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Samson Resolv Studio Monitors

Big Bang for Your Buck

Samson has been a player in the studio reference monitor arena since the home recording market blossomed a decade ago. The company recently redesigned its Resolv line of studio reference monitors, and I had the opportunity to put the Resolv SE5 and SE6 models through their paces.

The Resolv SE6 delivers 100 watts of output, with 75 watts used on the 6.5-inch low-frequency driver and 25 watts on the 1.25-inch tweeter for a frequency range of 40Hz–30kHz. The Resolv SE5 has a 5-inch woofer and 1.25-inch tweeter to pump 70 total watts of power for a 50Hz–27kHz frequency response.

I pulled up some mixes in different musical styles to hear these monitors roar. The sound is big—volume is definitely their strong suit. The Resolv SE6 handled the huskier levels better than the SE5, not surprising considering the difference in woofer size.

The silk domes of the tweeters on the SE6 and SE5 kept high guitar tones and cymbal splashes from becoming abrasive. The mids produced a noticeable but acceptable level of coloration on instruments like saxophone and piano. The low frequencies from the woofers felt a bit forced at times, but you can purchase a separate subwoofer for use with the Resolv series that will flatten out the low frequencies for professional applications.

While it would be unrealistic to expect these monitors to stack up to high-end models that are four times the price, the SE5 and SE6 are a good value for musicians looking for competitive reference monitoring for home and project-studio applications. —John LaMantia

Ordering info: samsontech.com



Steinberg UR22 USB Audio Interface

Rugged, Reliable Recording on the Go

The acquisition of Steinberg by Yamaha in 2005 created a perfect partnership by merging a world-class hardware developer with an innovative audio software company. Taking advantage of their combined talents, Steinberg has released the UR22, a compact, high-resolution, two-channel USB 2 audio interface featuring 24-bit/192kHz recording capability and a pair of sweet mic preamps.

The UR22 appears very plain with its basic no-frills box design. However, closer inspection reveals the ruggedness of the unit, which is housed in a durable metal casing. The UR22 is powered directly through the host's USB port.

Two vital components lie at the heart of any digital audio interface: the mic preamps and digital converters. They are critical links in the audio chain. The UR22 meets this challenge by providing conversion at resolutions up to 24-bit at 192kHz. The preamps are one of the UR22's strongest features, with two D-PRE Class-A units onboard.

Getting started with the UR22 is painless. Just connect via any USB 2.0

port after installing the Yamaha Steinberg USB control panel on either Windows or Mac. The interface is compatible with all major audio production software and comes bundled with Steinberg's Cubase AI7 DAW package.

The UR22's front panel houses the two microphone inputs, which use combo XLR/1/4-inch input sockets for accepting either mic or line inputs. Input 2 offers a switch for selecting high or low impedance, allowing for direct input of an instrument such as electric guitar or bass. Phantom power (48 volts) is available, and each channel has its own input gain control and LED peak indicator. For latency-free hardware monitoring of the inputs, there is a headphone jack with level control, and the UR22 even provides a mix knob for combining the input the audio signal with audio from your DAW host. The unit's rear panel features line outputs for monitor speakers, a phantom power switch and the USB port. Steinberg also adds MIDI interface capabilities with MIDI in and out ports.

—Keith Baumann

Ordering info: steinberg.net

