

Gennum nXZEN Plus Bluetooth Headset

Posted by Sufian Siddiqi on 03 March 2006 Rating: 5



Being an avid technology junkie, as my friends like to call me, I'm always looking for the best gadgets available in the market. While roaming the showroom floor at the last CES I happened to come across the Gennum booth at the Sands Expo Hall. There, I was shown a demo of the voice quality of this earpiece and it got me interested in getting a replacement for my Jabra headset.

The nXZEN Plus has the traditional Bluetooth headset look and feel. There is no boom mic so the headset is very lightweight and compact weighing about 0.6 ounces. It comes with two different ear hooks and three types of earpieces to accommodate with the user's comfort level. You could also use the headset without the ear hooks because the earpieces fit snugly in the ear canal, but I preferred the hook.

In terms of buttons and controls, it took some time getting used to the location. The large, round button on the side of the unit acts as the power button and also manages calls. There's also another button near the front of the unit called the pinch button which controls pairing the headset with your Bluetooth phone, voice activated dialing, redialing the last number, switching between headset and phone, muting the mic, and more. Depending on what functions you want to accomplish you need to press either of the buttons for a certain amount of time until the specified number of beeps is heard (example: pairing the device requires you to press the "pinch" button till you hear 4 beeps). The headset also has a volume button on the other end of the headset even though volume can be controlled from your phone. These buttons were very stiff.



The nXZEN Plus was tested using both a BlackBerry 7290 and a Treo 650. Pairing was very easy to do with both units. Compared to the Jabra BT200, the call quality on both phones was very clear. I went through several areas (like in the demo shown at CES) and the callers I spoke with reported clear good quality on their end. The nXZEN has two mics to pick up sound. The background noise is suppressed using a noise-cancellation feature that is built into the unit.

One of the great features of this headset is its ability to pair to multiple devices at once. The headset also has the ability to connect to a Bluetooth mp3 player and comes with a cable for stereo sound. Testing this out we found the sound quality to be great. If you're using the headset to listen to music and a phone call comes in, the unit will switch over to the phone seamlessly and switch back when the call has ended.

Gennum says the headset has a talk-time of 7 hours and a standby time of 100 hours. It generally takes about 2 hours to charge the unit completely. An AC adapter is included for wall charging, however, you can also use a USB cable to charge it from your computer.

This headset retails for \$129.99 and can be purchased from your local compUSA, Fry's Electronics, or Best Buy.

The Gennum nXZEN Plus is a HWG Editors Choice Award Recipient.

