PRESS RELEASE
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Computer Audio Design (CAD) upgrades its award-winning Ground Control, taking noise reduction to a whole new level

Computer Audio Design's GC1 Ground Control was created to tackle high frequency noise reduction at the level of the signal ground plane, delivering remarkable sonic results that have since earned the company multiple awards worldwide. Now, designer Scott Berry is launching an upgraded version, the GC1.1. How does it compare? "Just listen."

To read the many accolades for the original GC1 Ground Control from worldwide press and customers over the past six years, one might be hard pressed to imagine how it could be bettered. Since the GC1 was singled out as a 'Hot Product' at the Munich High End Show in 2016, it doesn't seem to have stopped causing audiophile jaws to drop. So, designer Scott Berry is very much looking forward to taking his new GC1.1 'out on the road.'

"The impact on sound quality is more significant than you might anticipate," says Berry, of the result of tackling high frequency noise in this ground-breaking way. "Allowing customers to hear a Ground Control is our best sales technique."

Why does tackling high frequency noise at signal ground level make such a strong difference?

Over the past decade, the amount of high frequency noise on our mains power has increased dramatically due to the use of computers, routers, modems, WiFi and switch mode power supplies, etc. At the same time, the high frequency noise that is generated within our audio systems has also increased, largely through greater use of digital components.

Berry believes that this high frequency noise, while in itself inaudible, is so damaging that it changes the very ‘personality’ of sound.

To get to the bottom of it, he – unlike most audio engineers – opted to target the signal ground plane, having discovered that all is not as it may seem on that plane.

In an audio system there are two independent voltage reference points: earth and signal ground. Signal ground is a point to which all signals within the device are referenced, and is the "negative" side of an electrical connector – whether RCA, XLR, USB, etc. So when you measure, say, a component’s signal/noise ratio, dividing the maximum output of a device by its minimum output, the reference point for both measurements is signal ground. But if the ground plane has noise on it, then such specifications can be misleading.

“Most people imagine that signal ground is a nice, flat uncontaminated thing that we call ‘reference’,” explains Berry. ‘But in reality this is far from true. Signal ground is contaminated. It is full of high frequency noise. It is my belief that reducing high frequency noise on the signal ground plane is a key factor in ensuring the clearest possible sonic platform for a hi-fi system.”

Clean-up operation

The purpose of CAD’s Ground Control is to ‘clean up’ high frequency noise from the signal ground plane. Like any electrical signal, this noise will always seek the path of least resistance and flow around the system searching for a place to ground. The Ground Control provides a simple and effective route for it to do so and converts the noise into heat.

Like the original GC1, the new GC1.1 Ground Control’s methods for achieving this are something of a closely guarded secret, but involve a highly complex combination of proprietary materials, borrowing technology from aerospace engineering and featuring an ultra-precise internal configuration and construction. The challenge, reports Berry, is the fact that noise in everyone’s system is different, operating in varying frequency bands. The materials brought together in the GC1.1 therefore had to effectively tackle a broad frequency spectrum. Considerable attention is paid to the GC cables and connectors, since it is essential that the route from signal ground into the Ground Control is the easiest one that the high frequency noise can take.

The GC1.1 Ground Control can be connected to any audio component that has an unused input or output connection. Whether a DAC, streamer, computer, CD Player, NAS, router, phono stage or preamplifier, etcetera – if it has a spare input or output connector (RCA, XLR, spade, USB or Ethernet) then you can plug in the GC1.1 Ground Control.

Like its predecessor, the GC1.1’s design is sleek, hyper-minimalist and crafted to fit discreetly into your system.

Dimensions: 322mm (w) x 88mm (h) x 111mm (d). Weight: 4.65kg.

Pricing and availability

The CG1.1 Ground Control is available now, priced at £1,995 (incl. VAT) in the UK, and $2,250 in the US. Cables are priced separately, at £300 (incl. VAT) and US$350.

Consumer contacts for publication

Computer Audio Design products are sold through specialist dealers in the UK and worldwide. For more information:

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Press contact

For more information, product samples or high-resolution print-ready images please contact David Denyer on 07976 646 404 or david@ddpr.co.uk

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