



Portable speakers

- ✓ Exclusive interview with Bluetooth giant CSR
- ✓ Key price determinants
- ✓ 15 supplier profiles
- ✓ 6 trendy products

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Table of Contents

Buyer's Guide to sourcing portable speakers

What to look for when buying portable speakers from China, including key price determinants, 15 supplier profiles, 6 trendy products and an exclusive Q&A with Bluetooth giant CSR.

▶ Key price determinants	3
▶ Comparison table: Profiles of 15 export-ready suppliers	5
▶ Gallery View: Portable Bluetooth speakers	7
▶ CSR Q&A	9

How to determine China portable speaker price and quality

Bluetooth chipsets and speaker exteriors are two factors that can be used to estimate product quotes.

When importing portable speakers from China, buyers should not assume that the line's maturity and expansive supplier base mean they can simply source from any manufacturer and get top-quality products at budget price.

This article identifies the key parts that determine the price and quality of China-made portable speakers.

In a line that is [increasingly growing wireless](#), chipsets naturally rank first in the list of determinants, accounting for as much as 30 percent of speaker price.

Big-brand chips are often adopted in speakers targeting the upper segments of the market. Many of these designs are ODM-based and export-bound.

The table below indicates some of the Bluetooth chipset types used in the different portable Bluetooth speakers segments.

Market segment	Bluetooth chipset brand & model	Product type
Low-end	Shanghai Beken (BK8000), OV (ov3860)	Gift or promotional item
Low-end with SD card	AppoTech (2227 & cw6639), Tiangang Micro (AC4101 & AC515), Anyka (AK1052C), RDA (RDA5851s)	Bluetooth speakers with public mold
Midrange	ISSC (IS16XX & IS2015), CSR (CSR86XX), Vimicro (WS9621, WS9623), Airoha (AB1010, AB1510, AB1513)	ODM model, brand
High-end	ISSC, CSR, MV Silicon (AU78XX)	Export-bound Bluetooth speakers, brands

The outer shell is another differentiator among portable speakers. Upscale models have ABS or silicone exteriors that are shock- and drop-resistant. Housings' capability to withstand moisture is becoming an important factor as well, particularly as suppliers grow their selections of outdoor-use speakers.

Pricing also depends on the type of molds adopted in production. Speakers made using public molds, or molds can be used by any supplier without additional patent or design fees, are priced lower than those formed out of private or ODM molds.

A caveat, though. Speakers made out of public molds should not be the first option for buyers looking for standout top-quality products. The fact that a supplier's speakers are based on molds available to other manufacturers means very similar devices are readily available from other companies.

Batteries account for about 10 to 13 percent of portable speaker price and for this two options are available. Li-ion batteries have a higher energy density and cost less than Li-polymer types. They, however, undergo aging even when not in use.

Li-polymer batteries, on the other hand, are thinner and lighter, making them suitable for Bluetooth speakers with compact or unusually shaped constructions. Li-polymer types are also more powerful than Li-ion packs so they can support new speaker add-ons such as power bank, flashlight and solar charging functions.

At 7 to 14 percent, the speaker driver represents a relatively small share of speaker price although it is a key determinant of sound quality.

Aside from supplier-provided specifications, buyers will do well to evaluate speaker drivers based on the following factors:

Magnet: Bluetooth speakers from China normally use neodymium magnets, which have good frequency response. Such types are strong, so speaker drivers require only smaller magnets, allowing suppliers to reduce speaker size and weight further.

Some drivers use ferrite or ceramic magnets, which cost less but crack more easily than neodymium magnets.

Coil: The quality of the coil can be determined by its appearance. High-quality coils are clean, and have no loose or overlapping sections. The inner wall is smooth.

Cone: Normally, the cone is made of rigid, lightweight and highly sensitive paper. Cones used in water-resistant Bluetooth speakers have a coating designed

to withstand moisture.

Extras such as NFC, Wi-Fi, and power bank and solar charging capability understandably add to the Bluetooth speaker price. Increments depend on the type and number of features buyers want to incorporate into their orders.

Aside from the critical parts and components, standards compliance is another factor to consider when calculating portable speaker prices. For instance, CE and RoHS certification are required for Europe-bound models and cost about \$800 each, with paperwork guaranteeing RoHS conformance needing to be renewed every year. Securing FCC mark for products meant for the US is about \$1,200.

Conformance to [Bluetooth Qualification Requirements](#), a must for all Bluetooth-enabled devices, costs an extra \$9,700.

The table below breaks down the aforementioned key price determinants of China-made Bluetooth speakers, their percentage share of product quotes and the share's equivalent in prices.

Component	% of price	Price range		
		Low-end	Midrange	High-end
Bluetooth chipset	25 to 30%	\$0.80 to \$2.70	\$2.70 to \$8	\$8 to \$13
Outer shell	13 to 17%	\$0.50 to \$1.50	\$1.50 to \$4.50	\$4.50 to \$6
Labor	15 to 17%	\$1 to \$1.15	\$1.15 to \$1.25	\$1.25 to \$1.40
Mold type	10 to 15%	\$0.40 to \$1.10	\$1.10 to \$5	\$5 to \$10
Buttons, LEDs, cables and others	10 to 15%	\$0.37 to \$0.52	\$0.52 to \$1.60	\$1.60 to \$2.30
Battery cell	10 to 13%	\$0.35 to \$1.15	\$1.15 to \$3.50	\$3.50 to \$5
Speaker	7 to 14%	\$0.30 to \$1	\$1 to \$3	\$3 to \$4.30
Optional functions, including NFC, Wi-Fi, power bank, solar charging		Pricing of optional functions depends on buyer's requirements		
Total		\$3 to \$10	\$10 to \$30	\$30 to \$45

Supplier comparison table

Company name	Year established	Total number of employees	Number of QC staff	Number of design staff	Number of production lines
Dongguan World Tong	2012	60 to 80	10 to 15	5	4
Eyoung	2007	150	15	5	5
Gold Fingers	2012	200	15	10	6
Guangzhou Suoyin	2011	120	10	4	4
iLIKE	2013	3,000	100	40	30
Kiss	2004	200	23	5	9
Rainbow EC	2009	60	5	3	4
Scaler	2007	150	8	5	5
Shenzhen Apollo	2007	500 to 1,000	20 to 50	10 to 20	10
Shenzhen In-Link	2007	300	30	25	12
Shenzhen Mictex	2009	160	15	4	7
Shenzhen Sande Dacom	2007	300	22	19	4
Shenzhen W. Rider	2003	200	12	10	7
Shenzhen Winnershine	2008	150	10	4	6
Zhongshan K-mate General	1997	500	50	15	15

Annual sales for all products (US\$ million)	Annual export sales for all products (US\$ million)	OEM	ODM	OBM	Top markets	Key clients	MOQ (US\$)	
5	4	50%	30%	20%	US (30%), Europe (40%), Asia (20%)	Speedlink	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
4	3	70%	10%	20%	North America (30%), Europe (30%), South America (15%)	Master	5,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
5	5	80%	20%		US (50%), Europe (30%), Asia (20%)	Walmart, Amazon, Best Buy	15,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
7	7	85%	10%	5%	Europe (50%), US (30%)	N/A	5,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
20	8	50%	30%	20%	China (60%), US (20%), Western Europe (15%)	Amica Electronics, Thinx	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
13	10	50%	30%	20%	Japan (30%), US (20%), Europe (15%)	Seiwa, Elecom, Just Wireless, Cellular	15,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
5	5	50%	20%	30%	Europe (80%), Australia (10%), South America (10%)	N/A	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
10	3	40%	20%	40%	China (70%), Brazil (10%), Western Europe (5%)	N/A	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
5	4	90%	10%		US (40%), Europe (40%), Africa (20%)	D-seven, Walmart	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
15	9	40%	30%	30%	US (45%), Europe (25%), Africa (10%)	WOW, Hama, Mercury	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
15	10	90%	10%		US (30%), Europe (30%), Asia (25%)	N/A	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
15	2	30%	10%	60%	China (80%), US (8%), Europe (5%)	Asus, KYE	5,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
10	10	100%			N/A	Walmart	10,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
6	6	50%	45%	5%	Western Europe (40%), Americas (30%), Australia (20%)	Tesco UK, Archos	1,000	CONTACT SUPPLIER
30	30	30%	70%		US (50%), Europe (30%), Asia (20%)	Jaybird, JBL	N/A	CONTACT SUPPLIER

Portable speakers go wireless with Bluetooth

Handpicked by our Market Analysts, these units are even more mobile because they are wire-free. Many combine Bluetooth with NFC.

Bluetooth connectivity is now mainstream in China's selection of portable speakers. Many use version 4.0 of the wireless standard, reducing significantly power consumption and extending battery life. Models have an average operating time of 10 hours. Some types up the wireless ante by running on Bluetooth 4.0+EDR or 4.1.

Suppliers also equip units with NFC connectivity, combining the wireless technology

with highly sensitive microphones for handsfree communication.

Externally, enhancements have yielded models in shapes that veer away from the conventional rectangular and round.

The products in this gallery were handpicked by our Market Analysts for representing the current trends in portable speakers.



Mini Bluetooth speaker with <1% distortion

The Oupopo model from Dongguan World Tong Electronic Technology Co. Ltd is a mini Bluetooth 4.0 speaker with a distortion rate not exceeding 1 percent. Adopting a CSR chip, the unit has a frequency range of 20Hz to 20kHz. It also supports NFC connection. Power comes from a 400mAh battery with 10 hours operating time. The 43mm-diameter speaker comes in matte-finish light silver, graphite gray, stealth black, aurum gold, azure blue and rose pink. Custom colors are accepted. Price is \$17.

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2-channel stereo Bluetooth speaker

Gold Fingers Technology Co. Ltd offers a two-channel triangular portable speaker that delivers strong-bass stereo sound. The BTS26 model adopts Bluetooth 4.0 and supports HSP, HFP, multipoint A2DP and AVRCP. Multiple pairings, and NFC and handsfree connection are likewise enabled. The speaker packs 2x3W. A 1,000mAh lithium battery is built in, lasting 500 hours on standby. Operating time is 10 hours.

[CONTACT SUPPLIER](#)



Arched NFC Bluetooth speaker

Kiss Communications Technology Co. Ltd offers a Bluetooth 4.0 speaker featuring a sleek arch design. NFC connection, and HSP, HFP, A2DP and AVRCP pairing are supported, allowing the unit to work with multiple devices. The BTK50215598 model delivers 2x3W. Frequency response is 100Hz to 20kHz. Power comes from a battery with five and 350 hours operating and standby time, respectively.

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Bluetooth speaker supports multipairing

The triangular prism-shaped SP-02 model from Shenzhen Enjoyou Electronics Co. Ltd is a speaker that can receive simultaneously data from more than one device via Bluetooth 4.1. Noise cancelation, handsfree communication and echo suppression are supported. The LCD shows the time. The speaker uses two 3W drivers with a distortion rate not exceeding 1 percent. Frequency response is 100Hz to 20kHz while SNR is more than 75dB. Microphone sensitivity is -38dB. Price is \$25.

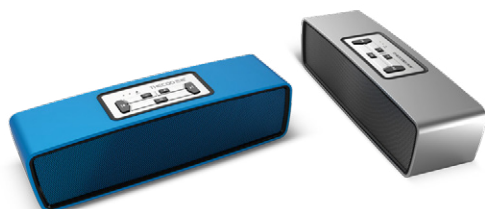
CONTACT SUPPLIER



Handbag-shaped Bluetooth speaker

Shenzhen Sande Dacom Electronics Co. Ltd has launched a handbag-shaped Bluetooth speaker with a carbon fiber body rated IPX4 for water resistance, making it suitable for outdoor use. The Y006 model uses an anti-distortion power amplifier with 3W output, ensuring sound quality across different volume levels. It also has a passive radiator for deep and rich bass. The speaker uses a Bluetooth 4.0 chipset from CSR. Price is \$19.90.

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Upscale aluminum alloy speaker

Targeting the upscale market, the BTA536 model from Shenzhen Shinylong Electronics Co. Ltd is a Bluetooth 4.0+EDR speaker with an aluminum alloy shell. The device features a built-in microphone for handsfree calls. It also has an auxiliary port for TV and other wired audio equipment, and two 45mm driver units on each end.

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CSR: Bluetooth will anchor technologies of the future

The Bluetooth pioneer continues to explore future application and market possibilities, driving the wireless technology's evolution.

Global Sources spoke with Bluetooth giant CSR's product marketing senior manager David James, who is based in Shenzhen, Guangdong province. He helps OEMs and ODMs innovate and develop Bluetooth Smart, CSR Mesh™, and IoT products and services for the smart home market.

Below are excerpts of our exclusive interview.

Global Sources: What are CSR's advantages against competitors?

David James: CSR has always been a leader in Bluetooth technology. We continue to innovate and provide our customers with key features that enhance the end user experience. CSR works hard to understand customers' needs, not just in terms of a piece of silicon, but the tools necessary to enable and foster the creativity beyond the chip.

What makes a brand name successful is the difference its product demonstrates versus any other generic product and to do that consistently with an evolving roadmap of future products. CSR creates the platform that enables that brand name creativity and work closely with our customers to continuously innovate, improve and lead the industry.

GS: How many China clients does CSR serve currently? Do you plan to expand further within China?

DJ: All of them. This is, of course, a bit of an exaggeration, but in reality China is our largest market.

CSR has already staffed up in a large way to service the China market and will continue to do so. I cannot comment on specifics to locations or numbers but



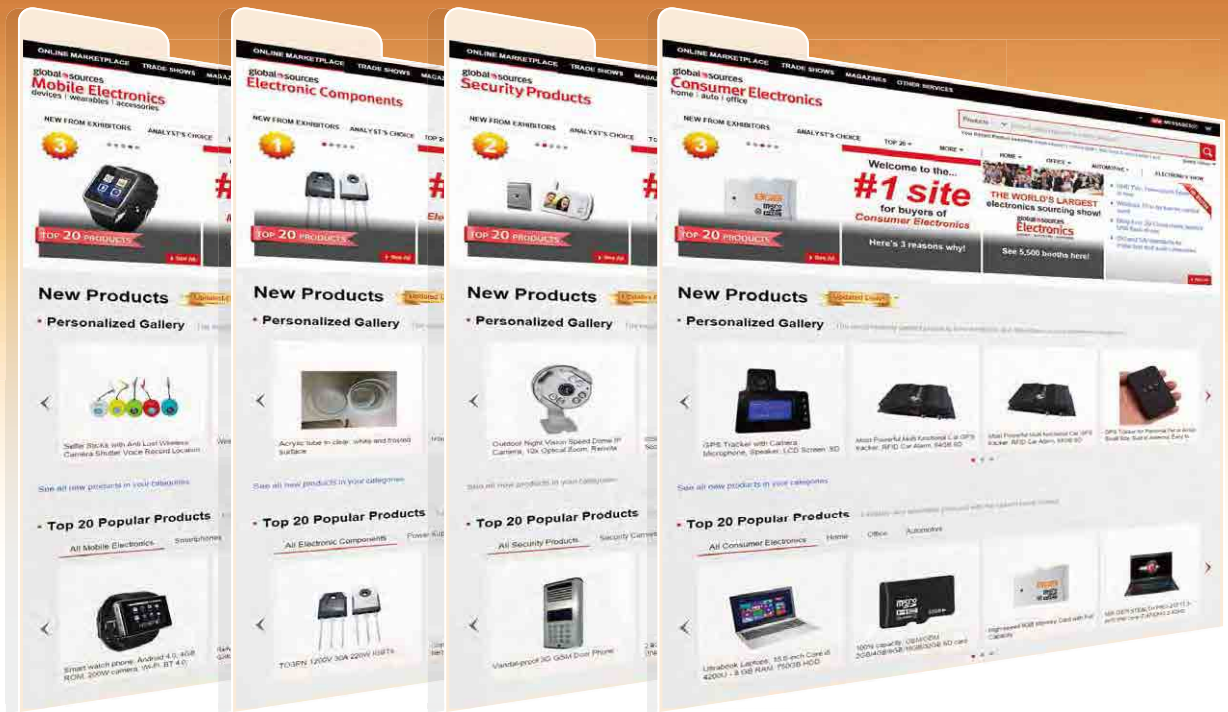
David James, CSR product marketing senior manager

I can say that there is a reason that—as a Senior Manager—I am located in China: It is simply our most important market.

GS: What do you think of the prospects of Bluetooth in the wearables and Internet of Things industries?

DJ: I can say that CSR historically has achieved and currently maintains leadership in the audio market, and with our continuing innovation, we are excited by the opportunities presented to us in the wearables and IoT markets. Wearables continue to evolve and unfold but it is the IoT or home automation market that really excites me. Our CSR Mesh™ technology is by all measures being welcomed in the industry with open arms. We have had several customers launch products in 2014 in the lighting and home automation segments and many more will follow quickly. I would not have to go too far out on a limb to predict that 2015 is the year of CSR Mesh™.

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