Subject: Re: Attracting Non-Audiophiles To High End Audio
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 21 Aug 2009 01:19:07 GMT
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I suspect that demographics are responsible to a large degree. Seems to me the largest group of people that are really into music are teenagers and twenty-somethings. That's not to say some of us older guys aren't as into music as they are, but I do think many people stop listening to music regularly when they get older. It becomes less a part of many people's lives as they become adults.

Think about it - Almost everyone listens to music a lot in their youth and they make it a big part of their lives. But as they age, many people get busy, start to listen more to the news and current events, and rarely turn on the sound system unless its tied to their home theater. Once you've brought a couple of rug rats into the home, it gets harder to spend an hour of undivided attention to your favorite album.

When you were a kid, you could stay in your room for hours listening to music. You probably had your first kiss at a school dance - listening to music. You went everywhere with the stereo in your car going, knew all the current songs. We sometimes get sick of the kids with their stereos blasting in traffic, but hey, they're still enjoying music.

To be honest, I don't think I see the "hifi downturn" as much as maybe some other people do. I was always interested in making speakers inexpensive, and I think that keeps me plugged in to the youth market, especially the younger DIYers. At least some of my products appeal to this demographic.

At first, having inexpensive but high-quality speakers was a necessity because I was one of those kids wanting the best but having little spending money. Then later, as my disposable income grew, I was able to make more price-no-object designs. But even they are inexpensive compared to some audiophile offerings.

Most of the people I deal with buy kits, and while not recession proof, that's exactly the kind of product people buy when they are trying to save money. DIY seems to be counter-cyclic with respect to economic downturns, so when the economy gets weaker, DIY products seem to sell more. As a result, I almost never see any real change that I can pin on a downturn in hifi or even in the economy. It's a steady stream to me, with most of my builders being the same sort of person that would do their own car tune-ups or put in their own kitchen tile. They often want to pinch a penny but they also want it "right", and they think "if you want it right, you have to do it yourself."

I think that brings us back full circle, right back to where Fred was when he started this thread.