



AES PNW Section

March Meeting Notice

Cables: Fact, Fiction and Fraud The Horrible Truth About Wire & Cable

Presented by Steve Lampen
Multimedia Technology Manager, Belden

AND

Kurt Denke
Owner, Blue Jeans Cable

7:30pm, Monday, March 7, 2011
Shoreline Community College
Room 818
Shoreline, WA 98177

[Directions to Shoreline Community College](#)

Wire we having this meeting?

Currently, the **potential** for confusion about wire in the audio realm is **manifold**. We see **powerful** advertising campaigns playing on mystery, according to some claiming that oxygen, that necessary element for life, somehow sucks all the life out of our audio. We will try to **gauge** the meaning intended by the **conductors** of this seemingly **electric** dialog, and help sort out the **impedance** that the layperson feels when confronted with this **bipolar**-seeming wave of information, and therefore **conduct** ourselves in a way to lessen the **resistance** to actual physics. We admit that sometimes we need to **insulate** ourselves in this regard by calling the **coppers**, and get the facts on the cable, in order to avoid **short-circuiting** via our own imaginations. A **parallel** to the **series** of claims from some wire manufacturers would seem similar to homeopathy.

- What is **resistance**, how does it relate to interconnects and speaker wire, and why

should I care?

- What is **capacitance**, how does it relate to interconnects and speaker wire, and why should I care?
- What is **inductance**, how does it relate to interconnects and speaker wire, and why should I care?
- What are **articulation poles**, how do they relate to interconnects and speaker wire, and why should I care?
- How do the differences in wires and cables compare to the effects of moving speakers a foot in a room?
- How do the differences in wires and cables compare to the effects of acoustic treatments in a room?

One of those is a ringer. Do you know which one?

While there are differences in construction quality, distributed capacitance and shielding between bargain priced cables and those costing a bit more, at what point are diminishing returns on the investment reached? Depending on the application, there is probably a range.

Shielded star-quad cables are definitely appreciated by live sound recording engineers running microphone levels signals around megawatt lighting dimmer packs and worth the extra expense. The home theater enthusiast might not notice any significant difference between competently constructed unbalanced one meter interconnects and the extra effort necessary to deploy balanced shielded twisted pair interconnects or other, more exotic approaches.

Is there really a difference? Isn't cable just a special configuration of two or more wires? If there is a difference, can you actually *hear* it? Join us on Monday evening at 7:30pm and find out. Bring your questions.

The Letter

Besides making Really Good Cables, Kurt Denke earned his 15 minutes of Internet fame when the lawyers at a certain esoteric cable company tried to get him to roll over and play dead by accusing him of patent infringement. It seems they have a design patent on an RCA plug that they felt was infringed upon by a connector used by Blue Jeans Cables.

Error! What they didn't know is that Kurt is a recovering lawyer who as a part of the recovery process got into the business of making decent cables. You can read The Letter, and Kurt's reply to it, [HERE](#). The other thing they didn't know was that rolling over for them is not part of Kurt's API.

Aside from pulling their chain, Kurt simply believes that good cables consist of decent cable

attached to decent connectors. No pseudoscience, no smoke and mirrors, no vestal virgins, and no BS. These are sound enough business principles to build a company around.

Our Presenters

Steve Lampen has worked for Belden for twenty years and is currently Multimedia Technology Manager and also Product Line Manager for Entertainment Products. Prior to Belden, Steve had an extensive career in radio broadcast engineering and installation, film production, and electronic distribution. Steve holds an FCC Lifetime General License (formerly a First Class FCC License) and is an SBE Certified Broadcast Radio Engineer. On the data side he is a BICSI Registered Communication Distribution Designer. His latest book, "The Audio-Video Cable Installer's Pocket Guide" is published by McGraw-Hill. His column "Wired for Sound" appears in Radio World Magazine.

Kurt Denke is a recovering lawyer who is now the owner of Blue Jeans Cable, an internet-based video and audio cable assembly company catering primarily to the consumer home theater market but also producing assemblies for commercial and industrial users. He earned his fifteen minutes of Internet fame by making the intellectual property lawyers at a certain esoteric cable company look like fools, which, he admits, is not very hard to do.

Bob Moses

AES PNW 2010-2011 Section Chair

n.b. *The material presented at our meetings is the opinion of the presenter and not necessarily that of the Society. You are encouraged to conduct your own research and to form your own opinions before adopting the presented material as Truth.*

Our meetings are open to anyone interested in Audio. AES membership is NOT required for you to attend our meetings.

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