Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live

Posted by pjm101111 - 2012/01/23 06:42
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Hi guys
since this is the place to go to for everything elektron related. I just wanted to ask what configs and setups you use to sync Live with elektron boxes.

I manly use live for vst synths (Native instrments Absynth and Massive. Also use ABL2 for some projects). Efter recieving some tips from a friend who is more experanced in hw then me me current set up is:

Ableton Live as master with clock signal sent to md/mnm over the TM-1 interface.
Master ch in live set to -6ms delay compensation. Tempo drifts +/- 0.3 BMP on the external hw.

All help and constructive critisism is welcome!

Cheers
PJM

** I'm new to the forum and if i have missed threads where this has been addressed please prove urls. Thanks.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live

Posted by manuelcicca - 2012/01/24 05:07
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"Innerclock systems" it's what you need to perfectly slave the OT to the DAW clock. Google it.
Also if you want to know more about this in here there was a thread in the Other Gear Section of this Forum about the Innerclock and how you use it.

Cheers

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live

Posted by prscrptn - 2012/01/24 11:14
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^ the Innerclock devices will help, but there is a certain amount of internal timing jitter in all of the Elektron devices. The Sync Gen II LE will tighten up synchronization with your computer and other devices, but unfortunately will not fix the internal clock of the MD, MnM, or OT...

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live

Posted by Citizen J - 2012/01/24 16:20
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Is this a problem they (elektron) couldn't just address in an OS update or something?

To be honest, this is the first time I have seen it said that the issue is with the Elektron devices as opposed to it being with MIDI in general and modern computers.

It's something I want to tackle as well. I haven't had my MD for very long so I'm more just getting used to the device at the minute and have yet to have it running its patterns being triggered via MIDI.

I'm in the process of getting a new audio interface so I'm unable to try out any suggestions I read until that arrives but I wondered whether anyone has triggered MD/MnM patterns from an external hardware sequencer and got perfect sync? I was actually looking at getting the Yamaha QY700 as I thought this might be a solid sync method for live use but I'm in 2 minds now I have just read that the issue could potentially still be there if it's Elektron units to blame?

Hang on though, if you own both the MnM and MD and use only those 2 devices where one is the master and one is the slave in a live jam, how is the sync then? If it's perfect, does this not mean that the issue is NOT with the Elektron

devices??

What about using the MD/MnM as a master? Does this produce better result than it being a slave? If I sync'd Ableton Live to the MD clock, am I going to experience error - free timing?

Like I say, I can't try these out yet until my Interface arrives as I have no MIDI connection but if somebody has some experience of these methods it would be worthwhile hearing about them.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by Nicolai - 2012/01/24 16:46
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It's interesting that your friend suggested using Live as the master. The computer-generated MIDI clock will have more jitter than the elektron boxes. Most articles/blogs I have read regard the Machinedrum's MIDI clock as being about as solid as you can get.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by Citizen J - 2012/01/24 16:56
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There's 2 conflicting statements in this thread, earlier prscrptn said there was an amount of jitter in all Elektron devices and that some of the Inner Clock devices might help. Of course now you saying the Elektron devices have some of the most solid clocks you can get, makes me wonder what's what.

I dunno, guess I will try out all possibilities.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by pjm101111 - 2012/01/24 20:43
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Citizen J wrote:
What about using the MD/MnM as a master? Does this produce better result than it being a slave? If I sync'd Ableton Live to the MD clock, am I going to experience error - free timing?

Nicolai wrote:
It's interesting that your friend suggested using Live as the master. The computer-generated MIDI clock will have more jitter than the elektron boxes. Most articles/blogs I have read regard the Machinedrum's MIDI clock as being about as solid as you can get.

My friend argued that Live had more trouble following external clocks and keeping everything in sync rather than acting as master. I know his studio has allot more midi interfaces and chains of hw so this set up might work better for him. I'm very novice in this area and had little success syncing live via the MDs clock.

I mix everything external and with -6 ms compensations on lives master channel it sounds tight.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by prscrptn - 2012/01/24 21:59
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To clarify, this is a problem that I have been working to solve for quite some time now...

Here are the results;

Computers output sync to your external devices which have ascertain amount of jitter. This is not "analogue groove", it is small random timing inaccuracies. Jitter will cause your device to be slightly ahead or slightly behind perfect clock. All

modern computers and DAW software have this problem, period. It does not matter what computer/DAW you use.

The Innerclock devices will convert audio to sync and output a perfect sync signal to your external gear.

Unfortunately, we have learned that most hardware; including Elektron devices, have some internal jitter issues which are similar to the problems that computers display with sync. Sometimes notes are slightly ahead and sometimes notes are slightly behind. Jitter is irregular and unpredictable and therefore many refer to this problem as "timing slop".

The only way to get your tracks perfectly in time is through micro editing. I suggest working with your computer as the master clock, but turning off sync during recording. This will reduce the amount of timing irregularities in your tracks, but unfortunately not eliminate it 100%.

I use Ableton with my Octatrack; this method has worked for me, but it is far from perfect.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by dataline - 2012/01/24 22:10
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my solution is to stop syncing DAWs to hardware :)

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by PLOVA - 2012/01/24 23:30
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Octatrack as master, Live/Mac as slave does not work for me.

However, Mac/Live as master and OT as slave does. Just a normal spec Macbook Pro with a humble old M Audio Fasttrack Pro interface.

I have tested this by starting Live in record mode and tracking the output of my OT into Live.

I disabled Warp mode on the recording, and it still timed up perfectly, over the duration of around 7 minutes.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by prscrptn - 2012/01/25 00:23
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dataline wrote:
my solution is to stop syncing DAWs and hardware :)

Exactly, this is what Daniel recommended, and it has worked for me.

I only use sync while I am writing so I can listen to the computer with the hardware.

When it comes to dropping audio; I turn off sync, and fly tracks in manually.

This makes things a lot tighter, (especially for the Octatrack).

Bad external sync and slices can be an editing nightmare!

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by crixmadine - 2012/01/25 02:13
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I know this is out of reach for most in terms of price, but I invested into an ACME-4 made by SND for rock solid sync between my DAW and the Elektron's as well as analog sequencers/drum machines (it has din sync outputs and cv trigs).

http://www.s-n-d.com/acme4e_a.html

When slaved to the ACME-4, I see almost zero amount of jitter on the Elektrons and is perhaps the most solid/stable clock out there. In addition you can fine tune and shift the individual clock outputs around which is amazing. You can essentially use it as a performance tool as each clock shift adjustment you make can be quantized. You can create all kinds of crazy off-kilter rhythms and then instantly recall your original sync settings to have everything sync right back in the pocket. In addition you have swing adjustment per midi output as well as half/double speed switches per midi output. It is basically the price of an Elektron but it is a pro piece of kit with quality components and you will never have to worry about sync issues again.

-cm

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by prscrptn - 2012/01/25 03:13
_____

crixmadine wrote:
 I see almost zero amount of jitter on the Elektrons and is perhaps the most solid/stable clock out there.

Really???

This is an example of quarter note jitter recorded w/ internal clock on a Machinedrum.

-64 samples/pushed by 1.45 ms
-64 samples/pushed by 1.45 ms
+96 samples/dragging by 2.18 ms
+160 samples/pushed by 3.63 ms
-32 samples/pushed by 0.73ms
-32 samples/pushed by 0.73 ms
-96 samples/pushed by 2.18 ms
96 samples/dragging by 2.18 ms
-32 samples/pushed by 0.73 ms
128 samples/dragging by 2.90 ms

Don't get me wrong, I am not bashing Elektron, I'm an avid user. Yet my point here is that there is a considerable amount of internal timing issues with these devices. Unfortunately, this is not just an Elektron issue. The DSI Tempest has an even worse internal clock as well as many other new devices. Still I have to ask the question WHY? When my apps for the iPad are near sample accurate, why are my dedicated hardware devices not?

If the drummer in your band couldn't keep time, would you keep him?

...I welcome all of your objections and flames!

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by crixmadine - 2012/01/25 03:52
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@prscrptn
What I was referring to there is the Elektron's have almost zero jitter when the SND ACME-4 clock is hooked up to them and serves as master clock which is the main point of my post. I'm not saying that Elektron's by themselves are jitter-free. I went ahead clarified my statement on my previous post. :)

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by we88 - 2012/01/25 03:59
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Syncing external gear to Live via midi clock is a hopeless joke - never had any joy with it. Yes the innerclock or probably

also the SND solution will improve things as far as the limitation of the external box will allow. As already mentioned above.

Have to say that the SND box looks hot- a sync gen and sync shift in one. Haven't used the sync shift but being a big fan of my Flame Clockwork and what you can do with that I can imagine the joy of a similar trick with midi gear

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by prscrptn - 2012/01/25 04:54
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crixmadine wrote:
@prscrptn
What I was referring to there is the Elektron's have almost zero jitter when the SND ACME-4 clock is hooked up to them and serves as master clock which is the main point of my post. I'm not saying that Elektron's by themselves are jitter-free. I went ahead clarified my statement on my previous post. :)

No worries... I misunderstood your statement. I guess this topic has become somewhat of a hot button for me as of late. I just do not understand why in 2012 our computers can not deliver the same quality of synchronization that an ATARI computer did 30 years ago! My statement against hardware developers is the same. Why does a $0.99 app for my iPad has better timing than my $1750 dedicated hardware sequencer? It just makes no sense at all...

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by chapelier fou - 2012/01/25 05:58
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having the BPM display drifting is perfectly "normal". The question is : do you hear problems ?
(sorry i didn't read the whole topic)

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by manuelcicca - 2012/01/25 07:07
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Citizen J wrote:
There's 2 conflicting statements in this thread

What I know is that DAW clock sucks when controlling external gear. Innerclock solves this problem by bypassing the DAW clock and sending it's own to (in this specific case) the Elektron. The Elektron in this case would act as Slave device so no clock being sent or jitter being generated from it. The other statement was probably referring to the opposite process i.e the Elektron acting as the Master and having to clock the other devices which are acting as the Slave.
So they are actually 2 different slices of 2 (different) pizzas . NO conflict .

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by prscrptn - 2012/01/25 08:22
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^ There are actually two points of jitter when syncing hardware to a DAW.

1. Sync generated by the computer.

2. Internal clock of the hardware.

These two clocks are not related, yet when added together become worse...

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by ties - 2012/01/25 21:34
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as mentioned before:
For perfect syncing your DAW with hardware:
SyncLock from www.innerclock.com is the answer!
supertight clock from any system with two spare audio-outs (1 for the clock and the second for transport) ingenius and bulletproof system, my soft and hardware become 1 (one) 'thing' !

I use it all the time, after years of frustration in trying to sync my mac with my elektron boxes and other gear, this is the solution, I can record, listen, playback and all is 100% in time and sounds the same!

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by chapelier fou - 2012/01/25 22:00
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Please let me ask my question again to the OP : "is there anything bothering you, beside the fact that you can see the tempo indicator jittering ?"

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by the dreammer - 2012/01/25 22:43
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Not sure if its midi-jitter and all that.. but currently i am trying to sync the octatrack with a vs2400-recorder. if the midi-clock jitters just after a recording-trig that is combined with a playtrig
(thus playing the sample,your sampling) somehow the octatrack looses position and plays outside its buffer.. resulting in verry shitty static noise..

did not test it enough to actually say i know.. but hmm i assume for the moment, its because of non-perfect sync

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by prscrptn - 2012/01/25 23:39
_____

ties wrote:
as mentioned before:
For perfect syncing your DAW with hardware:
SyncLock from www.innerclock.com is the answer!
supertight clock from any system with two spare audio-outs (1 for the clock and the second for transport) ingenius and bulletproof system, my soft and hardware become 1 (one) 'thing' !

I use it all the time, after years of frustration in trying to sync my mac with my elektron boxes and other gear, this is the solution, I can record, listen, playback and all is 100% in time and sounds the same!

^ +1 This is a great product and I highly recommend!

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by pjm101111 - 2012/01/26 18:14
_____

chapelier fou wrote:
Please let me ask my question again to the OP : "is there anything bothering you, beside the fact that you can see the tempo indicator jittering ?"

Hey chapelier
I did a simple test using the metronome in Live and put a rimshot on every quarter note on the MD and it sounds thigh (with -6 ms compensation on Lives master ch), So in that sense everything is fine.

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Re:Elektron boxes in sync with Ableton Live
Posted by SKL - 2013/02/20 01:10
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I'm also experiencing this problem, but found a quick fix - "track delay" in Ableton Live. This is not really a good fix when coming to recording, because I still need to edit the recordings, so that everything really is in sync after recording. But, it works when playing live!

To bad this is a problem though! And if it's a known problem, somebody should have made a deal with ex. Inner Clock, so that it came with the box! :)

Anyway, love the A4 machine !

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