

CEDAR Duo Auto Dehiss

Digital de-noising, using a variety of techniques, has been commercially available since the late 1980s. CEDAR was prominent then and is now almost synonymous with audio restoration processing.

ROB JAMES



TO GET THE BEST out of CEDAR's PC-based solutions requires a degree of time and expertise, at least when setting up. In many real-world circumstances this is difficult or impossible to provide. There are also cost considerations. CEDAR long ago recognised this and produces a range of standalone units at relatively low cost.

The latest 'one trick ponies' out of the stable are the Duo series, as the name implies, of two processors: the UK£3,500 (plus VAT) Duo Auto Dehiss module and the Duo Declickle each powered by two analogue devices SHARC DSPs. The modules are physically identical 1u rackmounts with universal power supplies.

The front panel is sparse. A power switch, three-line alphanumeric display with six soft buttons arranged at the sides, a data entry wheel and two indicator LEDs for power and standby complete the picture. Around the back, the story is similar, with just two XLRs for AES I-O at up to 96kHz 24-bit, phonos for SPDIF, MIDI In, Out and Thru, and a USB socket for factory updates.

Auto Dehiss is identified only by the front panel logo. Operation is kept remarkably simple. My only initial confusion was Bypass. This is set or cancelled in the Audio I-O submenu and, when set, disables the Auto and Manual On/Off toggle. Bypass removes the inevitable latency and is less likely to be used, whereas On/Off simply switches the processing in and out. Perfectly logical now I understand...

The unit can deal with AB or MS stereo. Processing can be either automatic or manual. Ninety-nine internal memories can be stored and recalled locally or

via MIDI, which also allows for remote control.

In automatic mode the Bias (dB) control affects the calculation of the amount of noise present in the original signal — a positive value means you think there is a higher level of noise present than the algorithm and a negative value a lower level. LF Bias does the same thing but only for content below 5kHz and Attenuation sets the maximum amount of noise attenuation at any given moment and frequency. Each channel can be set independently, if the material requires this. In Manual mode, Level (dB) sets the amount of noise believed to be present in the signal, LF Bias and Attenuation work as before.

The Duo Auto Dehiss process is a further development of the Dehiss 3 algorithm developed for the CEDAR Cambridge. Auto means what it says, the Duo makes a good fist of determining and removing the appropriate

amount of noise with no user intervention. For those with a little more time and expertise, the Duo offers meaningful and effective manual controls. Remote control, memories and 96kHz sampling add to convenience. All noise reduction processes degrade the signal by definition. The secret lies in getting the balance right between cleaning up dubious material and audible degradation. Duo makes this easier than any previous CEDAR processor and is probably the best standalone dehisser to date. ■

Contact

CEDAR AUDIO, UK:
Tel: +44 1223 881771
Website: www.cedaraudio.com

PROS	Remarkably simple with flexibility; near ideal compromise for most material.
CONS	Latency will always be an issue in some applications for dehissers; data entry wheel a mite stiff.
EXTRAS	CEDAR Duos each offers the processing power of five CEDAR Series 2 or Series X modules and host new algorithms. The Duo Declickle replaces the DCX Declicker and CRX Decrackler and the Duo Auto Dehiss replaces the DHX Dehisser. An upgrade path for CEDAR Series 1, Series 2 and Series X products is planned.

