
Subject: Re: Neodymium speaker price sticker shock.
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Mon, 11 Apr 2011 04:14:34 GMT
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Yeah, that's what I thought. The Chinese are taxing their exports, driving the costs way up.

I never started using drivers with neodymium magnets myself, always preferring ferrite motors with shorting rings for the high-end stuff. They're not as light as neodymium, but they are more linear than standard ferrite structures, which in turn makes them distort less. But where strength-to-weight is concerned, neodymium is king.

I remember some discussion about disk drive costs where I was told that the Chinese were focusing on this market, trying hard to corner it with predatory pricing that made it impractical for companies in other countries to invest in mines. So what they've done is to create a monopoly. One would wonder why companies that depend on neodymium wouldn't have anticipated this possibility, since there are a lot of products that require neodymium magnets for their small size and/or flux-to-weight ratio. It will be crippling for some industries.

For speakers, it's pretty much just a convenience. The smaller size magnet just means lighter weight. The package is still large, because the diaphragm is large. You can't make a 12" woofer smaller than 12", for example. But the smaller magnet means it can be lighter. Other than that, it's not really a problem to go back to ferrite. Add a Faraday ring to a ferrite motor and you have a better driver anyway.