

# Weizhi PRS-6 Power Conditioner

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## *Introduction*

A few months ago, Brian Ackerman of Aaudio Imports mentioned a new power conditioner he had obtained. He said that his preliminary evaluation was that it was an outstanding performer at a more real-world price. I have reviewed several other products that Brian markets, and they have all been excellent; not necessarily at lower price points, but certainly excellent. It was a no-brainer to ask for a review.

Let me start by pointing out that this review is relatively short. Before I started writing reviews, I had often assumed that a short review meant that the reviewer gave the product short shrift. That is not the case here. The reason why this review is short is that the Weizhi PRS-6 does *exactly* what its feature list says it does, and does it very well. All you have to do is look at Aaudio's website to read the product description, and you've really got it. The Weizhi PRS-6 power conditioner is a very excellent high-end power conditioner and competes with the best available.



## *Characteristics I Listen For in a Power Conditioner*

Early power conditioners all had major shortcomings. One of the most prevalent was the loss of dynamics and explosiveness when amplifiers are connected to them. This was especially true with very high-power amps. As a consequence, many audiophiles only used conditioners on low-power equipment. The functionality became limited to cleaning up the sound of the front-end and/or the preamp.

A related issue was the loss of pace and timing that occurred when using certain conditioners that added body to the musical presentation. They sounded great with languid music, but made lively music feel annoyingly slow. Altered tonality was also an issue with several conditioners. These units sought to soften the rampant “digititis”, but in doing so they often affected the tonal qualities of a wide range of instruments, as well as vocals. For every piece of music that benefitted, there was another whose musical presentation suffered.

Just as is the case with virtually every other audio component, even the best equipment possesses a voicing that reflects the designer's view of the most accurate reproduction of music. There are various iterations, but generally speaking, there are those whose philosophy is to reproduce exactly what's on the recording, while others seek to add body, extend the top- or bottom-ends, or reproduce a feeling of “live”. When talking about simpler, lower-tech conditioners, there are also iterations which I'd characterize as “hyper-clinical”, “thickly muddy” or “do nothing”. The differences among the best conditioners are less about shortcomings and more about how the playback represents the actual recorded performance. It is rare that any of these units ever sound bad on any particular genre of music – they just don't sound as good as another conditioner when that genre is played.

## *A Word about Aesthetics and Practicality*



In addition to the acoustic factors described above, appearance, size and functionality play roles in evaluating power conditioners. The three are often related. An 8-outlet conditioner will almost always be larger than a 4-outlet unit. Larger units with a greater number of outlets are necessary for systems that are all run off of a single electrical circuit. Systems powered by multiple circuits require multiple conditioners. The larger the unit, the more obvious it is, and the more important is its appearance. Smaller units are easier to fit into smaller spaces, etc., etc. As we'll see, the Wehzi PRS-6 has a nice provision of these various attributes.

## Description & Initial Auditioning

I'm not going to repeat what is readily available on the Audio Imports and Weizhi websites; suffice it to say that it is a compact 6-outlet power conditioner built with the absolutely finest components. The only issue I have with the website descriptions is the term "power regeneration". I usually associate this term with a very specific class of power products, not a passive power conditioner, which the PRS-6 is. Having said that, the PRS-6 certainly worked better than any of the power regenerators I've previously had in my system.

I have owned an early- rendition Monster unit, an original and then upgraded PS Audio 300 (\$995), the Walker Velocitor (\$3,750, earlier version) and a pair of Audience Adept Response RP-1's (\$495 each). I've also had the Nordost Thor (\$3,300) in my system for a few weeks. Of these units, the Velocitor and the Thor provided the most pronounced improvement, and between the Velocitor and the Thor, the Velocitor provided better results in my system. The main improvement was an increase in speed, pace and timing, but at a slight loss of weight. My current reference is the excellent [Lessloss Firewall](#) (\$5,000) that I reviewed in April 2009, of which I own three.

I started using the Weizhi PRS-6 without break-in, but I believe that Brian Ackerman had already performed some break-in before I received the unit. It sounded quite good out of the box and had minimal changes during the course of my review.



I first placed it in my "midfi" system, consisting of a modded Pioneer Elite DV-37 DVD-A player, Sony EP9ES digital preamp/processor (really quite an unappreciated little gem in its day), NAD 916 amp, Bowers & Wilkins SCM speakers and a pair of NHT Sub Two subwoofers. I also have a Direct TV DVR that provides satellite signals. I run this system with a Tributaries T100 Power Manager, which does not provide power filtering, though it does provide voltage regulation.

I substituted the Weizhi PRS-6 for the T100 and immediately could hear a cleaner and more detailed sound without any loss of PRAT or dynamics. When I say "cleaner", I mean *much* cleaner, as though I had upgraded all of my components. The soundstage also expanded and deepened, although the increase in width was modest, as the room itself was somewhat narrow, so there wasn't very much of an opportunity to get an increase. However, the depth increased substantially, extending well back beyond the front wall. This was quite interesting, since the B&W SCMs are mounted on wall shelves, and only extend out from the walls about four inches. This suggested to me that the increase in the recording's spatial cues was dramatic. This was verified when I moved the Weizhi PRS-6 to my main system.

Brian had told me that the PRS-6 would be highly neutral, which my first impressions seemed to confirm. He also said that the PRS-6's neutrality would allow use of any power cables, in essence giving you the ability to get a very clean and perfectly neutral presentation from your conditioner, but allowing some "tuning" by selecting your preferred power cable. I was able to verify this by substituting various different cables. More on this in my discussion of the Weizhi PRS-6 when I describe the results when inserting the PRS-6 in my main system.

Since I have a plasma monitor integrated with my basement system I decided to plug it into the PRS-6 to see what effect it would have. Interestingly, unlike the effect on the audio components, I did not immediately notice any difference in the system and was mildly disappointed. Just then I received a phone call which preoccupied me for nearly 30 minutes. When I came back to the plasma I was about to unplug the Weihzi when I noticed what I thought was an improvement in the picture. I looked for a while, and then unplugged the unit. Sure enough, there was an obvious decrease in picture clarity. Subsequent observations showed that the Weizhi PRS-6 significantly improved my video, but for some reason, it took longer to reach its performance peak than with audio equipment, so be patient if you try the PRS-6 on video.

This initial evaluation of the Weizhi PRS-6 clearly demonstrated the amount of decrease in background noise was very substantial. The amount of previously unavailable low-level detail made this very obvious. Only 3 or 4 other conditioners I've heard made this magnitude of difference in the music, and all of them are highly regarded in the audio community. It was time to make some direct comparisons.

## Head-To-Head Comparisons

I sold my other conditioners when I decided to purchase my second and third Lessloss Firewalls. However, I wanted to compare the PRS-6 with at least one other conditioner besides the Firewall. I made a few calls and was able to persuade one of my acquaintances to let me borrow his 4-year-old Walker Velocitor, predecessor to the current version, for a few days. This not only gave me two excellent conditioners to compare to the PRS-6, but it also allowed me to use a conditioner I was already very familiar with, since I had previously owned the Velocitor. In addition, I also pulled out several good power cords to use with the PRS-6: the [Lessloss DFPC Signature](#), the original [Lessloss DFPC](#), the PS Audio Premier SC, Silver Audio and some home brew power cables by acquaintances.

Since I power my main system with three separate dedicated electrical circuits, namely a 15-amp one for the front-end, and two 20-amp circuits for each monoblock, with a Lessloss Firewall plugged into each circuit, and only had one PRS-6 to play with, I had to determine what test configurations to employ.

My first comparison was to substitute the earlier-version Walker Velocitor for the Lessloss Firewall that powers my front-end. I wanted to first reacquaint myself with the Velocitor's signature. The components plugged into the Weizhi PRS-6 were the [Qsonix Q-105](#) music server, the [Esoteric P-70/D-70 transport/DAC combo](#), the MBL 6010D preamp and the [Lyngdorf RP-1 RoomPerfect Room Correction Device](#). Confirming my recollection, the Velocitor revealed lots of detail, and created the impression of slightly more speed and better PRAT, as well as better bass definition. However, this came at some expense to musical body and weight. I then removed the Velocitor and inserted the Weizhi PRS-6. I noticed more detail than was present with the Velocitor and a restoration of much of the body and weight that was present with the Firewall. Score one for the PRS-6.

One thing that I noted when I substituted the Weizhi PRS-6 for the Firewall was that the system still retained the character of the Lessloss DFPC Signature. My next step was to leave the PRS-6 in place and substitute the power cord running from the wall outlet to the PRS-6. I inserted the PS Audio Premier SC in place of the Lessloss DFPC Signature and the character of the sound shifted toward the sound of the Premier SC: a bit more prominent in the bass, a small shrinking of the soundstage and a more taut sound. This confirmed my earlier impression that the PRS-6 itself was highly neutral. This effect was repeated when I substituted the other PCs.

My next step was to reinsert the Lessloss Firewall and Lessloss DFPC Signatures to power my front-end, and then substitute the Weizhi PRS-6 in place of the Lessloss Firewall that fed my right speaker. This was a very difficult change to evaluate. The right side of the sound became a tad more...neutral?...transparent? These aren't quite the right words. The change was very subtle, which is logical given the fact that Lessloss DFPC Signatures till fed the PRS-6 and my Electrocompaniet monoblock, but it did sound just a tiny bit cleaner. I substituted the Walker Velocitor, and the differences were much more apparent, and pretty much exactly the same as when I used the Velocitor on the front-end. More detail, more body, etc.

I decided that I needed to feed both monoblocks from a single circuit filtered by a single Lessloss Firewall, and then substitute the Weizhi PRS-6. It took some work to get everything positioned, but I managed to get it going. After listening with single Firewall feeding both monoblocks, I first inserted the Velocitor. As usual, the Velocitor sounded quite good, with a clean and lively sound, but thinner than I'm used to from the Nemo monoblocks. At high volumes it began to show just a tiny bit of compression of the dynamics – not much, but noticeable. I then put in the PRS-6. All compression disappeared, the bass became fuller while remaining very lively, and I actually got just a tad more detail. This was excellent performance, beating out what was my previous reference conditioner.

Putting the Firewall back in for comparison created much difficulty. It was tough to formulate a description of the difference between the two units. Perhaps the best description harkens back to my earlier observation about "neutral" versus "live". The PRS seems to replicate everything as it is on the recording. Live music is really live, studio music is really studio. The Lessloss Firewall has as much detail, slam, treble extension, etc., but recreates the music with a bit more "you-are-there" sensibility. I have to admit that this probably means the Firewall is not as neutral as the PRS-6. Is this bad? I'm not sure. I think that anyone who has read my past reviews has noted that I prefer a total system sound which is not lean, but is more full-bodied. Maybe this means that I like my sound "colored" – I'm not sure. I already own three Firewalls and I still think they are the best I've heard, and they remain my favorites, but the Weizhi PRS-6 makes me think, and I never got to try *three* of them in my system. If the Firewalls really are #1, can the PRS-6 be 1A?

## Conclusion

If you are looking for one of the best conditioners available, and you absolutely love everything about your system, including the power cords, and don't want to change a thing about tonality and presentation, but are just seeking to reduce noise levels and be able to hear details masked by the low-level noise, look no further. I don't think I've encountered a more neutral audio product in my life. The Weizhi focuses *exclusively* on taking noise to lowest level possible. The resulting detail is phenomenal. I don't just mean the details of the music. I mean all the spatial cues you've been missing that reveal that the microphone was in row 14 center. Even if you want something to tweak other aspects of your system's sound, the Weizhi PRS-6 is among the best you can buy, and it allows you to adjust by intelligent selection of the power cords feeding the PRS-6 or the components connected to it. There are only 1 or 2 conditioners of this quality that I've personally encountered. Recommended without reservation.