The family-run shop that became one of the world's biggest audio dealers turns 60

Thursday 5 November, 2026

Founded in the year England won the World Cup, this family-owned retailer from the edge of the Lake District is one of Europe's biggest luxury audio dealers, and six decades on, it wants the rest of Britain to hear why

Carlisle, 5 November 2026: Peter Tyson, the family-run Cumbrian retailer that ranks among the world's largest dealers for Linn and Naim Audio, celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. What began in 1966 as a small television shop in Carlisle is now one of the UK's largest independent hi-fi and AV specialists, with luxury showrooms in Carlisle, Workington and Newcastle upon Tyne, a national online and telesales business, *petertyson.co.uk* and a team of over 75 people.

Within the AV industry, Peter Tyson's standing with leading manufacturers is considerable: in some years it has been the world's largest dealer for both Linn and Naim Audio, and it is regularly placed among the top three worldwide for McIntosh. Yet beyond the North of England, many enthusiasts know the AV brands on Peter Tyson's shelves better than they know the name above the door. With its 60th anniversary, the company aims to change that.

From TV shop to three luxury showrooms

Peter Tyson had repaired and serviced televisions before opening his first shop on West Tower Street, Carlisle, in 1966. It was the year England won the World Cup and households were beginning to buy their own sets rather than rent them. The shop became one of the first independent television retailers in the city.

In the early 1970s the business moved into hi-fi, first with Japanese brands such as Kenwood, National Panasonic and Technics, and then with the specialist British manufacturers that would cement its reputation among audiophiles, including Arcam and Linn. Around the turn of the millennium, the company launched its website, *petertyson.co.uk,* making Peter Tyson one of the first hi-fi dealers in the country to sell online. That early start has helped create a sophisticated and comprehensive website with everything from accessories to high-end hi-fi.

In 2017, the company moved into a purpose-built showroom and distribution centre of around 30,000 sq ft on Shaddongate, Carlisle. A new 5,000 sq ft store at Lillyhall, Workington, followed in July 2025, and the Newcastle showroom has seen major improvements to its demonstration facilities.

Built for listening, side by side

Peter Tyson's AV demonstration facilities are among the most extensive of any UK specialist. Across its showrooms in Cumbria and the North East, dedicated listening rooms allow everyone from first-time buyers to seasoned audiophiles to hear systems properly, in comfortable surroundings and at their own pace. Demonstrations are arranged around the customer's music, room and budget. Carlisle and Newcastle each have several demonstration rooms and the widest choice of product, with further facilities in Workington.

What sets the company apart is the *depth and breadth* of stock supporting those rooms. Peter Tyson holds an enormous inventory, both in stock for immediate delivery and set up for demonstration, which means **competing brands can be heard side by side in a single visit**. A customer weighing Linn against Naim, or Bowers & Wilkins against Sonus faber, can compare them *directly,* rather than travelling between dealers or relying on memory. Few retailers in the country can offer that, making Peter Tyson exceptionally well placed for anyone planning their next purchase, especially in the high end.

The range runs from affordable first systems to reference systems and installations costing several hundred thousand pounds; at a recent vinyl event in Carlisle, customers listened to a McIntosh and Sonus faber system valued at around £300,000.

Luke Tyson, Director and Hi-Fi Brand Manager, and the third generation of the family in the business, said: "You can go to high-end hi-fi shops *or* you can go to entry-level hi-fi shops; there are very few places that can take you from the top of the market to the bottom and back again, and let you hear the difference for yourself."

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Luxury audio and everything in between

In 2026, Peter Tyson introduced a dedicated luxury hi-fi section on its website, bringing together around 16 high-end brands, many of which it has represented for decades. They include Linn, Naim, McIntosh, Sonus faber, Bowers & Wilkins, Focal, KEF, Luxman, Chord Electronics, Bang & Olufsen, Marantz and REL.

The emphasis is on craftsmanship *as well as* performance: products made by hand, often in their country of origin, and in many cases, available in bespoke finishes. In addition, customers are supported by trained, brand-authorised staff.

The company is equally committed to those just starting out. Its pre-matched system bundles take the guesswork out of choosing separates, combining amplifiers, speakers and cables known to work well together, from brands such as Arcam, Audiolab, Bluesound, Denon, Leak, Musical Fidelity, Quad, Ruark and Yamaha. Peter Tyson also has its own British-made hi-fi brand, Fell Audio, inspired by the Cumbrian landscape.

Vinyl, too, is changing who walks through the doors. Luke Tyson said: "In the world of hi-fi, vinyl never really left. What's been fantastic about the resurgence, though, is that it's bringing newer generations of music lovers into our showrooms. People buy a record, and then they want to come in and hear it properly."

Newcastle: a showroom worth discovering

Peter Tyson extensively upgraded the hi-fi demonstration facilities at its Newcastle showroom in 2024 with little fanfare, and many in the hi-fi community have yet to discover it. The space has been redesigned with high-end listening in mind, with several dedicated demonstration rooms featuring the company's reference-grade brands. It is also home to a Focal Powered by Naim store-in-store and a dedicated Bowers & Wilkins listening room. Crucially, it is the place to hear Linn, Naim and McIntosh flagship systems under one roof.

A family affair: the name you can trust

The business is now led by the second and third generations of the Tyson family. All six of Peter Tyson's children have worked in the business, and grandchildren, nieces and nephews work there today, alongside staff who have been with the company for 30 years.

The founder's motto, "*The name you can trust*", still guides how customers are treated, whether they walk into a showroom or order online from the other end of the country.

Luke Tyson said: "My grandfather set a precedent for how customers should be looked after, and every decision we've made since has been guided by this principle: the people we hire, the showrooms we build, the brands we work with. Buying a television or a hi-fi system should be a pleasure; it isn't like replacing your boiler! We want every step of it to be enjoyable, from visiting our showrooms to playing a first record at home."

Luxury tech for house and home

Alongside its AV business, Peter Tyson remains a major regional retailer of televisions and home appliances. Its stores carry TVs from Samsung, LG, Sony, Hisense, TCL, Loewe and Bang & Olufsen, kitchen and laundry appliances from brands including Samsung, LG, Miele, Smeg and KitchenAid, and high-end coffee machines and small appliances from brands such as Sage and Jura. Appliances are also sold nationally through petertysonelectricals.co.uk, a rapidly growing arm of the business. The scale of that wider business underpins the company's buying power, stock and showroom investment.

Five principles with customers in mind

Beyond the showrooms themselves, the business rests on a small number of long-held principles: expertise, demonstration, choice, service and value. **Peter Tyson's specialist staff include some of the most experienced people in the trade**, many with decades in the industry, and their job is to give honest, practical advice. That advice is backed by careful product selection: the company works only with brands it genuinely believes in and can stand behind, rather than 'collecting' names for the sake of it.

Service is treated as something that continues long after the sale, and is meant to feel the same whether a customer visits a showroom, calls or orders online. Luxury systems can be installed anywhere in the UK by trained, brand-authorised installers. The company has also worked to make high-end audio more accessible, with 36-month interest-free finance and a trade-in scheme that, for around a decade, has allowed customers anywhere in the country to trade in their existing equipment remotely against something new.

Looking ahead, Luke Tyson said: "Hi-fi can be seen from the outside as a bit of a thing of the past, but it really isn't. Whether it's a turntable or an all-in-one streaming system, beautiful Italian loudspeakers or slim aluminium Danish wireless speakers, we have the products, the expertise and the showrooms. Over the next five years we want to take that to a much wider audience and show people just what's possible."

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Showrooms

- **Carlisle:**
  Shaddongate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 5TE
- **Workington:** Winscales Avenue, Lillyhall, Workington, Cumbria CA14 4PA
- **Newcastle upon Tyne:** Unit 6, Kingston Court Retail Park, 6 Kingston Park Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2FP

Notes for editors/key facts

- Founded 1966 by Peter Tyson, West Tower Street, Carlisle
- Selling hi-fi since the early 1970s
- Online since the turn of the millennium, one of the first UK hi-fi retailers to sell online
- Around 16 luxury hi-fi brands and more than 180 brands overall
- Nationwide trade-in and installation, plus 0% finance over 36 months

Images

Archive photography here.

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Review equipment, interviews with the Tyson family and visits to the showrooms can be arranged on request.

About Peter Tyson

Peter Tyson is an independent, family-owned audio, visual and home appliance retailer, founded in Carlisle in 1966. It has showrooms in Carlisle, Workington and Newcastle upon Tyne and sells nationally through petertyson.co.uk. The company is one of the world's leading dealers for Linn and Naim Audio, and a leading UK retailer for McIntosh, KEF, Bowers & Wilkins, Marantz and more. It is one of the UK’s largest family-owned AV businesses and stocks more than 180 hi-fi and AV brands. It employs over 75 people.

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