System Audio Legend 40.2 Silverback / Active Speaker

This is what we want!

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According to the System Audio the digitally controlled speaker should be the next step in the speaker space! Here we go. Let's try it!

TOP IN ITS CATEGORY

Somehow, you are facing a floor-standing speaker based on an otherwise conventional System Audio design, the Legend 40.2, only now added to the name and "Silverback", the code for the company's digital "back", which turns your uncle Haifindela's three-way street into a piece of modern audio history.

The path to a speaker like the one we are testing here was linear and to some extent predictable. Conventional active speakers began to be widely accepted in the home just a few years ago and streaming has forced manufacturers to make the need worthwhile, introducing what we call "digital" speaker, ie an active speaker that includes inside a DAC. The next step was to integrate a digital processor and when this was done (initially on "large" speakers) the way was open for logical development, the digital control of the speaker itself, in the sense of response control in the field of frequency and / or time. Depending on how it is implemented, this digital control can simply make the user's life easier or even work wonders. Take 40.2 for example: The company mentions 20Hz as the cut-off frequency (passive version up to 30Hz), with the additional remark that it becomes credible. Indeed, digital equalization can achieve this.

Step 1: You get a good conventional speaker ...

In retrospect it may seem obvious, but we have to say it. It does not make sense to waste gray matter (and computing power) to fix problems with a mediocre design, and System Audio probably knows that. Although I was not lucky enough to meet the passive Legend 40.2, it still seems to be a consistent build. It is a classic, "narrow" floor speaker with a height of just under one meter, three ways, with four speakers and bass reflex charging. Not to say fascinating but based on the company's top tweeter (Legend DXT), which is also used in its large model (Legend 60.2) and three 4.5-inch woofers, one of which performs mid duties and both perform low frequencies. The speaker cabin has a buffalo with a small width (limiting the diffractions) and its radiation is controlled through the DXT waveguide developed by the company. The side surfaces are curved and the support on the floor is made through a metal base which is cleverly integrated in the bottom.

Step 2: Add the digital part ...

The Silverback version of Legend 40.2 comes with the addition of a module that includes everything needed to make the speaker digital. I write "emerges" because every 40.2 can become "40.2 Silverback", whenever its owner chooses. The company's passive speakers can be upgraded to active ones, with the corresponding financial burden.

The Silverback package includes, in principle, the receiver for wireless signal transmission, which is compatible with the WiSA standard (which makes the speakers compatible with any WiSA source). It then includes the digital processor / crossover, which distributes

the signal to four switching amplifiers, with a total power of 300W, per speaker. The processor is accessible and can accept additional settings. The speaker can be used as a conventional active, via a balanced input, but this obviously means that an A / D conversion is taking place somewhere. From the Silverback panel it is possible to adjust the sensitivity, perform the necessary functions to activate the wireless connection and determine the position of the speaker in the system (right or left, or in any standard position in a multi-channel system).

Step 3: Accompany with the necessary Hub ...

System Audio has based its Silverback architecture on WiSA technology. It is a wireless standard, which does not use the Wi-Fi infrastructure, is optimized for very low latency (so that it can be used in multi-channel, AV environment) and supports high resolution audio transmission up to 24-bit / 96kHz. Using WiSA means that 40.2 can be used with any source that is also certified for it. However, System Audio has not left things to chance and offers the relevant hub along with the speakers, a simple-looking device that offers analog and digital signal management and connects the rest of the system to the speakers wirelessly. The user has at his disposal two analog inputs, four conventional digital, as well as HDMI, USB-B and USB-A ports. The Hub can be controlled in various ways (including a very good quality, conventional remote control) and is compatible with DLNA / UPnP, while it can handle digital signals up to 24-bit / 192kHz.

Music and Upgrades ...

The steps for the installation are simple and are described in a well-written "Quick Start" manual. Although, typically, you can use the speakers and the hub without a connection to the home network, their full use includes streaming, so either you must see them through Google Home, or through a DLNA / UPnP Controller. In any case, you will not need more than a few minutes.

The first impression made by the speaker is very positive. It disappears immediately, creates a very good, embossed stereo sound and is distinguished by homogeneity, with very good low volume, control and detail, natural medium frequencies that sound relaxed and detailed and a very good sense of high volume, speed, and performance of harmonious wealth. The Legend 40.2 Silverback is a well-built speaker, which fills the space without compression effects and creates a precise and pleasant sound field in the ear, which will never get tired, even at high levels.

All the above applies to the "99DCX532-L40-RT200x" version of the speaker that was released last March. One feature of 40.2 is that the user can upgrade digital filters. This means that you download the relevant file, upload it via USB to each speaker and have a new version of it. After the initial hearing, we proceeded, as it was next, to another version, the "99DCX532-L40-RT300", which is the most recent. The changes we heard were comparable to those we would have had if we had simply put another speaker in the room. The result retained all the positives of 40.2 in the medium and high frequencies and in the stereo image, but it transformed low to the point that it seemed unbelievable. You can "play" with USB all the time, so we "went and came" between versions once or twice, to make sure. The RT300 is far better than the RT200x at all levels and with the new digital filters, the speaker is one of the best low-frequency floor-standing speakers we've heard of.

As you can see, we are dealing with a great idea from System Audio, but we need to look at some details. In my opinion, may need to be provided more information about filters. The "Extra Analytical Sound" rating does not appear to be sufficient. A well-designed interface is also required. With this system you must remember which filter

you have loaded each time and kneel behind the speaker to press buttons, doing a reset. The company has announced an app which when these lines were written, was not available. It has also announced its intention to offer the possibility of digitally compensating the handset with measurements that will be made from a mobile phone (currently only iOS) with the corrections stored in the Hub. Great in all the ways!

In conclusion, the Legend 40.2 Silverback is one of the pleasant surprises of the year. It is a high-end speaker. System Audio clearly shows a way for a much better sound and this is what we want! **YB**

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OVERVIEW

System Audio Legend 40.2 Silverback

Description: Digitally controlled, Active Floor Speaker

Ways / Loudspeakers: 2.5, 3, 4 (depending on the filter) / 4

Loudspeakers: 1x 25.4mm tweeter, soft dome (Legend DXT), 1x mid (4.5 inch), 2x woofer (4.5 inch)

Charging: Bass Reflex

Frequency response: 20Hz-25kHz (± 1.5dB)

Amplifiers: 4, 300W / speaker

Crossover: In the digital field, adjustable

Wireless standard: WiSA

Analog input (speaker): 1x Balanced (XLR, adjustable sensitivity)

Inputs (Hub): 1x single ended (RCA), 1x single ended (TRS 3.5mm), 3x Optical (Toslink), 1x Coaxial (RCA), 1x HDMI, 1x USB-B, 1x USB-A, sample rates up to 24-bit / 192kHz)

Other features: Upgrading digital filters, offset space acoustics

Dimensions: 955x190x265 (mm, hxwxd, speaker), 170x100x41 (mm, wxdxh, Hub)

Weight: 19.4kg (speaker).

Price: €4.999 (Legend 40.2 Silverback), €3.199 (Legend 40.2)