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Samson Airline 77 Review 10-11-07

Pros:

- 1. This is the **most** accurate microphone we have ever tested (wired or wireless) bar none. When testing microphones we typically use several testers reading 300 words several times. This is what you would call ideal laboratory conditions and not real-world stop and go free-form dictation, (compiling your thoughts) which typically drops any microphones accuracy, depending on the end user, by 2 or more percentage points. Our previous most accurate microphone was the [Revolabs xTag](#) wireless lapel which came in at an impressive 99% accuracy but the Samson Airline 77 has taken over the 1st place position coming in with **100% average accuracy** (that's no typo). Although accuracy typically drops around 2% in real-world usage with nearly all microphones' the Samson Airline's accuracy only dropped about 1% in real-world free-form usage which loosely translates into 50% less corrections; making this microphone the only choice for accuracy critical, noisy environmental and efficiency situations.*
- 2. [theBoom "O"](#), [theBoom V4](#), [Sennheiser ME3](#) and [KnowBrainer Hands-free](#) are equally impressive in noise cancellation but the Samson Airline 77 bested them all and took over the 1st place position. The Boom and Senneheiser microphones will do better with a quick sharp sound, like a gunshot (wouldn't you like to see our testing facilities), but the Samson Airline incorporates a noise gate that will adjust the noise input level of the microphone within a second which means that this microphone is ideally suited to loud environments such as a manufacturing plant or an East Los Angeles EMR room.*
- 3. The Revolabs xTag microphone previously held the #1 duration position with its 8 hour self-contained rechargeable battery but the Samson Airline can run 14 hours on a single alkaline AAA battery and longer on a lithium battery. You should be able to get about 12 hours out of a AAA NiMH battery. We will be optionally bundling 4 AAA 1000 times rechargeable NiMH batteries and a rapid AAA, AA and 9 volt charger with this microphone.*
- 4. The best manufacturer microphone warranty we've seen is Parrott and Senneheiser's two-year warranties. Most microphone manufacturers include a one-year warranty but Samson includes a 3 year warranty which, considering all of the electronics involved, small toggle switches etc., is extremely impressive.*

5. *Interference free UHF 300+ feet transmissions. This industrial-strength professional grade microphone has the longest range of any wireless microphone we sell other than the [Hybrid Plantronics CS55](#) wireless telephone/microphone which also includes a 300 range.*
6. *Most other UHF wireless systems such as the [Nady Encore II](#), Sennheiser and Shure include a clumsy belt pack with a wire running from your headset down your back. The Samson Airline 77 includes a small wireless micro-technology transmitter on the back of the headset making it notably more user-friendly. Belt pack free transmitters also eliminate the possibility of snagging the headset wire.*
7. *The disadvantage of typical wireless microphones like the [Plantronics CS50-USB](#) is that if you forget or don't manage to place the headset properly back into the charging cradle, you'll have to wait an hour+ before you can use it. If you accidentally forget to recharge your Samson battery, you can always rob a pen light flashlight or digital recorder for a universal AAA battery.*

Cons:

1. *Locating the transmitter pack on the back of the headset can take a little getting used to because it may rub against your shirt collar. You probably won't experience this problem with collarless shirts and blouses.*
2. *Although we like the single AAA battery powered approach, we would've preferred that the unit automatically charge itself from a charging cradle when not in use. You either have to dispose of your AAA battery or purchase a separate charger which additionally requires changing out the battery once per day.*

Bottom Line:

Our favorite microphone is still the [Revolabs xTag](#) wireless lapel because you can't beat the comfort, price and convenience of a lapel microphone but if you require the highest possible accuracy/efficiency, serious noise cancellation and/or longer battery life, the Samson Airline 77 is the only way to go. Most of our staff prefer the xTag microphone but I personally chosen to go with the Samson Airline 77 because every second I have to spend correcting my dictation is time lost that I could be spending testing or developing the next big thing ;-)

One of the features that I particularly liked about the Samson Airline 77 was when I played an MP3 at 70 dB DNS briefly produced <??> but no dictation landed in my document. When I turned the volume up to 90 dB (the highest possible level without incurring ear drum damage) the microphone produced no errors but I had to significantly raise the level of my speaking voice in order to hear myself speak, which is a big no-no with DNS. Raising your voice this much would normally produce abysmal accuracy and the first few words of my

dictation came out as complete nonsense but the built-in noise gate even handled this situation and the rest of my dictation came out fairly accurate, even under these extreme conditions.

One of the biggest problems end-users have with NaturallySpeaking is maintaining a steady volume level. When you run the Audio Setup Wizard you preset your volume input level but unfortunately most people read at a lower volume level than when utilizing real-world stop and go free-form dictation. End-users also have a tendency to raise their voice when they become frustrated with NaturallySpeaking, Windows and other everyday situations. The built-in noise gate goes a long way leveling out these types of problems. No other microphone, we know of, includes this capability and that's why I made the Samson Airline 77 my personal microphone of choice.