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Subject: Re: Reviews Versus Personal Taste  
Posted by [Thermionic](#) on Wed, 04 Sep 2013 03:07:42 GMT  
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Sounds about right, for sure. Back when I was in the business, about 6 or 7 years ago, I was warned by a fellow audio entrepreneur to NEVER submit product to a certain online audio magazine for review. This gentleman knew their dirty deeds first hand, as he himself had been the victim of them.

They had just recently reviewed a product that used a particularly unusual tube type, which we'll call "Product B." Well, it just so happened that the gentleman mentioned above was probably the only other commercial builder offering a similar product using the same tube type. We'll call his "Product A" as it was actually on the market first.

The review claimed that the four staff reviewers unanimously agreed that Product B was vastly superior in every way to Product A in their A-B listening tests. He found this very strange, as he had no recollection of ever providing them with any product for review, much less that one. He looked back through his records, and indeed hadn't. He then contacted each of his customers who had purchased that particular product and inquired whether they had lent it out to anyone for any reason, or if they even knew any of the staff reviewers. The answers were "no" and "no" from each customer.

A friend of the gentleman's who was a detective began doing some research on the side. Among other things, he found the owner of the magazine had been fired from a certain audio publication for soliciting bribes in exchange for (you guessed it!) writing superior reviews of their products.

Just a few weeks later I received several e-mails from that magazine requesting I submit product for review. I never responded.

Interestingly, shortly after that I was contacted by an individual about modifying a certain product he'd bought based on a glowing, phenomenal review by said magazine. He was very disappointed to find that it sounded quite awful, and wanted to know what could be done with it, if anything. Upon hearing it, I agreed with him wholeheartedly, and dubbed it as definitely being one of the two worst sounding pieces of tube gear I've ever heard in my life. It was beyond horrible, to say the least; an awful circuit design built with awful junk. I ended up gutting it down to the bare chassis and building a whole new circuit from the ground up.

Thermionic

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