IK Multimedia iLoud MTM MK II

Compact Near-Field Monitors with Room Correction System

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With the iLoud MTM MK II, the Italian pro-audio specialist IK Multimedia is already releasing the second iteration of an ultra-compact near-field monitor solution, which we would like to present to you here in detail.

Concept

Right from the outset, IK Multimedia had ambitious plans for these desktop speakers in the iLoud series, and at first glance, the small dimensions of the enclosure and the slim design could quickly obscure these. At the latest, when you lift the extremely space-saving monitors, measuring 264 mm x 160 mm x 130 mm,

but weighing an impressive 2.5 kg, out of the packaging, you realize that this seems to be a solid tool.

The iLoud MTM MK II, designed primarily for more economical and spatially

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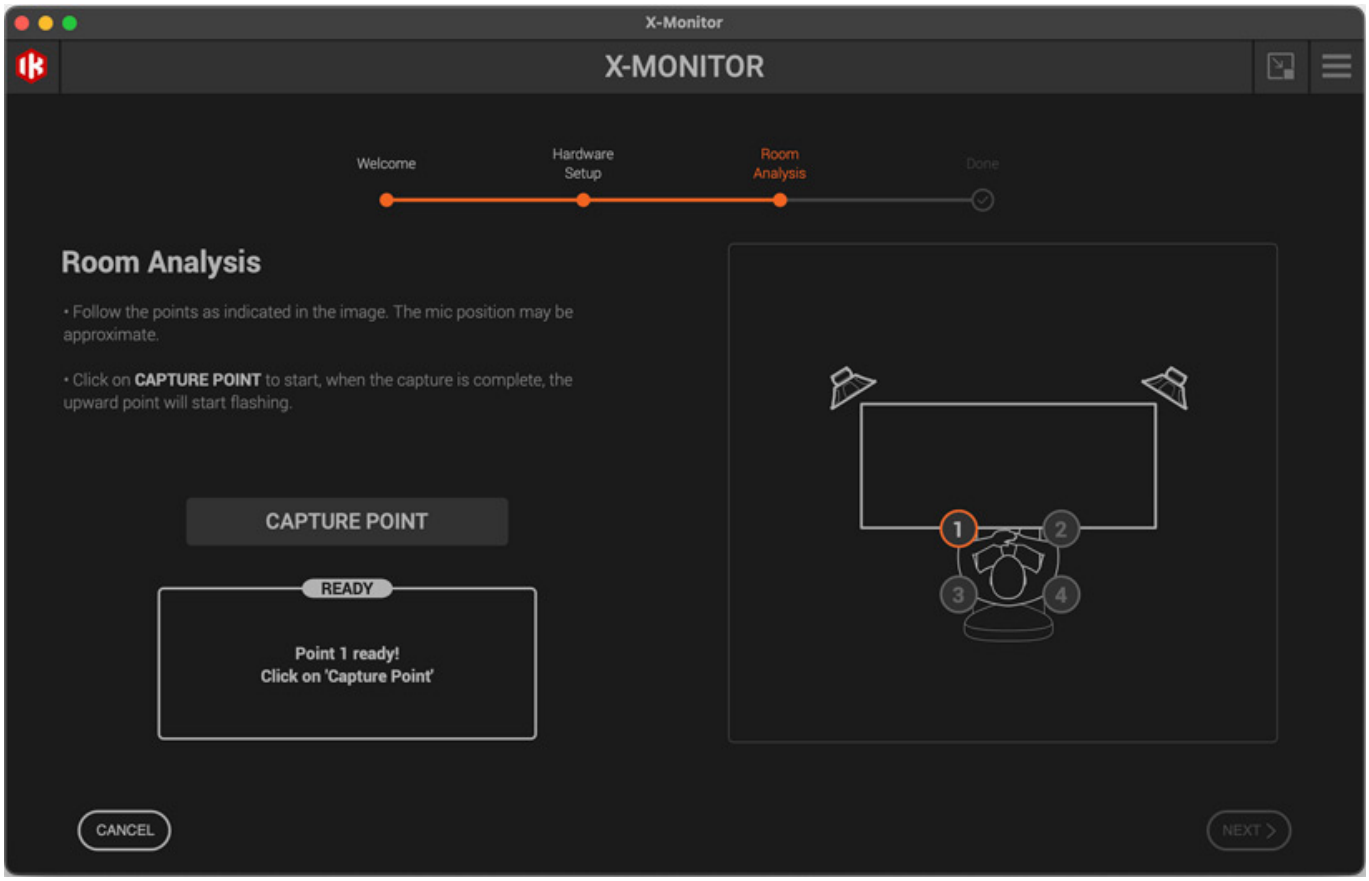
manageable workplaces, is based on a two-way system equipped with three loudspeaker membranes. The sound is reproduced by two 3.5“ woofers driven by a 70-watt Class D amplifier, and a 1” silk dome tweeter with a 30-watt supply. The bass reflex system, with a crossover point at 2.8 kHz, operates in a range that is quite respectable for its size, from 48 Hz to 28 kHz (± 2 dB) or 36 Hz to 32 kHz at -10 dB, and has a sound pressure level of 94 dB SPL (@ 1 m).

Calibration



When you buy a stereo pair, an ARC measurement microphone is also included, as with the ARC Studio that has already been tested, which can be used to adjust the iLoud MTM MKII to the acoustics at home. To do this, you download the corresponding calibration software X-Monitor via the IK Product Manager, which can be installed free of charge for macOS and Windows. This software is basically a slightly slimmed-down version of the better-known ARC 4.

For the extremely uncomplicated and well-guided calibration via GUI, the microphone is simply connected to the corresponding socket on the back of the monitor using the included XLR-to-mini-jack adapter cable. In addition, a USB connection to the host computer is required for a registration in the software. After the first MTM MKII has been measured, the process is repeated with the second candidate – or, if you have purchased IK Multimedia's attractively priced Immersive Bundle, a few more times, of course.

Although the sweep-triggered measurement with X-Monitor requires only a single measurement point (ear) compared to the three-level ARC 4 procedure (ear height

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and 10 cm above and below) with the ARC Studio, the correction result in practice differs only marginally.

The monitor and speaker emulations called “Voice” can be selected in X-Monitor via drop-down menus in the categories Studio Monitors, Hi-Fi, and Multimedia.

Further DSP Features

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If no further corrections or settings (e.g. emulation of known monitor systems for comparison purposes) are needed, the USB connections can be removed after the measurement process for further operation, because the adjusted curve is now stored and activated under the adjustable preset CAL on the back. The same button can be used to access a flat setting without any corrections, as well as a desktop preset that combats the acoustic “table top effect” with a 4dB lowered bell filter at 160Hz and a slight boost at 1.8kHz.

The models also feature a four-stage low-cut filter that acts as standard below 50Hz but can also be set to 40, 60, or 80Hz depending on the application and necessity. The last mode is designed for use with additional subwoofer units or bass management in conjunction with multichannel setups.

A rudimentary frequency curve adjustment can also be made using the HF filter between 0dB (FLAT), +2dB and -2dB (from 8kHz) and the LF filter between 0dB (FLAT), +2dB and -3dB (below 100Hz). For use in alternative setups or for a

deliberate reduction of the amplifier floor noise, the input sensitivity of the iLoud MTM MK II can be lowered from the internationally common studio level of +4dBu to the consumer level of -10dBV (-7.78dBu).

Sound Impression

Anyone who has already scaled down their sound expectations due to the handy dimensions of the monitor systems should be prepared for a pleasant surprise when putting them into operation. In the design and implementation of the iLoud MTM MK II, the developers from Modena have really done a great job. In addition to a balanced sound, the low-frequency range is particularly impressive, with a clearly defined bass that lays a solid foundation, as is usually the case with larger monitors. Yes, one can go so far as to say that the systems sound more powerful than the data sheet and visual impression suggest. In practice, the stereo image lacks neither depth nor precise location. Even in the area of depth graduation, the compact system does not have to hide from the sometimes more expensive competition.

Off-topic Practical Test

During the test phase, a visit from an artist friend from Australia not only provided the opportunity for an impromptu living room concert but also the opportunity to use the MTM MK II as a mini PA for vocals and acoustic guitar. The bottom of the MTM MKII features a threaded insert for locking and angling the supplied stands, with which the monitors can also be mounted on a standard microphone stand in no time at all. As a result, this setup not only proved to be the ideal and unobtrusive support for the acoustic sound, but also an integral part of an unforgettably beautiful evening.

Conclusion

At a price of just under 900 euros for a pair, the iLoud MTM MKII is a solid piece of equipment that will not only find its place in project and home studios, but also as a second pair of speakers on the console of a larger studio. The uncomplicated and practical calibration process also offers real added value, which, in my opinion, is topped off by the monitor model simulation (from the classic "white-membrane" to the iPhone speaker). IK Multimedia has really created something in a class of its own with these speakers, both in terms of sound and overall concept. Well done!

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