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MOTU SHIPS 8pre 16X12 FIREWIRE AUDIO INTERFACE WITH EIGHT MIC INPUTS

MOTU 8pre FIREWIRE AUDIO INTERFACE OFFERS EIGHT MIC INPUTS IN ONE RACK SPACE

Print-ready and web-ready product images are here:

http://www.motu.com/marketing/motu_products/audio_interfaces/8pre/

CAMBRIDGE, MA – Thursday, October 5, 2006. MOTU, Inc. (www.motu.com) is now shipping the 8pre (\$595), a one rack-space Firewire audio interface that turns a laptop or desktop Power Mac, Intel Mac or PC into a 24-bit, 96kHz recording studio with eight mic inputs, 8-channel ADAT optical digital I/O and MIDI I/O. When not connected to a computer, the 8pre can function as an 8-channel analog-to-digital converter, making it two products in one.

The 8pre is designed for convenient desktop or rack-mount operation, with a variety of controls and status LEDs on the front panel for easy access and connectors on the rear panel for efficient studio installation.

The 8pre rear panel connectors

The 8pre rear panel provides the following connectors:

- Eight 24-bit 96 kHz analog inputs equipped with TRS/XLR combo jacks accept either a standard, low-impedance XLR mic cable or a standard, high-impedance quarter-inch TRS plug for connecting a line input such as a synth or sampler. Front panel controls for each individual input provide 48V phantom power for condenser microphones, a trim knob that provides up to 40 dB of gain and a 20 dB pad switch.
- Two 24-bit 96 kHz analog main outs are provided on standard quarter-inch TRS plugs for connection to powered studio monitors or other monitoring destinations.
- Two banks of ADAT optical digital I/O connectors (in and out) are provided. When the 8pre is operating at a 1x sample rate (44.1 or 48 kHz), the first bank provides 8 channels of standard optical digital I/O. When the 8pre is operating at a 2x sample rate (88.2 or 96 kHz), both banks can be connected to another device that also has two banks and supports 2x optical operation, such as another audio interface or a digital mixer, to provide 8 channels of digital I/O at these higher sample rates.

- MIDI in and out jacks allow users to connect a MIDI controller or other MIDI device without the need for an additional MIDI interface. MIDI performance is sample-accurate with supporting software.
- Two 400 Mbit Firewire jacks allow the 8pre to be connected to a Mac or PC. Because there are two ports, the 8pre can be daisy-chained (without the need for a Firewire hub) with additional 8pre's or other Firewire audio interfaces for additional audio input and output. Up to four 8pres or other MOTU Firewire audio interfaces can be connected to a single Firewire bus when operating at 44.1 or 48 kHz. The 8pre can also be daisy-chained with other Firewire devices, as long as the overall Firewire bus traffic does not exceed the bandwidth limits of the bus.
- Finally, the rear panel provides a standard IEC power cord receptacle for operation in the US or overseas.

The 8pre front panel controls

The 8pre front panel provides the following controls and status LEDs:

- For each of the 8pre's eight mic inputs, there is an individual set (eight sets total) of three front panel controls: a trim knob, 48V phantom power switch and a 20 dB pad switch. The trim knob provides 40 dB of gain. When combined with the 20 dB pad, the gain range for each analog input is 60 dB.
- Users can connect headphones to the quarter-inch phone jack and control the phone volume with a digital rotary encoder next to the jack. The LED section to the right temporarily indicates overall headphone level by horizontally illuminating the second row of amber LEDs. When the user finishes adjusting volume, the LEDs return to providing input level for the eight mic inputs as standard vertical 5-segment ladder LEDs.
- The phone volume knob is a multipurpose push pot (digital rotary encoder that can be pushed as well as turned) that independently controls headphone volume, main out volume, clock source and other settings.
- The LED section provides eight 5-segment ladder LEDs that indicate input level for the eight analog inputs, in addition to phone and main out volume as described above. Other status LEDs indicate clock source and other settings.

Operation as an 8-channel analog-to-optical converter

When the 8pre is not connected to a computer via a Firewire cable, the front panel *Mode* LED changes from *Interface* to *Converter*. In this mode, the 8pre acts as an 8-channel analog-to-digital converter that can add 8 mic inputs to another ADAT optical-equipped audio interface, digital mixer or other device. For example, a user who already owns an 828, 896 or Traveler interface could connect the 8pre to the optical bank on their MOTU interface to seamlessly integrate the 8pre's additional eight mic inputs into their MOTU interface CueMix mixer or host software mixer. When operating in this mode, the 8pre simply routes each mic input signal to the corresponding optical output channel (mic input 1 goes to optical output 1, etc.) This approach has benefits over simply connecting the 8pre as a second Firewire audio interface. For example, it conserves Firewire bus bandwidth (for other devices, such as hard drives). It also streamlines the user experience by avoiding the extra setup procedures, software settings and performance issues users often encounter when operating multiple Firewire interfaces connected to their computer. By connecting the 8pre optically to another Firewire interface, it becomes, in essence, a seamless extension of the other interface.

As previously mentioned, the 8pre has the ability to support 8 channels of optical output at 88.2 or 96 kHz (the 2x sample rates). This means it can be connected to another device that also supports 2x optical sample rates (via two sets of optical connectors) to add all eight mic inputs at 88.2 or 96 kHz.

Additional features and included software

Like other MOTU Firewire interfaces, the 8pre is equipped with a 16x8 digital mixer. Users can connect microphones, guitars, synths, keyboards and drum machines, and then use the 8pre's built in 8-bus mixer to monitor all of these live inputs via the 8pre's main outs, headphone jack or any optical output pair — with virtually no monitoring latency and no processor drain on the computer. Users can even create up to four separate (stereo) monitor mixes for the main outs, headphones and optical outputs. Everything, including talk-back and listen-back, can be controlled from the included CueMix Console™ software, just like a conventional mixer.

The 8pre also provides on-board SMPTE time code synchronization features, which allow users to slave their 8pre system to SMPTE time code (via any analog input) without a synchronizer. The 8pre can also generate time code and send it to its main outputs. These sync features are provided by a DSP-driven phase-lock engine with sophisticated filtering that provides fast lockup times and sub-frame accuracy. The synchronization features are cross-platform and compatible with all audio sequencer software that supports the ASIO2 sample-accurate sync protocol.

The 8pre provides cross-platform compatibility with Mac OS X 10.3 or higher (including the new Intel Macs), Windows XP x64 (64-bit) and any audio software that supports standard WDM/ASIO/Core Audio drivers. The included AudioDesk workstation software for Macintosh provides 24-bit recording/editing and 32-bit mixing/processing/mastering.

The 8pre is now shipping.

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