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Circ: 890,7000

## Yeti caught in wild



When Blue Microphones announced the Yeti USB microphone (\$149) in November, I was a little apprehensive about the name. Sure, Blue Microphones has been playing it cutesy over the years with microphones named Snowball, Snowflake, Mikey, and Bottle Rocket--but Yeti?

Well, after getting my hands on this thing I can now say that I fully understand the thinking behind the name. For starters, this microphone is huge--like, disturbingly huge. It measures a foot tall, weighs 3.5 pounds, and--to be perfectly frank--it's starting to give me a complex.

But beyond its intimidating size, the Yeti moniker is just as fitting as a way to describe its sound. Compared with similar

microphones, such as the Samson G-Track or even Blue's own \$99 Snowball, the Yeti's sound quality offers noticeably better depth and detail. It's a big sound from a big microphone, which is probably what I should have said in the first place instead of wasting your time with the last two paragraphs.

Hands on with the Yeti microphone (photos)

OK, so what else are you getting with the Yeti? From a features perspective the Yeti offers an integrated control for gain adjustment, zero-latency headphone monitoring, headphone volume control, a handy little mute button, and a switch for selecting between four microphone recording patterns (omni, cardioid, stereo, bidirectional). The solid metal man-shaped stand is also a nice feature, and does a better job than the G-Track or Snowball at placing the microphone at mouth level. If the cutesy-ness of the stand is overwhelming, a standard, threaded mic stand mount is also included on the bottom of the Yeti.

When it comes to performance, the Yeti has plenty to brag about. For starters, this is the first microphone or audio input device to receive the coveted THX certification. I asked Blue Microphones to tell me what was required to get the THX stamp of approval. Apparently, it involves a multitude of factors, such as tests for frequency response and signal to noise ratio, and--perhaps more importantly--proof of performance consistency across multiple product batches. In other words, it had to sound good and have a reasonable chance of sounding good every time.

The Yeti's three-capsule, multipattern microphone design is another first for the USB microphone world. The three 14mm mic capsules are arranged in a slightly offset, triangular layout, affording four different recording patterns, including stereo--which is a rare find for a relatively large capsule microphone like this. And although we're big fans of the mic capsules used on Blue's Mikey and Snowball, I was told by Blue's product representative that the Yeti uses a new capsule design with a slightly different tuning that takes advantage of the three-capsule layout.

Of course, none of this matters if the mic doesn't sound good. For now, you'll need to take my word for it that the Yeti is redefining my expectations for a \$150 microphone. By the end of the week, I should have a full published with audio samples. in the meantime, hit-up the photo gallery.