

Embody Your Sexy Geek
Quick Techie Tips to Let
Your Sexy Geek Shine



Are you being heard?
How to plug into great sound online



By Katie Geddes

Sound Matters



Sound Affects (Not Effects)

Sound affects us on a deep, feeling level. Clean, pure sound makes us feel welcome. It's a beautiful thing. Use it to your advantage.

The quality of your sound can affect your bottom line in real ways. It's just as important as the image you present of your business. The good news is that it's never been easier to sound good. Here's a little guidance I hope may "resonate" with you (warning: puns are easy with this topic).

Sound Matters

How you sound matters. As entrepreneurs grow increasingly sophisticated in their abilities and demands, the desire for great online sound presents itself. Whether you're creating podcasts, having fun sharing recorded voice messages and music with

friends, delivering webinars or recording videos and in-depth presentations, how you sound is an important aspect of your message and it creates a strong impression.

Built-in Mic vs. External Mics USB & XLR -- Huh?

Your computer, Mac or PC, usually comes equipped with a built-in mic. If you have a desktop system, it's possible that you don't have a built-in mic, in which case you need to get one if you want to use things like Skype (allowing you to connect worldwide) as well as recording and exporting sound.



To demystify some of the language, USB, with which you're likely familiar, is the name for one standard connector used with many external devices for your computer. XLR is the traditional input



connection on a microphone that looks like three little dots.

Musicians will be familiar with XLR mics, while most business people won't. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't care. You can

get excellent quality mics that offer both connections. What's great about this combo is that you can then use your mic for either computer recording or a gig, whether a speaking engagement or becoming the rock star you always knew you had inside of you. Can you say karaoke, anyone?

Options

First, you need to decide what fits your needs. Will you ever want or need to take your mic away from your computer, for instance, for speaking engagements? In that case, you'll want a USB / XLR combo mic.

If you'll only ever be recording voice, that doesn't mean you want to scrimp on sound quality. Voice matters as much as music sound quality and I want to help you GAIN — (pun intended: gain in a live PA (public address) system means signal strength) — every advantage possible for your business. Think how much time and attention people put into their music setups. Your business' vocal quality deserves at least some of that consideration.

Following is a list of top runners in the external computer mic department that I found when comparing current options, speaking to fellow entrepreneurs and consulting audio sound professionals.

What People are Liking

Blue Microphones is the clear frontrunner manufacturer for high quality USB pro sound level mics at affordable prices, while there are other good options. Great picks include the following.

Blue Microphones Spark Price Estimate: \$199

Note that this model comes in two variations; the orange one doesn't come with a desk mount and isn't iPad/iPhone compatible (also has sound differences) whereas the newer blue one does and is.



Hailed as Blue's first serious, studio-quality microphone that also attaches to the iPad and iPhone, this latest Spark mic garners much praise from audiophiles.

"This is the best bang for your buck USB microphone on the market today. I recommend this to everyone for talking or singing. It's great for both."

John Ferretti, Guitar Center Audio Dept

Blue Microphones Yeti & Yeti Pro Price Estimates: \$129 & 249

The Yeti comes in two varieties and price points. The pro offers stereo XLR outputs.

"If you live in a noisy household, a condenser mic (like the Yeti and Spark) may NOT be the way to go. These babies will pick up everything, including the hum of the refrigerator. But if "up close" sound is what you need, you will likely fall head over heels for the Yeti USB or the Spark."

Chel Hamilton, Entrepreneur



Rode Podcaster Price Estimate: \$229



Rode has created the Podcaster in answer to the onslaught of computer recording. Well-received for voice recordings, this mic is not intended for recording singing or music like many of Blue's offerings and is therefore less versatile but not less expensive.

"Very easy to set up and excellent sound quality. I got the shock mount to cut down on noise and that was a good move. I didn't pick up on the background noise until I heard the difference between my laptop mic and the Rode."

Suzanne Gray, Art Consultant

Blue Snowball Price Estimate: \$69

Works with the iPad. Widely reviewed as fantastic at this price point.



Blue Microphones Blue Bird Price Estimate: \$299

Similar to the Spark but a gorgeous USB / XLR combo option.

There are many more expensive options if you want to go even more studio quality with your computer setup.

Mounting Details

You'll need a mount of some kind for your mic, whether standing or a swing arm. Based on your working space layout, how you speak comfortably and your budget, be sure to consider this when choosing your mic. You're definitely not going to want to hand hold your mic for optimal sound and comfort.

My Choice: The Blue Spark

My choice that will make you sound like the pro you are is the Blue Spark. I chose not to get the Blue Bird USB/XLR combo because I already own great XLR mics so didn't need the flexibility. The sound quality is excellent. Setup is simple. It looks great.



For those familiar with voice recording, a "pop screen" attachment is available for all Blue mics but I haven't found it necessary, which is nice. I'm very pleased with the sound quality of this mic.

Up your game and sound fantastic.

Setup Tips

It's worth noting that 90% of the time, setup issues are "operator error." I learned after an hour on the phone with Guitar Center that I needed to reboot for my system to have it recognize my new mic. When in doubt: unplug and reboot. You'll be good to go.

Be sure to check the "input" and "output" settings on your system preferences and choose your new mic. Same within each and any recording software you're using. Webinar software stumped me until I clicked refresh and it recognized my mic. Click options and you'll get it right. Test your system before any important recording dates.

What About You?

Now's your chance to really be heard. Let me know your experiences with online mics. I love hearing you sound great. Write me at: sexygeek@embodyart.org.

Lovin' Bytes,

Katie Geddes



Katie Geddes can be found geeking it up at Embodyart.org, where she'll show you how to profit from your passion. Katie designs thriving businesses for spiritual entrepreneurs. E-mail Katie at sexygeek@embodyart.org to say hi, ask a question, sing a song or apply for a FREE discovery session that's worth a friggin' fortune.

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