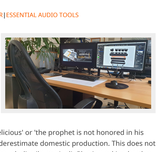
HIVISIT ESSENTIAL AUDIO TOOLS MAINS POWER PRODUCTS: MEN ON A MISSION

MORE FROM THIS BRAND

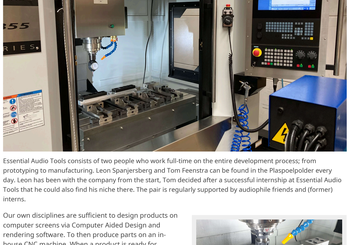
RENÉ VAN ES| AUGUST 29, 2023 |PHOTOGRAPHY MANUFACTURER|ESSENTIAL AUDIO TOOLS

Hidden in the depths of the Plaspoelpolder industrial area in Rijswijk we find the building of Square Audio BV, manufacturer of Essential Audio Tools. A brand that has itself
specialized in the in-house manufacturing of mains voltage products such as Mains Multipliers (distribution blocks), Current Conductors
(power cords) and Audio Tools (accessories), but which, strangely enough, is more well known in the abroad than in our own low countries. 'What you get is delicious' or 'the prophet is not honored in his own country'. The Dutch are a crazy people who often underestimate domestic production. This does not seem to be much different with Essential Audio Tools, although distributor AudioPlus is working hard to put this example of Dutch craftsmanship on the map.



Essential Audio Tools: the very beginning

Essential Audio Tools was founded in 2005 and started producing power cords and a power strip in-house. In addition, three accessories to complete the package. In the years that followed, the range was expanded with power strips and cables and the products were improved slightly. This gradual evolution has borne more fruit than many so-called revolutions among competitors.

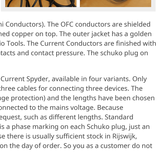


Essential Audio Tools consists of two people who work full-time on the entire development process; from prototyping to manufacturing. Leon Spanjersberg and Tom Feenstra can be found in the Plaspoelpolder every day. Leon has been with the company from the start. Tom decided after a successful internship at Essential Audio Tools that he could also find his niche there. The pair is regularly supported by audiophile friends and (former) interns.

Our own disciplines are sufficient to design products on computer screens via Computer Aided Design and rendering software. To then produce parts on an in-house CNC machine. When a product is ready for production, the machine is programmed to make series.

Merging will obviously require more for all three product groups. Electronics design is part of this, just like making wiring harnesses for the power strips,
from assembling power cords and soldering parts on printed circuit boards to packaging all manufactured products. In that respect, Essential Audio Tools is at home with all brands and only purchases the basic materials such as POM-C plastic, connectors, cables, components, bare printed circuit boards and small materials.

Current Conductors



Zooming in on the product groups, it was the power cords that were the first to come onto the market in 2005. With their Current Conductor, Essential Audio Tools has always strived to bring a solid and full-fledged product to the market without attributing voodoo or quantum properties to it. The basis is a cable, 'cord' if you like, from a manufacturer based in the Far East
specializes in producing cables for audio. So not from a large cable factory where the quality of copper does not count 'because it only needs to conduct'. The cables are used in variants of 3x2.5mm2 (Current Conductor L and HC), 2x4mm2 (Current
Conductor B) and 3x0.75mm2 (Current Conductor S and Myni Conductors). The OFC conductors are shielded with a 100 percent opaque aluminum foil with a braid of tinned copper on top. The outer jacket has a golden brown transparent insulation characteristic of Essential Audio Tools. The Current Conductors are finished with various connectors, paying attention to the purity of the contacts and contact pressure. The schuko plug on the mains side has an Essential Audio Tools sleeve.

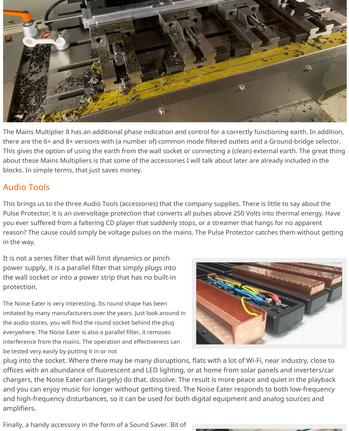
A particularly handy version of the Current Conductor is the Current Spyder, available in four variants. Only one plug goes to the wall socket, then the cable is split into three cables for connecting three devices. The housing of the junction contains a Pulse Protector (overvoltage protection) and the lengths have been chosen so that devices stacked on top of each other can be neatly connected to the mains voltage. Because everything is made in-house, customization is available on request, such as different lengths. Standard lengths ranging from 0.5 to 5 meters apply to cables. There is a phase marking on each Schuko plug, just an easy help for correctly connecting the mains voltage. Because there is usually sufficient stock in Rijswijk, delivery times to dealers are short, shipping is usually done on the day of order. So you as a customer do not have to wait long for your power cord.

Mains Multipliers

The second and very important product group includes power strips. While the Spyder is a super handy solution, the junction boxes contain a similar device that was given the name Myni by the makers. The smallest high-end distribution block on the market. Super handy to place close to a set when there is little space available. The Myni has one input (of course) and four outputs on the top, all designed as IEC plugs.

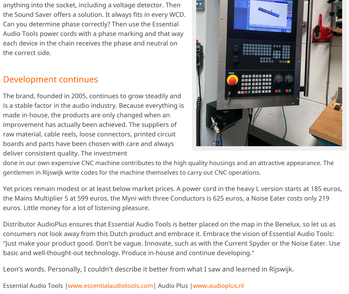
Now you're probably thinking; IEC plugs, is that audiophile and good enough? Well, IEC plugs are widely used in IT, among others. In data centers, almost all switches and routers are located in 19-inch racks on distribution strips with IEC plugs. To ensure years of trouble-free service. Included with the Myni is a Current Conductor S of 1.5 meters and two Myni Conductor IEC cords for connecting to devices, one of 50cm and one of 75cm. Other lengths of Myni Conductors, with a figure 8 or euro-coupling connector, can be purchased separately. Despite its small dimensions, the Myni contains a copper Faraday cage for shielding against electromagnetic radiation, two HF filters and overvoltage protection. The copper cage allows the block to lie very close to equipment without picking up and radiating interference.

Nice news: Essential Audio Tools dealers will have access to a demo case with a Myni and various cables so that the customer can try out the block and cables at home.



The Myni and all other power strips are made from POM-C, which stands for Polyacetal Copolymer; a strong, hard and dimensionally stable plastic. POM-C withstands heavy impacts and – very important for audio – it absorbs vibrations. The material is also easy to machine mechanically and is chemically resistant to oils and fuels. Low moisture absorption and excellent mechanical properties guarantee wear-resistant products that are dimensionally stable.

Essential Audio Tools has also embraced POM-C because it can be machined very neatly on a CNC machine, it is environmentally friendly, does not pose any additional environmental burden during processing and looks beautiful when the end product is finished. Essential Audio Tools calls the distribution blocks Mains Multipliers. Types 5 and 7 are the same except for the number of (filtered) outlets. A number of sockets have an HF filter, all outputs are protected against overvoltage and the wiring is star-shaped.



The Mains Multiplier 8 has an additional phase indication and control for a correctly functioning earth. In addition, there are the 6+ and 8+ versions with (a number of) common mode filtered outlets and a Ground-bridge selector. This gives the option of using the earth from the wall socket or connecting a (clean) external earth. The great thing about these Mains Multipliers is that some of the accessories I will talk about later are already included in the blocks. In simple terms, that just saves money.

Audio Tools

This brings us to the three Audio Tools (accessories) that the company supplies. There is little to say about the Pulse Protector; it is an overvoltage protection that converts all pulses above 250 Volts into thermal energy. Have you ever suffered from a flattering City power that suddenly stops, or a streamer that hangs for no apparent reason? The cause could simply be voltage pulses on the mains. The Pulse Protector catches them without getting in the way.

It is not a series filter that will limit dynamics or pinch power supply, it is a parallel filter that simply plugs into the wall socket or into a power strip that has no built-in protection.

The Noise Eater is very interesting. Its round shape has been imitated by many manufacturers over the years. Just look around in the audio stores, you will find the round socket behind the plug into the socket. Where there may be many disruptions, flats with a lot of Wi-Fi, near industry, close to offices with an abundance of fluorescent and LED lighting, or at home from solar panels and inverters/car chargers, the Noise Eater can (largely) do that. dissolve. The result is more peace and quiet in the playback and you can enjoy music for longer without getting tired. The Noise Eater responds to both low-frequency and high-frequency disturbances, so it can be used for both digital equipment and analog sources and amplifiers.

Finally, a handy accessory in the form of a Sound Saver. Bit of a big name for what the thing does; phase control. Where is the phase located in the wall socket or power strip? And is the earth okay? I hear the readers thinking; do you also have a voltage tester for the Gamma? Indeed, but many outlets are now protected with a closure so that children cannot put anything into the socket, including a voltage detector. Then the Sound Saver offers a solution. It always fits in every WCD. Can you determine phase correctly? Then use the Essential Audio Tools power cords with a phase marking and that way each device in the chain receives the phase and neutral on the correct side.

Development continues

The brand, founded in 2005, continues to grow steadily and is a stable factor in the audio industry. Because everything is made in-house, the products are only changed when an improvement has actually been achieved. The suppliers of raw material, cable reels, loose connectors, printed circuit boards and parts have been chosen with care and always deliver consistent quality. The investment
done in our own expensive CNC machine contributes to the high quality housings and an attractive appearance. The gentlemen in Rijswijk write codes for the machine themselves to carry out CNC operations.

Yet prices remain modest or at least below market prices. A power cord in the heavy L version starts at 185 euros, the Mains Multiplier 5 at 599 euros, the Myni with three Conductors is 625 euros, a Noise Eater costs only 219 euros. Little money for a lot of listening pleasure.

Distributor AudioPlus ensures that Essential Audio Tools is better placed on the map in the Benelux, so let us as consumers not look away from this Dutch product and embrace it. Embrace the vision of Essential Audio Tools: "Just make your product good. Don't be vague. Innovate, such as with the Current Spyder or the Noise Eater. Use basic and well-thought-out technology. Produce in-house and continue developing."

Leon's words. Personally, I couldn't describe it better from what I saw and learned in Rijswijk.