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Sonos Move: Take your songs anywhere

Indoors, outdoors or away from home, this speaker gives you big sound but at a bigger price tag

MALA BHARGAVA

Until now, if you wanted a world famous Sonos speaker, you would have to use whatever workaround you could to get one from abroad as they weren't officially sold in India. That has just changed and you can now much buy a Sonos directly—and we can check them out. The first of the speakers we have for review is the Sonos Move, released sometime in 2019, actually.

I like to think of the Move as a moveable, in keeping with its name, rather than a portable. It can work on battery so you can move it but it's not so portable that you could tuck it under your arm and go off somewhere. It weighs three kilos. You could move it from one room to another without thinking twice; you could take out on the balcony or porch or plant it in the garden; you could even pack it into the car and take it with you for a holiday.

Shock resistant
You get a fabric bag to use to protect the speaker and keep it clean when not in use. There's a large indented or scooped out chunk on the back of the speaker that serves as a grip to lift the speaker. The speaker is IP56 rated so it can take a bit of rain when outdoors. But not an outright immersion in water. It's also got a shock resistant body so hopefully, it won't be destroyed by a bit of a drop.

The Move comes in either black or white. We got the black and it looks familiar enough but the white too would look interesting and blend well against lighter

walls. When used indoors, the Move is plugged into power and sits on a special and unique charging base. It works with your Wi-Fi network. The charging base is quite convenient because it means your speaker is always charged and when you put it back you don't have to fiddle with plugs. When you lift it off the base and take it out of the house, you use the button on the back to switch to Bluetooth. You can also charge via USB for which the slot is available. The power and connect buttons are also on the back. On top are touch sensitive controls for navigating tracks, volume etc — and they're nice and sensitive. I thought the icons weren't too user-friendly, however.

Sonos app
Another place to control the speaker is through the Sonos app. From here, you can add a voice assistant (Alexa or Google for now). You can also add music services from here, after which they'll play through the app. There's quite a few music services supported, but some are country specific and of course all will need subscriptions. I did spot some of the local Indian services as well as Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube. Sonos also has its own Sonos Radio.

There's a lot else in the app, from parental controls to system

updates, to setting up your own music libraries. You can also set up through the app and it isn't as quick a process as with some. You need to create an account. And if someone else signs in with their ID, good luck figuring out how to disentangle them, though once you know it works out.

Coming to the sound: things are a bit mixed. It has a rather nice surprising bass, making it sound substantial and full. The higher frequencies sound adequate though get a bit strident at high volume. I did think the music contained rather than spread out and open. But then, the speaker uses Trueplay to adjust itself depending on where you've placed it, so changing the placement around to see how it sounds is highly recommended. It's a smart feature for a speaker that's focussed on being moved.

We were not able to test any multi-room or stereo pairing as there was just one unit for review, but the Move fits into the Sonos ecosystem well, as is known from the experience of others who have been using it for over a year.

Sonos is a really popular cult brand and for that it can certainly charge a premium. Even so, the speaker is far too expensive in India. At \$400 in the US, it should be around ₹30,000 but it costs a lot more, even beyond Apple's HomePod and Echo Studio which are roughly equivalent though not portable.

Price: ₹43,999
Pros: Deep bass sound, flexibility with placement, convenient charging, splash proof, shock resistant, full featured app with services
Cons: Very expensive, long set-up, no line-in so can't connect devices directly

Apple Music: How to hear the difference

Lossless and hi-res tracks may be available now, but you need to take a few steps to listen

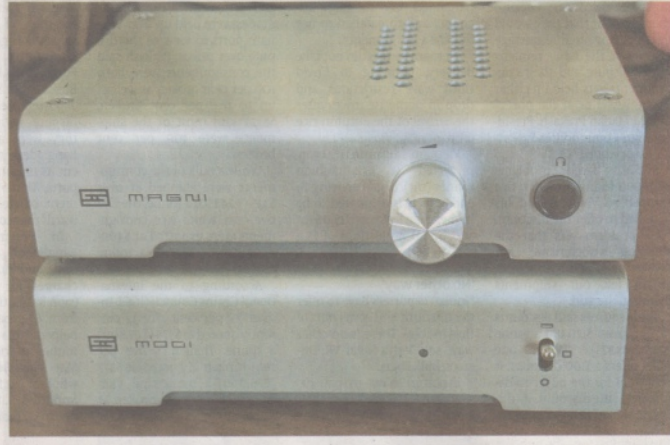
KISHORE BHARGAVA

Amongst all the announcements made back at WWDC-2021 by Apple, one that had a lot of people excited were the changes coming to Apple Music. They announced three significant changes. Apple Music would now be available in lossless (CD quality), hi-res lossless (better than CD quality) and spatial audio (Dolby Atmos) or basically music coming at you from all angles.

Along with this they also announced that this would be a server side change and only needed to be enabled in settings on the device playing it, and finally, no change in the pricing plans even for the hi-res lossless tier. This is huge since many other services like Tidal and Qobuz actually make their money based on the fact that they provide hi-res lossless music which you can't get anywhere else. Suddenly, Apple has the opportunity of converting its entire library of over 75 million songs into better than CD quality.

It was a month after the event that the changes happened in the US and some other countries. For India, the services started sometime in mid-July and ever since we have been listening to higher quality music. But life is not that simple. To truly get the best out of Apple Music, you may need to add some additional pieces to your music system.

First-up, if you just want to listen to CD quality music then you will need, at the very least, a pair of wired headphones. This is primarily because Bluetooth is not capable of streaming CD quality. While there are some headphones, like those from Sony, that have the proprietary LDAC protocol and get close to CD quality, they still fall short. If you are using an iPhone, then the lightning to



3.5mm stereo adapter does the job very well and you will most certainly hear the difference.

For an iPad, depending on whether it has a USB-C port or lightning port, you will need the appropriate adapter. Airplay does support lossless and can be used. An Apple TV or speakers which support Airplay2 can definitely be used to stream lossless music.

AudioQuest DragonFly
The challenge is when you want to go to a higher resolution. The built-in DAC (digital-to-analog) converter in the phones are just not good enough for the job and you need to add an external DAC. If you like listening on headphones, there are many choices of good headphone DACs which will not break the bank, the Shanling UA1 is a good starting point. And as you fall through the rabbit hole of becoming an audiophile you can invest in an AudioQuest DragonFly. You'll find these available on Amazon, Headphone Zone and AV shops. They're expensive sometimes, but worth the transformation in the music.

Of course the real fun begins when you want to listen on a nice pair of speakers, whether

powered or ones with an amplifier. In our listening journey, we tried several types, starting with the low-end speakers the kind that you normally connect to a computer and moved onto a pair of Sonos Play 5 speakers and then finally to a pair of Klipsch speakers. Our final chain was a Schiit MODI DAC with a Schiit MAGNI pre-amp connected to the Klipsch speakers. For the source, we used an iPhone, an iPad, a OnePlus phone (yes, did we mention that lossless and hi-res lossless is also supported on Android) and finally an Android tablet. All of them worked very well.

Spatial audio
In terms of listening, the difference between the normal AAC stream and the lossless and hi-res lossless stream was stark. Even at CD quality, the sound stage really opened up, tonal clarity was simply amazing and dynamic range was brilliantly handled. In some ways even listening to tracks from our college days felt like rediscovering some of that music. Things which previously sounded like a "clink" sound now should have been all along.

Only time will tell if serious audiophiles will come flocking

to Apple Music or not, but for the beginner audio buffs, this is music to the ears.

But wait it's not over yet; we haven't discussed "Spatial Audio". A few years ago, Apple introduced spatial audio for its AirPods. Other manufacturers also had similar options but the content was lacking. The first and most obvious choice for 360° content are movies and TV shows, and if you use your headphones to consume such content then it was a very interesting and immersive experience indeed. But what about music? Nobody thought music would go the same direction. In fact, Apple actually talks more about spatial audio than it does about lossless.

A classic old track by Marvin Gaye has been used to demonstrate the progression of music from mono to stereo to spatial audio and if listening on headphones it does truly feel immersive.

As newer music is recorded with this in mind, it would be an interesting journey to follow. We would love to see Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon mastered as Spatial Audio or Dolby Atmos or whatever you wish to call it. That would be a fascinating listen.

Apple Music is ₹99 a month and just ₹49 for students.

Postman closes \$225-m Series D round at \$5.6-billion valuation

Company has now raised over \$430 million across four rounds

OUR BUREAU
Bengaluru, August 18

SaaS start-up, Postman, closed its \$225-million Series D funding round led by Insight Partners. New investors such as Coatue, Battery Ventures, and BOND, along with existing investors CRV and Nexus Venture Partners participated in the round. Postman is a collaboration tool for application programming interfaces (API) development.

DoorDash Product Leader, Gokul Rajaram, and Freshworks Founder, Girish Mathrubootham, also participated in the round as individual investors. The company has now raised over \$430 million across four rounds and is valued at \$5.6 billion.

To expand teams
Postman will use the Series D capital to expand its teams in the areas of sales, marketing, product, and engineering. In addition, the company will continue to invest



"APIs have quickly become the fundamental building blocks of software used by developers in every industry, in every country across the globe. Postman has the opportunity to become a key pillar in how enterprises build, deliver products, and seamlessly enable partnerships across the ecosystem," said Insight Partners Managing Director, Jeff Horing.

Postman has added more than 300 employees across 13 countries since the beginning of 2020, more than doubling its headcount. It also added thousands of new customers that include 90 per cent of the Fortune 500 and the likes of Salesforce, Stripe, Kroger, Cisco, PayPal, and Microsoft.

The company recently announced that its Public API Network has more than 75,000 APIs shared on the network.

To support the global growth of APIs across all industries, Postman has released various capabilities such as Postman on the web, public workspaces, the Private API Network, the Public API Network, OpenAPI validations, support for protocols like WebSockets, and other improvements.

*APIs have quickly become the fundamental building blocks of software used by developers in every industry, in every country across the globe. Postman has the opportunity to become a key pillar in how enterprises build, deliver products, and seamlessly enable partnerships across the ecosystem," said Insight Partners Managing Director, Jeff Horing.

MG Motor India unveils AI assistant in upcoming SUV Astor

Aims to build on the concept of Car-as-a-Platform

OUR BUREAU
New Delhi, August 18

MG Motor India (MG), on Wednesday, unveiled the industry-first personal artificial intelligence (AI) assistant and first-in-segment Autonomous level 2 technology to be featured in its upcoming mid-size sports utility vehicle — Astor.

MG aims to further its auto-tech focus by building on the concept of Car-as-a-Platform



Personalised
The personal AI assistant depicts human-like emotions and voices, and can give detailed information on every

topic through Wikipedia, Chaba said. It is powered by i-Smart Hub and will allow customers to personalise their AI.

"We've always introduced breakthrough technologies and now we are moving forward with AI," said Rajeev Chaba, President and MD, MG Motor India.

GMR Infrastructure Limited
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25th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF GMR INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the 25th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Company will be held through Video Conferencing (VC) on Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 3.00 pm IST, in compliance with all the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Rules made thereunder and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (SEBI LODR), read with General Circular No. 14/2020 dated April 8, 2020, General Circular No. 17/2020 dated April 13, 2020, General Circular No. 20/2020 dated May 5, 2020, General Circular No. 02/2021 dated January 13, 2021 and other applicable circulars issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and SEBI Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD/IR/P/2021/111 dated January 15, 2021 read with SEBI Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD/IR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020 (collectively referred to as "Relevant Circulars") to transact the business, as set out in the Notice of AGM which is being circulated for convening the AGM.

In compliance with the Relevant Circulars, Notice of the AGM along with the Annual Report 2020-21 have been sent on August 18, 2021 through electronic mode to all the Members whose email addresses are registered with the Company's Depository Participants (DPs).

The aforesaid documents are also available on the Company's website www.gmrinfra.com, website of the Stock Exchanges i.e. BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com respectively and on the website of the Company's Registrar and Share Transfer Agent, Kfint Technologies Private Limited ("Kfint") at <https://investor.kfintech.com/>. Members are advised to attend and participate in the AGM through the VC facility only. The instructions for joining the AGM are set out in the Notice of the AGM.

The Company is providing the facility to all its Members to cast their votes by electronic means both through remote e-voting and e-voting during the AGM. Detailed instructions for participating through VC and the process for remote e-voting/e-voting for Members holding shares in Dematerialized mode, Physical mode and for Members who have not registered their email address are provided in the Notice of the 25th AGM.

The remote e-voting period commences from 9.00 a.m. IST on Monday, September 6, 2021 and ends at 5.00 p.m. IST on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 (both days inclusive). Members of the Company holding shares either in physical form or demat form, as on the cut-off date i.e., Thursday, September 2, 2021, may cast their vote through remote e-voting or through the e-voting facility at the said AGM. Once the vote on a resolution is cast by the member, the member shall not be allowed to change it subsequently. The remote e-voting module shall be disabled for voting beyond 5.00 p.m. IST on Wednesday, September 8, 2021. The voting rights of members shall be in proportion to the equity shares held by them in the paid-up equity share capital of the Company as on Thursday, September 2, 2021. Members who have opted through remote e-voting will be eligible to attend the AGM, however, they shall not be allowed to cast their vote again during the AGM.

Members who have not registered their email address are requested to register the same in respect of shares held in electronic form with the Depository through their Depository Participant(s) and in respect of shares held in physical form by writing to the Company's Registrar and Share Transfer Agent, Kfint Technologies Private Limited, Kfintech, Selenium Tower B, Plot 31-32, Gachibowli, Financial District, Nanamanga, Hyderabad - 500032 through email at share@kfintech.com.

The Members who have not registered/updated their email address and therefore could not receive the Annual Report, Notice of AGM and instructions for e-voting, the Company has provided link to update their email address and mobile number at <https://investor.kfintech.com/> and also through email at share@kfintech.com.

For queries regarding e-voting,

a) Individual Shareholders holding securities in demat mode with NSDL may contact NSDL Helpline by sending a request at evoting@nsdl.co.in or call at toll free no.: 1800-1020-990 and 1800-44-30.

b) Individual Shareholders holding securities in demat mode with CDSL may contact CDSL Helpline by sending a request at helpline.evoting@cdsl.com or contact at 022-23597389 or 22-23595423.

c) Members who are voting through the facilities provided by the Depositories Participants, may contact their respective Depository Participant(s).

d) Non-Individual Members holding shares in demat mode and Members holding securities in physical mode may contact Kfint Technologies Private Limited at toll free number 1800-309-4201 or write to them at share@kfintech.com and/or evoting@kfintech.com. Members may also contact Mr. S.V. Raju, DGM, Kfint Technologies Private Limited, at RTA's address mentioned above or at share@kfintech.com for any further clarifications. Kindly quote your name, DP ID Client ID/ Folio No and e-voting Event Number in all your communications.

Kfint Infrastructure Limited
64/-
T. Venkat Ramana
Company Secretary & Compliance Officer
GMR GROUP - DL 7168 / PREM ASSOCIATES