

## **Thomas Kaufmann**



Thomas Kaufmann holds a diploma degree in Physics from the University of Bonn and a Master of Science degree in Chemistry from the University of California Santa Barbara. In 2012, he founded OTOjOY to raise awareness about hearing loop technology and provide better accessibility for individuals with hearing loss in public spaces. In partnership with two local non-profit organizations OTOjOY created the Loop Santa Barbara public awareness campaign to educate venues, consumers, and hearing professionals about hearing loop technology. More than 80 community spaces have been equipped with hearing loop systems, transforming Santa Barbara into the most hearing-friendly city in California. As a result, OTOjOY was honored with the Santa Barbara Mayor's Award for Outstanding Effort.

### **Recent Innovations in and around Hearing Loop Technology**

This presentation will discuss non-traditional uses of hearing loop technology in settings such as concert venues and music festivals, as well as several recent developments and innovations related to induction loops. These include LoopFinder, a U.S.-wide web platform and iOS app that allows users to locate hearing loop-enabled venues, the newly created capability to receive the signal from a hearing loop using a smartphone, and recent advancements in creating automatic captions with low latency and high accuracy using hearing loop technology. The presenter will further discuss the need for multiple channel audio transmission, low bandwidth data transmission, a globally universal platform to locate accessible facilities, and currently unavailable features in hearing devices to improve accessibility and convenience for users.