Subject: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by FredT on Wed, 05 Jul 2006 11:36:01 GMT
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Northcreek Music has announced that they will discontinue their DIY division on Sept 30. That's too bad, because their products offered good value for the money. Their Zen caps sound much smoother to me than Solens and they sell for about half the price of a comparable value Sonicap. But the world is changing and I'm sure we'll see other changes in the DIY supplier market in the coming months and years.One thing I find especially interesting about this change is the content of George Short's lengthy message about the reasons for discontinuing DIY sales. Of course a major factor is the increasing material costs and the shrinking of the DIY market, but all this is economics 101.For an interesting discussion, what do you guys think about "rubber chickens"?
George's Statement

Subject: Re: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 05 Jul 2006 13:42:57 GMT
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I don't agree that the DIY market is shrinking. I think it's at an all time high, mostly because of the internet. But one thing about DIY is the amount of support is unusually high, so there's a high labor cost in comparison to sales. That's probably the biggest thing that made them decide to leave the DIY market. They mentioned competition as being one of the reasons for their decision too, and that sort of implies that the DIY market is actually growing.As to the comments about "rubber chickens and the mis-information superhighway", I couldn't agree more. But what the writer suggests is the cause is only half right, in my opinion. The whole loudspeaker industry has long suffered from "rubber chickens", most because it is fairly low-tech. I'm not talking about the physics of the matter but rather the construction of the machine itself. It's a simple machine, really, and a working model can be built by almost anyone. It won't throw a rod or catch fire if done improperly. Worst thing it will do is burn a speaker coil or sound bad. So this tends to invite all sorts of types as manufacturers, with varying levels and abilities. This isn't limited to DIY - Look around at the commercial products that have been sold over the years and you'll see what I mean.

Subject: Re: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by Martin on Wed, 05 Jul 2006 20:51:03 GMT
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I read George's long winded explanation of why he is going out of the DIY business. He seemed to be blaming everybody but himself, if his sales are falling off or remaining flat he needs to boost interest not complain about the competition.I think his discussion of "rubber chickens" was both

arrogant and amusing. Since by his definition I am probably a "rubber chicken" it is somewhat amusing since some of the most uninformed and downright technically incompetent people I have met and discussed audio with are people in the industry itself (and of course the people on AA). If you only rely on printed texts and journal articles in this day and age you are going to be way behind the current latest technology, the Internet has changed the way information (both good and bad) is distributed and you need to adapt. My personal opinion is technical society publication is going to become the tool of only the academics and ont the engineers, not much applicable output. At the one DIY gathering I went to a few years ago, I was really impresswd with the technical knowledge, dedication, and efforts made at producing some very fine speaker systems (I guess those people are some of his competition and also "rubber chickens"). I lost a lot of respect for George Short after reading his reasons. Why not just state that the economics are not there for his DIY line and move on. If he has not succeeded the reason looks back at him every morning in the mirror. Bottom line is that there are many thriving businesses, just like his, and he could not compete.Not trying to be harsh but that is my opinion and reaction,Martin

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Subject: What About DEQX
Posted by FredT on Wed, 05 Jul 2006 21:15:52 GMT
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I also take issue with his comments about DEQX: "active crossovers generally do not sound that good above 200 Hz and digital equalizers do not sound that good ever". Does this mean the Linkwitz Orion is a lemon, and Jim's line arrays at the GPAF didn't sound as good as Linda and I thought they did?

Subject: Re: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 05 Jul 2006 22:21:56 GMT
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I had the same thoughts. Some of the biggest "rubber chickens" are industry members, some even with advanced degrees. There are egos involved and it isn't a matter of technical incompetence (or maybe I should say, isn't just a matter of technical incompetence) but also an effort to introduce "spin" to push their ideas, and ultimately, their products or services.But I do agree that there is a lot of rubbish spouted about on the internet, and that audio is one of the worst-case subjects for pseudio-science jibberish. And you have to admit that there are some laymen that are adamant about the most errant nonsense. They can get pretty argumentative, and some even proudly boast about their lack of technical abilities, as if to equate "ignorance" with "open-mindedness". It can get pretty frustrating when a person attacks you almost violently with an "Earth is flat" argument, as I know you well know.Still, I'm not sure which is worse - The arrogant layman that can't even spell "acoustics" or the charlatan industry member selling half-truths. One in particular I know of proudly boasts that he is a "myth buster" when he himself pushes more myths upon the industry than anyone else I know. Gotta laugh at that!

Subject: Re: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by Martin on Wed, 05 Jul 2006 22:38:24 GMT
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"And you have to admit that there are some laymen that are adamant about the most errant nonsense. They can get pretty argumentative, and some even proudly boast about their lack of technical abilities, as if to equate "ignorance" with "open-mindedness". It can get pretty frustrating when a person attacks you almost violently with an "Earth is flat" argument, as I know you well know."Everything you say is in agreement with what I feel, although I try not to get sucked into arguements any more. I state my case and leave it at that, I'll answer questions but no way will I debate foolishness with a fool. I just don't care anymore about winning useless arguements. Lots of strong opinions, both right and wrong, every place you look.The Internet is an amazing source of information, again both right and wrong. I find that the immediate exchange of info and the ability to interact with people all over the world makes up for some of the bad experiences. You just need to think about what you are reading and question its validity.I have had internet friends submit articles on TL's to the AES and they have been rejected. I have read several reviewer's comments and reasoning for not accepting the article and in my opinion the reviewers had no business saying anything, they were completely incompetent and strongly biased. On the other hand, I have seen totally useless papers published in technical journals by coworkers (with their bosses and other managers as coauthors of course) which add no value to the engineering community and are basically self promoting or just advertisements for the company. So in my opinion "rubber chickens" represent a certain percentage of any group and having something in or rejected by a journal is not the final measure of its worth. George has set very snobbish and restrictive boundaries about where he will accept information.

Subject: Re: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 05 Jul 2006 22:44:15 GMT
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Yes, I agree with you. As you know, your input is always welcome here. Maybe it's being snobbish back, but you can disregard journal reviewers by remembering that you're a "real" engineer.

Subject: Re: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by Martin on Thu, 06 Jul 2006 00:34:00 GMT
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Thanks for the positive feedback and support.New Stuff on my site :www.quarter-wave.com/Project07/Project07.htmlwww.quarter-wave.com/General/Stand_Mount.pdfMartin

Subject: Re: What About DEQX
Posted by Jim Griffin on Thu, 06 Jul 2006 12:37:20 GMT
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Fred,I'm with you on George's comments on the DEQX. In one case he is reporting what a customer stated to him so it is not as a first hand user. Dennis Murphy--he is the talented classical music trained crossover designer who posts on the Madisound board and who is a full-time economist--has worked with Jim Salk on many of his designs and states that the benefit of DEQX is that a competent user can equal the best passive crossover in a matter of minutes vs. a passive crossover which would consume much more time (think weeks, months, etc.) to design, build, and tweak. The user does need to understand some core values for loudspeaker design and to be able to make decent measurements. My point is that one can not just use any random combination of drivers and shoddy measurements and expect the DEQX machine to derive a quality speaker. Bottom line I can say that digital processing will continue to make high dollar component passive crossovers obsolete. Passive crossovers vs. digital ones are analogous to film cameras in a digital photography world.Jim

Subject: Re: Northcreek to Discontinue DIY Sales
Posted by SteveBrown on Fri, 07 Jul 2006 09:11:26 GMT
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Well, I'm not even qualified to be a rubber chicken, but I am someone who has ordered from NC before but does not do so now. A lot has to do with ease of ordering, frankly. Those who have easy shopping are usually the first on my list. Secondly, as a DIY consumer I like to shop where I can get the bulk of my stuff in one shot, and places where there is a variety to choose from. None of this is true for NC. Though don't get me wrong, I do like the products they carry, but I'm more into high efficency and designs not all dependent upon MDF, and it seems like that's the niche that NC caters to. Personally, I hope DIY is far from dead, I suspect it has just relocated where it shops. By the way, if anyone from Parts Connection is reading this, good - I really like the range of parts, but shopping there is a big pain in the butt. Make it easier! Thanks!

Subject: Re: What About DEQX
Posted by harry4265 on Sat, 15 Jul 2006 10:03:36 GMT
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nope they are rubbish

Subject: Re: What About DEQX

Posted by FredT on Sat, 15 Jul 2006 13:55:20 GMT
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I'm not sure which impresses me more, the completeness or the credibility of your insightful statement. Keep up the good work. You'll go far.