Posted: Thursday, Jun. 13, 2013

Big sounds come in small packages

By Michael J. Solender
Published in: Smarter Living

The question these days isn't so much what you're listening to. With all the new gadgets out there, people are asking how you're getting your tunes, podcasts and other audio content.

If you still rely mostly on AM/FM tuners and multidisc trays that stay in one place, you're missing out. These audio upgrades won't hog your space, and a few of them can keep your playlist on loop a while you're on the move.

Tune in at home

It's not just retro-cool styling that makes Tivoli Audio's **Model Three Clock Radio** stand out. It's also what goes on inside: It can stream your downloaded playlist from iPads and smartphones.

Search by genre to find your favorite music. It also has traditional features such as a snooze button, alarm settings and an analog radio tuner. Program a different wake-up time for your bedmate with an optional extra speaker. \$299.99, www.tivoliaudio.com.

If you prefer streams of Internet radio to AM/FM analog tuner dials, take a look at Tivoli Audio's **NetWorks**. It only needs a Wi-Fi connection to find live broadcasts on thousands of online radio stations around the globe.

No special service or subscription is required. It has 10 preset stations and also plays music from your PC or mobile device. \$399.99, www.tivoliaudio.com.

JBL's **On Air Wireless Airplay** speaker dock is a compact solution for wirelessly streaming music in any room using a Wi-Fi network. Tap into your iTunes library, playlists or prerecorded content from a computer, iPod, iPhone or iPad. You'll also have access to Internet radio and 10 preset channels, an alarm clock and playback control.

Tuned in

- Some predicted radio's demise as television moved into America's homes in the 1950s. Yet, we're still tuning in, some of us every day.
- Ninety-three percent of Americans ages 12 and older own a platform or device that plays radio, and more than 89 million Americans have listened to an online audio service in the past month, according to the Pew Research Center.
- A major challenger to traditional AM/FM radio is found in SiriusXM satellite radio, which reported nearly 24 million subscribers during a fourth consecutive year of gains.

Related Stories

Related Images

1 of 3 6/13/2013 10:29 PM

The 7 watts per channel of amplifier power will be ample for most speaker setups. \$124.95, www.jbl.com/estore/jbl/us/index.jsp.

Portable possibilities

Plug JBL's **Soundfly BT** speaker into a wall outlet and stream music, podcasts and other audio programs through your Bluetooth-enabled device. This small package delivers 20 watts of amplification. There is no cable or wiring needed, and you won't have to clear off much shelf space.

The speaker weighs less than a pound and is slightly bigger than a nightlight. Soundfly works with Bluetooth on smartphones, MP3 players, tablets, PCs and laptops. Download the app and its voice feedback "talks" you through the setup process. \$179.95, www.jbl.com/estore/jbl/us/index.jsp.

The **Charge** portable stereo speaker is equipped with Bluetooth to stream wirelessly through a smartphone or tablet. The 10-watt speaker comes with a 12-hour rechargeable battery, Bluetooth capability and bass port technology that improves sound quality in the small devices.

It also has a USB port, which can serve as a charging station for other portable devices. Position it horizontally or vertically. At 3 by 7 inches, it is smaller than a tube of tennis balls. \$149.95, www.jbl.com/estore/jbl/us/index.jsp.

Out in the elements

Bowers & Wilkins is bringing better sound to places where it can be elusive — your patio, for example. Its **AM-1** architectural monitor has a weather-resistant, rustproof aluminum grille. The technology is designed to cover a wide area. It measures 12 by 7 by 8 inches. \$300 www.audioadvice.com/.

One-on-one help

The **PAE 300** by Vitasound is an option for people who want to hear more clearly without blasting the volume on the television or other devices. It is designed for situations where background noise or low audio are a problem. The unit is about the size and weight of a







2 of 3 6/13/2013 10:29 PM

smartphone. Available at Amazon for \$399. <u>www.pae300.com</u>



Subscribe to The Charlotte Observer.



3 of 3 6/13/2013 10:29 PM