



MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER

Monitor Audio

MONITOR AUDIO'S MONOLITHIC Platinum II speaker drivers were built using the lightest and most advanced metal components available, but its production process began with something altogether more low-tech: a recipe.

"We have a product development team, based in Rayleigh, Essex, who we give complete ownership of each project to," says Alex Emson, Monitor Audio's director of global sales and marketing. "They start by going out and sourcing materials."

For the leather that covers the front of each speaker, the product development team chose a 180-year-old Scottish business called Andrew Muirhead and Sons. "We had samples sent down, which we analysed, and only then did we decide whether their products worked within *our* products." It's just one example of Monitor Audio's obsession with attention to detail. Another is the wooden speaker cabinet, crafted from Santos rosewood and natural ebony, coated 11 times in clear gloss piano lacquer, which not only looks beautiful, but allows it to withstand bumps.

Then there's what goes on inside. The products in the range, from the PL100 II bookshelf speakers to the two metre-tall floor-standing PL500 II, feature ceramic-coated aluminium magnesium metal alloy driver cones, which, unlike the plastic ones used by its competitors, are lighter, more rigid and stronger. This doesn't just make the sound better but, crucially, the silences, too.

"Imagine you're listening to a recording of a clarinet solo backed by an orchestra," says Alex. "With our speakers, you're going to be able to shut your eyes and pinpoint where that clarinet actually is, as if it's a performance in your living room."

The range took three years to develop, but it builds on the first Platinum series, which itself took six years to create. In fact, the British-based company has been revolutionising speakers since 1972. Today, its 60-strong team distribute to 75 countries, including as far afield as Brazil, Japan and China. But why put so much effort into premium audio, when they could surely generate larger profits through simpler kit? "You can't invite The Beatles, Queen or ELO into your living room," says Alex. "Our job is to give people the best experience we can."

— www.monitoraudio.co.uk