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YOU DON'T NEED MORE SPEAKERS TO HEAR MORE SOUND

YAMAHA'S YSP-3000 NOT ONLY GIVES YOU MORE SOUND WITH FEWER SPEAKERS, BUT IT MAKES OPERATING YOUR SYSTEM EASIER.

> BY MARSHAL M. ROSENTHAL

For me, nothing beats lying in bed watching movies on a big screen. I pay for this luxury by not having surround speakers because my wife doesn't want the bedroom cluttered with extra gear. I've tried using those soundbars that claim to create multi-channel sound from a single unit, but they don't fool my ear. Yamaha's YSP-3000 shares the single-unit approach of a soundbar, but the surround sound it produces is real. The YSP-3000 uses 21 separately amplified midrange/tweeter drivers and sophisticated digital processing to direct sound at specific angles and bounce it off your room's walls. Yamaha calls the product a digital sound projector.

The YSP-3000 is but the latest in Yamaha's line of digital sound projectors, and it adds features that allow it to serve as a hub for your viewing and listening experience.



You can connect a couple of audio/video source devices (like a DVD player or cable/satellite tuner); use its built-in FM radio and add XM satellite radio, if you like; and connect your iPod through an optional dock. The included universal remote controls the YSP-3000, plus your TV and source components.

The body of the YSP-3000 is slightly less than 3 feet long, perfect for use in a bed-

room or small den. It looks great in front of my Samsung 56-inch rear-projection TV, complementing the look of the set as it sits at eye level or a little above, the position Yamaha recommends. Because the YSP-3000 is centered in my bedroom, all of its surround modes are available, which wouldn't be the case if I had placed it in a corner.

Simplifying the con-

nection process is the fact that the two HDMI inputs accept both audio and video. I hooked up an Oppo DVD player and a Dish Network HD receiver; the YSP-3000's HDMI output passes the video to the display at up to a 1080p resolution. While I would expect the YSP-3000 to handle Dolby Digital, DTS, and Dolby Pro Logic II, I was pleasantly surprised to find DTS Neo:6 and XM

You get two analog and four digital inputs. A subwoofer out makes adding one easy. Not shown are the two HDMI inputs and the one HDMI output.

HD Surround (the surround sound format used on select XM channels). The YSP-3000 selects audio formats automatically, depending upon the source.

With the help of a wired microphone and internally generated test tones, the YSP-3000 measures your room's acoustics and adjusts the sound to suit. After placing the microphone on top of some books to approximate my head's position on the bed, I went to the IntelliBeam setup screen and activated the countdown; then I left the room so that the YSP-3000 could analyze the audio streams. This takes just a few minutes, and I saved the results in one of three internal memory settings. You can also manually adjust the sound and save that profile, but I'm confident the automatic adjustments will suffice.

Getting the best sound from the YSP-3000 requires experimentation with its surround modes and its Cinema DSP soundfields, which include music, movie, and sports modes. The sports mode favors dialogue, while the music mode simulates the ambience of a performance hall. Each of these modes is an acquired taste: I didn't find



the music mode's soundfield to be all that enveloping, but the sports mode really helped the announcer's voice stand out when I watched football games.

The YSP-3000's surround modes are the real prize, and you can access each one quickly using the remote. The 5 Beam mode re-creates a 5.1 surround setting; I found the effect compelling with action movies, especially ones like *Die Hard* that have strong surround tracks. I found the 3 Beam mode to be better when I played *The Man From Uncle*; the movie's monophonic soundtrack works best with a simulated center speaker for dialogue and just front left and right simulated speakers to widen the soundfield a bit. The Stereo mode is fine for classical CDs, although it's not as satisfying as a conventional stereo system; here, the 3 Beam mode also works wonders.

The last mode, My Beam, is tailor-made for the bed-

room, as it allows you to listen to audio without disturbing the person next to you. As you hold the remote in your desired seating location, the YSP-3000 takes a reading using the remote's tiny internal microphone. The result is a strong, monophonic sound suddenly focused right at you—a better solution, in my opinion, than wireless headphones.

Yamaha includes SRS TruBass processing to add some heft to the dual 4-inch mini-woofers. TruBass does help round out the sound, but you're much better off adding a small subwoofer to the YSP-3000, which has an output jack for that purpose.

The YSP-3000 succeeds both technically and aesthetically, providing convincing multichannel sound while keeping its physical presence to a minimum. Now, even in my bedroom, I can watch movies in comfort while enjoying all of the audio oomph I desire. **HE**

➤ For reviews of other in-wall speakers, head to HEmagazine.com.

DESCRIPTION

Digital sound projector that simulates surround sound using multiple audio beams from a single unit. Amplifiers, surround sound processing, an FM tuner, and video switching are built-in; it's also XM-ready

COMPONENTS

21 1.63-inch cone midrange/tweeter drivers, each powered by a 2-watt amplifier; two 4-inch cone woofers, each powered by a 20-watt amplifier

CONNECTIONS

Inputs: Two HDMI, one composite video, two Toslink optical digital audio, two coaxial digital audio, two stereo analog audio, one 3.5mm mini-jack, one iPod dock connector, one remote IR control, FM and XM antenna jacks

Outputs: One HDMI, one composite video, one RCA jack for subwoofer

DIMENSIONS

6.1 x 31.5 x 6 inches (hwd)

PRICE/CONTACT

PRICE: \$1,199.95

CONTACT: 800.492.6242, yamaha.com

HOOP



MARCH/APRIL 2008

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the goods

BY TREVOR KEARNEY #8

Yamaha YSP-3000 ↓

Whizzing bullets, overhead planes, bone-jarring explosions and footsteps from behind come to life sans a multiple-speaker array with the YSP-3000. The single-piece digital sound processor simulates 5.1 surround sound with just two channels. Seriously, after properly setting it up via the easy-to-use Intellibeam system, we were fooled into hearing audio from the left, right and rear. With 1080p-compatible HDMI input/output, the optional iPod dock station (YDS-10) and XM-ready compatibility, this compact (31.5 x 6 x 4.5 inches, 27 pounds) unit will pair perfectly with any home-theater setup.

\$1,199.95

\$99.95 (optional YDS-10)

