

Denon And Bose S302 And Lifestyle V30



Company: Denon And Bose

Pros: Denon: S302 his is a slick package that's well worth the money. The designers have worked on what consumers need to today while also introducing some very neat connectivity. Bose: The sound is great and there is a stack of connectivity ports

Cons: Denon: I would have like to have seen two 1.3 HDMI input connectors Bose: At \$4,999 this is a rort especially as it has no built in content player, no iPod connector and no network connectivity. This is Bose arrogance at its best.

"Who Has The Best Home Theatre Kit? Denon vs Bose" By David Richards and Mendelson Tiu | Published:06/12/2007

The SmartHouse shootout between the new Bose Lifestyle V30 home theatre system and the Denon S302 home theatre system has opened up some very big issues as to the future direction of home theatre kits.

During the past 12 months we have seen a significant change in home theatre technology. The smart Hi Fi Companies like Denon and Kardon have realised that content and the delivery of content to the home theatre system is as equally important as the output however there are some Companies like Bose who are only just catching up to what was yesterdays home theatre system 5 speakers a sub woofer and a connectivity console.

In today's home theatre environment what is critically important is technology such as wireless, Ethernet connectivity and an input capability from an iPod player. Also important is the ability to plug in and play content from a USB storage device. Why? Because most consumers have either a PC or an iPod or even both and a great deal of consumers have content in a digital format or are storing content to a removable hard drive system or a USB storage device.

We don't know what Bose is playing at in Australia but the Lifestyle V30 is being sold here for \$4,999 which is excessive for what the system delivers. However the pain comes when one searches the web and finds that one can buy the exact same system in the USA for \$3,332 (Best Buy price) which is some \$1,667 cheaper than what the product is being sold for in Australia.

But that's not the impediment that the Bose system has when comparing it with the Denon S302. Firstly the Denon has three ways that one can connect an iPod. Either directly from a 17-pin cable connection from the iPod to the Denon. Or using a combined video and audio cable connected directly to the iPod or by connecting a Denon iPod docking station either directly or via a wireless connection.

Ironically Bose also has a brand new iPod docking station but the only problem is that there is no way to connect the docking station to the Lifestyle V30 so that one can take advantage of the Bose speakers on the V30 which are far superior to the small speakers incorporated into the Bose iPod Docking station. While there is nothing wrong with the speakers in the Bose docking station it would be great to be able to pug the device into ones home theatre kit and get the advantage of the sub woofer and larger speakers.

So how do the two stack up?

Firstly the Denon system is extremely easy to set up with colour coordinated plugs from the speakers to the sub woofer and while the device has only two speakers it is very hard to notice the difference between two speakers and a 5.1 speaker system.

The two closed box 2-way speakers create a true surround sound experience from the two speakers a feat that usually requires a 5.1 channel speaker system.

The unit's built-in 1080p DVD/CD player will scale content - including up-conversion from all analogue sources - to 1080p outputting via HDMI and also perform I/P conversion from interlaced to Progressive Scan from all video sources.

The S-302 features Dolby Virtual, dts Virtual, the new Audyssey Dynamic EQ and Bass XT for greater bass response as well as Denon's proprietary AL24 processing, which delivers excellent resolution and detail from CD and other sources. The technology is normally reserved for the company's audio/video receivers.

Although Denon have packed the unit with features, one of the ways Denon were able to keep the size of the control unit down was by housing a 3-channel amplifier, which provides 50 watts to the front channels and 100 watts to the subwoofer, within the subwoofer.



The addition of an Ethernet port and built-in Wifi allows the S-302 to be Digital Living Network Alliance (DLNA) certified – the DNLA is an international, cross industry collaboration of electronics, communication and computer industries that support a wired and wireless network between PCs, A/V home entertainment products and mobile devices, enabling a seamless environment for sharing digital media and content services. Thus the S-302 can stream Internet radio as well as music from network attached storage devices.



The S-302 is also able to decode popular MP3 and WMA, the new WMA Lossless formats and also AAC (Non DRM files), WAV plus FLAC. Additionally, the S-302 integrates a new GUI for ease of use as well as the ability to view the cover art from an iPod or other streaming media.

Connectivity shouldn't be a problem with 1 x Component, 2 x S-Video and 2 x Composite video inputs, plus 1 x HDMI, 1 x Component, 1 x S-Video and 1 x Composite video outputs. It also features 3 x Analogue audio inputs, 1 x Digital OPT, 1 x Digital Coax, 1 x USB port and 1 x iPod (AR-P100 terminal).

Connectivity via the S-302 to a wireless network is easy and within minutes one can access internet radio and an iTunes or Windows Media database sitting on a PC. Or one can simply plug in an Ethernet cable. If you are going to do this try buying a switch and run your Ethernet cable to a switch and another from the switch to your home theatre kit. This then allows you to plug in a gaming console and stay online with both your home theatre kit and your gaming console.

The output from the speakers is excellent however the standout for the Denon is the remote control. This has been well thought out with one side being for the professional programmer and the other side a simple easy to use remote with large buttons for the audio management and easy to read and see buttons for menu, exit, aux, WiFi, Ethernet and iPod connectivity.

For \$2,900 this delivers excellent value for money. In fact this could well sell for \$4,990 which is the same price as the Bose offering which has a lot less features and still be value for money.

The Bose Lifestyle V30 comes with a set of video-in ports (HDMI, Component, Composite, and S-Video) that a user can use to connect the Lifestyle Home Theatre System to any television set. The unit also has two HDMI ports and four sets of Component, Composite and S-Video ports available to hook up four different devices (like DVD players, CBL/SAT, VCR, and AUX) that require video output.

There are also five sets of analogue audio-in connection (RCA jacks), as well as five optical/digital audio input ports available for users who want to connect their device's audio to the home theatre system. There is also an RCA audio-out port, AM and FM antennae port, TV on/off sensor port, IR emitter port, and two coax ports at the back of the unit, as well as a headphone jack that is located on the right side of the media centre. What is missing though is an Ethernet port, an iPod docking station, Wi-Fi capabilities, and USB ports, making this home theatre kit limited in terms of connectivity to digital files.

Bose has a 'recommended' speaker set-up that one can follow in order to get the audio atmosphere of a 'home theatre'. The centre speakers must be placed directly above or below the centre of the TV, the front left and right speakers must have a maximum distance of three feet from the edge of the TV, the rear speakers must be positioned in the back half of the room and must be directed away from the listening positions to maximise the reflected sound, while the Acoustimass module must be placed under a table or behind a cabinet.





After setting up the speakers, users must tailor the sound to your room with the help of the AdaptiQ audio calibration system. This audio calibration system minimizes the effects of the listening environment - including furnishings, listener locations, and speaker locations in order to provide the 'consistent and high quality performance' in any room.

The V30 comes with a special headset that is designed to be worn above the ears and contains two miniature microphones that take acoustic measurements during calibration. A series of audio tones will be heard all throughout the testing stage and will be done in 5-10 minutes. Just remember that every time that you move any of the speakers to another location, you must re-run the AdaptiQ audio calibration to recalibrate the speakers.

The whole speaker system was able to provide us with vibrant mids and highs during our music test. From classical to pop to rock, the speakers did not have a hard time reproducing the sound coming from our source. Sound effects in different games and movies were balanced and the speakers were able to produce crystal clear sound with minimal distortions. The Acoustimass module was able to work well with the small speakers and was able to deliver solid, low frequency sounds even at high volumes. Explosions sounded fuller, deep rumbles can be heard, and music files with a lot of bass were rich and powerful. The module also had a clever way of 'throwing' its sound to the small cube speakers, giving us the impression that the highs, mids, and lows come from the small speakers.

FINAL RATING

Denon S302: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

For: This is a slick package that's well worth the money. The designers have worked on what consumers need to today while also introducing some very neat connectivity.

Against: I would have like to have seen two 1.3 HDMI input connectors.



Bose Lifestyle V30: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

For: Great Sound; Abundance of connectivity

Against: At \$4,999 this is a port especially as it has no built in content player, no iPod connector and no network connectivity. This is Bose arrogance at its best.

