

Eastern sparks

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THE WORLD of high-end audio abounds with so many products sporting stratospheric prices, I sometimes wonder if it is a hobby only for the wealthy.



There also seems to be a widespread perception that the more expensive the product, the better it is. It is because of this scenario that I delight in finding rare gems, which deliver a lot of the performance of esoteric gear, but at a fraction of the price.

It is even more delightful when the product is from a brand you never hear of, from a country that is hardly known for high-end audio gear and the product category is one where generic gear is regarded as good enough and spending more is a waste of money.

Recently, I happened upon a product that met all these criteria and so the 'delight meter' in my head went nuts. The brand is LessLoss, the product category is power cords and the country

is Lithuania.

This Lessloss Signature series power cord was sent to me to review in a nondescript envelope and although the cord itself had very good build quality, there was nothing out of the ordinary from the looks of it.

I put it through the mandatory two-week burn-in period during which I was pleasantly surprised to see that the braided design of the cord made it helpfully flexible when connecting it to an audio component. Once burnt in, I used it to connect my amplifier to the wall power outlet. Given my experience with most other after market power cords, I was expecting a subtle to moderate difference to the sonic performance of my system.

To my surprise, I could immediately hear the difference even before I could reach my listening sweet spot. It seemed like each musical note had been scrubbed clean, the silence between the notes were quieter and the music sounded so much more like the real thing. The difference was so astounding, I just had to switch back to my reference power cord and then to the LessLoss model again just to confirm that the difference in the sonic reproduction could indeed be credited to the LessLoss power cord.

I never realised that there was so much of grunge in the sound of my audio system till I started using the LessLoss power cable. After a few hours of listening I realised that it also reduced the fatigue factor that comes from listening to distorted music. The blissful listening session went well into the night till my eyelids grew so heavy then I reluctantly switched off the system to go to bed.

The next day I invited a few audiophile friends over for an audition just to see if they could detect the same difference that I'd heard. All of them heard a positive difference. Many of them opined that it was equal to a Dh2,500 to Dh4,500 upgrade of a source component like a CD player.

So what engineering magic did LessLoss use to produce a power cable that makes such a positive difference? That's what we will look at next week.

(If you have any views or queries on consumer electronics, email them to emailgomes@gmail.com)