

Handy Devices for your NLE

By David Hurd

USB Match Plus

The USB Match Plus is a professional USB-to-XLR bidirectional stereo audio codec and monitor system that lets you monitor your audio both audibly and visually. The USB Match Plus provides USB connectivity in any application where digital audio from a computer needs to interface with a professional analog audio system. The unit is USB-powered, and solves the problems caused by using common computer sound cards in broadcast and professional audio environments.



What is wrong with using sound cards? Well, using a PC sound card to interface with a professional audio system usually leads to numerous problems. The inputs and outputs are often at the wrong levels, and the unbalanced interface creates ground loops that cause hum and buzz. Also, the "EMI hurricane" within the PC case creates even more noise, and the sound card shielding is usually sub-par, resulting in electronic noise getting into your audio tracks.

Henry Engineering's USB Match Plus has been designed "from the ground up" as a true professional product that solves all of these problems. It delivers impeccable audio quality, accurate monitoring facilities, XLR connectivity, and the convenience of a simple USB interface to the computer. The net result is obvious with a simple listening test: the USB Match Plus will sonically outperform any sound card, and even surpass the quality of many 24-bit systems. MS Windows and the Linux OS are supported; no special driver or software is needed. The USB Match Plus operates with virtually any audio edit-

ing, recording, or broadcast automation software at sample rates up to 48 kHz and up to 16-bit resolution.

I have used two of Henry Engineering's Match-box HD units for several months now with great results. I used the two boxes to connect the unbalanced "RCA" audio jacks (on the back of my Sony DSR-20 DVCAM deck and my external DVD Bumer), to the balanced inputs on the Matrox AXIO editing system that I am currently testing. I have also used them with the VT4 system from Newtek. No hum, no buzz, and no loss of levels. Very sweet!

MSRP: Varies with product

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The E8 HBA Dependent RAID Case from Enhance Technology


When I upgraded my editing system I put it in a rackmount case from Antec. The case is great, but with dual AMD Opteron 280 chips, and 10 high-rpm hard drives running at the

same time, the heat out on location in Florida would sometimes cause thermal shutdown. No harm done, but a rather large pain when I was in the middle of a production.

To solve this problem, I got a case from Enhance Technologies. The E8 is a stand-alone RAID case that holds eight SATA or SAS hard drives, each in its own little hot-swap tray.

I loaded my E8 with eight Seagate SAS drives, which are 15K rpm drives that are really fast and designed to be worked 24/7. By connecting two multilane cables from my computer to the E8, I was able to write data at 500 Mb/second, and read data even at even a faster rate. To keep cool, the E8 has a hot-swappable fan.

It's been over six months now, and I've used the E8 to edit TV shows with both the Newtek VT4 and the new Matrox AXIO. Everything has been fast, even when editing four or five streams of uncompressed video in real time. I have had no problems, even when editing 10 hours a day. Now I'm experimenting with HD. This is good stuff.

The E Series is the coolest storage system on the market with a host of hot-swap components, giving you features that are normally found only in high-end SCSI RAID systems... ..and... ..it only costs about \$595. 

CONTACT:

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