

TEST:

HiDIAMOND HDX2



text and photo: Marko Pecotic, June 2015

manufactured by: HiDiamond S.R.L., Italy [www.hidiamond.eu]

price: approx 1.450,00 EUR

Is this the most complex hobby in the world? Or is it not? Audio components, room acoustics, room size, speaker placement, vibrations, spikes, various connectors... The recordings? They're a bitch, they are too much different. The listener's mood, weather conditions, humidity, air pressure, room temperature... All these things affect the sound. Did I forget to mention the current and voltage, power cables, plugs, fuses...

So. A Hi-Fi system needs electricity if you want to play some music. How wise and profound is that, right? Electricity as such should be of the highest quality, ie. as clean as possible, ie. the voltage should be as close to 230V (without any ups and downs).

There's an opinion (with which I, in general, agree with) that goes something like this: if an audio component has a built-in good power supply, it will not need any external additional filter. There are also audio components that are completely immune to power cables, filters or conditioners. There are also rooms (buildings, neighbourhoods etc) in which the electricity is so bad that no audiophile power cable will improve the sound.

So, all these power devices can - in general – work in three ways: they can actually work, there can be absolutely no sound difference in sound and they can fu*k up the sound.

Electrical pollution?

Life without electricity is unimaginable. Or not? African kids barefoot and naked are running around the bush hunting lions, they have no electricity, they've never heard of the World Wide Web, but they have a smile on their faces. Maybe they are happier and more fulfilled than we are. We are nothing but slaves of a certain way of life, among many other things, we are addicted to electricity. We are bla-bla-bla 24/7 on our cellphones, we're staring at our monitors and TV's... And the sweetest thing in the world is to eat Nutella with a big spoon – of course, in front of the TV. And fu*k, our bodies are like computers with a built-in long term memory, and sooner or later our body will fight back with various consequences: the stress of the endocrine and nervous system, headaches, weight problems, spine problems and so on.

Cities are spreading, cities are overcrowded, the electrical system is often jammed. Those who know a lot about it, they say that, quote: the problem lies in "transients, tops and secondary frequencies that cause hazardous forms of electrical pollution of radiofrequencies called dirty electricity which can be found inside the building walls where electric wires are acting as antennas." There's a bunch of sites on the web with the electrical pollution materia, they are saying that there's a connection between dirty electricity and tumors, diabetes, migraine, depression, asthma, multiple sclerosis, autism, leukemia... If you live close to say power lines or a substation, that's also bad. On the other hand we are all surrounded by radio waves – all of these things, as they say, have a negative impact on human health.

Just google the term „Electrical pollution“, you'll find a whole bunch of various links, and you can also buy special filters that are supposed to, as they claim, reduce the polluted electricity that's entering our houses.

Here's a quote from one of the numerous web sites ([link](#)): *With the worldwide increased consumer demand of electricity, those who study electrical pollution maintain that the modern electrical environment is dangerous to human health. With the abundance of computers and other electrical appliances, exposure to "dirty" electricity has increased significantly. Researchers of electrical pollution explain that the current electricity distribution infrastructure cannot properly handle the increased electricity dependence and demand of modern appliances. Therefore, millions of people are being exposed to harmful electrical phenomena. The wires and transformers are not only delivering the juice to run electrical devices, but are also the carrier of dangerous high frequency currents.*

In Croatia

If you think your voltage is too high or too low, according to our laws, you can contact the power supplier and ask them to come to your house and test the actual voltage. If the results show that the consumer was right, the supplier will not charge the testings. If the results show that the voltage was in accordance with the legislation ($\pm 10\%$ 230V, [vidi link](#)), the consumer will pay the testings.

Cities are overcrowded, the buildings are overbuilt, some people are illegally connected to the electrical infrastructure etc. Was all of that followed by the adequate electrical infrastructure? And as we all know, bad voltage can potentially have the most serious effects on electronic equipment.



HiDiamond

HDX2

HDX2 is a power filter, or a "network distributor" as they call it on the HiDiamond web site. It has a built-in 60 A (!) filter, and at the back you will find five SCHUKO inlets. There's also a fuse button that'll protect the connected electronics from lightning, overload etc.

There's a display on the front with the actual voltage information. That's really not impressive, what can you do with that kind of information, you can just stare at the display and watch the voltage go up and down. And there are cheaper ways to find out how high the voltage at your home is. I wish this display had a dimmer because the listener's attention can be easily distracted with the voltage going up and down. On the other hand, this dimmer is of darker intensity and it is hard to read from the 3 or 4 meters distance (which in this case is a plus).



Sound

quality

As far as I'm concerned, you can keep those power filters, conditioners and all that stuff away from me. Maybe it's because the electricity that I have at home is good: a separate line for Hi-Fi and approx 225V. I also believe that there are rooms/buildings in which a Hi-Fi system cannot work properly without a power corrector.

I haven't really tried many power filters or conditioners (maybe up to ten or so?), and those were in most cases bad experiences. This primarily refers to the repressed dynamics (and music sounds awful with bad dynamics). Apart from that, the sound got blurred, bass became a balon etc. So in my experience, audio filters very often can do more harm than good. But yes, in this hobby one plus one very often does not equal two, so never say never. I've tested the HDX2 in two various systems so I could value it from different aspects. I have connected the HDX2 to a complete system, I did not test it with individual audio components. The manufacturer says it needs approx 50 hours to burn-in. What does it sound like. EXCELLENT. The dynamics? What are the dynamics like when the whole system is connected to the HDX2? No dynamics = no music. I'm talking about the unrestricted, concert dynamics. There's where the HDX2 is at home.

Most of the time I listen to my Hi-Fi at more-less realistic, concert volume levels (sometimes even louder, sometimes not, depending on the moment and the mood). Whether it is a big orchestra, solo piano or say country music (irrelevant), the system should be able to carry out the full dynamics, without any distortion, restraint etc. On the other hand, the full dynamics are in a direct relation to a full deep bass. A big concert piano. HDX2 has slightly reduced the possible sharpness in higher keys, the stage got bigger (without the sound being artificially pumped up), piano keys got better sustain, and HDX2 enabled the piano to easier reach up the low frequencies. Rock and pop music. HDX2 has purified the cymbals and drum brushes, gave them more air, freshness and sustain. The dynamics are, as I already said, great, they are delivered without any restraint. In general, more details are coming out of the recording (without sounding analytic). The sound in general became cleaner, bigger, clearer, more natural and more with the flow. The stage become deeper, vocals are bigger, bass is deeper and with more „meat“, the treble is cleaner and clearer. Without HDX2, the electric guitar has sometimes sounded harsh or sharp (depending on the recording), and with the HDX2 the electric guitar has a fuller tone and sounds less sharp. Back to the big concert piano, my favorite musical instrument, an instrument that'll tell you all about your Hi-Fi system, an instrument that's not easy to reproduce correctly on a Hi-Fi system. I've tested HDX2 on a bunch of solo piano recordings, my general conclusion is this: without HDX2 the piano sounds a bit drier, high keys are a bit rougher, and the sound in general is a bit thinner. A symphony orchestra. Short and sweet: the sound with HDX2 became bigger and fuller, the stage became wider and deeper. Each individual instrument in the orchestra can be heard clearly and precisely. With HDX2 in the system, the orchestra was not that precisely organized. The same thing can be easily noticed with the piano (piano again!). Without the HDX2 in the system, the piano keys sound a bit disorganized. With HDX2 being installed inside the system, piano body is bigger, sustain is better, there's more air, the stage is wider, the sound is more coherent. Without HDX2 the piano has a smaller body, thinner tone, less defined high keys. A couple of times I almost wanted to shut down the system when the HDX2 was no the part of it. In general, with HDX2 the sound of the system is bigger, more coherent and fuller, instruments have a better sustain, sharpness of some recordings is softened, but all in all without the dynamics or details being concealed. Two things: the timbre and the dynamics. HDX2 has conquered me with these two things. The dynamics can be easily heard if you play a say grand piano (not again!) recording: a classical example is [Pogorelich's Scherzi](#), on this recording the HDX2 will allow a full flow of dynamics and orgasmic climaxes. Are there any shortcomings? Yes of course. With just two piano recordings (I did not hear it with other piano recordings, I've no idea how to explain that) I've noticed that the sound lost its' clarity, the sound in general had less clarity and freshness. More precisely: without the HDX2, the sound of the piano sounded more fresh, more open and with more air (thumbs down for HDx2); on the other hand, without the HDX2, the sound of the piano was drier, thinner and rougher, the timbre sounded worse (thumbs up for the HDX2).

The

end

The key question in this story - and it's the question that I don't know the answer to - is: when should a person buy the HDX2? In the beginning, as a *conditio sine qua non*? Or in the end, as a final step? I've no idea. Considering its' price/sound ratio, my final score for the HDX2 is 9/10. This is an excellent product.