

Hi-fi? Wi-fi? NaimUniti brings it all together

CD/WI-FI
RECEIVER

NAIM
NAIMUNITI

★★★★★

£ 1995

FOR

Does a lot for the money, and does it very well; great sound and logical operation

AGAINST

iPod cable a £95 option; display could be clearer from a distance

VERDICT

There's nothing else quite like the NaimUniti, and at the price it's a steal

WE FINALLY SETTLED on 'CD/Wi-Fi receiver' to describe the NaimUniti – well, it seemed a bit neater than 'CD receiver with DAC, iPod-connectivity, internet/DAB/FM radio and wireless music streamer thingy,' which was our first rather clumsy stab.

Why? Well, the NaimUniti is a unique product, and it's not hard to see why this system has already caught the imagination of buyers well beyond the usual Naim 'family': what we have here, in a single heavy-duty Naim enclosure,

"The NaimUniti is a unique product, and it's not hard to see its appeal"

is a CD player derived from the company's CD5i, and a 2x50W amplifier based on the Nait 5i.

To that's added a DAC with five inputs – two optical and two electrical round the back, and one combined with a 3.5mm stereo analogue in on the front panel. The radio section has DAB, FM and internet capabilities, with presets available transparently across all three formats – so preset 1 could be Radio 1 FM, the next one Radio Paradise off the internet and the next Radio 5 Live on

DAB – and the same wireless internet capability also allows streaming of music from wi-fi'd computers or Network Attached Storage (NAS) units.

There's a USB socket on the front to play music from pen-drives, a socket for a dedicated n-Link iPod cable (it's a £95 option), line-ins for analogue sources, a powered DIN socket for a Naim phono stage, twin subwoofer preouts and even another DIN to add one of the company's power amps.

And the operation of the unit(i) is highly customisable: you can adjust input gain, displays, and the way it responds to remote commands. There's even a 'unity gain' option, so you can use the Naim in conjunction with an AV receiver or the company's AV2 surround processor.

That last facility isn't mentioned in the instruction manual, but it's there on the 'input' menu all the same.

Captivating, whatever the source

Best of all, the NaimUniti sounds superb, whatever source you use. With CD the performance is not far off that of a CD5i/Nait 5i combination, maybe just lacking a little openness by comparison, and it's revealing enough of low bitrate broadcasts and rips. But

KNOW HOW INSIDE STORY

THE NAIM-UNITI RECEIVER is of a modular design: the swing-out CD section, for example, is a self-contained player within that familiar loader, and it outputs in analogue into the amplifier.

Meanwhile the transformer has separate outputs for each section of the system, each of which is on its own board. What's more, the design is built to be upgraded, whether

with the addition of a preamp or a Naim phono stage, or via firmware changes using the RS232 connection on the rear panel, where you'll also find an external remote input.

One request for the next firmware tweak, Naim: can we have a zoom option on the display in streaming mode? The type's a bit small from across the room...



POWER OUTPUT

2x50W

INPUTS

5 digital, USB,

5 analogue

OUTPUTS

Speakers, 2

subs, preouts,

headphones

RADIO

DAB/FM/Internet

DIMENSIONS

43x9x31cm



See the video

review

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video

