

Triangle AIO Twin

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For French loudspeaker brand Triangle, it all began in 1980 with the high-end 1180 floor-standing model followed a year later by the CX2, famed for having its tweeter outside the main cabinet and appearing like something of an afterthought. That was then and, still based in its purpose-built facility in Soissons, the company has grown to gain an international reputation for sonic creativity.

While still creating luxurious top-end transducers, the marque is now home to a much wider range of audio products, including the all-in-one mini-system under test here. The AIO Twin is a wireless speaker package which appears to include everything needed to create an instant sound system.



Design

When the carton arrived, I hadn't quite appreciated just how much I was getting in one audio package. Yes, there were the two compact two-way speakers (with a cable to connect them together) and a mains lead to plug in the active one – but that was not even half the story.

Here we have a wireless package which is absolutely packed with technology: versatility in a box, if you like. I soon discovered that I had all the features of an entire hi-fi system in one place which allows music streaming from a wide range of sources including Spotify, Deezer, Tidal and Qobuz, the connection of a sub-woofer if required (the Tales 340 is suggested), an optical digital input and MM phono sockets for a suitable turntable, such as the matching unit created in co-operation with Pro-Ject. The back panel also sports an ethernet connector, 5V USB output for charging as well as a 3.5mm aux input socket.



While I sat down, with a coffee, to digest the comprehensive instruction manual I familiarised myself with both the natty remote handset as well as installing the Triangle app and pairing my smartphone to the speakers. The process was not at all daunting and, within a few minutes I had music playing via high-res streaming. With the option of 24-bit/192kHz wireless connection, a Bluetooth 5.0 aptX option and that ethernet socket, there really is a wide range of ways to access music.

The AIO Twin can be used as part of a multi-room setup, using Linkplay technology, to allow enjoyment in several rooms around the home. For this review I contented myself with the speakers either side of my TV with an optical/SPDIF connection between the two. This proved most satisfactory.

There's just so much to discover that I found I was unearthing new features every day during the review period. One which particularly appealed, as a former radio broadcaster, was the TuneIn internet radio station access. This had me entertained for hours and I really enjoyed being able to listen in such good quality to broadcasts from near and far so easily.

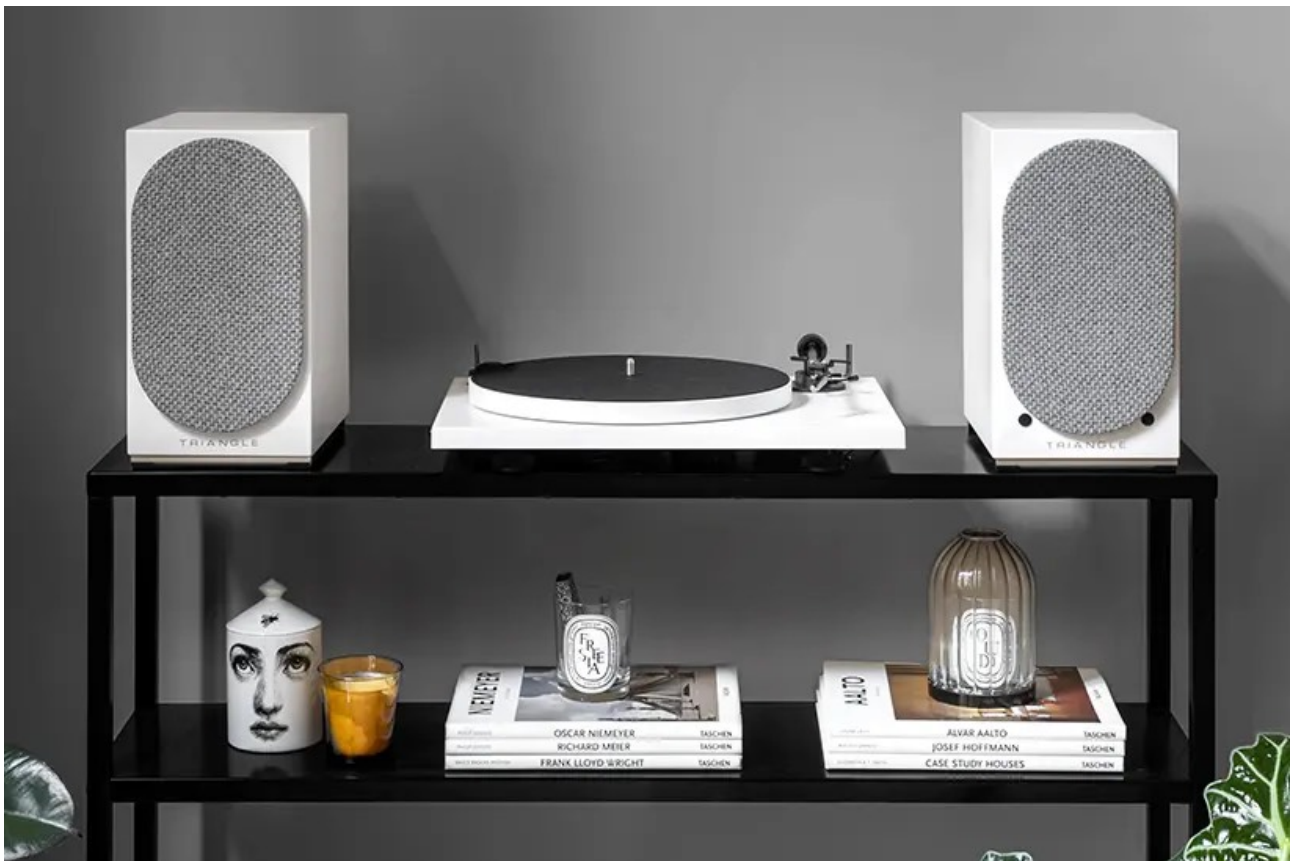


Build quality seems very good with a decent level of finish which includes the provision of fabric-covered oblong grilles created in partnership with ‘fabric architect’ Gabriel. There are natty aluminium feet which house rubber pads to aid anti-vibration and protect the surface underneath, while the cabinets themselves are offered in a fetching range of colours as well as wood effect.

Sound quality

With AIO Twin up and running I wasn’t really sure what to expect. As reviewers, we are spoilt with the loan of some really top-end kit from time-to-time as well as getting the chance to hear some pretty impressive systems at both hi-fi shows and during visits to manufacturers.

My first audition of the AIO Twin was with the system handling my TV’s audio and, wow, compared to the inbuilt loudspeakers in the flatscreen set, the Triangle system really brought programmes to life. There was a huge expansion of the soundstage, in width, depth and height. The sound became overall richer and more detailed via the AIO, while there was a glorious richness to the mix which those compromised internal drivers just couldn’t capture with any realism. Dialogue became much easier to hear as it cut through the mix; less so on what I know are very well-balanced TV productions made using BBC-type broadcast monitors (the likes of *Heartbeat*, *Emmerdale*, *Eastenders*); but A/B comparisons with a wealth of other material proved the AIO Twin’s worth here, notably with quintessentially British films from the days of analogue, such as *Carry on Cabbie* and *Holiday on the Buses*. With more modern material the AIO Twin was clearly also very much at home as I was immersed in a screening of *Mr Bean Rides Again* where the full force of the sound effects was not lost on the little boxes.



Switching to those internet radio sources, some are clearly made available in better quality than others such as the vagaries of digital distribution. A few are clearly streamed over the web with gloriously high bitrates and I enjoyed them greatly. Music steaming is just a cinch once the Triangle AIO Twin system is installed. Armed with my smartphone and the free app, I was able to enjoy a wealth of music from both Tidal and Spotify with consummate ease. So much so that I found I left the little remote handset alone and relied entirely on the app to control everything. Almost every conceivable audio format can be handled by this set-up, including but not limited to FLAC, WAV, MP3 and AAC.

I clearly underestimated the sonic abilities of the little system because, time and again, they amazed me and brought a smile to my face. I conclude that they are happier with what I term 'processed pop' rather than, say, solo piano where they struggled even on what I know to be excellent recordings to convey a neutral tonal balance of the instrument. Given the right material they can rock, by which I mean they have a wonderful ability to deal with pace and timing while maintaining the musical rhythm in such a way as to generate involuntary foot-tapping from the listener.

Through a fortnight of enjoyment I was very pleased with what the Triangle AIO Twin could achieve; plus the sheer ease and variety of connectivity makes the compact system a dream to use in a variety of settings.

Conclusion

Now, of course, the Triangle AIO Twin is not a replacement for a fully-fledged high-end system; it would be silly to suggest that it was and, if that were the case, we wouldn't find Triangle still manufacturing the joys of its Magellan floorstanding towers amid the rest of their catalogue. No. What we have here is an adjunct to a main system. I would relish one in my kitchen, to enjoy during breakfast. Perhaps in the study, to listen to music while working from home as more and more of us

do now. And, I can see AIO Twin as the perfect thing to present to a (lucky) offspring settling in at university or leaving home.

For the package that it is, AIO Twin is just incredible. Incredible value for money; incredibly good at extracting a glorious tonal balance from what are essentially tiny acoustic enclosures. The package reminded me, to some extent, of those Akai and Aiwa mini- and midi-systems launched when CD first came out, and we reviewers were so enamoured with. Now with all the advantages of digital connection and streaming, the Triangle AIO Twin takes that concept to new heights and creates a total music solution in a two box package. Just amazing.

Specifications:

Type: wireless standmount loudspeaker

Amplifier power: 50 Watts/channel

Drive units:

Mid/bass: 130mm

Tweeter: 25mm

Bandwidth: 56Hz – 22kHz

Inputs: Wi-Fi, RCA / phono, mini-jack 3.5mm, optical S/PDIF, Bluetooth

Sample rate: 24-bit/192kHz

Bluetooth: Bluetooth 5.0, aptX, aptX HD, aptX LL, SBC, AAC

Dimensions HxWxD: 304 x 165 x 235mm

Weight: 10.4kg/pair

Finishes: Graphite black, Frost white, Linen grey, Abyss blue, Brown maple

Warranty: electronics 2 years, passive components 5 years

Price when tested:

£699 at time of publication