

The Cable Guy

Meet Audio Envy's Captain Payne



Captain Payne

BY DAVID THOMSON

MOVE OVER JIM Carrey, there's a new audio cable guy out there who will happily hook you up at a value so affordable that it would be sacrilegious to your music, never mind downright disrespectful to your components, if you didn't check him out... and you can, FREE!

Meet Captain Payne, the creator of Audio Envy, who has many competitors feeling just that — envy of the quality and accuracy of his line of stereo speaker cables, interconnects, and power chords which improve upon similar products costing as much as 20 times more.

Audio cables are the red-headed stepchild of audio. The perception is that wire can't improve the sound that much tho,' that's changing thanks to qualified, experienced audio

engineers like Payne who have proven that there is value in test driving a cable upgrade before replacing components. "But beware," Captain warned, "There's a ton of nonsense out there,"

"For example, Rhodium is a recent conductor plating fad that is less conductive than gold, costs less money to produce yet, it is billed at a premium with an expectation of greater performance. And, you may have heard that audiophiles can't tell the difference between a coat hanger and Monster speaker wire. "Cynics cling to this urban legend with no scientific merit then believe that it's true."

Well, I'll tell you one thing, the comparison between my two grand, 2" pipes versus Audio Envy's \$280, NV-SP5 speaker cables stunned me. Straight out of the packaging—no running in time—the detail across the spec-

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trum from highs to bass flooded me. The Beatles' opening information on "Come Together" or, Zappa's "Inca Roads" — tracks I thought I knew backwards — revealed detail and depth that I'd never heard before.

All the while I'd been concentrating on upgrades to my Oracle Turntable or, procuring Joule Electra electronics or a Lyra Titan i cartridge. (I'm still happy with my Manley 300B mono-blocks and my Spendor SP9/1s).

Meanwhile, I'd been robbing myself by "blindly" believing that my well respected, name brand speaker cables were beyond reproach.

Captain continued, "Cables must come first. Why so many begin their audio system investment with the electronics while accepting inferior cables that reveal little of the plethora of information the components are capable of delivering amazes me."

We postpone their procure-

ment as Captain says, "and forsake an improved experience that is both audible and measurable. Rewiring your speakers can make you think twice about replacing them."

That was my experience; 20 years of thinking that because my speaker cables cost a couple of thousand that they were revealing all of the music. Little did I know that I was sacrificing definition and detail for the seduction of warm, loose sound.

"That romantic sound, as I

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refer to it," said Captain, "slurs the Transient Response. The faster the transient response the more the recorded information is revealed." In my case, the NV-SP5s also made my system sound much more musical.

More misconceptions and myths include the idea that electricity travels at the speed of light. Electricity travels at the speed of which the medium allows. A typical coax cable is about 60% the speed of light, up to a raw conductor tested in vacuum laboratory conditions at 90%, Velocity of Propagation is the term. Audio Envy's wiring measures in the high 80s!

Anyway, that's enough technogeekspeak. We are RCN, not Scientific American. Here, we want to keep it simple and impart the information that will reveal the importance of good wiring. You can certainly google for more info.

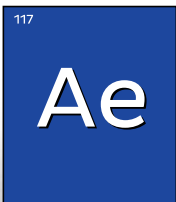
Plus, just like everything electronic, technological evolution has been incredible since I first bought those well-respected speaker cables, I just didn't know how incredible—until I was exposed to Audio Envy.

Captain continued, "With improvements in transient

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response, the music gets delivered faster with benefits of a smoother and wider dynamic range. It has taken Audio Envy 10 years of small yet discernible developments that came together to maximize signal potential. The end result in my review system was earth-shattering!" (Does this give a new definition to breaking the sound barrier?)

Quality of materials and meticulous construction are

the essence of it all. A 500-foot spool of wire takes 1-2 weeks to construct. Several Audio Envy connectors are hand dipped in 24-carat gold: All this happens in their headquarters in Fort Collins, Colorado.

"Transient response and resolution go hand in hand. The sooner consumers and music makers take advantage of Audio Envy's technology, the sooner cable debates and resolution arguments will be a whisper of the past!"

Also, what it's about really, is minimizing distortion — in all its ugly waveforms. Obviously, the cleaner the signal, the less noise and the more we get to hear. And, as mp3s on mediocre standard issue earbuds are the norm, think of, musically, what we're missing today. It's like when we went from listening to the dynamic range of the LP to accepting the laughable fidelity of cassette tape on a Walkman. Sorry kids, mea culpa. it's now in your DNA.

Yet there's hope. We all hear,

Quality of materials and meticulous construction are the essence of it all. A 500-foot spool of wire takes 1-2 weeks to construct.

and respond to stereo systems, differently. At the recent, inaugural, Los Angeles Audio Show I asked some of the high-end cable manufacturers exhibiting there, "What's the deal with this audio invader securing the first "Alfie," the LASS Best of Show award? How can cables costing a few hundred bucks compare sonically to a much heftier—not only in girth but wallet damage—and more recognizable, respected brands?

"Perceived value," was the consensus. "When you spend a hundred thousand dollars on your audio system, do you really fuss over 10% of your budget being spent on cables? In fact, many want to boast that their interconnects cost bla-bla-bla." (Fess-up time: I used to joke with friends that, "...my cables cost more than your car!")

As was mentioned in last issue's LASS editorial coverage, kudos to the Natural Sound salon for giving the opportunity Captain to walk the talk and allow him to swap out the recognized power chords for his Audio Envy Ocean Elite. Then, after noticing palpable sonic improvement, replacing the speaker cables costing almost 20 times more than the Audio Envy NV-SP5 pair—which are still coupled with them today.

"I'm not selling a theory," Captain concluded, "I'm selling results."

You can test for yourself, audition an Audio Envy cable, risk free, for 40 days! Visit audioenvy.com or call: 970-672-9511.

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