

AVS 2016 - Warsaw, Poland

Written by Doug Schneider

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AVS 2016: Electronics, Part 2

This is the second and final installment on electronics at the Audio Video Show (AVS) 2016. Featured are those products that are new or were most interesting to me. Unlike the other write-ups from this show that I've already done, though, only one of the brands highlighted here is from Poland -- AVS is attracting exhibitors from all over the place. All prices in euros.



Pink Faun -- weird name, but cool products. The company is from the Netherlands, and they started out many years ago as do-it-yourselfers who created audio gear, probably for themselves and for their friends. Eventually, their reputations attracted a significant number of customers and they became a full-fledged manufacturer. While these two products are not brand new (they're a couple of years old), we've never covered the brand before, and I thought they were so interesting that they needed to be shown in this report. First up is the 2.12 network streamer, priced starting at €4990. It's intended to improve upon the two main problems that most computers have: noisy fans and poor-quality switch-mode power supplies. To combat these issues, Pink Faun . . .



. . . used cooling pipes instead of a fan for the CPU and built its own high-quality linear power supply. You can add various upgrades to the base 2.12, such as improved clocks, for an additional cost. One particularly interesting feature is its I2S output, which, of course, you need to use with an I2S-compatible DAC. Not surprisingly . . .



. . . Pink Faun offers a few models that have an I2S input. Its flagship, the DAC 2.32, starts at €3990 and has I2S, S/PDIF optical and coaxial, and AES/EBU digital inputs. It's a 32-bit DAC with a separate power supply that, in its base form, uses four DAC chips per channel (for a total of eight), but can be upgraded to use 16 DAC chips per channel (so 32 in total). Combining the outputs of multiple DAC chips results in an averaging out of inherent errors unique to each one, which usually results in better noise and distortion performance. The 2.32 supports PCM and DSD, and can have its oversampling turned on or off at the flick of a switch (the company prefers no oversampling, but lets the customer decide). It also has a tubed output stage. As with the 2.12, other upgrade options for the 2.32 are available for an additional cost.