

This updates review content has been trimmed to allow for highlights of last weeks Las Vegas CES.

NEW TECHNOLOGY RIBBONS FOR THE FINEST HIGH END IN AUDIO.

DETAIL • TRANSPARENCY • SOUNDSTAGING • DYNAMICS

REVIEW SUMMARY

**Bound for Sound, #4A, '94
 R8-2, Bob Bottman, USA**

Because of the R8-2's clarity, I found myself quite satisfied to listen at lower levels. These more than any other speaker in recent memory, gave me a clear, non-fatiguing, picture window view of the music, allowing the listening experience to take on a more intimate quality. The fine detail of the ribbons was addictive. The Newform R8-2s are musically revealing and forgiving at the same time, able to gracefully, but unequivocally, display the weak links in an audio chain. And their soundstage illusion is near state-of-the-art period. At their (list) price point, I believe the R8-2s are one of audios best buys.

Draft for Hi-Fi News, 1994

R8-1, Chris Beeching, England
 The Newforms performed superbly, with a real weighty deep full pedal performance and the Ribbons complementing by keeping the strings smooth, yet detailed and well focussed. The acoustic was well presented with a lot of air and space. The Ribbons do have this ability to recreate the acoustic with uncanny reality. Must be the next best thing to having Charlie Parker in your living room. They must be one of the most musical speakers on the market today. In conclusion, it's such a good speaker that it's price of around 1800 pounds seems far too little. Their small footprint makes them ideal even in smaller rooms and there's little if anything to touch them in the sub-2000 pound bracket.

Audio Ideas Guide, Fall, '93

R8-1, Andrew Marshall, Canada
 Looking at the measurements, we see one of the flattest speakers I have ever measured, with superb dispersion over a 60 degree horizontal window. The neutrality of the R8-1 could be heard on choral and female voice tests as well as with orchestral music. Strings had a nice sheen without sounding overly bright, and the middle strings, violas and cellos, were heard with appropriate warmth and weight. Pop vocalists also sounded extremely neutral and almost in the room, the clarity of subtle inflections always heard. I listened to the R8-1 for many hours and never felt a sense of listening fatigue. It is an accomplishment for any company to produce a speaker this good, especially at a relatively reasonable price for high end sound.

Klang & Ton, 1/95, R8, Bernd Timmermann, Germany

...even with a crossover of 1kHz, there is a fantastic and stable soundstage in the making. On or off axis, the Ribbon shines with the best output, it deserves to be coupled

with the finest mid-bass. In frequency response and soundstage, it overshadowed everything that has so far been offered.

South African Audio Soc.1994

R8-1, newsletter, S. Africa
 The ribbon speakers themselves gave plenty of depth and were extremely smooth and laid back. No harshness at all, rather an ultra polite sound with plenty of detail, especially in orchestral music.

The Inner Ear, Vol 6, #2 1994

R8-1, Ernie Fisher, Canada
 The R8-1s basically sound the same as their larger siblings, the R8-2. The same precise clear and succinct highs, the same beautifully clear midrange and an uncanny tonal balance, make these speakers exceptional. The almost electrostatic like revealing quality is nothing short of astounding, which places the Newforms into the high-end (not high price) category of loudspeakers. The image presented to listeners by the R8-1s is breathtaking. With the R8-1, Newform Research has created what we consider to be audiophile loudspeakers for the budget conscious consumer.

The Absolute Sound, #102, 1995

R8-1 Aaron Shatzman USA
 Aaron liked the R8-1s a great deal but TAS has a policy of not allowing quotes for their reviews to appear with quotes from other publications. Please refer to your back issues for the complete review.

Audio Observatory, Fall '95

R8-1-30, Shane Tenace USA
 Upon first listen, I was impressed with a huge, rich and tactile sound which emanated from the R8-1-30s. On "Behold Man", a track from Reference Recording's Testament the power of the choir was well conveyed. I'll go on line and say that in this respect, the Newforms rival anything on the market (megadollar speakers included). What about those Ribbons? Pretty sweet actually. Through the R8-1-30s the individual (brush strokes by drummer Mike Buck) were easily followed. This sort of essentially natural presentation is highly prized. In the end, I was pretty impressed by the Newforms. Their soundstaging alone places it beyond the performance of most competitors. Add to that the weighty bass response, excellent tonality, coherent, natural highs, overall sense of balance and you are left with a loudspeaker that is an absolute steal at \$1236.

Sensible Sound, Summer '95

R8-1-30, Tim Parker, USA
 The clarity of the Ribbons was immediately noticeable. The treble is clear and crisp and remarkably undirectional. The R8-1-30s imaged superbly with both audio and

video sources. These speakers are great for videos with 2 or 3 people watching, especially when the centre channel is turned off. With my video system's sub-woofers cutout, the train wreck from "The Fugitive" was still visceral. Jazz is sublime, as is small orchestral groups. Each instrument is placed just so, and as clear as a bell.

The bottom line? For their price, these are very competitive loudspeakers and worth a listen if you like jazz, classical and non-pounding rock. They are also a superb video speaker and compare very favourably with speakers costing many times their price.

Soundstage, April 1997

**R8-1-30, Spectron
 Doug Schneider
 www.sstage.com**
 This ribbon's sound is exceptionally transparent, revealing, with wonderful body and weight. There is an incredible amount of detail and a fabulous sense of transparency. At the same time, this ribbon retains its composure and unlike other ribbons I have heard is never, never, never harsh.

If it sounds as though I am raving, it is because I am. The ribbon has extremely good horizontal dispersion resulting in good off-axis performance. As well, they handle a lot of power and are capable of producing near ear-splitting volume levels. Where many speakers begin to choke, the Newforms begin to sing. ... the R8-1-30 captures and conveys the "soul" of the music. As well, with the detailed yet non-fatiguing nature of this speaker, they were ideal for overall voice reproduction. The R8-1-30s are some of the best speakers for home theatre that I can think of at anywhere near this price. The result was thrilling. Furthermore, I felt no need for a sub-woofer at any time.



New R630 with Scan Speak carbon fibre pulp cone

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Starry Eyed ... The R8-1-30 offers aspects of performance that outclass many speakers near this price. As previously noted, the high level of performance is mainly due to the ribbon unit. Within the ribbon's range, the speaker compares to other speakers costing upward of two, three, or four thousand dollars. The performance in the lower frequencies is very good, but not outstanding in the same way and is more in line with speakers selling in the sub-\$2000 range. Taken as an overall package, the R8-1-30 is a star performer. At \$1236 the R8-1-30 represents superb musical value and is simply a steal for someone contemplating setting up an outstanding music home theatre system.

Audio Ideas Guide, Spring, 1997, R8-1-30 x 4 in home theatre, Andrew Marshall, Canada

The R8-1-30 achieves a superb + - 2dB tolerance between 10 and 10,000 Hz. The 30" Ribbon is as well a behaved treble reproducer as I have seen. A pair of these speakers can form the acoustic end of a very fine high end audio system, and a quartet, well, they make up as good a home theatre system as I've ever heard. These speakers will handle power like few others, the ribbon having tremendous dynamics and no breakup modes whatsoever.

Because of excellent lateral dispersion, the individual speakers tend to disappear, but very exact imaging is provided by each line source. The other aspect of the Newform ribbon that should be emphasized is its speed: the dynamic capabilities are lead by extraordinary transient capacity. I've lived with the Newform quartet now for a couple of months, and have come to appreciate their honesty; next to them most other home theatre systems are decidedly coloured sonically. It took living with and then measuring the R8-1-30 for me to objectively realize how really good these speakers are and how superbly well suited they are for high end home theatre systems. Simply put, reference quality.

Soundstage, Montreal Audio Show Report - No Holds Barred Doug Schneider www.sstage.com

The Newform ribbon is one of the finest midrange tweeter ribbon drivers I have ever heard. It is exceptionally detailed, yet smooth, with excellent dispersion characteristics. The NHB sound at the show was very detailed with an excellent soundstage. Newform Research deal only factory direct which makes their speaker prices very competitive.

John had things very well balanced and the system was sounding very natural with the ribbons, dynamic modules and subs integrating seamlessly. Speaker placement must be a breeze with these because I was getting good imaging from just about anywhere I stood.

Audio Review May, 1997, R8, Focal Kit

Bruno Ragionier, Italy
Translation not available but "Un grande tweeter" perhaps doesn't need any.

Speaker Builder, No Holds Barred Upcoming, Robert Greene, Joe D'Appolito USA

But not only do the NHBs present a large, expansive, seemingly unlimited sound picture, they also produce unusually real-seeming instrumental or vocal images. The whole effect is startlingly convincing. And none of the astronomically priced box speakers I know of do any better, nor even as well. It won't be easy to go back to box loudspeakers. The song may be over but the soundstage lingers on.

NEWFORM COMMENTS ON THE REVIEWS

The themes running through all of the above reviews are detail, transparency and soundstaging. The reviewers comment on these qualities not just in relation to similarly priced loudspeakers but in absolute terms. The R830 review by Andrew Marshall is important because it finally addresses the advantages of our Ribbon design in a surround sound application. The Speaker Builder article by Robert Greene looks beyond the loudspeaker system (NHB) to the presentation of musical space and is a flat out endorsement of our Ribbon technology as the best there is for soundstage (stereo) and soundfield (surround sound) creation.

OWNER COMMENTS

- I would like to congratulate you on your Ribbon design. I have never heard reproduced music like this before. Details, details, more details. LL, Florida
- The imaging is remarkable. I shall forbear a rhapsody in the awful style of "Stereophile"; sufficient to say that one can hear separate voices in the choir on the Bach B Minor Mass we have. D.B. Colorado
- The imaging and detail from these Ribbon speakers is stunning. R.B. Manilla
- My R8-1-30 continues to be a great pleasure and the strong point of my stereo set-up. Let

me tell you about the sound. It's wonderful. J.R. Buffalo

- Thanks again for a superb product. They make me just listen to the music again. L.S. Nova Scotia
- I have had my speakers since March and they are superb!! I am constantly stunned by their imaging and clarity. mg Cyberspace
- After 10 years of trying, your Ribbons have finally gotten rid of the "squonk" ("box sound"). Thank you! D.A
- I finally ended up keeping the R8-1-30s at the front and moving the Quads to the rear. NJ
- These (R8-1-30s) are great loudspeakers and I don't mean just for the money. WWW
- About a year ago I bought a pair of R8-1s and couldn't have been more pleased. Now I am thinking about a pair of NHB Essentials.
- The Standing Mod 30s and Sub 1 we purchased last January are just fine. So fine that several colleagues have indicated interest in obtaining their own.
- I just love these speakers (R8-2). I have rediscovered music after 15 years. Last night my teenagers came downstairs at 12:30 and yelled at me to turn it down.
- I also want to thank you again for your patient advice regarding my hifi setup.

Another testimonial that counts is the used speaker market place. Try buying a used pair of Newforms. It is next to impossible because there are hundreds of owners out there who aren't selling. Find out why they feel they can't improve on their Newform Ribbons.

NEW MODELS

Note We are trying to add clarity and consistency to our speaker names. The formula has the first number denoting the size in inches of the mid-bass driver and the second number the length of the Ribbon. The R8-1-30 becomes the R830. The R6-1 becomes the R65 etc.

Audiophiles have been asking for our Ribbons to be teamed with the best mid-bass drivers on the planet and the R630 and R645 are the end result. Many of you have heard by now of these latest models. What are they?

Basically, the R630 is an even more refined and transparent version of the R830. It uses the famous ScanSpeak 8545 6 1/2" driver as opposed to the Peerless 8". The ScanSpeak 8545 with its carbon fibre pulp cone is used in



R630 without grille

some mega dollar loudspeakers and is widely viewed as the best there is for mid-bass. Merlin uses it in their highly regarded \$4500 VSM and Wilson uses it in several models (\$10,000 +++). The R630's sound is leaner and better defined throughout the mid-bass. Overall, it is simply more transparent. We still expect the R830 to remain as our "favourite" in terms of bang for the audio buck but the Scan Speak drivers add refinement and give up very little in the bottom end unless heavily pushed.

The R615 maintains the detail and delicacy of the R630 but is a 4 ohm (3.6 ohm minimum) loudspeaker with a sensitivity of 91dB. It is flat down to 33Hz and is extremely dynamic. It uses a new high efficiency 45" Ribbon and dual Scan Speak 8515s.

Both the R630 and R615 were designed to accept a handsome full length grill. Audiophiles have known for years that at Newform "grills-R-not-us" but we have finally developed a grill which is aesthetically appealing while presenting a minimal acoustic profile to the propagating wave. The cabinets of both models are heavily bevelled to take these grills but, of course, as good looking and benign as they are, the sound is better grill-less. The R630 without grill is shipping now. The R615 will go out in the middle of January (we hope). There is also the possibility of more vapourware materializing in the form of the R65 SS. You guessed it. The Scan Speak 8515 with the R5 in an very fast, ultra linear monitor for (just) under \$1000 per pair. Delivery? If development goes well, look at mid-December. NHB 45? Ask about it.

The R55 is a very fast little monitor with exceptionally smooth frequency response. It is meant to be used with a sub and will do very well as a monitor, satellite or centre channel.

HOME THEATER PACKAGES

- 4xR55 + Denon DSP Sub \$1490
- 4xModule 30 + Denon DSP Sub \$2380
- 4xR630 + Denon DSP Sub \$3330
- 4xNHB 45 + 2 Denon DSP Sub \$4835

For R55 centre channel add \$240 to each package. Can be purchased later.

DELETED MODELS

The Standing Modules with the grill hoods have been dropped since the overwhelming preference has been for the basic Module 30 at \$990 pr. Also, the R8 and the R15 and any model using them have been made special order items since the R30 and R5 are the runaway favourites.

FAQs AND TIPS

Do you sell single speakers as opposed to pairs? Yes. Cost is 1/2 of the pair price plus \$20 for increased shipping and customs burden. If ordered with other speakers, the \$20 charge is dropped.

Which amp works best with Newform Ribbons? The Spectron is still number 1 to our ears but you don't have to spend a lot to get great sound. We are now checking into a 100w ch amp (with level controls and vu meters) which will sell for < \$350!. Great for surrounds or a small system. Bottom line, there are a lot of really good amps out there (and, yes folks, a few of them are in surround sound receivers) that don't necessarily cost a fortune.

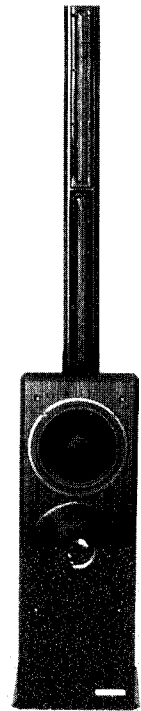
Can I use Newform Ribbons to replace the tweeters and mid-range on my 15 year old JBL/Infinity/much loved favourite? It is better to start from scratch than butcher a working loudspeaker which will prove problematic in level matching, crossover points and dispersion patterns. Several people have added our Ribbons to Magnapanars and have been very happy but to take full advantage of the Ribbons' capabilities, they should be used in fresh, simple designs. The R5, because of its baffle mount capability is the most likely candidate to be used in a surgical upgrade.

How does the centre channel issue stand now with the discrete formats Dolby Digital and DTS? The jury is out on the necessity of a centre channel whereas with Pro Logic it was a firm NO! Since you can always add a centre channel speaker if you feel you need it, don't order it now. With the soundstaging capability of our Ribbons, there is a good chance you won't ever feel the need for one. Some kit builders are using dipole Ribbons for home theatre by putting a back on them to turn them into monopoles. While putting a back on a dipole will turn it into a monopole, it won't necessarily be a good monopole. Our advice (biased as it is) is to use something that was designed from the start as a monopole.

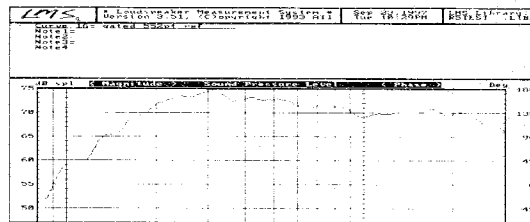
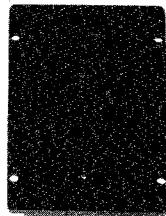
HOME ENTERTAINMENT TRENDS

The 1998 Consumer Electronics Show In Las Vegas

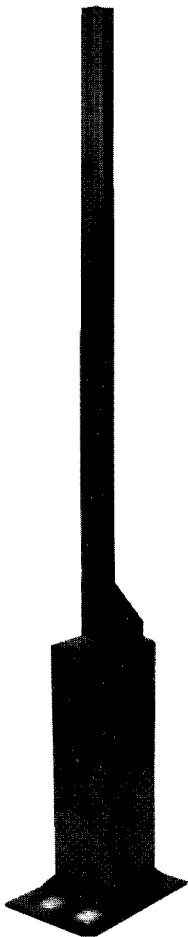
DVD audio standards. "How do I format thee, let me count the ways." While audiophiles may worry about all of the different formats being proposed, the danger is the mass market may take one look and merely change the channel. The DIVX format proposed by Circuit City is meeting with universal criticism and Circuit City is quite concerned about it. It would be a surprise if they and their supporting studios withdrew from the project but they are certainly getting a rough ride for confusing the market with another format. The Sony Phillips high end audio standard "Super Audio CD" sounds ideal since it can be played on both existing CD players (at 16 bit) and on DVDs with a 2.8 mHz single bit stream reputed to sound "better than 96kHz, 24 bit". Frequency response is out to 100kHz but may be trimmed to 45kHz. Aside from bandwidth and resolution, the advantage of this format is the absence of D to A converters. Introduction date could be 2 years. Software availability will be ???



R8 30
"The Favourite"



The New R5 designed to mount conventionally on the front baffle. Exceptionally flat frequency response. With x-over +/-2dB 2kHz to 25kHz. Recommended crossover 1.6kHz to 2.5kHz. Suitable for very high quality centre channels, satellites and bookshelf monitors and in-walls.



High end audio will happen on DVD. The question is whether it will be 24/96 or bit-stream. This may happen sooner rather than later in a time frame of possibly 6 months. From the horses mouth I hear that really well engineered 16 bit CD material sounds better than poorly done bit-stream. This is no surprise. When the engineers adjust to the higher resolution formats, sound quality should take a great leap. Witness the general improvement in movie soundtracks over the past 3 years.

There are some good AC-3 and DTS processors out and they are coming down in price and getting better at the same time.

No Holds Barred Essentialia
The Tallest. The Thinnest.
The Best Soundstage.
If 92" is a little too tall for you,
the Standing Modules,
NHB 45s or R630s
are great alternatives.

Marantz Dolby Digital processors and receivers have an option (from MSB Technology) to incorporate DTS capability. A great idea. The new Bryston processor just introduced at CES has full 24 bit capability so it will handle any future improvement in formats (so long as they are not bitstream). Cost is projected at \$4000. Pricy but it is undoubtedly a superb product.

Several of the major Japanese electronics companies appear to have released inexpensive Dolby Digital processors. These run from \$400 to \$700 and word is that they are very good for the money. The Sony \$3000 CD DVD player at \$700 is reputed to be extremely close to their high end \$7000 in both video and sound quality. That makes it the class of the field. The Toshiba 3007 also garnered a great many positive comments.

If you are looking for a DVD player, make sure you get a second generation model!! Why? Sound and video quality and compatibility.

Velodyne introduced two new subs, the HGS-10 and HGS-12. They boast 2nd(!) peak to peak excursions and 1000 and 1250 watt amps.

PSB had their mark IV sub at the show. This has basically the same extremely flexible remote control electronics-Q and roll-off settings as well as 9 memories - as our Denon (see below) but with a larger bass driver and enclosure. List is \$1400.

At CES, exhibitors were fewer at the Alexis Park (the high end audio venue). Many had doubled up or moved to the Hilton (the home theatre venue). The non-CES high end show held at the Debbie

Reynolds (cheaper with better rooms) had its problems. Due to some bankruptcy proceedings at the hotel, the show split with 15 at the Debbie Reynolds and 16 at the Holiday Inn near the I15 intersection. My heart goes out to those exhibitors.

I don't have numbers but it certainly appeared that traffic was down for the Alexis Park while the Hilton traffic was heavy. The commercial shift to home theatre was quite evident this year.

The main story at CES was high definition TV followed by DVD. Many at the show were worried that the emphasis on HDTV will stall sales of existing product for a format which won't be within the broadcast reach or price accessibility of most consumers for another 5 years. However, the picture quality of the high def screens was wonderful. Toshiba had a great demo as did most of the usual video high enders.

Now that HDTV is almost upon us, some large corporations have actually thought to do market surveys on the quality of audio associated with the superb visuals. They found that once people were exposed to the very high quality images, their awareness and demand for high quality audio skyrocketed. Maybe the major corporations will come to realize that 85% of the emotional involvement in a home theatre comes through the ears and not the eyes. Is it possible that audio will become a priority with the majors? Stay tuned.

There are also some passable amps at amazing prices coming out. Call for the latest news on the most suitable products and if you have any equipment or software scoops to share, we'd be interested to hear what you have to say.

CURRENT PRICE LIST

	List Price	Price Delivered		List Price	Price Delivered
FULL RANGE			MODULES		
R65	\$1095.00	\$664.00	R55	\$895.00	\$556.00
R65 SS	\$1445.00	\$896.00	Standing Mod 30	\$1795.00	\$990.00
R630	\$2695.00	\$1680.00	No Holds Barred	\$7995.00	\$4235.00
R630 Grill-less		\$1516.00	Essential NHB	\$4395.00	\$2540.00
R645	\$3695.00	\$2265.00	NHB 45	\$3995.00	\$2290
R830	\$2095.00	\$1236.00			

Kits All kits contain Peerless drivers, full crossovers, wiring and all hardware. You supply the enclosures and grills.
Module 5 R55 in kit form \$371.00
Module 30 Mod 30 in kit form \$780.00
Kits can be supplied in many different formats. What kind of project would you like to tackle?

RIBBON DRIVERS (pairs)

R5	\$292.00
R15	\$460.00
R30	\$680.00
R45	\$1140.00

SPECIAL OFFER

6 preset & 3 user memories, variable crossover point, slope and Q bass extension and roll-off. Audio's most sophisticated sub electronics controlled from your chair.

We have bought a number of Denon DSP (digital signal processing) sub-woofers (List \$995) with world class flexibility in terms of crossover points, slopes, memories and room tuning. They are solid down to 25Hz. The woofer is 12" with a 50 oz magnet and 2 1/2" VC and the amp is 200 watts. It comes with two remotes so you can dial it in from your listening seat. Too sophisticated for retail channels. Denon turned to Newform's audiophile customers with extremely aggressive pricing. The special price combined with a pair of Module 30s is \$1400. Call for details.

We have dealt with many different systems in many different types of rooms.

Call for advice, it's free!

All Prices 'pr USS FOB Your Door via UPS
There are no additional charges in the continental USA. Payment is by personal check, money order, wire transfer or Visa. For overseas shipments, price includes 50% of air freight to the nearest international airport. Duties, customs charges and taxes are extra.

30 day, "Let's Make Sure" period. Offer applies only to systems not kits.
5 Year parts and labour warranty with 1 way shipping.

If you don't already have it, please ask for our 20 page booklet.

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