

Transoniq

Hacker

The Independent News
Magazine for Ensoniq Users

Step Entry Sequencing

(With a Program Change Kicker)

Dan Rohde



Many sequencers offer a convenient way to enter key down data called Step Entry that allows the user to enter one note or "step" at a time, rather than to record a track in real time. Though I don't use Step Entry often, it can be extremely helpful in recording certain things, such as a complex percussion track, that tricky Chopin Etude (*Opus 10* comes to mind), or some bluegrass banjo. My brain just doesn't translate banjo notation that fast. (Now what note would 8 frets up on the drone G string be?)

I'm using the KS for my examples, but much of this also applies to most Ensoniq sequencers. The KS's manual tells *what* the keyboard does, but it falls a tad short in telling *how* to do it. Therefore, I'll use the

venerable 1., 2., 3., ... "how to" approach.

How to Use Step Entry

1. Begin with an existing sequence or preset. Select the sound and track you want to record your music on. (See my previous article "*Basic Sequencing*" a month or two ago in the *Hacker* for tips on starting a sequence from scratch.)
2. Push the Edit Sequence/Preset button.
3. Push Control Bank 11, which brings up the Step Entry/Record screen. By the way, the manual discusses this on page 10 — 7 to 9.
4. Push the up arrow to select ON for Step Entry.
5. When you press Record and Play simultaneously, the screen will display Step Recording! Auto Step = Off. This setting enables you to enter multiple notes (a chord) on each beat you select, but it also requires that you press the Enter button after each step, which gets tedious real fast.

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Since I'll be entering single banjo notes, however, it will be much easier to...

6. Select Auto Step = ON. This setting means that for each note you play, the sequencer will automatically record it and advance to the next predetermined step in your sequence.

7. From Auto Step = On, press the right arrow to display the Gate screen. Above the Bar-beat-clock information, you will see the Gate = parameter. The three Gate modes are Manual, Step, and Fixed, each allowing you to enter note data a little differently. It is actually the next screen that reads Step = (note) that tells the sequencer how much time each step is worth. For my banjo track, I'll choose the eighth note symbol here. This means that each step I record will be an eighth note, in case that wasn't obvious. (I'm assuming some novices might be reading this.)

8A. The Gate = Manual mode enables you to record various note durations by holding down a key for various lengths of time as you press the Enter button. This wouldn't affect a the sound of a banjo note, but it would let you sustain a sound with a longer decay, such as organ, piano, violin, etc. In other words, if you play a piano note that sustains for the length of a half note, hold the key down and push the Enter four times, since we have set the Step parameter on the next screen to eighth notes. (Four eighth notes equals a half note, right?)

8B. The Gate = Step mode is probably best for my banjo notes. It records an eighth note, whose length is determined by the Step parameter on the next screen, each time you hit a note. Holding down a key to continue a sustained note will not now work.

8C. The Gate = Fixed mode combines elements of the first two choices. Though the Step parameter on the next screen still says eighth note, the Gate = Fixed can be set to a different length, such as a half note. This means that with each key down and push of the Enter button, a half note will be recorded, but the sequencer only advances one eighth note's time. If you were to play a key repeatedly but not push the Enter button, you'd be recording (Anyone? Anyone?) half notes that overlap. (Interesting result?!) On the other hand, you could reverse this effect and set the Step parameter to half notes while setting the Fixed note parameter to an eighth

note, which would give you eighth notes worth of your chosen sound at half note intervals.

9. At this point I've decided my banjo track needs to have a couple more notes in it that didn't get on the first take. I have a couple options. If I just want to replace my existing track with new, different notes, I decided where they need to go, such as measure three.

Though you could do the whole track over, the easier way is to replace just one measure in the track. Push the Edit Sequence/Preset button, then the Locate (upper left 0) button. Push Enter, then use the data entry slider or up arrow to advance to measure three and hit Enter again. Next, push and hold down Record then the Stop/Continue button. The sequencer will be poised at the first beat of measure three patiently awaiting your new key or controller data. After entering as many new notes as you'd like, hit Stop again. You can audition the part either by pushing play or by reselecting measure three. The handy Locate screen will even default to your previously selected measure three! If you like your new measure(s), push the Yes arrow. If not, hit No and try it again.

The only little glitch I have noticed on my KS is that after recording new eighth notes, the Step Entry method automatically erases the step/beat following the last note I enter. This means I'll need to select Record = Add (instead of Record = Replace) found on the second screen of the (1) Control button, locate the deleted beat, and add one more note using the same process as above — a relatively small problem, I suppose.

Now that I think of it, a better way yet is to first erase measure three only using the Erase Track Command, set Record = Add, then Locate Bar three and use Step Entry to record one measure's worth of new notes.

For better or worse, the end product is automatically quantized. Some sequencers even offer the function of a randomized track shifting to "humanize" the feel of the music, but the KS-32 does not sport this feature. Yes, you can play around with the Shift Track commands, but maybe we'll do that some other time.

(Continued on page 4.)

RND (🎵🎵)

Hacker News

Robby Berman's MR patch article didn't quite make it into this month's issue — look for it in next month's issue.

We'd like to acknowledge the slow start on MR coverage to our new MR readers. It takes a while before our regular writers get the new gear or our new-gear folks become regular writers. We're pounding on doors (thanks, Pat!). We'll get there.

Steve Vincent, having totally caught up with the *Basement Tapes*, is taking a well-earned break this month. (Making this an appropriate time to run a Jeffrey Fisher article...) Steve'll be back with more next month. Meanwhile, here's a good spot to list "Tapes Received" —

Hypnotherapy from J.D. Ryan

Down2us from Roshan & Shivani Kumar

Record-breaking *Interface* section this month... Hey, check out that small print.

Syntaur Productions has moved to new and improved World Headquarters — Syntaur Productions, 500 West Prairie Ave., Eagle Lake, TX 77434. Their new phone number is 409-234-2700. Their toll free line remains at 1-800-334-1288.

And this just in for you MR folk...

HYPERSOBIQ NEW PRODUCT NEWS

What do you do with your spare time, when you can't find that ultimate vocalist to accompany you on that international #1 smash hit you've had ready to unleash on the world since the day you discovered music!? We'll tell you... You get really frustrated, break some stuff, cry, etc., and then after all that you find other ways to put your talents to use. So we here at the Zepvado Music Group™ decided to use our talents to fill a void, that

being the lack of drum machine rhythms available for the MR-61/76.

The Zepvado Music Group is a small indy label located in Allentown PA, consisting of two Ensoniq technical support reps (Eric Montgomery, and Craig "Frequent C" Friebolin), one studio engineer (Richie Pena of Rich-sound studios), one long-time tour band keyboardist (Larry Dix, toured with everyone from Sister Sledge to the Jackson 5), and one label president (Raymon Alvarado). We all took some time out from our various other projects, (and our collective efforts on an upcoming audio sample CD, "*The Toy Box*,") to collaborate on MR drum machine rhythms soon to be available to YOU!

After a lot of thought on exactly what types of rhythms the average MR user is looking for we threw up our hands and said "Let's ask 'em!" So now we're asking, "What type of rhythms are you lookin' for?" If you'd like to make a suggestion we will be waiting with open ears at 610-820-5811. Please call and leave a message as we are sure to be working hard on this and many other projects. As we have no marketing department, we drew straws and came up with a retail price of \$19.95 + shipping and handling.

We're looking to have these rhythms available by mid September. Keep reading the *Transoniq Hacker* to keep abreast.

Current Ensoniq O.S. (Disk/EPROM)

EPS	2.49/2.40	SQ-2 32	2.03
EPS-M	2.49/2.41	SD-1/SD-1 32	4.10/4.10
EPS-16 PLUS	1.3/1.00F	DP/4	1.15
MASOS	2.0	DP/4+	2.05
MIRAGE	3.2	DP/2	1.02
ESQ	3.5	KS-32	3.10
ESQ-M	1.2	ASR-10	3.53/1.5
SQ-80	1.8	ASR-88	3.53/3.50
VFX	2.30	KMX-8	2.00
VFX-SD	2.1/2.00	KMX-16	1.50
SQ-1	1.11	TS-10/12	3.10
SQ-1 32	2.03	KT-76/88	1.62
SQ-1 PLUS	1.15	SDP-1	1.70
SQ-R	1.20	MR Rack	1.5x
SQ-R 32	2.03	MR-61/76	2.10
SQ-R PLUS	1.15	ASR-X	1.12
SQ-2	1.2	E-Prime	2.01

Program Change

One very useful feature, the Program Change, can also be accessed through Step Entry (and through the Event Edit Track screen). Seriously, how many of you Ensoniq aficionados have actually figured out how to record a Program Change. (Let's see a show of hands.) I stalked the elusive Program Change for an embarrassingly long time before finally figuring it out. This feature allows you to tell the KS-32's sequencer to change from one patch to another on a track automatically during its playback. This is so SO much easier than frantically hitting a different track button when you want to switch from, say, a piano to an organ sound.

Let's suppose you want to insert a Program Change from Jazz Piano (ROM 15) to Jazzy Organ (ROM 01) by the first beat of measure 17. To make that work smoothly — and avoid the slight pause on beat 1 of Bar 17 — we'll do the Program Change in measure 16.

1. Select Step Entry = On as we did above, then...
2. Use the Locate screen to select measure 16, beat 2, also as we did above.
3. Push and hold the Record and Continue buttons. The screen changes to Step Entry = On.
4. Now, push the Edit Track button, then the (Screen 4) Channel/Program button. Use the Data slider — not the arrows — to select 02 (you must add one to the patch number here since this screen will not register 00), which is Jazzy Organ's ROM number ($01 + 1 = 02$), then press Enter. There's no way you can enter this information on the fly without selecting a bunch of different patches as you move the slider. Now when the sequencer arrives at measure 17, the 01 patch will be selected automatically...except for the fact that the KS defaults to the RAM bank. How to access the ROM bank? Hmm? Only one way: we need to send a different message in front of our patch number, so...
5. Select Event Edit Track (50) (This stuff is on Page 10 — 32 to 36 of the manual) After you find this screen...
6. Press Enter, then use the slider or arrows to find Program Change.
7. Press Enter again to reach the next screen: The Cur-

rent Event type, the Cursor, the Event Value, and on the bottom of the screen the Event Location.

8. With the right arrow, select B (bar) 16 and b (beat) 1 so the command will come right before our previously recorded Program Change.
9. Move back two spaces to Event Value and enter the number 125, one of five special commands that selects different banks of sounds. There are four other numbers: 124 = INT (RAM) sounds; 126 and 127 select Card A and Card B sounds, respectively. Selecting 123 changes the Effect chosen for a sequence while it is playing. Hold it — there's more.
10. Press the right arrow until you reach the Press ENTER to AUDITION/EXIT screen.
11. Now press the up arrow — yes, the UP arrow — to reach the Insert screen (mentioned but not pictured in the manual).
12. Go through Steps 8 through 10 again, reselecting 125 and the correct Event Location. I know it seems a little redundant, but it's the only way mine will work.
13. Use the right arrow to get to the AUDITION/EXIT screen and press Enter. You Can hit Play to audition the track, or you can hit Enter again to keep the track. You can remove the Program /change by selecting Remove above the Insert screen.

When the sequence reaches its end, it resets automatically, so a looped sequence will keep switching from one patch back to the other. You can change programs as often during a sequence as you'd like, but look out for variances in volumes.

Step Entry function enables you to record virtually anything, even such stuff as classic Scruggs banjo notation, which would be extremely difficult to do in real time.

And now I must ride my Flop-Eared Mule over the Cumberland Gap to see Sally Goodwin and start Huckling the Berries at Foggy Mountain before All the Good Times are Dead and Gone. Feedback welcomed at darohde@muscatine.k12.ia.us. ■

Bio: Dan Rohde is looking for a good bass pond and a baby blue '55 Chevy Nomad to get there in.

MR-Keyboard Help Screens

On-Line Easter Eggs

Pat Finnigan

Okay, so you've tinkered with the MR and and gotten pretty good with it, but you're at the point where you need to sit down and read the manual. And you're putting it off because the *MR Musician's Manual* is a 700+ page bible, a veritable plethora of information to sift through. Not exactly the stuff a light read is made of, eh? You've already gone through the 12-page index at the front of the manual trying to get from here to there, and you've found it can be daunting getting directly to the parameter or value you're looking for. Pisser, ain't it?

Well, Ensoniq thought of that this time. Not that they thought we'd avoid the MR Bible like the plague or anything, but they realize it's a case of "when all else fails, read the manual." Hey, we're musicians, not manual readers — we bought this thing to play. And even though Ensoniq documentation is the best out there (remember those old Roland Brown Manuals that read more like fractured english than keyboard operation?) would the owner stop what he was doing to pull the manual down and glean some needed info? And interrupt the creative processes? And I staunchly note, for the record, that Ensoniq docs are the absolute BEST out there. Easily read, understood, and no hidden or glaring errors. (Reminds me of that old Yamaha tale... Anybody remember the first batch of CP-70 Electric Grands that hit the country in 1975? Remember the sticker on the lid with instructions on how to put the legs on the piano? Well, something got lost in the translation, and they didn't recommended you "screw" the legs into their threaded sockets — they recommended the vernacular. Paints a, uh, ah, musically vivid picture of a CP-70 with its new owner, doesn't it?)

So, ahem, sorry for the aside, but it's an absolutely true story, no offense intended. After you've given up looking for errors in the Ensoniq manual, look closely under the Utilities button in the Disk/Global region of your MR keyboard. It's appropriately entitled "Help," and to be quite frank, I just discovered it accidentally at the gig.

I thought I was pressing the "Load" button when the display assumed words I'd never seen before. And although it's not a substitute for the *Musician's Manual*, it points you in the right direction and the right chapter. Still with me here?

Okay, press that "Help" button and then press the "Utilities" button directly above it. The display now reads "The Utilities button provides..." followed by a down arrow. Press the down arrow (way too logical, isn't it?) or turn the Value knob (if you resent authority figures) one click right. The display now reads "access to a selection of tools" followed by that down arrow again. Press the down arrow to get to "For working with floppy disks, see..." and press the down arrow one last time to get to the "Chapter 9" screen...

Every button on the MR keyboard has not only a brief description of what its function is on the keyboard, but refers you to the appropriate chapter for detailed info. Pretty smooth. If you get lost first time out (or just space some of the functions early in the learning curve), become one with the Help button. It's your friend, and if you're not as experienced as some of the Malvern power users out there, hey, press help, press the button of curiosity, and you'll get a quick tip on what it is, what it does, and what chapter to open to get the complete description, function, and operation of that curious little button. The best one is still the "Idea Pad" button, but I won't tell it all here...

The MR was designed to explain itself? Some sneaky folks in Malvern are snickering... ■



Bio: Pat has left Truevision to lead a normal life. "If video is such an art form, explain television."

Eight Reasons Stopping You From Making Any Real Money In the Music Business

Jeffrey P. Fisher

You want to move past a mediocre music career to be successful and make more money, don't you? Of course you do. But you may be sabotaging your own efforts. Here are eight reasons that might be preventing you from being the success you want to be... and what to do about them.

You're not mentally prepared

First and foremost, you need to understand and recognize what success means to you. How do you measure success? Can you quantify where you want to go? Will you recognize your own personal success when you achieve it? Will your current view of where you want to go be enough to satisfy your desires? You must prepare your mind for both the demands and rewards of success. Surely you believe that your success is inevitable if you work hard and persist?

If you're lazy or looking for an easy way out: Stop right now. This isn't for you. This article is only for people who want success and are willing to put the time, energy, money, effort, patience, skill, and talent to the task. That's you, right? Well, to begin you must buckle down and prepare your mind to that tasks at hand. Solid determination and an interminable will to succeed are the two crucial characteristics you must cultivate.

You're not technically proficient

Are your skills, image, presence, demo tape, and other factors showcasing your best work? If not, you need to concentrate on improving your technical skills in these four areas:

- Writing skills
- Oral presentation skills
- Business skills
- And, of course, your musical talent

You must be able to communicate effectively, both on paper and orally. Writing promotional material and delivering sales presentations are crucial to your survival. You will be meeting with clients by telephone and in person. You must learn to explain your business and music in ways they'll understand. And you will sell yourself, your ideas, and your music. If you can't communicate effectively, you are doomed to fail. You must understand the intricacies of these

skills, practice using them, and ultimately master them. Go back to school or take some adult education courses at your local college. What about business skills? I'm advocating you run your musical career like a small business, and there are many advantages to running your own business. It's up to you to discover what works for your situation and then exploit every possibility. You can't afford to take these important points for granted. Yes, your music matters, but your people and business skills are also vital to your eventual success. Making it in today's music world is a demanding job. You will use every single ounce of your talent, knowledge, stamina, and skills to thrive.

You don't understand the real problem

It's unfortunate but there are quite a few musicians out there who just don't get it. Most focus narrowly on production and not sales. If you are more concerned with getting a good drum sound on tape than getting your tape into buyer's hands, you'd better listen. While gear is cool. And production and engineering are fun. And playing into the wee hours of the night is a rush. It's all a masquerade for what is really happening. The key to succeeding in any business is marketing: Getting your products and services into the hands of those who need and want your offering... and who have the means to pay for it.

As I said in my *How To Make Money Scoring Soundtracks And Jingles* book, promotion is the key. Just because you hang your shingle out for the world to see doesn't bring a flood of customers to your door. Or put money in your pocket either. You must work hard to develop your music business. Spend your time, effort, imagination, and creativity toward building it. The actual musical part is then the easy part. You will put more time into solving the marketing problem than any other task you face. Don't make the mistake made by most who fail. The need to market well is crucial to your success.

You don't have the necessary promotional material

No matter what part of the music business you are choosing to pursue, there is one constant. You need your tape, biography, picture, sales letters, brochures, flyers, news releases, contracts, and other collateral material designed to promote

you and your work. No business can succeed without this necessary sales material. You can't exist with just a demo cassette and stack of sticky notes. You need to develop this material yourself or find other professionals to help you put together what you need. If most musicians would put the time and attention they put into their music into promoting and selling their talents, there would be many more successful artists in the world.

Let me clarify an important promotional factor. Your business prospects are not interested in you. They are only interested in themselves. To succeed, you **MUST** make sure your promotional material — indeed every sales opportunity — focuses completely on your prospect's wants and desires. Start thinking about this now. It's a subtle but critical position. You can't use "I'm great, hire me" tactics. You must shift your position to "You have a problem or need that I understand. By working with me we can solve that problem (or fulfill that need) together. Here's how..."

Do you see the difference? Do you feel the difference? What do your clients want? How do your music products and services benefit them? If you follow this advice, you will save tons of money that you would otherwise waste on promotional gambits and materials that don't work to sell your music products and services.

You're not committed to success or willing to do what is necessary for success

I believe you can have anything in the world, just not everything. To be the musical success you envision, you need to sacrifice something, give something up. You can't have a full social calendar, and a full-time job, and a family, and a band... and devote your full energy to each. Something's gotta give and you must decide what it is going to be.

That may seem cold-hearted. Surely this is America. And the American dream is to "have it all!" Unfortunately, many well-intentioned people have failed miserably or even gone to an early grave while chanting that anthem. You must first decide what it is you want and then concentrate on getting what you want. There is no middle ground. I believe author Holbrook Jackson described it best when he said sacrifice is a form of bargaining. Suffice to say that **YOU** must determine where it is you wish to head and must commit, indeed pledge, that you will do what is necessary, make the appropriate sacrifices, to reach your goal. That is how it must be. You can blame nobody for your failure. And all that prevents you from getting there is you.

You haven't planned how and what you are going to do

Have you scrutinized your competition, considered your

promotional stratagems, studied the many options available to you, and determined a plan of action? Set your goal. You need a specific plan of action. This doesn't need to be some fancy doctoral thesis. Start with this simple format: Here's where I am. Here's where I wish to go. And here's how I plan to get there. Now commit your resources of time and talent to attaining your goals.

Prepare yourself for the demands of business and write down your goals. Research your market and your competition carefully and make a plan. Practice your skills, both music and business. Be confident in your abilities. Work your plan. Organize your studio, equipment, and resources. Get help in areas where your skills lack and learn from the experience. Build a solid financial cushion both for your life and for the start of your business. Learn to market, promote, and sell your music products and services. Manage your business meticulously. Get started right away. *Now!* Take a small step toward your goal today. And keep taking steps. Persist.

Pay close attention to this next piece of advice: Diversity is the secret to making big money in the music business. You will be more successful if you exploit all aspects of your musical talent. You should record, perform, produce, write songs, teach, compose scores and jingles, and more. This is an important point and a key to your survival as a working musician.

You haven't determined how to measure your success

What does "making it" mean to you? There is a local band I'll call the All-Nighters who kept pursuing a record contract. For years they played all around town and bars, festivals, parties, even touring regionally. Unfortunately they missed the success right in front of their noses. They had a loyal following, many paid gigs, and sold merchandise, including their own tapes and CDs for profit. Still they spent energy trying to get the elusive record contract and ignored the success they had already achieved. Eventually it all caught up to them. Members left and life went on. While I think the record deal was a noble goal, they spent too much energy on it and ignored the tidy little business that was waiting outside their door. Though they had a plan, they never adapted to changing circumstances.

You need a one year plan, a five year plan, and a life plan. Use the plan as a road map, but be flexible. When you set your goals, and how you plan to achieve them, make sure you also include a measuring device. Getting the record contract is great, but what if nobody buys your music? Did you succeed? Scoring the next David Lynch film a dream? What if you get a documentary for PBS? Did you succeed? These are hard questions. Almost philosophical in nature. Set yourself some general goals and with the specific outcomes you

desire. For example, you might be inclined to say you want to make money from your music. Hold it. That's too vague. How about this instead: I will earn my living entirely from music related ventures within two years. That's easy to measure. If you are still holding down a part-time job to pay the bills 25 months from now, you know you didn't reach the goal you set for yourself. Take a few minutes to think about how you would measure your success. Write it down. Keep it with your plans. And then take some action!

You haven't put in place a means of reviewing these steps

Don't make the mistake of thinking about this once and then filing it away. You need to periodically review these steps and determine what is working... so you can keep on doing it. And what is failing... so you can fix it *fast*. Take time out from your endless pursuit to reflect on what you did, are

doing, and should do. It can sometimes be a sobering experience... or a wake up call. But often it's a good feeling with a sense of focus, accomplishment, and pride. Now don't let that stop from reviewing your past, learning from it, and applying what you learn to either changing or staying on course.

I've been a little tough here. I hope you appreciate my candor. Friends can be tough on you. But they also understand, are compassionate, and truly care. ■

Bio: Jeffrey's newly revised edition of his popular book, How To Make Money Scoring Soundtracks and Jingles, has recently been released. Get more details on how to turn your musical talents into cash. Write Fisher Creative Group, 323 Inner Circle Drive, Bolingbrook, IL 60440; e-mail fishercg@mcs.com; visit www.mcs.net/~fishercg; or call (630) 378-4109.

Out, Out Dang Put

Editing Sampled Sounds in the TS-10 and TS-12, Part 6

Robby Berman

Ah, it's like tracing genetic oddities in an extended family: it's not that Hank's nose looks so bad, but, jeez, what's it doing above Mary's mouth on Junior's face? That's the kind of mish-moshing that occurs at times when using sampled sounds in a TS — the familiar traits are all there, but things tend to show up in odd places. This is all attributable to the chasm between the TS's waves — with their permanently joined groups of wavesamples — and the ASR/EPS architecture of individual samples arranged in layers. Some wave parameters that you see in the TS are applicable to individual samples in sampled sounds, while others apply to whole layers of them at once (in these cases, the parameters act very similarly to the TS parameters). Most of these parameters are accessed from layer parameter pages.

This article is not about them. Jeez. So what *is* it about? It's about the wavesample Output parameters, one of those areas where certain familiar TS settings are available while others are off hiding somewhere. Let's start as usual by getting our bearing with good ol' BABY-GRAND (in Bank R2-0). Once you've

selected this sound, click the Output button. BABY-GRAND comes up with its GND-PIANO wave selected; it's this wave's Output parameters we're viewing now.

GRND Zero

So, what've we got here? The first page features the TS's exotic KBD-SCALE feature on its top line, and the wave's volume setting on the bottom, as well as its volume modulation source and amount parameters. Press Output again: the second Output page reveals the wave's effect routing on the top line, and its pan setting and modulation parameters down yonder. Press Output yet again, oh weary fingerbone, and you'll be confronted by the wave's voice priority setting (which has no counterpart in a sampled sound), and its velocity window settings. Oriented (or for you Brits, "orientated")?

Grunt Zero

Load in the sampled sound VOCAL SNIPS from the

SSD-100 sampled sound floppy that came with your TS. Once it's loaded and you've selected it, press the Select Voice button. Press the button above WAVE-SMPL on the display to underline that field. Play the C# below Middle C for a charming little grunt that sounds like someone lifting an ASR-88. This, as you can see on the display, is wavesample 16 in layer 1.

All Put Out

Press the Output button. The top line shows two perhaps unfamiliar parameters; I say "unfamiliar" since the one on the right might be confused for the TS KEY-ZONE range thingy.

But first there's the BOOST parameter. This handy little device provides a gross volume boost for the selected sample. This can be a real butt-saver when setting up the volume balance between samples, since some of them, no matter what you do, are loud, while others are simply not, due to all kinds of digital recording voodoo ("caca?"). The BOOST parameter, when on, makes the selected sample 12dB louder than it really is. The rule o' thumb: A sample whose BOOST is on and whose volume (that's the VOL parameter on the lower line of the display) is set to 65 will be precisely as loud as a sample whose BOOST is off and whose VOL setting is 99. By the way, don't get too dependent on using this parameter as a quick-and-dirty loudness tweaker for this sample and that — before you know it, all of your samples will be boosted, and you'll be right back where you started, only much louder.

For the next two paragraphs, don't touch your keys unless you really mean it. The LO/HI-KEY parameter sets the keyboard range in which the selected sample will play. Follow? In our case, that's the grunt, currently set to play only on C#3. The parameter is set — but dontcha do this — by underlining the LO KEY and playing the lowest key on which you'd like to hear the selected sample. The underline then moves to the HI KEY field, at which time you can play the highest key on which you want to hear the sample. This is a great tool for mapping samples to the keys of your choice; a typical use would be to tweak an existing drum kit to conform to a keyboard layout you're used to.

I'm advising care here because sampled sounds oper-

ate on a last-one-in basis. Gnorf? What I mean is that the samples in a layer can overlap each other's lo/hi key ranges, causing one sample to "cover up" another. In this case, only the last one you set up is heard when you play their common key(s). Ergo, if you were to — again, don't do this unless you really want to — underline the LO KEY field now and play the lowest key on your keyboard, and then the highest, you'd have nothing but grunt from A3 down, and grunt-plus from A#3 up (A#3 happens to be where the samples in layer 2 begin in VOCAL SNIPS). As far as the samples in layer 1 go, it would be all grunts, all the time for you.

The bottom line of this display hardly requires explanation — tish-tosh — or much anyway: it's the standard volume and volume modulation parameters for the selected wave. Volume in sampled sounds is expressed linearly from 0 to 99 (in normal TS sounds, it's expressed in dBs). Press the Output button again: here is a page that looks and acts remarkably like its counterpart in TS sounds: it's the effect bus routing parameter for the selected wave, as well as its pan and panning modulation parameters. Note how cool this is, though: with sampled sounds, each sample gets its own effect routing and pan settings! The Ensoniq library is full of drum kits that take advantage of the individual-sample effect routing by leaving, for example, one clap dry while sending another through a beeg reverb.

We've discussed the Output parameters for sampled sounds by selecting a single sample for editing. You can also, however, select a whole layer, or even an entire sampled sound for editing. Just be careful with that whole LO/HI-KEY business.

Next time, we'll try to traverse the entire top row of editing buttons: the LFO and envelope stuff. ■



Bio: Robby Berman is a musician living in the fire-fly-lit pine forests of New York State. His latest album is "Rings and Rings."

Syntaur "Kickin Drums 4" Sample Set

Tom Shear

For: EPS, EPS-16+ and ASR-10

Product: Syntaur "Kickin Drums 4" Sample Set

Price: \$29.95

Contact: Syntaur Productions, 500 W Prairie Ave., Eagle Lake, TX 77434. Phone: 409-234-2700, 1-800-334-1288.

Have you ever had one of those days where you just don't want to work and, well... quite frankly you just want to bang on the drum all day? Well, even if you aren't Todd Rundgren (and not many of us are), chances are you have the need for some good drum sounds for your faithful sampler... perhaps even "kickin'" drum sounds. Well, if that's the case, Sam Mims and associates offer this new set of drum sounds for your consideration. Let's take a look inside, shall we?

Disk One

The set starts out with a kit of samples taken from the Akai MPC-3000. As one might expect, the sounds are crystal clear and punch through like nobody's business... And while there isn't really much variety (this is a single kit... one kick, one snare, etc), if you need that high quality, you will probably be willing to make that sacrifice. Aside from a nice kick and sharp snare, there are hats, rides, crash cymbal, some very nice toms, and a variety of different percussion sounds. The one weakness is the cymbals really, but this isn't entirely Syntaur's fault. The crash lacks a powerful attack and sounds wimpy, and most of the cymbals sound flanged a bit which is heavily annoying. As is the case with all of Syntaur's sounds, this is programmed to the hilt, with a truly amazing (and rare, unfortunately) attention to detail. The patch selects lay out the drums in a variety of different formats such as Ensoniq Drum Map, and General MIDI for added convenience.

Disk Two

Next up is the T-1 BigKit. This provides a little more variety, but unfortunately the sound quality suffers for it. This is basically a gated kit with some very powerful, heavy sounds, but the snares and toms sound muffled even

at their highest velocity levels. This is unfortunate because there are some nice sounds here. I would say heavy EQ would be necessary to use these in a professional setting, but it would've been nice to just have the sounds right in the first place... after all, that *is* why we buy these things, right? These sounds fare much better in the patch selects... especially the kit that shifts the pitch of the snares up... while they are not as heavy in this form, they sound a million times clearer and are *really* punchy... I'd recommend using the sounds in this form and ignoring the preset version.

Disk Three

Now this is more like it. This disk starts out with the X3 Rave Kit. This set gives the best combination of sound quality and variety so far. *Lots* of electronic and acoustic drum sounds to choose from, all of which are very clear and punchy sounding. I have to say Syntaur has the punch factor nailed, and that is something missing from most commercial drum samples. In addition to the kicks and snares, there are some nice hats, and miscellaneous percussion sounds including laser zaps, the ubiquitous 808 style cowbell, and some gated toms. *Very* nice kit. The only fault is that the reverb is way too extreme on this... but, of course, this is easily remedied by reaching for your handy dandy mod wheel and adjusting the reverb mix to your liking. These boys have thought of everything. And things continue to get better, believe it or not. The tiny CZ-101 kit was my favorite of the whole set. Who woulda thunk a little toy like the 101 could make such buttocks-kicking percussion? At a mere 165 blocks, you get a variety of Kraftwerkian bleeps, boops, and squiggles that will lend your tracks a definitely unique sound. Within a week of receiving these sounds, I had already used this kit in a remix. GREAT stuff!

Disk 4

And the set ends with a bang, so to speak, with Syntaur's Loop Bits Kit which is made up of sounds isolated from drum loops, as well as some from the Ensoniq TS-10. Once again big variety. Some of the sounds are a bit muf-

fled but that may actually be the point with these if you want to use them for programming authentic-sounding drum loops. The snares are cool and unusual and the hats are great and very realistic. In addition to all that, you get some really cool off-the-wall type syncussion sounds. As always, the patch selects provide useful variations including a "chipmunk kit" which would be useful to those into drums n' bass style techno. Nice, nice, nice. (Did I mention these sounds are nice?)

So there you have it. Yes, there are some clunks in the bunch, but I suppose every sample set you encounter is going to have its share. For the most part, however, these

sounds are punchy as can be, and overwhelmingly *professional* sounding. I have some nice drum samples of my own, but none of them sound as good as these. So if you are ready to take your sound to a whole new level, might I suggest you give these sounds a try? You won't be sorry. ■



Bio: Tom Shear was disappointed to learn that the ear drum wasn't a musical instrument.

WTHM, You're on the Air!

Eric Montgomery

Thank you for tuning in to WTHM (*Transoniq Hacker Magazine*) talk radio where our motto is "If it isn't Ensoniq, then you ain't got it!" Kick'in it live on the real thang with your humble host Dr. Love. Where we always reunite people with their gear. Now enough of all that jazz, let's get to our first caller. We have someone who says he is "Caught in the Love Triangle."

You're on the air!

"Well, I got this ASR-10 and I was really happy with it, but I went to the music store and heard the MR-61. I bought it. Now I love them both, but I can't get the MR to use the ASR samples. What am I going to do?"

Do you have a computer?

"Yes Dr. Love. I do."

You need someone who can be a translator between the ASR and the MR. That is what your computer can be with the right software. You have to get Giebler's EDM program (Giebler Enterprises 610-933-0332 <http://users.aol.com/giebler/>) to read the ASR sample into your computer. Then get Awave (Awave <http://hem.passagen.se/fmj/fmjsoft.html>) to convert your ASR sample to a format (.WAV or AIFF) that your MR can understand. Awave will save your ASR sample to a

floppy disk under the .WAV format so that the MR can read it.

"Thanks Dr. Love, now they can work together because of you."

Aw shucks, man that's real nice of you. Just doin' what I do.

This caller says that she wants to get the fire back into her relationship. Caller, you're on the air.

"Hi Dr. Love."

Hello.

"I feel rather embarrassed.."

Go on, we're all friends here.

"Well, I bought the KT-76 a while ago and Ensoniq just came out with the E-Prime. The piano sounds in my KT are great but the E-Prime has this Yamaha Grand Piano sample that is just wonderful. They operate the same and can read the same KT sound cards but I don't have that piano sample."

Not to worry. Ensoniq came out with an update (this

update has to be installed by an authorized Ensoniq service center) that will allow you to get the Yamaha Piano sample that is in the E-Prime for your KT-76/88 for only 149.95 including installation! There is more info available at their website at www.ensoniq.com or call their customer service department at 610-647-3930.

Our next caller says that her kids keep acting up. The DP-2 just keeps fighting with her guitar pedal. What are we going to do? Listen to her question; she's on the air!

"Hi doctor. I have these two that just won't get along. My MIDI pedal can't send bank change messages. For that reason I can't get to all my favorite effects settings in the DP-2."

Don't worry, the doctor is in the house. The only way to get around that problem is to use the Program Change Map in the DP. Simply press the Edit button. Press the System button. Use your right arrow button until you see Program Change Map and turn it on, then continue using the right arrow button and go to the next window. The first # is the program change # and the second # is the sound that you want the DP to load when that program change # is sent i.e. send program change # 1 and the DP-2 will load program 45. (The period after the number represents bank B).

"That's it?"

Yes, that is it.

"Oh, Dr. Love. You're the greatest!"

Yeah, you know Dr. Love has that effect on people. And our next caller says that she has a grouchy ASR-10. You're on the air with Dr. Love.

Call For Writers!

In spite of their current god-like status, writers for the *Hacker* were once mere mortals — just like you! If you're noodling around with Ensoniq gear, you too can join their elite ranks. We're always looking for new writers, and yes, there is actual payment involved. If you're toying with an idea for an article, how about giving Editrix Jane a call at 1-503-227-6848 and listening to her soothing words of encouragement?

"You see doctor, whenever I load a sample into the ASR it just gives me a lot of static and the sounds seem to be crackling. I get messages like error 144 or error, some # and reboot."

Have you recently expanded the memory of your ASR?

"Why, yes I have."

That may be the problem. First let's make sure of the correct simm description. 8 bit, 80 nanoseconds or faster, non-parity, non-composite, 30 pin simms. Look on the back of your ASR and look for the manufacturing date. If that date is before June 20, 1995 then you need to use 4 meg simms that have 8 D-rams per simm.

"What are D-Rams?"

D-rams are the rectangular or square boxes that are on the simm board. If it was made after 6/20/95, then you may use the simm that has 2 D-rams or the 8 D-ram simm. Thank you for calling.

The next caller is on the air!

"Hey doc, I got a problem. A friend of mine was telling me about this Paris thing coming out. What is it?"

Paris, basically, is a multi-track recorder. Have you ever used a four-track before or a sequencer?

"Yeah, I have a 4-track recorder."

Well, Paris is like your 4-track but it records to your computer hard drive, not to tape. Paris can record up to 128 tracks of audio! Yes, you can actually plug in your guitar and record it. Plug a microphone in and sing or have a whole band over and record the whole session! Talk about effects, Paris has 6 DSPs (digital signal processors) built in. The effects are the same quality as the DP-Pro effects processor. Incredible! You will have full editing like copying one vocal section of your song to several other locations in the song. It is the most powerful digital recorder I have ever seen. If you would like more information on this product and others from Ensoniq, check out their website at: www.paris.ensoniq.com.

If you have never been there or you have seen the site

before and haven't visited in a while now is a good time to visit. The site has been completely redesigned and it looks great.

We've got more calls for the man called Doctor Love here on WTHM. Our next caller wants to adopt a new friend but does not know if his old friend will get along with the possible new one. Hi, you're on the air!

"Hi Dr. Love. I was in the music store last week and I saw the ARXS."

Sir, that's ASR-X.

"Yeah, yeah, the AXRS, that's what I said. Anyway, I got an ASR-10, what's the difference between them?"

Lots of things. The ASR-X has a 16-track sequencer and it is 16-part multitimbral. It has 2 megs of built-in ROM samples and patches. The layout of the sequencer and selection of sounds is like that of the MR family of synths. It has a resonant filter and some great effects. It even has the ability to use an EXP board (EXP-3 is a good one for this unit) like the MR family.

"Can the ASR-X use my ASR-10 samples?"

Absolutely. By the way, some listeners may already have an ASR-X and they can't load ASR-10 samples. Just get on the Internet and order the software from the accessories department or call 610-647-3930 between the hours of 10:00-12:15 and 1:00-6:00 Monday through Friday. The courteous Customer Service staff at Ensoniq will be happy to help.

"Thanks, Dr. Love. I think my group of friends is about to grow."

Well that is what the doctor does, just spread'in L.O.V.E. Hello caller, what can I do for you today?

"You see, I'm calling for a friend. He is visually impaired. He is a great musician and he loves Ensoniq gear but sometimes it is hard for him to operate the various units since he's not able to view the screen. Is there anything you can suggest that might be able to help?"

Yes, there may be a way he can get more from his key-

board. I understand there is an LCD Interface that may work on several keyboards that actually read the screen to the user. The user could use a speech box, Braille board, large print screen, etc. This interface could possibly work on the KT/E-Prime, MR, SQ, DP family and the KS series. The people to contact:

Kentucky Department for the Blind
c/o Wayne D. Thompson
209 St. Clair St., P.O. Box 757
Frankfort KY. 40602-0757
1-800-321-6668 or 502-564-4754
502-564-2929 TDD
<http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/wforce/dfblind/dfserv.htm>

I am sure that company can help. Please keep in mind that Ensoniq does not do this type of upgrade or mod to any of their synthesizers. This is not a service that Ensoniq can provide or help with. All of this info has to be dealt with through the previously mentioned service.

"Thanks, Dr. Love."

The thanks in this case goes to the people that use technology to better the quality of our lives and to a friend of mine, Craig Friebolin, for finding this info. Well, here is our last caller.

"I just bought the ASR-X. I was wondering if I could use the EPS and EPS-16+ sounds on the ASR-X?"

The only way for this to be done is to load the sound up in either EDM (from Giebler Enterprises) or in an ASR-10 and resave the sound to a DSHD (Double Sided High Density) floppy. Then the ASR-X can read it! Well, we are out of time today. Remember to tune in to the people who care about you and your gear, WTHM and Dr. Love. ■



Bio: Eric Montgomery is a Customer Service/Technical support representative with Ensoniq. In his free time he writes and produces instrumental/Jazz and R&B music.

SCSI Voodoo, Zip Drives, and Ensoniq Samplers

Sam Mims and John Gould

After battling SCSI demons for quite a while at Syn-
taur Productions, we have finally arrived at a sampler-
Zip drive-computer setup that works consistently and
flexibly for computer editing and for storing sample
data. Along the way, we've gotten bumped and
bruised, but we have managed to figure out what
works and what doesn't — and even why in most
cases. Our SCSI system consists of a Macintosh com-
puter, Iomega Zip drive, EPS-16 Plus sampler,
ASR-10 sampler, and TS-10 synthesizer — all hooked
up together. And here's the amazing part: It all works.
The Mac is on one end of the SCSI chain, the Zip
drive is in the middle, and then a 3-position switch
box (made by QVS) feeds any one of the three
keyboards.

Many have had trouble transferring sound data via
SCSI from their ASRs to Alchemy software (MIDI
works, but is dreadfully slow). Take heart — it can be
done! We use Alchemy (and Infinity) with the ASR
and the EPS-16 all day long, and save our finished
work to Zip disk. But you've got to know the tricks to
make it all happen. The sequence in which you boot
up each device in the chain is important, as are some
other considerations.

EPS-16 SCSI Power

First of all, there is an inherent difference between the
ASR and the EPS-16 in their SCSI setups. The ASR
will supply power to the SCSI bus, the EPS-16 will
not. What this translates to is trouble if you want to
use a Zip drive with your EPS-16. (ASR users can
gleefully skip this section.)

The Iomega Zip drive needs to have its SCSI bus
powered, or it will not talk to anybody. Let's say we

have only a Zip drive and an ASR sampler in the SCSI
chain. If you plug the two together, they should work
fine because the ASR is powering the SCSI bus. If you
try this with an EPS-16 instead of the ASR, however,
trouble looms. The SCSI bus is not powered in this
scenario, and the Zip refuses to speak to anybody.

To resolve this trouble, you must have something else
in the SCSI chain that supplies power to the bus. One
such device is the SCSI Sentry, made by APS Tech-
nologies (800-395-5862), and available for around \$60
with the power adapter. The Sentry is an active ter-
minator that monitors traffic on the SCSI highway; it's
very handy for diagnosing problems.

If you have a Macintosh, however, you won't need the
SCSI Sentry (at least for power), as the Mac itself can
fill the role of powering the SCSI bus. Getting the
Mac, the Zip drive, and the sampler to work in har-
mony, however, is not exactly a walk in the park.

SCSI ID and Termination

Both the sampler and the Macintosh are terminated
and have fixed SCSI ID numbers. The Zip drive,
however, has switches on the back panel that allow
you to select the SCSI ID number (either 5 or 6) and
whether or not the termination is on or off.

For the ID number, it doesn't matter which you
choose. The SCSI ID number is kind of like a MIDI
channel; each device in the system needs to be on its
own "channel" so that it can be identified by the data
zipping through the cables. Neither the sampler nor
the Mac is set to SCSI ID 5 or 6, so choose whichever
of these numbers feels more in harmony with your
space-time continuum.

As far as termination goes, the answer is more tricky. Typically, the rule of thumb is that, in a SCSI chain, the devices on the ends should be terminated, and everything in between should not be. In the simple set-up with just an ASR and a Zip drive, the termination switch on the Zip should therefore be set to On.

How about when we add a computer into the recipe? Since the computer and the sampler will always be on the ends of the chain, both are terminated internally. And the Zip drive should not be, since it's now in the middle, right?

Actually, it should be terminated as well. The reason is that when the sampler talks to the Zip, we don't really want the Mac in the chain. And when the Mac talks to the Zip, the sampler has no good reason to be eavesdropping. Basically, we have two independent SCSI chains that just happen to be connected on a party line. So turn the Zip's termination switch to On.

Okay, I'm sure there are some wise guys out there who are now asking, "Well what about when the Mac talks to the sampler (i.e. when using *Alchemy*)? Shouldn't there be no termination between those two devices?" Well, wise guys, the answer to that one is, shall we say, beyond the scope of this article. (In other words, we don't understand it either. We just know it all works with the termination set to On.)

Well then, now that we've been ID'd and terminated, let's get back to the party, shall we?

Battling Over the Zip Drive

Adding a computer to the SCSI chain can be frustrating at first. First of all, skirmishes break out because the Macintosh and the sampler speak different languages, and they each want to talk to the Zip drive. If you place an Ensoniq-formatted Zip disk in the drive, for instance, the Mac will see only that the disk is non-Macintosh, and it will prompt you to format it. But if the Zip disk is formatted for the Mac, the sampler won't be able to talk to it.

Secondly, you must avoid situations where the Mac and the sampler try to access the Zip drive at the same time. This will freeze up the entire system, and you'll

have to re-boot everything.

The solution we have found is twofold. First, in order to use the Zip drive with the sampler, you must remove from the Mac's Extension list the Iomega Driver software. When you purchase a SCSI Zip drive and run the Macintosh Zip Tools installation program, the Iomega Driver software is placed in the System Folder and configured so that the computer automatically checks in with the Zip drive as it boots up. Your mission is to undo this.

We found it easiest to remove the Iomega Driver software from the Macintosh completely. Probably 99 percent of our Zip drive use is with the samplers, so we typically don't need the Mac to access the Zip drive at all. When we do, we can simply click on the Iomega Guest software (this also comes with Zip Tools) to access the drive immediately.

If you do typically use the Zip for Mac data, you should leave the Iomega Driver intact. When you're ready to use the drive for storing samples, go into Extension Manager, and simply disable (un-checkmark) Iomega Driver, and save this as a custom Extension list. Now, with the driver software disabled, the Mac will recognize that the drive is physically there (it sees it when it scans the SCSI bus during boot-up), but it no longer tries to automatically read anything from the Zip. In other words, if you have an Ensoniq-formatted disk in the drive, the Mac simply won't care. The computer will remain configured this way until you go back into Extension Manager, re-select Iomega Driver, and save this setup again.

If you want to use the Zip with the sampler for just one session, you can simply hold down the space bar as the computer boots up. This will take you directly into Extension Manager, where you can de-select Iomega Driver. This changes the computer's configuration only temporarily; next time you boot up, the driver will be back in place, and the Mac will see the Zip once again.

This cures the problem of how the Zip disk is formatted, but it still doesn't end our troubles. In order to get the whole system working, you must also obey the correct boot-up sequence.

Booting Up the System

Booting up everything correctly is of paramount importance. Unless you boot the Zip drive before the sampler, for instance, the sampler won't ever know that the Zip is there. But if the Mac and the Zip drive are booted up first, then turning on the sampler will crash the Mac. Yet with an EPS-16, unless the Mac is turned on before the sampler, the SCSI bus won't be powered, and the Zip drive won't be recognized. Gad-zooks, there is seemingly no way to make it work!

Fortunately, there is one right way, and it not only depends upon the boot-up sequence, but on the timing as well. (It's easiest and quickest to boot the sampler from the Zip drive rather than from floppy disk, so having an Ensoniq-formatted Zip disk containing the sampler's operating system in the drive is a good idea. It is not necessary, however.)

First, turn on the Mac and the Zip drive together (or at least approximately together). The Zip will come to life first. After about a second, it will wink its yellow light at you, signifying that it has booted itself and mounted the disk. While this is going on, Mr. Macintosh is working on his boot-up. After a few moments, he will signal you that he is happy (the smiling Macintosh icon shows on the screen), and power is now flowing to the SCSI bus. When you see this smile, turn on the sampler.

Note that, at this stage of the game, the Mac has not officially booted up yet — but it's working on it. The goal is to have the sampler up and running before the Mac completes its boot-up procedure. It's not that close a race, but don't loaf when you see that happy icon; go ahead and hit the sampler's power switch.

Be sure and wait until the desktop is up and running on the Mac before you begin working with the sampler. Jumping the gun can cause the sampler and the Mac to try and access the Zip drive simultaneously — a digital faux pas.

It's not too difficult to get the timing right on all of this — just wait to hit the sampler's power switch until you see the Mac smile. The reason for this procedure is that, as both the sampler and the Mac come to life, they each scan the SCSI bus to see who else is con-

nected. If the Mac gets scanned while it is up and running, it crashes. The samplers appear to be immune from this, so get the keyboard going first, and everyone will be happy.

To keep tabs on the whole procedure, watch the yellow LED on the Zip drive. It should first blink a few times for a second or two after being powered up, as the Zip checks for a disk and boots itself. Ten or twelve seconds after the Mac is turned on, the Zip light will blink briefly once again. Once the Macintosh smiles a second or two later, turn on the sampler, and when the display reads SEARCHING FOR SCSI DEV, the Zip light should blink again as the sampler scans the SCSI bus. Finally, as the Mac completes its boot procedure, the yellow light should blink yet again, as the computer scans the SCSI bus. (Watching the Zip LED is a good way to diagnose problems. If it doesn't blink after you turn on the sampler, for instance, you know that the sampler is not seeing the SCSI device.)

At this point, you're ready to rock. Accessing the drive with the sampler will not crash the Mac any longer, because it is no longer scanning the SCSI bus. Should the sampler crash, however, you will need to restart the whole system.

First-Time Zippers

As we mentioned earlier, it is easiest to have an Ensoniq-formatted Zip disk containing the sampler's operating system in the drive when you boot up. This way, as long as nothing is in the sampler's floppy drive, it will boot up from the Zip disk. This is less cumbersome and quicker, than booting from floppy disk.

To format a Zip disk for use with the sampler, you must boot up your system as outlined above, booting the sampler from the Ensoniq floppy disk containing the operating system. Once the Mac has finished its boot-up, you can then format the Zip disk by pressing Command/System on the sampler, and scrolling to the FORMAT SCSI DRIVE page. Press Enter, and the sampler will ask you a string of questions about Interleaving and such. Answering YES to all the questions works just fine; power users may want to make some

changes (we set up our own directory structure, for instance), but otherwise, don't worry. Most importantly, answer YES to the question of whether to copy the OS to the SCSI drive.

Once this is all done, you can tuck your OS floppy disk away for safe keeping.

Guarantees?

Dude, nothing having to do with SCSI is guaranteed. While this setup works pretty flawlessly for us, it's conceivable that you'll have trouble because you live too close to the north magnetic pole, or because your dad drove a Buick, or because one of your cables has decided to be persnickety (even though it has always worked fine until now, and probably will be fine again tomorrow). SCSI is notorious for being under the influence of some strange voodoo, and it just doesn't make sense sometimes. Mantras and incense probably work just as well as cable testers for solving the trouble.

Just the same, it's a good idea to keep SCSI cables as short as possible. The rule of thumb is that the entire SCSI cable run should not be longer than six feet. Ours is almost double that length, and it works fine. I guess we have long thumbs.

The good news is that, once you get the system working, it is likely to remain in good standing. The Zip drive is highly recommended; it's quite reliable, and insanely inexpensive. And combined with the sampler and the Mac, it makes for a powerful system for creating your own digital noises. ■

Special thanks to Joe Paschall at Ensoniq; he's a SCSI guru, and a true humanitarian. And a heck of a nice guy.

Authors' bios: Sam Mims and John Gould are noise-makers at Syntaur Productions in Houston. Sam likes IBMs, and John likes Macs — and they don't even fight over it.



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OUT-OF-PRINT BACK ISSUES

M.U.G. will provide Out-of-Print issues for cost of materials and postage. Write: G-4 Productions, PO Box 615TH, Yonkers, NY 10703. Attn: TH Back Issues. *** Folks in the New York City area can get copies of unavailable back issues of the *Hacker* - call Jordan Scott, 718-983-2400.

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Transoniq-Net

HELP WITH QUESTIONS

All of the individuals listed below are *volunteers!* Please take that into consideration when calling. If you get a recording and leave a message, let 'em know if it's okay to call back collect (this will greatly increase your chances of getting a return call).

All Ensoniq Gear - Ensoniq Customer Service. 9:30 am to noon, 1:15 pm to 6:00 pm EST Monday to Friday. 610-647-3930. Ensoniq's Fax On Demand line, (1-800-257-1439) can also be used to retrieve specs, OS info, hard-drive info, and the like.

All Ensoniq Gear - Electric Factory (Ensoniq's Australia distributor). E-mail address: elfa@ozemail.com.au; their web site at <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~elfa>; or e-mail their resident clinician, Michael Allen, at mallen@geko.com.au. Phone calls, Business hours - Victoria. (03) 480-5988.

All Ensoniq Gear - The Electric Factory in New Zealand, phone (64) 9-443-5916, fax (64) 9-443-5893, or e-mail geoffm@elfa.co.nz (Geoff Mason).

TS Questions - Pat Esslinger, Internet: pate@execpc.com, CompuServe: 74240,1562, or AOL: ESSLIP.

TS, VFX, and SD-1 Questions - Stuart Hosking, stuh@ozemail.com.au.

MIDI users and ASR-10 Questions - Ariel and Meiri Dvorjetski, Internet: s3761921@techst02.technion.ac.il, or dvorjet@techunix.technion.ac.il. You can also call Sincopated BBS at (Israel country code: 972) 4-8776035, 24 hours, 28.8K Modem. Please Login as: ENSONIQ, Password: MIDI

SD-1 Questions - Philip Magnotta, 401-467-4357, 4 pm - 12:30 EST.

VFX, SD32, and EPS-16+ Questions - Dara Jones, Internet: 71055.1113@compuserve.com or call 214-361-0829.

SD-1, DP/4, ASR-10 Questions - John Cox, 609-888-5519, (NJ) 5pm - 8 pm EST weekdays. Any time weekends.

SQ-80, VFX Questions - Robert Romano, 607-898-4868. Any ol' time (within reason) EST.

Hard Drives & Drive Systems, Studios, & Computers - Rob Feiner, Cinetunes. 914-963-5818. 11am-3pm EST. CompuServe: 71024,1255.

EPS, EPS-16 PLUS, & ASR-10 Questions - Garth Hjelte. Rubber Chicken Software. Call anytime. If message, 24-hour callback. (612) 235-9798. Email: chickenEPS@willmar.com.

ESQ-1 AND SQ-80 Questions - Tom McCaffrey. ESQUPA. 215-830-0241, before 11 pm Eastern Time.

EPS/MIRAGE/ESQ/SQ-80 M.U.G. 24-Hour Hotline - 212-465-3430. Leave name, number, address. 24-hr Callback. Email: G4Prod@aol.com.

MIDI Users - Eric Baragar, Canadian MIDI Users Group, (613) 392-6296 during business hours, Eastern Time (Toronto, ONT) or call MIDILINE BBS at (613) 966-6823 24 hours.

SQ-1, KS-32, SD-1, SCSI, MR & hard drive Questions - Pat Finnigan, 317-462-8446. 8:00 am to 10:00 pm EST.

ESQ-1, MIDI & Computers - Joe Slater, (404) 925-8881. EST.

eTH - A Faster, Cheaper Hacker

If you can receive e-mail via the Internet, you can take advantage of avoiding the post office and get a faster, cheaper, e-mail version of the *Hacker*. The e-mail *Transoniq Hacker* contains all of the same information and advertising as the printed version, but it's only \$20/year - anywhere on the planet. Plus, if you convert over from the printed version you'll get extra issues added to your sub. Interested? Just send a message to us at eTH@transoniq.com and we'll e-mail back complete subscription information. Let us know if you'd like a free copy of the current issue and we'll send one along.

The Interface

Letters for The Interface may be sent to any of the following addresses:

U.S. Mail - The Interface, Transoniq Hacker, 1402 SW Upland Dr., Portland, OR 97221

Electronic mail - Internet: interface@transoniq.com. In many cases a quick answer can be obtained by posting to our interactive, on-line Interface at our Web site (<http://www.transoniq.com/~trnsoniq/interface.html>) or calling Ensoniq CS at 610-647-3930.

This is probably one of the most open forums in the music industry. Letter writers are asked to please keep the vitriol to a minimum. Readers are reminded to take everything with a grain of salt. Resident answer-man is Pat Finnigan (PF). Letter publication is subject to space considerations.

TH -

I just bought an Ensoniq EPS-M OS 2.49. However, the nice dealer does not have the manual and advised me to refer to sampler ASR-10 manual.

We would be very happy if you could post or perhaps mail the manual.

Thank you,
Sheila ecaps@cyberway.com.sg

[PF - Sheila: The EPS-M came with two books - the Musician's Manual and the Advanced Samplers Guide. The first details navigating around the EPSM, the second deals with sampling and concepts (looping, theory and practice, etc.) You definitely want both of these, which are available from Syntaur (check for the link to Syntaur at our "Related Sites" page).

The EPSM is an especially cool piece in that it not only has the SCSI adapter built in (which lets you connect most Macintosh-compatible SCSI hard drives for sample storage), but it also has the OEX-8 output expander built in, allowing a total of a whopping TEN outputs. Very desirable piece.

Also, Rubber Chicken Software has an excellent EPS tutorial available. Check their link out at the Hacker's "Related Sites" page.]

Hey,

I have an Ensoniq EPS-16+ Turbo keyboard, and just bought a new SCSI Zip drive for it. I did read that there was firmware problem with it that didn't allow it to format in the proper Ensoniq format. Since it's a new unit, I am led to believe that there is still a problem. I even installed an older OS 1.10 in the EPS-16 to take advantage of the Format SCSI function. I am on the right track?? Please tell me I can use this drive... I can't take it back.

Thanks a lot,
Arthur
neuralgia@geocities.com

[PF - Art: The newer Zip drives are the ones

that exhibit the format problem. No combination of Ensoniq firmware/O.S. revision will talk to certain Zip drives. Contact Iomega Systems with the serial # of your Zip drive. If it's one of the "funny" ones that doesn't work well with the 16+, they'll exchange it for one that will with a full warranty. The Hacker published these findings last year when the Zip drives were first released and hard to find. Iomega is aware of the problem, so give them a shout: they'll take care of your drive...]

[PF - Garth's article on Zip drives is actually one posted at the TH ftp site. So you can check it out and get the full story. In addition there is an article in the pipeline from Sam Mims that also touches on Zips/SCSI and all that. It should be in the next issue or the one following.]

Hello,

Here is Johnny - an ASR-10 freak from Holland.

I want to know if you have any effect or filters for the ASR-10. I have only a resonant filter.

Greetings,
Johnny
jonenq@freemail.nl

[PF - Johnny: You want to contact WaveBoy Industries at 1-610-251-9562 (voice) to bag their other FX disks (like the Voder, Soniq Demolition, Audio-In FX, etc.) They are the only company I know of that has written alternate FX algorithms for the ASR...]

[TH - Every so often we hear something about some outfit in Europe that is also selling some FX for the ASR - but we've never heard from them directly, so we don't really have any info on them. You might want to ask around your local dealers to see if they know of them.]

[PF - Gang: I've heard from a reliable source at Ensoniq that these European FX disks are cracks of Ensoniq code. Enough code of insignificant strings is changed to make the file different, but the FX code is a

Waveboy lift. It is also my understanding from the same reliable source at Ensoniq that these people were, shall we say, vigorously prosecuted.]

[TH - Well, that certainly explains their shyness...]

TH-

I need a General MIDI Drum Note Map to use with my TS-10 in GenMIDI mode. Any ideas where I can get one?

Thankx,
Dennis Dickerscheid
DDickerscheid@kih.net

[PF - Dennis: I'd stop by your friendly music store and see if one of the sales people couldn't photocopy a page out of any Roland keyboard manual. (One little page ought to fall under "fair use.") As the GM spec is a Roland inception, just about any Roland keyboard manual will have that map in the back 10 pages.]

[Daniel Drummond, drummond@gold.com.br - You can check out the MIDI note numbers and corresponding percussion instruments on the following address: <http://gold.com.br/~drummond/daniel/textos/bateria.html> It's in Portuguese, but the instruments names are in English.]

Hello,

I just bought and returned Garth Hjelte's latest release of his DiskTools program. As a TS owner and a long time VB developer, I really respect his vision and goals with the program, but find it just too buggy to use after working with it for four hours. I could not successfully create layered instruments even after following the help file and trying different workarounds. The resulting EFE's did not map to the keyranges or the root keys I specified. I also found the interface challenging.

Am I alone in this experience? I am curious to know if my expectations were somehow unrealistic and that I did not give his program a fair shake. I am not seeking to find others to

simply slam Garth's effort to create a really cool program, but I thought I'd ask some other people's opinion...

I have historically used EDM, CoolEdit96 and AWAVE to create TS instruments from WAV files. These programs, while a little short on the feature side, are very solid from a bug perspective.

Please share your insights, or direct me to others who have used the program.

Many thanks,
Ted Bicknell
Bicknell@sprynet.com

[Rubber Chicken Software Co. (chickenEPS@willmar.com) - (Written July 12th) Mr. Bicknell kindly provided us with a detailed list upon returning the program (he had tried it for a day). Those concerns are addressed at <http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/concerns.html> - along with other folks' questions and suggestions. We posted these to a web site as to not fill up the space here.

Although we did not find any problems with the key range assigned within the modifying of the parameters as Mr. Bicknell stated, we did make some various improvements and implemented most of his other suggestions. He was also concerned that there wasn't more TS-specific stuff (not related to samples) in the program. That was why renamed the program from "TS Tools" for "Disk Tools." However, we are working on support for TS-type files within the program.

We invite you to take a look at the program by downloading the MIDI-Disk Tools demo at <http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/download.html> - although the demo is very non-functional, at least you can see the information side of the program, and you can write Disk Images onto floppies. Ensoniq Disk Tools is fully contained within MIDI-Disk Tools. You can also see a page-by-page description of the program with screen shots at http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/sfw_shpp.html#EnsoniqDiskTools - this will be posted on July 12th.

Since Mr. Bicknell has already returned the program, he hasn't seen the fixes at this time.

We apologize for any plugging of the program here - please see http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/sfw_shpp.html#EnsoniqDiskTools for the list of features.

We commonly respond to program concerns

immediately within a day, and have been known to provide a suggested feature on the spot - please feel free to express your ideas at the Concerns page listed above. By the time this is in printed form, the program will most likely do many more things!]

[PF - Ted: I can't offer any insight on DiskTools except I requested an eval copy for review be sent to the Hacker over a month ago. Maybe one of our other reviewers is checking it out as we speak.]

[TH - Nope, but a review copy is now on its way.]

[Ted Bicknell (Bicknell@sprynet.com) - Thanks to TH and Mr. Hjelte for the quick responses!]

I look forward to TH's review of Rubber Chicken's DiskTools because it promises to be one of the best PC-based sampling solutions for non-ASR owners in the TS world.

My initial review of the program was definitely shaped by my sheer enthusiasm and excitement with the DiskTools. In returning the program to Rubber Chicken the next day, I perhaps lacked the patience and understanding due to a fellow software developer simply because I was so pumped by the program's potential. Suddenly, I had realized that I did not have to own an ASR to create layered samples for my TS-12!

For other TH readers I would like to say that as soon as Rubber Chicken's DiskTools are reviewed finalized, I will be the first in line to take advantage of a cost-effective solution to unlimited sampling potential!

Eagerly waiting your review, Ted Bicknell]

Dear Transoniq,

I downloaded some files to use in my VFX-SD but I'm running into problems, I hope you can help.

I want to know if it is possible to transfer the file patches onto VFX formatted disks? I downloaded the EDE file but can't get the patch file in the proper config for the EDE to read into directory, and then onto VFX disk. Please help, the Transhacker docs don't help.

Best regards,
Thom
ballybead@worldnet.att.net

[PF - Thom: My recommendation is to

procure the VFX package of utilities from Giebler Enterprises at 610-933-0332. I reviewed his wareS years ago, and pound for pound, \$ for \$, they represent the most robust tools to do what you describe. Give Gary a shout - best \$40 you'll ever spend.]

TH,

I've counted on TH through many years of Ensoniq ownership. You provide a wonderful forum for learning the details of these complex and wonderful instruments. Here's my question for today...

I play in a fairly popular jazz group in Rochester NY, and we play at many of the summer festivals. Today while playing I looked down at the display on my MR-61, and it was solid black!!!! Soundfinder, as good as it is, doesn't work without a display. My question is what do other people do when you have to play outdoors in the sun??? These black instruments get ripping hot. [...and not from my hot licks either ;-)] Could this damage the instrument?? It still sounded great... but it's not functional as a performance instrument if you can't change sounds.

This was a scary experience as I was forced to play the whole gig with the patch I was on. Any solutions or suggestions will be appreciated.

Thanks for your help,
Gerry Youngman
youngman@eznet.net

[PF Gerry: I've played gigs outdoors in 100+ degree weather, and yes, when it gets that hot, most displays will conk out, especially LCD displays.]

The best I can tell you is to try to shade the display if you're stuck in that climate. Only turn on the instrument when you use it (shut it off during breaks, etc.), and try to keep it in the shade. My SD-1 and ASR are nigh impossible to read in direct sunlight.]

[Ensoniq - As stated in the Ensoniq manuals, there are temperature guidelines to stay within when dealing with any electronic gear. Damage can occur when exposed to extreme temperature changes. Leaving the MR in the back seat of a cold car for instance, will cause condensation to build up on the internal circuitry, the same way a pair of glasses will fog up when you come inside from the cold. Turning on a unit when this condensation has occurred can cause the components to

short out or be damaged. Excessively high temperatures also pose a threat to the unit, stressing both the internal circuits as well as the housing. With this in mind, it is highly advisable to follow these precautions when storing and setting up your MR-61 and MR-76, or any electronic gear for that matter:

- Avoid leaving the MR in temperatures less than 50 degrees Fahrenheit or more than 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

- When bringing the MR indoors after travel, allow the unit at least 20 minutes to reach room temperature before powering up. In the case of excessive heat, outdoor temperatures below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, allow an hour or more before powering up.

- Avoid leaving the MR exposed to direct sunlight inside a vehicle.]

[ICHI, ens-mi@mail.at-m.or.jp - Gerry,

Well, for your display problem, try making a little shade for your display using some cardboard and tape. It looks kinda stupid but it works.

As for selecting patches during a gig on a MR. There are two ways. First way is save the sounds your gonna use on the gig, only save them with a number. Say you have a Jazz Piano, save it as "1 Jazz Piano." Then say Suitcase Rhodes could be "2 Suitcase." During the gig all you need to do is press SELECT SOUND and the Low D key on your keyboard and there's your piano. Hit SELECT SOUND and E on your keyboard and you got your Rhodes. So on and so forth.

Second way, personally I like this way best. First decide what patches you'll need for the gig. Next, send each patch to a separate sequence location. To do this, select one of the locations (A-H) in the song playlist. Send the patch ("With Effect" so that all the patches sound as cool as possible) from Soundfinder to say Track 1 of sequence A. Since you have 24 sequence locations that means you can do this 24 times and have 24 separate instruments all with their own effect, tuning, ASDR, glide, pan, level settings and select any one at the touch of a button. (Or at the very most, three touches.)

If you don't care about isolating your effects you can put sets into a single sequence. So that's 16 instruments X 24 Locations = 384 instruments all accessible within a few key strokes. After you're done building up your sets, save 'em and name 'em. All you do now

is load up the appropriate file for the gig and you're ready to go.

This is pretty obvious so I'm sorry if you already did this and it wasn't happening for you. I know if you pick sounds on the fly this won't work, but I believe that we all pretty much know what sounds we're gonna use before the gig, at least the bread and butter stuff.

Apart from being my songwriting partner I do all sorts of live things with my MR and this has proven to be a very cool utility keyboard, like a Musical Swiss Army Knife. I use the Drum Machine for solo gigs, I play back sequenced samples and breakbeats for dance gigs, turn pathetic Standard Midi Files into acceptable files using the better MR sounds, remap and tweak the Drum Machine Data in Performer for Remixes and also to feed my loop-hungry ASR. Very cool machine. Hope my rambling helped. Aloha.]

[PF - Ichi: I use Method 2 for selecting sounds live on the gig. Each track gets a separate sound (or layers of sounds) so I just have to poke a track button to get the sound. The added benefit is effect assignments per track and the insert FX work way cool this way.

Well put - The MR-series is INDEED the "Swiss Army Knife" of keyboard players.]

Hi.

I own an ESQ-1 from the days my granddaddy played. (I also own an EPS 16+ from the days my father played.) My question: Cakewalk says it IS possible to send system exclusive data, such as patch info (internal program bank), to the ESQ-1. But I've had problems getting it to work right. Cakewalk WILL receive the info, but apparently the ESQ-1 doesn't like to receive it this fast or something. Do you have any info in this area?

Kevin
kcooter@usa.net

[PF - Kevin: The issue here is timing. Yes, Cakewalk can accept any Sysex message. It cannot play it out (or back) in the EXACT manner in which it was received. Ensoniq gear outputs a header message, followed by a short delay, then followed by a burst of Sysex info. Cakewalk isn't inserting that brief delay (typically 100-300 milliseconds between the header and the data). It can be specified - check out the following from an earlier Hacker.]

[TH - Here's the scoop from a similar question (in this case, for a TS) in Issue 129...

CS - Apparently, a problem arises with timing when using Cakewalk. What happens is this:

Your TS sends SysEx messages in two parts. First, it sends header data (informing the receiving device of what type of data is being sent, how much is being sent, and so on). Next, the TS sends the bulk (program or sequence or whatever) data. So far so good.

The problem arises when Cakewalk attempts to send the data back. It first sends the header data, then - without pausing - sends the bulk data. The problem is, the TS is still processing the header data when the bulk data begins to arrive, therefore missing it.

Apparently, there is an update for Cakewalk which remedies the problem; Ensoniq may have something to say about it. Otherwise, try contacting Twelve Tone Systems directly (you might also want to check out the Cakewalk home page: <http://www.isvr.soton.ac.uk/People/ccbl/Cakewalk/>).

And for anyone experiencing a similar problem, the remedy is to insert 100ms or so between the header and the rest of the data when sending SysEx to your TS (that is, if your sequencer will allow you to edit SysEx data).

Ensoniq - With regard to Cakewalk and timing issues, Sysex dumps of Sequences to the TS need "special" treatment for the reasons Clark mentioned. (See below for the exact Cakewalk fix which will work.)

A number of Ensoniq synthesizer users have complained that they can't get their Ensoniq gear to receive System Exclusive dumps correctly from their IBM PC's running Cakewalk. This problem was caused by Cakewalk's lack of required delays when transmitting certain types of Sysex dumps to Ensoniq equipment. (The Sysex messages affected were Sequencer dumps on all Ensoniq gear, and Preset dumps on KS/SQ family products.)

The problem has been fixed in the latest release of Cakewalk Professional for Windows version 2.01. (Please note that there is no fix for Cakewalk for DOS users, or for Cakewalk Pro for Windows v1.00 users.)

To fix the Sysex timing problem, users must edit the configuration file named TTSSEQ.INI that is located in their C:\WINCAKE direc-

tory. The following 3 configuration lines must go in the [OPTIONS] section of TTSSEQ.INI:

```
SysxDelayAfterF7=1  
SysxSendDelayMsecs=200  
SysxSendPacketSize=65535
```

These settings cause Cakewalk to delay 200 milliseconds if it encounters an F7 in a System Exclusive bank. This gives the Ensoniq gear a required amount of "breathing" time which is necessary to process the Sysex transmission. Please note that timing requirements such as this are not unique to Ensoniq products - other keyboard manufacturers also rely on specific byte timings when receiving Sysex messages.]

TH -

I have EPS-16 PLUS Turbo. I can't find a SCSI hard disk. I tried the Seagate 2.1 GB but I "Fail to Format this Disk." Now I'm Looking for Zip. The Syquest models in your list on the Internet no longer exist. Only the "EZflyer 230 MB" and "Syjet 1 SE-08 1GB" I can find.

Please send me your advice because I'm in confusion.

argwin@hol.gr

[PF - Argwin: Rather than going with a removable drive, have you considered a smaller hard drive? They are SOOO much faster than Zips and Flyers because the removables don't support changeable interleave (which is crucial to SCSI load times).

If you've got to have a removable drive, check out the Rubber Chicken page at <http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps>, as Garth has a pretty comprehensive page of caveats concerning SCSI and the 16+. Select the "Tips" option from the menu bar - very useful info...]

TH -

In the July, 1997 issue, your reply to Joseph Cason Jr. suggested he acquire an SQX Expander for his SQ-2. What is an SQX Expander (this is the first I heard of it), and is it available for my SQ-1 Plus?

TaxProArt@aol.com

[PF - TaxProArt: Yes, the SQX-70 sequencer expander supports all the SQ KEYBOARD series - the racks, without a sequencer, ob-

viously can't use it. But the answer is an affirmative yes: the SQX-70 works in the SQ1/21+/KS32 series of Ensoniq keyboards.]

Hello to all,
Please bear with me...

I've been using my Ensoniq MR-76 keyboard as a MIDI controller to my soundscape Elite card to make GM files. I start them using Cakewalk Home Studio v 2.01, running in Win95. When they're done, I load them via floppy into my MR, and assign some MR ROM sounds, tweak a bit, and resave as an MR *.mid file. This usually works well for me because I then have two versions. A great sounding MR, and an acceptable GM, for those unlucky enough to not own an MR.

But the MR only allows 215k (we've been through this before), to play back MIDI files in a playlist. Well, I make rather large MIDI files (150k+) and can not fit more than one song at a time into my MR. We'll probably never get any more SONG RAM available for our MR's, (I've been begging for more RAM, but apparently, I'm alone on this, and still reaching deaf ears). So, I'm trying to use the Voyetra Audiostation Midiplayers' Playlist that came with my Ensoniq Soundscape Elite Card, and my PC's 16 meg RAM so I can finally, hopefully play the MR *.mid's one after the other. I have had NO problems playing back the GM .mid files, both to the Soundcard, and to my MR through MIDI. The problem occurs when I create a PC playlist of MR *.mid sequences that use MR ROM sounds, and attempt to play 'em back from PC to MR.

I'll set the Soundscape's MIDI device to external, so it will play my MR which it does, but it doesn't access the right MR ROM sound locations, until I press STOP and START on the Audiostation Player. Then, It will pick the correct sounds... until the next song in the list. It will play too, but also uses the wrong sounds, until I hit Audiostation's STOP and START again. I have to do this for every song in a playlist, but only for the sequences I changed to use MR sounds and effects. Audiostation is all I've got with more than 215k available, that supports the use of a playlist, and it works great with everything...except an MR *.mid. I have updated my Soundscape Elite drivers to the latest available on the Web. The same *.mid's loaded into the MR via its onboard disk drive play flawlessly. Well, the ones smaller than 215k that is. :<

The Microsoft Mediaplayer doesn't have

trouble accessing the right sounds in an MR *.mid sequence, but does not allow for a playlist, (that I know of, and it chops up the 1st couple notes every time anyway).

If I then load that same MR *.mid into Cakewalk, and select Soundscape midi out, The MR will respond correctly, but again... no Playlist allowed, just one seq at a time. Aaarrggggghh!! Not quite what I wanted ...

I'd love to be able to just stack 3 or 4 whole songs in my MR. (Isn't that why we have 24 sequence locations and some 9k steps?) But recording multiple time meter changes in an MR song, requires a NEW sequence for every meter change. The MR can't create/edit multiple time signatures within a Sequence. (If they exist, they're read only.) Well, that wouldn't bother me except for the fact that when I use the MR's playlist and have a different time meter for each sequence, the song is no longer (remotely from my PC), MR friendly, because:

First, Songs are saved as a .mfb (song), not a .mid (MIDI file). Audiostation won't recognize a .mfb file as something it can play. So to be able to play this song from the PC to the MR means going back, and saving ALL the sequences in the song separately as *.midfiles (*.mid), and putting them into a playlist in the PC's midiplayer.

...And second, unlike the MR's playlist, my PC's midiplayer playlist loads JUST the 1st sequence, plays it, then stops to load the next sequence before it can go on, which of course, wrecks playback of the song, and by the way, if you do the math, 215k shared by 24 sequences averages 8.9k per sequence. Sorry Ensoniq, but that's just about a sin.

One song I did was several MR sequences that used the MR playlist, and I wanted to make it a GM sequence so someone without an MR could play it. I had to append track 1 of seq. 2, to the end of track 1 seq. 1... and so on...for all 16 tracks, for all the individual sequences... 'till I had 1 huge sequence. It took forever, and when I was done, I realized the whole song was locked into the first time meter (4/4) and that just about wrecked everything. I'll never start another song on my MR that I want to also be GM. It doesn't work well for me.

That is why I now use Cakewalk to start sequences, and wait 'till they are finished to make an MR sequence out of it.

But now, I can't play them back reliably from my PC to the MR, (for the above "Start/Stop"

reason), and some are too big to even fit into the MR. Even ones that DO fit... there's not enough RAM left to tweak it, or play anything else along with it, and of course, since the sequence is no longer in playlist fashion, (it's just 1 huge sequence), I'm now locked into using just 1 insert effect for the whole song. That, is a rather large bummer. An Avoidable situation with more RAM available... yes?

My MR-76 is totally up to date with OS 2.10 My Voyetra Audiostation software is V 1.80.08, and came bundled with my Soundscape Elite card. Got Ensoniq's latest Soundscape drivers from the web. No change. I've been to Voyetra support. Not much help. I turn to you, Gods of the great Malvernian Boxes.

It is important to me that I be able to play MR *.mid files one after the other. (Correctly.) That's why I bought it. That WAS the sales pitch. Is there any playlist software for the PC you know of that can do this, or should I start thinking about selling my MR already, in favor of something with some real RAM?

I hate to keep grinding on about the RAM thing, 'cuz I do absolutely love everything else about my MR, but c'mon, are people *really* happy with 215k TOTAL Song RAM? (Shared by the Idea pad, and any RAM soundbanks, I might add, so there's often even *less* RAM than that available.) Just what the heck were these engineers thinking about when the discussion about RAM came up? (It couldn't be \$\$\$'s, RAM is cheap!) Has anyone ever tied to edit a 158k file in an MR? How about you? Doesn't anybody else ever get the "SORRY...NOT ENOUGH RAM TO..." messages?

And, I don't really want to hear "That's what your PC is for" stuff either, 'cuz NOBODY wants to have to haul their PC around with them. I know I don't.

I gotta tell ya, It really fries my butt when I see how they've adorned prior KBs with "RAM RAM RAM RAM," and the new ASR-X with "RAM RAM RAM RAM RAM" up the wazuu! And here's the big bad "innovative" MR, with - well, "ram." Isn't EXPANDABLE a part of its Ensoniq given name? Compositions on 215k? Good luck. (That's the equivalent to the space shuttle running on 1 gallon of rocket fuel.) I'll bet that's why they put the demo on a chip, because it wouldn't fit in the sequencer.

Now, To Ensoniq, or ANYONE who'll listen:

I know you don't want to hear this, but I'll say it anyway -

I'd like to see an exp card designed for the MRs that gives us more SONG RAM. (Or at LEAST, some decent software for our PC's that can play MR Midi's without giving it the hiccups, or a mind of its own.) I promise... I'll BUY IT!!

Maybe, we could use the 3rd slot, since we can only have one sample flash card installed anyway, and most people can afford maybe one exp card, (that's me), and so that leaves room for one more. (Don't want to waste that 3rd slot.) How 'bout a SONG RAM card!?? Please, Please, Please. (I said Please...) I'm convinced my MR editing problems would ALL disappear, and then I wouldn't have to sell it.

I can understand the need for a PC to edit the internal MR layers using Unisyn, But with a 16-track sequencer as POWERFUL as the MR's is, and RAM as El Cheapo as it is, WHY'd you put it on a PERMANENT diet of 215k? (My telephone has more RAM than that for cryin' out loud.) I can't believe that anyone would REQUEST less RAM for a Composition Keyboard Sequencer.

I get ERROR CITY if I try to edit anything bigger than 150k, and I'm getting sick of that event 65 error too. All the editing features in the world (and the MR does have an outrageous array of features), don't mean "diddly" to me if they just generate errors when I use them, 'cuz my file's too big.

Ram Ram Ram will make it go way-away-away: Am I alone alone alone?

...wishing the MR wasn't so... RAM-less
Tim Roche
TRWEBBS@aol.com
Erie, Pa.

[PF - Tim: Well, uh, ah, er, what can I say? You're absolutely right on all counts, and I'm not going to tow the "it was designed to be a compositional workstation for one song" line, because, I've hit that wall once myself trying to sequence Dukas's "Sorcerer's Apprentice" into it. What I will say is that it was a rare occasion (I don't normally try to load a complete symphony into the MR), and I didn't let that one issue spoil the convenience of the instrument.

But I'm not saying that's what's happening, here, and I wouldn't dream of second-guessing Ensoniq's next move, so I'll cast my vote for more sequencer memory also. After

all, the original EPS Classic shared RAM with samples and sequences (as anyone who tried to move a full bank load from an EPS into an EPS rack discovered), so yeah, I'd like to see Ensoniq retrofit an ASR-X 72-pin SIMM slot into the MR for sequences so I can drop a \$159 32 Mb SIMM in it and load 12 hours of non-stop sequences into it.

I'd also like to see an end to world hunger, violence, political correctness, and Microsoft world domination also...]

[TRWEBBS@aol.com - Thanks for the vote, Pat. <p. Anyone else? Just curious, if Ensoniq has no intentions of giving us an option for more MR RAM, all I'm asking for is a good reason why. They had to change the specs about the ASR/EPS sample option... Okay, I can live with that. They changed the specs on the flash sample memory (12M down to 4M)... Okay, I can live with that too. But, you get my drift...]

Thanks for the vent!!! It's 4am, I just ran out of memory again, and I'm going to bed.]

TH -

I would like to format Zip cartridges from my Macintosh for my ASR-10. Lately I had some problems formatting from the ASR.

Thank you,
Alain from Montreal

[PF - Alain: The Zip issue is getting to be a very popular subject here in the interface. Certain Zip drives have a problem with the ASR and won't format Zip carts, but since yours just recently started having problems, I'd suspect improper cabling or termination before pronouncing the drive flaky. As Zip externals only allow two SCSI ID's (5 or 6), ensure nothing else in your SCSI chain has either of those ID's. Secondly, ensure you've terminated the Zip drive, or the ASR simply won't see it. Check out http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/rcs_tips.html#Zip DriveTips for some pretty enlightening info.

I'm not a terribly pro-Zip guy, because the Zip carts don't allow changing interleave, and changing interleave from 1:1 to 2:1 or 3:1 basically cuts ASR load times in half. And since all removable media (at least all the removables I've used) won't format to an ASR-optimal interleave, I leave them alone. Then again, the convenience of one drive sharing two purposes can not be denied...]

TH,

I recently acquired a whole bunch of back issues of TH related to my TS-12 (at a great price!), and they have been a great resource. I'm a late bloomer on the Ensoniq scene and my TH subscription is a definite plus.

I have a few questions about the TS-12 I could not find direct answers to in the articles (they may be in there somewhere, but I hunger for quick answers and shared experiences from the TH community). I have grouped these into a few categories. Feel free to flame me if these questions have been asked time and time again. Here goes:

A) Problems with my TS-12?

1) I sometimes hear crackling when rapidly modifying effect params on a voice with any mod controller, or when simply rapidly adjusting Filter params or other envelope properties. This is a bummer when I want to record the effects of dynamically changing a voice's effects onto my 4 track. I called McMurray's music here in St Louis and was told "Yes, that happens." Is this true? Should I accept that I am offered a feature that I cannot use for production work because the resulting sound is crackly? The crackling does not always occur, but it occurs enough so that I have essentially given up trying to really dynamically modulate effects while mixing down.

2) Try the following: take a patch, select a single voice/wavesample within it and set all env params to "ALL ZEROS" using the good 'ol COPY options (except env 3, use piano decay so you can hear it), and strip off all effects, filters, LFO etc so that you can hear that wavesample at its rawest form. I have created a patch called BARE-SOUND with this setup where all wavesamples within the patch are grand piano and butt-nekkid, and only the first wavesample will sound - all other are muted. This helps me experiment from the ground up. Change the first, non-muted wavesample to SINE-WAVE. Go ahead and strike a chord with over 6 notes simultaneously sounding. Hear any crackle?

Selecting other wavesamples with the exact same setup does not yield the crackle. I believe it is limited to the sine-wave wavesample. I get this even just plugging in my headphones to the TS-12, so it's not my other audio equipment.

Is this what other THackers mean when they say the TS-12 is weak in the analog wavesample area?

Mine crackles badly. I created my BARE-SOUND patch as a personal teaching tool, so I could figure out how to work with wavesamples at their barest forms to create custom analog synth patches. That's the great thing about the TS-12, right? I'm a computer programmer, and the TS generally gives me the control and creativity I want. I am also very interested in ambient techno (Like Paul J Pappas), and I can't afford CD-ROMS, so I want to create great analog sounds just with the ROM wavesamples. Do I need to take my unit in for service, or is the sine-wave wavesample just that way? What are my options if this behavior is "just the way it is"? \$250 for CD-ROM, \$199 for CD and nothing left over to buy beer with? hmm....

Which leads me to my other question...

B) RESONANCE with ROM wavesamples:

1) Besides using effects processing, what are the best methods for getting resonance filter-like effects on on board ROM patches and wavesamples? No, I don't want to use VCF or effects to do this. YES! I have used wheel and pedal mods to tweak the Filters page parameters, but that's just tone/frequency. NO! The onboard transwaves are just too buzzy. Don't like 'em, but I have used them only because I have not learned yet how to get resonance filter like effects with other methods. I understand that ROM samples are static, and that's why we have transwaves, but there's gotta be a way to get close to resonance like effects without the effects processing and buying samples! Which makes me wonder about...

2) TIMBRE: is this the gateway to approximating resonance-like sounds on the TS? Can anyone point me to a concise how-to with TIMBRE and MODMIXER to approximate Rezonancy?

I primarily bought the TS-12 to program great analog synth patches. (did here an oops! out there?) For my general "rock-band" type stuff the TS-12 is easy to use and drums, keyboards (but not basses) sound great. Please let me know what my programmatic (not CD samples!) options are..

C) Creating Transwaves

1) I own EDM, CoolEdit and AWAVE and a PC laptop. I have already created a number of keymapped sample instruments. Can I create transwaves myself?

2) and finally a tip for creating really clean WAV samples on the PC using CoolEdit with

your junky sound card:

A lot of people know about CoolEdit's Noise Reduction feature, but not everyone may be using it to its full potential. This tip can be found in the help file on the Noise Reduction screen. Despite my crappy sound card (and I have verified that my wav file quality is due to my soundcard - I tested another card on my PC), I can create clean wav files, ripe for EFE conversion. The trick is to allow a second of "silence" before recording your sample. Once the sample is recorded, select the minute of silence (or system noise) and create a noise reduction profile using the Noise Reduction options. The key is not to generate a noise reduction profile for the whole sample, just the noise before it. After you have generated the noise reduction profile, exit the Noise Reduction profile screen and zap the leading and trailing "silences" in the sample, and then select the entire wavesample. THEN apply the noise reduction profile to the whole wavesample. You are essentially subtracting out the noise from the key sample. You may have been aware of this, but I wasn't, and now I NEVER have to worry about noisy samples again. This has made a world of difference!

Thanks for your assistance!
Ted Bicknell
Bicknell@sprynet.com

[PF - Ted: Answers, in order:

(A1) Modifying FX parameters can result in what we call "zipper" noise, but the key word in your sentence here is "rapidly." If you're torqueing a parameter of an ACTIVE effect by massive amounts, yes, you can experience this anomaly. That's one of the reasons ALL FX processors mute their outputs when changing programs - you don't want to hear what a DSP chip sounds like when you reset it and load new variables (nor would you want to replace your speakers' tweeters every time you did this). But it's also quite possible that your TS FX hardware is out of calibration or otherwise a bit non-linear. If your instrument is under warranty, no problem - just return it to your FRIENDLY Authorized Ensoniq Repair Station (dealer) for repair, if it's out of warranty I'd still have an Authorized Service Center look at it just to insure it's up to snuff. An ounce of prevention...

(A2) I've been able to repeat this on ALL Ensoniq keyboards. The Ensoniq VCA's do NOT like to be slammed shut. I haven't experienced a "crackle," but on my SD1 after the VCA snaps shut I can hear some residual

"bacon frying" of the FX processor as it decays. It's at such a low level I just wrote it up to the cost of doing business on such a productive interface. I've found that on the Malvern sampling box a VCA release of 12-15 prevents this behavior, and is so close to "key-up" release it might as well be 0.

(B1) Contact Waveboy Industries at 610-251-9562 (voice) or 610-408-8078 (fax) to order the Resonant Filter Disk. It's \$40, and gives you an ADSR-programmable 4-pole resonant filter that will positively wake up your entire Moog sample library.

(B2) See (B1) above.

(C1) See (B1) above, they ALSO sell a 5-disk Transwave Library for \$70 that offers 27 evolving waveforms with resonant sweeps, PWM, vector synthesis, FM, all under real-time control. And as they proudly proclaim, "no pianos."

It's my understanding that a transwave is a really "packed" wave, i.e., a big sample comprised of MANY little sample fragments with lotsa pointers. You could make your own, but it's such a time-consuming affair I'd bag the Waveboy set. When I jumped off the Ensoniq bandwagon, I had to perform this exact feat on a Roland W30 by taking all my samples, butt them end to end and write down all the sample start/stop points as well as loop start/stop/position pointers to get any more than 4 sounds into its limited 512k sample memory. Boy, did I come screaming back to Ensoniq after working 6 months with that er, uh, ah, keyboard...

(C2) Passing these tips along; thanx!

Hope this helps!

[Ted Bicknell (Bicknell@sprynet.com) - I got an answer to the crackle on the stripped down sine-wave sample from Ensoniq. They responded very quickly to my email inquiry.

It was the volume on the Output page, which apparently defaults to -2. It turns out that this volume level is high enough to cause distortion when more than a few notes are played simultaneously. I turned the output volume down to -8 and that solved that!

As for my search for RESONANCE on the TS-12, the VCF effect works pretty well for now when slaved to the CV pedal for an auto-wah type effect.

Just thought I'd pass the volume thing along...]

[PF - Ted: Amazing thing, a full-code sine wave, isn't it? You've just discovered the torture test for ADC's and DAC's. I would have never guessed that -2 would be that hot a level, but hey, you've proven it is. Thanx for pinging us back with the solution and kudos to Ensoniq for the prompt heads up on this issue.]

TH -

I need a program that will convert .wav, aiff, and possibly even other sampler formats to that of the TS-10. This program should also be able to write to either floppy for TS-10 or save to a SCSI drive. I thought I found one with a program called EPSm but the site to download it from is inactive for another month. Please help, I love my TS-10 but I need a wave of adding and storing new samples.

Thanks,
Pat Duff
psduff@mailhost.mis.net

[PF - Pat: I apologize for sounding like I'm on a soapbox, but the best bang for your buck are the Giebler utilities. They're a whopping \$40, and they'll let you migrate samples all over the place, as well as convert one sequence format to another (!!!). I reviewed the sound utilities almost 3 years ago, and they're worth every penny. Contact Giebler Enterprises at 610-933-0332 (voice) or 610-933-0395 (fax). Gary is the oracle of x-platform utilities.]

[Ted Bicknell (Bicknell@sprynet.com) - I just bought the TS-12, and had the same need, which I have solved!

If you have a PC (or Mac) with a sound card, you can use a suite of programs to create great sounding samples.

A guy named Gary Giebler created a program called EDM, which allows you to write EFE files to EPS formatted disks (and ASR). Another program called AWAVE allows you convert WAV, AIFF (any sample type) to EFE format. Finally, any WAV creation/editor program allows you to create and modify WAV files at 44kHz, 16-bit CD quality sound. I use CoolEdit96.

All of these vendors and programs can be found on the net. Just search for the names.

I first create WAV files with CoolEdit96 on my PC with my sound card, and then edit

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Your ASR-10 becomes a high-end digital compressor, with this new Waveboy plug-in effect. This stereo compressor limiter has adjustable attack, decay, threshold, and ratio, plus a noise-gate function to control digital noise in more extreme squashing situations. Only in digital can you get true "instant" attack time, which can control the fastest transients. Great on internal sounds, for re-sampling, and for processing external inputs. A must-have tool for recording, mixing, and mastering. Also works on the EPS-16 PLUS (with mono audio-in.) \$49.95

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them as needed (sometimes noise reduction methods are required for noisy sound cards). I then use AWAVE to convert them to EFE files, and finally I use Giebler's EDM program to write them to floppy. AWAVE also gives you the ability to map more than one wav file to separate keymap ranges.

Rubber Chicken also has a program which combines these three functions into one Windows package (and allows you to do a whole lot more)! They also have a Mac version available.]

TH -

In the July issue of TH Bill Webster wrote about not being able to get the ASR-10 to respond to program change messages using Logic Audio.

I have tried to do so in the past and have an answer for Bill.

Here is the problem:

Logic instruments have a program change N0 as well as a bank N0 (CC 32).. If you were wanting to send a PGM change number to change to a macro on the ASR, you would have to use a "transformer" in logic to convert the bank control number 32 into a PGM change number. Plus use the add value of 101 in the "operations" 2nd data field, so that bank 1 will now send out PGM 101, and then use the standard PGM for you samples to load.

But still this does not work due to the fact that logic spits out both messages at the same time and the ASR-10 can only process one message at a time and not the other. So you will either change your macro or load a sample, one or the other.

Now you're thinking, "But logic has a delay object." Yes, this can be used but only while the sequencer is running. AND it is NOT much good loading samples while your song is playing.

The Workaround:

Is to use a PGM to load a bank file. This works but you have to have the ASR in the directory where the bank resides. That's the only way I have been able to make loads somewhat automated. Anyone else have any ideas?? I have tried many times to get this to work.

BTW, Len Sasso (LSasso@Swiftkick.com)

has written a book about Logic Environments, which I believe is superb.

Have fun,
\\|// Lynden J Garrett
(o o)
-

Lj.garrett@hunterlink.net.au

[PF -The Transoniq Hacker - what a concept, what a forum...]

Dear TH,

What buttons do you push on the SD-1 to find out about available sequence memory? Also, on the TS-10? Is it still possible to have an older SD-1 updated to 32 voices with memory expansion - through an authorized dealer or otherwise? Is memory expansion still available for the TS-10? Or did the TS-10 come fully expanded?

Also, register my vote to bring back the patch select buttons and a large display screen on Ensoniq's next version of the MR synth! I really do miss those features.

Bob
San Francisco Ca

[PF - Bob: Sad to say, the SD-1 upgrade from the VFX-sd expired about two Februaries ago. The SD-1, as the flagship of the Ensoniq line at its time, came only as a 32-voice fully-expanded instrument. You got 4 banks of internal sounds (outside of the cartridge sounds!), fully expanded sequence memory (built-in SQX-70), 24-track sequencing, that glorious interface... Ah, I digress. I still use mine to death, and when it breaks I truly don't know what I'm gonna do to replace it...

The TS-series came with 2 Mb of sample RAM on two 30-pin (non-parity) SIMMS. To fully expand it, you remove those two SIMMS and replace them with two 4-Mb, 30-pin, non-parity SIMMS (Macintosh compatible). These are currently available for around the \$25-\$35 price range each (as 30-pin SIMMS are quickly becoming obsolete), and represent the most valuable addition you can perform on your TS. As the TS can only address 8 Mb total of sample RAM expansion, it's useless to try to install 16/32/64 Mb SIMMS in it, as they won't work. Just bag two 4-Mb SIMMS and you'll have done the right thing.

Because (remember?) the TS reads

EPS/16+/ASR disks - you have access to load the largest sample library in existence into your TS with 8 Mb sample RAM installed.

And yes, I miss those patch buttons more than I can say, and I'm only one of the thousands of Ensoniq users who whined about their departure on the new line of Malvern boxes, but something about the sound of a tree in the forest comes to mind...]

For the Interface:

I recently purchased a Roland Super JV-1080 synth module. I am using THE GREAT TS-12 as a controller. Just so Ensoniq doesn't get offended I will list my Ensoniq equipment: TS-12, SQ-1, DP4+, and lots of Ensoniq sound cards, disks, and pedals.

It's just that the JV-1080 has the sounds that I have long looked for. I am doing my best to write music. I have only been playing for about 3 years. My question is this:

Roland's JV 1080 has a user bank, preset A, preset B, preset C, and preset D (GM). These are patches (sounds) that can be selected via Midi. I have sent with this letter a copy of a couple of pages from the Roland manual to help explain my situation. (3. Live Performance Techniques.) I have been trying to select the different banks from the TS-12 and have not been successful. I would like to show you what I have tried so far. EXAMPLE:

TEMPLATE FOR TEST ROLAND PATCH
CONTROL CHANNEL=16

TS-12: TRACK 1 - CH 16

2 - CH 16

3 - CH 16

4 - CH 16

TS-12: TRACK 1 = 80 MSB - got Roland user bank

2 = 81 MSB - got Roland preset A

3 - Here is the problem.

4 - Here is another problem.

Somehow I am sending the proper info to the Roland for user and preset A. But I can't call up on the Roland preset B or C from the TS-12. If you look at the manual... Roland JV needs an MSB and a LSB value. How can I do both in the track parameters on the TS-12? EXAMPLE. Preset B needs 81 MSB and 1 LSB. I am going crazy trying to figure this out.

I have called tech support at Ensoniq but get little help. It's not their fault. Its really hard to explain on the phone. I called Roland in

California. They said to call Ensoniq. Ensoniq said to call Roland. I know I'm missing something here. This shouldn't be that difficult. Please help me if you can. I know I have everything set on the Roland that I should to receive PC and CC messages. I guess I need to know my TS-12 manual better. (But I have read it many times!)

I know this letter is rather lengthy but I really need to get this resolved. I'm thanking you in advance for your help.

P.S. Contrary to Roland's manual, the keyboard does not do this automatically.

P.P.S. I want to send these program changes with one push of a track button. (Live performance.)

Sincerely,
Deane Seelhorst

[PF - Deane: For only being in the MIDI scene for three years, you're sure deep into Sysex! Your questions are really not that outside, nor are they some kind of impossible feat. But the issue here is doing it live, and in real time. These types of sysex messages are usually sent out by a computer to perform these sysex functions. The TS will not do these kinds of macros in real time. It will send out program changes, and other standard MIDI controller messages, but rather than saddle its horsepower by sending an FE out every 300 ms (active sensing, like Roland, Yamaha, and others), it uses its CPU cycles for sequencing, realtime FX modulation, all those wonderful things we've come to take for granted out of the Ensoniq box.

What I would recommend doing is to request a copy of the Sysex documentation for the TS-12 from Ensoniq directly. It may, in fact, be possible to select Roland banks from the TS, but you'll certainly need the TS-12 Sysex docs to do this. I'm sorry I don't know as much about the TS as some of the other Malvern boxes, but I don't think you can do what your trying to do without some other form of MIDI box, like a Kawai MM-16, the old tried and true Yamaha MEP-4, the DMC MX-8, or other device that can store sysex strings and send them out with a single button press.

In any case, request those Sysex docs for your TS-12, because, contrary to your "only 3 years of experience," you're tickling the dragon's tail...]

Hi,

My name is Sascha and I am mailing from "Outer" Germany.

I've got an Ensoniq EPS (Classic) with SCSI-interface and I tried to connect it to an Syquest 270MB-drive (termination and id - everything correct) but my "lovely" EPS says: Drive not connected!!! Same with an Seagate 1.2 GB-drive...

Ensoniq says: Try to format it!!! Funny... I HAVE tried to format it!! That was the time when this stupid system-message appeared.

Can you imagine my problem??? Please help me... are the drives wrong, or shall I kick my EPS out of the window???

I so confuuuuused.

Sascha
klein@gfi.ihk.de

[PF - Sascha: What a wonderful name! I hope I can offer equally wonderful advice. Case is, however, the original EPS Classic doesn't get along with removable devices. Even if you got one to be recognized, as soon as you ejected the media the EPS would crash as it doesn't support that type of device. Remember, the EPS was designed in the late 80's when an 80 Mb SCSI drive was \$1200 (I know; that's what I paid for an Eltek drive back in 1989) and removable media didn't exist in the SCSI world.

As for the 1.2 gig drive, the EPS will time out if you're running an older software and firmware combination. Ensure your EPS is booted with O.S. 2.49, and the firmware revision (internal ROM chips) is 2.40. This combination allows the format of drives larger than 1 gig, as well as allowing changeable interleave. There are some other issues like termination power, request attention lines, and other techno-babble that doesn't mean much to most people that might be causing some problems, but I'd doubt it, as most issues with SCSI drives on an EPS Classic fall into the older software/firmware barrel.

But don't worry - MANY drives smaller than 1 gig are perfectly acceptable. I loaded everything imaginable on my old trusty 80 Mb boat anchor and still had thousands of blocks left free. I'd recommend a Quantum mechanism in the 105-350 Mb range. Unless you use your EPS as a Foley machine it's doubtful you outgrow that capacity, as the Classic samples are smaller and load faster than their ASR equivalents.

Garth Hjelte has some excellent tips and

tricks concerning SCSI drives on the Original EPS. Point your browser to <http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps> and surf around.]

[Sascha - My SCSI problems - the everlasting story :-)]... My configuration: EPS Classic, ROM 2.40, OS 2.49, memory x4, SCSI, Seagate 297n, SCSI 0, correctly terminated.

*The problem: after formatting the hard disk the EPS still says *formatting* even when the Seagate is ready with formatting. A half minute later the EPS says "file operation error" and "not an EPS drive." I am sure that the harddisk is fully functional 'cause I used it on an Roland VS880-system with no problems.]*

[PF - Sascha: Your EPS is properly configured with a properly configured SCSI drive, so I think it's time your EPS visited a friendly Ensoniq Authorized Service Center. I've had the same problem with an EPS and a Seagate ST297N also. I swore the drive was goofy so I hooked up another Seagate ST 277N (65 Mb) drive: it did the exact same thing. The EPS would initiate the format, the screen would blink "formatting" and then about 5 minutes later I'd get the same "File Operation Error."

Turns out it wasn't the drive. It was the SCSI card in the EPS. Once when I was playing a gig with it, someone walked up and bumped the cable connecting the drive to the EPS and it disconnected. I plugged it back in and everything seemed to be fine until the next gig, when it wouldn't boot from the hard drive. The Ensoniq tech at my music store explained that when the drive is disconnected when the power is on, the main chip on the SCSI expander gets knocked out. And the only solution is to replace the SCSI expander with a known good one to test it with.]

Dear TH,

This is in regard to selecting computer software/soundcards/plugin-ins, etc. for my project studio.

I have been recording original music in my home studio for the last five years or so using a good ol' four-track analog cassette recorder. About three years ago I purchased an Ensoniq ASR-10 (which I love) on which I've been sequencing industrial music. The problem is my final product is still recorded on not-so good ol' four-track cassette. As an experiment I took my four-track to a neighbor's house (he said I could) and mixed down

my demo tape onto his PC using a Soundblaster sound card and recorded wav files. We used Corel CD to record an audio CD. The results were fantastic (well, at least better than I had hoped for).

So I've decided to buy a PC of my own. I would like your expert help in determining what software/soundcards/plug-ins etc would work well for my application(s). Did I mention that I am a novice with MIDI? I've been subscribing to the *Transoniq Hacker* for the last couple of years (happyface icon) and it has proven to be a highly valuable tool (and kinda funny). I love my ASR-10 and I'm trying to find the best computer gear and software to work with it. Since I haven't had a studio computer at my disposal, I have no clue as to how these different programs/hardware work or get along with each other.

The following is a list of decisions I've made in this regard and goals I am trying to accomplish with my studio - and some of the gear I have and wish to utilize:

* Due to unrelated applications I need to use a PC format, not Mac. I plan on buying a PC with at least a 200 MHz processor, 32 Mb RAM, and at least 6 gigabytes of disk.

* My goal is to record all digital demo/marketable CDs for my own projects and for others (I want my final product to be on audio CD). I would like the audio quality to be as high as possible (plausible?).

* I have many songs completed using my ASR-10/analog cassette tape and I would like to be able to easily convert/re-record the songs into the new PC format (if possible).

* I want to be able to play back my songs with the program in a live application. In other words, I want to play out live without a band (I will play guitar and sing to the sequences). I need the program to be able to play back its own sequences or to use the ASR-10 via MIDI. However, if I go this route I will need another MIDI keyboard to play sequences between songs while the ASR-10 clears the old song and loads the new one. My Juno 60 does not have a MIDI kit.

* I want to continue sampling my own guitar and bass lines.

* I would like to be able to record multiple ASR-10 tracks into the same computer based sequences, so I will need to be able to record some sort of time code (I think) on the computer. Eventually, I will probably wean myself from the ASR-10 for sequencing, but

until then...

* I would like to be able to use various plug-ins with the host program while I learn my various needs.

* I have plenty of outside effects units, including studio quality reverbs, multi-effect units, EQs, etc and of course the 1/2 of a DP2 (a DP1?) included with the ASR.

* I have a fairly large library of ASR-10 sounds which I want to continue to use.

Please feel free to correct anything I've written that is wrong/misguided. I am truly a novice with using a computer (other than my ASR-10) to make music. The more specific the answers (ie, brand names and models) the better. From my perspective (or lack thereof) the only difference I currently see between a Soundblaster card and an Echo Layla unit is about \$700. Thanks in advance for your help.

PS: How about more articles for/on the ASR-10 (specific tips, using the synth engine, etc.)? Alas, the middle child is often neglected.

Sincerely,
Dave Radisewitz
Madison, Wisconsin

[PF - Dave: I'll be honest with you - if you plan to do digital recording on a PC and the only difference you see or hear between a Layla and a Soundblaster is \$700, don't go there. You'll get more bang for the buck by going out and bagging the following 3 items:

(A) The OEX-6 Output expander. This gives each track a discrete output, as well as a stereo pair for Audio Tracks. Keyword: DIS-CRETE...

(B) A high-quality line conditioner. Not a surge protector, but a serious piece like a Juice Goose or equivalent. You want the best signal-to-noise ration you can get, and by reducing your quiescent noise floor, you've effectively added more dynamic range to the top. Keyword: HEADROOM...

(C) An ADAT. I'll get flamed on this, and too bad. Like it or not, EVERY studio uses them to death. Edits are noiseless, punch-ins and outs are undetectable, and it's the standard of the industry. Keyword: MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE... Just my \$.02 worth...]

TH,

I recently bought a used TS-10. Why didn't I

buy an MR synth like everybody else? Well, because the TS is a great sounding box (I kicked out my Wavestation for the TS type waves). And it seems like I am the only one who finds it ridiculous that the MR does not support the Ensoniq sample format.

First of all, I don't even own a computer (I know, totally obsolete etc.). Second, I'm really a programming fanatic but this doesn't mean I'd like to stick to some (yeah, I know Giebler is god!) editing software to convert my more than 5 GB (!) ASR samples to PC format. How many MR floppies might that be? Just divide 5000 by 1.44 and you'll know. Why does nobody complain about that?

Au contraire, read TH, Issue number 144, page 14 - quote: "I was able to take an original disk that came with my EPS-16+ and read the FLUTE 1 WS with my PC's floppy drive. I was then able to convert the WSs to WAV files. I copied these WAV files from the PC onto a 3.5" floppy and loaded them directly into my MR..." DIRECTLY? How complicated can it be to read an Ensoniq sample into an Ensoniq synth? Seems that I have to buy an ASR-X with the MR - pure coincidence, Ensoniq?

Regards,
Marc Klinger
Duisberg Germany

[PF - Marc: Yeah, I know - I've heard several gripes over this issue, and I don't know what to tell you. You'd think if the ASR-X could read the sample library (which it CAN do as of the new O.S. release), it shouldn't be any harder to repeat the process for the MR-series. And obviously, such is not the case...

And no need to make excuses about not owning a computer. I've always felt playing keys with one hand and wiggling a mouse with the other was anything BUT making music, which, btw, was the main reason I became an Ensoniq fanatic: here's the computer built into the keyboard. Logical. Sweet. Elegant.

I wish they'd do to the MR what they've done for the ASR-X too. Maybe, someday...]

[Ensoniq - The MR is a different design platform which means it will not load ASR samples.]

TH -

Does anybody have an IDF file for the SQ-1 +32 in Windows95? Making it compatible with General MIDI?

I know there's an IDF Editor, but I haven't found it yet, so I turn to the TH readers.

Regards
Daniel Nilsen
dmorph@swipnet.se

[PF - Dan: For what app? Cakewalk? CPW has an SQ1+32 IDF in v.5.0. We had a reader email us with detailed instructions on how to select it last issue. I'd email the Hacker and request last month's eTH be emailed to you. It was in the Interface. I'd cc it here, but my Old eMail folder got deleted by my daughter. She just loves to see my Mac trash can swell up when it's full and then return to normal after she empties it... Needless to say, she's getting her own Mac this week so this problem doesn't happen again.]

Hello,

I have an ASR-88, an Emu Morpheus and a Boss DR-5 that I have been trying to get up and running in a performance system. My question is can the ASR change banks while the sequencer is running or change individual patches? I know if you hold down the load button and type the number of the patch you want, it loads in on that track... but I need to be able to play multiple sounds while stuff is loading and unloading... Is this machine capable of delivering what I need?

Also, I tried to get my computer to sequence with the ASR and my other units through an Opcode 8-port SE interface. I am wondering if there is a way to get the ASR to control the interface without the computer so I can have more than eight tracks.

I am involved in music where there is a lot of changing sounds and patches. If I can't get the ASR to operate and change banks from the computer, is there a way I can get the Morpheus or DR-5 to play MIDI from the

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tracks of the ASR sequencer? I am kind of disillusioned with using a computer in my setup and want to simplify things if I cannot get these problems resolved and get up and running soon.

Steve
Plutocat@worldnet.att.net

[PF - Steve: Yes, the easy way out here is to set up a few "MIDI" instruments on the ASR. All you need to do is to create a wavesample of nothing but MIDI channel # and program #. Ensure you select "MIDI" from the track page instead of "LOCAL" or "BOTH," and then set channel # and program change #, then save the instrument to disk.

The cool part of this is that MIDI only instruments only take up around 3 blocks.]

TH -

One of your dedicated subscribers thanks you for this forum.

Being synth savvy does not mean one is computer/SCSI/hard drive savvy... The articles/letters in the Hacker seem to indicate a very advance knowledge of the material. I have reviewed two years of Hacker issues, (95-present), and still, to this date, have not heard a simple explanation as to how one advances from being a simple TS-10 owner to installing SCSI, buying a hard drive a CDROM etc., to be able to load in samples from whatever..... Please stop and begin from the beginning in one easy paragraph in simple terminology assuming I know nothing about my Mac 8500/180 604e processor when it comes to talking to my TS-10, loading in samples from an external source, etc.

Is there a way to use my Power Mac, its CDROM, my Zip drive, and my MIDI interface program in order to load samples quickly into my TS-10????

How does one download from the internet samples into the TS? Does it, can it? Must I buy a compatible hard drive for the TS or can I use what I own already.?

Please be simple, pretend I am from planet Mars, don't make this more impossible than it already is... Let's start with buying and installing the Ensoniq SCSI port and take it from there....

Thank you and hope to hear from you,
Glenn Losack, MD

[PF - Dr. Losack: Sorry if I'm talking over our readers' heads. That's not my intent nor the Hacker's purpose. It's just that lately the Hacker has been inundated with questions about connecting your favorite Ensoniq box to a computer. The TS-series is an unusual device in that its optional SCSI interface is READ-ONLY - you cannot write to a drive connected to a TS-10.

Its purpose in life is to allow the TS-10 owner to connect a CDROM drive and load samples from the ASR/EPS/16+ CD sample library. As such, any hard disk drive connected to it must be formatted by an ASR-10 or equivalent since the TS-series cannot do this. And the CDROM and Zip drive of your 8500 cannot be used with the TS (that is unless you physically remove them and connect them to the TS).

The Zip drive CAN be used with the TS - all it requires is a cartridge formatted for use with an ASR-10 and ASR samples on it. Point your browser to <http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/> for a clear and concise precis on how the TS-series loads ASR samples.

But the short story is to install the SCSI expander into your TS-10 and then purchase a CDROM reader from Rubber Chicken for around \$120-150, and then start collecting Ensoniq CD library CDs. Garth may also have Zip carts for sale with certain selections of his library on them as well.]

[Dan Erlang (finst008@tc.umn.edu) - I think I can add a little confusion here and that doing so is appropriate. Being a musician is not simple. Asking for when to use the phrygian mode in improvisations should have different answers.

With a SCSI interface in your TS-10, you CAN hook it up to your Mac and load samples from the Mac's CD ROM. However, you need to change the SCSI ID of the CD-ROM player. This is because Apple uses #3 as a default and your TS-10 interface also uses #3. The latter can not be changed. Setting your SCSI ID to 4 on the CD ROM drive will allow you to load banks from Ensoniq CDs. Thus 4 is a good number, but you can use others. There is one more obstacle - your Mac will protest when you insert an ASR/16+ CD in the drive, effectively forcing you to eject the CD again. I run the program EPSm while I insert the CD, then this won't happen.

It may be a good idea though to buy an external CD ROM for the TS if you will move the

TS to different locations.

As for ZIP drives. Yes, you can use it with the TS. You can not format carts with your TS. I format carts with the Mac program EPSm. I download and edit samples with the Mac and put them on ZIP floppies for the TS-10 by EPSm.]

[PF - Dan: Thank you, sir. I've known it was possible to do what you say - I was unaware that the obstacle was changing the internal Mac CDROM to anything other than 3. And this is key. Terje's got some cool wareS, and I'm glad to receive feedback from ANY individual who has taken the time, effort (and frustration) to make a virtual Mac/ASR chain.

Yes, I agree - if you plan to use the TS as a performance instrument, an external CDROM is a given. Thanx for putting it into context. And again, yes, once a Zip cart is formatted (by ANY ASR-legal app) and has loadable ASR samples on it, YES, they can be imported into the TS as if the Zip were another CDROM drive...

Also, remember once you've changed the SCSI ID of the CDROM from 3 to 4, you will not be able to load banks or invoke macros. This isn't too big of a deal with a TS, but on an ASR with multiple drives it will throw a monkey wrench into your whole program...

BTW, Terje: I received EPSm, but by the time my server delivered it to me, the authorization had expired. Could you please resend these wareS, as I'd like to recommend them to we veteran Mac users who wish to live in a non-Microsoft-dominated world? As well as review them for our reader base.]

TH -

I notice an ever-increasing flux of questions that could be answered by the manuals or user guides of the ASR/EPS family. I think it would greatly benefit people if they would go through the manual instead of going straight for the power switch. I would also like to remind people that a great part of a purchase is the support the retail merchant offers after the purchase (regardless of whether or not it's local or mail order) and the support or lack of should be remembered when it comes time for another purchase.

Being someone who has had a chance to use just about every sampler that has come in the last 8 years I find it interesting when people doubt the capabilities of an Ensoniq board.

They have a straightforward, common sense method of operation. If you think that 64-notes poly and more than 16 meg of ram is great all I want to know is why you need your entire library loaded at a given time or why you would want to put that type of task on the processor in a given piece of equipment? As far as having access to your library, that's what SCSI is all about and you would be surprised at how many samples will fit on a properly set up SCSI removable.

One last thing for those who find it necessary to get error messages on their Ensoniq gear, here's what they mean:

-32 effects down load errors
-33 effects down load errors
-129 usually indicate bad sequence data
-130 usually indicate bad sequence data
-131 usually indicate bad sequence data
-137 usually indicate bad sequence data
-195 usually indicate bad sequence data
-144 buffer overflow (usually at the MIDI-in port/ data was too fast or had errors in it)

The thing to remember is that we inadvertently cause errors sometimes through our attempted functions or button selections.

"Keeeeeep Hackin' Along"
SKI,
ski-beats@usa.net

[TH - Actually, we don't mind the letters. An awful lot of what's in the Hacker can be figured out by going through the manuals - but, boy, sometimes it sure helps to have it explained a different way!]

[PF - Ski: Just about everything that pops up here in the Interface is a direct lift from the Musician's Manual of the alleged/afflicted and appropriate Malvern box. But as I noted in an earlier review: the manuals that come with your particular flavor Ensoniq box are technical manuals detailing its operation. But Ensoniq buyers, or anyone who purchases an electronic keyboard, didn't buy it to read the manual, they bought it to have fun. Just imagine the fun they'd have if they knew which buttons to push at the appropriate times.

So let them push mine. I'm just glad to help (in some insignificant little way) Ensoniq owners make more music...]

Hi,

Anyone know where I can get an OEX-8 for my EPS at a decent price? I could really use one.

Thanks,
Larry
kmfmdm@dataplusnet.com

[PF - Larry: First, I'd try Ensoniq. As the EPS has been out of production for quite a few days now, they're the first place to start. Other than that, the normal fare of used dealers (Rogue, Big Daddy's, etc) might have one collecting dust on a shelf somewhere. I'd personally go for the new one from Ensoniq (if still available) - I knew of a couple of guys who unplugged the expander with the machine on: it blows out the expander. Not good, and there's no way to tell if the box is functional or not until you plug it up. The cable that comes with it is a bit of a pain: the connector isn't as robust as the mini-DIN on the ASR.

But once you get it, having 10 outputs is the real deal. Kick, Snare, racktoms, floor toms, bass, etc. - your output assignment becomes your recording slate...]

TH -

Subject: Ensoniq EPS Classic vs. EPS-16+

Can anyone describe the exact differences between these two models? I have the opportunity to purchase a very-well-taken-care-of EPS Classic for roughly \$700 for my soon-to-be-famous 14yr-old son. He wants to create his own "sounds" and is pushing for this keyboard. Any advice on the advantages of one over the other would be appreciated. Additionally we have a very nice computer with external MIDI keyboard and various software that has defied our attempts to get working properly, any input again, and thanks in advance.

Jamie,
jamiea@mindspring.com

[PF - Jamie: The big difference between the EPS and the '16+ is effects. The issue here is what's in the EPS Classic. If it has the 4X memory expander and SCSI expander, then yeah, it's worth the \$700. Probably \$750-\$800. Without the SCSI expander, try around \$600-\$650. Without the 4X memory expander, don't buy it. You need as much memory in the EPS as you can get, and even with the 4X you only get 4096 blocks.

The '16+ is a cleaner, "newer & improved" EPS Classic with digital effects. If it has the full memory expansion, SCSI, and an obscure option called FlashRAM, buy it. They're going for around \$950-\$1300 depending on condition, options, and disks.]

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