

[opensuse] Sound troubles in SuSE 10.3

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Searching around on the internet I think this question has been asked by others but I cannot find an answer that I can understand so hopefully someone here will be able to guide me into the light...

I am trying to get a media center built, based on SuSE 10.3, and am running into a snag that is rather annoying that involves the sound card that I want to use. I have the Creative Labs Audigy 4 Pro soundcard which is what I want to use. I also have a Hauppauge 350 TV Tuner card which I "think" has a sound chip on it called Conexant CX8801 and I think this is somehow confusing things in SuSE.

About half the time when I boot up, it seems that the Creative Labs Audigy 4 Pro sound card is not recognized and instead the Conexant CX8801 sound chip is. This results in no sound coming from my system as I do not hook up the speakers to the TV Tuner card. (I am wanting to use the surround sound and Dolby features provided by the Creative Labs card)

I have been trying various ideas on how to solve this but it is very confusing and I do not understand the sound architecture model very well, but here is what I have observed....

Yast2 ALWAYS claims, under the Sound Card setup in the Hardware section, that I only have 1 sound card model – SB Audigy at index 0 installed. But it does NOT appear that Yast2 is really setting this sound card up properly for me, and I will come back to this point in a moment to clarify why I think so...

When I boot up this computer, if I do not hear the initialization sound signature I know the boot up process failed to set up the SB Audigy card properly and I can verify this by checking the Mixer settings in KMix as it will be telling me that the current mixer is the Conexant CX8801. If I open up the pull down list of Mixer options in KMix I will not see (so cannot select) the Audigy 4 Pro soundcard. However, if after booting up the computer I DO hear the initialization sound signature for SuSE's signon, then KMix will also be showing that it has selected the Audigy 4 Pro card and it now also shows up in it's Mixer options pull down menu! Also the KMix GUI will show a great many more slider controls for all the features of the Audigy 4 Pro card which is what I need to control my surround sound system!...

Getting back to Yast2, this same sort of problem shows up if I bring up the Volume control settings menu from the "Other" pull down menu options for the Sound card setup. If the boot up failed to setup the Audigy 4 Pro card properly then EVEN THOUGH Yast2 is claiming that my sound card is the Audigy Pro, the volume control settings menu does NOT show all the separate sliders and values for all the various controls of the card. Instead it only shows a single slider which has no effect. But if the boot up process did select the Audigy 4 Pro card correctly then the volume controls in Yast2 > Hardware > Sounds > Other > Volume does show all the controls for the card properly!

There is another aspect on this which is even more confusing. I have a Harmon Kardon receiver/amplifier hooked up to this computer via a USB cable (and HDMI cables) (I can control it via a Windows app to route

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video and music to other computers in my house and I plan to write an app for it, to run under Linux also, so that is why it is hooked up) KMix is somehow able to "see" this USB receiver as it shows two additional mixer menu options, something called "USB Audio CODEC" and "USB AV Receiver". I haven't played with these settings yet as I am just trying to get the basic stuff going first in order to up the wife approval factor as quick as possible. ;-) If I disconnect the USB cable to the Harmon Kardon then these two menu items for mixer options in KMix go away as well.

Anywise as I said in the beginning I don't fully understand the sound architecture model of SuSE yet and am still trying to learn. Why doesn't the Conexant CX8801 or the USB devices show up as additional sound devices in Yast2 when they show up in KMix? If Yast2 is recognizing that I have an Audigy Pro card in my system and it is suppose to be responsible for setting it up and configuring it during boot up, then why is the Conexant CX8801 sound chip on the TV tuner card being selected half the time instead of the Audigy Pro card? Is there a way that I can "force" SuSE/YaST2/KDE/KMix to strictly use/setup the Audigy 4 Pro sound card and completely ignore the Conexant CX8801? If there is some sort of random sound device selection process going on then why isn't the USB sound devices getting selected some of the time? (NOT that I want them to but it would be nice if at least things were consistent!)

BTW I also had a sound chip on my motherboard that initially was adding to this confusing mix but I was able to get around it by disabling it in the BIOS. That seems like a harsh approach but at least it worked as it was ALWAYS being selected despite every effort I had made in YaST to disable it... (YaST seems to always detect it and re-enable it on me! sigh.)

Another path I have traveled down was to go into the KDE Sound and Multimedia setup and there I discovered additional layers to this already confusing sound architecture. There I fooled around with changing the audio device, selecting ALSA and OSS instead of using Autodetect but that didn't help either so suspect those are higher layers of the sound system and not important it trying to get the fundamental sound card drivers working properly... (I have set it back to Autodetect hoping that the KDE designers know what they are doing better than I do!)

So I am now completely lost and confused...Any and all help will be most welcomed! Thanks in advance and please forgive me if I misstated some of this, I am NOT an expert on this stuff by any means...

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