

# The Fernsehfee Blocks Out Commercials

- *Currently only suitable for the German-language TV market*
- *Recognizes commercial breaks during a TV program*
- *Can record TV programs without commercials*
- *Can presort TV programs according to audience ratings*
- *Compatible with all the other Apps thanks to the Android operating system*





# Intelligent TV for the German-speaking TV Market

The Fernsehfee manufactured by TC Unterhaltungselektronik AG is an Android-based DVB-S2 satellite receiver that is highlighted by two special functions: on the one hand there's an Ad Blocker that can recognize commercial breaks while on the other hand there's a Personal TV function. Both of these functions are currently only optimized for German-language TV programs.

The box measures just 13 x 13 x 3 cm (5.1 x 5.1 x 1.2 inches) and comes in a sleek black housing. There are no buttons on the front panel that would disturb the receiver's serenity, but, unfortunately, the user also has to do without a front-panel status display.

The only button on the box, namely the on/off button, can be found on the top of the housing and includes an LED.

On the sides of the Fernsehfee you'll find four USB ports, an SD card reader as

well as a CVBS/stereo audio output.

The rear panel is dominated by the satellite IF input and its looped-through output. But here you'll also find an HDMI port, an RJ45 network interface, a coaxial digital audio output as well as a jack for the external power supply.

Just like the receiver itself, the included remote control is also just as elegant. We were also quite impressed when we had a look at the technical data sheets: The Fernsehfee is powered by a 1GHz Cortex CPU, 1 GB DDR2 memory as well as 4GB Nand Flash. For the op-



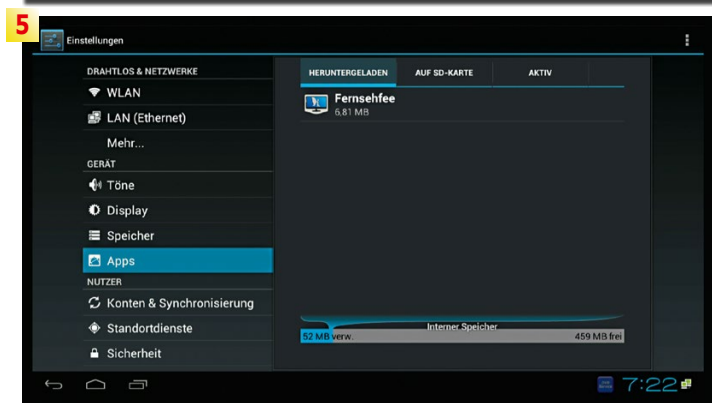
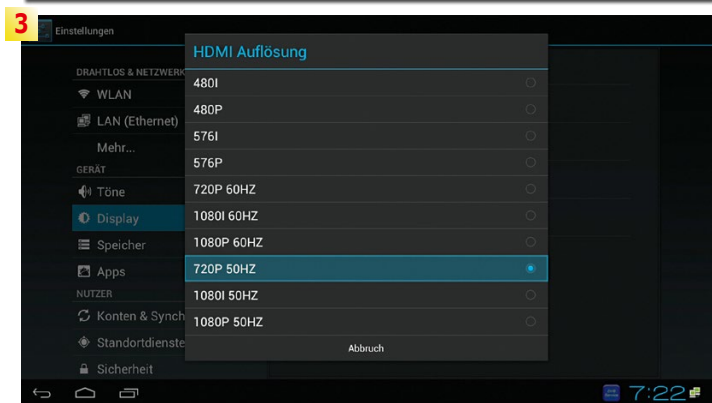
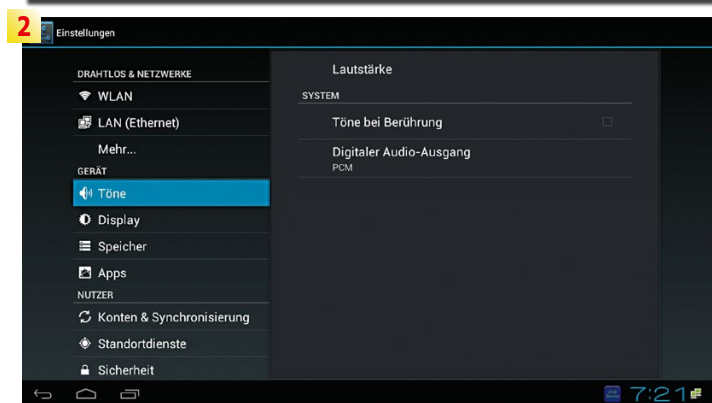
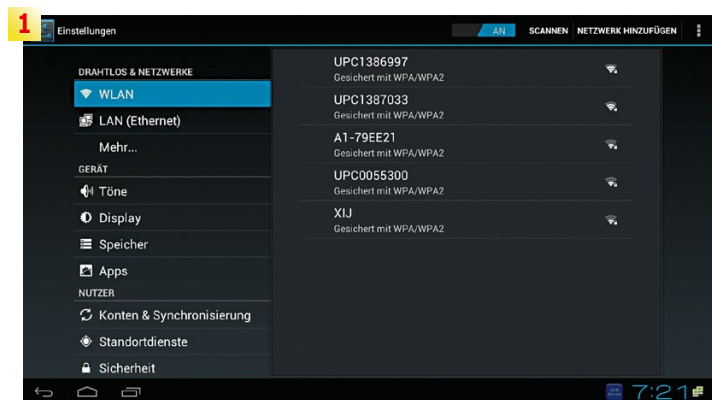
erating system the manufacturer chose Android 4.0.4. We were also pleased to see that an appropriate WiFi chip was not left out either; it lets the Fernsehfee communicate with your local router.

After taking care of the initial installation, the user lands directly in the Main menu and if you've ever held an Android Smartphone in your hands, you'll feel right at home. The user is thus able to enjoy the Android features but is also able to set up the Fernsehfee App so that it loads right after turning it on.

Before we begin putting this special App to use, here's a tip: if you want to be able to use the box's features outside of the Fernsehfee App, we recommend connecting a separate keyboard and mouse to the box. For this purpose we used a







Logitech K400 wireless keyboard with an integrated trackpad. This makes utilizing the box's functions much easier and quicker compared to the remote control.

After setting up the Fernsehfee to our personal needs, the Fernsehfee App can be started so that we can now enjoy watching TV.

Since the Fernsehfee can provide a very complete TV viewing experience (more on that later in this test report), the manufacturer recommends opening up a free account through their own website ([www.fernsehfee.de](http://www.fernsehfee.de)). This would allow you to store and edit your personal box settings on the provider's server plus you'd be able to utilize a wide variety of features as well as have the ability to remotely access the box. After registering, you merely have to enter your login data in the box and just like that, you're ready to go.

Even though the Fernsehfee has its own integrated DVB-S2 tuner that at first glance resembles a standard satellite receiver, you should ignore that train of thought; this box is nothing like a standard satellite receiver.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Before you can do anything, you have to tell the box what satellites you can receive with your antenna system.

The manufacturer had the presence of mind to preprogram the unit with the six most important European satellites: ASTRA 19.2°, ASTRA 23.5° east, ASTRA 28.2° east, ASTRA 4A 4.9° east, HOTBIRD 13° east, EU-TELSAT 9° east, TURKSAT 42° east.

Unfortunately, though, during our tests we did not find a way to add additional satellites. This limits the installation of the Fernsehfee functions to central Europe

which actually is logical considering that the actual Fernsehfee functions are currently only available for German-language TV channels.

For reception of multiple satellites the manufacturer claims that the DiSEqC protocols 1.0, 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are all supported, however, during our tests we were only able to activate DiSEqC 1.0.

And don't waste your time looking through the menus for a channel scan function; instead the box loads a complete channel list for the six satellites directly from the TC Unterhaltungselektronik AG's servers. The advantage here is that there's always a totally up-to-date channel list available for the user but at the same time it prevents reception of any other satellite.

We also didn't find a way to edit the LOF settings for individual satellite entries in the Fernsehfee App nor did we find a way to use SCR single cable solutions. If you need these features or if you

#### 1. WiFi network settings

#### 2. Audio settings

#### 3. HDMI video signal resolution

#### 4. During the initial installation the size of the picture can be matched to your TV

#### 5. Apps settings for the Fernsehfee App

#### 6. Numerous Fernsehfee settings can be synchronized with the manufacturers server

#### 7. Synchronization of the settings and data

#### 8. Numerous basic Android system settings correspond exactly to Smartphones and Tablets

#### 9. Overview of the factory-installed Apps

#### 10. The File Browser can be used to access local multimedia content

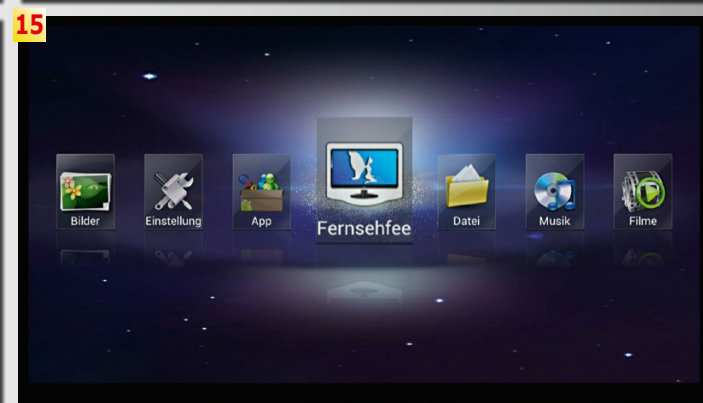
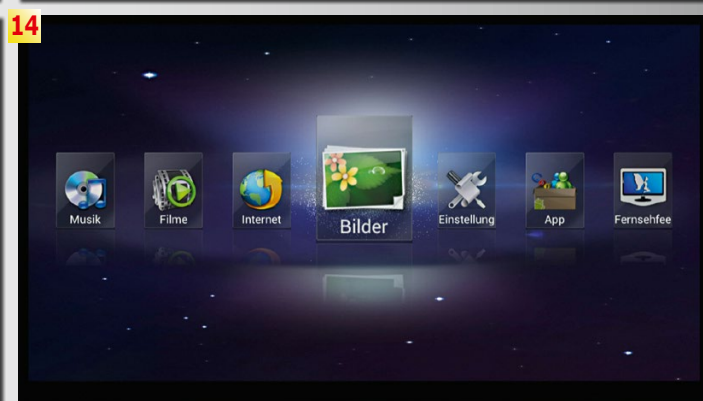
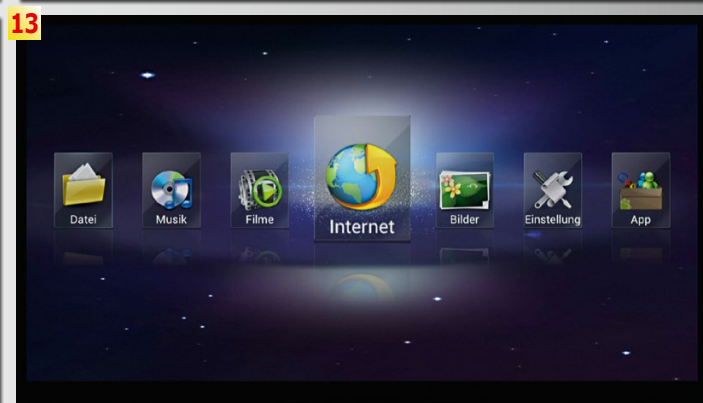
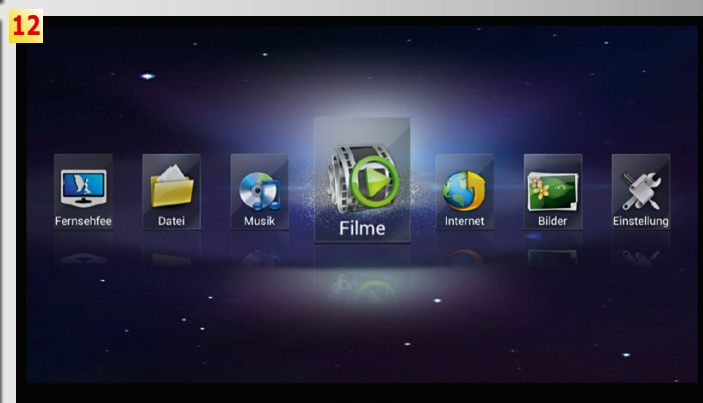
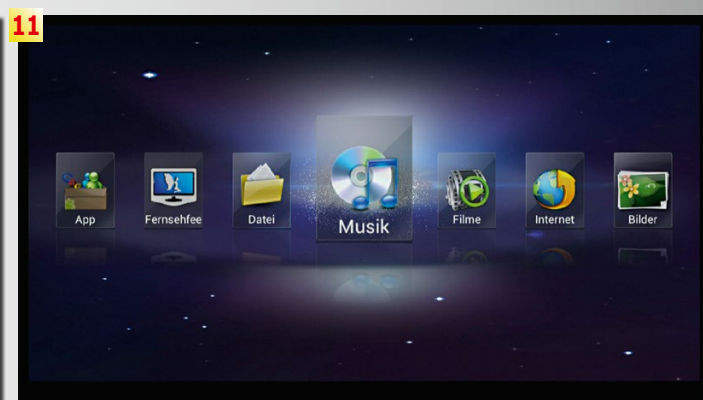
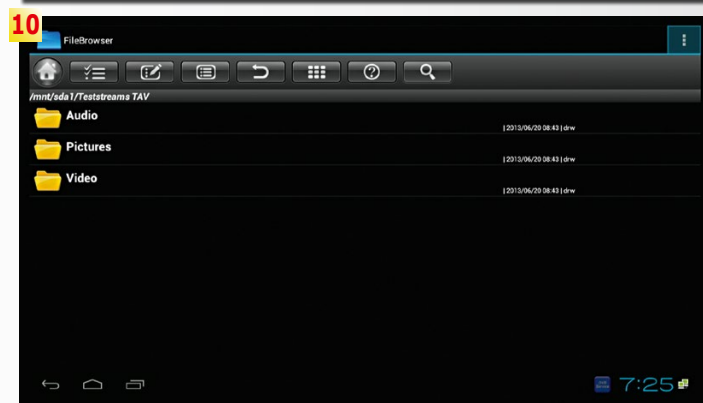
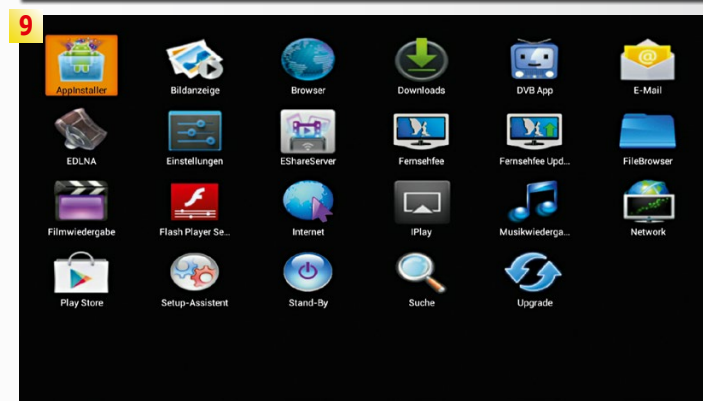
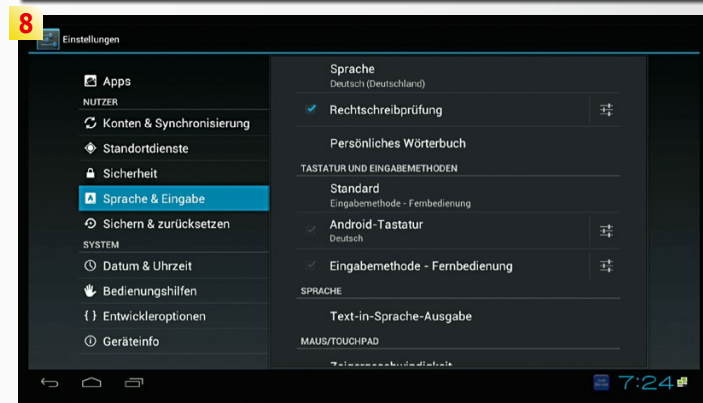
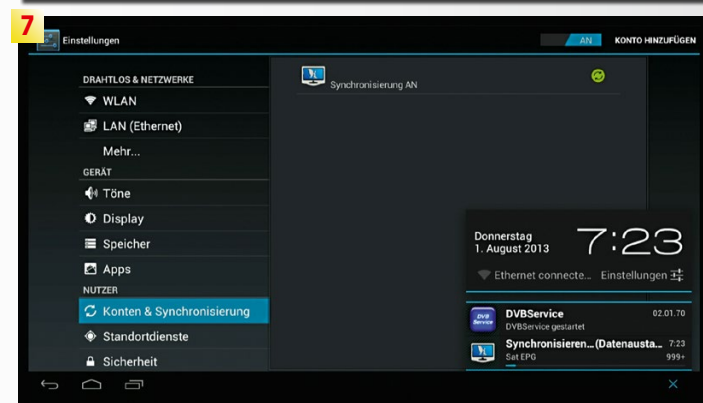
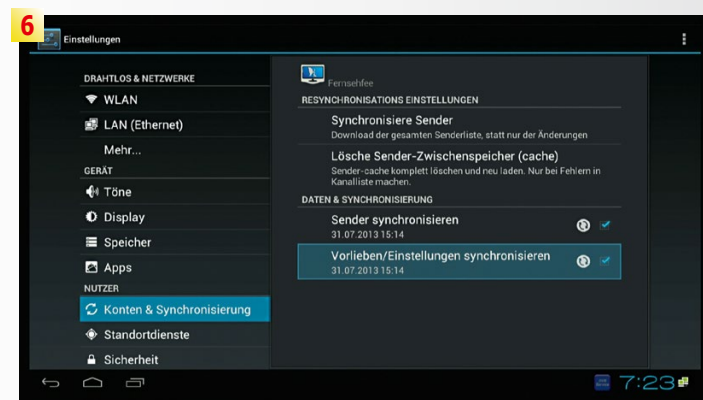
#### 11. Music player

#### 12. Video player

#### 13. Internet browser

#### 14. Photo viewer logo

#### 15. The Fernsehfee App is the central component of the Fernsehfee







16. Fernsehfee App main menu

17. Fernsehfee App channel list sorted alphabetically

18. Commercials are currently running on Sat 1; thus this channel is marked with a red dot in the channel list

19. Three different Fernsehfee EPG modes are available to the user

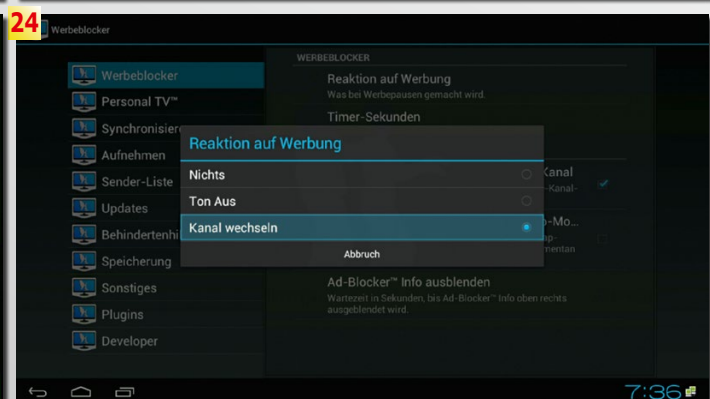
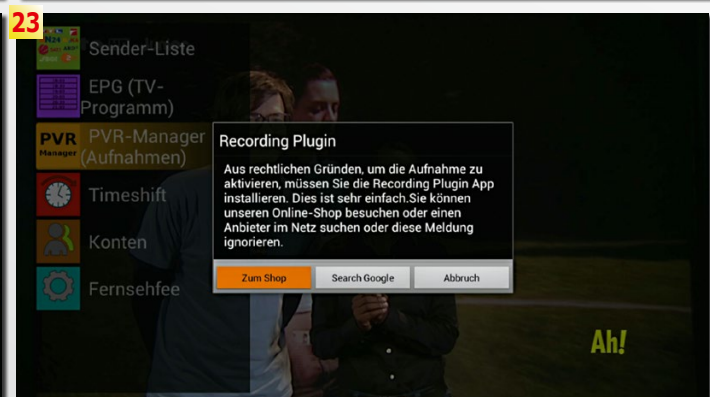
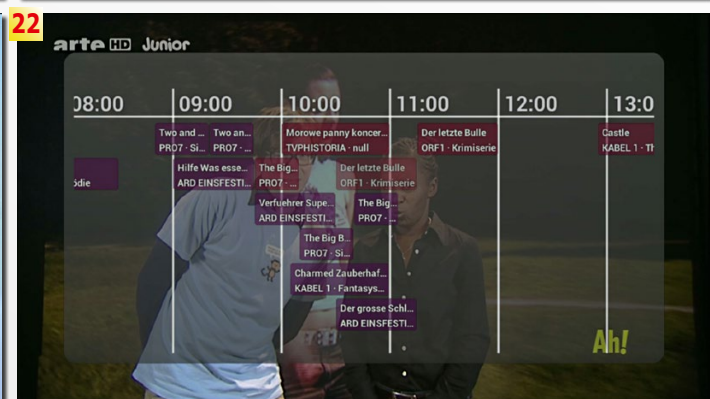
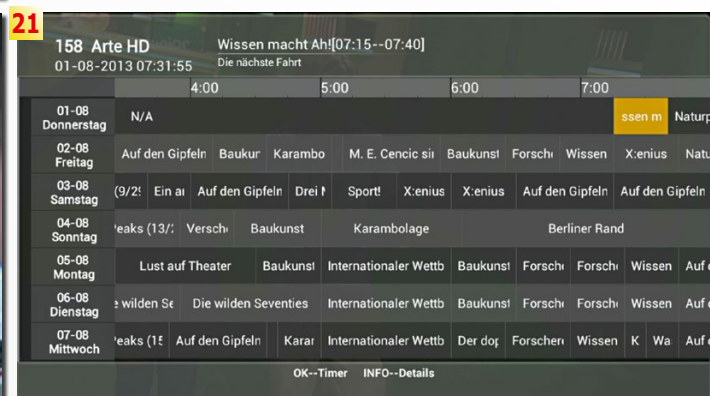
20. Fernsehfee EPG

21. Satellite EPG

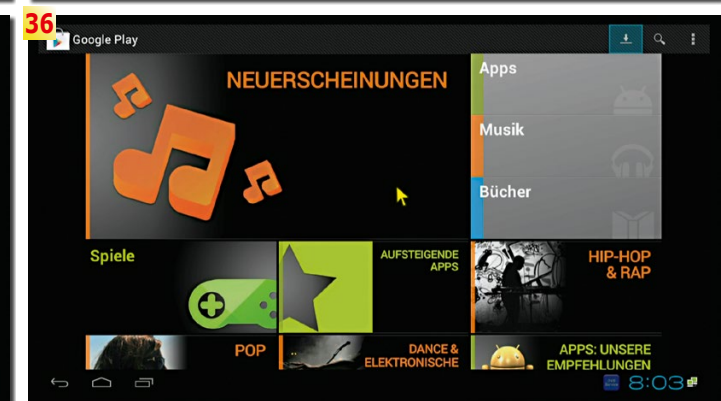
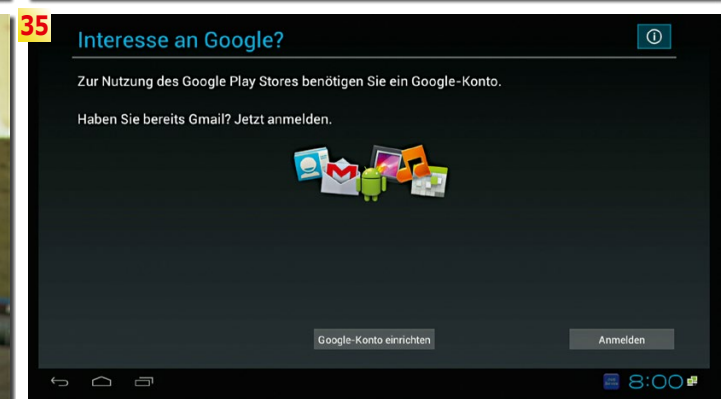
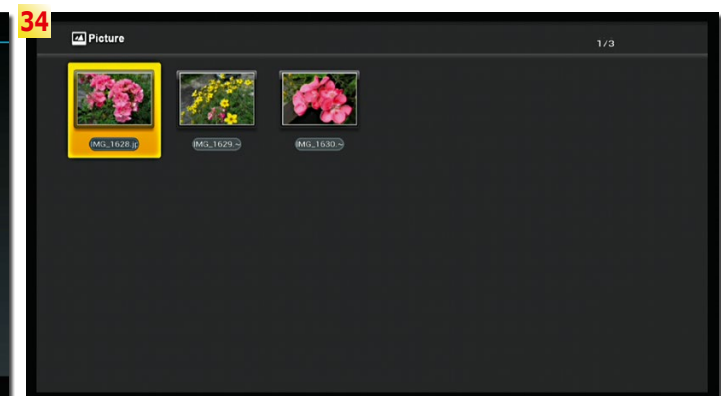
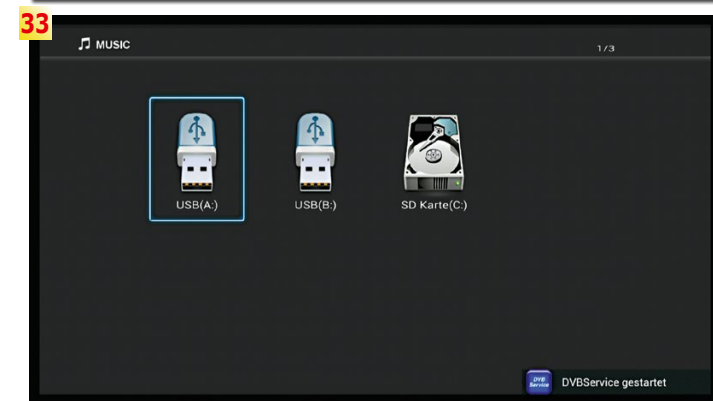
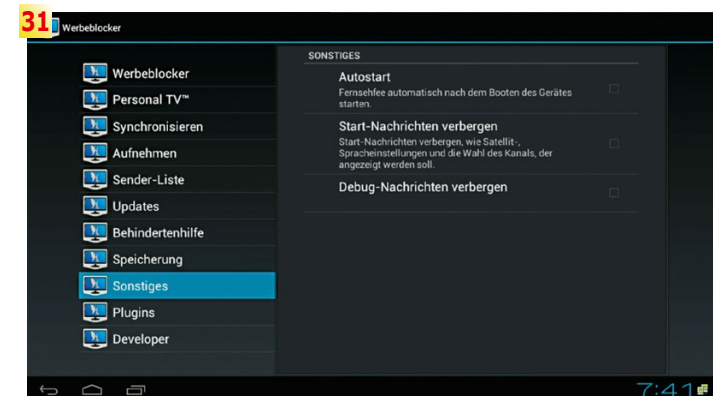
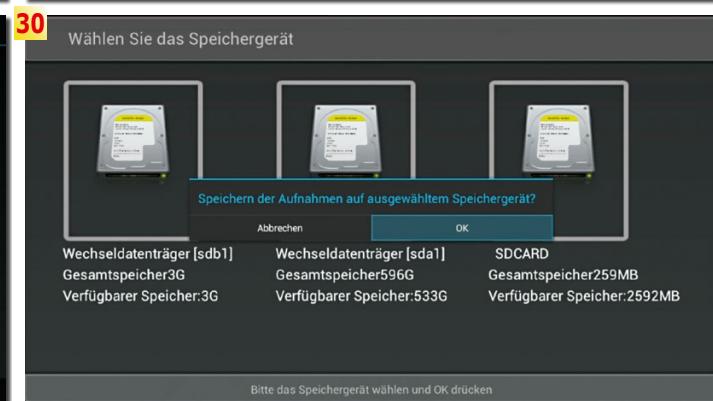
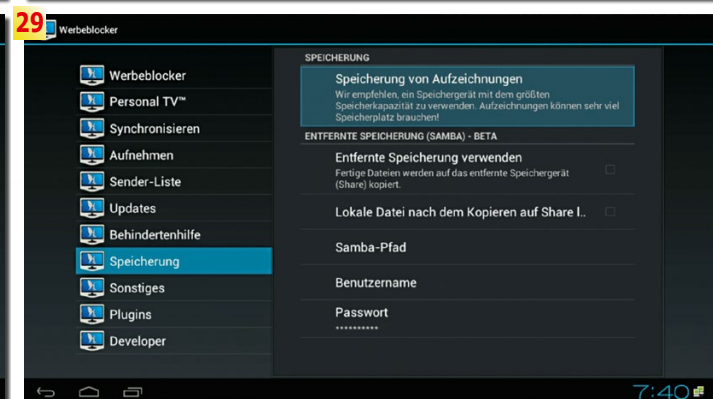
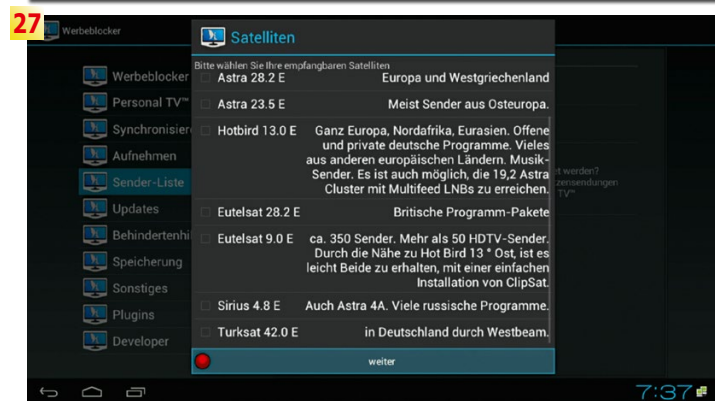
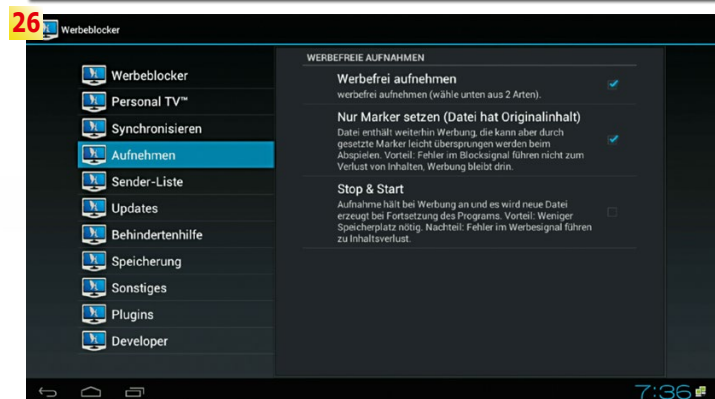
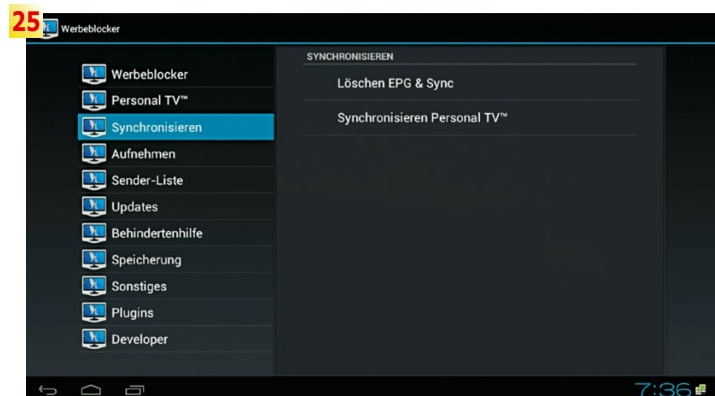
22. TV Pilot EPG

23. For legal reasons the Fernsehfee does not come shipped from the factory PVR compatible. This function only activates after downloading a plug-in.

24. What to do with commercials? The Fernsehfee App can either mute the audio or switch to another channel.







25. If necessary the synchronized data can be deleted and reloaded at any time

26. The Ad Blocker even has influence in the PVR. The user can select how the box handles commercial breaks

27. The list of preprogrammed satellites

28. Sorting the channel list

29. PVR settings

30. External storage devices can be connected via the USB ports so that they can be used for recordings

31. If desired, the Fernsehfee App can be set to automatically start when the box is turned on

32. Information on the currently received channel

33. Audio, video and pictures can be presented from local storage media

34. Photo viewer

35. A Google account is needed so that all the Android operating system functions can be used

36. The Fernsehfee provides easy access for the user to the Google Play Store



want to receive additional satellites, you have to rely on the DVB App that is also pre-installed, but you will lose all of the additional features that make the Fernsehfee interesting in the first place.

The Fernsehfee channel list that is automatically downloaded from the Internet can be sorted by priority, TV Pilot, Personal TV or alphabetically.

At first this may sound somewhat complicated but in reality there are a number of simple and ideal Fernsehfee features available. Most importantly you should rid yourself of the idea of a rigid channel list since the basic concept of the Fernsehfee is to always have the user's most interesting channels at the forefront.

If the channel list is sorted by priority, then those channels that were watched the most on average over the past year will wind up at the top of the list. Sorting by TV Pilot on the other hand takes into account the expected ratings of a channel. Using the ratings of previous programs and a number of other parameters, the box calculates the audience rating that a program achieves and sorts the channel list in such a way that those with the highest ratings end up at the top of the list.

Sorting by Personal TV requires that you've already placed TV channels in groups whereby the Fernsehfee would then sort the channels once again by their ratings.

In this way you could, for



37. Downloading Apps directly to the Fernsehfee box

38. Thanks to the support of external input devices, surfing with the Fernsehfee is a lot of fun!

39. The Fernsehfee channel list sorted according to our personal interests

40. The Fernsehfee channel list sorted according to our personal interests displaying the different categories

41. Naturally, subtitles are

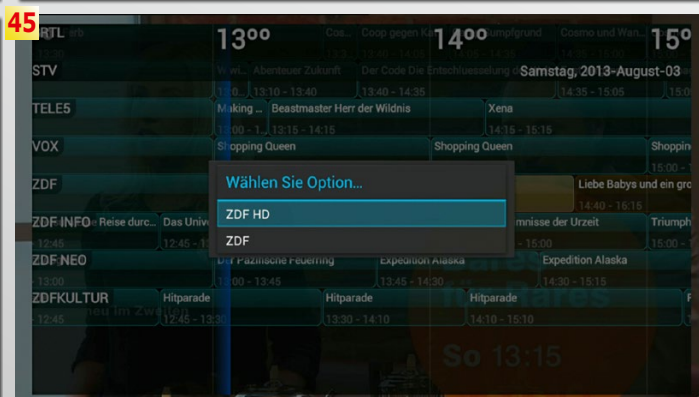
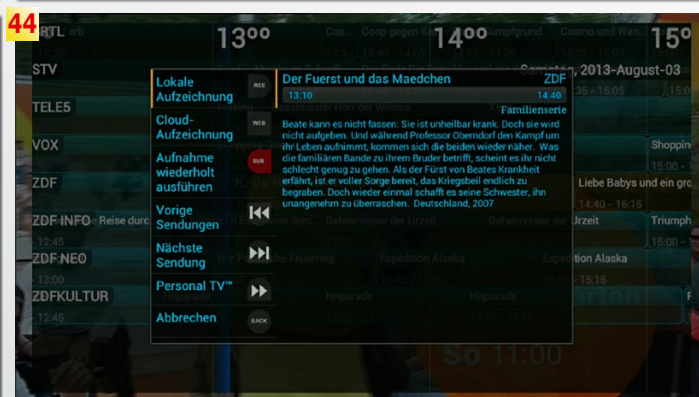
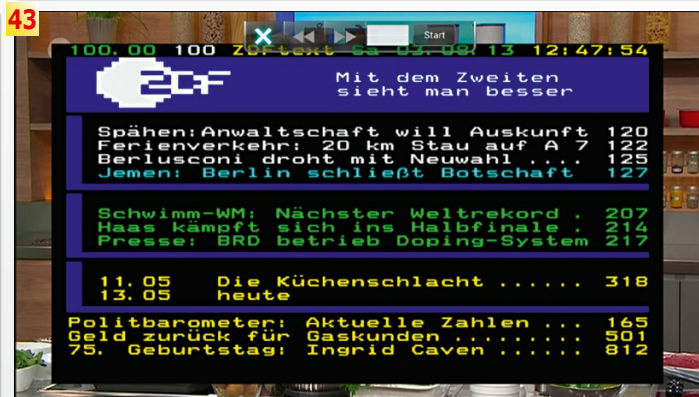
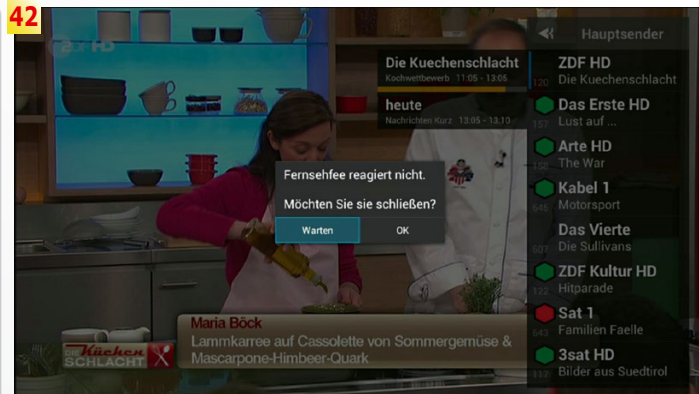
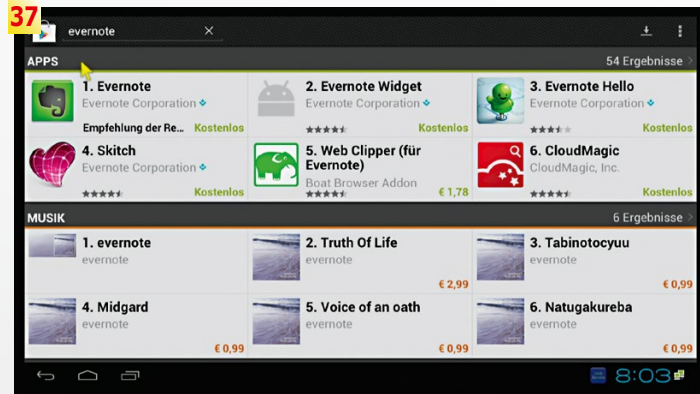
also supported

42. Unfortunately, we saw this message a number of times during our tests - overall the Fernsehfee App reacts very slowly at times

43. OSD teletext decoder

44. Recorder programming can be handled directly from the EPG

45. If a channel is available in both SD and HD, the Fernsehfee asks which version should be recorded with every timer entry





example, display movie or sports programming without any undesired results from other categories.

Personal TV can do even more: you can provide your interests in the smallest detail to the manufacturers website (such as, ball games, comedy series, political dramas, cartoons, etc.). You can even identify your favorite actors or directors to the website.

All of this information is

then directly transferred to the Fernsehfee where it is processed with the TV channels EPG (that is available for up to three weeks in advance) so that a customized channel list is created with all of your desired channels.

With so many design options, we couldn't wait to see the first picture on the TV so that we could finally start our tests.

It took us no time at all to get used to the Fernsehfee's

operational concept; the longer we played around with it, the more fun and pleasure it gave to us.

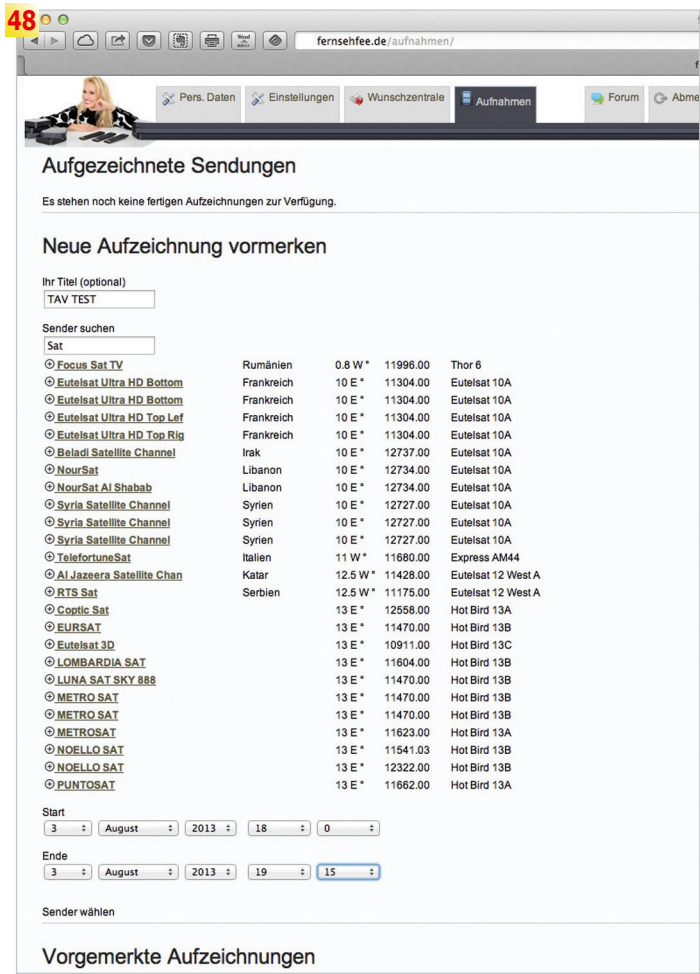
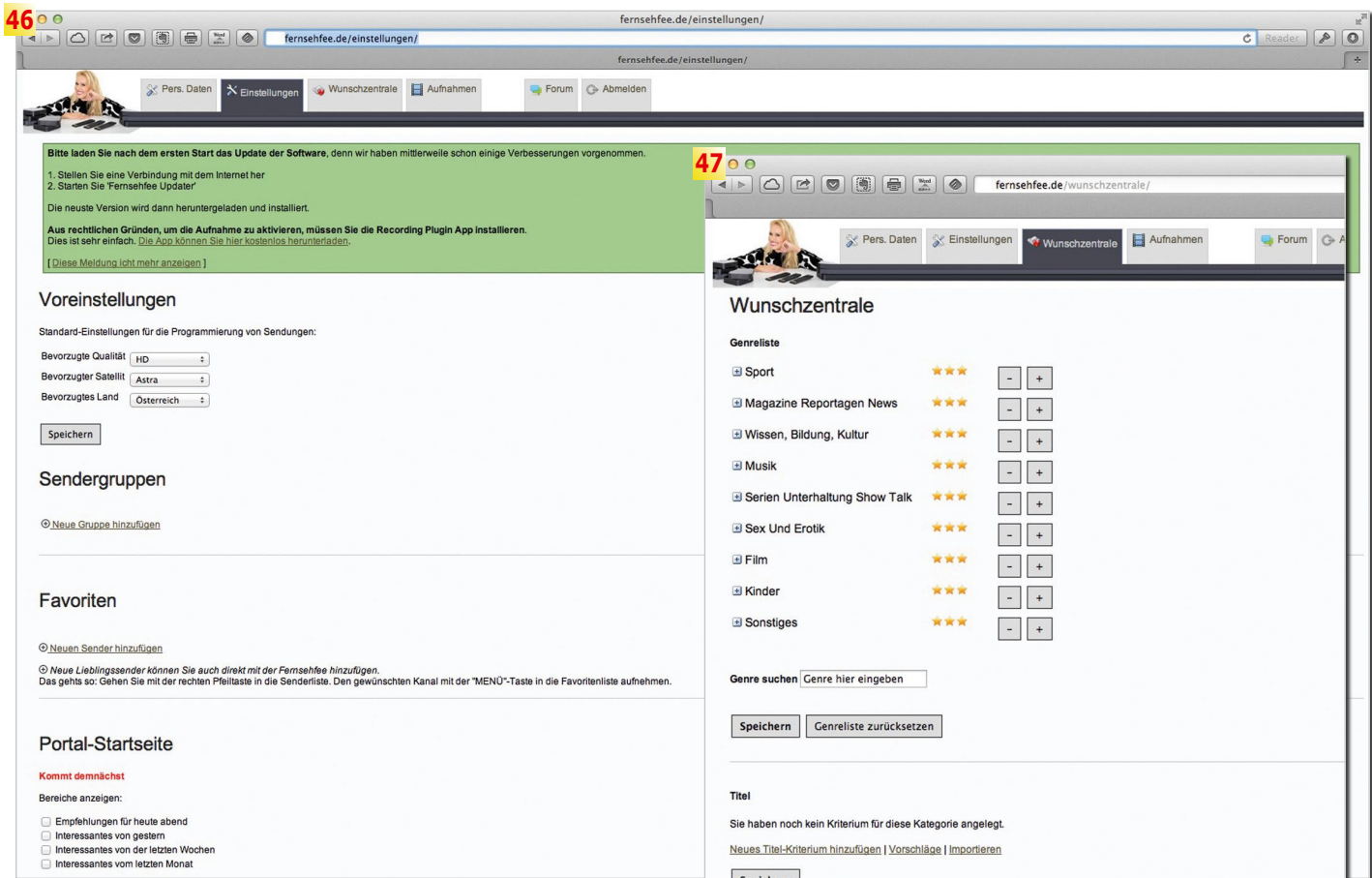
We especially liked the integrated EPG that was available in the modes Fernsehfee EPG, TV Pilot and Sat EPG. While the Sat EPG merely focuses on the data provided by the broadcasters on the satellite and always shows just one channel, the Fernsehfee EPG displays the programming from nine chan-

nels at the same time for several weeks in advance in a grid format. The TV Pilot EPG shows only those favorite channels and provides an overview of the highlights of the day.

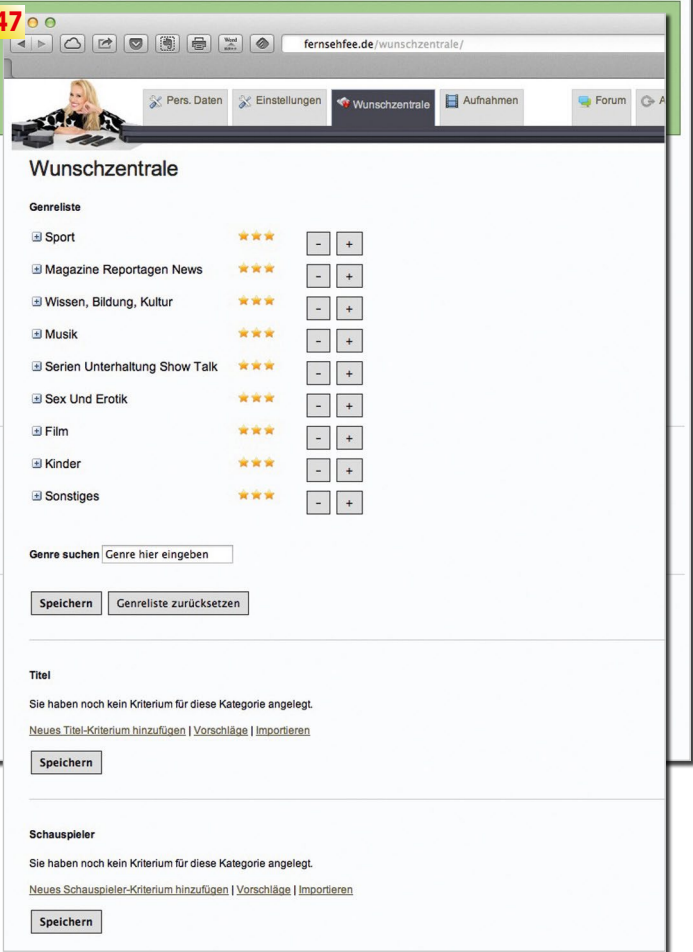
The Fernsehfee's best feature is the integrated Ad Blocker that allows the box to recognize commercial breaks and automatically react to it. The box can be set to mute the audio or switch to another channel as soon







46. Individual online portal at [www.fernsehfee.de](http://www.fernsehfee.de)  
47. The settings of the Fernsehfee features can also be changed online  
48. Recorder programming via Internet



as a commercial break is detected. When the commercial break comes to an end, the box turns the audio back on or switches back to the original channel.

In our tests, this function worked perfectly on all of the German language channels. But the question is, how does it work?

It's actually surprisingly simple: the employees at TC Unterhaltungselektronik AG monitor all the channels manually and then submit the commercial breaks to the Fernsehfee customers.

Even though this method doesn't sound all that technologically advanced, the reliability of the system that we demonstrated during our tests ultimately proves the manufacturer right.

According to official data, the Fernsehfee Ad Blocker covers up to 99% of all the

German-language channels, and we can confirm this value.

We also really liked the fact that any channel that currently has commercials running on it are identified in the channel list by a red dot. This makes it extremely easy to see ahead of time which channels to surf through and which ones to avoid.

The Fernsehfee is not PVR compatible as shipped from the factory, but have no fear, you can simply download a plug-in from the manufacturer's website to turn the Fernsehfee into a recorder.

Thanks to the available USB ports and the SD card reader there is nothing to stop you from connecting an external storage device.

We were able to record one channel at a time in our tests without any problems; multiple simultaneous recordings

however were unfortunately not possible.

There's a Timeshift function that lets you comfortably pause a program and then continue watching it when you're ready without missing a thing.

Naturally, the integrated Ad Blocker also plays a role in the PVR such that any commercial breaks that occur during a recording are marked so that later on they can be removed on a PC before the recording is burned to a DVD.

You can also just let the Fernsehfee store the individual segments of a program in its own file; in this way the commercials aren't even recorded. And, of course, there's also the ability to set up recordings and if desired even a playback function directly from the EPG.

We found it ideal that the box even asks ahead of time if the program should be recorded in SD or HD. This would only work, though, if the satellite in question carries both the SD and HD version of a channel.

Anyone who burns DVDs on a regular basis is almost certainly aware that HD recordings can only be burned onto Blu-Ray discs.

And it's exactly these users that will appreciate that the Fernsehfee manufacturer

included this selection capability.

All in all, the everyday use of the Fernsehfee was quite enjoyable; the manufacturer was very diligent in including all the basic features of a satellite receiver as well as ideal features like the Ad Blocker and Personal TV.

The Fernsehfee App worked perfectly during our tests. TC Unterhaltungselektronik AG deserves our congratulations for developing such an excellent product.

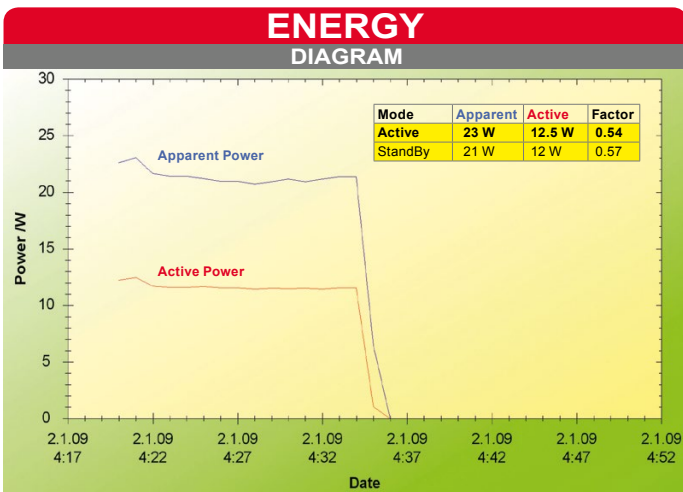
And last but not least we don't want to forget to mention that besides the Fernsehfee App, all the other functions of the Android operating system can be used without any problems, whether it's the video player that worked correctly with all of the various video formats we used during our tests, the audio player that can play back a wide variety of different formats, the photo viewer or the web browser that is all the more fun to use thanks to the keyboard and mouse support.

In addition, the user has access to the Google Play Store with its vast assortment of Apps, nearly all of which can be used with the Fernsehfee and its Android 4.0.4 operating system giving the box almost unlimited possibilities.



+ TC Unterhaltungselektronik AG, with the Fernsehfee, has introduced a satellite receiver whose functions have been matched to the primary requirements of the user. The box that is currently compatible only with the German-speaking market is extraordinarily easy to use and at the same time comes with especially innovative features such as the integrated Ad Blocker and the Personal TV function. In our tests these features proved themselves to be very reliable and functioned without any problems. Thanks to the Android operating system running in the background, the Fernsehfee also offers an outstanding user experience in multimedia, Internet and Apps. The entire Google Play Store with all of its many different Apps can also be accessed.

- Because of its exceptionally simplified operation, there are relatively few settings capabilities for more experienced users. The model that we tested unfortunately did not support the reception of encrypted channels although the manufacturer is working on a version with a CI slot.



The first 15 minutes active operation; the next 15 minutes standby