

Bowers & Wilkins premieres two complete new architectural speaker series at CEDIA 2009

Most important custom product launches in the company's history



North Reading, MA—September 2009— We maintain a singular ambition—to offer the best residential loudspeakers available, dollar for dollar, in every significant category,” notes Doug Henderson, B&W’s Vice President, Sales & Marketing. “We’ve enjoyed great success in the custom speaker category for many years, but we’ve set our sights even higher with these two new ranges. Simply put, we’ve focused our considerable resources to create a market-leading standard for performance, ease of installation and appearance quality at their respective price levels.

Through our network of the top dealers around the globe, B&W has sold more high-end loudspeakers than any other brand in the history of the industry, year in and year out, because the value offered is unambiguous. Now, we are thrilled to introduce you to two new custom series which have the potential to super-charge architectural speaker sales in a way that only B&W could.

CI 600 Series

Fast installation, elegant cosmetics, placement versatility and outstanding B&W sonics

In the process of defining the brief for the CI600 Series, Dr. John Dibb and members of his design team paid a number of visits to North American dealers and discussed the pros and cons of current custom speakers. Feedback suggested standard installation techniques are often awkward at best, with the need to juggle a power screwdriver in one hand and a speaker in the other (usually from the top of a ladder), and with little feedback as to how well the dog-legs are cinching down on the sheetrock. Input also pointed to the desirability of a less visible profile, and greater flexibility in terms of placement. Finally, many dealers commented on their need for more expensive models. To be truthful, there were very few negatives raised about the sound quality of our present models, many of which have pleased customers for years. But of course, Dr. Dibb felt we could improve performance, too. He always does!

Meet the QuickDog™

It won’t fetch your paper, but it will help you finish your jobs faster and more easily! Inspiration usually springs from a keen appreciation of a problem. The QuickDog™, and the tool-less installation process it affords, is such a case. B&W’s industrial design team spent considerable time looking for a better way to mount in-wall and in-ceiling speakers with the least amount of effort and time on the part of the installer. Time, as the saying goes, is money. We are proud to say they came up with a brilliant idea! To install one of our new CI 600 speakers you merely take the frame and place it in the opening. Then, you reach through the frame opening and push down on the self-locking QuickDog™ mechanisms, which tighten the frame securely in place (more securely than is possible with a conventional screw down dog.) The speaker wire is attached to terminals on the frame, not the speaker. Finally, you simply take the speaker baffle and place it in the frame until it snaps into place. Terminals on the baffle mate with terminals on the frame to complete the electrical connection and the baffle is locked in place simply by pushing in self-locking pins. Removal is just as easy. It takes only a quarter turn of the locking pin to release and remove the speaker if required. The QuickDogs™ are also easily released. No tools required! The labor savings on a large job can be substantial.

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A thin-bezel, scrimless design...that conceals a Bowers & Wilkins speaker!

In keeping with our stealth installation objective, all the new models feature a very thin bezel, thus providing a decidedly unobtrusive profile sure to please even the most décor conscious. We've taken a new approach to the thin-bezel, too, one that allows the visible edge to be firmly cinched to the sheet rock, thus avoiding the gaps that plague other designs. Additionally, the surfaces behind the grille are dark, including black glass-fiber or dark blue Kevlar® cones, black soft-dome tweeters or dark grey anodized metal dome tweeters. Thanks to the dark interior surfaces, no grille scrim is required which means better sound. Another unique aspect of this range is that there is an easily fit square grille option for the round in-ceiling models. As we know, it's hip to be square these days!

Performance details that matter.

It simply wouldn't be a new B&W range if we didn't look to making even better sound than the last, and the CI 600 Series is no exception. The entry level models offer considerable sonic performance, with quality B&W designed drive units and careful voicing for smooth, non-fatiguing sound. As you move up the range, a host of performance enhancements are introduced—Kevlar cones; Nautilus Swirl™ tweeters; larger voice coils and magnets; and cast driver baskets, to name a few. Each step reveals a clear performance gain. Another refinement found in the upper ceiling models is a unique variable position tweeter coupled with a three position bass-mid EQ switch (0/15/30 degree positions) which for the first time allows you to properly balance a physically directed tweeter with the fixed bass-mid driver.

A complete line-up that's easy to remember!

The 600 series features an easy to follow nomenclature – the first digit is the series (i.e., 6 = 600 series), the second digit is the driver size (6 = 6") and the third digit is the quality level, which, in keeping with our tradition, has the smallest number at the top.

Eight-inch in-ceiling models

- CCM684 Retail \$600/pair
- CCM683 Retail \$850/pair
- CCM682 Retail \$1200/pair

Six-inch in-ceiling models

- CCM665 Retail \$400/pair
- CCM664 Retail \$550/pair
- CCM663 Retail \$700/pair
- CCM662 Retail \$1000/pair

Six-inch stereo models

- CCM664SD Retail \$350/each
- CCM663SD Retail \$500/each

Six-inch wall mount models

- CWM664 Retail \$550/pair
- CWM663 Retail \$750/pair

Five-inch wall mount model:

- CWM652 Retail \$550/pair

The all new CI 600 Series is launching 1st Quarter 2010

The all new CI 600 Series will be premiered at CEDIA 2009, and we expect to begin shipments to our dealers in early 2010. The transition, however, will be easy since we designed the new range to fit the same cut-outs as the current models (except for the CWM652, which is slightly larger.)

CI 700 Series

Be first ... or be best!

The fact is, certain competitive companies have launched more costly architectural speakers than B&W, particularly in the ceiling category, and have laid claim to "best" as a result. You won't be surprised to learn that we don't consider this acceptable! As creators of the most popular, most critically acclaimed high performance loudspeakers of all time, we are happy to take on all comers! Competition should make the best better, and so it is in this case. We also recognize that free standing speakers simply won't work in many applications where B&W performance is otherwise desirable. While our flagship Signature 8NT and CWM8180 models are unquestionably top performers, their large, preconstruction-only enclosures can present challenges. Further, the ceiling has become the location of choice for many consumers and this reality provided us a motivation to bring higher B&W performance to this application.

Elevating expectations for flush speaker performance and install-ability

Our brief for the step-up CI 700 custom installation range included offering the best performance available at anywhere near the price, a highly refined aesthetic presentation, fully B&W engineered enclosures to enhance sound quality and limit transmission to adjacent spaces and an easy to retrofit format. Our commercial and critical success with the current CT 700 models made them the obvious basis for this new range. The CI 700 series deliver synergistic "mix and match" options for side and surround channels in a CT 700 Custom Theater system or can be used in an all flush mount theater context, in-ceiling or in-wall, with equally superb results. They also work exceptionally well for very high quality stereo music listening, filling large spaces with effortlessly dynamic sound.

The unique retro-fitable 700 series baffle and enclosure system

Bowers & Wilkins' famed Research Establishment at Steyning applied their unrivalled expertise in enclosure design to the CI 700 Series. They used advanced measuring and modelling techniques, many B&W developed, to this end, along with their expertise in materials science. The CI 700 models use fully B&W engineered enclosures that fit through the frame cut-out.

Matrix™ stiffening is combined with a dense glass-fiber reinforced ABS material to prevent unwanted resonances. Further, you will note that the ceiling models' enclosures have a curved back, which adds additional strength.



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Installation is easy, too. This is a two-part system where the frame/enclosure is fit in the cut-out first and secured, and then the baffle is installed into the frame. The baffle itself has been “critically formed” with smooth surfaces to minimize diffraction and project the sound into the listening space without “boxy” distortion that typically characterizes competitive designs that are relatively crudely constructed. Like the CI 600 models, the baffle is held securely by captive, locking-pins and is just as easily removed as installed.

The CI 700 Series uses a unique enclosure design for the wall models, which lets them fit into a 2” x 4” stud bay, and mount through the cut-out, yet provides the bass driver with enough internal volume to make deep, undistorted bass. We’ve also provided the wall models with our Flow Port™ venting, increasing efficiency and output. Performance details include Nautilus™ tube-loaded tweeters, cast bass-mid driver baskets and powerful motor systems, and high quality crossover components. The ceiling models are compact 14” squares that will fit neatly in any ceiling using 2” x 8” joists or larger. They sit very flat on the ceiling surface for a remarkably unobtrusive appearance.

Custom Ceiling Mount Key Features

- 3 quality levels – all approximately 14” square
- Driver complement aligns with CT700 Series
- 88 – 90 dB sensitivity
- Critically formed 45° degree baffle directs sound well down into the room with fully flush grille
- Dense, glass-fiber reinforced, Matrix™-stiffened enclosure
- Magnetic grille sits in edge of frame, not overhanging, for a tight fit to sheet rock surface
- Visible bezel edge .26”
- Depth behind surface 7.22” (fits between 8” or greater joists)
- CCM7.5 Retail \$750/each (Match with CT7.5)
- CCM7.4 Retail \$1000/each (Match with CT7.4)
- CCM7.3 Retail \$1500/each (Match with CT7.3)

700 Series Custom Wall Mount Speakers

- 3 quality levels—complement CT700 range
- Dense, glass-fiber reinforced, Matrix™-stiffened enclosure fits 2 x 4” stud bay
- Sensitivity 88db – 90 db
- Flowports™
- Visible bezel .26”
- Black anodised brushed and engraved logo plate
- CWM7.5 Retail \$600/each (Match with CT7.5)
- CWM7.4 Retail \$800/each (Match with CT7.4)
- CWM7.3 Retail \$1500/each (Match with CT7.3)

The CI 700 Series will be available by year end.

CI 700 production is scheduled to begin shipping to B&W dealers starting in December.

Summary

These are the first Bowers & Wilkins custom ranges that have been developed comprehensively as groups. Each model ushers in a higher level of performance, fit and finish, and features than our prior offerings. Our Senior Development Engineer, Dr. John Dibb, who has developed revered speakers such as the Signature Diamond, led the development team on this project.

Staying in the line up to complement the two new ranges are the venerable Signature 8NT and DS-8 models; the new angled flush mount in-ceiling models CCM-816 and CCM-818; the flat-panel friendly LCR-7; the CWM Cinema 6 LCR; the entry level CCM616, CCM618 and CWM6120 models; and of course, the recently added ISW-4 subwoofer with SA-250 amplifier.

When it comes to high performance custom speakers, it’s a whole new ball game with the launch of the B&W CI 600 and CI 700 Series. Customers will love the super clean cosmetics and the genuine B&W sound.

About Bowers & Wilkins

Bowers & Wilkins (B&W) is Britain’s leading exporter of loudspeakers, and is also the number-one imported brand in North America. Since 1966, B&W’s “Quest for Perfection” has resulted in a succession of technical loudspeaker innovations that have satisfied the world’s most demanding listeners. B&W’s rave reviews and universal acceptance as the monitor for classical music recordings have helped B&W become the dominant premium loudspeaker company throughout the world.

For additional information visit www.bowers-wilkins.com

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