

MULTICHANNEL
POWER AMP
ROTEL RMB-1077



£ 1600

FOR

Powerful, compact and runs cool; even-handed presentation

AGAINST

Nothing of any significance

VERDICT

A cleverly designed and talented seven-channel amplifier that will work superbly in a wide range of AV systems

Rotel's sleek 700w powerhouse

TWO FIGURES DEFINE Rotel's new RMB-1077 multichannel power amplifier: two and a half, and 700. The first is 'number of inches', and represents the height of this slim-line powerhouse; the second is 'total output in watts', and justifies the use of the term 'powerhouse'.

Smarter than the average amp

Traditional amplifiers that deliver 7 x 100 watts of power tend to be large, finned devices that give off loads of heat. Fine, if you've got plenty of well-ventilated space to put them, but what if you want the amp tucked away in a cupboard? In that case, traditional designs aren't practical without some serious work being done on air through-flow. Rotel has combined its own

take on digital amplifier circuitry with a clever switched mode power supply to produce a muscular, yet cool-running, power amp.

That's all very well, but it's no use if the product doesn't sound any good. Don't worry, it does!

"It refuses to harden up even at ear-splitting levels: ideal for action"

Like any decent home cinema product, the RMB-1077 goes loud. Very loud, in fact, and it refuses to harden up even at ear-splitting levels: ideal for use with large-scale battle scenes such as those from *Lord of the Rings*, or *King Kong's* more violent moments.

If that was where the good news ended, you'd be disappointed. Thankfully, the RMB-1077 offers much more. It has refinement, and a highly even tonal balance, which helps it sound natural regardless of the partnering speakers.

Switch to music, and this power amp reflects Rotel's stereo heritage with a performance packed full of detail, dynamics and poise. No, it won't better the best stereo amps at this price – even tripping into our reference PMC IB2s – or run the likes of Cyrus and Naim close for timing. Yet for a multichannel power amp, it's far better than most – which is why it gets five stars.

Forget fins and chunky looks – the slimline Rotel is just 2.5in high and cleverly built



ALSO
CONSIDER



PRIMARE
A30.5MKII



May 2003
£1700

An elegant powerhouse with an insightful sonic performance

LINN CHAKRA
C5100



£2000

November 2005
Not particularly powerful, but this Linn produces a punchy and upfront sound