

Firewall

Date Added: 10/31/2012 by Aaron Knock

I feel immensely fortunate to have a LessLoss Firewall in my system. Even if I were a man of unlimited means, I think this would still be the case. The best way for me to describe the Firewall in my system is in terms of the DFPC Signatures. Below is a compilation of improvements I noted while listening (one Signature on my CD player, the other on the amp). (Some comments apply to specific tracks).

- Clearer, crisper
- Higher fine detail resolution
- Vocals more realistic
- Fuller sound
- Deeper bass
- Bass more articulate
- Starting to hear the recorded room now
- Instantly more realistic as a whole
- Lower noise floor: sounds like instruments used to sound through a veil.
- Smoother vocal

The improvements provided by the signatures were very significant and easily noticable. With just two Signatures in my system, I've achieved more improvement than had I spent more than double the amount of two Signatures on an amp upgrade, or, even a source upgrade (this, based on auditioning such products). By comparison I'd describe the Firewall's performance to be about 1.5x augmented beyond the improvements provided by two Signatures working together. The most general and wide-reaching improvement provided by the Signatures was realism. This is what I loved most. So, with the Firewall, for realism to be enhanced yet again and to this degree, this was truly special.

As for aesthetics, I love the look of the tankwood casing. It looks seamless, and the aluminum end pieces integrate very elegantly with the tankwood. When you get to handle one of these in person, after you get over how heavy it is, you immediately get the sense that this is something very hi-end, a refined piece of high performance equipment—something very special.

I've had the Firewall for nearly half a year now, and I'm every bit as satisfied as when I first heard it.

My system:

Speakers: Focal 816V

Speaker Cables: LessLoss Anchorwave (3m)

Amp: Yamaha RX-A 3010

Interconnects: Kimber PBJ

Source: Cambridge Audio 650C

Power cords: LessLoss DFPC Original; LessLoss DFPC Signature

Power conditioner: LessLoss Firewall

Power distributor: Furutech e-TP60

Date Added: 07/14/2012 by Michael R.

Addendum to previous review: Please see my review of Feb. 14th, 2012. I would only like to add that after 5 additional months I notice still more sonic refinement and clarity than before. There is just that bit much more realism now compared to what I heard in February. So you can look forward to continued improvement in your sound for many months after your initial break-in of the Firewall. What a continuing pleasure!

Date Added: 02/14/2012 by Michael R.

I now have about 250 hours on my Firewall. The greatest changes occur at or before 100 hours. Now that I'm just about done with break-in, I can say that the changes I heard were very significant and in some respects greater

than I even expected; the music sort of flies off the speakers. Everything becomes crystal clear as if something inside my system had been cleaned. The sense of being at a live performance was much greater. I don't think there is much higher praise than that. To try one is to never go back to being without one. Now for a review in The Absolute Sound!

Date Added: 10/04/2011 by Fodor Bogdan George

I've noted the Firewall with 4 stars, since a new good product can always take its place. Louis Motek's splendid Firewall did something very important in my system. The sound transformed from an artificial and rigid timbre into a more relaxed solid, organic one. More controlled lows, natural mids, and silky highs. That sometimes metallic spectrum is gone. And when you see the Panzerholz shield of the Firewall, you feel very proud of this product. Note: it works splendid with the DFPC Signature cables. Thanks, Mr. Motek.

George

Date Added: 08/24/2011 by Alan Carruth

This will be of interest to owners of the original Firewall as well as new customers!

SYSTEM:

CEC TL-51X transport slaved to LessLoss DAC 2004 MkII
Jeff Rowland model 6 mono amps with battery PS
Wilson model 5 WATT/Puppy speakers
LessLoss Tunnelbridge interconnect system
2 pair LessLoss Anchorwave speaker cables (amps to Puppy & Puppy to WATT)
Original LessLoss Firewall with 8 outlets
7 LessLoss DFPC Signature power cords
12 LessLoss Blackbody Field Conditioners
New LessLoss Firewall
Nordost Titanium Sort Kones under everything

I wanted to express my highest praise for the redesigned Firewall. My system now employs everything LessLoss has to offer with remarkable results. I have had the opportunity to listen to my system evolve over the past 3 years as I have added LessLoss solutions to the point that despite having 15 year old speakers and amps, I am listening to something beyond my wildest dreams!

What I now hear rivals systems I have heard costing 2 to 3 times more than mine. The final solution was to add the redesigned Firewall, but since I am using the original Firewall, how could I best use the new one? After experimenting with various configurations, I found the best sound was obtained as follows: Dedicated wall outlet to DFPC Signature to New Firewall to DFPC Signature to the Old Firewall to all other components. The addition of the New Firewall further stabilized and defined an already wonderful sound stage. The listening experience is 3D! It is so life-like it is almost scary. I can hear so far into the music, it is like I never heard these CDs before. A note of caution when first adding the Firewall; be prepared to allow for some serious break-in time. Even after 200 hours of listening, I am still hearing subtle improvements in the sound. I am hearing almost no digital/electronic noise which is so common in solid state systems, even when playing complex and dynamic symphonies (i.e., Gustav Holst's "The Planets"). Every kind of music from pop, to rock, to jazz, to vocals, to classical sounds wonderful. I get so lost in the music I can't even concentrate to read.

Thank you so much Louis and Vil. Your products are the best!

Date Added: 04/20/2011 by Claudius

My system:

Mac Mini

Transparent Audio USB Cable
Ayre QB9
HMA Sestetto Cable
Octave HP500SE
HMS Sestetto Cable
ADAM Audio Pencil Active Speakers
ALL Power Cords Lessloss Signature
3 Lessloss Blackbodys

I have a dedicated power line with a special grade fuse in the power distributor in our house. The wall receptacles are from HMS. A DFPC Signature is feeding the Firewall. Another DFPC Signature is feeding a Furutech TP609e. From there all other gear is fed by Signatures. Before buying the Firewall, the system was fed by a HMS "Netzleiste", which is something like a classic in Germany. I still use it for the mini, which seriously hurt the sound when being plugged into the Furutech.

Before going into the details, I have to confess that I am biased. I was completely overwhelmed by the naturalness the Signatures introduced into my system. I started off with one cable for the QB-9 which gave the QB-9 more weight, more flow and even more naturalness. I then bought cables for all my other gear. But I still had the HMS distributor between the cables and the wall receptacle. It never did hurt me. Then I read about the Blackbodies and bought 3 of them. As with the cables, they did exactly what Louis had told me. They gave my system a clarity and see through quality I didn't think was possible. My system sounded good without the Lessloss products but it sounds excellent with the powercords and the Blackbodies. Well I am an audiophile. So I kept thinking about the firewall, with the most positive bias one can have. I expected nothing else than the biggest upgrade I ever made to my system. So my expectations were very, very high.

When getting the Firewall I was impressed by its size and its looks. I thought "Damn, why does this thing have to hide behind my rack?" It is big and heavy, and the looks of the Panzerholz are striking. Before getting the Firewall I had some longer email conversations with Louis and he advised me to set the Firewall up exactly as written on the LessLoss Firewall page (there is a separate PDF Firewall Usage Guide to download). I did this and started to listen to music. Well, to say I was disappointed is putting it very mildly. I knew my system had to warm up (the QB-9 takes some time when it was off the grid and my Octave Pre has an external power supply which usually takes at least 5-6 hours to reach its peak). But I have heard my system cold before. When I leave the house for a week or longer I take everything off the grid. But it never sounded this bad - at least I thought it sounded that bad. After listening for about half an hour I turned down the volume and turned on the TV. I slept really bad that night. The next day I thought, well I heard about burn in of the older Firewall, which was supposed to take weeks. When I got back from work the next day I listened to some music and it was sounding better. Even better than before. But not 4000 Euros better. The sound was thin, but the dynamics were very good, quite was quite and loud was loud. But after an hour I got tired of the sound. This was a really bad sign. So I emailed Louis who confirmed that there was burn in time and it should be much better the next weekend. So I slept a little better that night. The next day I invited my brother, who is a recording engineer and also an audiophile. My wife and kids were not at home this night, so we cooked something, had some wine, talked a little and had the stereo in the background. It sounded good. It sounded very good. So we sat down and had a listen. First was Mahlers 5 (Gustavo Dudamel, Deutsche Grammophone). I turned it up a bit. I turned it up some more. The orchestra reached a peak and the whole room was shaking, I felt the sound and I had goose bumps all over my body. My brother looked at me in disbelief and I had a grin all over my face. I didn't say anything, but kept thinking: "what the ****, what the ****, "The dynamic range of my system had increased in a way that I thought not possible. The control over bass was extraordinary, we could turn up the system to a point where the active speakers went into safety mode and up to that point we always felt that the system can easily handle it. My brother kept saying "This is phenomenal, I can feel the music, this is almost like life....". We heard music, drank wine, drank some more wine... I went to bed happy and drunk and thought what a good investment. Until next evening.

I listened to my system and something had changed. It had lost some weight, it sounded thinner, but there was a new quality to the sound. It had top end sparkle, it produced pictures of an enormous size. Wow... but after an hour I got tired, listening fatigue. I emailed Louis and he said that it is very probable that you will experience "performance bumps" while the unit burns it. But it should be better next weekend. After the experience the night before I couldn't wait for the weekend to come.

Well I could write about the next week and a half, where I experienced two more bumps, but I'll skip over that. All I can say is, that burn in is lengthy and painful. Louis wrote that he can hear some 90% of the good things right away. I would say that I heard about 60% at the beginning, at maximum.

How is the sound now?

On the website it says that you will experience dynamics floating around freely. This is the exact truth. My system is utmost dynamic. It is impossible for me to listen to classic orchestral music in the background because most is too dynamic. The other day the UPS man rang the doorbell, heard the music and asked me if we were artists. I asked him why he thought that and he said, because I had friends who made such great live music at my house. At first I thought he was making fun of me. He really thought I had a jazz combo playing live at my house. Afterwards I understood, because the music has a natural quality with the Firewall that exceeds the naturalness the Signatures impose on a system by far, very far.

Talk about details. If you want to, you can get lost in finding new details in records you thought you knew very well, because you heard them on a lot of very different systems. For example "A case of you" Live by Diana Krall. I always hear some coughs in the audience. I thought it was about 5 or 6 (I can't remember). With the Firewall in place you hear a plethora of coughs. You even have an idea where in the audience the people who cough sit and I think I can hear which coughs are by the same persons. But this is not important. Important is, that the emotional quality of my system is so much better than before, that I constantly get goose bumps and I am usually not a very emotional person. Something more related to music. ;-) You can easily hear the decay of a triangle while the whole orchestra is playing.

You can easily hear every detail there is (so it feels) but you don't have to. Just don't. Just listen to the music.

Talk about bass and energy. Listening to a bowed acoustic bass (I don't know the exact translation of "gestrichener Bass"). If you ever heard one just beside you, you know how the bass can make your body vibrate. You feel it at you sternum. The bass in my system has become exactly this quality and the ADAMs are good with bass but not really great. I know a lot of speakers which can do better in that region. With the Firewall it is like having a very good active subwoofer in my system.

Talk about color and resonance - exceptional.

Talk about speed, rhythm and interplay of instruments. On good recordings (mostly old ones - very sad!), you hear the interplay of the band.

Talk about highs - cymbals and hi-hats to die for. Attack, shimmer and resonance - wonderful. Top to bottom extended in a way I have not heard before.

Are you into computer audio? If so, you know about different players sounding different. I have never before so easily discerned the sound signature of the various players. Just for the fun of it I changed one of my interconnects to my old interconnect (not a cheap one!). I remember that I could hear that they sounded different, the one I replaced was good sounding but did not have as much air and did not have the same emotional quality of the HMS Sestetto. Changing the cable back was like listening to a broken system. The degradation of the sound was dramatic. I now knew why I did not like these cables.

So, is the Lessloss Firewall the most dramatic improvement I ever had in my system? YES. Is it worth the cost? Yes. It is a lot of money, an awful lot of money. But to bring the investment into perspective: I had very expensive cables in my system for evaluation and they would have cost almost as much as the Firewall and they did not bring this much improvement.

What others say: in the meantime 5 other people have heard my system and where from deeply impressed to shocked at the improvmnt. I will now invite my dealer who sold me speakers and my pre to let him listen to my system (the other day I took the Blackbodies to his place and he was impressed with the results). My wife said: This is really moving sound. My kids either say: "Can we listen to some music?" or "Turn down that music it is too loud." or "Turn down your music and let us listen to our music." I can now even enjoy some kids' music.

But most of all I am on a mission. On a mission to rediscover all of my digital albums. I can't wait to listen to my 1000 LPs. So I have a lot to do. But then again. Maybe I'll listen to these new interconnects from this Lithuanian guy? ;-)

Caution: if you buy the Firewall, then don't let it sit on thick carpet. Make sure that the Firewall sits with its 3 tiny spikes on something hard. Experiment with placement. I put some resonance control devices under the little spikes.

With great result. If you do not place the Firewall properly you will not hear the full potential! And: expect about 10-14 days burn in. AND: once burned in is not always burned in. I accidentally unplugged the unit and had to experience it the hard way. This is the only thing where you should not trust Louis: the sound right out of the box can be very frustrating. So if you don't like the Firewall, wait for a couple of days and you will know where the sound will be heading over the next couple of days.

Greetings from Berlin,
Claudius

Date Added: 02/20/2009 by Alexander Schmidt

Impact to the sound:

- More concrete, more realistic loyal instrument sounds, the positions of the musical instruments are more better, the deep and high lane width is better.
- The space is bigger, deeper and realistic loyal.
- The micro and macro dynamic have developed, more information, analytic airy.
- Te sound not silky, is not firm, not aggressive.
- It is informative in silent mode, does not empty.

About the picture:

- More plain, the picture is sharper
- More information
- Bigger light power contrast
- The picture is almost 3D.

Conclusion:

- It is excellent equipment which develops the picture and the sound as well!!!!

We tested this equipment with:

Amplifier: Unison Research, P70 (valve)
CD player: Unison Research, CDE
Loudspeakers: Opera Tebaldi
Turntable: Clear Audio, Master Solution AMG WOOD
Tone arm: Clear Audio, Unify 14"
Cartridge: Clear Audio, Stradivari
Phono preamplifier: Clear Audio, Balance
TV: Pioneer KRP600A
DVD player (blue-ray): Pioneer BDP LX91
Power generator: Clear Audio, Syncro
Interconnect cables: Acoustic Zen, Absolute
Loudspeaker cable: Gryphon
Power Cables: LessLoss

Great job! Congratulation!!!

Alexander Schmidt

Date Added: 01/22/2009 by Han de Hair The Netherlands

Dear Louis,

The Firewall and the Lessloss cables have arrived!

What a piece of gear!! When I unpacked it, I was very surprised to see how big it really was! It looks fantastic and is beautifully made, compliments on that.

Then I installed everything, that took me some time because of its size but setting it up was very easy. When it was in its place, I could start playing...

My first impressions:

First thing that came to my mind was that what I heard was very detailed, really crystal clear and with an impressive black background. The sound was a bit thin however and lacked the authority that I usually get from my system. Had to play on a higher volume than normal. A bit disappointing until I realised that of course the Firewall needed some time to break in!

Today I left my system switched on and now I'm listening to all of my favourite cd's and I'm getting happier and happier. The detail and crystal clearness are at least as magic as I heard yesterday and the dynamics, authority and full bodiedness are back, even on a higher level than I ever got from my system! It sounds fantastic!

After a few days of listening I feel like being in "audio heaven". I'm so glad that I have found your website and the Firewall! My set is playing like never before and I have thought about the right words to describe that. The only thing that kept coming to my mind was that everything has become more real. When I play Tom Waits it feels as if he is singing and playing his little organ in my very living room, fantastic!

Conclusion after two weeks:

This Firewall is phenomenal! More detail in every aspect (low mid and high), more stage, speed and dynamics, a significant gain in clearness and most of all a more real and natural sound.

Thanks again and we'll keep in touch!

Best regards, Han

Equipment used:

Source: Linn Unidisk

Preamp : NAT Utopia

Amp : 2x NAT SE3 monoblocks

Loudspeakers : Dynaudio C2

Interlinks: Siltech Compass Lake and Snowlake

Loudspeakercables: Siltech Emperor

Powercables: Siltech Ruby Hill and Lessloss

Netfilter: Lessloss Firewall

Date Added: 12/23/2008 by Alan Carruth

I just installed the Firewall in my system to compliment the 5 DFPC I previously installed. I am absolutely stunned by the quality of the sound!!! The sound stage is enormous; the voices and instruments are relaxed and fluid; the background is as black as I've ever heard on any high end system (my system is Jeff Rowland amps and preamp, Sonic Frontier CD transport and DAC with Nordost Valhalla and Odin interconnects, Wilson WATT/Puppy 7 speakers). I have never felt as much a part of the music as I am now. What a joy!!! I could listen all night. Even my wife is astounded, and she usually doesn't sit still very long to listen. Thank you so much Louis. I highly recommend the Firewall to anyone seeking to dramatically improve their music listening experience.

Date Added: 12/05/2008

Dear all,

I heard a one of the first Firewalls in our showroom.

Our system had as a powerfiltering device the famous Isotek Titan.

As a source we had a Audio Aero Capitole.

Of course we listened with our Kaiser Kawero Speaker

And how was the sound?

I did never, never hear such a difference from a power filter.

After one song I decided to switch our development system to be feed by a Lessloss Firewall.

What is immediately perceivable is the "black background" of the musical event. Sound stage is much more stable and the tone itself has the right harmonics. You can feel the body of the instruments. Wood sound like wood. Brass like brass.

After that experience I decided to join Lessloss as exhibitor for the RMAF 2008.

I was pretty sure that we would perform on ultra high level using the Firewall in Denver

If anyone is interested in purchasing a Isotek Titan, please let me know.

I will make a good price ...

Best regards

Rainer Weber

Technical Director

Kaiser Acoustics