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"...Also with regard to the Bluetooth connection, I can only comment positively. Speakers in the living room, smartphone in the kitchen or bedroom – the connection even remains clear and stable through walls"



Magnet

MAGNASPHERE 33



Test result
12/16

1,1
Top class

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OVERALL RATING: **1.1**
CLASS: **TOP CLASS**
PRICE/PERFORMANCE: **VERY GOOD**



Magnet

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Magnat MAGNASPHERE 33

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Magnat Magnasphere 33 – entering the world of wireless hi-fi and multi-room systems!

The demands we make on hi-fi components often go beyond those concerning pure acoustic quality - after all, we live in times where the possibilities are becoming increasingly diverse. We want active loudspeakers, we want wireless access to listen to music - from our laptop, smartphone or tablet. Bluetooth should ideally be available everywhere. And, quite apart from that, of course, we don't want to do without the classic connectivity possibilities. The Magnat Magnasphere 33's, which are also multi-room compatible, bring all of this together.

With its new Magnasphere range, the Magnat brand, familiar to just about every hi-fi aficionado, presents two high-quality all-rounders that meet all the demands mentioned above. In this test, I deal with the most compact and smallest representatives of the range, the Magnasphere 33 shelf-top speakers. I want to take a thorough look at the different functions as well as the quality of the finish. I also want to listen very carefully, of course, when it comes down to what these speakers have to offer in terms of sound. Finally, I'd like to know whether the statement on the Magnat website is true: "Compact loudspeakers - weak performance? Certainly not!" So, with the Magnasphere range, is Magnat delivering a loudspeaker system of the future or is it more like "old wine in new wineskins"? You could be in for a surprise!

Clever wireless solution

As might be expected, opening the loudspeaker box reveals quite a lot. In addition to the two stylish active speakers (available in attractive silk matt black and white), the package also contains a small transmitter unit with the name TX11. This hub is the real highlight of this stereo set on account of it serving as the connection device for all sources. In contrast to the vast majority of active speakers available on the market, the sources are connected to this small hi-fi centre rather than directly to the loudspeaker. In addition to two analogue audio (1 x cinch, 1 x 3.5 mm mini-jack) and two optical digital inputs, it also offers a USB port. That makes the Magnasphere 33 nothing less than an all-inclusive, modern hi-fi system. Inside the autonomously powered audio centre, all the incoming signals are processed in fractions of a second in such a way that they can be forwarded to the two loudspeakers via wireless transmission. This means: The hub can theoretically be placed in a cupboard, on a lowboard or simply out of sight behind the rack to make it disappear from view completely. A clever and neat solution, particularly predestined for use in more minimally furnished living areas.

First impression: These are high-quality all-rounders!

Also included in the package: a remote control that is positively striking in terms of both touch and appearance, as well as all the necessary power cords, of course, together with three power adapters. As if that was not enough, the manufacturer also provides connecting cables for all the different connection types: an RCA cable, an analogue stereo cable (3.5 mm jack plug), one optical digital cable (TOSLINK), as well as a corresponding USB audio cable (Type A - Type B). Together with the precise, "foolproof" user manual, everything is provided to get you started straightaway. So time to take an extensive look at the stylish shelf-top speakers. Just a few words about the finish, however, before we proceed with the practical test: The loudspeakers are not only well-proportioned and visually stylish, they also have a reassuring and high-quality feel. And the technology used is equally impressive. No wonder, because the features of the Magnasphere gems evidently benefit from technology transferred from the Quantum range. Anyone who takes an interest in the subject of hi-fi will know that the tried-and-tested high-end range from Magnat has been one of Germany's most sought-after loudspeaker programmes for years. The just under 33 cm high and, at 6.6 kg, surprisingly heavy active speakers are each equipped with a 170 mm bass-midrange driver and a 25 mm dome tweeter. Each of the two-way systems referred to is powered by its own integrated power amp with a total power output (RMS/Max) of 65/110 watts.

This means: If you decide to buy the Magnasphere 33's, it doesn't need a separate power amplifier or D/A converter anymore. Combined with the flow-optimised reflex tubes on both sides and the interior reinforced, very solid MDF enclosure, the features referred to promise one thing, in particular: stable, powerful and intensive sound. A promising prospect. I can hardly wait now, so I start setting up the speakers...

Go-ahead for the practical test

As already mentioned, Magnat's Magnasphere 33 offers the full range of connectivity options. This makes it more of a complete music system than "just" a pair of active speakers. I would like to give you a brief overview here of everything that is possible:

Connection of external sources such as a CD player, tuner, audio amplifier or an AV receiver via the analogue cinch input jack:

Connect the source using the cable provided, select "Line in" via the remote control and you can get started.

Connection of external sources (e.g. smartphone) via the 3.5 mm jack socket:

Connect the corresponding cable provided to the jack socket on the source device and the line-in input on the Magnasphere transmitter - ready to go!

Connection to a computer via a USB port:

Connect PC/Mac to the USB audio input on the transmitter. Particularly valuable in this function is the DAC (Digital-to-Analog Converter) integrated in the Magnasphere system. This performs the necessary conversion of digital signals into analogue signals and does it in much higher quality than the computer would. A distinct difference in the sound!

Connection to digital audio sources:

External sources like games consoles, network players or CD players can be connected to the transmitter via an optical digital cable. This makes it possible to connect two devices at the same time.

Wireless connection via Bluetooth:

With just a few simple steps on the transmitter and your Bluetooth source, you have created a wireless connection in less than a minute and can now play back your playlist from a smartphone, tablet or laptop.

The bottom line:

The Magnasphere 33 makes a lot possible. The loudspeakers are now also set up - so now I can really let it rip!

Ears focused on the essential: The sound check

One thing's for sure right now: The sound check will not make for a quiet afternoon - not for me or my neighbours! I will test all the connection options and maybe push the volume to the limits. I start in a relatively relaxed way by connecting my CD player and celebrate "Party like a Russian" with Robbie Williams. And the party starts in a highly promising way: Extremely clear sound resolution, virtually perfect weighting of high and low frequency tones and, in particular, the astonishingly powerful sound density keep you wanting more. And so much more that I go online at the same time and try to buy advance tickets for Robbie's next tour. While I'm still hanging on in the queue, I hook up my laptop to the Magnasphere 33 via the USB port. I then challenge my test items in terms of genre and volume by playing "Best of You" by the Foo Fighters. Dave Grohl's distinctive voice leaves the speakers' drivers in a penetrating manner and the drums and guitar also produce a performance at least worthy of rock. I enjoy what is now a very loud rock experience with plenty of power - and without any loss in sound quality. It is particularly noticeable here that the Magnasphere hub acts as a kind of high-quality sound card. And that's good because, on account of the digital signal no longer being converted by the integrated converter (average quality at the most) in my laptop but, rather, the transmitter unit mentioned, I now experience the sound in genuine hi-fi quality. The prerequisite for this is, of course, correspondingly high-quality source material.

Magnasphere 33 goes wireless

In step 3, we then have wireless mode: I pair my smartphone with the Magnasphere hub via Bluetooth and listen to the legendary St. Anger album from Metallica. As expected, it's not long before I really crank up the level. But, even far above the room volume often quoted, the duo still does not appear to have reached its limits and continues to operate with minimal distortion. Brilliant! While listening and nodding to the beat, I move through the apartment with my smartphone for the purpose of testing the performance of the speakers under realistic load levels as well as the stability of the Bluetooth connection. The conclusion on the first point is reached quickly: I can't manage to elicit anything negative from the two loudspeakers. Even in the loudest range, the sound remains clean and captivating. No scratching, no rattling, no distortions worth speaking of, only Metallica -

pure, hard and extremely intensive. Also with regard to the Bluetooth connection, I only comment positively. Speakers in the living room, smartphone in the kitchen or bedroom - the connection even remains clear and stable through walls. The only time the wireless transmission was interrupted was when I left the house with my smartphone in my hand. The wireless transmission between the transmitter and the speakers was also constant and consistent and 100% error-free. All in all, I was very impressed with my test guests! In terms of sound, we really can speak of a modern high-end loudspeaker system here, as the manufacturer does on the specially created Magnasphere website. Nor could I detect any weaknesses regarding the variety of functions. On the contrary: Those who like systems that are flexible and expandable are guaranteed to make the right decision with the Magnasphere 33.

Expandable? Welcome to the multi-zone application.

When I used the word "expandable" above, this was not, of course, related to the quality of the loudspeakers but, rather, to the possibility of also using the Magnasphere 33's as multi-zone loudspeakers. A function they are particularly proud of at Magnat. The integrated multi-zone function makes it possible to install up to three Magnasphere loudspeaker groups (applies to the 33's as well as the 55 floor-standing speakers) around one centrally positioned transmitter. This means that, theoretically, up to three rooms can be filled with stereo sound at the same time. This is made possible by means of 3 selectable wireless frequency bands (identified here as A, B and C) via which the hub communicates with the loudspeakers connected. All speakers assigned to the same zone receive the signals synchronously. If the loudspeakers are assigned to different zones - e.g. A is the living room and B is the hobby room - the volume and source can, of course, be controlled and selected separately in these rooms. This interesting feature therefore enables clever and flexible all-round sound throughout your own home - real multi-room in fact! For houses fitted out or furnished in an acoustically demanding way, such a solution certainly is an aspect that should be given consideration.

Conclusion

My previous test items has already revealed a number of highlights. The Magnasphere 33 music system fits seamlessly into the range of absolutely perfect specimens. In purely visual terms, the speakers fit into virtually any living area with their stylish looks. The sound quality is also totally convincing. Even in the "stress test" carried out by me, the sound remained clear and perfectly balanced at all times, always producing sufficient force and power. At a price of around €1,700 per pair, these loudspeakers may not really appear to be something for those on a tight budget, but if you take into account that you don't have to buy a separate amplifier or be bothered with laying all the cables, the price-performance ratio is spot on. The fact that the speaker pair can also be used in autonomous multi-zone mode is a useful additional benefit. If you have high expectations with regard to sound, like to have a broad selection of available music sources and expect easy set-up and maximum operating convenience, then you are a real candidate for Magnasphere. If you also like the idea of multi-zone application, you'll hardly be able to ignore Magnat's latest innovation.