

SOS Readers Ads GRAB A BARGAIN £337,759 of Second-User Gear for sale now — don't miss out!

^o Good range of pre-sampled acoustics available.

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At over £10,000 with all the CD-ROMs, you've got to be prepared to pay for such high quality.

summary

The ability to sample your own favourite acoustic spaces and apply their characteristic reverbs to other recordings is revolutionary. I'm sure that the Sony DRE S777 will quickly gather a fanatical user base in a wide range of recording environments. seconds; or double rate (88.2 or 96kHz) for 5.5 seconds — however, the 11-second standard and 5.5-second double rate sampling modes require an optional DABK S703 DSP expansion board for sufficient computational power. The reverb samples are stored on a supplied 64Mb memory stick inserted into the front of the S777. Given that a 5.5-second standard-rate sample requires around 2Mb of storage, and that the corresponding compiled reverb program comes out at roughly 25 percent smaller than this, the memory stick ought to accommodate about 40 standard-rate programs.

The compiling operation is almost trivial — select the relevant samples and start the process. Mid-way though the procedure, the machine provides the option to delete any data which arrived prior to the direct sound — pre-echoes. With most natural reverberation, pre-echoes are irrelevant and should be removed, but if you were sampling plate reverb, for example, pre-echoes might well be an integral part of the reverberant sound. The software next displays information about the reverb samples, including the level of noise — this should be below -60dB, otherwise the sampling process ought to be repeated with more TSPs. However, if everything is satisfactory the compiling process will then produce the final reverb program.

The DRE S777's new operating software also allows you to import reverberation impulse responses by saving them to the memory stick. This data can then also be compiled as described above to produce a new DRE S777 reverb program. It is Sony's intention to create a web site where users may post and download impulse responses and programs for the S777.



Real Spaces: The Sample CD Collection

The standard CD-ROM shipped with the S777 is entitled *Halls, Churches, Studios and Plates.* This is a collection of general purpose anonymous acoustic spaces, and includes two halls, two churches, three studio live rooms, two plates, and a drum room. All are provided with a variety of source and microphone positions, providing subtle alternative reverbs, and all portray the almost uncanny realism which is the hallmark of the machine.

The three new disks are entitled: *European Halls and Churches, American Acoustic Spaces*, and *Japanese Acoustic Spaces*. These all carry version 2.0 software and offer a greater variety of mic positions and types than the original generic disk. There is also considerable technical information about microphone positions, the structure of the halls and the nature of the recorded reverberation.

The halls section of the European disk includes samples of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Vienna Grosser Musikvereinssaal, and the Concerthaus in Berlin. There are also three churches: Westerkerk in Amsterdam, Jesus-Christus-Kirche in Berlin; and St. Vincent de Cardona in Spain.

The American disk provides four studios (Avatar Studio A, Ocean Way Studio B, Enterprise Studio E2 and Giandomenico Studio), the Mechanics Hall, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and a boxed canyon in the Grand Canyon — the latter a fantastically open ambient acoustic.

The Japanese disk starts off with the Sedic Audio Studio in Tokyo, providing seven variations of the main studio, plus samples from the vocal booth, the control room, a tea room and a telephone box! The one hall is the Yokohama Nohgakudou, while the more unus

tea room and a telephone box! The one hall is the Yokohama Nohgakudou, while the more unusual spaces include the Tamanoyu Bathhouse, the Ohyaishi quarry, the Kamaishi mine, the Goto Planetarium dome, and the Hotaka mountain range!

The combination of the four disks provides a vast and impressively usable collection of acoustic spaces and reverberation characteristics, and provides something for pretty much any occasion.

Room For Improvement?

The self-sampling software for the S777 really opens up the potential of this innovative machine. The whole sampling process is very fast and easy to perform, needing little in the way of equipment and no particular expertise. But, most importantly, the results can be impressively accurate and very usable. Although a specialised machine, once any studio acquires one, they'll almost certainly wonder how they ever coped without it!

Prices

- DRE S777, £5869.13.
- DABK S701 two-channel A-D converter board, £922.38.
- DABK S702 two-channel D-A converter board, £634.50.
- DABK S703 DSP upgrade board, £1874.13.
- DASK S701 European Halls and Churches CD-ROM,
- £699.13.
- DASK S702 American Acoustic Spaces CD-ROM, £699.13.
- DASK S703 Japanese Acoustic Spaces CD-ROM, £581.63.
 DASK S704 sampling software, £646.25.

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All prices include VAT.

information



GLOSSARY: technical terms explained

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