
Subject: Re: Attracting Non-Audiophiles To High End Audio

Posted by [Shane](#) on Sun, 09 Aug 2009 14:55:55 GMT

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As someone who enjoys the high end gear, but could never justify spending a lot, I think I fall into a middle category. When I bought my first "system" back when I was a freshman in high school, I bought a set of speakers before I even had any other components. I bought the best sounding ones to me that I could afford, then 6 months later got a receiver and listened to radio for 6 more months before I got a cassette deck, then a CDP as they were coming out. None of my gear is even remotely high end. The 12B4 Abraxas amp is probably the closest. I've got some Carver, Kenwood (70's), and some NAD SS gear as well. Then the DIY stuff which is entry level stuff. Generic cables and IC's. My NAD stuff goes into some little Polk Audio bookshelves for the living room and they sound quite nice for what they are.

We only have two stereo shops here in Amarillo, and neither carries very high end stuff. One Mac, the other B&W and such. You mention tubes or a turntable and they start to reminisce about the good old days. I bought a 1/2 dozen LP's at a city wide garage sale yesterday and the guy asks me if I collect them (he had several 1000 there). I told him that I play them, not collect them. He didn't even know they still made equipment to utilize vinyl. They were all his albums and he said he couldn't play them anymore as his TT had died 20 years ago. So there is unawareness even among those that listened to music.

I don't discount the sound of an iPod. If you put lossless music on one and run it through a good head-amp using the LOD connection into good cans, it can rival any high end stereo rig in my opinion. Unfortunately that is a small section of the population that uses that kind of setup. Dedicated they are, though. People just tend to discount headphone listening all together which is too bad. Because I can get into a complete headphone rig for less than \$1K that is very nice.

Current pop music is made to be played through earbuds and factory car systems and is compressed to death. Some car systems sound phenomenal if done right. One of the best sounding systems, home or car, I've ever heard was the Clarion salesman's car system. He used 4 6.5" speakers individually amped for the low end, then a few mids and tweeters throughout the car. Not the boomy bass most go for, but a tight, quick bass that when eq'd through a digital setup was very balanced and "correct". He probably had about \$3K in it. There is a very visceral feeling to listening to a hard rock CD in a car that is quite similar to being at the concert. One of the reasons I appreciate a good car setup.

But there is a lot of badly recorded music. There is an awful lot of poorly recorded classical music, especially anything "live". Sounds like it's coming from another room around the corner with a door shut. Now not all is that way, but most of the stuff I've heard is, which is one reason I can't get into it as much as I would like.

I think the small shows like LSAF give the public an opportunity to hear what can be done, and Fred's room showed that you don't need a lot of money to get good sound. I guess I'll never have a decent system as I can't bring myself to spend \$3-5K on audio gear. Mortgages, car payments, and kids take care of that

Well, I've rambled on and lost the point all together.
