

# Something You Have Never Heard Before!

## Tech Talk by *Steve Metcalf, Gibson Sound & Vision*

I wanted to write about something different, something that most of you have never heard before. I wanted to talk about the speakers in your home. Yes, that's right. I am trying to say that most people have never actually heard their own speakers. Sure, you can turn on the stereo and listen to music, but how much of what you hear is actually coming from your speakers? What can be done to ensure that you will (in fact) hear the beautiful sounds that your speakers should produce.

Let's discuss why it is that you are not really hearing your speakers. The answer lies in how your ears and brain work together to process sounds. When a sound reaches your ears, your brain lumps it together with other sounds that arrive shortly thereafter. This is known as Haas effect. In a



home theatre or listening room, your brain is interpreting the sound of the speaker and the sound of the room as if it were only one sound. The result is a change of tone and smearing of details. In a worse-case scenario, acoustic conditions in a room will make expensive speakers sound like cheap speakers.

Any room that has not been acoustically treated can be improved upon with simple, cost effective and aesthetically pleasing acoustic treatments. The treatments that are available will make drastic improvements to the sound quality of your listening space at only a fraction of the cost of your wonderful speaker system.

To find out what your room really sounds like, here is an experiment for you: Bring a mobile phone with a speaker function (and a friend) into your listening room. Now, leave the room and place a call to that mobile phone. Have your friend put the call on speaker. You will now start to hear the echo in the room as your friend is talking. That echo that you now hear accounts for more than half of the sound that you think you hear from your speakers. So, in truth you have never really heard them before.

To learn more about acoustics, come and visit Gibson's on Columbia between King and Weber.



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Weekdays 9-9,  
Saturday 9-5:30,  
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