Subject: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by mixinlady on Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:38:46 GMT
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Have you ever had a home theater system ruined by a hungry pet that chewed through the wires, an inquisitive child who pushed too many buttons, or a clumsy house guest who spilled expensive wine on an even-more-expensive sound setup? Share your horror stories here!

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 13 Dec 2011 22:32:41 GMT
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I've been very lucky with my children and my pets. They know I'm pretty careful with my sound system equipment and with my cars, so they don't mess with them. Maybe it helps that my speakers have horns instead of cones with delicate voice coil covers. Those seem to be finger magnets for kids.

But I do have two stories, probably mostly the kinds DIYers might relate with.

I didn't totally avoid the voice coil cover poke-in dilemma. The drivers I use have pretty tough voice coil caps, but they aren't completely immune to damage, of course. One time, I had a JBL 2226 with a damaged cone that I had reconed. Can't remember if it was from damage to the cone or to the cap, but I do remember that I took the speaker while the glue was still setting. Normally, I would leave it overnight but this time, it just made sense to take it with me. I kept the speaker facing cone-up for the short drive back home, cone taped in place, glue tacky and drying. It arrived perfectly, and I set it in my office, again, face-up and closed the door so no cats would get in.

Evidently I trapped a cat in the room. And what's the most comfortable spot for the cat? Why of course! On top of the freshly coned speaker. Must have looked like a perfect little cat nest.

So when I realized the cat was missing, looked around a while and eventually looked last in my office, sure enough, there was the cat perched in the basket. Nice. The new cap was dented, glue had hair and no telling what all else. It was so great to take the speaker back the next day for a fresh recone, and get the razzing from the shop. Needless to say the speaker stayed overnight this time.

Next one is even funnier, at least to me. Only funny in hindsight, though, because when it happened I was mortified.

Some of my horns have dead air spaces and occasionally, I've opted to fill those spaces with expansion foam. When done properly, the foam makes the dead-air space more like a solid mass but adds very little weight. So it is great to drill a couple holes, fill with expansion foam, and then put a plug in the hole after the foam cures.

First time I did this, the expansion foam I used gave an estimated expansion volume, which I use

to calculate how much to inject. I actually only went about half the calculated amount, thinking I would wait a while to allow for expansion and then add more as needed. I was sure this was a safe process, because I had tried some foam out in the open and saw how it expanded.

What I didn't consider is that the foam does not flow and fill a void, nor does it expand homogenously. It appears to - out in the open - but when it comes in contact with a boundary, it tends to apply pressure to the panel right away rather than expanding to fill the void. Even when the volume is only half full, it can apply enough pressure to burst a container at the points of contact. You can bulge the sides even when the box is only half full. So much to my dismay, I watched an expensive horn swell long before the foam filled the cavity. It ruined the cabinet.

I realized that this stuff doesn't really flow - it sticks and swells immediately. It isn't safe unless it is applied in a lot of places, filling the cavity a little at a time. You can't expect it to flow much at all, and you have to apply it in many small areas instead.

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by NoWomanNoCry on Tue, 03 Jan 2012 18:38:16 GMT
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Back in the 80s I had some speakers used as a scratching post. More recently, my 4 year old niece carved her first initial into my 52 inch plasma TV. It was not covered by the warranty but fortunately several months later the TV started having serious issues with burning and they had to replace the whole screen.

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by Wayne Parham on Tue, 03 Jan 2012 19:43:49 GMT
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Wow, what a lucky warranty deal. Yeah, cats do like to make speaker grilles into their own personal scratch posts. I love cats and all, but a cat that uses my speaker grille as a scratch post gets used for target practice. They find that out real quick, usually by a much less violent method like a squirt bottle.

So I gotta ask. What does your moniker mean?

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by gofar99 on Wed, 04 Jan 2012 16:19:42 GMT
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Hi All, not my personal experience, but way back there was a funny story in a magazine, Stereophile I believe. The tester had a problem with his cats doing exactly what they do best, use speakers as scratching posts. He also tried to keep them out of his listening room. One day one of the cats got in without him knowing. He was in the process of setting up a test and had accidentally connected an FM tuner to a live input on the preamp (that went to powered up amps and eventually to the speaker). As luck would have it the tuner was not on a channel and only inter-station hiss was there. All this took place when the cat was about to paw the grill cloth on the test speaker. Luck also would have it that the level of sound (hiss) produced was about 100 watts. At the instant of paw contact, the speaker exploded with sound. The cat clearly thought that there was a huge mean cat inside the speaker and ran for cover. The cat never went after a speaker again.

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 04 Jan 2012 20:20:20 GMT
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Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by Nymeria on Fri, 06 Jan 2012 18:16:28 GMT
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gofar99 wrote on Wed, 04 January 2012 10:19Hi All, not my personal experience, but way back there was a funny story in a magazine, Stereophile I believe. The tester had a problem with his cats doing exactly what they do best, use speakers as scratching posts. He also tried to keep them out of his listening room. One day one of the cats got in without him knowing. He was in the process of setting up a test and had accidentally connected an FM tuner to a live input on the preamp (that went to powered up amps and eventually to the speaker). As luck would have it the tuner was not on a channel and only inter-station hiss was there. All this took place when the cat was about to paw the grill cloth on the test speaker. Luck also would have it that the level of sound (hiss) produced was about 100 watts. At the instant of paw contact, the speaker exploded with sound. The cat clearly thought that there was a huge mean cat inside the speaker and ran for cover. The cat never went after a speaker again.

Hahahahaha! Now I know how to save my speaker grilles! The trickiest part would be lying in wait for the cat; she tends to do it at night when I'm in bed.

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by Drury on Sat, 07 Jan 2012 09:31:32 GMT
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gofar99 wrote on Wed, 04 January 2012 10:19Hi All, not my personal experience, but way back

there was a funny story in a magazine, Stereophile I believe. The tester had a problem with his cats doing exactly what they do best, use speakers as scratching posts. He also tried to keep them out of his listening room. One day one of the cats got in without him knowing. He was in the process of setting up a test and had accidentally connected an FM tuner to a live input on the preamp (that went to powered up amps and eventually to the speaker). As luck would have it the tuner was not on a channel and only inter-station hiss was there. All this took place when the cat was about to paw the grill cloth on the test speaker. Luck also would have it that the level of sound (hiss) produced was about 100 watts. At the instant of paw contact, the speaker exploded with sound. The cat clearly thought that there was a huge mean cat inside the speaker and ran for cover. The cat never went after a speaker again.

This is the funniest story I have read for a long time. It's even better that the entire thing was set up accidentally. The damage cats do is one good reason not to keep them as pets, but dogs can be troublesome too, in different ways.

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by gofar99 on Sun, 08 Jan 2012 01:18:37 GMT
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Hi, I'm glad everyone is getting a few laughs out of it. I have three black cats and surprisingly they are well behaved. The previous cats (one Siamese and a common short hair) used to claim my sub woofers. Fortunately the driver was about 16 inches off the floor and the vent took the brunt of the attacks.

Subject: Re: Ruined system horror stories
Posted by The Wiz on Fri, 02 Mar 2012 02:23:47 GMT
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Wayne Parham wrote on Tue, 03 January 2012 13:43
Wow, what a lucky warranty deal. Yeah, cats do like to make speaker grilles into their own personal scratch posts. I love cats and all, but a cat that uses my speaker grille as a scratch post gets used for target practice. They find that out real quick, usually by a much less violent method like a squirt bottle.

So I gotta ask. What does your moniker mean?

You're pretty nice to use a squirt bottle. My dad used to throw whatever was around at an unruly cat. I can recall the television remote being one of the more common items used.

Just like Gofar99, we have three cats at the moment. Two of them aren't too bad, but one gets into everything. So far I haven't had any really crazy problems, she just chews up a wire once in a while. We do our best to keep them away from everything, so far we've been pretty lucky.
