



**A STEREOMOJO EXCLUSIVE
WORLD'S FIRST REVIEW**



**PS AUDIO PERFECT WAVE TRASPOT
PS AUDIO PERFECT WAVE DAC**

by
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The PS audio Perfect Wave Transport and Perfect Wave DAC is easily the most anticipated product of 2009 and it has just been given its final update in the last hour and is ready for release to the public. Both products have been undergoing intense beta testing for several weeks to iron out the final kinks in its rather complex operating system. Several people were chosen to be beta testers who agreed to not tell anyone about it. I can now reveal that I was one of the chosen few. While the operating system is very advanced, one of the primary goals of the production team was to make the operation of it simple, seamless and very intuitive. So simple, that the average user might not even need to crack the manual to use the colorful graphical user interfaces or GUI. Did they accomplish that and ultimately, how good does the innovative system sound?

There are a couple of key words when describing the Perfect Wave System; “perfect” and “yet”. Perfect is a word used often by the company in describing these units. Usually I try to limit such hyperbole in reviews since many things in this world are described as perfect yet are not. Remember, CD was touted as “Perfect sound forever”. We now know neither is true. However, it seems as if the word “perfect” may be closer to fact than just marketing hype in this case in its limited context, so I allowed it. See what you think. “Yet” is another word you will read more than once. You will see why.

Here is what PS Audio CEO Paul McGowan says about the genesis of the system:

“The system’s philosophical beginnings centered on a somewhat radical concept: that we could create a high-end delivery digital audio system that transcended the performance issues of storage, media type and data delivery. We reasoned that all digital audio data should provide the same level of performance regardless of whether it was stored on optical discs, hard drives, solid state memory or even over the internet. After all, “bits-is bits”. But we knew that bits-aren’t-bits because they sounded differently’ CD’s sounded different than the same recording burned to a hard drive or streamed over the internet. We knew that from a theoretical standpoint this shouldn’t be and set out to design a system that transcended these limitations.

We first experimented with modified PC motherboards and output cards to extract and manage data from both a hard drive and ROM drive. These experiments quickly convinced us that no PC equipment could be used as their environments were too noisy and the peripherals measured well but relied on massive data manipulation and sample rate conversion to achieve low jitter. Had we stayed the course with using computer parts placed in a nice high-end audio chassis, we could have been to market a year earlier and competed with those manufacturers that have chosen this route. But our goals were loftier than this and we trudged onward from the ground up with a custom solution. No computer parts were used in the building of this remarkable system”.



THE PERFECT WAVE TRANSPORT

The Perfect Wave Transport or TWP is what is called a memory player. When a disk is inserted, it is almost immediately scanned, then the digital data which has just been read is compared to the data of the original disk and scanned again (and again and again) if necessary until the data coming from the disk is bit-for-bit perfect, every 1 and 0 being sent forward matching perfectly with no errors. If you have ever used the PC program Exact Audio Copy, you know what I mean. It does the “exact” same thing when ripping CD’s. Traditional disk players do not do that. The data is read from the disk then is software corrected on the fly. The software guesses what the correct data should be and inserts it, then the data is converted from digital to analog. The PWT does not send the data directly to the DAC though. It instead sends it to a 64 meg solid-state memory buffer that has no moving parts. Only then is it sent to the DAC - perfect data played from jitterless, noiseless memory. You never listen to the disk directly.

This is easily demonstrated by ejecting the disk while the PWT is playing. Amazingly, the music continues to play as the disk sits motionless in the drawer or even in your hand. I experienced CD playback of over a minute with the disk completely removed. Higher bitrates with more data play for a shorter time.

Higher bitrates you say? Yes! The PWT and PWD will play bitrates up to an astounding 24 bit 192 kHz! We’re not talking upsampling, we’re talking native playback, though several upsampling options are available as well which we will discuss in a moment. For example, Reference Recordings has a series called HRX that is issued on DVD containing lossless WAV files at 24/176.4, bit-for-bit copies of the original digital master recording. Of course, for their CD’s, like all companies they had to downsample those masters to Redbook’s measly 16/44.1, but not HRX. Previously, one had to put the disk in his computer and transfer the massive files to hard disk, then play them back through a very expensive DAC, usually \$5,000 or more. With the Perfect Wave system, I simply put the HRX disc into the PWT’s drawer, pressed the play icon on the gorgeous built-in touch screen and Voilà; master tape quality in my room, read perfectly into memory and played back with no hard disk artifacts. Audio just does not get any better than that, including (yes) vinyl.

I thought that there would be a significant delay between the time a disk is inserted, read and re-read and streamed to memory, but I was wrong. It takes no longer for the PWT to read a disk's table of contents and be ready for play than a regular player. Extremely fast processors and efficient programming are the stars here. Speaking of fast, if you have any other advance computer based products like BluRay, Tivo, Xbox to name a few, you know they take forever to boot up. Not these. Start 'em up and you see "initializing" on screen and about 5 seconds later you're ready to rumble. Don't you wish your PC did that? And don't you wish your monitor adjusted its brightness to room lighting? These do. Brighter in bright light, dimmer as it gets darker. Of course, you can turn them off completely if you wish. Hallelujah!

Of course, if you want to see your CD's track names and album art, you may not want to turn them off. If you hook the PWT up to Ethernet, it retrieves that info from the 'net. By the way, if you have ever purchased a product that claimed to do that, you probably drove yourself crazy trying to get it connect to your network and ended up waiting on hold for a hour to talk to someone at technical support. I know I have. In this case, I plugged the cable from my router into the back of the PWT and a few seconds later I was connected. Perfectly. That alone goes to show the pains to which the team at PS Audio went to make the system user friendly. I think PS Audio has shown that easy operation is attainable with enough time, work and caring about their end users. Are you listening Microsoft?

There's another little perk for connected, registered users - your own personal webpage where your playlists are stored. Each time you play a disk, its info (not the music itself though) is sent to your page and stored there along with other interesting tidbits. Like most of the features of the system, that will be developed more. This system is still a work in progress.

But user updates have been made easy, too. Around back of both boxes there is an SD memory card slot with standard SD memory card. Many people think this is where disk data is stored, but that is incorrect. The little card holds the firmware data so that updates are easily accomplished. No CD burning needed. It would be nice if updates were downloading via the internet connection we just mentioned, but since not everyone will be connected, the SD card is the next best way.

Speaking of connections, there are more than you are likely to need and varied enough to work for anyone. There are four type of connection to the PWT, or any other DAC. Yes, the two pieces are designed to be used together, but each can be used separately.

FOUR OUTPUT OPTIONS

I²S (I squared S) This uses an HDMI cable but is NOT standard HDMI, it must go into a PS Audio approved type such as the PWT. According to the company, this is the best performance option. The PWT uses an asynchronous clock that is completely divorced from pulling data off the optical disk when using I²S. Normal clocks float with the disk's output and can introduce artifacts. I²S is the native format of data transfer consisting of four streams of data. Normal S/PDIF truncates the native I²S data into one stream before separating them again into 4 for final playback. The I²S eliminates that completely. Can output data up to 24/192.

The next best option is S/PDIF via balanced XLR. Also capable of 24/192

Third best is standard coaxial via RCA - 24/192 as well

Bottom of the barrel is optical. This output is limited to 24/96.

PERFECTION HAS ITS LIMITS

As enthusiastic as we are about this system, we are not salesmen; we are advisors. The difference is that a salesman will tell you about all the exciting features of their, say, refrigerator, but they won't reveal that half of them have been delivered dead on arrival with a bad motor. An advisor is supposed to work in your best interest, so he informs you of the strengths and weaknesses of everything.

While the PWT has a lot of "perfection" built into it, it is definitely not omniscient. It is not a universal player. It does not do any video at all. It does not play SACD - yet. It does not play DVD-Audio disks -yet. This may seem odd since DVD audio can be output via normal data outputs and fed into a DAC. If you hook a universal player up to the PW DAC, find the right tracks on the disk and press play, the DCA will play them, um, perfectly. However, the PW Transport will not read them. The issue right now is that the GUI does not have a way to open folders and DVD-Audio disk contain lots of them. The Reference Recording HRX DVD's do not contain folders. Same with some of Chesky's. There are many things that Paul McGowan and his team are working on for future features and DVD-Audio is one of them, but not yet.

Another current limitation is that the PWT only reads WAV files. No MP3's, AIFF or ACC. No Apple lossless, either. Just WAV's. However, the biggest frustration for those who want to listen to high resolution audio files is that the PWT also does not read WMA or FLAC files. Why? Because almost all providers of downloadable high-res content use either the smaller but still lossless FLAC or WMA format. That means that one must convert those files into WAV format to burn to blank DVD's for the PWT to recognize.

Also, as of the original release, the DVD must be burned using the UDF 2.0 system. This is not an issue with Mac's because they that format as standard, but PC's do not. Burn a DVD using any other format and you have yourself a coaster. Thankfully, the PWT will play either DVD (plus) or (minus) rewritable media, so you can avoid the coaster syndrome.

Early on there was a lot of DVD coaster making until I posted this:

"I have found the best, cheapest and most reliable way to make WAV files from hirez flac files is to download the latest AUDACITY program. It's free. Simply drop your flac (or anything else) onto the app's icon. The program will open and you will see the flac being converted. I have used 192 bitrate with no problem. The bitrate shows in the lower left corner.

On the MAC, go to FILE/Export. W window comes up with the metadata. Click ok. Now you get a Save dialogue window. Select "other uncompressed files". To the right then, click "options". You get "select uncompressed options" window. For "Header", select WAV (Microsoft). For Encoding select Signed 24 bit PCM. hit OK. You see the "save" dialogue box. Change the "save as" name and "Where" if you wish, then click save. You will see your new WAV file.



Simply put in a blank DVD, drop the new WAV files onto its icon on the desktop (or open the disk), click "burn", wait until its ready and pop it in the PWT. I used DVD-R, DVD+R and even (surprise) DVD + and - RW! Didn't think the PWT would read re-writable DVD's, but it does. Everything played perfectly. There is also an AUDACITY for Windows, but I did not try that.

The program Toast for Mac also works and coverts flac files as well as others. But it costs \$\$\$".

That seemed to help everybody and it was nice to have something nice said about me on an audio forum...

After I had played around with making High Res DVD's, another thought occurred to me. I sometimes like to make my own disks with a variety of cuts on them instead of listening to 80 minutes of the same artist no matter how good they are. So I later posted this:

Don't know if anyone has thought of this, but after making DVD's with AUDACITY by dropping hirez WAV files, I thought, "What the heck...I wonder if regular 16/44.1 WAV files will play from a DVD or DVD-RW."

So I stuck a blank DVD-RW into my IMAC G5, sorted the Itunes library by "kind" so all the WAV files were together. I selected a variety of tracks one at a time and did a "show in finder". Then I just dragged the WAV files to the DVD on the desktop. Of course, a DVD holds 4.6 gigs rather than the lowly CD's 800 meg or so, so you can have one disk with many more tunes on it. Not only more tunes, but you can make your own "various artists" disk or your favorite demo tracks or review references. All female vocals, all jazz, or a mix of all genres like I did.

But would it play? Yes...it's playing as I type this. Can't wait for it to get dark so I can sit back, relax and enjoy a variety show of great music. And if I want, I can erase the disk and make another later.

It did get dark and I did listen to that disk for a couple of hours before I had to turn on the tv for one of Linda's favorite shows. I can't wait to make more.

Of course, another problem is that high res audio is still in its infancy. There are very few sources besides the aforementioned Reference Recordings and Chesky, and even those two only have a handful of titles available so far. One of the better sites is Linnrecords.com that lists about 100 titles in 24/88 format or better, up to 24/192. These are mostly classical releases and most of them are from the Linn catalogue, though there are a few from other labels as well. They have many more titles in MP3 320 bit and CD quality for download. Their CD's are also HDCD encoded for added quality. And no, the PWT does not do HDCD - yet. I'm going to lobby hard for that.

Then there is also MusicGiants. They have the best selection from many labels in all genres by artists you know and love. Not all of them are better than CD quality though and you really can't tell for sure what bitrates their high res downloads are. The site is also for PC users only. Mac users can go take a hike. Most of their selections contain Digital Rights Management which limits how you can use them and back them up or transfer between devices. That issue really comes to bear when you find out that MusicGiants recently declared bankruptcy, even though they continue to operate for now. There were major issues with their business plan, none less than the dependence mostly on one major investor who could, and did, disappear at any time. I've been told that it cost upwards of forty million dollars to launch the company. The really insane part is that, so I am told, a license to distribute just one release on the site could cost up to \$50,000! How many tracks from that one title must they download just to break even?

A new site is naimlabel.com which does have a limited selection of downloads in WAV format. Of course, their selection is limited to artists that record for Naim, so no Alison Krauss or The Beatles.

Of course, when CD's were first released, selection was even more limited at first than hi-res is now, and we all know what happened there. Do the masses really care about ultimate sound quality? Will high resolution audio ever take off? That's for another article, but remember that the PWT and

PWD also play those standard resolution disks we call cee-dee and are almost future proof by way of their updatable firmware.

There's another rather negative factor concerning high-res audio. It's expensive. The reference Recording HRX discs, as incredible as they are, cost about \$45 each. Linn charges up to \$30 to download a whole album of "Studio Master" FLACs. Of course, you can easily pay \$19 for a CD at your local store.



THE PERFECT WAVE DAC

The PWD looks almost identical to the PWT except that the screen displays different items and there is no disk drawer. Both boxes, I should mention, feature a top panel insert of piano-black, high-gloss wood adding a touch of elegance. The rest of the fit and finish is impeccable, a fact demonstrated to me when I needed to open them up. If you have ever taken the case off of anything that is secured by several tiny screws, especially formed sheet metal, you know that lining the little holes back up for reassembly is usually a nightmare. There's always at least one or two that are the dickens to get the screws to fit. Not only were the wires and components inside the cases pristine (dare we say "perfect"?), those tiny holes lined up precisely making reassembly a snap. Sometimes the little things are the most impressive.

THE PWD accepts all the digital outs from the transport of course, but adds USB if you have to use it. All inputs, including USB, are capable of accepting high-definition digital audio signals. The USB and TOSLINK are capable of accepting 96kHz, 24 bit audio and the other inputs are all capable of handling up to 192kHz 24 bit data. Again, the preferred connection is the I22. Note that no HDMI cable is included in either package. PS Audio says that better cables sound better and, of course, they have a couple you can buy for that purpose. Any 'old HDMI can be used "to get started". Same goes for the power cables for both boxes. You can upgrade if you wish.

You can connect one or all four inputs at the same time. For instance, you can connect the USB input to your computer and the coax input to your CD player. Then you can simply choose which one to listen to from the front panel touch screen (or the remote) that selects the input. The USB does not need a driver but it does need to install its own driver. If you are using USB, make sure both the computer and the PWD are connected and powered up. The computer should recognize the new hardware and self install the necessary drivers.

Here's an important and potentially money saving note: The PWD is designed to be used as a preamp you can plug directly into your power amp. It has a volume control accessed by the GUI or by the remote which controls both the transport and the DAC. Analog outs are both RCA and balanced XLR.

Inputs can be selected from a scrolling menu on the screen or directly from the remote. One nice feature is that you can name each input via the touch screen.

HERE, TAKE A SAMPLE

The PWD is a very sophisticated piece of work with many variations in how digits are played back. If you are playing a CD, you can upsample it to 24 bits and 48, 88.2, 96, 176 or even 192 kHz. Now. I have not said much about sound quality yet, but here's something interesting. I have had the opportunity to experiment with many digital players and DAC that offer upsampling. I have never



liked the sound of any upsampling on any of them. This was troubling. I thought something was wrong with my ears or at least my perception of upsampled sound. It just did not sound natural or as musical, but it should be better shouldn't it? After all, I video players that upsample video signals from say 720 to as high as 1080i and the upsampled video looked much better than the lower native version. So why not

audio? Most DAC's that feature upsampling do not give you the option of listening at the native 16/44 rate. The Benchmark that everyone is wild about is a good example. It upsamples everything to

24/96 with no 16/44 option. I was not as thrilled with it as other reviewers. Blessedly, with all the upsampling options with the PWD, it also plays back in native mode. I tried all the variants but always came back to native. I really tried to like them.

Imagine my relief and surprise when I read this in the PWD manual: “NATIVE is the original untouched sample rate as transferred from the digital source. Use this mode whenever you are using an I2S input, a high-resolution audio file or, as your listening experience would suggest. Many people feel that NATIVE is a cleaner and more natural presentation of audio that does not rely on the digital manipulation found in the sample rate converters”. I think I can reveal that many at PS AUDIO prefer native as well. So. There’s nothing wrong with me after all. Whew.

However, the choices of playback do not end there. There are also six different filters that are available for playback. I’ll let them explain them to you with this from the manual. It is rather long and technical, but it is an important feature set of the PWD. If you want to skip it for now, don’t feel bad. Just scroll past the BLUE TEXT:

“The PWD offers a wide assortment of digital filters. Digital filters are necessary and used in all modern DACS but few are as sophisticated as the ones in the PWD. The problems with any filter, whether it is analog or digital, are the effects they have on the passband (usable audio frequencies).

Filters leave several types of negative artifacts: group delay, phase and ripple errors. Some filters minimize phase and group delay errors while others minimize ripple errors. Each error is minimized at the expense of the other; thus, there is no such thing as a perfect filter and, as with many things in electronics, each is a tradeoff with good and bad points.

The PWD has two basic types of filters with several combinations of the two available. The two filter types are: Linear Phase and Minimum Phase as well as Recursive Non-Half Band (which is basically a combination of the first two). Within these two main filter types (Linear phase and Minimum) there are several variations to choose from on each filter, including Apodising and Soft Knee Filters.

From a user perspective, we recommend choosing whichever filter sounds the best to you without being overly concerned about understanding these extraordinarily complicated subjects. Our favorite on the PS system is Minimum Phase Apodising “MP Apod” on the touch screen.

A brief explanation of each filter type appears below.

Linear Phase and Minimum Phase filters

Linear phase filters have been widely used in DACS for over 20 years because they introduce no group- delay distortion, minimize post ringing and have a phase response that is the same for all frequencies but at the cost of pre-ringing. Conversely minimum phase filters have some group-delay distortion, some minimal phase shift with frequency but little pre-ringing.

Most DAC digital filter designs tend to focus on the frequency response and neglect the time domain response. However there is now an increasing interest in the effect that time-domain properties of these filters have on the perceived audio quality, thus the PWD offers a choice between 5 different filter types described in this section.

Generally speaking, linear phase filters are focused on maximizing the frequency domain while minimum phase filters are designed to maximize the time-domain performance.

Group delay is a time domain issue where different frequencies arrive slightly out of time with the other frequencies. A filter with no group delay (such as a linear filter) means that all frequencies arrive at the same time). The issue from an audibility standpoint is then how much group delay is audible and acceptable? Research has shown the ear is relatively insensitive to group delay distortion of several milliseconds for low frequencies (less than 1kHz) and insensitive to +/- 0.5ms over the 1-5kHz band. Other work shows that the sensitivity to group delay distortion falls after 4kHz and therefore group delay distortion in the upper regions of the audio band is much less audible. For a typical minimum phase filter designed for 44.1kHz the group delay distortion up to 10kHz is under 2 samples (less than 46µs) and may be inaudible. The minimum phase filters used in the PWD have group delay that we feel is inaudible.

Pre-ringing (or Pre-echo) is an interesting type of distortion. It is a type of additive distortion to the waveform that occurs before the actual event (sound) occurs and is a product of linear phase FIR digital filters. The ear appears to be very sensitive to this type of pre-echo because re-ringing rarely occurs naturally. As you can imagine it is very rare to hear the artifacts of the distortion before the originating sound reaches the listener. Apodising and slow roll off response The PWD offers both linear and minimum phase filter choices, along with a Recursive Non-Half Band type, which is a combination of both. Within each choice of linear and minimum phase filters the user has the ability to choose either Apodising or Soft Knee choices.

An Apodising filter is one that can be used to control the time smear of a whole recording and reproducing chain. This type of filter can reduce the pre- and post-ringing of the impulse response in both linear as well as a minimum phase filter choices. Soft Knee filters take advantage of the larger transition band to reduce the dispersion and delay through the filter. Instead of the classic "Brick wall" filter approach of cutting everything above the passband off very sharply, a soft knee filter does this in a gentler fashion, thus minimizing group delay problems.

Three of the filters (LP Apod, MP 1/2B, LP Soft) will have a slight high frequency roll off within the audio band (20kHz) when you are using 44.1kHz modes (Native and 44.1) and playing 44.1kHz material (CD's). We have included graphs of the frequency response of every filter for you to see. The audible effects of this roll off are minimal at best. The most extreme roll off in the series of filters is LP Apodising, which is - 0,2dB down at 19kHz and -3dB down at 20kHz. All 3 filters will display ruler flat frequency response to 20kHz, while playing 44.1kHz material if you increase the sample rate to a minimum of 48kHz although we do not believe this is necessary or warranted. While no Audiophile wants to hear that there is anything lost in the music, the facts are pretty clear: these small frequency deviations with different filters at the lower sample rates have very minimal impact on performance".

The filter choices

1. AUTO. This will automatically choose filter MP Soft for 44.1kHz and LP Soft for any higher sample rates. These are the choices we believe work best.
2. Filter 1 MP APOD. Minimum phase Apodising filter. Low pre-ringing, minimal group delay, minimized post ringing, good phase vs. frequency, sharper filter cutoff.
3. Filter 2 MP SOFT. Minimum phase soft knee filter. Low pre-ringing, minimal group delay, minimized post ringing, good phase vs. frequency, soft cutoff.
4. Filter 3 LP APOD. Linear phase Apodising filter. No group delay, perfect phase vs. frequency, minimal post ringing, some pre-ringing, sharper filter cutoff.
5. Filter 4 LP SOFT. Linear phase soft knee filter. No group delay, perfect phase vs. frequency, minimal post ringing, some pre-ringing, softer filter cutoff.
6. Filter 5 MP 1/2B. Minimum phase recursive Half Band symmetrical filter. Minimized pre and post ringing, good group delay, good phase vs. frequency response, sharp cutoff.

Told you it was technical. Unfortunately, the early manual I received did not give as much info as is represented above, especially the line, “While no Audiophile wants to hear that there is anything lost in the music, the facts are pretty clear: these small frequency deviations with different filters at the lower sample rates have very minimal impact on performance”. So I’m listening to CD after CD, ones I know well, and I am NOT hearing hardly any difference changing from filter to filter

which you can do from the remote on the fly. Once again, I thought there must be something wrong with me, or why would they go to the trouble and expense of putting them in here?!” When I later began to experiment with high resolution content, the filters did sound a bit different, but they were still more than a little subtle. I ended up doing exactly as they recommended and used the “AUTO” setting.



HOW'S THE SERVICE?

If you are looking for a music server, one that will play music from all your computers in every room, or one that will store all your CD's to an external hard drive, the Perfect Wave System is not it - and here's that keyword again - YET. The company will be releasing a bridge unit with those capabilities later this year. It will slip into the back of the PWD and connect to your network or external hard drive and even play internet radio. The info I have does not state that it will be able to rip your CD's to that hard drive. We'll wait and see. Just not...yet.

DON'T BUG ME

There is one acknowledged bug as of release date. It has to do with the end of the disc; if you play a track all the way to the end, then the PWT returns to the beginning track 1. If you press play at that point, the last track number is displayed before the correct track plays. They are working on it like mad but felt it was a minor annoyance not worthy of holding up production for those who are eagerly awaiting their units. It doesn't happen all the time with mine, it might not be a factor in the near future.

THE SOUND OF "PERFECTION"

We did not have normal timeframes in which to work with these products and many changes took place during that time that often changed the features and sometimes the sound itself. In short, CD playback simply stellar. Clean, clear, richly detailed with no sense of digital grunge or haze. I am referring to playback with the "native" setting. It is not overly bright and does a fine job with all the audiophile buzzwords like soundstage, dynamics and transparency. I think McGowan and team has probably reached very close to the zenith of standard Redbook playback. I have only had one component in my system that plays in the same league and that is the Ayon CD-2 CD player. It is a nearly \$6,000 tube player that does only one thing; play CD's. It will not play anything on DVD nor will it play anything beyond Redbook's 16/44.1, but it does sound a bit more musical to me, no doubt by virtue of its tubes, but some would say "that's coloration!", and they might be right. But there is more texture to instruments and vocals with the Ayon. By the way, it has the option to upsample to 24/96. I tried it. I don't use it.

As marvelous as CD playback is, it pales in comparison when you insert a DVD with high-res data files. The best I heard was easily the HRX discs from Reference Recordings played back in their native 24/176.4. They prove once and for all that CD's are not "perfect sound". I have always been a big fan of Professor Johnson's recordings both on LP and CD and now I like them even better. Simply everything is significantly better at the higher native bitrates. More detail, more air, more soundstage, more everything. But the real quality is the improved naturalness and musicality. It sounds as if the sound has at last been unleashed and unbridled and it could not be happier about it. It almost lives and breathes like there's another entity in the room. There is an essence that is indescribable that reaches you on an emotional level rather than an analytical one. You just don't want to sit there and evaluate and critique. You just want to listen. To me, going through individual tracks of reference material and pointing out how a banjo sounded more banjoey is pointless in this context. You just want to listen and let the music take you away.



The Perfect Wave Transport and Perfect Wave DAC as slightly limited as they are on the day

