

# Eycos S50.12 PVR

## The Goose That Laid the Golden Egg?

We've been waiting a long time for the first PVR receiver from the very young company Eycos out of South Korea. On a dark and gray cold winter morn-

ing the delivery truck trudged through a thick layer of snow all the way to our doors. Finally, the long awaited test unit is sitting here in front of us.

We were very excited while opening the package and the initial impression from looking at the outside of the receiver did not disappoint us. Sleek but ele-

clearly labeled and sits nicely in your hand. Eycos also provided a second remote control that is smaller and equipped with limited functions. This could be

reveals a number of additional setting possibilities. The Eycos is quite international: aside from German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Hungarian and Dutch, you can also choose from Romanian, Russian, Swedish, Turkish and Farsi as an OSD language.

The Main Menu is divided into six sections. In the first section, "Channel Search", all of the settings for antenna configuration as well as satellite data are handled. The receiver supports the DiSEqC protocols 1.0, 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 (USALS). Every user, regardless of whether they have a WaveFrontier antenna or a DiSEqC motor, should have no trouble adapting the receiver to their system. Contrary to receivers from other manufacturers, the Eycos was designed in such a way that the user need not worry about which tuner to select except for determining whether both tuners would be

fed with the same satellite signal. We find this to be a very practical feature and once everything is correctly set up, the user will no longer need to think about which tuner to use. The receiver handles this all by itself.

It has become almost standard for most receivers to offer an automatic, a manual and an expanded PID scan. The Eycos is no exception here. Of course a network scan is also available. At a little over three minutes, the automatic scan of 80 transponders is quite good although the receiver needs quite a bit of time to actually store all of the channels it found. For the manual channel scan, Eycos came up with a rather interesting idea: if a single transponder needs to be scanned that is not yet in the receiver's transponder list, there is one transponder in the list with a frequency of 00000. Simply enter the desired new frequency and once the channel scan has been completed, this new frequency will be transferred to the transponder list. This can be done as many times as needed to complement the existing transponder list.



gant is the best way to describe the S50.12 PVR. The front panel sports a four-digit display as well as eight buttons for complete operation of the receiver should the remote control go missing. Behind a centrally located flap are hidden a pair of CI slots that can be used with a variety of modules (Irdeto, Seca, Viaccess, Conax, Nagravision, etc.)

The nicely equipped rear panel also put a smile on our faces. In addition to the IF input and looped-through output for the two tuners, there are also a set of Scart connectors as well as an S-Video connection, three RCA jacks for video and stereo audio, a programmable 0/12-volt output, an RS-232 serial interface, a USB 2.0 port for connection to a PC, an RF modulator and also an optical digital audio output for perfect sound. Rounding out all of this is a main power switch.

The included remote control is ergonomically designed,

quite practical when you consider that your nosy little one could have otherwise easily messed up the entire programming of the receiver.

We also need to highlight the user manual written in English and German. It is clearly and concisely written, covers every aspect of the receiver and is properly illustrated where it needs to be. All in all, it should be able to answer almost any question you might have regarding the operation of the S50.12PVR.

### Everyday Use

To our astonishment, this test receiver came to us preprogrammed with a very up-to-date channel list for Astra, Hotbird and Turksat. If you happen to have a somewhat standard antenna configuration, then it should take no time at all to get the first pictures on your TV set. Accessing the nicely designed and animated main menu

| SATELLITE<br>INTERNATIONAL<br>TELE | TEST RESULT             | Features | ★★★★★★★★ |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|
|                                    | Channel Memory          | ★★★★★★★★ | □ □      |
|                                    | Channel Scan Speed      | ★★★★★★★★ | □ □      |
|                                    | Channel Switching Speed | ★★★★★★★★ | □ □      |
|                                    | Video Quality           | ★★★★★★★★ | □        |
|                                    | Audio Quality           | ★★★★★★★★ | □        |
|                                    | Tuner Sensitivity       | ★★★★★★★★ | □        |



If up until now you have been frustrated with the poor picture quality of CVBS signals, you can seek help in the "User Settings" menu. The receiver can provide the video signal in CVBS, RGB and S-Video. YUV for connection to flat screen TV's or projection systems is unfortunately not available. The reception of US feeds in NTSC format did not present any problems; the automatic switching between PAL and NTSC signals functioned perfectly.

The remaining three menus deal with CI modules, the hard drive and subsequent decryption: the receiver is capable of recording multiple encrypted programs on the hard drive for later decryption. As long as the CI module supports this function, the receiver can also record two decrypted programs at the same time. In our test using an Alphacrypt module, this also worked without any difficulties.

## Features

After this excursion through all of the S50.12PVR's setting possibilities, we wanted to immerse ourselves in the features used on a daily basis. The capability to record four programs at the same time jumped right out at us. Since this receiver uses only two tuners, the four programs to be recorded would have to be on two transponders. Unfortunately, the receiver only shows the number of current recordings. If you want to know what and for how long/time remaining, the proud owner will only find out after pushing the large PVR button on the remote control and checking out the list of previously recorded programs. A little improvement here might not be a bad idea since with up to four simultaneous record-

ings, it won't be too difficult to lose sight of what is going on. Contrary to most other receivers, the list of recordings in the Eycos is in descending order - that is, the last recording is shown first. At first it may take some getting used to, but after a while you won't want it any other way.

After every channel change - if desired this can be set to a gradual fade out/fade it - an Info bar is displayed that shows information on the current and upcoming program.

The EPG is very logically designed, is very quickly loaded with data and displays all of the information correctly and legibly.

The Eycos manufactured tuner is very sensitive to incoming signals and was easily able to handle the weak signals on Arabsat 2D at 26° east. The receiver also mastered the SCPC test signal on Pas12; the signal with a symbolrate of only 1.325 Ms/sec. was no problem for the receiver.

Even though the movie industry and some PayTV providers might not be happy with this feature, nearly every manufacturer must equip their PVR receivers with a USB 2.0 interface in order to survive in the market. Eycos is no different. In fact they seem to have put a little extra effort in this in that they managed to find a chipset that can take full advantage of the capacity of USB 2.0. It took just about three minutes to transfer a 2GB

recording from the receiver to a PC and this without any supplemental software since Windows recognized the hard drive in the receiver. Eycos also offers a settings editor at no charge that can be used to edit the channel and favorites lists comfortably on the PC.

For dealers there's even a self-diagnostic menu. After entering a code known only to dealers, they can determine if the receiver's basic settings are functioning correctly.

This is a powerful tool for the service tech. The question now becomes, is this receiver really the goose that laid the golden egg? We believe that it is definitely headed in that direction. The manufacturer is willing to please and has promised to react to our small list of bugs that we stumbled on during our tests. Without a doubt, Eycos has developed a very solid receiver with the S50.12PVR.



## TECHNIC DATA



|                             |                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Manufacturer</b>         | Eycos Multimedia Systems<br>No.756, 189-1, Kumi-dong<br>Bundang-ku, Seongnam<br>463-810, Korea |
| <b>Distributor</b>          | Satforce<br>Kommunikationstechnik GmbH                                                         |
| <b>Tel</b>                  | +49-86-54 773 851                                                                              |
| <b>Fax</b>                  | +49-86-54 773 852                                                                              |
| <b>E-Mail</b>               | info@satforce.com                                                                              |
| <b>Model</b>                | S50.12PVR                                                                                      |
| <b>Function</b>             | Digital Satellite Receiver with<br>PVR Function                                                |
| <b>Channel Memory</b>       | 8000                                                                                           |
| <b>Satellites</b>           | 45                                                                                             |
| <b>Symbol Rate</b>          | 1-45 Ms/sec.                                                                                   |
| <b>SCPC Compatible</b>      | Yes                                                                                            |
| <b>USALS</b>                | Yes                                                                                            |
| <b>DiSEqC</b>               | 1.0 / 1.1 / 1.2 / 1.3                                                                          |
| <b>Scart Connectors</b>     | 2                                                                                              |
| <b>Audio/Video Outputs</b>  | 3 x RCA                                                                                        |
| <b>UHF Output</b>           | Yes                                                                                            |
| <b>0/12 Volt Output</b>     | Yes                                                                                            |
| <b>Digital Audio Output</b> | Yes                                                                                            |
| <b>EPG</b>                  | Yes                                                                                            |
| <b>C/Ku-Band Compatible</b> | Yes                                                                                            |
| <b>EPG</b>                  | Yes                                                                                            |

## Expert conclusion

**+** The Eycos S50.12PVR is a solid and easy-to-use receiver that did not show any problems during our tests. Especially noteworthy is the extremely fast USB 2.0 interface as is the capability to record four programs simultaneously.



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**-** Here and there we found some small bugs in the software of this receiver. The bug list as well as a wish list was forwarded to the manufacturer.



Main menu |



Satellite scan |



Satellite list |



Info bar |