

AUDIO HORIZONS

New Ideas In Professional Audio From Martinsound

Spring 2000

Maximize Your Existing Console

25 YEARS

Martinsound
HELPING YOU STAND OUT

Because we have operated recording studios here at Martinsound for 25 years,

we're painfully familiar with the continual tension between being profitable and offering equipment that will attract the best clients. Without question, the console is the most important piece of equipment customers consider when deciding where to work. Many analog consoles are classics, known and loved by customers, but is it time to trade in your tried and true workhorse and go digital? Well before you list your console in the classifieds, here are some things to think about.

Digital formats are evolving rapidly. We have gone from 14 and 16 bit to converters with 20 and 24 bit word size. There are many sample rates including 44.1, 48, 96 and 192kHz, and exciting new formats such as Direct Stream Digital (DSD). Are you going to be able to pick a digital console that will have the formats you need two years from now? And how can you protect yourself against innovative new consoles that are more powerful than current products at a dramatically lower cost? Your analog console doesn't

by Greg Thompson - Director of Marketing

Greg started in pro audio at Martinsound in 1977. One of his passions is great audio products.

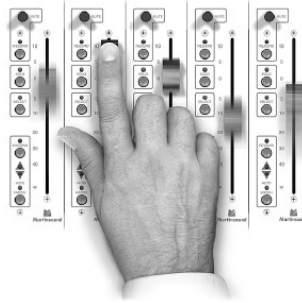
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Products mentioned in this article:

Flying Faders, MSS-10, MultiMAX, ForMAX, VuMAX, ACX.

Article summary:

Attract more business and increase your profit by extending the functionality of your existing console.



care about sample rates, word size or new formats. It can work with many different formats at the same time without inflicting a lot of brain damage.

You could get a small digital console and plan to trade up in a few years, but size does matter. Little consoles just don't have the drawing power of a big

analog console. Some digital consoles radiate digital noise that can effect other equipment and degrade sonics. Not only will your analog console protect you while digital technologies continue to change, many engineers find that having dedicated controls for each function make analog consoles easier to use.

Continues on page 2

Reach For Your Surround Potential

TALK TO US

Mail the Reader Response
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Martinsound's surround monitoring solution has been expanded with

formatting, metering and balancing products. ForMAX and VuMAX extend the functionality of MultiMAX to provide integrated monitoring, metering and film-style mixing features in all current production formats.

Martinsound's family of surround products now gives facilities the ability to begin with MultiMAX, which delivers the extensive monitoring features needed to do surround projects. As your surround business grows, ForMAX and VuMAX can be added as needed, providing more features and flexibility. All of these products are seamlessly integrated with no overlapping functions, providing a smooth and efficient upgrade path from MultiMAX to a full featured film-style monitoring system.

MultiMAX is the cornerstone component which adds extensive multichannel functionality to any stereo mixing console, supplementing the console's stereo monitor section to provide sophisticated

by Steve Harvey - Director of Public Relations

Steve often gets help editing this newsletter from his cats.

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Products mentioned in this article:

MultiMAX, ForMAX, VuMAX

Article summary:

Martinsound's retrofit surround monitoring products offer a smooth and cost-effective upgrade path to powerful film style systems.

control of surround formats of up to 8 channels. The unit controls multiple speaker systems, facilitates downmix compatibility and quality checks through single pushbutton operations, and includes bass redirection and monitor system calibration tools.

In response to the development of new audio production formats incorporating additional rear surround channels, such as Dolby Digital-Surround EX, Martinsound is introducing MultiMAX EX. The new EX version will control up to 8 speaker feeds configured as 3 or 5 front channels with 2, 3 or 4 surround channels. The downmixing features have been extended to correctly fold-down the new formats.

If you already own a standard MultiMAX your unit may easily be upgraded to the EX version.

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Martinsound
SURROUND SOUND
MONITORING

Is Service Dead?



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In the last couple of issues, I have mourned the near death experience suffered

by Joe Martinson - President of Martinsound

It is an unfounded rumor that Joe wanted to be a mortician.

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by many areas of pro audio including quality audio, mentorship, productivity and easy to use equipment. My wife is worried that this preoccupation with death is a sign that I'm getting old. At the risk of confirming her suspicions, I would like to comment on the apparent death of service.

The passing of service in the pro audio industry is nothing new. It has been on life support for a very long time. When we moved into our present location 25 years ago, I purchased a new console for our main studio. Until that point, the dealer I bought it from had given me very good service.

When I hooked up the console, every output oscillated at around 3 MHz. I called the dealer to complain. Both the dealer and the manufacturer told me that it must be my wiring. So I pulled the module out of the console and powered it on bench supplies. Even outside the console the module still oscillated! Neither the dealer nor the manufacturer was concerned enough to solve my problem. Trust me, it was not good service.

Around that time I became acquainted with Deane Jensen, the founder of Jensen Transformers. Deane had written several papers about amplifier stability and spent many hours at no charge helping me understand how to fix my oscillating console. Talk about great service. After adding decoupling caps, isolation resistors and ferrite beads the console was stable as a rock. I replaced the console's input transformers with Jensen Transformers and the console sounded great.

Look at the difference between the two companies. I paid \$30,000 for a console that didn't work right and no one would help me except to say that it was

my fault. Then I got free advice from a company on how to fix the console and ended up buying \$1,800 worth of transformers. Now that was great service. It was also a life-changing event that turned me from a tinkerer to a designer. I spent a lot of time after that rebuilding equipment to make it sound and work better. That led to designing equipment for sale.

Well, 25 years later, things are even worse. Even though that dealer couldn't solve my technical issues, he was able to impart a lot of very useful application information to me. But now everyone just buys on price. Wal-Mart, Circuit City and The Good Guys have taught us to serve ourselves. But this has its downside.

With the death of mentor-apprentice relationships the only sources of information left are trade publications, manufacturers and their dealers. Cut rate pricing has made most pro audio dealers little better than guitar stores that just move boxes. You can't spend much time with your customer at 10% over cost. Unlike toilet paper, audio products are a lot more complicated to purchase; you can't afford to change brands just because the product is a little rough.

The best service is a two-way street. We at Martinsound don't know more because we are smarter, we know more because we are smart enough to spend time listening to our customers. And that allows us to be a conduit from those who know to those who need to know. That knowledge is built into the products we make. Our job is to help customers discover what they need rather than just supplying what they request. Even the best product designer will constantly learn

Article summary:

Everyone makes mistakes. The difference between good and bad service is what they do about it.

from the users.

Another aspect of service is standing behind what you build or sell. No matter how much effort is put into the design, assembly and testing of a product, occasionally every manufacturer screws up. But companies who really care about their customers find each flaw painful. We recently had a console returned to us that was damaged in shipment. We dropped everything and spent a couple of weeks carefully re-testing every section, making sure that everything damaged in shipment was repaired and that it was working flawlessly for the customer.

The good news was that the console had weathered the abuse with relatively little damage. The bad news was that the insert inputs and outputs were reversed, and our testing and re-testing didn't catch it. Ouch. Good service doesn't mean that mistakes aren't made, but that a review process keeps them from happening a second time.

At Martinsound, we want to do more than just ship product: we want to help you stand out as true audio professionals in a semi-pro world. We try to do that with products that sound great and are easy to use. And we want to give you the information you need to get the most out of your investment. If you have any thoughts about service or how we can serve you better, my e-mail is jmartinson@martinsound.com. Together we need to breathe life back into pro audio to better serve your customer! 📧

Joe Martinson
President, Martinsound, Inc.

Maximize Your Existing Console from front cover

Your analog console is probably paid for, too.

Martinsound offers three compelling and profitable ways to maximize the analog console you have built your business on: Retrofit moving fader automation, outboard surround monitoring and formatting, and outboard mic preamps. Flying Faders is our 'Just Mix' moving fader automation system that, when retrofitted to a console, has a proven track record of attracting more sessions at a higher rate. Our ACX automated console expander lets you book sessions

that need more automated channels than your console has. MultiMAX is an inexpensive multiformat, multi-speaker controller that replaces your console's monitor section so you can attract surround sound customers. ForMAX makes post production work easy by adding monitor reformatting to your console. VuMAX works with MultiMAX or ForMAX to add surround metering to your console. Our Martech MSS-10 mic preamp replaces your console's preamp in a way no other tube or discrete preamp can. It allows you to capture natural

mic sounds that greatly reduce the time and effort required to make tracks work in the mix.

Martinsound shares the values that made you successful. Our products and services help you stand out with your customers by offering them what they want without sacrificing your profitability.

Find out more about the three ways to maximize the useful life of the great console you already own by mailing the Reader Response, phoning, or by visiting our website. 📧

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A VU On Downmixing - Free Report



Martinsound is offering a new free Report. *A VU On Downmixing* will address

engineers' concerns and promote discussion about surround sound format compatibility and downmixing.

With MultiMAX in use in many TV and post facilities around the world, Martinsound has a unique opportunity to not only watch but to participate in helping a fledgling format grow to maturity. As DTV, HDTV and DVD usher in a new era of compatibility checking for audio engineers, the days of simply mixing in mono or, more recently, mixing in stereo with a quick check in mono, are gone. Today, engineers mixing in 5.1 must check compatibility with a wide variety of formats.

Consumers can choose to listen to a mix in its original 5.1 format or rendered as 5.0, Dolby Surround™, LRS, LCR, Dolby Stereo™, Stereo or Mono, leaving little room for relational and phase mistakes. Additionally, consumers may select multilingual formats. For just one program there could be a large number of mix variations. And the bottom line is that live television precludes the opportunity of a second chance.

Though all the formats and downmixes must relate well to one another they can be very different. Dolby Digital™ 5.1 has full bandwidth stereo surrounds and a low frequency effects channel (LFE), Dolby Surround/Pro Logic™ does not. Great care must be taken when mixing to ensure that essential low frequency information does not appear exclusively in the surround or LFE channels, to guarantee compatibility with Dolby Surround and other formats.

by Shawn Micheal - V.P. Product Development

When Shawn isn't directing manufacturing, he's busy making the world a safer place for mixers.

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And consequently, the mixer must compare a Dolby Surround version with his original 5.1 mix, at reference SPL, to ensure their correlation.

Do not forget Dolby Stereo, an accepted broadcast format for many years due to its use on most movie soundtracks and stereo VHS releases, and the necessary delivery format for the millions of Pro Logic/Surround decoders worldwide. Dolby Stereo does not always provide satisfactory headphone reproduction and also does not maintain stereo surround information. Dolby Digital therefore allows consumers to choose to downmix a 5.1 mix to standard Stereo, but as with the downmix to Dolby Surround/Stereo, the caveat once again is that LFE will be lost.

Dolby Stereo and standard Stereo downmixes are very different, but in spite of those differences mixers not only expect to make a direct comparison between Dolby Stereo and standard Stereo downmixes but also expect to compare the mono counterparts of these two very different downmixes.

This begs several serious questions that involve both equipment headroom and audio perceptions. Should these mixes and downmixes be monitored at the same SPL? When switching from a 5.1 monitor system to a single mono loudspeaker, should the overall SPL remain the same or should it vary as the quantity of speakers varies? Is a total SPL of 90 dB from five different directions and LFE perceived the same as 90 dB from only one direction?

Products mentioned in this article:

MultiMAX, ForMAX

Article summary:

A free Report looks at the pitfalls and challenges of downmixing.



Request a free Report on surround monitoring.

We are offering information and promoting further discussion with two free Reports, *A VU On Downmixing* and *Secrets Of Doing Surround Sound On Your Existing Console*. Through these Reports you will not only become aware of the pitfalls that lie ahead but also the straightforward surround monitoring solutions that Martinsound has available through products such as MultiMAX and ForMAX.

Request both free Reports by mailing the Reader Response, phoning, or by visiting our website. 📧

MSS-10 - Free Report

To hear how the natural sound of a Martech MSS-10 microphone preamplifier

can improve your productions just listen to Diana Krall's latest album, *When I Look In Your Eyes*. Renowned engineer Al Schmitt used the MSS-10 exclusively to capture Krall's Grammy Award-winning jazz vocal performance and also received a Grammy - his eighth - for the project. Congratulations to both of them!

The natural sound of the MSS-10 goes so far beyond the quality of tube and discrete units that it introduces a new category of preamp that is in a class by itself. The MSS-10 has become a favorite of world class engineers, mixers, and musicians like Schmitt, Bruce Botnick (Jerry Goldsmith, The Doors), Michael O'Reilly (Jewel), Andy Smith (Paul Simon, Bob Dylan), and drummer Ricky Lawson (Kenny G, Steely Dan).

They have all discovered that when they use the MSS-10 they no longer have to waste time correcting the sound of a mic preamp that introduces its own

character and coloration to the source being recorded.

Coloration should be the prerogative of the engineer, not something that's unavoidable. Because even renowned preamps don't reproduce every detail they tend to color the sound. That's why one preamp is chosen for top, another for punch and a third for the bottom. The lost detail and added artifacts requires heroics to try and restore the original sound.

Because it adds absolutely no coloration, the MSS-10 will astonish you. Its natural sound adds nothing but gain and effortlessly delivers what everyone works so hard to achieve.

But don't just take our word for it. Higher than anticipated sales have allowed us to make the MSS-10 more affordable by reducing the retail price to \$1,995, so contact your local dealer for a demonstration and experience Natural Sound for yourself.

We have produced a free Report entitled *How The MSS-10 Takes The Hassle Out Of Tracking And Mixing* that explains the genesis of the MSS-10 and how it will improve your recordings. Request the free Report by mailing the Reader Response, phoning, or by visiting our website. 📧



Mail the Reader Response
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www.martinsound.com



MSS-10 is the Natural Sound microphone preamplifier.

Martinsound's Founding Father



Martinsound
HELPING YOU STAND OUT

This year, we celebrate 25 years of doing business as Martinsound at our present

location. But this year is also special because it marks the 25th anniversary of when my father, Art Martinson, joined our company. Martinsound wouldn't be here today without Art's love, support, tireless effort and his belief in his son's vision.

To understand Martinsound, you have to understand my dad. My earliest memories are of my father building Heath Kit Hi-Fi equipment. He was the guy that ran the PA system at our church and fixed it when it broke. He bought an Ampex PR-10 in 1960 and taped live concerts wherever he could. He's the one that taught me to solder with a 10 pound Weller soldering gun, a bad practice that took me years to break. That thing could remove traces off a PC board in less than 10 seconds. His love of building things still burns within me today.

Art loves tech toys, and as his boy, I love them even more. He bought me a Heath Kit Oscilloscope when I was 10. By the time I was driving, he had "invested" in several tape recorders, a Langevin Mixer and Altec A7 Speakers. To justify all of the capital expense, Art and I became partners. The deal was that he supplied all of the money and I ran the business, Complete Sound Service. This "Anything Audio" company did PA installations, sound reinforcement and mobile recording. The only thing it didn't do was turn a profit, since all the income went into expansion. I was quite adept at helping Art lower his taxes by creating losses.

By the time I graduated from high school, our company purchased an Ampex MM1100 16-Track Recorder and we were in the rental business. Later we purchased an MCI JH 416 Console and a lot of

by Joe Martinson - President

Joe's wife Annette has worked at Martinsound for almost 20 years.

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outboard gear. I did recordings on location, in my parent's living room (only once, when they were out of town) and at our church. When my very patient mother got wind of my plans to convert her basement sewing room into a recording studio, it was decided that I needed to move the company out of the house. Once I got married, she made sure that I moved out of the house.

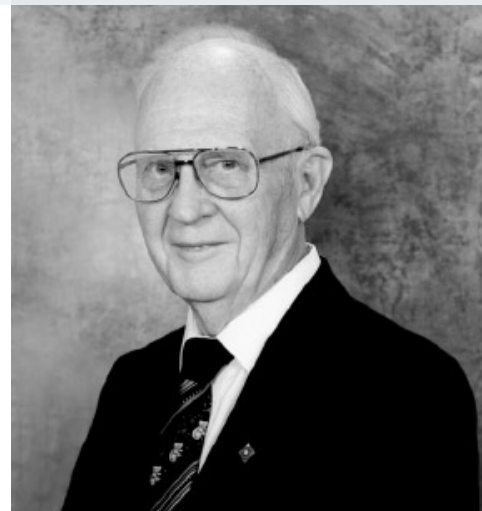
In the spring of 1975 my father signed a lease (and later purchased) our building in our present location. We had finished construction of our main studio by midyear. By fall, Art retired from medicine and came to work full time. Perhaps he wanted to keep an eye on his investment. Even after he sold his interest in the company to me, he supported our expansion into design and manufacturing by loaning the company the money required to develop Flying Faders. Twenty-five years later, Art is still working hard at Martinsound as Vice President of Finance.

It is hard to believe that Art has had time to do anything but work at Martinsound and keep tabs on his boy, but he has accomplished so much more. Professionally he has taught medicine and had a private practice for over 30 years. He also served for over 3 decades on the Board of Directors of a multi-billion dollar hospital corporation.

Art is the ultimate family man. His marriage to my mother continues after 63 years and he is an outstanding father to his three children including my two older sisters. He loves his 6 grandchildren and 6 great-grand children and looks forward to

Article summary:

Story of a great Dad who supported his son and pro audio.



Art Martinson - 85 years young

family travel and get-togethers. Art's generosity extends beyond his family. He is a philanthropist, sharing his talents and resources with his church, community, family and friends.

On behalf of all of the people, both in and out of the pro-audio business, who have been touched by Art Martinson and his quiet, behind the scenes contribution, I want wish him a happy 85th birthday. I would also like to personally pay my father a special tribute: "Happy Founding Father's Day, dad." 🎧

RecordistMAX For Machine Rooms

Designed as an off-the-shelf solution for motion picture and video post

production studios, the RecordistMAX recordist monitor system is a modular rack-mounting, multi-input monitor and switching matrix that provides the machine room technician with programmable alignment, monitoring, metering and track-combining facilities. With the recorders being used on dub stages changing from one project to the next, it's no surprise that facilities like Warner Brothers, Universal Studios, Todd-AO, Disney and 4MC (Four Media Corporation) have installed RecordistMAX in their machine rooms to help with confidence monitoring and quality control.

The 2U base unit accommodates four 8-track recorders and provides monitor selection of recorder inputs, sync outputs and repro outputs, assignable to L and/or R of headphones or stereo

loudspeakers, with level, mute and dim controls, and a multi-mode solo system. Expander units may be added to handle up to a total of 16 machines, or 128 tracks, with serial communication between all units allowing distributed placement and roving remote control panels.

RecordistMAX streamlines the alignment process with a built-in programmable digital sinewave and pink noise test generator. Tone injection is a snap, with one-button assignment to each 8-track machine's recorder inputs. The front panel display shows the current frequency or level, or monitor level, depending on the selected mode. Setup frequencies and levels may be memorized, and up to 32 snapshots can be created of the input source selection, and loudspeaker and meter assignments.

Options include a remote and VuMAX, a set of 8 VU meters that may be fed by RecordistMAX's meter buses. The meter buses may additionally be used to drive auxiliary balanced line outputs, allowing track combining for copies and transfers, 8 monitor



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RecordistMAX is a recordist's dream come true.

channels for projector changeover switching, or additional external meters. An oscillator buffer provides a balanced oscillator output even when tones are not being fed to the recorders. 🎧

Ask Your Customers



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If you've been considering what automation system to add to your console

this is for you. Do you want to know which system to buy? Ask your customers.

You can talk to as many manufacturers and dealers as you want but the fact of the matter is they won't be booking time at your studio. And if you make the wrong choice no one will be booking time at your studio. An exaggeration, perhaps, but you certainly won't attract any new customers if you make the wrong decision.

If you cheap out and buy a 'budget' system your customers will continue to book time at studios with more professional systems. No one has the time to sit around while your system loses mixes, locks up, crashes or has to be re-booted. Confidence in the system quickly goes out the door – followed by your customers.

Chances are, if you are considering adding automation and attracting more mix business you probably have a good analog console deserving of an upgrade. It may even be a classic. A console like that deserves the best, which means there is only one choice: Flying Faders.

Flying Faders, the 'Just Mix' system, is the most requested motorized fader system in use worldwide, with an installed base of AMS Neve, API, Focusrite, Helios, MCI, Neotek, SSL, Trident and vintage Rupert Neve-manufactured consoles located in many countries. And the reason that many of them chose Flying Faders is because they asked their customers.

Ted Greenberg, co-owner of Big Zone Recording near Philadelphia, considered alternative budget systems when upgrading his vintage API console, but after asking the producers and mixers who booked

by Chris Walsh - V.P. Sales

Chris collects guitars and kids.

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time at his studio he discovered that "for my clients it was Flying Faders or don't bother. Besides, it's so easy to use. You just mix."

Jim Sabella, owner of Sabella Recording near New York City, has the same story: "I checked with the producers and engineers who have been working in my room. It was the only system mentioned."

Doug Cronin at Harbor Sound and Video had a similar experience: "Since I had decided to go with a classic console [a Neve 8068], because my customers told me that's what they wanted, I asked, 'What kind of automation?' The answer was Flying Faders."

Steve Albini is an engineer and producer who is well known in alternative music circles. While deciding what automation should be fitted to the new Neotek Elite II in his Electrical Audio studios in Chicago he looked at the available options. "It was the only system that had any impact on my clients," he says. Rick Bench at Benchmark in Burbank, California, adds, "We have a custom, hybrid 80 Series Neve desk. It was the only logical choice."

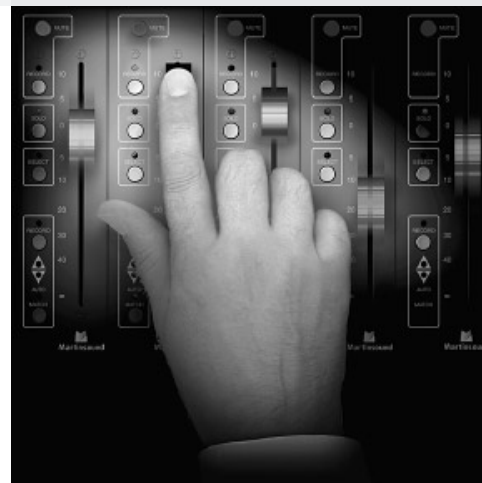
As soon as Flying Faders is installed you will begin to see results. Jimmy Sloan, manager of King Sound in Los Angeles, quickly saw an increase in bookings: "We are a classic API room. Before adding Flying Faders we were about 60% booked. Now we're 100%."

And it is not just single room facilities that are choosing Flying Faders. If you add a second room you will most likely want to add another Flying Faders system; and another, and another. Dino Elephante, co-owner of The Sound Kitchen, located near Nashville and the largest music recording facility

Products mentioned in this article:
Flying Faders

Article summary:

Consider your customers' preferences when choosing a moving fader automation system.



"It's so easy to use. You Just Mix".

in the southeast, states, "I have four rooms with Flying Faders. I give my customers what they want." Paul Camaratta, owner of the legendary Sunset Sound in Los Angeles, also has multiple systems: "We have four of the top mix rooms in the world. We have four systems. I think that says it all."

Find out more about how Martinsound's 'Just Mix' automation system will extend the life of your console and increase your bookings by mailing the Reader Response, phoning, or by visiting our website. You can also join the Flying Faders Users' Group to receive regular news and information bulletins. 📧

Reach For Your Surround Potential from front cover

MultiMAX and MultiMAX EX will augment any stereo console, from the smallest Mackie to the largest SSL or AMS Neve, adding multiformat monitoring functionality. Interfacing to MultiMAX is simple, requiring little more than standard Tascam-type cables. The monitors can be quickly calibrated using MultiMAX's internal pink noise generator and user-friendly setup software, minimizing expensive downtime. Setup is so effortless that many multi-room recording facilities simply move MultiMAX from studio to studio as needed.

For facilities that are looking for an inexpensive way to upgrade to more comprehensive film-style mixing, and who require more sophisticated monitoring control of their surround sound productions, Martinsound is introducing ForMAX, a surround monitor formatter, and VuMAX, a precision VU meter display package.

ForMAX is a programmable 48-input 24x8 surround monitor formatter. Intended primarily for busy, high throughput studios, ForMAX stores and recalls many different routing and surround format setups, allowing the instant reset of recorder, console and monitor assignments. It offers an accurate, repeatable way to reformat a surround sound project

to the house standard, or to monitor multiple premises or stems simultaneously, and permits rapid changeovers between sessions.

There are 24 recorder returns and 24 mix bus inputs, each with individual recorder/mix (PEC/Direct) monitor selection. A single ForMAX may be connected to each of MultiMAX's 5 Wide Inputs for a total of 120 playback and 120 direct input sources. User-definable mute groups may be memorized, and a mute mask may be created within each group to include any combination of inputs and outputs. An auto-clear function removes the selected group setup from memory. The solo system works similarly.

The VuMAX meter display houses 8 precision VU meters, lights and buffering circuitry, and provides an off-the-shelf solution that can be easily integrated with MultiMAX and ForMAX to provide visual indication of monitor source levels.

MultiMAX and MultiMAX EX's 8 meter outputs automatically follow the Monitor Source selection, allowing the engineer to check the mix of the selected Wide Inputs and the results of downmixing, the recorder returns, surround encoder outputs (including Lt Rt) and the mixing console outputs.

ForMAX provides 24 meter outputs that follow the

PEC/Direct switch selections to the reassign matrix.

An electronic balancing kit for MultiMAX and MultiMAX EX's 16 monitor outputs has also been introduced. The SB-16 converts the unit's single-ended balanced impedance monitor outputs to fully differential balanced outputs, and brings the levels to a true +4 dB. The electronics are housed in a small box that plugs directly into the Main and Other Monitor Outputs connectors on the rear of MultiMAX.

Finally, new software enhancements for the standard MultiMAX were recently released which provide an SPL Display Range mode, an extension of the level range by 30 dB and the addition of a Wide Inputs Interlock mode, all accessed through a new SPL Level/Range menu page in the Setup Directory.

Whether you are looking for a compact and easy-to-use surround sound monitor controller to augment your stereo mixing console, or require a more extensive film-style package that includes metering and formatting, the MultiMAX multiformat monitor controller, working with our new surround sound products, accessories and option, offers the most comprehensive and cost-effective solution available. Request more information by mailing the Reader Response, phoning, or by visiting our website. 📧

Village Expands 3 Consoles With ACX



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Martinsound's ACX Flying Faders Console Expander allows your studio to do

more sessions on its existing console. Where it is not possible to expand the mixing console, either due to physical space limitations or the lack of available parts, the ACX offers the perfect, compact solution, integrating with any Flying Faders-equipped console to increase its input capacity.

Village Recorders, now in its thirty-second year and one of the premier music recording facilities in Los Angeles, purchased a 24-input ACX in mid-1999. The Village features 3 Flying Faders-automated consoles: a vintage Neve 8048 and 2 AMS Neve VR Series consoles.

The gold and platinum disks on the walls testify to the Village's illustrious heritage: the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan and Fleetwood Mac are all represented. But an impressive number of film scores are mixed at The Village, many requiring the use of the ACX, including Bowfinger and Rounders.

Independent engineer Steve Kempster, who works mainly with composers Trevor Rabin and Mark Mancina, regularly uses the ACX in Studio D on film score mixes: "We used it on Tarzan, Enemy of the State, Jack Frost and Con Air, plus Deep Blue Sea, which was mixed elsewhere."

Explains Kempster, "If not for the expander we could not have mixed the projects that we have. I generally

fill the 72-input VR Legend with most of what I am focussing on, and use the ACX for the surrounds, reverb returns, and so on. It works great. Being able to use the ACX is the next best solution to having a larger VR console."

But the ACX is not only used for film score mixing at The Village. Music acts have been making use of the ACX since its arrival, including Foo Fighters, Sneaker Pimps, Robbie Robertson (who has a private office at the complex), Sheryl Crow and Phil Collins, who mixed and overdubbed his original songs for the Tarzan score at The Village.

"We use the ACX for all 96-track mixing, with 2 digital 48-track machines, or any time someone needs more effects returns," says Mitch Berger, The Village's chief technical engineer. "The Neve 8048 in Studio A is limited on the track count and is short of effects returns; and the ACX is great if you want EQ on every return."

Also available in 16- or 32-input versions, every ACX input module incorporates 4 band EQ (with 2 swept filters), 4 aux sends, 8 buses plus stereo, panning, direct output, insert, and solo and mute switches. Each module features 2 line inputs, with separate trim controls, which may be selected individually or summed, doubling the number of inputs monitored through the console, or allowing easy comparison between 2 mixes.

"The ACX interfaces seamlessly with any of our 3 Neve consoles," continues Berger. "I can have the ACX in the room and set up in 5 minutes. It takes no time to patch it in; then all I have to do is change the fader configuration in the computer. The automation only



Village Recorders - Studio D

needs one optical cable, so we can put the ACX at the back of the room if we need to. Studio D is fairly large, so the ACX can sit next to the main board in that room."

The ACX may be interfaced to any host console's multitrack, auxiliary, stereo and solo buses, and integrates completely with Flying Faders, allowing it to be included in global solo and group assignments. Mix data for the host console and ACX saves as a single computer file. Four ACX module switches, input select, input sum, EQ and insert are automated through Flying Faders' events control.

For any facility interested in preserving its investment in vintage analog consoles the ACX facilitates the addition of more high quality channels at an affordable price, offering further economy when shared between rooms. The functionality of the ACX seamlessly interfaces with a wide range of analog consoles and accommodates multichannel surround mixing, allowing studios to handle larger, more diverse projects and quickly repays their investment. ■

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MultiMAX Brings Surround To Japan



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HELPING YOU STAND OUT

Studio System Labs, Martinsound's exclusive Japanese distributor, has

recently installed a number of MultiMAX systems.

Procen Studios has installed MultiMAX in Room MA3, a non-linear digital audio editing suite, where it is controlling Genelec 1032A main monitor and 1029A surround speakers. Located in Tokyo, Procen Studios features 3 surround mixing and 3 video editing suites. It also offers foreign

language dubbing and subtitling facilities, together with post production, recording and mixing in Dolby Digital 5.1 and Dolby Surround formats. The studio released 100 foreign language movies dubbed for the Japanese theatrical, video and TV markets last year.

Also in Tokyo, the award-winning Studio Ghibli is using a MultiMAX and remote in the production of animation feature films for theatrical release. The renowned studio, established in 1985 by Hayao Miyazaki, is best known for *Mononoke Hime* (*The Princess Mononoke*), released in 1997 and distributed worldwide by Disney.

Memory-Tech Corporation, a Tokyo-based manufacturer of CD, DVD and other optical disk media, has purchased a MultiMAX and remote for its audio studio in the Minato-ku district. MultiMAX is providing surround sound monitor control during the editing, processing and authoring of audio for a variety of release formats. Memory-Tech is a joint venture with several Japanese manufacturers, including Mitsubishi Corporation, and boasts an output capacity of 10 million disks per month.

Studio System Labs may be contacted at ssl@ear.ne.jp ■



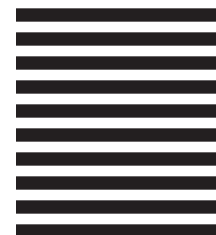
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New Standard Post And MultiMAX

New Standard Post (NSP) is a full-service facility located in a multi-story

building in the heart of Hollywood's post production community. Open for just over a year, it features 2 large THX-certified dubbing stages, an ADR suite and numerous edit rooms.

Dean Hovey, Director of Sound, explains that NSP uses Pro Tools workstations throughout the building, all linked by a high-speed network, but when planning the mixing facilities they needed to find a way to integrate monitor control on the dubbing stages. "We mix on Pro Control consoles but needed to combine the 3 systems into 1 mix for monitoring," says Hovey. "MultiMAX was just coming out and we decided to give it a try as our master audio control on the stages."

The largest of the stages, Studio A, offers a 7.1 setup with over 300 channels of automated mixing, while Studio B is configured for 5.1 and provides more than 200 mixing channels. Studio A also accommodates Dolby's Digital-Surround EX (6.1) format.

At NSP, MultiMAX provides control of NHT and industry-standard JBL surround speaker systems on both dub stages. The MultiMAX multiformat monitor controller will manage up to 4 monitor loudspeaker systems. The 2 main systems are separately configurable for 8-channel, 7.1, 5.1 or LCRS operation, with switch selection of an alternate surround system. A stereo nearfield pair or a mono speaker may alternatively be selected.

In Hovey's opinion, "One of the biggest challenges in television work is midstream format monitoring.

We can monitor the mix in mono, stereo or surround - in LCRS, 5.1 or 7.1 - with just the push of a button. It's a fast and convenient way to monitor the mix for any delivery method."

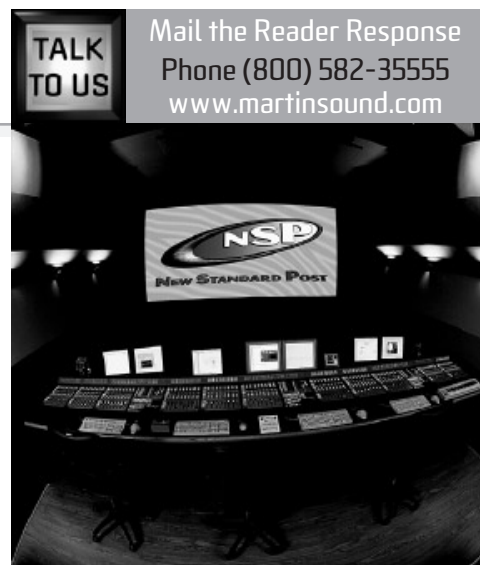
"It's all about control and flexibility," agrees Scott Wood, who until recently was VP of Operations and chief engineer at NSP. "MultiMAX provides an easy, reliable solution for monitoring surround in many formats."

MultiMAX is the only surround monitor controller to offer downmixing in all formats as standard, ensuring backward compatibility on any playback system. Single-button operations on the front panel (or optional remote control) allow the engineer to audition a 5.1 mix in stereo or mono, for example, or to monitor the encoder's 2-channel Lt Rt mix.

"We will monitor the mix in all of the various formats," continues Hovey. "People at home can be assured they are listening to our mix in the highest audio quality. This would be a time consuming process if not for the MultiMAX, but with the unit each format is just a button press away."

Hovey adds: "MultiMAX turned out to have a few surprises we didn't expect. First of all, you have three different 8-channel inputs that can be used for 5.1 stems for dialogue, music and effects. This allows us to quickly isolate any of the 3 without affecting the automation in the console. In addition, in 1 button press we can switch to any input for monitoring playback or off the final 5.1 recording deck."

The current version of MultiMAX permits the selection of either the Direct (mix bus) or Playback (recorder return) inputs, plus any combination of the 3 Premix Inputs. Software enhancements have recently been introduced that include a new mode permitting



New Standard Post - Studio 1

all 5 of these 8-channel inputs to be selected in any combination, or in an exclusive, interlocking mode. The new software is included on all new units and is available as an upgrade for current users.

Hovey concludes: "When using MultiMAX it is easy to isolate speakers independently of one another or in any combination. This is a powerful thing when mixing in the 5.1 environment. If we want to hear what lives in the left and right surround speakers within a given scene, without interference from the rest of the mix, it becomes an easy maneuver with MultiMAX."

As a result of its power and flexibility MultiMAX has proved invaluable on numerous independent film projects at NSP, including the recently released features Love and Action in Chicago and Drowning Mona, and on the Lynch Entertainment television series 100 Deeds For Eddie McDowd, for Nickelodeon. ▀

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