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Lindemann Audiotechnik Limetree Network

Pocket size streaming

There are a lot of network players around, but only a few fit into the trouser pocket. One that does fit is the Limetree Network from Lindemann Audiotechnik and it plays like a big one! Sounds interesting?

Jörg Schumacher, Stefan Goedecke

Before it gets confusing: Limetree is the British English word for the German "Lindenbaum". Linde just as Lindemann. It has nothing to do with citrus fruits as the American English translation might suggest. Other than that, the stylised limetree leaf on the chassis of the product is a clear indicator. Leaves of lime fruits look different. But enough of this excursion into linguistics and botany. The topic after all is audio and not green stuff. And Lindemann Audiotechnik is quite good at that, not only because of their company name. At least, they are 25 years strong in the hi-fi business claiming milestones such as the first German SACD player their own. Being at the pulse of the time with their own products is their simple credo. Thus, we are more than thrilled, how the company from Woerthsee close to Munich approaches audio network streaming with their Limetree Network.

Compact design

Especially, because a high-quality D/A converter and other clever

The WPS button for an easy connection with Wi-Fi routers and the port for the low-noise "medical grade" power adapter can be found on the rear of the Limetree Network

tricks were built into the product. But let's not reveal too much. The first thing strinking is the ultra compact overall dimension of the Limetree Network. It measures 10 × 4 × 10 centimeters. The aluminium body is ideally manufactured and looks absolutely beautiful with the sharp graphic of a leaf and the multicoloured LED's. Besides the latter, the front panel of the chassis only hosts the power switch and the 3.5 mm mini jack of the headphone amp. All other ports are placed on the rear side. Supplementary to the stereo cinch output, the Limetree Network includes a RJ-45 port to integrate it in wired networks, a USB 2.0 host port to use external storage media and a jack for the included Wi-Fi antenna. A Bluetooth connection with other devices is also possible with the Limetree Network, if these devices support the A2DP profile. The connectivity options are obviously versatile and also the inside of the network player has plenty stuff to offer. First and foremost the two DAC chips from Asahi Kasei (type AK4452) and the AK4137 re-sampler. And here we are at the above mentioned clever tricks. All audio signals are indeed re-sampled and synchronised with the so called Ultra-Low-Jitter MEMS FemtoClock of the Limetree. According to the name of the technology, it promises to eliminate Jitter effectively and ensure the best possible sound. But this is not all. The AK4137 is also capable to re-sample PCM signals into DSD signals. Our test product offers the option to switch into the DSD-Re-Sampling mode, which provides more transparent

The Limetree is not just a converter, but also a streamer, therefore two boards

and natural sound reproduction. While we're on it: PCM signals are supported up to 24 bit resolutions and sampling rates of 384 kilohertz (kHz) and DSD signals up to the DSD256 format. Even via Wi-Fi these formats are feasible, but this depends of course on the performance of the router. Other than that, the Limetree Network delivers absolute vital results on the spec sheet. The dynamic range is over 120 decibel (dB) and the Total Harmonic Distortion plus Noise (THD+N) is under 0.001 %.

Intuitive control

Some of you might have noticed, that the Limetree Network neither has a display nor a remote control. It is simply because the product is controlled via the Lindemann Audiotechnik app. The app is working stable, good-looking and neatly arranged. After a short settling-in, the handling is easy and you'll find yourself creating playlists or streaming music via one of the supported streaming services such as Spotify, Tidal or HighResAudio. The connection with the music server of our editorial department was plug and play, in the truest sense of the word. Just connect the appropriate LAN cable with the Limetree Network, done! Everything worked instantly and without a problem.

Precise sound

With no suprise and without exception, the Limetree Network left us sonically with a positive impression. We are presented with a clear and balanced sound that does not lack depth or width. The headphone output is no exception and offers a tidy and crisp listening experience. By switching into the aforementioned DSD-Re-Sampling mode, the sound impression intensifies and the rendition gains truly more airiness and vividness. Somehow, we don't want to switch back again. Instead we start playing "Goucho" from Steely Dan's eponymous album from 1980. Even in the more complex moments of the arrangements, the Limetree Network never loses its composure. The transients of the drums are naturally transferred, the bass

range sounds deep and sonorous, but not boomy and the horns are blowing in best 1980s perfection. After all, Steely Dan is also known for being satisfied in the studio with nothing but just that. Lindemann's Limetree Network is more than just that. ■

SUMMARY

Lindemann Audiotechnik presents with the Limetree Network a compact network player with integrated DAC, that doesn't has to hide behind his bigger fellows, either sonically or in terms of user comfort. Clever functions such as the DSD-Re-Sampling make this one an all around comprehensive package.

FEATURES

• DSD-Re-Sampling

Advantages	+ sound + easy handling
Disadvantages	− none

FEATURES

General

Device class	Network player
Price band	Middle range
Manufacturer	Lindemann Audiotechnik
Model	Limetree Network
Price (EIA)	895 Euro
Dimensions (H/W/D)	10 × 4 × 10 cm
Weight	0,3 kg
Information	www.lindemann-audio.de

Technical Information (manufacturer)

Power	n/s
Individual tone frequency	DSD-Re-Sampling
Playback options	LAN, WLAN, BT
Formats	WAV, FLAC, AIFF, ALAC, MP3, AAC, Ogg Vorbis, WMA, DSD
Power consumption	Stand-by: 0,1 W Operation: 3,5 W
Inputs	1 × USB, 1 × RJ-45
Outputs	2 × cinch, 1 × 3,5 mm TRS-jack

EVALUATION

Playback quality		54/60
Equipment/workmanship		17/20
User-friendliness		8/10
Appreciation/Depreciation		None
Interim result		79 of 90 points
Price/affordability	Excellent	10/10
Result		
	Very Good	**89 %**

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