

CAUGHT IN THE NET

Standard IT gear is designed to be low-cost and effective for PC data and gaming” but is “simply inadequate for high-quality digital music” Melco say. High-end managed enterprise switches can be optimised for audio use, but Melco reckons that even then “there are serious limitations”. Hence the £1,199 S100, said to “improve the sound quality from any network audio device with an Ethernet connection”.

With parent company Buffalo Technology's experience to draw on, the result is an “advanced architecture, unlike that of any other data switch”. The S100's audio-specific mainboard, built into a vibration-isolating aluminium-chassis, features ten ports (four 100Mbps, four 1Gbps, two SFP/LC optical), a 1.5MB packet buffer, powerful processor and “audio-grade capacitor bank”.

Advantages include low-noise design (you can even turn off the LEDs), external power supply, highly precise data-handling and internal packet-traffic settings that have been optimised for NAS drives, routers (for streaming services), Roon devices and of course Melco products.

Alan Ainslie, Melco Audio's General Manager, told us that the S100 “restores the magic of the source stream, as no IT device can possibly do”.

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