LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers:

We hope you are enjoying the new format for *Audio Solutions* magazine, one of GC Pro's main avenues of communication with current and future clients, manufacturer partners and the wider Guitar Center music community.

In this issue, we would like to convey our thoughts on "added value." In today's world of ultra-fast information flow, finding the best pricing and technical specifications on high-end audio equipment is just a few clicks away. So, what does it mean to find real value?

Added value, by one definition, is the difference between the cost of an item and services supplied by one company versus another—how they compare over the whole experience. GC Pro seeks to add superior value to all the products we represent, as a way of distinguishing us from rest of the pack. We start with a guaranteed competitive price, so, when you take price out of the equation, the added value is the difference. Our competitive advantage comes from combining first-class technical expertise, the right equipment and our unique ability to provide face-to-face consultation on a national level. The result is much greater customer satisfaction, the building of long-term customer relationships and, of course, the system or equipment optimized for your application.

We start with our experienced staff, ready to supply first-class consultation; then draw on extensive inventory from over 250 stores, a massive distribution center and our special orders department to quickly meet your needs, getting it right the first time, every time.

We strive to become a partner in the success of your business. Having a local, highly skilled and experienced Account Manager—someone whose experience helps provide the best advice and the right product for your needs, avoiding wasting time and money—is truly a blessing. In essence, it's the team you work with that delivers added value, and they are only as good as the company that backs them up. GC Pro is behind one of the finest teams of experts in the business. Please visit our newly redesigned website at gcpro.com for access to our staff, exclusive content and to get the ball rolling on the added value we can bring to your project.

Rick Plushner
Vice President, GC Pro

SOLUTIONS

PHILADELPHIA INTEGRATED PRODUCTION COMPANY IS NOW AN ALL-RAVEN FACILITY

Audio people can be notoriously stubborn, tending to hold on to what they like—certain platforms, processors, protocols and techniques—even if those affections sometimes outlast the increasingly shorter shelf life of pro audio gear. In many cases, these connections to certain pieces of equipment are patterns formed in an earlier age, when analog systems were both more endearing and enduring. In other cases, we just get used to working a certain way and prefer to avoid change if we can.

Both of those mechanisms were at work for Bob Schachner, the senior audio designer at ShootersINC, a leading Philadelphia video post-production house. Schachner—who has worked on most of the company's iconic content, from prime-time spots for clients including A&E, Lexus, The Weinstein Company, and Scripps Networks Interactive, to the original content they've been helping develop, such as the Food Network's hit *Restaurant: Impossible*—came of age in the tape and console era, and transitioned smoothly into digital. But after keeping his Avid Pro Control working in one of Shooters' three audio control rooms for nearly a decade after Avid announced it

SHOOTERSINC STREAMLINES ITS WORKFLOW WITH THE SLATE RAVEN MTX

would discontinue the platform, he knew he had to move on. In doing so, he faced the same dilemma all working professionals do when their most familiar tools approach obsolescence: finding new ones that are compatible with all of their other systems but that also manage to let them manage their workflow just as they had before.

Enter the RAVEN

Schachner says he found that in the Slate Digital RAVEN MTX console, the third of which was installed at Shooters in November. "It reached the point where it was becoming harder and harder to get parts for the Avid Pro Control, and it wasn't compatible with newer versions of Pro Tools," he says.

He and Brad Petrella, manager of engineering services at Shooters, had been on the lookout for a good replacement platform that would work for Schachner and Shooters' other audio engineers. Then, last year, Schachner says he saw a video of the RAVEN MTX and was intrigued by its interface: a 46-inch LED backlit touch-sensitive display with 1920x1080 HD resolution and integrated compatibility with the HD3 Pro Tools systems Shooters uses.

"Stephen Slate had a good reputation for his plug-ins; I liked the way he made his graphical user interfaces for them," says Schachner. "So we went to a demo of the RAVEN at GC Pro and thought it had the potential to do what I needed it to do."

Schachner's only real concern was that the console, which had been introduced in October 2012, was clearly initially aimed at the music production market. Would it translate for Schachner's workflow needs in audio post? He was not disappointed: "I live in the edit window in post, not on the faders and knobs," he explains. "So the transition to the touchscreen was perfect. On a touchscreen work surface, there's nothing that I lose and I gain this huge screen, which makes everything on it easy to see and access. I found myself transitioning from the trackball to the touchscreen quickly—the RAVEN was installed on a Monday, I was working on it by

Tuesday and was fully up to speed on it by Wednesday. There wasn't any slowdown in the workflow."

All RAVENs, All the Time

In fact, within a month of the first console being installed in October, the entire facility had RAVEN MTX workstations in all three control rooms, and everyone was conversant with the RAVEN's operation. "One of our guys is in a band and his engineer did some overdubs," Schachner recalls. "I loaded his work into the system and gave him a quick two-minute tutorial on it. He had no problem with it at all. Basically, if you can work Pro Tools, the RAVEN MTX is going to be very familiar to you."

Since that whirlwind changeover to the RAVEN MTX, Schachner has done spots on it for National Geographic, some of the plethora of healthcare-related commercials and PSAs that have mushroomed in the wake of the Affordable Care Act, and several webisodes for BMW.

"What we like about the RAVEN MTX is that it doesn't demand that you learn it—it accommodates how you work, for instance, by letting you get started quickly and then allowing you to learn different shortcuts and other things at you own pace, as you need them," observes Petrella.

In the space of barely two months, Schachner says the RAVEN MTX has changed his work patterns for the better. "When you have faders, you're constantly reaching all over the board, and that causes your head to be constantly moving, which affects your ability to monitor accurately," he explains. "With the touchscreen in the center, I find that monitoring is much easier since I don't have to move as much. Plus, with the Pro Tools screen on the console display and so much easier to see, I can see the waveforms better; I can read the plug-ins easier. Pro Tools is part of the console now. I feel more connected to the entire process. You don't realize that that's happening until it hits you. This is a great way to work."

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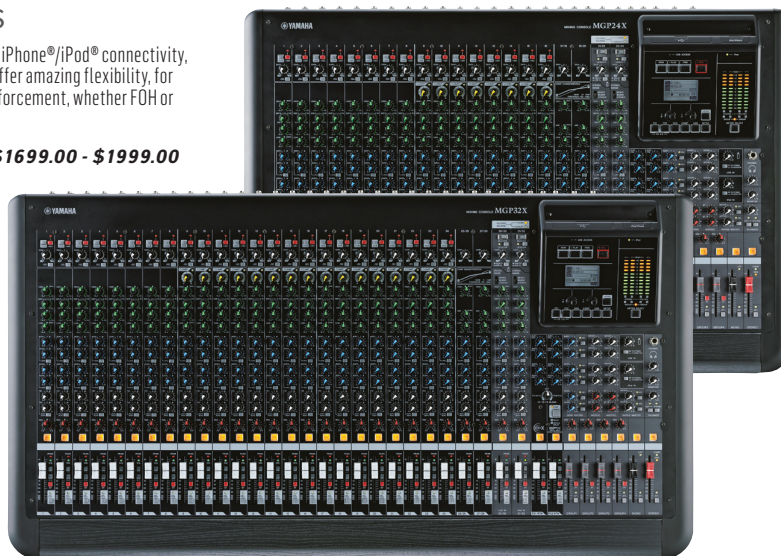
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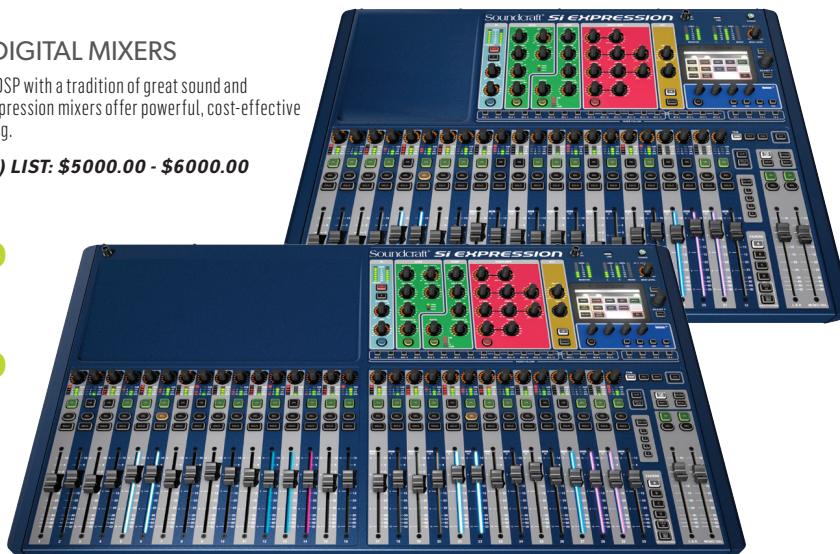
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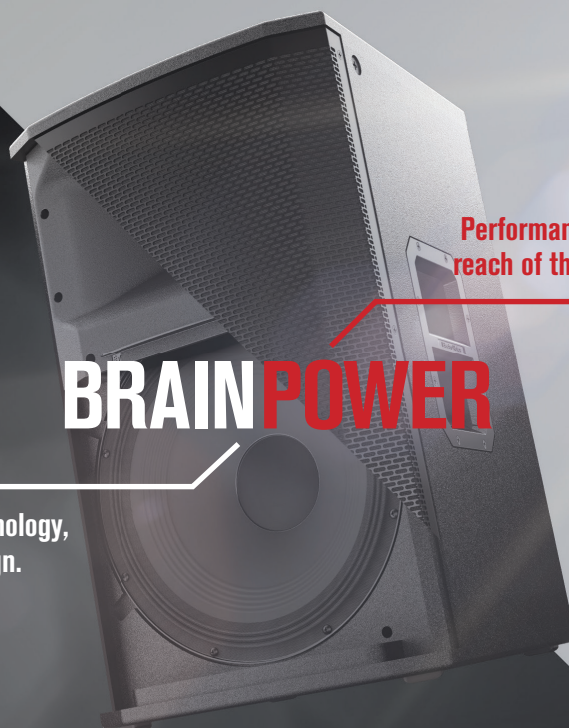
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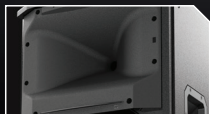
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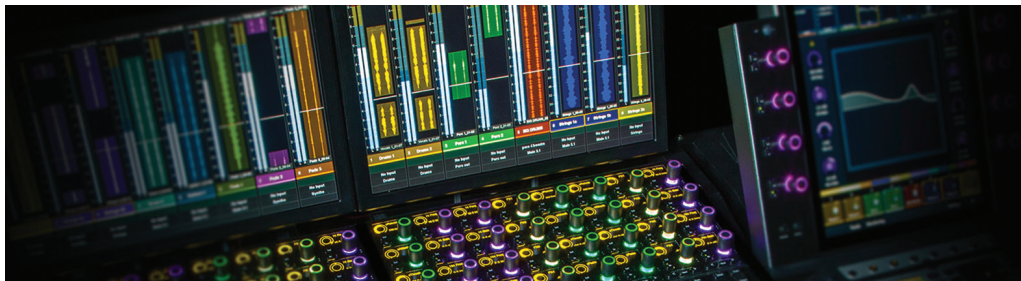
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