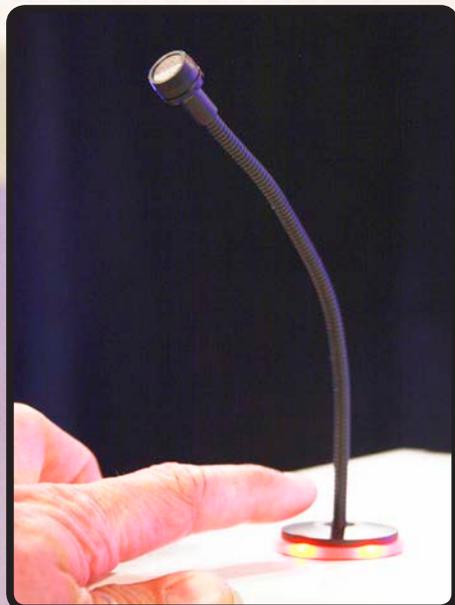
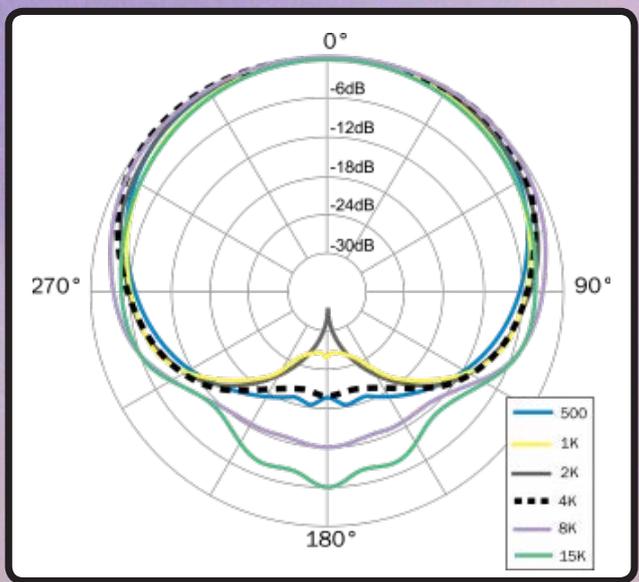


EARTHWORKS IM SERIES

BY JIMMY DEN-ouden

HIGH DEFINITION INSTALLATION MICS

WHILE MANUFACTURER EARTHWORKS IS WIDELY KNOWN FOR THEIR MEASUREMENT MICROPHONES, PERHAPS LESS WELL KNOWN IS THEIR RANGE OF INSTALLATION MICROPHONES. THIS PIECE FOCUSES SPECIFICALLY ON THE IM SERIES GOOSENECK MICROPHONES FOR TABLE OR CEILING INSTALLATION. THE IM SERIES IS ELEGANT. IT'S THE SORT OF MIC YOU MIGHT USE WHEN ADDRESSING THE UN (OR COURTS, PARLIAMENT AND GOVERNMENT IN AUSTRALIA).



BRAND: EARTHWORKS
 MODEL: IM3, IM6, IM10, IM12
 (IM12 ON SPECIAL REQUEST)
 RRP: RANGING FROM \$1199 INC GST
 FOR THE IM3 TO \$1309 INC GST
 FOR THE IM10.
 PRODUCT INFO: WWW.EARTHWORKSAUDIO.COM
 DISTRIBUTOR: WWW.AUDIOBRANDS.COM.AU

Four different gooseneck lengths are available (3, 6, 10 and 12") and colour selection includes black and white, with a silver model in the works. Designed specifically for installation, mounting is pretty simple. Drill a hole into your intended mounting surface, push the base through, and secure the mic with the included washer and locknut. Then plug in an XLR and you're done. The only real difficulty is that you need to get behind the panel to secure the locknut, but this is likely to be the case with most products of this nature. The upside is that this can make it much harder to steal.

For applications where switching is required, the IML series includes a touch-sensitive ring with red/green LED illumination. The logic inputs and outputs on the IML series can be used to trigger events in an audio DSP, or even trigger automated video camera shot recall – anything a logic trigger can control.

The IM series are very much premium grade products, and they're priced accordingly. This is probably not the mic for your local school hall lectern or church, and nor is it claiming to be. So why would you fork over the extra dosh? Well, a few reasons...

Let's start with specs: frequency response is 30Hz to 30kHz +/- 2dB @ 30.5cm. That's very wide range response, and made all the more impressive when you realize it's pretty well totally flat across the pattern, even at high frequencies. 60 degrees off axis looks largely the same as dead-on axis with only very slightly less sensitivity. You can see why they call it "high definition". The specification claims "an impulse rise time of no longer than 25 microseconds, and a total settling time (inc rise time) of no longer than 120 microseconds".

The pattern is cardioid, and quite wide cardioid at that, yet with good rear rejection. Hard to explain, so just look at the polar plot. If you deploy an IM series mic on a lectern or something similar, you'll notice the difference the pattern makes when you have multiple presenters or speakers standing behind it.

The benefits of the wide pattern become even more apparent when using multiple mics. Each mic yields more coverage, so you need fewer of them. The first benefit of this is potentially a reduced scope for phase errors between mics. The second is that you require less cabling and DSP to connect and process inputs. Analogue IO tends to be one of the more expensive parts of most modular DSP systems, so significant savings can be had here, and on the labour costs of running cabling.

If RF interference is like that unwanted guest who shows up at your party to ruin things, the IM series is like the dude standing at the front door refusing entry. The mics have good RF rejection characteristics, and also exhibit minimal handling noise when manipulating the gooseneck. Phantom power is required and it needs to be full +48V phantom power for the mic to perform correctly (not every mixer provides the full voltage). Use a decent console or DSP and you won't have a problem.

Last thing to know? The IM range has a 15 year warranty. If Earthworks are willing put that much faith in their product, then you probably can too.



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