

Audience Studio ONE

interconnects and loudspeaker cables

Alan Sircom

really like Audience's Au24SE cable. It's one of my go-to cables, especially where solid-core is called for. And now it's gone, replaced by Studio ONE... and I couldn't be happier!

Why? Because Studio ONE does everything Au24SE did and more but doesn't ramp up the cost in the process. Everything good about Au24SE transfers over to Studio One, it smooths out what few bad bits there were about Au24SE and sprinkles in a few good new bits of its own. I was never a good Boy Scout (how was I supposed to know there was something in the rules about human sacrifice?) but... Job Done!

Unlike many audio cable companies – that go for a cable that is as thick as physically possible – Audience's solid-core interconnect and speaker cable designs are deliberately slimline. While this might not tick the boxes of those who select their audio cables purely by weight and girth, the more grown-up of us choose our audio equipment based on sonic performance and it's here where the Studio ONE shines. Like its Au24SE predecessor, Studio ONE uses high-purity oxygen-free copper conductors, but now the quality of those materials are improved, especially with the use of cross-linked polyethylene (XLPE) dielectric. The other big change to Studio ONE, however, is the use of Audience's own EHVP, or Extreme



High-Voltage Process. This uses the application of high voltages in specific combinations to align the crystalline structure of the metal conductors and screen during a factory burn-in.

In fact, the slim nature of Audience cables in general is deliberate. The size and construction of the cable contributes to its low impedance, while this – coupled with the lower mass of the cable design itself – makes for a cable that reduces eddy currents. The obsession with low-mass,

high-performance design extends to the braided outer jacket and the use of Eichmann bullet plugs for the RCA connections.

No fuss

We tried both Studio ONE interconnects and loudspeaker cables. There are power cords too, but at the time of review were unavailable outside of 110V regions. The cables look functionally identical until you get to the termination; they are both thin, >>

EQUIPMENT REVIEW
Audience Studio ONE



“
The Studio ONE cables show how accurate they are by their chameleon-like nature.

» flexible cables with a black jacket with a single red thread running helically along the cable. They are directional, but the direction indicators are subtle. In a way that seems to typify all things Audience does, these are very 'no-fuss' designs; not so flexible that they will turn into a rat's nest of wire if left unattended for a nanosecond, but not so weighty or inflexible that they can't be used in relatively inaccessible 'back of the system' spaces. They are good at rejecting RF interference without wearing such rejection like a badge of honour. Sure, beefilicious cables lay claim to being more reinforced against damage, but we're not jumping up and down on our cables daily, and what you gain in reinforcement along the length of the cable you lose in additional strain at the termination with the bigger boys. In short, these are 'realistic' cables in terms of design and overall flexibility.

These are not cables for those who erroneously want a wire-shaped tone control; those wanting a cable to give the bass a bit of a lift or add some expression to the higher frequencies. Instead, this is a cable that demands you get those performance parameters 'sorted' elsewhere; this one just speaks 'truth'.

The Audience Studio ONE cables unpick the sound, but not in a brutal way. You get to hear deep into the

mix, with excellent vocal articulation, super dynamic range and fast transient response. This last – the cable's ability to start and stop with the music – sounds like something that shouldn't have any relationship with 'wire' but in listening it delivers excellent timing, especially in any system that is attuned to 'PRaT'.

The Studio ONE cables show how accurate they are by their chameleon-like nature; a system that emphasises timing... people will like the Studio ONE's precise timing. Those who like a good soundstage will comment at just how big the imagery is when the Studio ONE cables are in place. Meanwhile, detail hounds will love the way Studio ONE cables deep dive into the recording to pull out precise details. And each will praise the cables for their accuracy in their personal favourite characteristics. Just like Au24SE use to, but more so.

Accuracy here is a dynamic thing. We sometimes equate 'accuracy' with something 'worthy but dull'... out comes the 'Cuckoo Clock' speech from *The Third Man*. But here, it's a dynamic, breathing thing, letting you deeper into the music at every turn. That good RF rejection comes through in the depth of the silences between and around the notes (unless you play a lot of speed metal, when the silences

come between tracks) but that only highlights just what the equipment is doing more. And I couldn't put a pin between the two in terms of performance; the speaker cables and the interconnects perform equally well.

Yes, set against the absolute benchmarks, there are more layers to be swept aside and more to be had from the music. But not much more, and bear in mind that many of those absolute benchmarks cost five or six times the cost of their Studio ONE equivalents. In truth, the only real shortcoming is more of a question aimed elsewhere... is your system up to the task?

Less is more!

I was desperately trying not to wring out 'Less Is More' here, but it fits so well with Audience Studio ONE; less really is more. The cables weigh less than most, they add less to the sound and you hear more of the signal that passes from one device to the other. While all cables make a claim to do just that, Audience actually does it, and does that neutrality with greater accuracy and precision, and without recourse to Star Trek materials and Harry Potter explanations. For both cables, Studio ONE is the honest cable we all need right now. +

Price and contact details

Audience Studio ONE
interconnects £1,200/1m

Audience Studio ONE loudspeaker
cables £2,500/3m, w/banana plugs

Manufacturer Audience
audience-av.com

UK Distributor Signature Audio Systems
signaturesystems.co.uk
+44(0)7738 007776