

“... what the Monitor 7

does right for under \$1000 is

PRETTY REMARKABLE”

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“... good dispersion and consistent tonal balance anywhere in the room. ... dynamic capabilities were surprising, the tweeter hard to faze, and very fast and agile. Lateral imaging was excellent. ... I recommend it highly ...”

by Andrew Marshall

Having updated its Reference series of speakers, *Paradigm* has now turned to the *Monitor* series, and the *Monitor 7* is perhaps the most popular result. It's a floorstanding slim tower featuring a pair of 6-1/2-inch poly-coned woofers with an improved aluminum alloy dome tweeter. The grey baffle remains, but finish around it, in our review pair, was an attractive cherry laminate that is very veneer-like, and much nicer than most vinyls in its softer sheen. The enclosure is front ported, while the rear panel has gold-plated bi-wire binding posts.

Frankly, I doubt that anyone but a *Paradigm*® Dealer would be able to accurately guess the price of these speakers by looking at them.

And after hearing them, your guess might be even higher, but let's look at the measurements before getting to that. Very smooth from 50 to 1500 Hz in the Pink Noise Sweep (PNS) at top, the *Monitor 7*

shows a minor dip in the midrange that reaches 3 dB at 4 kHz, response rising above. At the very top, it can be seen that the tweeter has a resonance starting at 19 kHz, a little low for a metal dome, but not likely to bother anyone but your dog. The quasi-anechoic curve below shows this mid-range dip and the rising tweeter, but is unusually linear and un-spiky for an unsmoothed curve. This fact, and the close grouping of the axial curves underneath indicate very little lobing or interaction between drivers, making for good dispersion and consistent tonal balance anywhere in the room. Even at 60° off



Monitor 7

axis, the response is similar, but down about 4 dB in level.

In the bass, the *Monitor 7* is very flat to 50 Hz, down just over 5 dB at 40, and 9 dB at 30. It should benefit from boundary proximity to bring up the deepest bass. The midrange dip will work to the speaker's advantage in smaller rooms, making the speakers sound less forward.

Impedance ranges between just above 4 ohms (150 Hz) to about 38 ohms (2 kHz), indicating that the *Monitor 7* should be easy to drive. Its electrical phase varies by $\pm 45^\circ$ through the crossover region, quite common in a budget speaker, which may show some limits in its imaging capabilities. The measurements are, overall, excellent for a modestly priced loudspeaker, with particular strengths in bass extension, dispersion, and overall smoothness.

"Voices were quite accurate in timbre ... choral music had good articulation and blend. Piano was clean and solid ... orchestral music had good body and sheen ... Percussion and cymbals had a nice clarity, shimmer and speed."

In listening these were heard, with excellent pedal reach with relatively little doubling, and a very satisfying neutrality of tonal balance. The dynamic capabilities of the *Monitor 7* were surprising, the tweeter hard to faze, and very fast and agile. Lateral imaging of the *Monitor 7* was excellent.

Voices were quite accurate in timbre, while choral music had good articulation and blend. Piano was clean and solid in the bottom, while orchestral music had good body and sheen, but sounded just a little forward, with limited depth of image. Percussion and cymbals had a nice clarity, shimmer and speed. In general, the sound

of the *Monitor 7* was a little leaner and less articulate in the midrange compared to our reference *Veritas 1.8*, which is about eight times the price of the *Paradigm*.

However, what the *Paradigm Monitor 7* does right for under \$1000 is pretty remarkable, and I recommend it highly for its low price and good looks, especially for a home theatre system, where its accuracy and dynamic capability will stand out.

