

Teenage Engineering PO-137 Rick & Morty Limited Edition £85

The perfect addition to your handheld arsenal, or just fanboy merchandise?

CONTACT WHO: Teenage Engineering. **WEB:** teenage-engineering.com **KEY FEATURES** Handheld pocket sampler and voice synthesizer. Microphone, 16-step sequencer, 16 patterns (chainable), 8 voice types, 8 effects, 16-part Microtonic drum engine, pre-loaded with exclusive Rick and Morty samples



Since their inception, Teenage Engineering's Pocket Operator handheld synths have focussed on succeeding at one vital thing: making music fun. The latest addition to the series sees the existing PO-35 Speak take a wrong turn into a parallel universe in the form of the PO-137.

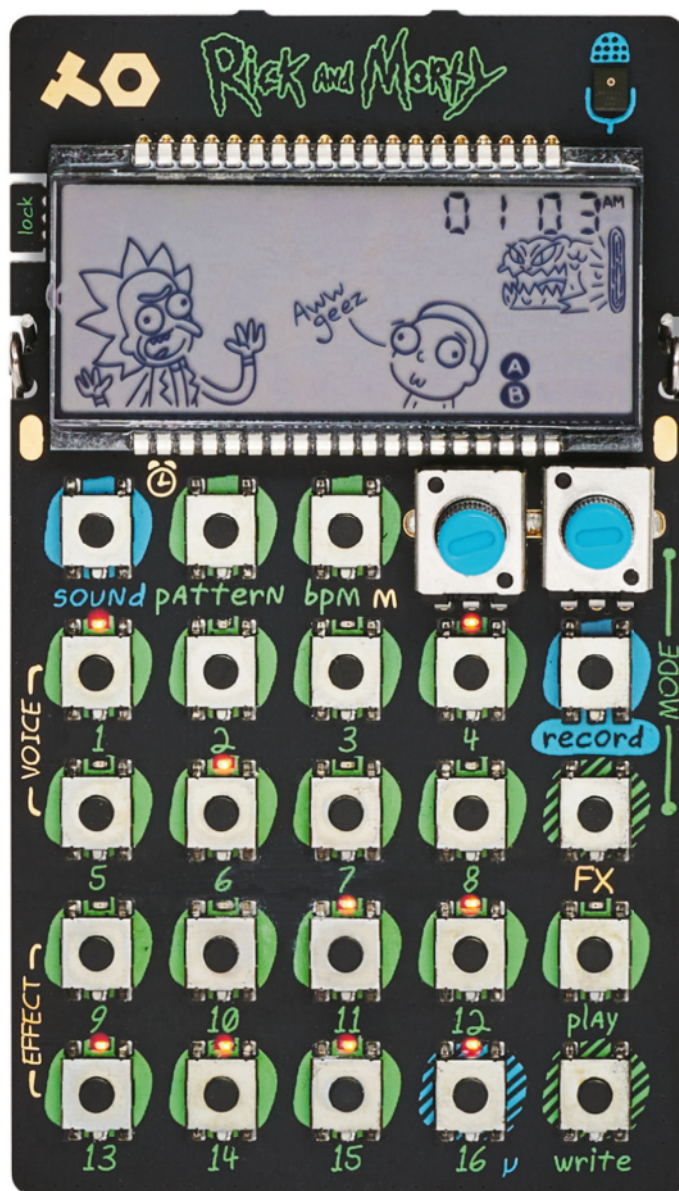
In what can only be seen as a very canny marketing move, teaming up with Rick and Morty co-creator Justin Roiland, the Swedish manufacturer has created the perfect merchandise for fans of the Adult Swim show and refreshed an already existing design, with, presumably, little investment needed. The PO-137 takes the PO-35 and adds Roiland's own designs to the interface and LCD screen and sees his vocal talents at the mercy of the onboard effects and different voice types. Even the model number is a nod to the show.

Cynics may already be asking 'What is the point in spending extra money on what is just a reskinned product?' Well, the good news is that the PO-137 doesn't cost any more than the PO-35 Speak, which just begs the question, should you buy the -137 or will the -35 suffice?

Every Pocket Operator shares the same interface layout, an LCD screen, onboard speaker, stereo out that can also be patched to send out a pulse clock and mono signal, which can be chained with other POs via the 3.5mm input. Like the PO-35, the -137 features eight voice characters, eight effects, a 16-step sequencer and a Microtonic drum engine. The big difference here is that the 15 pre-loaded samples are voiced by Roiland himself and feature some of the catchphrases from the show.

This is, however, where one issue lies with the -137: rewriting over the Rick and Morty samples with your own. In fact, the dilemma is clearly spelt out on sound #15, delivered by Rick himself: "If you want to ruin this thing, then press one through 15 to record your own dumb sounds."

That's a stark warning that's hard to ignore, but once you've overcome that hurdle and done so anyway, you'll be pleased to have a crunchy, lo-fi sampler and voice synth at your disposal. In fact, we'd go out on a limb and say this particular Pocket Operator is the most useful of the bunch. That said, it still suffers from



the same issues as previous models, such as the fiddly nature of the buttons. And the rotary dial controls are contextual, so familiarise yourself with the manual.

The overall storage limits you to 120 seconds of sample time, which may seem little, but it's more than enough space to create interesting sequences, especially combined with the onboard drum machine. This is further enhanced by the very additive effects, which can be punched in on-the-fly, or recorded as parameter locks.

For those fans who will undoubtedly come for the Rick and Morty samples, we're sure they will leave realising they've got a handy

little lo-fi sampler that delivers fun in spades. But how limited this edition really is... we just don't know. **FM**

FM VERDICT

8.6

Roiland-voiced samples make this a Rick and Morty fan delight – and might even convert some newcomers along the way

THE PROS & CONS

+

Not just for the RnM fans

Portable

Tons of battery life

-

Doesn't come with batteries

Buttons on the fiddly side

Will you want to delete the onboard samples?