Subject: Cables
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 01 May 2004 07:39:12 GMT
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I didn't look through more than a post or two over in the mudwrestling pit, but I did notice that there were some claims that a cable was relabeled and marked up, perhaps excessively. I could see this was the point, but then stopped reading after a post or two. Not worth my time. But I was curious about a few things, directed towards pretty much anyone considering the subject of aftermarket cables:1. Do you believe that expensive cables are worth it?A. When defining an interface or interconnect, do you look for more than resistance, capacitance, inductance, coupling proximity to other conductors, resistance to corrosion and insulation strength, etc.?2. Did you think that relabeling a product is dishonest? How about OEM stuff?3. If OEM or whatever, if relabeled, do you think that slapping a high price on a product will make it more attractive to the twitch-o-philes, making them believe the thing is somehow "better"?4. Same question as #3, except what if a small cosmetic change is made between the expensive audiophile item and the inexpensive part?5. How about a legitimately improved product, say one where the conductors are treated to resist corrosion and the connectors made with precious metals for the same reason? Or if it has greater current-carrying capacity, better shielding or other benefits?

Subject: Re: Cables - my worthless opinions
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sat, 01 May 2004 17:38:31 GMT
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In the world, there are two types of cable.Where I work, the sparkys worry about Type I cable. They figure ampacity, debate the merits of going cable tray or duct bank, they do trade-off studies of voltage vs. transformers vs. circular mils and worry if direct-buried will deteriorate due to inadequate jacketing.Then there's Type II cable. The application for Type II cable is exclusively in consumer audio. Type II cable is insensitive to ampacity, resistivity, dielectric constant, etc... Type II cables may vary in capacitance, or self inductance, or myriad other demonstrable properties, but those properties are irrelevant.In Type II cable production cost bears no relationship to retail price, nor should it. The cost can only be evaluated in terms of how it makes the purchaser feel. Like a Prada handbag or a Louis Vuitton shoe, Type II cable is purchased for its intangibles, not its functionality.

Subject: Re: Cables - my worthless opinions
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 02 May 2004 11:41:03 GMT
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Yeah, kinda figured that. I remember some of the discussions over there. I don't see much merit in them. I can see a benefit in oxidation and corrsion resistance, so two seemingly similar cables

made of different materials might have different characteristics there. And there's also the obvious things such as dielectric strength, resistance per foot and thermal conductivity which sets voltage and current capacity. Those are important on speaker cables and power cords. Interconnects run at high-impedance preamp levels might also include shielding properties, characteristic impedance and things like that. But some of the discussions about this stuff just go way, way over the top. It's definitely similar to the "Emperor's New Clothes" story most of the time. If a person is too zealous on either side of the cables "debate," I am suspicious of their competency and/or motivations. There are some things there to consider but not very damn many, that's for sure.

Subject: My views on cable: transparent
Posted by akhilesh on Sat, 08 May 2004 15:52:05 GMT
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I agree that almost all cables sound just the same. However, in my system, transparent audio cables (you'll never see them advertise in sterophile) did make a distinctly audible difference. SO i use them. They are expensive, but used, they are worth it. The difference is becuase of the passive network boxes they put in the cable, that restrict the bandwidth of the cable from carrying high freq noise that can apparently distort music. And you know what... it works for me sicne i can hear the change quite clearly. On the web transparent has been knocked around (mostly by other cable people i think) but IMHO they work really well. The transparent plus is the level i have...their interconnefcts and speaker combinations certainly took my system to the next level or two. YOU can go higher, but then we are talking mucho dineor, and the difference may not be huge. my 2 cents, based purely on lsitening.-akhilesh

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Subject: Re: My views on cable: transparent
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 09 May 2004 18:02:08 GMT
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I remember our discussion about this on the porch. When you were describing what Transparent offers as a product, I remember thinking that it was more than just a cable. It is an RFI filter built-in to a cable. I can see how a cable assembly like this would be more expensive than a similar cable without an RFI filter.As for the cable itself, that is probably a different matter. There was a big discussion (fight) that broke out on one of the other sites where one guy claimed a high-end cable was actually a standard product by Belden or someone, and that the only difference was the sales tag.I saw this and thought to myself that the person reporting this information might have an axe to grind. But maybe not. The other side might have had an agenda, who knows. It just all seems to get way out of hand on something like that. This is especially true on the site where the "discussion" broke out, since one of its main goals is to promote controversy in order to increase traffic. If you watch the Jerry Springer show, you expect to see fights. And you kind of know that most of them are made up fights, pure fiction with

play-actor participants.But setting aside the controversy and reasons for it to be generated, the matter is really limited to a discussion about the merits of specific cables. I see this as sort of like talking about bolts. We can talk yield and tensile strength, corrosion resistance, etc. There are some things to consider when choosing a fastener, just like there are some things to look at when picking the right cable. But once a cables discussion starts getting weird, I tend to tune it out. It's definitely a "get a life" topic in my eyes, once we get past the (relatively simple and easy to describe) physical characteristics.