

# Your word

## Price ripoff

After reading glowing reviews in various magazines for the Focusrite Voice Factory and Drawmer MX-60 Voice Channel, and noting their low prices overseas (375 pounds for MX-60, 399 pounds for the Focusrite in the UK) I decided that a new purchase was in order. When I arrived at my local dealer, to my surprise I found the prices were \$A1795 for the MX-60, and \$1595 for the Focusrite Voice Factory. After doing a quick calculation and taking into account transport fees, duties, taxes... I determined that the MX-60 should be below \$1199 and the Focusrite VF \$1299. At least, that's what it would cost me to import one from the UK. Why are we being ripped off?

*Name withheld*

*I remember the first time I got my hands on a US recording magazine and looked at the prices. Yes, they're very cheap and to compare them with Aussie prices is very disheartening. It would be easy and very gratifying to surmise that there are a few local fatcats making loads of money at our expense. Unfortunately it's more complicated than that.*

*It's worth noting that the two products you cite as examples are both UK companies, and in the UK their pricing is direct from the manufacturer to the dealer – there's no distributor (or 'importer') margin involved. But then, while I was working in the UK I can recall being thoroughly disgruntled with US product imported to the UK for the same reason – it always seemed to be far more expensive than it had any right to be. Australia isn't a big manufacturer of high tech recording gear and as such, we import the bulk of what we buy. And to import gear we need distributors who take their cut which inflates the price somewhat. Why do we need distributors? Well we don't... until we need some technical help or repair work done, that is. It is frustrating seeing what the US and Europe pay for their gear, but with their economies of scale and strong manufacturing sector it's understandable. In short we've just got to live with the prices, just like we have to live with the prices of imported cars, hi-fi, parma ham... Good news is that with the removal of the sales tax and imposition of the GST in Australia next year prices should drop. – CH*

## Studio makeover

Firstly, I would like to congratulate your team on a great publication. I've bought every issue so far and always enjoy reading the articles. I'm fairly new to the music scene, and that is why I'm so interested in reading your articles. They help me to better understand the concepts that go with working in this great industry.

At the moment I am still studying, but during my free time I pursue my interests in music and music recording. Being a musician I have already recorded my own CD (Majestic Worlds) in my project studio. After my

studies I wish to open a proper recording studio, and I've already begun its design.

Because of this, my favourite article so far has been from Issue 3, 'Studio Makeover'. Reading about topics such as ways to reduce sound leakage and general studio setup is great! It really makes it easier for myself to become aware of how I'll one day be setting up my own studio.

Another aspect of your magazine I am always interested in is the vast amount of recording gear you review. Thanks for not cutting the product reviews too short, and thanks for generally displaying the prices – I can't stand it when I find a product I really like and it doesn't tell me how much it's going to cost. I look forward to reading your next issue, its great to see an all Australian magazine, keep up the great work.

*Marly Luske  
Canungra, QLD*

## Gee Thanks

I am currently setting up a Midi home studio on the Gold Coast, so I was pleasantly surprised to see AudioTechnology on the shelf of my news agent – something that certainly lives up to the standards of today's international magazines. It is not only a great magazine filled with all the info readers die to get their hands on, but it's also Australian which is beneficial to local readers like myself. My main subscription has been with Future Music which is another great magazine from overseas, which includes a CD as well (saying that I pay \$16.95 for the airmailed copy over here). AudioTechnology is the only other magazine I have come across that is really what the readers want to see and is hard to beat as far as the profiles, reviews, and price. You certainly can't get a magazine of this quality for under 10 bucks these days! A cover mount CD would be appreciated though.

*Damian Newell, Gold Coast, QLD*

*Thanks Damian for your kind words. Of course, we have looked at doing a CD. Although I don't see AudioTechnology having a CD on the cover of every issue, there are a couple of special one-offs planned. We want to be extra careful to offer something genuinely useful rather than a bi-monthly beer coaster! – CH*

*Got something to say? Want a rant?*

*Send your comments, observations, and criticisms to Your Word, AudioTechnology magazine, Suite 33, 84 Dee Why Parade, Dee Why NSW 2099.*

*As an added incentive, the best letter printed in each issue wins some equipment from M Audio courtesy of Electric Factory. This issue's winner is Marly Luske, who receives some great M Audio gear like you see pictured left. Future issue prizes include the Flying Calf 20-bit A/D converter, and Mac and PC Midi/SMPTE interfaces.*





## Tascam MX-2424

Tascam has released a new heavyweight contender in the hard disk multitrack market. The MX-2424 features 24-track, 24-bit recording for under \$10,000. The MX-2424 comes as standard with a 9GB internal

hard drive, offering 50 minutes of 24-track, 24-bit recording. The I/O configuration is user defined with a variety of combinations of TDIF, ADAT optical or AES/EBU and analogue. The front panel 5.5-inch drive bay can be fitted with another hard drive, a removable Kingston drive, or backup DVD. The MX-2424 comes with an optional remote and Viewnet MX graphic user interface. Looks to be a very tasty bit of kit at the price.

Tascam has also updated their DA series of 8-track DTRS machines. The DA-78HR is effectively a 24-bit DA88 machine, while, similarly, the DA-98HR is effectively a 24-bit DA98 machine. The new gear is due out early 2000.  
*TEAC Australia: (03) 9644 2442*

## Digi go to square 001



ProTools v5.0 recently went out on the road spreading the Digidesign gospel. The new software had the crowds oooh'ing and aaah'ing as many lingering niggles were ironed out and new features shed new light on accepted ways of working. What caused most eyebrows to arch was the inclusion of Midi sequencing in the package. The Midi section is by no means comprehensive, and neither is it meant to be. The Midi integration is intended to be stripped down, offering everything that is essential and none of the arcane complexities often seen in the latest generation Midi+Audio sequencer packages, and to make it a 'natural extension of ProTools' audio features'.

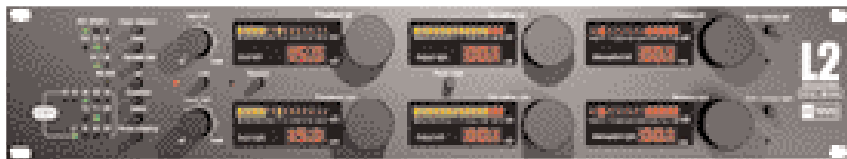
Also on tour was the entry level Digi 001. The Digi 001 is 'a complete audio/Midi, hardware/software solution in one box'. On the breakout box you'll find eight analogue inputs, eight analogue outputs, eight channels of ADAT optical I/O and two S/PDIF I/O channels – all at 24-bit resolution. The package comes with ProTools LE v5.0 Audio+Midi software and a PCI card. As you'd expect with Digidesign, there are plenty of third party plug-ins available. Digi 001 is retailing at \$1699.

*Digidesign: (03) 5428 7780*

## Waves L2 Master

Wave's first hardware unit is based on Waves L1 software, the 'most popular digital limiter in the world'. The L2 takes everything further, to 48-bit resolution, 96k support, ninth-order noise shaping IDR (increased digital resolution) dithering, and the world's cleanest brickwall limiter. Add to this Wave's 24-bit, 96 k A/D and D/A converters, and the L2 is an obvious choice for mixing, mastering and more. Hot levels, highest resolution, clean sound. 2U 19-inch rackmount. The L2 should be priced in the \$4000 to \$5000 region.

*Sound Devices: (02) 9283 2077*



## Alesis Masterlink ML9600

More news on the hotly anticipated Masterlink ML9600 mixdown and mastering system from Alesis. It combines hard disk recording and editing, digital signal processing and CD creation in a single unit. Masterlink ML 9600 stores, delivers and plays stereo 24-bit/96k audio on standard recordable compact discs. The unit can also produce and play back con-

ventional 16-bit/44.1k Red Book format CDs. Masterlink features a 3.2GB internal hard drive with editing, digital signal processing and mastering functions, a 4x CD-R drive, and 24-bit A/D and D/A converters. The Masterlink should retail in Australia for around \$4000.

*Electric Factory: (03) 9480 6708*

# Soundscape & Hyperprism

Arboretum Systems Inc. and Soundscape Digital Technology have unveiled the new Hyperprism digital effects package for the Soundscape SSHDR1, Mixtreme and R.Ed digital audio workstations.

Hyperprism is the first full-featured multieffect package for the Soundscape platform. Hyperprism for Soundscape is fully compatible with the SSHDR1-Plus DAW and V2 software, the popular Mixtreme audio card and the new 32-track R.Ed digital recording and editing system. The pack will retail for \$499.00. Purchasers of the 1.0 edition will receive the next upgrade – including further new effects – free of charge.

*Soundscape Australia: (02) 9356 1955*

# Yamaha Nearfields

Yamaha has added to their range of powered nearfield monitors with the MSP10 powered monitor and comparable SW10 powered subwoofer system.

The MSP10 features an 8-inch long-throw woofer housed in a bass reflex design cabinet, providing a deep and tight low end. Its one-inch pure titanium dome tweeter with wide dispersion waveguide horn provides a 'smooth, high frequency response to beyond 40kHz'. It's internally powered with a 120W amp for low frequencies and 65W amp for high frequencies.

*Yamaha Music Australia: 1800 805 413*



# Akai DR16 Pro

Akai has released the DR16 Pro hard disk recorder. Here's some of the features: 16, 20 and 24-bit recording, up to 96k sample rates in two-channel mode, 24-bit A/D converters on input, 10 track simultaneous record 16 track playback, five track simultaneous record eight-track playback at 96k. 16-channel digital mixer, ProTools file import and export. *The DR16 retails at \$10,995.*



# Behringer Ultra Gear

The new Behringer Ultra-Q Pro PEQ2200 is a five-band parametric equalizer – designed for broadcast, stage work, or in the sound or TV studio. The PEQ220 Ultra-Q retails for \$399.

The new Multigate Pro XR4400 is a four-channel expander/gate which packs four frequency selective expander/noise gates in a compact single rack space chassis. The Multigate Pro combines simple operation with flexible control functions. The Multigate Pro is particularly suitable for handling the difficult separation of microphone signals when recording drum sets. RRP \$599.

The Behringer Ultra-DI DI100 'puts an end to hum and impedance problems'. Any source of sound can be routed to the mixing console clean and balanced. You can even pick up a guitar amp (or power amp) directly at the loudspeaker output – on systems up to 3,000 Watts. RRP \$129.

The Behringer Ultrabass Pro EX1200 is a bass enhancement system for live or studio application. With this digital subharmonic synthesizer you can add bass power to your sound system, installation, club or studio. RRP \$399.

The Behringer Ultrapatch Pro PX2000 is a patchbay which helps you keep things organized in your studio or rehearsal room – whether you're dealing with complex patchbay cabling or just want a solution for smaller setups. RRP \$199.

*MusicLink Australia: (03) 97656530*



# E-mu E5000

The E-mu E5000 Ultra is the newest member of E4 Ultra sampler family and 'the most affordable Emulator ever'. As an E4 Ultra sampler, the E5000 provides you with the same professional features as the rest of the range: the intuitive Emulator Operating System, the new fast Ultra processor, access to the most comprehensive sound library in the world, and proprietary tools like Beat Munging and Z-Plane Filters, all at a competitive price. Some of the specs include: 64 Voice polyphony, 4MB RAM (expandable to 128MB), four balanced analog outputs (expandable to 12) and ROM slots. RRP: \$3495.

*Music Technology: (02) 9369 4990*



## Cool Edit goes MP3

Syntrillium Software has announced the release of its new MP3 plug-in for Cool Edit Pro. Now you can import and export MP3 files right in Cool Edit Pro using a high-quality process based on the Fraunhofer's MP3 codec. The plug-in supports bit rates from 20kbps to 320kbps. The MP3 support means you can put your music on the web, send e-songs [yippee!], or even store up to 10 hours of music on a single CD, all at a sound fidelity that's generally recognised as pretty darn good for the rate of compression. There's a free, functional demonstration version of the MP3 plug-in available via download from Syntrillium's web site, or you can pay \$49 for the real thing.

*Major Music Wholesale (02) 9545 3540*

## VST drums

Steinberg Cubase VST v3.7/v4.0 can now fully integrate software synths into the VST environment. No surprise then that Steinberg are bringing on some new plug-in synths. First up is the LM-4 plug-in drum machine. The LM-4's six outputs (stereo mix plus four individuals) can be routed directly into the VST host's internal audio mixer ready for adding EQ and effects. LM-4 is supplied with 20 sound sets, each containing at least 18 drum sounds. Users can also build their own kits from any standard 16- or 24-bit AIFF or WAV files, even with velocity layers. Having the LM-4 as part of the VST environment also results in much greater timing accuracy over an external Midi device, a big plus in the realms of rhythm. RRP \$295.

Get It On CD is the latest addition to Steinberg's Creative Tools product line. Built on Wavelab 1.6 code, it includes all basic audio editing functionality and CD burning in a package priced at \$195.

*Music Technology: (02) 9369 4990*

## Budget TC

TC Electronic are at it again, this time addressing the studio on a budget with TC sound quality and operating system. The result is the M.ONE, and the D.TWO. The M.ONE is a dual effect processor where you can run two full blown effects without 'compromising the sound'. The D.TWO is a digital delay. Both units feature balanced jack I/O and S/PDIF digital I/O. Otherwise we're a little sketchy on the specs as we went to press but we do know that each unit will be retailing for \$1400, which is sure to bring TC to a new market.

*Amber Technology: (02) 9976 1211*

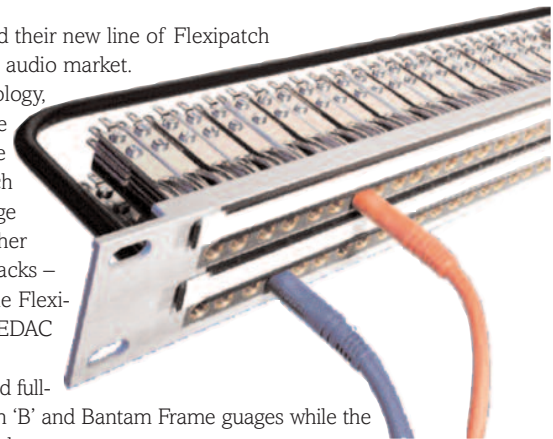
## M&M patchfields.

Mosses & Mitchell have released their new line of Flexipatch patchbays for the professional audio market.

By utilising modern PCB technology, M&M have effectively removed the usual problems associated with the hard wiring of jackfields. Flexipatch is available in Long Frame 'B' gauge and Bantam Frame gauge with either plain brass or nickel-plated brass jacks – both reliable and hard wearing. The Flexipatch is terminated using 56-way EDAC connectors.

A selection of half-normalled and full-normalled 'pods' is available in both 'B' and Bantam Frame gauges while the 'B' Frame, a digital version is offered.

*Control Devices: (02) 9356 1943*



## Antares Mic Modeler

The AMM-1 studio DSP processor allows any reasonably full-range mic to sound like virtually any other microphone – well that's the promise of Antares anyway. Using patented Spectral Shaping Tool (SST) technology, Antares created 'precise digital models' of a wide variety of mics, from historical classics to modern exotics, as well as a selection of industry standard workhorses. The user simply tells the AMM-1 what microphone they are using and what mic they would like it to sound like. The AMM-1 references the stored models of both the source and target mics and processes the input to create the sound of the desired mic. Antares reckon they've modelled over \$300,000 worth of mics thus far. Sound too good to be true? AudioTechnology will let you know next issue.

*Sound Devices: (02) 9283 2077*

# Bruce Evans passes away

It is with great sadness I write that Bruce Evans, the designer and maker of the wonderful ETR mic preamps, died of cancer in his home town of Newcastle, on Friday, September 10th, 1999.

Bruce had been diagnosed with cancer only a few months before and, with his typical analysis and optimism, had fought bravely to the end. He was a man of unusual and fearless intellect, completely self-taught, who fastidiously stuck to his guns, and who would believe or support a theory only if and when it made complete sense to him. And who can argue with that?

The ETR mic preamps were only one part of Bruce's interests. He was also busy working, until the week he passed away, on numerous projects including his earth-shaking bass subwoofer (which I've heard and can testify to its impressiveness), compressors, limiters, hand-made ribbon mics, magnetic cartridge pick-ups, a small high-end (as always) monitor amp, and the next ETR mic preamp.

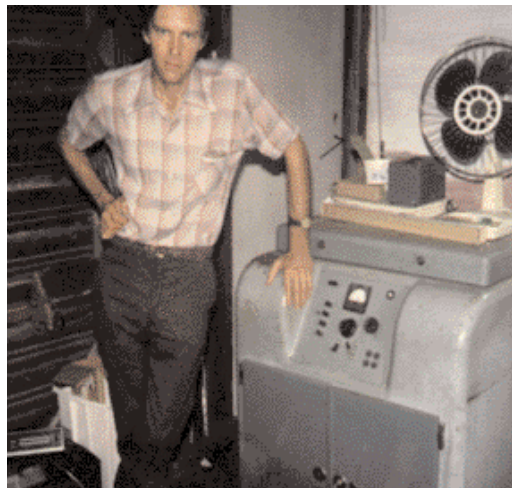
Bruce's funeral was held in Newcastle, and was very well attended. His eldest daughter, Kate, gave a great eulogy, and, at Bruce's request, we all applauded as the coffin disappeared through the curtain into the crematorium.

He will be very much missed, and I am grateful to have known him.

- Bob Spencer

Bruce was admired and respected by all of us at AudioTechnology. He was an innovator and an educator, and had many interesting audio designs up his sleeve. The wonderful ETR mic preamp was just one of a few that became a commercial reality before his untimely passing. I believe the Australian audio industry has suffered a greater loss than we can imagine.

- Greg Simmons



**For a thousand dollars,  
you could buy one piece  
of equipment, or ...**





## Neutrik Stage Boxes

Neutrik's latest NSB Series stage box systems combine quality and flexibility with modest pricing in a range of 12 models to suit a variety of live sound and studio applications.

The series features three different styles ranging in size from 8-In/4-out to 32-In/4-Out. All models feature high quality Neutrik XLR connectors with a solderless IDC design to ensure rapid, simple termination. The fully modular construction also includes a robust strain relief suitable for multicore cables up to 20mm diameter. The stage boxes are very competitively priced, ranging from only \$96 to \$169 recommended retail.

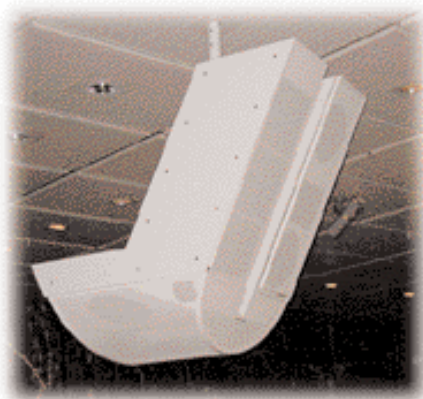
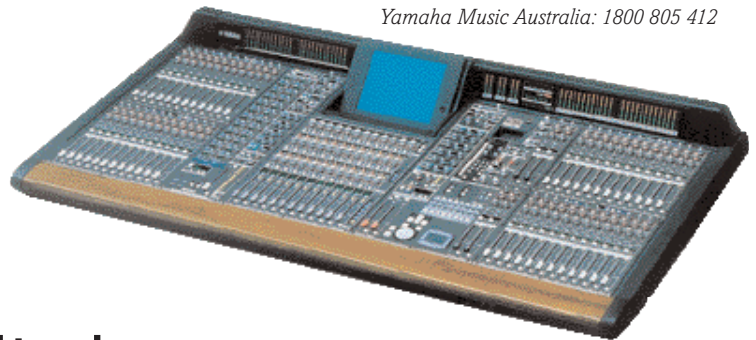
*Amber Technology: (02) 9975 1211*

## Yamaha's Live Digital Board

Amid longtime industry-wide speculation that the company would be releasing a new digital board at the 1999 AES, Yamaha finally confirmed the rumours by unveiling the PM1D, their first large-format digital mixing console designed specifically for live and installed sound applications.

The PM1D mixing console is a totally digital, computer-based system which performs all mixing and audio processing functions completely in the digital domain with 32-bit internal processing for superior audio quality. The CS1D Control Surface operates the system DSP1D digital audio engine, which is contained in a variety of stage racks which can be located with the control surface or remotod to the stage or other convenient location. (where all audio is processed). Configurable in both 48- and 96-channel versions with 48 mix busses, 24 matrixes and 12 DCAs (Digitally Controlled Amplifiers), the board system features top-quality 28-bit A/D and 27-bit D/A conversion. Dual inputs on each channel provide 96 inputs for the 48-channel system and 128 to 192 inputs on the 96-channel version.

*Yamaha Music Australia: 1800 805 412*



## JBL sits in Parliament

Elecoustics has just finished commissioning a permanent JBL sound system for the Great Hall at Parliament House, Canberra. The space is quite reverberant, however, with strong echoes off the back walls, the speaker positions were constrained by a large hanging tapestry, and lighting and maintenance requirements. The solution was to create a moderately sized array for the main system with a constant directivity from 100Hz to 15kHz. "This would ensure the best possible tonal balance throughout the room and minimise the amount of sound radiated under the speakers, allowing for a second smaller system for down fill which could be tailored to minimise feedback," Elecoustics' Glenn Leembruggen explained.

*Jands Electronics: (02) 9582 0909*

## Yorkville AP6040

Yorkville's latest addition to the Audiopro amplifier line is the AP6040, delivering 2,000 watts per channel (at 4 ohms), making it the perfect solution for subwoofer applications such as a pair of two to four large format subwoofers per amplifier.

The CR5 amplifier has been specifically designed for the budget-conscious consumer, and will be a competitive alternative for commercial and rental applications. Featuring 250 watts per side at 4 ohms in a rugged three rackspace package, the quiet, passively cooled CR5 includes separate rear mount channel gain controls, stereo/mono/bridge switch, power, clip and protect LEDs, a defeatable limiter and circuit breaker.

*Dynamic Music: (02) 9939 1299*