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Subject: Amp Kits

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sun, 23 Jan 2005 14:41:33 GMT

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The difficulty with providing kits for electronics lies in the choices the manufacturer needs to make in order to provide for some measure of profitability. In a tube amp kit; the most expensive aspect of sales is not the parts but the need to provide for aftermarket customer support, which is particularly involved in the case of kits. The parts of a tube amp; other than the transformers and chassis are not pricey and therefor have a limited profit possibility. At the 5-600\$ point there is very little room for maximising profit potential; in fact the only flexible option is parts and the only parts that offer a serious cushion whithin which to float is the transformers. How much can you save on a capacitor or resistor. So therefor the manufacturer must by definition cut costs on the iron; which is the most important part of a tube amp. Case in point; Bottlehead started as a group of guys selling kits in order to fund their own purchases. It helped that one of their members was a transformer winder. They did not need to make a big margin to survive. So they could sell cheap with decent iron. Once a kit is built with marginal transformers, no amount of tweaking will ever get the amp to the next level. That is the drawback to all tube amp kits as I see it. Even with economies of scale they still cannot sell enough to enable a serious transformer set to be feasible. So you are doomed before you start to mediocre performance. There are rumours; unsubstiated but from a good source that Magnequest wishes to leave the DIY community entirely due to low profit and high maintainence. I think we will see more of that as the year progresses.

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