

Product Review

EyeTV Hybrid with FM Looks Great, Saves Commercial-Watching, but FM Reception Lags

By Maria Argiello

Product Name: EyeTV Hybrid with FM Radio
Company: Elgato
URL: <http://www.elgato.com/>
Price: \$149.95
System Requirements: Macintosh® computer with a PowerPC® G4,G5 or Intel Core® processor
512 MB of physical RAM
a built-in USB 2.0 port
Mac OS X v10.4.11 or later
Internet connection required to download Program Guide data
Test System: Mac Pro 2 x 2.66 GHz Dual-Core Intel Xeon, 7 GB RAM, Mac OS X 10.5.6.
Rating: 3.5 out of 5 Apples

The EyeTV Hybrid with FM Radio and software version 3.1 are the newest products from Elgato. I was particularly intrigued and happy that I could now program radio shows for recording. I especially wanted to capture the local broadcasters who narrate the Philadelphia teams during playoff games and export them to my iPod. I like to turn off the TV sound and listen to the radio voices of Merrill Reese for the Eagles football team and Harry Kalas for the Phillies baseball team.

Unfortunately, I found out that I could only access 5 FM stations in the Philadelphia area — and not the ones I wanted. The stations it found were 88.5, 88.7, 102.1, 105.3, 90.1 but not 94.1 WYSP and 90.9 WHYY. WHYY is NPR, which has many programs that I wanted to record. And WYSP is the station that broadcasts my favorite sports during the football and baseball seasons.

At first I thought the receiver could show TV or FM radio one at a time because I could not see both listed in the Channel List. But that is not so. I accidentally found both TV and Radio LISTED in the Controller and that is good. It wouldn't make sense to be switching the tuner to Radio and then back to TV.

You can manually add a radio station but you would have to know its frequency and not knowing that I didn't try. I look forward to seeing the evolution of the FM radio tuner when all my local stations are automatically found.

During my review a weird thing happened. For some reason I lost the color TV reception and I had only Black and White. It looked pretty cool. To go back to color I restarted EyeTV. I have not

been able to replicate this happening.

Let's take a look at some of the new features in the new EyeTV version 3.1. Its reception and display qualities are superior to the old version. There is also the TV Guide data free for one year but \$20 per month after that; thus not relying totally on Titan TV (free) for program information (being phased out in 2011). I resented the lack of free TV programming at first but for your money you will have identified HD channels improving your HD programming. You can search the guide for programs you want by genre, actors, topics, time and date, and more and save your searches.

Your recordings will have the commercials automatically marked for you, saving you a lot of time during editing.

My favorite feature is the ease of recording an entire season of a television show with Smart Series Guides. Simply select a specific episode of a show and click the Record All button. This will record every episode and you specify new shows only, so you don't waste space, recording repeats. And when you want to find a recording among those you've saved, EyeTV can display them in list or CoverFlow. It can't be any easier.

You can record two shows at the same time if you have two tuners. You can use the video inputs to transfer old VHS tapes to DVDs.

With Elgato's EyeTV Hybrid with FM Radio and inputs for set-top boxes, you can watch and record live HDTV, clear QAM, and analog TV and FM radio, search listings and set up automatic series recordings, and export your shows to watch on your iPod later. You also avoid TiVo subscriptions and cable box rental fees, although there is the monthly cost of program data after a year. Freshly Squeezed



Maria is a retired high school science department head and teacher who enjoys learning about the diversity of the user group community. Read more of her reviews at <<http://ugab.typepad.com/ugresources/>> She has a daughter and three grandchildren who are all Mac users. She is the Apple User Group Regional Liaison for the Northeast United States (CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT).