
“Hardware” Review

Elgato EyeTV Hybrid with EyeTV 3

Reviewed by Maria O. Arguello

Company: Elgato Systems

URL: www.elgato.com/

System Requirements: Macintosh with a PowerPC G4, G5, or Intel Core processor, 512 MB of physical RAM, a built-in USB 2.0 port, Mac OS X v 10.4 or later. Internet connection required to do download Program Guide data.

Test System: Mac Pro 2 x 2.66-GHz Dual-Core Intel Xeon, 7 GB RAM, Mac OS X 10.5.2. Apple 23-inch Cinema HD, and the MacBook Air Price: \$99.99

Rating: 4.5 out of 5 Apples

The EyeTV Hybrid is an Analog/Digital TV Receiver and with EyeTV 3 you can watch, record, edit, and enjoy analog and HDTV on your computer. The tuner allows you to get free over-the-air HDTV and analog together in a small USB stick. New to the EyeTV Hybrid is the ability to also receive unencrypted digital cable (QAM). The clear local QAM stations are a joy to watch in Full Screen view on my LCD display and even the analog channels are improved. And it's all-free.

Comcast is my cable service provider and I get 98 analog channels and six local HD channels in unencrypted QAM for free. A QAM tuner is a device present in some digital televisions and similar devices which enables direct reception of digital cable channels without the use of a set-top box. Per Wikipedia: Quadrature amplitude modulation (QAM) is a modulation scheme, which conveys data by changing (modulating) the amplitude of two carrier waves. These two waves, usually sinusoids, are out of phase with each other by 90° and are thus called quadrature carriers—hence the name of the scheme. Setting up your EyeTV Hybrid is a breeze with the Setup Assistant. I performed the exhaustive scan and accessed the following QAM stations: 3 ABC QAM clear; 2 NBC QAM clear; 0 CBS QAM clear; and 1 WPSG-DT or local Philly 57 QAM clear. But when I did an Auto-Tune, I got twice the number of free QAM channels. These tuners are limited in the number of HD QAM channels they find no matter what mode you choose.

Elgato has been in the business of making TV tuners for the Macintosh for a long time. They keep getting better video reception as the tuners evolve. The small stylish USB stick tuner is good

looking design-wise but the drawback is the heavy cable that has to be attached at one end. The TV cable is so heavy and thick it makes my laptop feel uncomfortable on my lap. It has to be placed on a table or desk for more comfortable viewing. The EyeTV 3 (included with the EyeTV Hybrid) is a recent software upgrade that gives you TiVo-like capabilities for your Mac—record hours of television and edit out unwanted content; organize recording in Smart Playlists; access recordings via Wi-Fi on an Apple TV, iPod, and iPhone and selected SmartPhones; store collections on an external drive, or burn a disc with Toast 8 and much, much, more. I particularly love the way it labels the channel names. Older versions had to be labeled manually, which was a time-consuming effort. If you have EyeTV 2 it will cost you \$39.95 to upgrade. EyeTV 3 costs \$79.95.

I recently taped the 2008 Philadelphia Flower Show with the EyeTV Hybrid and the new EyeTV 3 software. I used portions of that recording to incorporate them in a presentation of iMovie v 7.1.1 for which I am preparing.

Included in the box are the EyeTV 3 software (CD-ROM), EyeTV Hybrid TV tuner, PDF product manual (CD-ROM), Video cable, USB cable, infrared remote control with battery pack, and a Quick Start Guide.

I've been using Elgato hardware and software for a long time and have had ample experience with their excellent tech support and products. I had a problem with the test unit during this review and the turnaround for a replacement was exceptionally fast. This company supports the Macintosh platform with absolute class and commitment. I recommend all their products without any reservation.

Reviewer: *Maria O. Arguello*

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Maria is also a member of NCMUG, PMUG, CCP-MUG, MUGSNJ, PPUG, and SJAUG.

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