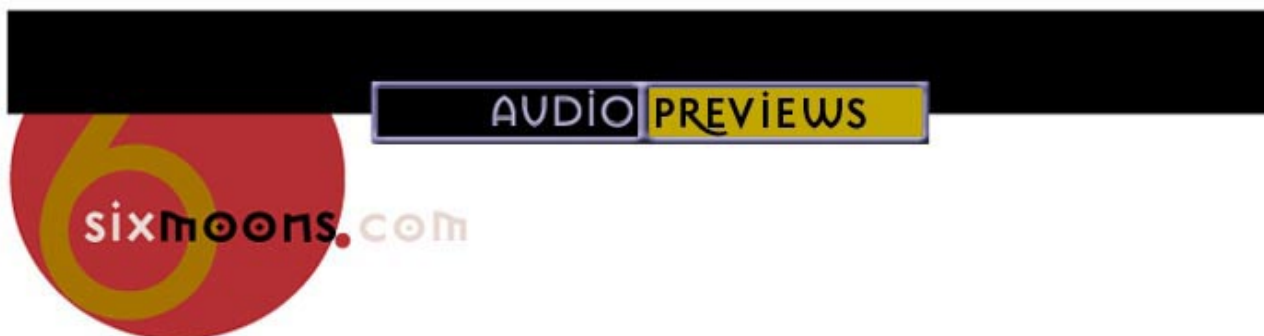


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AUGUST 2007



CRUSADE AUDIO TV CONNECTORS

Reviewer: Marja & Henk

Source: UPC cable and UPC Media Box

Speakers: Avantgarde Acoustic Solo

Cables: Nanotec Golden Strada #201: Dual Core Shield Cable [in for review]

Powerline conditioning: Omtec Power Conditioners

TV: Sony 30 inch widescreen

Review Component Retail: €15.95/pr

Most all reviews here at the moons, probably 99.99%, are related to local sources. With local sources we refer to CD, LP, tape and PC/MAC/iPod. Only very sporadically does a remote source become a review subject - we recall an internet radio and a tuner.

Remote sources can enter our homes in a few ways. There are broadcasting sources that use the ethers as transmission medium. That's good old-fashioned radio of course and no longer just analog, with many radio stations using digital formats to get their message out. Another way to get outside information into the home is via the telephone line. Besides the familiar call facilities, DSL and ADSL internet connections open up the world of remote sources to our ears and eyes. As a third option, there's another wire-based communication system - *cable*.

Cable communication is getting more and more popular. Cable companies not only offer TV and radio distribution services, cable telephone communication too is gaining in popularity. For the consumer, that's particularly convenient with just one monthly bill for all external communication services, often bundled with mobile phone options as well.

Using something other than ether-based transmission has other benefits, namely the lack of RFI pollution. When we look around our city of Rotterdam, its skyline is swamped with tasteless receiver and transmitter antennae. Each and every roof has at least one of those deformed artificial skeletons. The roof's owner is paid for the use, the poor citizen has the visual scars and -- the jury is still out -- probably other, more severe side effects to endure. And then there's the audio enthusiast who has to ban RFI from his gear.

Now we get to the subject of our review. We use cable, too. To be more precise, we use cable for occasional TV watching. Meandering through the cesspool of misery that is broadcast, there *are* some worthwhile programs here and there - the occasional concert, documentary and the like that can entertain and/or educate.

We'd used some 10 meters of 10Base-2 cable for the connection from wall socket to TV simply because we had that length available. This cable was used for computer networks some decades ago and is a coaxial 50-ohm design. For watching the occasional analog TV broadcast, it worked fine though the cable is far from suited for this use and was terminated with generic connectors.



Then Crusade Audio offered us a pair of really good looking, heavy quality connectors specifically made for cable TV/radio. With their thick gold plating, Teflon insulation and overall build quality, these connectors begged to be attached to the old cable as soon as possible. With a wire stripper and a small screwdriver, the connectors were installed in minutes. Lo and behold, the clarity of the picture and the sound improved instantly, with both cleaned up. Still, the quality was not up to the standard of our preferred way to watch the glue tube, DVDs over the Avantgarde Acoustic Solo self-powered hornspeakers in a 2.0 setup. Yet we could happily live with it and consider it an improvement over what we had put up with before.

Recently cable company UPC made available a TiVo-type device, a digital video recorder or DVR. The package deal included tons of extra channels to have us catch up with the Jones in the US. And for the curious, the deal does include some channels that focus on the *other* natural history.

Prior to the arrival of the DVR, we changed out the old computer network cable for a generic 75-ohm TV cable.

Combined with the Crusade connectors, this once again made a nice difference. We bothered with the cable swap because we were warned that incorrect impedance might cause digital fallout - when you see those jittery blocks on the screen. A good quality gold-plated Scart cable was already on hand to transfer the signal from the DVR to the TV.

Now the TiVo-like package also meant that the incoming signal had changed to digital from its former analog format. After hooking up the set-top box, we had a much clearer picture than before and sound was equally enhanced in intelligibility. For a test, we replaced the Crusade Audio connectors with the old generic ones and that lasted only a few minutes before the gold-plated quality jobbies were in use again.

Conclusion? A pair of good TV/radio connectors when using either analog or digital cable as remote data provider is worth more than it costs. In combination with a decent, proper 75-ohm terminated wire, the quality of image and sound improves substantially. The connectors make better contact and their shielding keeps out a lot of environmental noise. If you fancy your picture sharp and your sound clear and intelligible, hit *contact* on Crusade Audio's website and do the dirty.



*Dr. Marja Vanderloo &
Dr. Henk 'Longbeard' Boo*

Quality of packing: Blister with instruction leaflet

Reusability of packing: Blister can be used many times

Ease of unpacking/repacking: Very easy.

Condition of component received: Flawless.

Completeness of delivery: Product plus instruction leaflet in Dutch

Quality of owner's manual: Pictures and text are unclear

Website comments: In Dutch

Warranty: Return

Global distribution: To be announced

Human interactions: Professional and courteous.

Other: Good finish

Pricing: Value for money

Application conditions: Connectors accept cable up to 8.3mm

Final comments & suggestions: None.

