

English Electric Claims Audiophile-Grade Switch

Written by Frederick Douglas
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Chord Company launches a first product under the English Electric brand-- the 8Switch, an ethernet switch the company says is designed to deliver high-quality sound from music streamed over a network.



The 8Switch comes inside a machined aluminium enclosure, one English Electric says provides "excellent" protection from acoustic and electrical noise. It offers x8 "audio-grade" 100/1000 Base-T gigabit ethernet ports, all featuring high and low electrical noise isolation to reduce data issues when streaming music over a network.

The front panel features a discrete LED panel with power, alarm and link status/speed indicators for each of the 8 ports. Resonance-damping feet help decouple the 8Switch from unwanted mechanical vibration, while a medical-grade power adapter promises to reduce electrical noise from AC sources and prevent mains quality issues from affect network signals. The switch also claims high power efficiency with a no-load power consumption of less than

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0.075W, plus short circuit, overload and over-voltage protection.

Driving the unit is a custom TCXO (Temperature Compensation Crystal Oscillator) with accuracy rated at 0.1ppm, higher than normal crystals and higher than a normal TCXO. It allows the 8Switch to generate higher-accuracy network signals and, in turn, provide more stable music data transmission. The power supply and clock-generation circuits have two electrical noise-isolation circuits to ensure stable network signals, and an EMI (Electromagnetic Interference) absorber helps further reduce noise from the digital circuit. In all, English Electric claims the 8Switch lowers jitter by 90% compared to standard network switches.

The 8Switch is available now. The package includes a Chord Company C-Stream digital streaming cable (0.75m).

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