



Friday, May 30, 2007

connect

Compression
Digital files can be compressed into smaller file formats, but not all are created equal. AAC, and MP3 are the most popular. iTunes uses AAC, which offers several advantages over MP3. For example, AAC offers a better handling of audio frequencies under 20kHz. It is used by default in iTunes.

But rather than worrying about the file format, you should be concerned with the bit rate of the file.

This specifies how much disc space each second of music will take up.

The standard is 128kbps, which means each second of audio will occupy 128kb of space, or about a minute a megabyte.

The lower the bit rate, the higher the compression, and the worse the music will sound.

In the recent Apple/EMI deal, Apple said they would double the bit rate of purchased tracks from 128 to 256kbps, an admission that 128kbps is too low.

With the price of storage dropping rapidly, it might be worth considering changing your own settings to reflect the higher 256kbps bit rate.

Changing the settings in iTunes is easy. Simply go to iTunes Preferences, click Advanced and Importing. Select AAC and choose custom to change the bit rate to 256kbps.

For more information on changing your own settings with iTunes see docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=93118

You should be able to hear the difference with the improved bit rate, particularly if you listen to classical music, where the peak frequencies tend to get lost with compression.

DANNY GOROG

gorogsguide.blogspot.com

connect

Editor Dave Bullard
Telephone 9292 2317
Email: connect@heraldsun.com.au
Fax: 9292 1177

Audio Visual Editor Peter Familiari
Telephone 9292 2349
Email: familiarp@heraldsun.com.au

Advertising: Tony Bradica
Telephone: 9292 2527
Covers: Nathan Donaldson



▲ Sounds easy
What: Portable MP3 speakers
Price: \$199
Cygnett: 9429 2552
www.cygnett.com.au

THE Groove Cube is a compact, portable sound system designed for MP3 players — and it's easy to use. Connecting your MP3 player or laptop to the foldable Groove Cube is as easy as plugging a cord into the headphone jack. Groove Cube comes with a USB charger cable to plug into your PC or laptop, or you can take it on the road using six AA batteries.

► Straight shooter

What: HD camcorder
Price: \$1999
Canon: 1300 021 167
canon.com.au

CANON has brought true high-definition 1080p video recording to consumers for under \$2000 — quite an achievement. The HV20 has a professional-grade CMOS sensor, instant auto-focus and 10x zoom with optical image stabilisation. It delivers 1080p video at a Blu-ray-quality 25 frames a second. Connect tried it out at this month's launch and we were highly impressed with its clear, sharp, finely detailed and richly coloured video. It will make you look like a pro.



Dave Bullard and Peter Familiari bring you the best of the latest products



▲ All together now

What: Multimedia unit
Price: \$1599
Digital Products Group: 1300
www.beyonwiz.com.au

NOW this is what we call cool to our shores, has brought a high-definition TV tuner, with the ability to stream from PC to your TV (and do it wirelessly). It lets you pause two HD TV channels while program. Available from H



▲ Sounds easy
What: Portable MP3 speakers
Price: \$199
Cygnett: 9429 2552
www.cygnett.com.au

THE Groove Cube is a compact, portable sound system designed for MP3 players — and it's easy to use. Connecting your MP3 player or laptop to the foldable Groove Cube is as easy as plugging a cord into the headphone jack. Groove Cube comes with a USB charger cable to plug into your PC or laptop, or you can take it on the road using six AA batteries.



Dave Bullard and Peter Familiari bring you the best of the latest products

Tannoy Prestige Glencol

The 15" Dual Concentric Tannoy Speakers are so natural they disappear that you are there.

Cary Audio Electronics, CD-304
CD player in the world, CD value CD player

519 Brunswick st, N
Ph: 9489 484
www.audiophile.com

Almarro • Amber • Cary Audio • Counterpoint • SEAS • Dual • Grado

Herald Sun
Connect Magazine
30th May, 2007