

# Press Release.

September 2024



Advancing the digital transformation in the audiology field, by placing patients at the core of our approach



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# IN SUMMARY.

By 2050, hearing disorders will affect 2.5 billion people worldwide. In France currently, 1 in 2 people have never undergone a hearing test, and 1 million people are not fitted with hearing aids when they should be.

The reasons for this lack of care are numerous: the main ones being the price of hearing aids, concerns about their effectiveness, psychological barriers, and limited access to care. The impact of late-fitting and failure to fit hearing aids is well known (dementia, social isolation, depression, dependence...). **This lack of access to care is therefore a major public health issue.**

Founded in 2019, SONUP develops easy-to-use, fast and reliable solutions for assessing hearing disorders, from the simplest (screening) to the most complex (diagnosis). With its expertise in the creation of hearing tests, its ambition is to accelerate the digital transformation of the audiology field, based on innovative technologies and perfect knowledge of the hearing professions.



SONUP solutions are intended primarily for healthcare professionals, whether hearing specialists (ENT doctors, audioprosthetists) or not (opticians, pharmacists, general practitioners, occupational practitioners, oncologists).

The company also provides solutions for broader targets, such as academic and industrial research laboratories (to optimize their hearing-related research programs), or companies/mutual insurers (in-company hearing screening sessions, webinars, training courses).

Initially financed by its founders, and supported by the local ecosystem (Créalia Occitanie, BIC de Montpellier, and more recently PariSanté Campus), in November 2022 SONUP finalized a first round of financing of 3 million euros from one of France's leading private equity funds.

The company is already seeing strong growth, thanks to its innovative business models and a solid network of professional partners. The company is now seeking to expand its national deployment and broaden the scope of the technologies it develops.

# THEY TRUST US.

## Institutional partners



## Business partners



## Medical and health research entities



## Large companies



# CORPORATE IDENTITY.

**Type of company :**

Scale-up

**Head-office :**

RPT Benjamin Franklin - 34000 Montpellier

**CEO :**

Maxime Balcon

**Activity :**

Expert in psychoacoustics, creator of audiological solutions that make hearing assessments accessible, simple and easy to interpret.

**Date of foundation :** November 2019

**Date of first commercialization :**

March 2021

**Number of employees :**

48

**Ambition :**

Accelerate the digital transformation of the audiology sector, based on innovative technologies and in-depth knowledge of the hearing professions.

**Missions :**

- Democratize hearing screening.
- Contribute to quality care for hearing-impaired patients.
- Facilitate the work of healthcare professionals.

**Values :**

Independence, innovation and quality of service





# CEO'S BIOGRAPHY AND STORY GENESIS.



Maxime BALCON  
CEO

“Building bridges between healthcare professionals seemed to be a common-sense solution: cooperation that benefits everyone is what drives me.”

Hearing aid specialist by training and entrepreneur at heart, Maxime BALCON co-founded France's first pluridisciplinary hearing center in 2014.

In 2017, after a life-threatening accident, he was pronounced dead within minutes. A prolonged stay in hospital followed, giving him the opportunity to define how to act more significantly in his field of expertise, and to lay the foundations of what would be SONUP two years later.

Supported by various institutional players, Maxime quickly surrounded himself with a committee of experts, and brought together a dynamic team to carry the SONUP project forward with commitment and enthusiasm.

In 2023, SONUP's first round of financing signs a new phase in its development, marked by the amplification of the national deployment of its initial offering, and the expansion of the scope of application of the technologies it develops.

## Beginning of the adventure

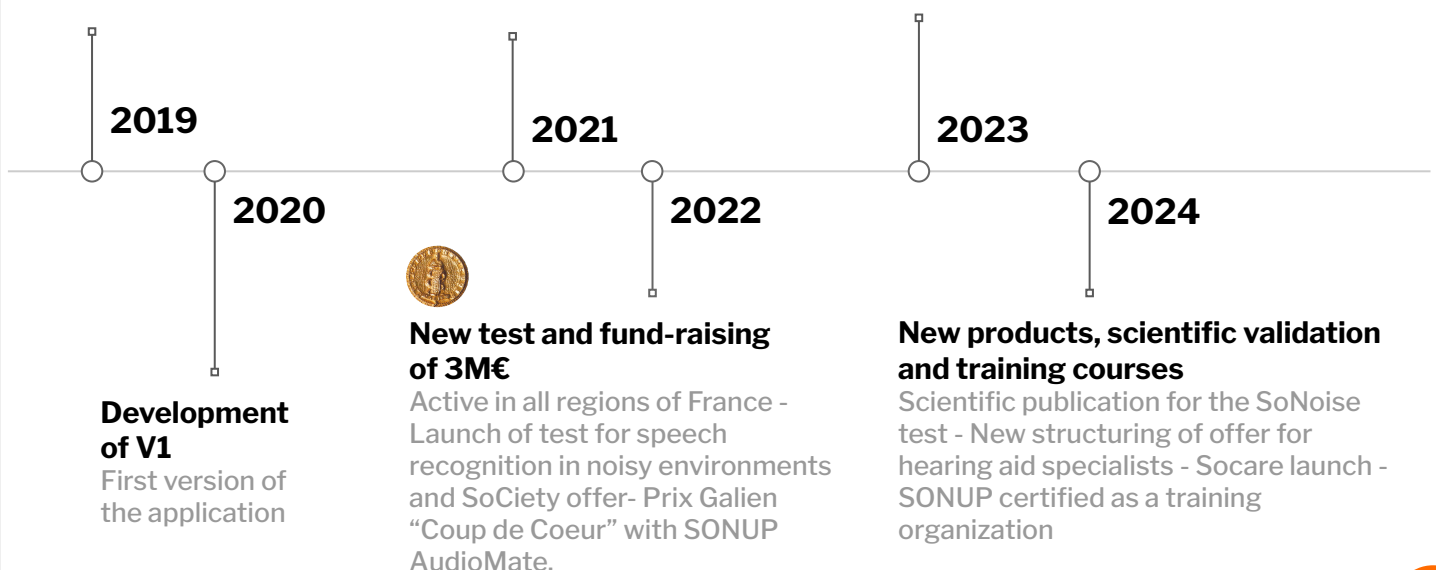
Incubation - Development of the calibration technique  
- Creation of the company - Tech The Futur prizewinner

## Commercial launch

Start of the activity with the SYNERGY offer and the SYSTEM offer

## New offers and first scientific validation

Offer diversification - Scientific publishing in the International Journal of Audiology (SoTone test validation)



# OUR SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE.

SONUP is an independent team of about fifty people, committed to the democratization of hearing assessment and the qualitative care of hearing-impaired patients.

## Scientific committee :



**Maxime BALCON (CEO)**  
Hearing aid specialist.  
Specialized in audio prosthetics, implantology and audiology.



**Jean-Charles CECCATO**  
PhD and engineer in electronics, automation and electrical engineering. Senior lecturer in Audioprosthesis. Researcher in audiology and neuroscience, INM (Institut des Neurosciences de Montpellier, INSERM).



**Antoine LORENZI**  
Hearing aid specialist and PhD in neuroscience.  
Specialized in audio prosthetics, implantology and audiology.



**Frédéric VENAIL**  
Medical Director of the Otolaryngology and Otoneurology and the Maxillofacial surgery unit at the Gui de Chauliac hospital.  
Researcher in audiology and neuroscience, INM (Montpellier Neuroscience Institute, INSERM).



**Arnaud GENIN**  
Hearing aid specialist.  
Doctoral student in biology and health.



Together they form with **Frank CHASTANET**, Head of sales, the group of six founding partners of SONUP.

## Scientific validation of tests :

We develop our own tests, which we standardize through scientific studies that are regularly published in international peer-reviewed journals.

- [International Journal of Audiology](#)
- [Frontiers in Audiology and Otology](#)



# THE SONUP DEVICE.

## Recurring features of our solutions:

- Easy to use
- Lightweight equipment
- Reliable results



### Easy to use :

- Our tests can be conducted as **self-tests**, or with minimal operator intervention.
- When they are intended to be used by professionals not specialized in hearing, no knowledge of audiology is necessary.

### Lightweight equipment :

- All our solutions are made available as **an application on a tablet device, a Bluetooth headset, and that's it !**
- Some of these tests need to be carried out in quiet environments (examination rooms or soundproof booths), but others can be perfectly performed in "noisier" environments.

### Reliable results :

- An **innovative Bluetooth calibration technique** has been developed, enabling reliable testing even in non-standardized environments and on all types of tablet (iOS and Android).
- **The headsets are individually calibrated**, enabling control of output levels and guaranteeing reliable results.
- They feature **active noise reduction**, enabling tests to be carried out in non-standardized noise environments.

## OUR TESTS

The two main types of tests available through our solutions are :

- **SoTone** : pure tone screening test (spotting test to determine whether the patient **HEARS** correctly in both ears).
- **SoNoise** : noise comprehension test (test to determine whether the patient **UNDERSTANDS** correctly).

These are followed, depending on the target use, by derivatives of these tests, other tests, surveys, etc...



# OUR PRODUCTS.

## SONUP SYSTEM

Digital audiology solution offering standardized, reliable and reproducible tests, either self-tested or operator-assisted.

→ Targeted industries : hearing aid specialists, opticians, ENT

## SONUP AUDIOMATE - “Favorites” Prix Galien 2022



Standardized hearing assessment solution, which enables self-testing in non-standardized environments while guaranteeing test-taking conditions, and notifies follow-up teams in real time.

→ Targeted industries : care facilities, academic and industrial research laboratories

	System	AudioMate
Opticians	x	
Hearing aid specialists	x	
ENT doctor	x	
R&D teams		x

# PRESS REVIEW.

## March 2024

Le Journal des entreprises “[Sonup lance Socare, une plateforme de téléexpertise en santé](#)” (print)  
L’Ouïe magazine “[Une publication sur le test SoNoise de SONUP](#)” (print)

## February 2024

Entreprendre à Montpellier “[Une reconnaissance internationale pour Sonup](#)”  
L’Ouïe magazine “[Une publication scientifique sur la fiabilité du test SoNoise de Sonup](#)”  
Audiologie Demain “[Le test de compréhension vocale dans le bruit “SoNoise” fait l’objet d’une publication scientifique dans une revue internationale d’audiologie](#)”  
Fréquence Audio “[Sonup : son test SoNoise validé par une revue internationale d’audiologie](#)”  
La lettre M “[La start-up montpelliéraine Sonup se diversifie dans la téléexpertise](#)”  
Fréquence Audio “[Sonup lance Socare, une plateforme de téléexpertise pour faciliter la communication entre professionnels de santé](#)”  
Le Journal des entreprises “[L’équipe Sonup lance Socare, nouvelle plateforme de téléexpertise en santé](#)”  
L’Ouïe magazine “[Sonup se positionne sur le marché des solutions de téléexpertise](#)”

## January 2024

Audiologie Demain “[Socare : nouvelle plateforme d’information, de communication sécurisée et de téléexpertise, pour les professionnels de santé et leurs patients](#)”

## November 2023

L’Ouïe magazine “[SoTone de SONUP, sujet d’une publication scientifique](#)” (print)  
Entreprendre à Montpellier “[Spécialiste du dépistage des troubles auditifs, SONUP s’ouvre à d’autres spécialités médicales](#)”  
Fréquence audio “[Dépistage des troubles auditifs : SONUP voit grand](#)”

## October 2023

Audiologie demain “[La communauté scientifique valide les performances du test de dépistage auditif tonal “SoTone” de SONUP](#)”  
L’Ouïe magazine “[Le test de dépistage SoTone de Sonup fait l’objet d’une publication scientifique](#)”  
Fréquence audio “[Les performances de SoTone, validées par la communauté scientifique](#)”  
Profession Pharmacien : Dossier spécial audition (print)

## September 2023

Maddyness “[Krys et Sonup réinventent le dépistage auditif en boutique](#)”  
Midi Libre “[La start-up Sonup signe un partenariat avec le Groupe Krys pour les tests auditifs](#)”  
Fréquence Optic “[Adossé à SONUP, Krys démocratise le dépistage auditif lors du parcours d’achat optique](#)”  
Le pharmacien de France “[Se former à la langue des signes](#)” (print)  
L’Ouïe magazine “[Sonup inaugure une zone de pause sonore au Silmo](#)”

## July 2023

Audio infos 365 “[SONUP récompensé de la deuxième place au concours de pitch de la French Care](#)”  
Acuité “[Tests auditifs : Krys annonce un partenariat avec SONUP](#)”  
Audiologie Demain “[Krys s’associe à SONUP pour réaliser des dépistages auditifs simples et ludiques dans les magasins d’optique](#)”  
L’Ouïe magazine “[Krys lance Audioscore, un autotest mis au point avec SONUP](#)”  
Mes infos “[SONUP la start-up montpelliéraine récompensée](#)”



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