Magnat

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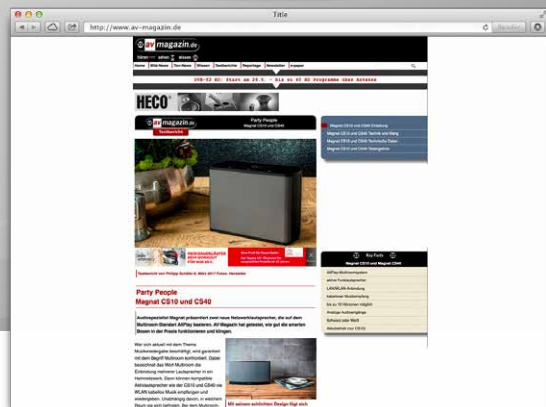
CS40

CS10

SOUND: VERY GOOD
FEATURES: GOOD-VERY GOOD
OPERATION: GOOD
WORKMANSHIP: VERY GOOD
CLASS: TOP CLASS
PRICE/PERFORMANCE:
VERY GOOD
OVERALL: VERY GOOD

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Audio specialist Magnat presents two new network loudspeakers based on the AllPlay Multiroom standard. AV-Magazin has tested how well the smart speakers work and sound.

Those currently occupied with the subject of music reproduction are guaranteed to come face to face with the term "Multiroom". Mutliroom stands for the integration of several speakers into a home network. Compatible loudspeakers like the CS10 and CS40 can then receive and reproduce music in wireless mode via WLAN. Regardless of what rooms they are in. With the Multiroom system from Magnat, which is based on the Qualcomm AllPlay standard, up to ten listening zones can be set up. AllPlay-compatible loudspeakers from other manufacturers can also be used within these listening zones. The advantage of a Multiroom system of this type is that users can determined via smartphone or tablet what music they want to hear from what speaker. In addition, the user can choose whether to listen to one music title on all the networked speakers or listen to a different one in each room. Control is via an operator app, which can be used to group together, name and control the volume of the different loudspeakers. It is irrelevant in this regard whether the music comes from the internal device memory of a tablet or smartphone, from a network drive, a web radio or an online streaming service like Spotify. The Magnat network loudspeakers also have an analogue audio input. Televisions, hard disk recorders or computers can be connected to this port. The input is selected via the app on your smartphone or tablet. The only other things present on the CS10 and CS40 loudspeakers are sensor fields to facilitate volume control. The CS10 and CS40 Multiroom speakers are available as of now and cost around €250 and €400 each respectively. While the small CS10 is available in black and white, the large CS40 loudspeaker is only offered in black.

Operation and use

To start with, each loudspeaker has to be integrated into a home network. For a wired connection, a LAN cable is plugged into the network socket at the rear of the speaker. For a wireless connection via WLAN, first go into the system settings on your smartphone or tablet and select the Magnat wireless network emitted by the CS loudspeaker. Several dialogue windows then open one after the other in which you enter the WLAN code and you can then give the speakers individual names. You can then download and use any AllPlay-compatible app from Google PlayStore or Apple App Store. We first opt for the original Jukebox app from the system producer Qualcomm.

After starting up the operator app, the CS loudspeakers can be grouped together, set and managed as you wish. The music sources that can be used include the device memory in your smartphone or tablet, an NAS hard disk, an external audio source via the mini-jack input, various web radio programs or online music streaming services. In addition to Spotify and Napster, Aupeo and SomaFM are also supported. The US American music service Tidal will follow soon. Amazon Prime Musik, Deezer and Apple Music are currently not included. If you want to listen to an Internet radio station, you first have to download the AllPlay Radio app. Although this not a particularly elegant solution, it works perfectly well in practice. Activating the AllPlay Radio service in the AllPlay Jukebox app under Music Services then starts the Qualcomm Radio app. Its content is provided by the well-known provider TuneIn. The possibility of selecting the sound quality of the online radio stream also needs to mentioned. Keeping the data rate display below the station logo depressed in player mode opens another window in which you can select the sound quality levels, sorted according to kilobits per second. In the Jukebox app, searching for music titles only works within the device memory. Finding tracks searched for on a network drive is not available for the Qualcomm Jukebox app. Nor is it possible to place an individual music title you are listening to on the playlist on the fly.

Technology

With the CS10 and CS40, Magnat has two different active loudspeakers in its portfolio. They are both active speakers and have a built-in amplifier in addition to the obligatory loudspeaker technology. This has a power output of 2 x 25 watts in the large CS40 speaker. This enables it to supply a two-way system comprising a 12 cm subwoofer and a 25 mm dome tweeter. The CS40, designed as a stereo system, weights in at just about 5 kg and, like the small CS10, is equipped with bass reflex technology. This allows it to amplify particularly low-pitched tones via a passive membrane at the rear of the enclosure, which effectively improves the audible depth of the speaker. The compact CS10 loudspeaker is, unlike the CS40, designed as a mono-speaker and therefore only has a tweeter and bass-midrange driver. The compact digital amplifier in the CS10 can generate a power output of up to 15 watts. It draws the power needed for this from an external power adapter. On the CS40, however, the transformer is incorporated inconspicuously into the housing. Those wanting to use the small CS10 speaker in the garden, on the patio or on the balcony will be delighted

with the built-in battery. This then ensures up to 2 hours' use off-grid. The wireless network connection is established in either the 2.5 or 5 gigahertz band. The Magnat loudspeakers support the network standard up to 802.11n in this regard, which guarantees interference-free transmission when using a large number of Multiroom speakers.

Sound

The large CS40 loudspeaker is pleasing with tight, precise bass reproduction, presenting good contouring and differentiation even at raised volume levels. Magnat has tuned the CS40 very well in the bass range, with no extra "oomph" added and not excessively loud. The same is true for the smaller CS10 speaker, which also displays a crystal-clear bass tone foundation. In the mid-tone range, both speakers sound neutral in tonal terms, benefiting authentic voice and instrument reproduction. In the treble range, the CS40 and CS10 are elegantly restrained, without withholding any detail from the listener. In contrast to many competing products, Magnat does not rely on brash showmanship for its Multiroom speakers. Instead, the CS systems have been equipped with a finely balanced soundscape that provides a perfect acoustic setting for all styles of music, ensuring long-lasting listening pleasure. And that's good because neither the Qualcomm app nor the loudspeakers themselves have any tone control possibility via an equalizer. It should also be mentioned that the Multiroom system from Magnat can even play back high resolution audio in FLAC format with a sampling rate up to 192 kilohertz and 24 bit calculation depth.

Conclusion

With the CS40 and the CS10, Magnat presents two powerful sounding network loudspeakers that offer the right audio solutions for all requirements and every room. The AllPlay Multiroom system also enables uncomplicated set-up and flexible control, which provides users with many various possibilities to enjoy their music at home.