Transoniq Hacker

"As unique as a very unique thing"

Putting some "Zip" into your ASR-X

Garth Hjelte

In the last article in this series we talked about replacing the floppy drive in the EPS/ASR with a ZipDrive. Now, for you ASR-X owners, let's talk about replacing *your* floppy drive (evil laughter coming from the background)!!!

I'm even more enthusiastic about floppy drive replacement with the X — for a couple of reasons.

1) You don't need the floppy drive to boot up;

2) The ASR-X does not load sounds very quickly anyway from the floppy drive (although the newest OS's are faster than the others).

But the installation has several issues of its own — so let's go through it. If you'd rather not go through all this, or especially if you don't want to search for all the special parts, you can pick up the RCS InternalZipDrive Kit for the ASR-X — it includes all the materials you need — just follow the instructions. On the web, see www.chickensys.com/asrx/IntZipDrive.html.

Warning-Disclaimer-Hear Ye, Hear Ye

This does void your warranty, so consult your lawyer.

Parts List

40-pin ribbon cable
50-pin ribbon cable
2 IDC 40-pin female connectors
1 IDC 50-pin male connector
MDB50 male – CEN50 Male adaptor
Cen50 female jack
IDC male connector – MDB50 female adaptor

Opening It Up

Make sure the power cable is unplugged from the ASR-X unit. Your ASR-X has many screws! Not only that, some are Hex screws. Fortunately, Ensoniq provides you with a hex wrench, so use that and a Phillips screwdriver to unscrew the proper screws. Take out the floppy controller connector and the power connector. Unscrew the four small Phillips head screws from the bottom of the ASR-X that hold the floppy in. Put these aside. Pull the floppy drive out, and keep it for safekeeping.

Removing The SCSI Port

Remove your SP-5 SCSI board (if it is already installed) by unscrewing the back two hex screws. These are smaller the front panel Hex screws — fortunately, Ensoniq supplies the proper-sized hex wrench in the SP5 package. Remove the 40-pin ribbon cable attached. You will need a slightly longer 40-pin cable.

In This Issue ...

Articles:

Putting Some "Zip" into Your ASR-X
Garth Hjelte ..... cover

Major Changes at Ensoniq
Sam Mims 3

Keyboard Amps
Steve Vincent 4

Regular Stuff:

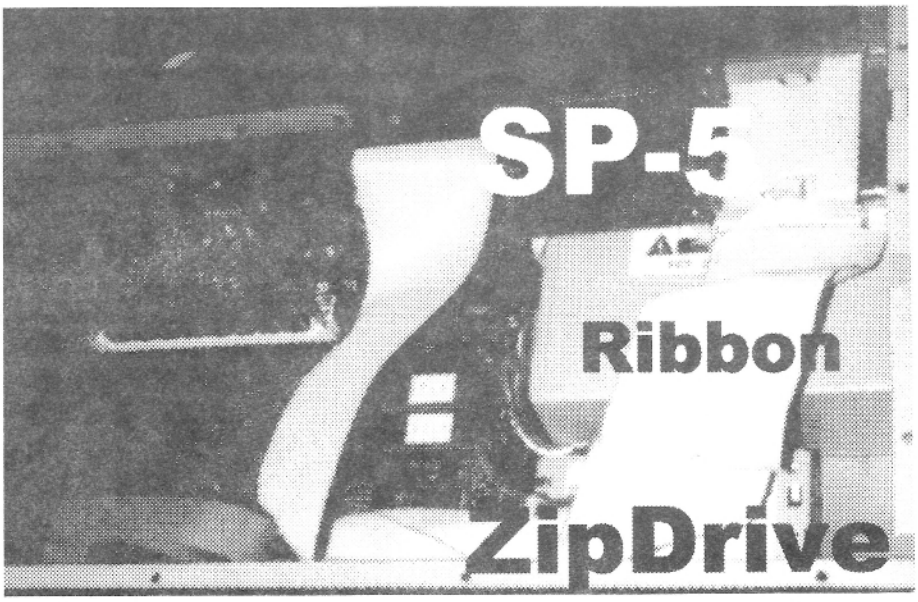
Transoniq-Net 3
The Interface 7
Classifieds 9
Hacker Booteeq 11

This newsletter is stopping publication November, 1999 (Issue #173).

Issues remaining: **6**

If your address label indicates more than 6 issues remaining, please let us know if we need to work something out with back issues or something.

If your label indicates less than 6 — not to worry: a partial-year renewal notice will be sent about the same time as your second-to-last issue.



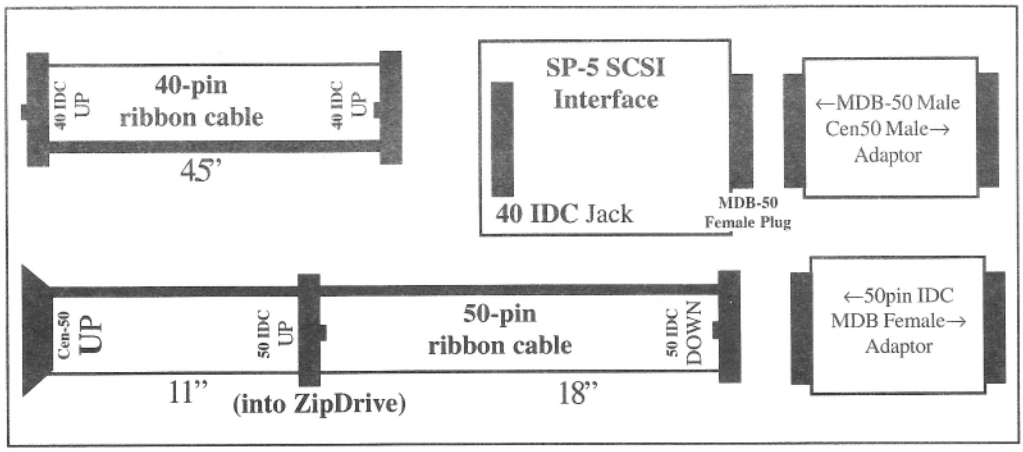
Where Do You Put The SCSI Port?

Yeah, where? Our solution was to kill two birds with one stone. We used a larger MDB50-Cen50 adapter to attach to the SP5 SCSI output. We then flipped the SP5 upside down, aligned it horizontally, and use the adaptor to hold it in place (see Figure 1). A strip of Velcro secures the adaptor/SP-5 to the power supply casing. We originally drilled holes and used standoffs, but Ensoniq informed us that brought UL problems into play, etc. Anyway, we put the SP5 on the power supply case, and use the MDB50-CEN50 adapter to make the cable conversion to get the SCSI signal to the ZipDrive.

Stepping backwards for a second, now you can see why we can't use the 40-pin ribbon cable that comes with the SP5 — it's too short. Make another one 4.5 inches long — it's nice to be exact here, and fold it up and under the SP5. Since the SP5 is slightly above the power supply case, the 40-pin ribbon cable can run underneath, and shield the SP5 from the case.

The Cable Guy

Figure 2 shows the cables and components.



As you can see, it runs in this order: motherboard to 40-pin cable, then to the SP5 connected to the MDB50-CEN50 adapter, plugged into the CEN50 jack, out of that a 50-pin ribbon cable to IDC50 connector, into the ZipDrive, out to a 50-pin ribbon cable to IDC 50 male jack that runs the SCSI signal out to external devices. WHEW! You always can stop the cable at the ZipDrive, if you don't think you'll be using any external devices.

There isn't tons of clearance between the power supply case and the back of the ZipDrive — we found the best method was to run the cable from the SP5 below the ZipDrive, clamp it onto the connector, and run it out above to route to the final output.

Installing The ZipDrive

This is pretty much the same as removing the floppy, only in reverse. But before you attach the ZipDrive to the case, fold the 50-pin ribbon cable out of the adaptor and attach the first 50-pin connector to the ZipDrive. It comes under the drive. Connect the floppy drive power supply cord into the ZipDrive, and then bolt the ZipDrive in — you can use the same screws that held in the floppy to secure it.

Placing The 50-Pin Custom Cable to the External Back Panel Jack

Screw the IDC50 male-MDB50 female adaptor into the ASR-X's back panel to where the SCSI card used to be. Then attach the dangling 50-pin ribbon cable coming from the ZipDrive. Use cable clips to keep the ribbon cable from flopping around.

Testing The Connections

Before you put everything back together, test the SCSI connections. First, put a PC formatted ZipDisk into the ZipDrive. Turn on the ASR-X, and after it has booted, press LOAD. It should say Select Load Device? Floppy Disk. (If it doesn't, the ASR-X has not detected the SCSI board itself.) To select the ZipDrive, turn the Value knob over 1 step. The ASR-X should start Scanning for SCSI Devices, and it should find the ZipDrive at 5 (depending on how you set the jumpers in the ASR-X).

Ram-ifications And Precautions

Ensoniq did not have internal hard drives in mind when they designed the ASR-X, and especially the X-Pro (see below). So you should be aware of the minor issues to deal with.

One is that the ASR-X looks for a SYSTEM-SETUP file upon boot up from the floppy drive, and automatically loads it if it finds one. This contains any special SYSTEM information you have set for yourself. Since the floppy won't be there, you'll lose this automatic feature. The work around is to simply load it yourself.

The ASR-X does not react harshly at all to the lack of a floppy drive. If you try to Load Floppy Disk, it'll just say "Disk not readable!" (The exclamation mark is there for effect, I'm sure.)

Probably of slightly greater concern are FlashROM updates with the ASR-X Pro (this does not concern the ASR-X "Amateur"). The FlashRom updates are only loadable via floppy disk, and are not loadable via SCSI. We suggested to Ensoniq at the time of the release of the ASR-X Pro that this was certainly a strange limitation, and Ensoniq gave their usual vague answer. Again, the workaround is easy — keep your floppy drive around, and stick it in when you need the update. At this time of writing (March 1999), there has only been one OS update, and one more announced, and I predict there will be relatively few of these anyway.

Conclusions

Again, think about it — how many computers only have floppy drives? A hard drive onboard is great — especially with the ASR-X. Since the X relies heavily on a computer to do any serious editing, being able to share a storage device is very handy — just hook the ASR-X up to your SCSI port on your computer and you are ready to rock. With SMDI being in better shape with the new OS updates, the connection is even a better deal. And when you go out on the road, just disconnect and you're off. ▬

Bio: Garth Hjelte is CEO of Rubber Chicken Software Co., a subsidiary of Chicken Systems, Inc, which is dedicated to the full support of all Ensoniq samplers.

Major Changes at Ensoniq Signal the End of an Era

Sam Mims

Creative Technologies, which acquired Emu Systems several years ago and which also recently acquired Ensoniq Corp., is now consolidating the two companies in a way that leaves Ensoniq die-hards feeling like it is the end of an era.

On March 5, Ensoniq's MI (Musical Instruments) marketing and sales departments were jettisoned completely. Engineering and sound development staff either found themselves looking for new jobs, or they were repositioned — into Creative's multimedia projects. Among the layoffs were folks who had been with Ensoniq since day one, when the Mirage sampler was conceived and built. Those remaining on MI projects feel that their days may well be numbered.

While many previous changes brought on by Creative were expected, such as the integration of Ensoniq's accounting into the system already in place at Emu and the sharing of technology between the two companies, the word was that Ensoniq would remain its own entity and continue to make its own keyboards. This new move signals that, if there will be future keyboards carrying the Ensoniq name, they will most likely be designed and built in Scotts Valley, California by Emu. The people who made the Ensoniq keyboards what they were, and the factory in Malvern where they made them, have all been removed from the equation. The Malvern site, in fact, looks like it will eventually be used only for Creative's PC multimedia work. ▬

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. 10:00 am to noon, 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm EST Monday to Friday. 610-647-3930. Ensoniq's web site (www.ensoniq.com) 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.

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

VFX, SD32, and EPS-16+ Questions – Dara Jones, Internet: darajones@juno.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. (320) 235-9798. Email: chickenEPS@willmar.com.

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.

SQ/KS/KT, SD-1, SCSI, MR, ZR, Emu & 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.

Keyboard Amps

Steve Vincent

Once upon a time there was a mythical land where Sound was perfect. It was called The Digital Domain. All Music produced in this kingdom was perfectly clear, the entire audio spectrum perfectly balanced. The sonic landscape was unblighted by shrill highs, boomy lows, or grainy midrange. The Music was perfect. There was peace.

But there was a problem: You could not hear this Music. It was kept inside the walls of an impenetrable fortress, where everything therein was cloaked in a mesmerizing mage-shroud consisting of nothing but runes. These runes were two: the numbers One and Zero. Impossibly long, seemingly interminable strings of Ones and Zeroes were the Perfect Music. The Music and the runes were one. But the runes would never penetrate the ears of mortals, so this Music of Perfection was doomed to remain locked inside the walls of The Digital Domain forever.

For once the Sound left the magical walls of The Digital Domain, it entered The Land of Analog. The passage from The Digital Domain to The Land of Analog changed the Runes of Perfection into Vibrations. These changeling Vibrations could enter the ears of mortals, but the Vibrations were unstable, bouncing and careening from every physical surface, changing and morphing on their brief journey through time. So it was said that no two mortals could ever hear the same Music...

Let's face it, we're spoiled. Sitting in the captain's chair on the bridge of the Starship Home Studio, we listen to near-perfection. We practice on our keyboards, monitoring through excellent headphones or "perfectly flat" nearfield monitors, as close as we can possibly get to digital bliss. We spend hours programming our synths, building keyboard splits and setting up mixes for our live gigs, honing our sounds to bitchin' tones. Then we go to our gig, plug into a keyboard amp or house system, and...

Hello. Reality. What happened to the entire low end on that patch that I spent three nights perfecting? Where are the highs? How come I can't even hear my keyboard when the guitarist starts comping? This is the bipolar life of the home recordist / slash / live keyboardist. Are we doomed to settle for lousy, compromised sound when we play live? Must we spend half the gig with a scowl etching our features into a gargoyle mask because we hate the way our keyboard sounds?

Nope. There are some wonderful keyboard amplification setups available to us spoiled brats. This article offers some ideas, opinions, and questions to ask yourself when pursuing sound reinforcement for your live act. It's not exactly a keyboard amp review, but a number of *Hacker* regulars have described their live rigs, and offer their two cents' worth as well.

There are obviously many different possible configurations for amplifying your keyboard for live gigs, but they can be narrowed down to two general scenarios: (1) You have an all-in-one setup where your keyboard amp is "it" for the gig (typical of small venues), or (2) You send your keyboard output to a house sound system (typical of larger venues). In scenario #2, you probably need some kind of stage monitor so you can hear yourself.

Your keyboard rig will probably sound best to the ears of your audience if its output is sent to a house system. Of course, in this scenario the quality of the sound depends a lot on the person running sound, not to mention the equipment being used. But most sound reinforcement systems in use by bands today are capable of reproducing your keyboard's sound quite faithfully, assuming it's being mixed well by the soundperson.

On the other hand, plugging your keyboard into a keyboard combo (all-in-one) amplifier will usually compromise your keyboard's sound in some significant ways. This is because most keyboard amps on the market these days do not have anything near a flat frequency response; the EQ of your keyboard's sound can be severely limited in certain frequency ranges. But this does not meant that there aren't some great-sounding keyboard amps out there.

Let's survey a number of real live gigging keyboard players, and learn from their experiences. Me first:

Keyboard: Alesis QS7.
Amplification: Barbetta Sona Pro-Combo 41 keyboard amp, Motion Sound Pro 3 rotating speaker system; line out to house P.A. system.

For my live gigging in the past ten years I have used the Mirage, ESQ-1, EPS, VFX, and now the Alesis QS7. I have played through house systems using wedge floor monitors, Roland Cube and Peavey KB300 amps, and most recently the Barbetta Sona Pro-Combo 41 and Motion Sound Pro 3 rotating speaker. I tried out many keyboard amps before settling on the Barbetta. Here's my opinions about some of them:

Peavey KB300 — This sucker is LOUD, heavy and unwieldy (one handle on top). It hurts your ears and your back. But if you just need sheer volume, and don't care so much about the sound, this amp can blast you through the mix to sonic dominance on stage. I found the sound too directional, with lots of dead spots. The KB300 is used by many keyboardists.

JBL Eon — Pros: Good sound, wide frequency response. Flexible input/output. Cons: distortion at higher volumes; enclosure rattles. I've listened to other keyboardists gigging through this amp, with excellent results.

Fender KXR-100 — I just didn't like the sound. Reminded me of the Peavey KB300, but without the balls. Distorted at higher volumes.

Roland KC-100, 300 and 500 — Same: I didn't like the sound. It distorted at higher volumes. No highs, wimpy lows. Heavy, with inadequate handles.

Barbetta Sona Pro-Combo 41 — I settled on this amp, even though I had to buy it "blind," depending solely on positive magazine reviews (couldn't find a local dealer where I could demo one). Of all the keyboard amps I've played, the Barbetta has the widest frequency response: high highs, and *low* lows. Mediocre EQ control (Low, Mid and High knobs). This amp can be very *loud*, but still sounds very musical and doesn't distort. It's also the lightest amp of any that I demoed, and is competitively priced. I would call this amp "deluxe." I've used it for guitar (using ART SGX2000 and Ensoniq DP/4 as preamps, as well as plugging my Gibson Chet Atkins Electric Nylon direct), and also as a bass amp, plugging my headless Steinberger directly in, all with excellent results. Cons: knobs inconveniently on the back of the amp; frequency response is so bottom-heavy that I have to completely attenuate the Low frequency for piano sounds.

Motion Sound Pro 3 rotating speaker — Although it's not really a combo "keyboard amp," I mention it because it's an integral part of my rig. I love this real rotating speaker; it's very portable, yet it sounds delicious. Makes even ho-hum B3 patches sound amazing. Highly recommended.

I run two lines out of my Alesis QS7 keyboard (Aux mono for all organ sounds, Main mono for piano and all other keyboard sounds), sending the organ directly to my Pro 3 rotating horn (which I mic with a Sure SM58), and the Pro 3's low end output into my Mackie 1202 mixer, sending it directly to the house (via a

direct box), and also into my Barbetta amp. My piano and other synth output goes to the Mackie, then also splits to the house and to my Barbetta amp. (Hint: if you can score a Mackie 1202 mixer for around $200, it can be a great addition to your rig, giving you lots of input/output flexibility, great EQ, and can double as a headphone preamp or other duties in your home studio...)

Glenn Normand

Keyboard: Ensoniq TS-12.
Amplification: Large gigs: Fender keyboard amp; "small gigs," a Mackie 1202 with a Crest power amp playing through the mid-sized Dawn speaker system).

Glenn's comments: "I play cocktail parties, weddings, and singalongs by myself, and I have a 7 piece show band also. I used to run the keys through the full system, but never had the full control I wanted. 12 years ago, I bought a Peavey KB300 amp. I used it mainly for stage monitor, but also for the smaller jobs. In big venues, it would max out on volume, and the piezo horn would eventually start distorting at full load. I recently decided to upgrade to the latest the music store had to offer. To give myself the benefit of actual comparison, I rolled in my old Peavey and placed it alongside the others. There was a Roland 500, a Fender, and a Crate. I plugged in an Ensoniq keyboard to each of the 4 amps, one at a time, playing soft, loud, percussive etc....What a surprise!!! After 12-plus years of technological advances, not one of the salespeople nor I could hear a major difference in any of the rigs, even my old one. With price tags over $600 each, it was a real decision... since there was not that much sonic difference. I liked the angled projection of the Roland, but it would be a problem to fit into the space in my trailer. The Crate just ran out of power too quickly. I reluctantly bought the Fender, because it was small enough to fit in the trunk of my car with the keyboard, so I didn't have to take my van. Now, I am not a fan of Peavey, never have been, since I saw the products from day one. They were always the "cheap" way to go. I bought Peavey when I couldn't afford the better brands. But now after about 12 years of doing one-nighters with a combo 300 bass amp and that KB300 rig, I realize that I got my money's worth several times over, and I should have gone to another dealer and purchased another Peavey KB amp. It has that rugged covering, the plastic cord winders on the back, the knobs are far enough back so you won't rip them off every loading, and the sonic quality is on par with the name brands."

(Note: one of Glenn's "small gigs" was a 14,000 sq. ft. hotel ballroom with 800 people for a reception for Secretary of State Madaline Albright.)

John Bolles

Keyboards: Ensoniq SD-1 and SQ-80.
Amplification: PA head, Peavey monitor speakers.

The ex-Wedding Singer comments: *"I could also use this set-up as a nice little PA system for cocktail hour work. And best of all, it's light!"*

Dave Musumeci

Keyboards: Ensoniq TS-12 and SD-1.
Amplification: Peavey KB-300, and line feed from both keyboards into Rapco DB-100 direct boxes to the board (in mono).

Dave's comments: *"Had the Peavey KB-300 about 12 years. It's very reliable in that as much as I've carried that thing around (I put it on wheels) it has never broken down. The sound quality is not that good, in my opinion. It does OK on the stage because playing classic rock music with egotistical guitar players, it's so damn loud that I need the power of the KB-300 just so I can hear myself and in all that noise, the sound quality gets lost in the noise!! I actually use two KB-300's: one for myself (which I tilt to hear) and I also park one across the stage so that the rest of the band can hear the keys. We found this to be preferred rather than trying to run the keys into the floor monitors. We try to keep just vocals in the floor monitors; it actually allows us to keep the stage volume down rather than everyone increasing their volumes on the stage, which sometimes becomes unbearable. I also use the KB-300 for practice and in a quieter setting, where the poorer sound quality can be heard. All in all, it is destined for the stage and performs admirably there. Ear plugs highly recommended."*

Kyle Warner

Keyboards: Ensoniq MR-76, EPS 16+ and Roland XP-50.
Amplification: 12-channel Peavey mixer set on a slide out shelf, a full patch bay for the ins and outs from the keyboards to the mixer, aux. outs for the house system, aux. outs to the drummer for his mix, main outs for the two Yamaha floor monitors I set on each side of me. QSA power amp, 400 watts.

Kyle notes: *"The stereo key system is the bomb; wouldn't have it any other way."* (Kyle recently scored a fully-charged, turbo'ed, SCSI'd EPS 16+, purchased from an erudite and well-known member of The Bevy...)

Kirk Slinkard

Keyboards: Ensoniq SQ-80 and VFX-SD.
Amplification: Vintage Sunn 16-channel mixer into a Crest stereo power amp. Home-built Gold Sound speaker kit using two 15-inch JBL woofers each plus a 6-inch cone midrange plus a "bullet" horn tweeter for each. "The Crest amp is rated at 250 watts per channel at 8 ohms, so I guess it must be around 400 watts per side with my 4-ohm speakers." Leslie 770.

Kirk comments: *"I generally play at parties and clubs, usually with little or no house sound system. Brand name full-range speaker systems give my keys too much of a low-fi "cheap" sound for my taste, and aren't as solid physically. I definitely recommend using a full-range stereo sound system for anybody who is cool enough to read the Hacker. Anything less strikes me as too much of a waste of what a synth is capable of, unless they are using a mono synth. Speakers that use only woofers, like guitar amps, muffle the sound way too much. They are great for electric guitars, but devastating for a synth. Commercial P.A. systems come in all sizes and price ranges and make a very good compromise. I have almost never been able to depend on a house system. The "good ones" are mostly run by house sound engineers who equalize them to be boomy, shrill, and lacking in clarity and deep bass."*

Sam Mims

Keyboards: Ensoniq TS-10 and SD-1 keyboards, with an SQ-R and ASR-10 in the rack, along with a Roland M120 line mixer, Digital Music MX-8 MIDI patch bay, and Furman AR-117 power conditioner ("the best piece of gear I've ever purchased — solved many strange keyboard problems obviously caused by goofy power").

Amplification: *"With Richard Elliott: stage line mixer (Roland M-120) to the house snake, and our sound man would send these direct to the house, as well as to my own monitor wedge. With Zainal Abidin (a pop star in Malaysia): mixer outputs went to an on-stage Crown power amp, which powered two full-range speakers on stands (I don't recall what kind) just behind me."*

Gerry Youngman

Keyboards: Ensoniq MR-61, Voce V3 with drawbars.
Amplification: Motion Sound R3 147 run through a Mackie 1202 VLZ, a Stuart World 1.2 amp into two Carvin 832 15-inch with horn loudspeakers; the entire rig in stereo.

Gerry comments: *"The combination of the Mackie into the Stuart into the Carvins is incredible. The Mackie is a wonderful keyboard pre amp. The Stuart has almost limitless distortion-free power in one rack space. The*

real key is the Carvin speakers. I have used all kinds of speakers, and the Carvins rule. Nothing can touch them even at 3x the price. On many gigs I play left hand bass, and they will put out ANYTHING I throw at them. No distortion, just clean warm, LOUD sound!!! And while they are a bit bulky, they weigh only 42 lbs each. At $250 each they are a steal, and can produce their punch across the entire keyboard bandwidth. The entire rig will fit in my Dodge Intrepid!"

Some questions to ask yourself when considering a keyboard amp:

1. Is my keyboard amp the whole rig, or will the signal also go out to the house system? Those keyboardists who send the signal out to a house P.A. system seem to favor a stage mixer/amp/monitor setup over a combo keyboard amp for monitoring their onstage sound. An onstage mixer (e.g., a Mackie 1202) allows you to control your own stage mix, and the amp + monitor(s) gives better frequency response than most keyboard combo amps.

2. Is weight an issue, or do you pay a roadie? If you have a bad back, you should make sure that you try lifting the amplifier you are looking at before buying. Some keyboard amps (Peavey and Roland, for example) are very heavy, and don't always have ergonomic handles for easy carrying. Budget for a dolly.

3. How many inputs/outputs do you need? Many keyboard amps have multi-channel inputs, including XLR inputs for a microphone. You may also want to consider acquiring a small line mixer; this can add superior EQ control to your setup, plus allow for more flexible routing of your multifarious keyboard signals.

4. Do you really need to hear your keyboards in stereo? Some of the keyboardists polled swear by their onstage stereo sound. However, many venues (clubs, lounges) do not send a stereo mix to the mains but instead run everything mono, so an onstage stereo mix would be your own private luxury. If you need/want stereo, you're probably looking at a mixer/amp/monitor setup, or a rig such as the JBL Eon series.

5. What type of music do you play? Do you use mostly piano sounds? Get an amp with enough sparkle to allow your piano patches to "speak." What about organ? Look at rotating speaker options. Key bass? Check out the prospective amp's low-end response, especially at louder volumes.

Everyone has their biases and favorites. If you are shopping for a keyboard amp, the very best thing to do is bring your keyboard to the music store and set up shop for an afternoon. A-B as many different amps as you can. I agree with Glenn's comments above: "After 12-plus years of technological advances, not one of the salespeople, nor I, could hear a major difference in any of the rigs." Don't listen to any of the advertisers' hype: listen to the amps. If you're like most of us, you will probably be a bit disappointed in most of the name-brand keyboard combo amps; they don't sound that much different than running your digitally pure 16-bit rig through a grungy guitar amp. Bottom line: Let your ears be your guide. ▬

Bio: Steve Vincent produces demos and CDs at his home- based Portent Music, and can be reached at his website at http://www.ks-pace.com/vincent.

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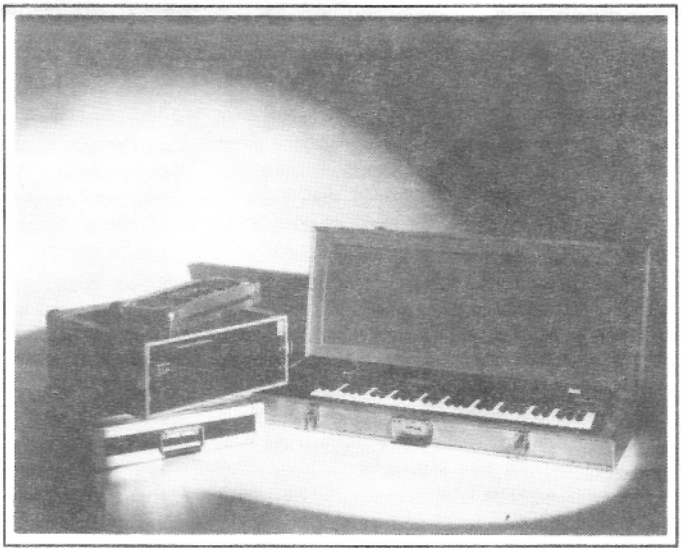

Shown: 4-space rack with EPS-16 PLUS module, 2-space rack, Eagle-I VFX-sd case

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The Interface

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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/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 in the printed version of TH is subject to space considerations.

Hi folks,

I'm playing a **TS-12** and an **MR-Rack** and "everything is just ticketty-boo!" (What famous computer said that!?) Anyway, I was playing a preset on the TS yesterday, with an electric piano voice on the TS and a lush string pad on the MR (WARM BATH, I think). I'd like to be able to control the volume of the MR, which is playing as a layered sound on MIDI channel 1, using my CV pedal, without it affecting the volume on the TS electric piano voice. Can someone tell me how to do that?

I can control the volume of just the the MR with the data slider if I am on the Mix page of the TS, but I want a hands-free way of doing this if possible. I looked through the MR effects editing pages and didn't find what I needed. I'd rather not do this with volume pedals in series between the synths and the mixer. When performing, I run each synth through one channel of a stereo volume pedal, so that I can make equal adjustments to volume of both boxes in real time when I need to.

Dave Simenson
fivetone@elite.net

[PF – Dave: Yeah, there's a way to do that, but you have to set the CV pedal to control a different parameter than CC#7, and then set the MR to receive this controller and remap it as volume (CC#7). Problem is by doing this you won't be able to control the volume of the TS with the CV-1 anymore until you restore its settings to CC#7, and the MR won't respond to CC#7 until it, too, is restored.

If it were me I'd connect another CV pedal to the MR and control it that way...]

Hi!

I was on Ensoniq EPS, but now I'm on K2000. I have been searching for an Emax Song named Sarangi/Tabla (floppy ZD729) for 4 years. If you know someone who has this sound...

Thank you,
Pascal Procman
pascal.procman@wanadoo.fr

[PF – Pascal: Try www.emu.com...]

TH –

I'm looking for an Ensoniq sound cart Vol. 1 for **VFX**. I welcome any help you can give me.

Thanks in advance,
Tom Bowman (MMF)
tbowman@holidayco.com

[PF – Tom: Point your browser to www.fatsnake.com/syntaur. They have everything you ever wanted for your VFX...]

TH –

I am trying to buy an **ASR-10**. If you know anyone who has one for sale please have them contact me and leave a phone number.

Thanks,
HJCMC2@aol.com

[WARNERPRD@aol.com – Look up Music Recycler.com and pick accessories, then highlight keyboards and go. You may then do a search of your choice. Type in Ensoniq, click "search" and begin your shopping spree. Just finished searching the Recycler.com and it looks like you could find one that's listed in there right now – must be 3 or 4.]

[Garth Hjelte (garth@chickensys.com) – As I write this, there is an ASR-10 for auction on eBay. I've seen as many as three at one time. See www.ebay.com – auctions have really grown up on the web. And don't forget the Classifieds in the Hacker!!]

TH –

Sometime back I remember reading about a problem with the **MR-61**'s keyboard. I believe Pat had a solution for it. Perhaps you could explain the fix again? The problem (at least on my MR-61) is the lowest C# key. Every once in a while the C# key plays very loudly. It sounds as if I've struck the key very hard. It's a very intermittent problem.

Sincerely,
Jim Rosand
jrosand@olympus.net

[PF – Jim: Yes, this is popping up a bit more often now that more MR's are in the field. What you've got is a dirty/intermittent key contact. What I did with mine was to remove the two adjacent keys to the offending note and used a q-tip and zero residue cleaner to clean the affected key. Pretty straightforward, and once you've done this the keyboard will resume its normal behavior...]

Hi Hacker people,

I am an electronics student, and was asked by a friend to fix his **EPS**. It was dead in the water. I found heat damage on the PCB in in the power supply, and found that the one rectifier diode (CR2) had gone short. After replacing this, the PSU seems to work. However:

1) The CR2 diode gets incredibly hot. Shorting the outputs of CR1 and CR2 to spread the load just means that both now get slightly less incredibly hot. All other components on the PSU seem fine, and the diodes stay cool when the rest of the EPS is not running off the board. This seems to imply that this PSU was designed to run these diodes at >80 degrees C. Is this so?

2) The output of the EPS is very noisy. It is almost as if the D/A is only putting out 5 bit data. Things are quiet until a sound is output, and then it is noisy, with the noise getting worse as the amplitude of the sound increases. The A/D audio section seems to be bunched up on one side of the board, with part of it on a mezzanine board soldered down over the main motherboard. Without circuit diagrams, I doubt I could do anything useful. Is this "noisiness" a common problem? Is there a known fix?

Many thanks,
Ray
ray@rucus.ru.ac.za

[PF – Ray: Sounds like a couple of problems:

(A) CR2 getting hot is indicative of something sucking really hard on that part of the power supply. Check the regulators as well: check voltages at the output connector disconnected from the motherboard to see if you're getting +5, +12, and the + and – 28.5V to the display board.

(B) Check voltages with the power supply connected to the main board to verify that something is pulling down one of the supplies. If there's a great deal of variance between readings connect and disconnected from the main board, something on the main board has gone short on you. Before even going to the logic board audio anomalies, ensure the power supply is working up to snuff; otherwise, you're chasing a symptom, not a cause...

Schematics for the older gear are available to Authorized Ensoniq Service Centers. If you contact one, see if their tech will let you take a peek at them...]

BTW, replace ALL the electrolytic caps in the power supply. A leaky 35V electrolytic to ground will masquerade as this behavior. Bag some new Nichicon 50V 'lytics of identical farad value and your power supply will be golden...]

Hello,

My name is Eddie Schneider and I am living in Romania. My favourite machine is my Ensoniq **ASR-10** and the sound-library I have collected through the years is the most precious thing I have. As my 540 Meg hard-disk is full, I am very concerned about finding a way to transfer the data into my IBM PC in order to burn a CD-Rom in Ensoniq format, so I can free the hard-disk.

I have written to Ensoniq an e-mail a couple of weeks ago in this concern and Mr. Al Blake very kindly responded and sent me the brochure "Guidelines for creating an Ensoniq-Format CD-ROM." Unfortunately there is no specification about the software to use on the PC in order to make an image-file from which to burn the CD. I have tried everything from Adaptec's "Easy-CD Pro" to "Win on CD" or "NTI CD-Maker Pro" – to mention some of them, but they all function as drag'n'drop files and of course Windows does not recognize any file structure on the Ensoniq-formatted hard-disk.

Is there no software since the Giebler EDM-EDE, which unfortunately deals only with floppy disks? There would be no problem on a Macintosh, but those

machines are very rare here in Romania.

Please help me with a good advice!

Thanks a lot!!
Eddie Schneider
edi@cristal.dntcj.ro

[PF – Eddie: Point your browser to www.chickensys.com. This is RCS's homepage. Click the "Information Base" link and read the one on "Burning Ensoniq format CDROMS." Lotsa good stuff here...]

[Gary Giebler Giebler Enterprises – Giebler Enterprises' Ensoniq Disk Manager (EDM) will read/write/format/copy Ensoniq SCSI drives attached to the IBM-PC. In addition, the latest version will allow you to create a CD-ROM image file on the PC for burning an Ensoniq CD-ROM. Contact Giebler Enterprises for more information at giebler@aol.com.]

[Rubber Chicken Software Co. (support@chickensys.com) – Rubber Chicken Software's Tools programs have been able to create raw image files for writing to CD-ROM's ever since its inception (we recommend Nero – http://freespace.virgin.net/r.blair/nero40.exe – for the burning part), and is an excellent tool for creating your own CD-ROM organization on the PC itself within the native Windows platform. See www.chickensys.com/software for more info. Oh, and the article Pat refers to is at the EPS/ASR Knowledge Base (not Information Base) – www.chickensys.com/kb/013.html. We have been updating it with the latest information and have been trying to make it more Mac friendly...]

TH –

I'm trying to locate an **SQ1 Plus** keyboard. Are they still in production? Are there any around? I need help fast... 'Preciate it!... thanks.

Stay in perfect peace.
JamTower@aol.com

[PF – JT: Out of production. Available used through the usual websites such as Sweetwater Sound's Trading Post, Junky's Music (www.ugbm.com), Rogue Music and similar mail-order used stores...]

TH –

Is it possible to increase the **ASR-10** RAM from 16 Megs to say 32 or 64?

Nik Fairclough
northwind@iafrica.com

[PF – Nik: Nope. The ASR-10 won't address any more than 16 Mb – hardware limitation...]

TH –

1. Come on Ensoniq...Emu, whoever you are; offer victims (sorry) people who purchased your **ASR-X** some kind of incentive at least, to trade in on the red box. We can't be held responsible for your errors and feel rather bent over at the fact that the red box not only replaced the black box in a mere matter of no time, but after shelling out almost 2.5 grand I would think the support from your company would spread itself a little bit thicker...remember I am a consumer, and it is me that bought ya car and paid ya house payments people...I want a divorce!!!

2. Next time you decide to make a "groove anything" pick up the phone and hire Roland.

3. I have bought over $14,000 worth of your merchandise and because of my past faith in your products have practically sold another $23,000 worth... too bad it will probably go to the Roland side of the next fiscal fence crossing!

4. Redemption will save you money!!!

5. Oh, from the x-files of me and my hip hop cohorts make a Planet Phatt card for the ASR-X. it's been a very long wait for a new card... how long do you think the urban card could possibly be "in"? Some groove machine yo... 1 hip hop dance card – you people make me laugh!

Sincerely,
Mike George
ceo- Nitemare Reality Wreckordz
HERETIK777@webtv.net

[PF – Mike: Pretty shagadelic, eh?]

TH –

I'm in a studio that has an **EPSm**. We also have an OS disk that is version 1.50 but the EPS says "incompatible OS disk" when we try to boot up. What appear to be system chips (inside the unit) say: the upper chip has 1355500424 across the top with AE40 under that. The lower chip has 1355500423 on top with 6476 underneath. They both have a 117 that looks to be hand written on the chips as well. Can you help me get this thing going? There are several OS disks all with the same 1.50 software. Thanks for your help.

Thanks,
Ron Katz
telesisgear@earthlink.net

[PF – Ron Katz: To view the firmware version of your EPSm press the "Command" and then the "1" button. The display will read "No Commands on Page." Press the right cursor button and you'll get a "Software Version" screen. Press the right cursor button again to get the "Hardware Version" screen and then press "Enter." Ideally, this should read V.2.0. If it doesn't, give Ensoniq a call and see if they can't scare up a pair of 2.0 ROMs for you. They're discontinued, but they might have a pair or two lying around up there. They were $35 when available...

But you should be able to surf over to www.ensoniq.com and download the V. 2.49 OS disk image. This is the last OS version written for the EPS, so I'd ensure that you use it rather than a VERY old V. 1.5 OS disk that may or may not be compatible with the later versions of firmware (ROMs).]

[Rubber Chicken Software Co. (support@chickensys.com) – If you run into problems getting the ROM chips from Ensoniq (which you probably will), we have them available for $39.95 – see www.chickensys.com/order.html to order. Also, concerning Operating Systems, see our new Knowledge Base article about the usefulness of using different operating systems – www.chickensys.com/kb/026.html.]

TH –

This isn't a question concerning a problem with my **EPS Turbo**, but I thought I would throw this out to all those who have sound libraries for the EPS. If you have Mirage, EPS, or ASR sound libraries that I could benefit from, and you don't mind sharing them with me, I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to use them, if you no longer have use for them. I have just purchased my first sampler, the EPS-16+ Turbo, and I am in the process of putting some new songs together. I find that the more different instruments I have to choose from, helps me to create new and better tunes. It will take me a while to generate more cash for sound libraries now that I put out a whack of dough for the sampler. I'm not a charity case, but a little help from my friends will help! Call me collect at 206-444-5106 or Email me at WARNERPRD@aol.com. Look forward to hearing from you all.

KYLE
WARNERPRD@aol.com

[TH – I hope these are public domain sounds you're talking about here... "Sharing" sounds sounds an awful lot like asking someone to pirate for you – and the third-party sound developers are having a hard enough time as it is. Or, if this is just a request for passing along libraries that aren't being used, then please ignore my intrusion – but I wouldn't expect to get many responses either...]

[WARNERPRD@aol.com, Kyle – Yes, public domain sounds.]

[Garth Hjelte (garth@chickensys.com) – There are tons of available sounds from a variety of sites on the web – especially see www.soundcentral.com. That'll really get you started.]

TH –

I would like to purchase **VFX** Carts. Can you help?

Manigs@aol.com

[PF – Yo! Point your browser to www.fatsnake.com/syntaur. They're the primo VFX guys...]

Hello,

I have a question on how to use the Sequencer Edit (Tap/Tempo) button on the **ASR-X Pro** to tap out the beat. The manual claims that you can use this button to manually tap out the beat at any time. I've tried doing it, but all it does is take me to the tempo display screen without changing the actual tempo of the sequence. Basically, what I'm looking to do here is adjust the tempo of the sequence to a drum loop so I can then loop the sequence without having to stretch or shrink the loop sample. I figured the easiest way to do it would be to tap out the rhythm, just like it says in the manual, but I guess I'm doing something wrong. Could you please explain to me how to use this particular function on the ASR-X Pro? Or perhaps there is an easier way of doing it, in which case I would really appreciate some additional info on the subject.

Thanks in advance,
Mark D.
mdrapkin@mail.hac.com

[Garth Hjelte (garth@chickensys.com) – I might be wrong here, but I believe Tap Tempo was accidently disabled or "bugged out" for a version or two of the ASR-X or Pro. Can anyone else help here?]

[Eric Montgomery (ericm@ensoniq.com) – The ASR-X Pro has two OS versions, 3.00 and 3.04. Mark, you have 3.00. You need to update to 3.04, then tap tempo will work the way the manual says it does. It can be downloaded from our website, from this URL: http://www.ensoniq.com/html/asrxpro/asrxproosupdate.htm

Follow these directions:

Creating the ASR-X PRO OS Disk.

Windows Computers

1> Double click on the "My Computer" icon
2> Right click on "Floppy"
3> Choose "Format"
4> Format type should = Full
5> Label should = ASRXOSDISK
6> Click "Start" in the format window
7> Go to the following URL:
http://www.ensoniq.com/html/asrxpro/asrxproosupdate.htm
8> Click on the operating system file and download it (Maybe select your desktop as a location to download to)
9> Double click the file you just downloaded (It is called ASRXPro OS)
10> Click "OK" in the box that popped up
11> Click "Unzip" in the self extractor box that popped up (Be sure that the disk we just formatted is in the floppy disk drive of your computer before you do this step)
12> When the extractor is complete, take the disk out of your computer
13> Be sure that your ASR Pro is OFF, insert the ASRX Pro OS disk into the floppy disk drive of your ASR-X Pro, turn the ASRX Pro ON.
14> Press "Enter" when the X Pro asks if you want to update the OS.
15> Let the X do its procedure.]

G'Day,

Now's the time for some real hacking!

1) Can someone work out how to get a real analogue signal (guitar or mic) into the **TS12** effects processor?

2) There are 6 ROM banks marked on the front face, only 2, 3, and 4 available. Can 5, 6, 7 be activated??

3) Battery backup of sample data.

Ideas like these must have some money value to someone who knows how! I wish I did!

Thanks,
Mel
mlaraway@senet.com.au

[PF – Mel: Answers, in order:

(1) No. This requires an A/D converter, which the TS doesn't support. Remember, it's a pure D/A converter, and unless someone wanted to graft the ASR front end onto the TS backend (not a trivial pursuit) for free, it simply WON'T happen. Sorry, but retro-ing this technology to an obsolete keyboard won't pay...

(2) Certainly. If someone decided to reverse engineer the wavetable to plot the end addressable (big-endian) waveROM table, one could iterate the open wavespace and make it addressable to pack it with more waveROM, up to the limit of the 68xxx CPU's addressable max. However, recoding the ROM to walk those addresses (as well as wavetype/position/pointer data) at startup pretty much screws this pooch. That technology lives in Maytags now.

(3) Remember what became of the FlashRAM concept at Malvern? Cool idea, not cost effective, limited processor cycles, paged memory, but so valuable that 16+'s w/FlashRAM command $2.5K+ in Japan right now...

Mel, all these things ARE do-able. But the resources, hardware, and brain trust to implement them have vanished from Malvern. It's high time for a POWERPC engine that does a 64-bit data path, branches and concurrently executes 4 I/O pipes asymmetrically. RISC. For Pete's sake, PRINTERS utilize this technology. Until we demand it in keyboards, we're simply stuck with what Japan gives us. After all, they decided MIDI should be a 31.25 kBaud modem to other keyboards back in 1982, and what a breakthrough that was. We're still stuffed into that spec NOW, aren't we?

Maybe in 2002 we'll see a similar group of quasi-Ensoniq young engineers realize they can take old G3's and make Gigasamplers out of them on the cheap. Kind of gives a new meaning to the term "USB Keyboard."]

TH –

I am looking for a Model SP-1 SCSI interface for the Ensoniq **EPS**. It seems that dealers and service centers no longer have them and cannot get them.

Regards,
Paul Hadorn
PaulHadorn@aol.com

[PF – Paul: Browse to www.chickensys.com and www.fatsnake.com/syntaur. They'll scare one up for you...]

[Paul – THANK YOU !!!!!]

TH –

I want to know if there is any **ASR-X** Unisyn-Profile for the MAC? I need to edit all Layer-Parameters for RAM-Sounds (imported from ASR-10). Most sounds I load from my ASR-10 sound different from the original when they're on my ASR-X.

Can someone help?
Andreas
apratsch@mail.hh.provi.de

[PF – Andreas: Nope. As of March 18, No ASR-X profiles of ANY kind were on MOTU's Unisyn website...]

[Garth Hjelte (garth@chickensys.com) – It's on Ensoniq's site – http://www.ensoniq.com/binary/asrxunisyn.zip. MOTU really doesn't write profiles unless it's really a necessary thing, which nothing really is that necessary anymore. IN fact, MOTU hardly supports Unisyn anymore. You might also consider visiting the ASR-Xchange (http://www.lanset.com/shansen), which has a freeware MIDI editor written by Shehryar Lasi (who contributed the valuable accurate sequencer timing tests a couple issues ago.). Specific URL is http://www.lanset.com/shansen/asrx-editor.htm. Also, ASR-X Tools for Mac is in development as should be released sometime before summer.]

Hello Hackers,

I own an **ASR-10** and its display functions poorly. A "3" shows like a "9", a "C" is an "E", and a "+" shows like a "4". It functions all right but it is sometimes hard to read. Especially with reading numbers it is hard. I wonder if I need a new display board (a good one seems hard to get) or can I do something else? It looks like too many "wires" light up, sometimes more, sometimes less.

Thanks for any advice,
Ties van der Linden
fonofactory@wxs.nl

[PF – Ties: You can try Ensoniq directly, or your local Service Center, but if you have a fluorescent display (the blue-green letters) you're out of luck, as Ensoniq ECO'd to an LCD display near the end of the model run, as even they couldn't get that display tube any more. I'd call Malvern directly at 610.647.3930 just to see if they don't have an old one collecting dust on a shelf somewhere. Good luck in your search...]

TH –

After years of developing sound, selling at retail, and seven years of being a rep for Ensoniq... I, with a great many others, was permanently laid off! I wish everyone good-luck, and will forever use my Ensoniq samplers and keyboards and DP products...

Classifieds

EPS-16+ Turbo for sale. Good condition. With case, 100's of sounds, effects, Zip Drive, sample CD's. Call 225-293-1630.

In honor of the service the *Transoniq Hacker* has provided to Ensoniq users over the years, Jack Tolin is offering a tape of original instrumental music tracking his Ensoniq-Hacker career. All sounds and music were produced exclusively on the SQ-1 PLUS 32-voice synthesizer. Jack is asking only $5 per tape. Send all requests to 8602 East 79th Street, Kansas City, MO 64138. Email: Yahkohv@Juno.com.

Wanted: KT-88. Must be clean and in great shape. Studio use only. Gary Allan, garyallan@ameritech.net.

MR-Rack with World Card. Tascam Portastudio 424mkII, 4 true tracks with 16 mic/line inputs. 2 speed, EQ, Dolby DBX NR. Best offer for each or both. 415-945-9108 or email clarusrw@cts.com.

Ensoniq EPS-16 Plus rack module, 8 outputs, SCSI expanded. Rarely used, great condition $700 obo. baliraja@hotmail.com

EPS Classic for sale! PS Systems 4X expander. 250+ floppies, with printed listing, of sounds. Excellent condition! $500. – Will separate w/case. Finale 3 – Notation Software. In box. Full documentation. $75 obo. Keith Mullin, 217-221-7267 days, 217-224-4036 nights, kmullin@harris.com.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS!

Well – within limits. We're offering free classified advertising (up to 40 words) for your sampled sounds or patches. Additional words, or ads for other products or services, are $0.25/ word per issue (**BOLD** type: $0.45/word). Unless renewed, freebie ads are removed after 2 issues. While you're welcome to resell copyrighted sounds and programs that you no longer have any use for, ads for *copies* of copyrighted material will not be accepted. Sorry – we can't (we won't!) take ad dictation over the phone!

Thank you one and all at *TRANSONIQ HACKER!*

Your friend,
Cosmo Watts
COZMIDI@aol.com

[TH – Sorry to hear of the hard times and good luck on wherever this takes you!]

[PF – Cosmo: For all inveterate musicians, Cosmo's programming prowess goes back to 1982 (and quite possibly earlier) back when the DX7 was the keyboard flagship. Back when the Hacker was at Issue #2 Cosmo was cranking out sounds for most all synthesizers back when the term "third party" implied a romantic tryst and not a developer source. I wish as many of our readers continued to have the same evangelism to their Ensoniq products as you do.

Sorry to hear that your years of devotion to the Ensoniq platform culminated in your release. But you're part of an honor roll: Roy Elkins is now Sonic Foundry, Jerry Kovarsky is now KORG USA... You'd think after a decade of watching other companies turn millions from their mistakes that Ensoniq might just learn from this pattern. Hope the Ensoniq pluses outweighed the minuses.

I keep hearing that profit is king, but, IMHO, when you discard aces just to win a few hands you're playing fish, not poker.]

[WARNERPRD@aol.com, Kyle – Cosmo, if you have sound libraries that are at a reasonable price, I am interested in purchasing them from you. This is for my EPS 16+. Pat Finnigan found me this EPS Turbo and again I'd be privileged to purchase some from you. Thank you.]

[Garth Hjelte (garth@chickensys.com) – See ya Cosmo, till we meet again.]

[Tom Tracy (ttracy@sctcorp.com) – Best of luck, Cosmo.

I too, was employed by Ensoniq as a technical writer for nearly ten years and was hit in the first wave of "permanent layoffs." You've probably seen my name in many Ensoniq manuals. Like you, I continue to faithfully use my trusty pumpkin-colored TS-10 (the first pre-production unit!). I'm currently creating soundtracks for multimedia training presentations for my new employer – SCT Corporation.

*See you again sometime,
Tom Tracy]*

Greetings from Australia!

I need to store all my **ASR-10** floppies onto my iMac drive for use in a AIFF sample player software. Is there a program which allows Mac to read ASR discs as well as convert them to AIFF?

For your help I will be forever grateful..... Thanks Mate!

Best regards,
Serge Douw
sergesound@netspace.net.au

[PF – Serge: Alchemy can do this, but I'd recommend EPSm by Terje Norstad. The particular problem you'll have is getting the files into the iMac, as it doesn't have a floppy drive, so you'll need the VST USB Floppy Drive ($100 here in the states) or the Imation USB SuperDisk ($150 when available) in order to copy the files into the iMac.

Point your browser to http://fysmac-elg01.uio.no-/eps.html and check out EPSm: should hit the spot...]

[Garth Hjelte (garth@chickensys.com) – Norstad? Man, Terje's gonna kill you. =) It's actually "Finstad." EPSm is now a commercial program distributed by Rubber Chicken Software. The above link is helpful, and as well www.chickensys.com/software/EPSm.html. By the way, USB support is forthcoming for EPSm.]

[PF – Gang: Sorry, Terje. Terje is Finstad for Mac software, John is Norstad for Software FPU, a 68882 emulator for certain PMac functions.]

TH:

On the output page of just about any Ensoniq synth there is a keyrange function. As an example, on the TS there is an output scale and lo-hi key. If it is set to the following: output scale: "zone" and lo-hi key "a3-g5," this means that this particular voice will only play within this applicable range. I see some programs with voice settings as follows: output scale "+55"; and lo-hi key of "b2-c4."

My 2-part question (please answer both): 1) what happens to the sound within the above range when the output scale is not set to "zone" and, more importantly, 2) what is happening outside this lo-hi range when the output scale does not equal "zone"? Does a note outside this range actually play less loud than within the range? This is not really explained in the manual and in testing the settings I don't seem to hear any audible differences outside this range which leads me to believe that the lo- hi range only seems to work when the output scale is set to "zone." I know this can't be true or Ensoniq would not have put this option on the output section. Please explain.

Thanks,
Delaware Dave
DMusum7335@aol.com

[TH – Pat has been trying to chase down some information from Ensoniq in order to answer your question and hasn't been able to get a response yet. Please hang in there, we'll get back to you...]

TH –

I too was taken aback reading Pat and Robby's back and forth in the last issue. I've been reading, and taking, all your advice for the last 8 years (and I've never needed a "grain of salt"). I think we can all agree that the Hacker will be missed. We all share that common bond of a love of this stuff that just can't be explained to the uninitiated (i.e. our spouses). Why does my pulse quicken at the thought of putting a sampler or synth through its paces? Beats me. But it does. And I will definitely miss the thrill of getting my fresh Hacker in the mail every month.

That said, I have a practical question. Would it be possible, between now and the Final Issue, to publish a list of Web sites or bulletin boards for those similarly afflicted with our passion? Or perhaps the Interface could carry on as some sort of pay site/BBS?

Thanks,
BERFAB@aol.com

[TH – For web sites, probably the best thing to do is just start following links from our "Related Sites" page. There are some TERNTATIVE plans to continue some sort of Interface – this is mainly up to Pat...]

TH –

I'm new to the eTH.

Has anyone done a review on the MRD-1 Sound Disk Series for the **MR/ZR** synths? If so, where can I find it? Or can someone email me with it and/or tell me if it's worth getting.

ThanX
James Cerniglia
jcigzr76@hotmail.com

[PF – James: Yes. Reviewed the MRD-101 last year (Issue #153). Cool Disk. Bag it.]

TH –

The "battery low" message has appeared on my **SQ1 Plus**. Do I really need to take it in to the shop to get the battery replaced? How tough is it to access the battery and replace it? I used to be an electronics tech, so I know how to solder electronic components, etc. I just hesitate taking the keyboard apart when I don't have a clue where the battery is. Can you give me some clues?

Gary M. Waller
gary.waller@lmco.com

[PF – Gary: The battery is a 2/3 AA lithium 3V battery, but since SQ1+ logic boards are NLA, I'd highly recommend taking it to an authorized service center, as if you nuke the board, you're hosed. Also, it's come to my attention that certain revisions of the SQ-series logic boards have coin-type lithium batteries soldered on the logic board, so even if you're got two holsters with soldering irons, let an Authorized Service Center take responsibility. You'll be glad you did...]

Back Issues

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ESQ-1 coverage started with Issue #13. **SQ-80** coverage started with #29, (although most ESQ-1 coverage also applies to the SQ-80). **EPS** coverage got going with #35 (and also applies to the **ASRs**). **VFX** coverage (which also applies to the **SDs**) got started in #48. The **SQs** got going in #63. (SQ articles also apply to the **KS, KTs, & E-Prime.**) **DP/4** coverage started in #88 (much of which also applies to the **ASRs,** and most of which also applies to the **DP/2 & DP +**). **TS** coverage got going with #98 but owners should also check out sample reviews for EPS/ASR sounds. The **MR- Series** coverage really started with #136 – but earlier sample reviews may also be useful.

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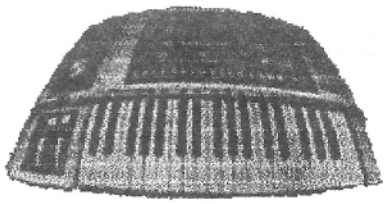

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Subscriptions: 12 monthly issues. US: $25/year, All others: $34/year.
E-mail version: $19/year. Payable in US funds.

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