

**ADAM**

A77X

The A77X is the first new monitor to be released by German firm Adam in two years. **Huw Price** puts it through its paces.

A77X

Manufacturer **Adam**

Price **£1,949 pair**

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Circumstances sometimes dictate that monitors need to be flipped horizontally, but sonics generally suffer unless the monitors were designed to be used that way. Hitherto, the only Adam monitors designed for horizontal use were confined to the company's flagship SX range.

The A77X features Adam's exclusive X-ART (Accelerating Ribbon Technology) tweeter, which has been developed to extend to 50kHz with higher efficiency and higher maximum sound pressure levels. The two 7-inch woofers are identical to those in the A7X, but they don't cover identical frequency bands. Only one handles the midrange; the other joins in below 400Hz.

Power specs are impressive, with a 50-watt A/B amp for the tweeter and 100-watt PWM amps for each woofer. Adam sees the A77X as having studio/home audio crossover appeal, so unbalanced RCA audio inputs are provided in addition to balanced XLRs. The rear panel also accommodates a gain control for the high frequencies (± 4 dB) and two shelf filters (± 6 dB) for high frequencies (5kHz) and low frequencies (300Hz).

Side issues

In our excitement to set the A77Xs up we omitted reading the manual. Don't make the same mistake, because the

Key Features

- 2.4-inch carbon/rohacell woofers
- 1 X-ART tweeter
- Front-mounted input sensitivity control
- Front-mounted power switch
- High- and low-shelf EQ
- Tweeter gain
- Frequency response: 38Hz–50kHz

Measuring Up

The A77X's most obvious competitor would seem to be the Focal Twin6 (£1,210 each) where one of the two 6.5-inch woofers works in large band (midrange–bass) and the other reproduces from 40–150Hz. The Twin6 Be can also be installed vertically or horizontally to respond to the space requirements of a studio. There are many other superb monitors in this price range including the PMC DB1S (£1,825 pair), but you'll need to consult the manufacturers to find out if they can be used horizontally.



labels 'Speaker A' and 'Speaker B' on the back panels indicate left and right respectively. If you get them the wrong way around the stereo imaging suffers – just as it would when two-way monitors are placed horizontally with the woofers on the outside.

The A77Xs delivered a **wide and spacious** soundstage with **solid left/right imaging**

Previous experiences with Adam monitors led us to direct our attentions to the low frequencies. Adam favours front-ported cabinets and many users have noticed wind noise at the openings at certain low frequencies. This is often called 'port chuffing', but we're pleased to report that the A77Xs were chuff-free.

Apparently, Adam addressed this issue a while back by tweaking the design of the front and back of the ports – and it has done the trick. However, sweeping through test tones indicated a slight kick up in the response around 50Hz and a fairly rapid drop-off by 40Hz, despite the two bass drivers and the generous proportions of the cabinets.

Unsurprisingly, the A77Xs delivered a wide and spacious soundstage with solid left/right imaging. However, we didn't experience the same sense of depth or roominess when we were listening to acoustic recordings.

Switching over to some electronic revealed a bottom end with tremendous energy and a nice degree of slam. Kick drums sounded extremely well defined, with differences in the intensity of pedal

strikes easy to discern and quick transients in the attack frequencies around 2kHz.

Opening up

Similarly, bass lines were solid and even throughout the frequency range without the irritation of vanishing notes or boominess caused by hyped low-mids. At the treble end we found the stock settings a little bit subdued in a test room with a moderate amount of acoustic treatment, but things opened up considerably when we boosted the tweeter by a couple of notches.

The midrange may be the area in which the A77Xs will divide opinion. By comparison to our Focal CMS-40s the Adams sounded a little on the thin side. Old-school vocal recordings didn't come over with quite the sense of body or rich valviness we are used to hearing. Consequently, centrally panned instruments never seemed to burst free of the speakers themselves to sit solidly in the air between the drivers. This is an observation rather than a criticism because what we like

to hear and what we need to hear aren't necessarily the same when it comes to monitoring.

All monitors have their own character to an extent and it's incumbent on the user to learn how they respond in any given space. Not everyone will find the A77X's slightly lean and two-dimensional presentation an enjoyable experience. However, they are fun and easy to work with, covering all the essential functions required of high-end monitors with aplomb. **MTM**

MTM Verdict

WHY BUY

- + Power/volume at front
- + Five-year warranty
- + Solid, well-defined bass
- + Wide soundstage
- + Plenty of power

WALK ON BY

- Unsuitable for LFE work

A high-quality active monitor with no obvious issues, but you may still require a sub for LFE work.

