

Image AV One

Great value from a New Zealand loudspeaker.
By Michael Jones

**Image AV One
loudspeakers. \$2100**

There's always a good feeling about a New Zealander doing well, whether it's in the arts, sports or, in this case, audio.

Chris Ball from Image Loudspeakers has been producing a well received range for some years and I'm lucky enough to have a play with the Image AV One.

Chris is very responsive to suggestions from his dealers, which is how the AV One and the AV Two (a bigger speakers) came about. His dealers loved the Image range, but wanted a loud-

speaker with a bit more kick down below, specifically for the home theatre buyer.

Now I'm a great believer that a good loudspeaker is just that: a good loudspeaker. Whether you play string quartets, Motorhead or Jurassic Park through the speakers, quality stands out in all cases.

So I was interested to see my reaction to the AV Ones, as my response to many speakers supposedly designed for home theatre use is that many of them are simply poor speakers.

One thing you'll notice about Image loudspeakers are the wonderful finishes. All Image speakers are handcrafted, finely finished in a variety of real wood veneers.

In fact, Chris Ball can produce a pair of speakers in just about any finish you require. My pair came in rimu.

The AV One's are a slim (185mm) and deep (330mm) floorstander. This is a deliberate design choice by Chris Ball. The slim front baffle makes the speakers more "room-friendly" while the depth of the cabinet allows for a decent cabinet volume for producing bass.



The AV One is a three-way loudspeaker. On the front baffle are a 28mm soft dome tweeter sitting below a 140mm poly cone midrange. The two drive units are placed very close together on the top of the front baffle.

A third driver sits on the side of the cabinet. This is a 210mm woofer to produce the bass. Placing this woofer nears the floor allows for some room coupling which can extend and smooth put the bass.

In my room the Images worked superbly well! They need a bit of space around them to perform at their best, so don't place the speakers hard up against the wall or in a corner.

A dynamic and punchy sound issued from the AV One's. They were great in helping to make the music come alive with their portrayal of dynamic swings.

Bass is more than just a "boom boom" going on below. Bass sets the foundation for the music and helps give a sense of scale to the sound. With its 210mm sidefiring woofer, the Image speakers could produce some serious bass.

Only the truly committed bass freak is likely to demand a subwoofer with these speakers.

Instrumental timbre - the ability to produce the tone of instruments was also very good.

Ironically, one of the closest competitors to the Image AV One's are another speaker from Image - the 404. I've listened to both, but with too long a gap between hearings to make any pronouncements on the differences.

The Image AV One's are a fine loudspeaker at an outstanding price. The glorious wood finishes just add the icing to the cake.



While some speakers can sound a little wimpy, that was not a charge that could be made against the AV Ones. They are a full-blooded speaker, both in their dynamics and bass