

reduced distortion and improved performance when the amplifier is warm.

Also new is the SB-MX200D three way floor-type speaker system. Featuring a new lacquer coated mica composite woofer diaphragm, it is claimed to improve on the SB-MX200.



KEF targeted as Polk buys Meridian

American loudspeaker company Polk Audio is buying Britain's Meridian for \$4 million (£2.3 million) as the first stage of a deal which could culminate in its takeover of KEF.

English parent company AGI (Electronics), based in Maidstone, Kent, bought the highly-respected independent Meridian nearly four years ago. Under the AGI umbrella, Meridian has maintained its reputation for excellence.

Under the terms of the deal Polk has the option to buy the rest of AGI, which includes loudspeaker maker KEF within the next two years for \$8 million (£4.7 million) or a mixture of cash and shares.

Polk president George Klopfer said the initial deal would provide KEF with much-needed money to develop its product range. He said Polk had bought Meridian because 'we think it's a neat company'.

But Polk's marketing staff would be investigating the pos-

sibility of using the connection to sell their range of loudspeakers in Britain, which retail in the US for between \$200 and \$3,500.

AGI chairman Peter Gaskarth said he was happy with the deal which made sense because Polk sold through the same specialist shops in the US as Meridian, but to a different section of the hi-fi market.

'This agreement is a highly positive step towards the completion of the negotiations we commenced in September 1990,' said Gaskarth.

He added that the deal would make no difference to British hi-fi buyers, although the company will not longer be British.

Meanwhile, merger-target Meridian has launched a DSP-based preamplifier called the 601. This 600-series two-box unit uses a D/A system for analogue output employing a DAC7 converter chip and DSP – digital signal processing – which allows the listener to select speaker/room equalisation, loudness, octave equalisation, 78rpm equalisation, psycho-acoustic headphone compensation, 'Kube' functions and conventional tone controls. The 601 features an eight-digit dot-matrix display and source mapping to eight handset keys.

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