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HANNSG HG281DJ monitor

EXCLUSIVE: Is 28 inches too big?

by Chris Hall published on 2 June 2008

With the price of LCD panels continuing to drop, HANNSG offer an affordable 28in monitor. But is this encroaching on your main TV? Can you justify going this big? We get watching, gaming and working to find out.

Housed by a narrow gloss black bezel, the HANNSG 281DJ has a 27.5in viewable screen of the Active Matrix TFT type, which is a matt finish, with a native resolution of 1920 x 1200, so supporting full HD. With a contrast ratio of 800:1 it is hardly pushing the boundaries. Whilst the screen isn't as sharp as some of the Super-TFT screens, the matt finish is appropriate for working as a monitor in general usage, cutting down on reflections that blight its gloss compatriots.

The screen comes with a stand that allows a degree of swivel, enough to be able to place the monitor and the adjust it for yourself or group viewing. You can also tilt the monitor and adjust the height so easy to set up for a range of operations. The rear VESA mount would allow you to fix it to the wall.

In terms of connections, you only get a single HDMI and D-sub/VGA socket and input for audio and a headphone jack. In the box you do get all the cables you need, including a DVI to HDMI and VGA to Component (YPbPr), although there are no Component connections on the monitor itself. You also get the audio cable to hook up the two rear mounted speakers, rated at 2.5W.

The lack of connections mean that this really is limited to being your monitor, rather than a screen that could replace your TV, so those looking to hook up a DVD player, PS3 or Xbox will have to look at options to combine these inputs, perhaps through an amp, which would not be a bad thing considering the speakers, but given the costs, might decide a TV is a better option.



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Staying with the speakers, as we've experienced with other monitors, the quality is very poor - acceptable for system beeps, but not the soundtrack to your favourite games or movies. Certainly, if your main interest is in a multimedia role, then you'll need dedicated speakers.

The quality of the images are good, with great vibrant colours that really bring images to life. There are basic presets, basically warm, cool, natural, or user defined, but we found the "natural" suited all conditions. Whilst colours are good, blacks are not as good as you'd find on some other panels and won't compete with your LCD TV. This becomes more apparent when you start watching movies.

HANNSG are pitching this as a gaming monitor, and it boasts a 3ms response time, which should mean that your monitor is keeping you in the action in first person shooters. We found that gaming responses were great and the quality when hooked up to an HD source (in this case a PS3) was very good.

VERDICT

This monitor is an all-rounder, delivering a good gaming response and offering compromise between a suitable working monitor and a multimedia display so an ideal solution for home office workers. It won't compare with your dedicated LCD TV in terms of connections or quality, but with good bright colours and a respectable price, this is certainly within the reach of gamers or those who want a little more screen space for their work.

However, serious consideration needs to be given to whether this is the best solution for your needs with great 24in screens within this price range and with prices on LCD TVs dropping rapidly.

At a glance

What is it?

28in gaming monitor

Good

Good colours, clean design

Bad

Limited connections, poor speakers, could be too big, price puts it close to competitor TVs

Verdict

The HG281DJ is an all-rounder, delivering a good gaming response and offering compromise between a suitable working monitor and a multimedia display

Price £399

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10