

LOUDSPEAKERS

ENERGY TAKE SPEAKER SYSTEM

Sonic and visual

Many readers will know that I have quite an affinity for Canadian speakers. My experiences with Paradigm and PSB have shown that the products that these companies offer are generally devoid of any unnecessary frills or marketing hype.

This results in speakers that deliver price/performance ratios that are often at or near the upper end of the scale.

This review brings me into contact with Energy Speakers, and more precisely the Take series of lifestyle-oriented speakers. These speakers too, followed the precedent set by their Canadian rivals in delivering on their claims of sonic performance.

Energy state that their design philosophy is inspired by their part in a pioneering study with the Canadian National Research Council almost 20 years ago. This study created numerous listening and measuring procedures that have been implemented into all Energy designs. It also created the technological foundation for some of the world's finest speakers.

Fellow Canadian companies PSB and Paradigm also either took part in or use the information that resulted from this study, in their designs too.

If the NRC study is the foundation for Energy speakers, the company's dedication to working with the latest materials and developing new technologies in order to understand sound better, could be considered as the building blocks that they use in always striving to deliver to market speakers that reproduce sound in the most realistic manner possible, and that provide listeners with the best audio experience.

This now brings me to the Energy Take speaker system on review.

The system consists of a pair of Take TWRs, used for front speaker duties, a single Take FPS speaker for centre channel, a pair of Take SAT speakers for surround sound, and an S 10.3 subwoofer.

As you can see from the images on this page, the Take speakers fit into the lifestyle speaker category and use extruded aluminium for their enclosures.

Energy claim that the aluminium used is of aircraft grade, and that the material was chosen due to its rigidity, stability and resonance-free characteristics. They add that the shape of the enclosure was designed to eliminate standing waves, thereby increasing fidelity.

The drivers used in the enclosures are themselves not 'off-the-shelf' items either. The tweeter used in the speakers, for example, uses an aluminium Hyperbolic dome mated to an Energy exclusive surround. This is then mounted in a chamber, which isolates the

tweeter from the rest of the cabinet and ensures that it plays lower and has better dispersion characteristics.

One of the key features of the bass/Mid drivers is that they use a patented Elliptical Surround. This eliminates much of the distortion commonly found with traditional surrounds and increases excursion and useable cone area, thus creating a more efficient speaker capable of moving large volumes of air.

Whilst talking about the drivers, it is worth



appeal

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VERDICT

The Energy Take speaker system reviewed here is a lifestyle package that sounds as good as it looks. Installation versatility adds to the appeal.

PRICE R17 995

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mentioning that the TWRs use a single tweeter and four woofers, the FPS uses a single tweeter, dual woofers, and dual passive radiators, and the SAT speakers use a single woofer and tweeter.

Frequency response for the speakers was listed at 52, 60 and 80 Hz for the TWR, FPS and SAT speakers respectively, with upper response listed at 23 kHz for all speakers. This is within a 3 dB variance.

Before moving on to mention the sub used in the package, I must mention that all speakers are supplied with adjustable wall mount brackets, and glass stands that allow the speakers to be placed on the floor – for the TWRs – and on shelves/stands for the FPS and SAT speakers.

Finally, the S 10.3 sub used a 10-inch polypropylene ceramic/glass/mica deposit cone with Energy's ribbed elliptical surround.

This was fitted into a ported enclosure and driven by a 200 watt continuous/800 watt peak power amplifier. The sub also featured variable phase, high and low level inputs and response down to 21 Hz.

Once set up and run in, the Take system proved to be rather impressive in its overall sonic delivery.

Its overall delivery of both music and film sourced material was smooth, fairly accurate, and endowed with more than a modicum of pace. Tonal integration of the speakers, and particularly that of the front three speakers was also good, resulting in good width and depth across the front soundstage.

This made watching DVDs an enjoyable experience as effects, heard all around the room, maintained their original character.

There could perhaps been a little more detail to the high and ultra low frequencies, as this would have moved the overall performance up another notch or two. This was most notable on music, and considering the price of the system is probably being overly critical.

Overall, with the combination of good looks, mounting flexibility, and good clean sound, the Energy Take system is most definitely worth looking at if you're in the market for a speaker package.

Joel Kopping

