REVIEWS

OPTIMICE REVIEW: BESPOKE REVOLUTION

It is how computer mice should be made in 2021

By Lemon Fuel | dj_creative.lab | Feb 16, 2021, 8:30am EST

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OptiMice is truly revolutionary. Behold for the bespoke renaissance to come, my fellow computer peripheral enthusiasts.

Let's talk about the status quo regarding the productivity mouse market. Frankly, there's not much competition in this realm over the past five years. Logitech reigns this realm with their wildly popular "MX Master" series. Among the tech enthusiast community, particularly on YouTube, is bloated with this particular mouse. Not to mistaken, the MX Master is a great mouse in every single aspect. The state of the art sensor technology, the elegant yet ergonomic form, and the infinite scroll wheel that no other manufacturers can offer. However, the question is, is it really the ceiling of what our technology in 2021 can offer?

A REVOLUTION?

Let's be honest, the mouse is always designed to fit an average man's right hand. Whenever my female friends are asking for a recommendation for a mouse at work, I hesitate to recommend them my go-to, which is the Logi MX Master 3. That might just be too big for their hands. In that same vein, I do actually have a problem with the MX Master 2S grip. Even if it is advertised to be an ergonomic fit, I found some of my gaming mice, that are thinner and shorter more comfortable to use. So I doubt if the ergonomic fit that is designed for the "average everyone" actually fits everyone, someone, or miserably no one.

Now; here comes the challenger. The OptiMice is a newborn project fresh out of Kickstarter with a pledge of $1,000,000, well over its original $500,000 goal. OptiMice is genuinely novel. I am positive that you've never heard of something similar. OptiMice is not just an end product, but a bespoke service powered by modern-day technology pipeline. The company gathers biometric data, essentially the customer's three-dimensional hand, to generate the "perfect" 3D model of a mouse with their own machine learning algorithm and photogrammetry technology. Leveraging 3D printing technology, they tailor a bespoke mouse that fits that specific customer's hand, while providing extra customization. With its ambition to "fit everyone at its best", is the mouse truly "optimized" for one person's specific hand and grip?

THE BESPOKE EXPERIENCE

The way they capture your biometric data is ingenious. With a very simple scan utilizing your smartphone camera, you can upload the scan to their server via the web app that involves no app store download required. Then I was guided and proceed to the order configuration process. Not only I was shown the 3D rendering of the mouse that is going to be manufactured, but I could also customize its color, shell material, sensor, switches, etc. Overall the UI was very intuitive to use. It somehow felt like I am configuring a Tesla order that excites me.

Within one week, I received my bespoke mouse that very possibly ran through its custom 3D printing and PCB manufacturing process under the hood. The packaging is definitely the icing on the cake. The vacuum-formed insert that is finished like velvet will very likely remind you about the premium you paid for a tailored service. Not clothing, but a computer mouse.

USING THE MOUSE

The fit of the mouse is mind-blowing. It is not exaggerated to say "it fits like a glove", since the mouse is essentially the positive mold of your unique hand. It is surreal, unprecedented, intimate, and comforting. The mouse is solidly built, and you might not even notice this is 3D printed. Unlike traditional FDM printing, the mouse shell is printed with an SLA printer that virtually leaves no contour lines on the surface. As far as customization goes, I opted for the silent switches for my left and right clicks. Since using the mouse, I started questioning why are all of the office computer mice not equipped with silent switches. Honestly, the mouse still operates just like any other professional productivity mouse. Although it is merely relaying all the pros of an ergonomic productivity mouse, for instance, dedicated software for programming individual keys, it just feels much more at home and comfortable.

FINAL VERDICT

Am I going to recommend it to my female friends? Yes. Other friends? Absolutely, or should I say everyone. It is truly revolutionary for OptiMice to bring the long-forgotten bespoke tailoring service back to the present, empowered by cutting-edge technology that is surprisingly mature and does the job well. Much like the rise of ready-to-wear clothing impelled by the advancement of fabric fusing and sewing machines, mature 3D printing, and the machine learning drastically lowered the cost of tailor-making and giving bespoke products a rebirth. The comfort that it provides exceeds the mere purpose of making you feel better, but to potentially cure chronic fatigue, for instance, carpal tunnel syndrome.

Clearly, OptiMice is finally here to prove that all unique individuals deserve a unique computer mouse that really fits.

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DaGurggles

I met with the Bosch E-Bike team at CABDA in 2020, while it is an impressive product, it is over priced. The motor cannot be swapped or repaired in a bike shop; Bosch requires the unit to be sent back to Germany for repair. Who wants their bike to be out of commission for weeks/months?

Riding 12 miles a day isn't a lot for someone that regularly commutes on a standard bike. Using a motor to aid in transporting a child or groceries does help, but the high price of 3K limits adoption. That doesn't even touch on the small size of the battery.

Non-cyclist have a hard time with the sticker shock of a standard bike above $700. Surley's Big Dummy is slight more affordable ($3300) without the motor and battery. The Big Easy adds 3K to the price for the higher end Bosch motor and battery, more cargo space and better ride quality with larger tires. Yes 9K is a bigger ask than 3K but there is a lot more function to be gained.

Posted: on Feb 11, 2021 | 2:28 PM

Zafarf

Interesting points. They need to get the motor-swapping logistics sorted out, sounds like.

Re the distance bit though, the motor isn't just about distances - for me it lifts my acceleration and top speed, so now I can cycle in primary position in town, there's no need to be overtaken any more, much safer & more relaxing.

I think a lot of those cargo ebikes are sold to people with a bit of cash who live in the deeper houses at the top of the hill (in the primary school / nursery is a mile away, down the hill, it's about making the wee commute pleasant even on wheny days.

Posted: on Feb 11, 2021 | 5:16 PM

DaGurggles

That's just how most e-bike motor manufacturers are. Mostly due to needing to keep center of gravity low and to keep the crank spindle steady. Any extra tolerance is a recipe for a bad time.

I'm an avid cyclist, I do mostly summer commuting on my bike. I use my Tracey to go to grocery shopping, pick up cat litter, and grab cases of beer. If someone only needs to travel 1 mile, an E-bike is the wrong tool.

Using an E-bike to overtake someone is bad safer is the wrong argument. Speed does not offset awareness or handling skill. It can make someone feel more confident if they don't ride but I've often found e-bike riders more dangerous in bike lanes or when passing (them or me). I do see the benefit for working to commute on a bike in a hilly area and not wading to be a sweaty mess upon arrival.

Posted: on Feb 12, 2021 | 10:06 AM

Analog Spirit 2.0

" All of this, especially that last paragraph. Situational awareness is the key to safety.

Posted: on Feb 13, 2021 | 1:28 PM

Zafarf

Nah, with respect, you're both wrong😉

@DaG.: You misunderstand - I find my ebike better than my other 3 bikes for my short commute because I no longer get overtaken by cars. Hence the mention of cycling in primary. Removing that car interaction is terrific. Sorry to hear it's the wrong tool.

@Analogue: Sure, situational awareness is good, if we can't do better. In places where lots of people cycle, not just mainly young men, infrastructure is key, not bike skills.

Posted: on Feb 14, 2021 | 4:00 PM

elsbevo

In places where lots of people cycle, not just mainly young men, infrastructure is key

That is VERY true. As a young man who loves cycling I often forget, that not a lot of people ride their bikes like me. I never really get, why people complain about cycling infrastructure in our city so much, because I love to zip between the cars.

So, just because I am having a great time riding my bike in the city, doesnt make it our city bikefriendly for most people

Posted: on Feb 16, 2021 | 4:26 AM

SynthArpeggio

Bosch Mixes are pricey but are well engineered. I have over 4000 miles on mine (Performance CX Line) - original everything. It's suitable like a car or better. 5 days a week, 50 weeks a year. The integrated lighting is really nice not having to worry about carrying extra batteries and finding them dead all the time.

I bike commute a little over 8 miles with 400 ft. elevation gain. Seems pretty typical. It cuts the time to get to work and the sweat considerably, if I want that. I can also turn the motor off and pedal (a lot) more.

I live in a city where 3x for bike is more than reasonable. But you're right even in Seattle (and in the southeast NOBODY would have bought that. PNW is much different.

Yes, the Surly bike is pretty sweet! I like the bigger front wheel for poorly maintained roads.

Posted: on Feb 12, 2021 | 2:19 AM

DaGurggles

Let's face it, anyone who is buying this bike lives in the city and the roadmap is going to be awful. I'll take full size tires for handling and ride comfort over compactness any day of the week.

Posted: on Feb 12, 2021 | 10:57 AM

Analog Spirit 2.0

Not only that, but bigger wheels and tires can handle any irregularities in the road better, like potholes and debris and stuff.

Posted: on Feb 13, 2021 | 1:29 PM

rbrian

Don't knock it till you've tried it – it's whoo! with Schwalbe Big Apples, which soak up a surprising amount of punishment, and make my Velotron comfortable to ride, even without the suspension of the HSD. It's fire.

Posted: on Feb 14, 2021 | 12:24 PM

Zafarf

Yep, good point. This bike is selling well to urban users who have to store it in their hall or living room. It can stand on its end. Compactness is a big thing. My folder is often my go-to bike simply cos it has small wheels – it's easier to get in and out and down the staircase, being shorter.

Posted: on Feb 14, 2021 | 4:05 PM

Analog Spirit 2.0

I didn't know that about the motor, that it can't be swapped out or repaired without sending the whole bike off to Bosch or wherever. That's an automatic deal-breaker for me. 😉

Posted: on Feb 13, 2021 | 1:34 PM

Michael Evans

Nice to see Verge finally reviewing bikes beyond the bottom barrel like RAD and VanMoof. We have a GSD which has been amazing planning to pick up the Stinger HSD hopefully next month.
Some of the new Rease and Muller front loaders are also looking pretty nice these days, would be good to see their stuff on Verge as well.

Posted: on Feb 11, 2021 | 4:31 PM

Zafarf

I agree w Michael, great to see some content about the bigger brands.

Posted: on Feb 11, 2021 | 6:05 PM

aRMANI

I have a Cube e-bike with Bosch electronics. With regard to service and maintenance I'd like to say that in my experience Bosch are absolutely TERRIBLE. The company that supplied my bike (StoCycles – a curse upon them) went bust a year after I bought it. I have emailed both Cube and Bosch (UK and Germany) MULTIPLE times – and received not so much as an acknowledgement. Even finding out what the servicing requirements are has proved all but impossible. Fortunately my local GWAT store has the software to both diagnose and update the firmware on my bike, something that I only found out about by accident.
I've subsequently discovered that there is a local company who are a Bosch agent. Their annual fee for servicing my bike is positively insane – over £300 pa. The helpful guy at Giant checked and updated my firmware (lots of updates of which I was totally unaware) for about £15.
To be clear; I have no major complaints about the bike or its electronics however given the ABYSMAL support offered – or rather not offered – by both Cube and Bosch, I would never buy another bike incorporating these companies' products. Beware.

Posted: on Feb 12, 2021 | 7:20 AM

Cpt_Slim_Jim

Those are some beautiful welds.

But holy damn are they overpriced.

Posted: on Feb 13, 2021 | 8:08 PM

rbrian

I love my Tern Vektron S10. For almost a year, I cycled between it and 30 miles a day, mostly on minimum assistance, except when I was tired or going uphill. It's great to ride, stable yet agile, and the chunky tires handle poor surfaces very well. I can carry all I need easily, with room to spare. I ran the battery flat once, to see what the range would be – 85 miles, with assistance, on the highest setting. I'm 6'2" and I can ride it, but it's a little too big for me, and I'm an Audi A4. The compact size is great for taking inside the house though. I pack it neat to my sofa so it can watch TV.

However, it has some unique parts which are impossible to find replacements for. After going over the bars at about 20mph (downhill), breaking some ribs, some teeth, and a cheekbone (the road was unfamiliar), the bike didn't suffer too much – a broken brake lever, which as a standard part is easy to replace, and a broken front mudguard (fender), which is made specially for Tern by SKS. SKS can't supply a replacement, nor can Tern. I did find one in another country who refused to ship it to the UK, saying it was against the distributors rules. The distributor gave me a list of British shops, none of whom stock it. It shouldn't be so hard to find, so just a bit of bent plastic! But nobody else uses 20x20" tyres.

My job has changed, I now need to drive – up to 150 miles a day with 500kg of tools and a couple of ladders are beyond the capability of most cargo bikes, so I'm not sure what I'm going to do next.

Posted: on Feb 14, 2021 | 12:12 PM

Zafarf

Nice to read an actual first-hand owner perspective. Good work!👍

Posted: on Feb 14, 2021 | 4:10 PM

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