
Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by orangehexagon - 2013/05/30 01:50

Right now I'm using an M Box 2 Pro and I'm feeling limited by only having 4 analog inputs.

I'm looking to buy a new interface so I can track live to separate channels. I have a MachineDrum (that I would like to separate out into at least 4 channels), an Analog Four (2 channels), and a Doepfer Dark Energy (1 channel).

So that's 7 channels there, but I would like a little flexibility to add more simultaneous inputs down the road.

Any suggestions on quality audio interfaces with 8 or more analog line inputs?

Also, just curious to see how others have their I/O set up...

I'd like to spend no more \$900 at the very most (preferably less so I can put that money towards an Octatrack) on a new audio interface.

Thanks in advance.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by bonde - 2013/05/30 02:06

I'm in the exact same situation. Been thinking about Focusrite Scarlett 18i6. It has 8 audio inputs:

<http://www.soundonsound.com/sos/feb12/articles/focusrite-scarlett.htm>

Anyone have any opinion/experience with that one?

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by recyclinglostcities - 2013/05/30 03:06

I've been dealing with this for a few months, when my old 8 in interface bit it and I had to find a solution. I was trying to save money and thought I could get by with only a 4 input soundcard, and picked up the Focusrite Saffire Pro 24. I really liked the sound (or lack of...very clean and quiet), and figured I could expand it with ADAT later. Of course, the only budget preamp unit on the market is the Behringer ADA8000, which does have very good reviews, despite the name. However, it requires ADAT in and out, even if you only need it as an additional preamp. Since the Pro 24 only has ADAT in, this was no good, and ultimately decided on the Pro 40, which has the same preamps as the 24, and much more expansion possibilities. You're going to be hard pressed to find any 8 input interfaces for less than \$500.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by GYS - 2013/05/30 03:09

Just putting this out there, but if you can get away with doing multiple takes to get a full recording done, you may want to consider going for something with less inputs but higher quality converters/pres. Along these lines, don't forget that the individual outs of the Machinedrum bypass the MD efx section.

I went from a MOTU 2408 to an Apogee Duet. I don't find it that bad doing multiple takes to capture everything in a song, and I'm really blown away by the quality of sound the Apogee gives me.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by vvd - 2013/05/30 20:53

I use (and can recommend) the Echo Audiofire 8 (the older version)! Converters are said to be very good (sound very awesome to me), and it is on the not too expensive side. I got mine used from ebay.

Don't get me wrong, I just happen to have the older model - the newer model is probably just as good, if not better.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by SBSIX - 2013/05/30 22:03

bonde wrote:

I'm in the exact same situation. Been thinking about Focusrite Scarlett 18i6. It has 8 audio inputs:
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Anyone have any opinion/experience with that one?

I have the 18i6 about a year now. It has been rocksteady, and very easy to use mixer software, which makes it ideal to use hardware without opening a daw, and zero latency recordings. It also works without a computer connected (although all input channels are set to mono instead of stereo pairs).

Also it can be expanded with adat if you need more than 8 inputs down the road.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by recyclinglostcities - 2013/05/31 04:44

While you can expand the 18i6 with ADAT, it is worth noting that the the least expensive ADAT preamp currently on the market (that I am aware of anyhow, having just spent too many hours researching this myself) that will operate with the only optical in (no out) Focusrite interfaces is the Octopre. No doubt that it's a great piece of equipment, but if you buy something with the intent that you will expand later, it might be good to consider.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by bonde - 2013/06/03 18:38

I'm currently looking at this Presonus Firestudio Mobile as a real cheap solution . Despite its smallness and cheapness it seems (judging from reviews) that the sound quality is quite good.

Anyone have any opinions or experience with this? Or with other presonus interfaces that use the same converters:

<http://www.musicradar.com/gear/tech/computers-software/peripherals/input-devices/audio-interfaces/firestudio-mobile-238529>

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by infinite6 - 2013/06/03 18:55

Second hand motu's - 828MK2 - Traveller

Cheap -

Reliable -

Solid drivers -

Expandable - just buy another.

Unless you spend \$2k + it's all the same shit.

Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by ntothe - 2013/06/03 19:14

also do look into a MOTU Ultralite. I've been using it for two years now and it gets the job done.

but this is valid only if you're a mac user. MOTUs love macs and they hate PCs (really, seems the drivers are messed up)

Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by duplex - 2013/06/03 20:46

I was in the same boat â€“ had an Echo AudioFire 4 and wanted more analog inputs. I settled on a TC Electronic Studio Konnekt 48. You get 12 channels of analog inputs on board, as well as an ADAT port for future expansion of I/O if you need it. The unit sounds great (to my ears) and has a TC reverb and channel strips thrown in for good measure. Get the one without the remote control for a somewhat cheaper price.

Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by AUX - 2013/06/04 20:50

+1 on Motu.

I use a 828mk3 and a Traveler daisy chained via firewire for 18 analogue I/O @ 88.1Khz 24bit. Stable (on mac) and can be used standalone.....

Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by RubixGroove - 2013/06/04 23:45

If you can find a Focusrite Saffire 40 used... jump on it! Sounds great, has never given me any issues and it's expandable. Right out of the box you get eight XLR/1/4" inputs. ADAT and SPDIF ins/outs. I found mine for about \$275 (\$500 new).

So many different ways to go! If you do your footwork and check in with GearslutZ when you have a direct question about a specific interface, you'll be on the right track soon enough!

Peace

Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by bonde - 2013/06/04 23:59

Thanks for all the tips - and for starting this thread.

In my case, I don't think I need the inputs to be with preamps, as I'm not gonna record guitar or song, but only from my elektron gear.

And I'm guessing that with the saffire pro 40, a good amount of what you actually pay for is the 8 mic preamps. So I think I might as well go for a cheaper focusrite unit also with 8 analog inputs, but with only two preamps.

Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by bonde - 2013/06/05 00:02

....^am I wrong up there?

Will I actually benefit from preamps when I'm only recording synths and drummachines etc.?

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by orangehexagon - 2013/06/05 06:32

You won't need preamps if you're just recording synths and Elektron gear. Just use level adjustments and master level to attenuate. You won't need more gain than what Elektron gear gives you.

I'm borrowing my friends Digi 002 and I love having everything hooked up at once and recording to separate tracks for further processing and post-performance mixing. I have the kick and snare both going out on their own lines and then the rest of the kit going out as a stereo signal. This really opens up the sound without doing a lot of tedious in-box tweaks.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by j0hnny - 2013/06/05 09:50

GYS wrote:

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Agreed. I would rather only have two inputs and record each instrument one at a time, knowing that I'm getting the highest quality conversion my money can buy, rather than have multiple channels and settle for lesser quality preamps, ad/da converters and clock timing.

Just upgraded from Ultralite MKI to Babyface and there's a BIG difference.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by Mailloux - 2013/06/05 10:18

I also have a babyface and I'm just wondering if your using XLR to female TRS adapters or your plugging your babyface in a mixer? How do you deal with those XLR inputs. I'm using adapters but I'm thinking moving to a mixer.

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by sdesign - 2013/06/05 20:19

orangehexagon wrote:

Also, just curious to see how others have their I/O set up...

If you are on a Mac you can use as many audio interfaces as you like simultaneously by creating an 'aggregate device', which is then recognised as one audio interface by your DAW.

I use a 16-channel Mixer with USB audio interface (just outputs a stereo pair), an Alesis iO4 audio interface (four inputs) and the audio interface that's built into my Novation X-Station (2 inputs). This gives me the ability to record up to 7 tracks

simultaneously (1 stereo from the mixer and 6 mono). I'm using a powered USB hub to connect them all so I can add another audio interface if I need more simultaneous inputs.

Not sure if this will help, you could for example just purchase a second 4 input audio interface to create an aggregate device with your current interface to give you 8 inputs for simultaneous recording B)

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Re:Audio Interface Suggestions

Posted by j0hnny - 2013/06/12 23:02

Mailloux wrote:

I also have a babyface and I'm just wondering if your using XLR to female TRS adapters or your plugging your babyface in a mixer? How do you deal with those XLR inputs. I'm using adapters but I'm thinking moving to a mixer.

Im just using XLR to TRS cables. If I want to hook up another synth or drum machine along with the A4 or OT, I just use the inputs on those. Im keeping my setup to a minimum at the moment and would also prefer to keep the signal path as simple as possible for recording, but will probably consider a good mixer in the future.

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