



WIRELESS TELEPHONE HEADSET FACE-OFF

[Jabra GN9350e](#), [Sennheiser BW 900](#), [Plantronics CS55](#),
[Plantronics CS70N](#), [Jabra Pro 9470](#), [Savi](#), [Sennheiser
Office Pro](#) & [VXI V100](#)

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Introduction:

A decade ago there were only a couple of wireless telephone/speech recognition microphone headsets available on the market. As public demand increased, so did the number of choices. This review is designed to help pare down those choices.

The following review consists of 3 parts:

- (1) My personal take on the [evolution of speech recognition microphones](#)
- (2) The [Pros and Cons](#) of what a general consensus of many top speech recognition experts believe to be the *top four USB soundcards*
- (3) My personal [assessment](#) of what the numbers mean

If you wish to skip past the brief microphone history, click [Pros and Cons](#). If you wish to skip further ahead to my conclusions, click [recommendations](#).

Evolution of Speech Recognition Microphones

When we first began using DragonDictate speech recognition software in the 1980's it seemed to be incredibly impressive technology. Never minding the very deliberate pause after each and every word, we waited with baited breath to see another (hopefully correct) word miraculously appear on our somewhat blurry little screens. It was fun! It was frustrating! It was not very practical. Back then, the couple of wired headset microphone choices available to us were more than adequate.

In 1996, NaturallySpeaking continuous speech recognition was released. With the emergence of this new technology, we had a viable tool for professional as well as personal use. That being the case, we needed microphones designed to better utilize this increasingly more sophisticated software. Microphone manufacturers responded. They designed wireless systems. They designed combination headset microphones that could additionally be used with cell phones, landlines and even hydraulic lifters which picked up our handsets for us.

A wireless combination telephone/headset just might be your best option if:

- You prefer the economics of using a single wireless microphone for your computer and telephone
- You enjoy the freedom of being wireless
- You enjoy the option of remotely answering your phone
- You like the idea of being able to quickly switch from your telephone to your computer and vice versa

Pros & Cons

Jabra Pro 9470

MSRP: \$549

Accuracy: 99%

Noise Cancellation: 8 out of 10

Overall Rating: 9 out of 10



Jabra Pro 9470 Pros:

- 99% Accuracy.
- Works on your cell phone (as long as you are near the base), computer and landline telephone
- Up to 450 foot range
- DECT 6 1.9 GHz
- Built-in USB soundcard
- The most accurate telephone/headset microphone we have tested to date
- Includes 2" x 3" VGA touch screen which allows you to instantly switch from your computer to your telephone or mobile phone
- Magnetic headset to ensure connectivity while charging
- Very good noise cancellation
- Up to 11 hour talk time in narrowband or 8 hours in wideband
- Safe tone technology prevents sound spikes
- Wideband response for VoIP and speech recognition use
- 1 year manufacturer warranty

Jabra Pro 9470 Cons:

- Built-in battery cannot be hot swapped
- More expensive than competitive units
- Only the base station is Bluetooth which means that you cannot use the headset with your cell phone if you're more than 30 feet away from the base station
- Hydraulic handset lifter is an add-on option rather than included

Jabra GN9350e (Discontinued)

MSRP: \$400

Accuracy: 98%

Noise Cancellation: 7 out of 10

Overall Rating: 9 out of 10



Jabra GN9350e Pros:

- Reasonably priced
- DECT 6 1.9 GHz
- Built-in USB soundcard
- Includes 3 different wearing styles
- Bundle includes a hydraulic handset lifter
- Optional rechargeable hot-swappable batteries
- Can keep an extra battery fully charged all the time in the base station so that you never run out of juice
- 1 year manufacturer warranty

Jabra GN9350e Cons:

- Limited noise cancellation prevents using this microphone in anything but a quiet environment

Sennheiser BW 900 (Discontinued)

MSRP: \$390

Accuracy: 99%

Noise Cancellation: 9 out of 10

Overall Rating: 8 out of 10



Sennheiser BW 900 Pros:

- 99% accuracy
- Good noise cancellation
- Optional rechargeable hot-swappable batteries
- Can keep an extra battery fully charged all the time in the base station so that you never run out of juice
- 1 year manufacturer warranty

Sennheiser BW 900 Cons:

- Requires an external soundcard
- Requires additional [PC Switch](#) external PC/Phone Switch for speech recognition
- 1.9 GHz but not DECT 6
- Soon to be discontinued dated technology
- Battery only lasts 4.5 hours and 2nd optional battery takes 3 hours to charge
- Optional hydraulic handset lifter incompatible for speech recognition
- Manufacturer claims of 300 foot range which we found to be closer to 150 feet

Sennheiser Office Pro

MSRP: \$449

Accuracy: 99%

Noise Cancellation: 5 out of 10 (poor)

Overall Rating: 6 out of 10



Sennheiser Office Pro Pros:

- 99% accuracy
- Extremely fast at recharging the built-in battery
- Built-in USB soundcard
- Magnetic headset attached to ensure connectivity while charging
- 2 year manufacturer warranty

Sennheiser Office Pro Cons:

- Unacceptable noise cancellation even in a very quiet office
- No hot-swappable battery option
- Onboard controls somewhat clumsy

Plantronics Savi 440

MSRP: \$299

Accuracy: 95%

Noise Cancellation: 7 out of 10

Overall Rating: 6 out of 10



Plantronics Savi 440 Pros:

- Includes 3 different wearing styles
- Lighter than other comparatively similar systems
- Built-in USB soundcard
- 1 year manufacturer warranty

Plantronics Savi Cons:

- Poor accuracy

Plantronics CS55 (Discontinued)

MSRP: \$299

Accuracy: 97%

Noise Cancellation: 7 out of 10

Overall Rating: 8 out of 10



Plantronics CS55 Pros:

- Includes KnowBrainer exclusive windscreen
- 1 year manufacturer warranty

Plantronics CS55 Cons:

- Requires additional [PC Switch](#) external PC/Phone Switch for speech recognition
- Dated 1.9 GHz technology, no DECT 6
- Optional hydraulic handset lifter incompatible for speech recognition

Plantronics CS70N (Discontinued)

MSRP: \$299

Accuracy: 97%

Noise Cancellation: 9 out of 10

Overall Rating: 8 out of 10



Plantronics CS70N Pros:

- Good noise cancellation
- Low-profile won't mess up your hair
- 1 year manufacturer warranty

Plantronics CS70 Cons:

- Requires additional [PC Switch](#) external PC/Phone Switch for speech recognition
- Must be worn like a typical Bluetooth microphone with a gel cap inserted in your ear canal
- Optional hydraulic handset lifter incompatible for speech recognition
- 1.9 GHz but not DECT 6

VXI Parrott V100 Pros:

MSRP: \$270

Accuracy: 96%

Noise Cancellation: 7 out of 10

Overall Rating: 6 out of 10 (**unacceptable**)



- Low-profile
- Multiple wearing styles
- 1.9 GHz DECT 6
- Optional remote handset lifter
- Built-in USB soundcard
- 1 year manufacturer warranty

VXI Parrott V100 Cons:

- Frequently fails to pass the NaturallySpeaking Microphone Check

Conclusions:

1st Place Overall ~ [Jabra Pro 9470](#)

The Jabra Pro 9470 came in 1st place in several categories including accuracy, features and flexibility. It was also our personal favorite. One of the main reasons for choosing the 9470 as our #1 pick is the fact that it seamlessly supports Bluetooth connectivity to a cell phone; not just speech recognition and standard landline telephone use. It is the only microphone to feature an impressive 2" x 3" VGA touchscreen (which includes all of the unit's options and settings), very good noise cancellation (only bested by the Sennheiser BW 900), excellent accuracy and overall user friendliness.

2nd & 3rd Place Overall Tie ~ [Jabra 9350e](#) & [Sennheiser BW 900](#) (Discontinued)

The BW 900 came in overall first-place for noise cancellation but utilizes an older 1.9 GHz technology that doesn't filter out interference (such as walking within 15 feet of a running microwave). Other than the Jabra Pro 9470, the BW 900 is the only microphone, on this list, to additionally feature Bluetooth but unlike the 9470, the BW 900 utilizes Bluetooth from within the headset so that it can be used with your cell phone beyond the base station. Unfortunately, it is exceedingly difficult to switch from 1.9 GHz to Bluetooth when you are within range of the base station. The BW 900 does not include a USB soundcard or work with the optional hydraulic lifter (when used for speech recognition).

The original model of the GN Netcom/Jabra 9350, like the Sennheiser DW Office, was not KnowBrainer certified for speech recognition use because it lacked sufficient noise cancellation but the 9350e included just enough additional noise cancellation to make the list. The reason why we believe the 9350e ties for 2nd place is because it features DECT 6, an impressive switching pad, twice the range of the BW 900, built-in USB soundcard, built-in hydraulic handset lifter and isn't effected by microwaves.

4th & 5th Place Overall Tie ~ [Plantronics CS55](#) & [CS70n](#)

(Discontinued)

The Plantronics CS50 (900 MHz predecessor to the 1.9 GHz CS55) was the 1st wireless landline headset microphone which KnowBRAINER Inc. reintroduced as a combination speech recognition/landline headset with the inclusion of a proprietary PC switch. Although both the CS55 and CS70N utilize 1.9 GHz frequency, it is an older technology that predates DECT 6. The CS55 includes 2 wearing styles but is somewhat inhibited by only being moderately noise canceling. The CS70N is significantly more noise canceling but is functionally limited to an in-your-ear gel design which end-users may not appreciate over a long period of time. Although the accuracy is very good in both microphones, it is not as good as the 9470.

You will not find the remaining microphones on our website because they did not meet minimum KnowBRAINER speech recognition standards for various reasons.

*The **Sennheiser Office Pro** came the closest to being acceptable with its high accuracy, built-in USB soundcard and quick charge base. We initially had high hopes for the DW Office as Sennheiser sent us 2 prerelease models before eventually releasing the DW Office, which we also tested. In the end, we simply could not give the DW Office a passing grade because the noise cancellation was unacceptable to the point where NaturallySpeaking was mistaking our breathing and even key clicks as words. The DW Office would've been a very decent speech recognition microphone had it not been for the fact that the noise cancellation simply fell below our minimum acceptability standards.*

*The **VXI Parrott V100** was the worst of the lot and frequently failed to pass the Audio Setup Wizard.*

Previous Reviews:

If you would like to see some of our previous reviews check out the following:

[KnowBrainer TableMike Face-Off](#)
[KnowBrainer Handheld Microphone Face-Off](#)
[KnowBrainer Headset Microphone Face-Off](#)
[KnowBrainer Telephone Microphone Face-Off](#)
[KnowBrainer Digital Recorder Face-Off](#)
[KnowBrainer Wireless Headset Face-Off](#)
[KnowBrainer USB Soundcard Face-Off](#)

Current Gold Standards:

The following is a list of microphones, USB soundcards and digital recorders that we consider to be #1 in their respected categories:

Best Wireless Microphone = [Samson Airline 77](#)
Best Combo Telephone Wireless Microphone = [Jabra Pro 9470](#)
Best Handheld USB Microphone = Philips [SpeechMike Premium \(LFH-3500\)](#)
Best USB TableMike = [SpeechWare 3-in-1, 6-in-1 & 9-in-1](#)
Best Wired Headset Microphone = SpeechWare [FlexyMike DE](#)
Best USB soundcard = [SpeechWare MultiAdapter](#)
Best Bluetooth Microphone = VXi [BlueParrott Xpressway II](#)
Best Digital Recorder = Philips [DPM-8000](#)
Best Speech Recognition Application = [NaturallySpeaking 12.5](#)

[Lunis Orcutt](#) - Developer of [KnowBrainer 2012](#) and founder of [KnowBrainer Speech Recognition Forums](#) (the world's largest speech recognition forum)
[Chat Live](#) w/a Nuance Gold Certified Speech Recognition Solutions Provider

