

# VALOR MULTIMEDIA NVG-670W

Text and Photos by Dave MacKinnon (www.osmlabs.com)



**T**hese days, it seems like you can get a multipurpose product that will do almost anything you want. I was just playing with my friend Arthur's iPhone (still a rarity up here in Canada eh?) and marveled at the variety of features built into that single product – cell phone, web access, email, calendar, camera and WiFi. The car audio world is quickly becoming similar – back when I started, the hot deal was a pull-out CD player, and lots of my peers fondly remember the introduction of the very first CD player, stereo cassette player and hours of slaving over an 8-track install.

Valor Multimedia appears to be at the forefront of assimilating as many features as possible into a single chassis, and their new NVG-670W stands as one of their flagship products – and it's freakin' loaded! Let's check out this truly all-in-one double-DIN DVD navigation system.

## FEATURES

You might want to break out a note pad if you want to try to keep up with the list of features I am about to lay down; it's long – really long. The NVG-670W is a 2-DIN AM/FM DVD receiver with integrated navigation. From a physical standpoint, the 670W features a 6.5-inch touchscreen LCD display with a resolution of 280,800 pixels. The front panel of the 670W is motorized and folds down to allow access to the disc-loading slot and an SD card slot. Between the SD card slot and the DVD optical drive, you now have access to MP3 and WMA audio files. The optical drive will play DVD Video, VCD, MPEG1, MPEG2 and MPEG4 files including AVI and Xvid compression formats. Heck, you can even look at JPEG pictures. Both DVD+R/RW and DVD-R/RW discs

(by the way, this is pronounced “dash R” not “minus R”) will play as well. The deck has a built-in Dolby Digital surround decoder with full 5.1 output via amplifier or 5.0 by the five-channel internal amplifier and a full TV tuner.

The DVD playback system is quite well equipped (no surprise there). There is support for sectional repeat, chapter search, subtitles display, fast forward (and rewind), audio down mixing, viewing angle adjustment, multi-language support and zoom functions. Parental Lock can be set anywhere from Adult to Kid Safe and there is an adjustable password function. You can choose from full six-channel audio playback or down-mix to stereo. Speaker size selection (Large or Small) for front, surround and center are also provided. There are adjustments for DRC (Dynamic Range Control) for compression at low playback levels, delay for the center and rear channels (0-5mSec in 1mSec steps for the center and 0-15mSec for the rear in 3mSec steps). There is even a

pink noise generator built in to let you set up the audio output level of each channel in the car.

Now, I mentioned that this deck features built-in navigation. The unit uses GPS for location calculation and, according to the owner's manual, no VSS connection is required. There are of course significant pros and cons to that. The maps provided are labeled to be for the USA and they are stored on a provided CD labeled "North America" – we'll check out the Canadian content once I get the unit on the test bench. Map data is brought to the unit on an SD card. The Nav system offers voice guidance, 2D/3D map views and the all-important automatic re-routing feature. There is an address book, recent destination history and detour options, just to name a few features.

A little more research reveals that the 670W uses Navmate's navigation software. I'm quite familiar with this software as it is used on several transportable products from other companies. By the way, it works pretty well and it's logical. We'll get to the functional details in the testing section of the review.

And so, back to the massive feature list. The NVG-670W has a built-in Bluetooth interface. The interface features on-screen dialing, phone book access and even the ability to stream audio from your Bluetooth-enabled MP3 phone. Valor

includes an external microphone to help make sure sound quality is good. Valor includes the ever-important warning that not all Bluetooth phones are compatible with this unit, so check your phone with the 670W before you have it installed (this applies to all Bluetooth interfaces – the industry standard isn't very standardized).

The 670W includes an iPod interface (what doesn't these days?). You have access to both audio and video and can sort your music by Playlist, Artist, Album, Genre, Song or Composer. As with other mobile iPod video solutions, you need to start the video playback from the iPod – Apple doesn't provide support for that via the docking port. Remember, the parking brake must be set for video to be displayed.

The 670W of course includes a radio tuner with three groups of six FM presets and one group of six AM presets. There are both auto-tuning and manual tuning options as well as Auto-Store, Program Scan and the choice of Local or DX tuner sensitivity. The radio tuning frequency spacing can be changed to meet the needs of USA, South America, Europe, Korea, China or Arabia. Nice to see the tuner well equipped in terms of features.

Last, but certainly not least in terms of music sources, there is support for XM Satellite Radio via an optional XMD1000 XM Direct Universal

Tuner box by Terk. Your dealer can get this for you and once connected, you have fully graphical control over your commercial-free, coast-to-coast, genre-specific music. A few other features include a rear-view camera input with reverse-light trigger wire and the ability to reverse the image via the deck. The motorized front panel can be tilted to make viewing easier and video playback can be either NTSC or PAL. There is a two-zone function that will let your rear-seat passengers enjoy a DVD via an overhead monitor and headphones while you listen to the radio. There is also that aforementioned TV tuner built in and ready to rock.

In terms of audio processing, the NVG-760W has a quite advanced audio adjustment menu. The output of each of the six channels can be individually adjusted in 21 steps from -10 to +10 while the master volume has 41 steps (0 to 40). The bass and treble are adjustable from -7 to +7 as is the subwoofer output control. There are also balance and fader controls. The built-in EQ has the following preset curves: User, Flat, Jazz, Pop, Classical, Rock, News, Urban, Rave, Movie and Techno. The loudness function is adjustable in effect in four steps or can be shut off – a very cool feature! Under the ASP (Audio Signal Processing) configuration menu, you can change the center frequency of the bass >>



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adjustment (60, 80, 100, 130, 150 or 200Hz), the treble adjustment (10k, 12.5k, 15k and 17kHz). The subwoofer crossover can be set to 80, 120 or 160Hz and the polarity can be reversed. The bass Q-factor can be set to 1.0, 1.25, 1.5 or 2.0 to affect the range of frequencies the boost or cut affects. Finally, and perhaps my favourite fine-tuning control, is the ability to manually adjust the relative level on the different sources in the deck. AM/FM, DVD, NAVI, Bluetooth, Sat, iPod, Aux-in and SD card gain are all adjustable in 15 steps from -7 to +7. Talk about being able to fine-tune...

Valor includes a really cool IR remote control with the NVG-670W – it looks somewhat like a computer mouse and features what they call a smart dial for access to menu options. The buttons on either side of the wheel adjust the volume up or down.

## TESTING

I brought the 670W to life on the bench to start with my lab measurements. Up first were the standard tests for power and preamp. The internal power amplifier has five channels – the fifth is dedicated to a center channel. I took the measurements using four channels being driven into 4Ω loads. The deck produced 8.33V

(or 17.34 W) per channel when being fed a 1kHz, 0dB sine wave from my test CD. Preamp output measured 2.82V with a good low output impedance of 105.4Ω. The top of the sine wave clipped well before the bottom. The Pierre Verany Digital Test CD is my usual source for testing the ability to play through scratches. However, the 670W's playback buffer made it hard to get a solid reading, though it took much longer than normal to get track 33 to start playing – this track has 1.5mm dropouts, however it did play just fine after a few seconds of reading.

Up next, I wanted to check out the navigation portion of the deck, since this is its claim to fame. The first thing we need to look at is map information. The NVG-670W comes with a 2GB SD card already loaded with the navigation information for Canada, Puerto Rico and the United States. You can also choose from one of ten languages. I chose Canada and English US and after selecting the correct drive letter, hit the big GO button.

With the SD card loaded in the deck, I fired up the nav option and set my office as the original location. I then asked it to plot a route home, which it kindly agreed to. This passes my first test – it knows where my

house is. Many nav systems with maps more than a couple years old don't have my street on it – weird since it's been there for almost eight years. The next step was to check out the POI data. I asked for a list of restaurants near my house – the 670W coughed up the Thai restaurant, QB Sports bar and McDonald's next door, but didn't manage to present the Tim Horton's across the street as an option. I re-searched the POI data base – no Timmies in there. Other POI information was great – banks, border crossings, hospitals, gas stations, police stations and ATMs all provided great accurate info. While in a route, there is no way to add an additional destination to the route if you suddenly had the craving for lunch or the need for fuel. You can ask the 670W to invoke a detour to your route, in case you get some traffic jam information from the radio and want to change your route. Overall, this is basic navigation: easy to use, but not full of bells and whistles.

With no room to cover every feature, I decided the iPod interface was worth checking out next. It took a minute for it to find my old 3G iPod, but up it came up after a few minutes. I mentioned earlier that you have all sorts of options in terms of accessing your music, but one thing that was nice to see was that you can simply enter a track number. I tried 2222 and up came a weird techno remix of Madonna's Like a Prayer – ah, the beauty of an iPod. A few of the icons were a bit small on the left side of the song list, but everything was there and intuitive to use. Ease of use is very important. The front panel rotary volume control is a very nice touch – I think rotary controls are going to make a come-back over the next couple years – at least, I hope they do.



## CONCLUSION

I could go on and on about every little feature of the NVG-670W, and it would easily consume five or six pages. What the NVG-670W is all about is being all about everything. It has more features than any other mobile electronic product I have tested. Performance from all functions is quite acceptable, bench-testing went very well and configurability is excellent. If you really want to load your dash up with every conceivable source for music and perhaps video, hands-free calling and navigation, then you need to check out the NVG-670W. **PAS**

# VALOR

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Valor Multimedia  
www.valordvd.com  
(626) 581-8900