GENERAL

vivitar digital camcorder 947 hd

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Introduction

In today's fast moving world of visual storytelling, a reliable digital camcorder can make the difference between a casual memory and a polished production. Whether you're a hobbyist capturing family moments, an adventure seeker documenting hikes, or a budding filmmaker looking for an affordable entry point, the right camera is essential. One model that has consistently earned praise for its balance of performance, portability, and value is the Vivitar Digital Camcorder 947 HD. In this comprehensive guide, we'll dive deep into every aspect of this device—from its core specifications and design philosophy to real world performance and how it stacks up against its competitors. By the end, you'll have a clear picture of whether this camcorder fits your needs and how to get the most out of it.

Overview of the Vivitar Digital Camcorder 947 HD

The Vivitar 947 HD was introduced as a mid range, high definition video recorder aimed at both beginners and intermediate users. It's engineered to deliver crisp 1080p footage, robust audio capture, and a user friendly interface—all packed into a compact, ergonomic body. Its appeal lies in the combination of solid hardware, straightforward controls, and a price point that makes it accessible for a wide audience. Below, we explore the key facets that make the 947 HD a compelling choice.

Key Features and Specifications

Understanding the technical backbone of a camcorder is crucial for assessing its suitability for your projects. The Vivitar 947 HD offers a suite of features that cater to a broad spectrum of recording needs.

Video Quality and Resolution

The heart of any camcorder is its ability to capture clear, detailed video. The 947 HD records in Full HD (1920 × 1080 pixels) at 30 frames per second, which is perfect for most consumer and semi professional applications. The camera's 2.0 inch sensor, coupled with a high gain optical design, delivers excellent performance even in low light environments. While it doesn't support 4K, the 1080p output remains more than adequate for online streaming, social media, and traditional playback on most displays.

Image Sensor and Lens

The 2.0 inch CMOS sensor provides a good balance between sensitivity and noise control. It's paired with a 5 x optical zoom lens (24 120 mm equivalent focal length) that allows you to capture both wide angle shots and tight close ups without the loss of image quality you might experience with digital zoom. The lens also features a built in image stabilizer that helps reduce camera shake during handheld shooting, a vital feature for action or travel videography.

Storage and Connectivity

Storage flexibility is a hallmark of the 947 HD. It supports micro SD/SDHC/SDXC cards up to 128 GB, giving users ample room for extended shoots. For connectivity, the camcorder offers a USB 2.0 port for data transfer, an HDMI output for direct connection to external displays or recorders, and a 3.5 mm mic input for higher quality audio

capture. The inclusion of a 3 way headphone jack also allows for real time audio monitoring—a feature that many amateur users find invaluable.

Audio Recording Capabilities

Audio quality can make or break a video, and the 947 HD addresses this with a built in stereo microphone that captures ambient sound with clarity. The mic input lets you connect an external microphone, which is especially useful when recording interviews or in noisy environments. The device also supports adjustable audio levels and a wind screen attachment, further enhancing its versatility for outdoor use.

Battery Life and Power Options

The camcorder's power system is designed for mobility. It comes with a rechargeable Li ion battery that offers up to 4 hours of continuous recording at 1080p. For longer sessions, an optional external power adapter can be used, ensuring you never miss a moment. The battery indicator is clear, and the device features a quick charge mode that restores 50 /% capacity in roughly 30 /minutes.

Design and Build Quality

The Vivitar 947 HD is engineered with ergonomics and durability in mind. Its lightweight body (approximately 350 grams) and balanced weight distribution make it comfortable to hold for extended periods. The camera's grip is textured for a secure hold, even in wet conditions, and the layout of buttons and dials is intuitive, reducing the learning curve for new users. The chassis is constructed from a blend of ABS plastic and reinforced polymer, providing a sturdy yet lightweight feel. The front panel features a clear, anti glare LCD display that remains readable in direct sunlight, an essential attribute for outdoor shooting.

Performance in Real World Use Cases

Technical specifications are one thing, but real world performance is what ultimately determines a camcorder's value. Below are scenarios that showcase the 947 HD's strengths and limitations.

Everyday Recording

For family gatherings, birthday parties, or casual vlogs, the 947 HD delivers reliable, high definition footage. Its automatic scene detection and exposure settings mean you can focus on the moment rather than fiddling with settings. The built in image stabilizer keeps footage smooth even when handheld, and the 5 x zoom allows you to capture a range of shots without changing lenses.

Travel and Adventure

Adventure enthusiasts appreciate the camcorder's rugged design and built in wind screen for audio. The optical zoom is handy for capturing distant landmarks, while the image stabilizer compensates for shaky handheld shots on uneven terrain. The device's compact size and lightweight construction make it a convenient travel companion, and the long battery life reduces the need for frequent charging on multi day trips.

Professional Use and Prospects

While the 947 HD is primarily marketed toward hobbyists, its feature set makes it a viable tool for entry level professional work. The ability to connect external microphones, monitor audio live, and export footage via HDMI gives filmmakers a level of control that rivals more expensive models. However, professionals seeking 4K resolution or advanced color grading options might find the device's limitations restrictive. Nonetheless, for small scale projects, documentaries, or community events, the 947 HD offers a cost effective solution.

Comparison with Similar Camcorders

To better understand the 947 HD's positioning, let's compare it with two popular contemporaries: the Canon Vixia HF R800 and the Sony Handycam HDR-CX405. These comparisons highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each model relative to the Vivitar.

Vivitar 947 HD vs. Canon Vixia HF R800

- Resolution: Both record at 1080p, but the Canon's 1/2.8 inch sensor offers slightly better low light performance.
- Zoom: Vivitar's 5 x optical zoom outperforms Canon's 3 x, giving more versatility in framing.
- Image Stabilization: Canon employs optical image stabilization, whereas Vivitar relies on electronic stabilization, which can be less effective in extreme motion.
- Audio: Both have built in microphones, but the Vivitar's external mic input is more robust.
- Price: The Vivitar is typically priced 10–15 /% lower, offering better value for budget conscious users.

Vivitar 947 HD vs. Sony Handycam HDR-CX405

- Sensor: Sony's 1/2.8 inch sensor delivers higher dynamic range compared to Vivitar's 2.0 inch sensor.
- Zoom: Sony offers a 3 x optical zoom, while Vivitar's 5 x provides more flexibility.
- Stabilization: Sony's optical image stabilization outperforms Vivitar's electronic method.
- Audio: Both support external mics; however, Sony's headphone jack is 3.5 /mm, matching Vivitar's.
- Price: The Vivitar remains more affordable, often under $250, while Sony typically retails around $300.

Pros and Cons

Every device has trade offs. Below is a balanced overview of what the Vivitar 947 HD brings to the table and where it falls short.

Pros

- Affordability: Competitive pricing makes it accessible for a wide audience.
- Compact and Lightweight: Ideal for travel and handheld shooting.
- 5 x Optical Zoom: Offers versatility without compromising image quality.
- External Microphone Input: Enhances audio flexibility.
- Long Battery Life: Up to 4 /hours of recording time.
- Micro SD Card Compatibility: Supports large storage capacities.

Cons

- No 4K Capability: Limits future-proofing for high resolution projects.
- Electronic Image Stabilization: May not match optical stabilization in extreme conditions.
- Limited Advanced Settings: Lacks manual color grading or advanced exposure controls.
- USB 2.0 Speed: Slower data transfer compared to newer USB 3.0 interfaces.

Buying Guide

When evaluating whether the Vivitar 947 HD is right for you, consider the following factors.

What to Look for

1. Resolution Needs: If you require 4K, you'll need to look elsewhere. For Full HD, the 947 HD is adequate.
2. Zoom Requirements: A 5 x optical zoom is beneficial for varied shooting scenarios.
3. Audio Quality: Verify that the built in mic meets your needs or that you have an external mic.
4. Battery Life: Ensure the battery can support your typical shooting sessions.

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