

NOVEMBER 2014

Church Production

Magazine

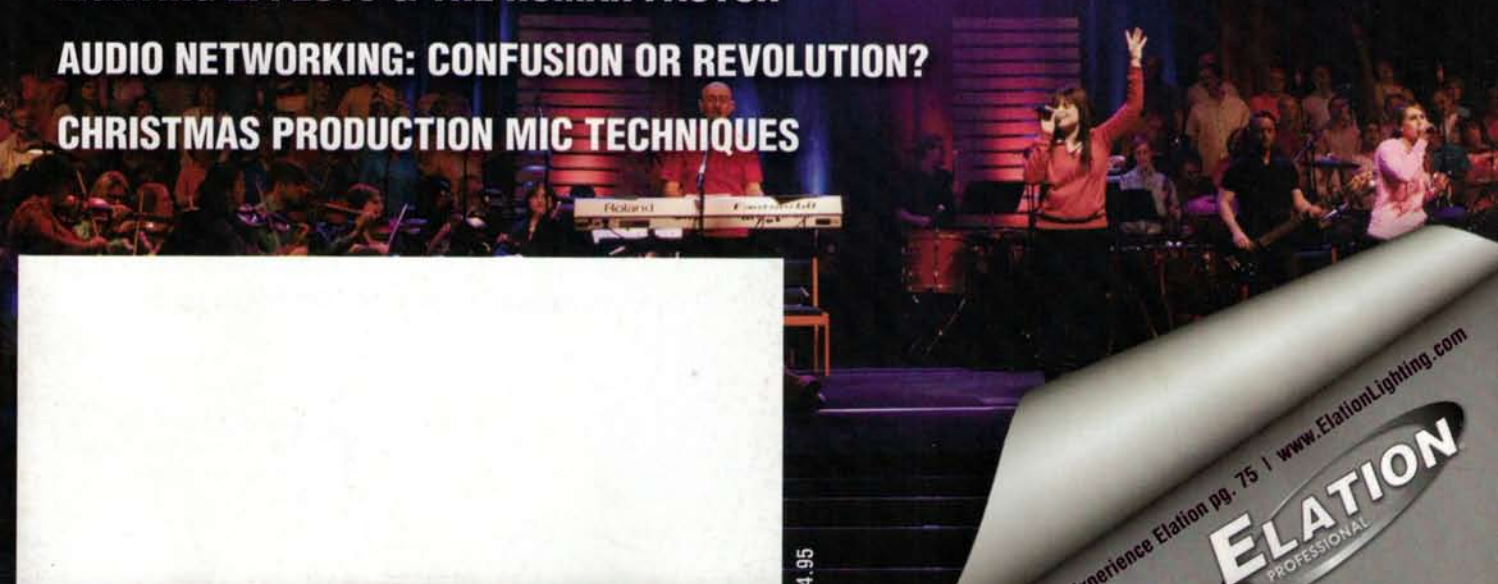
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"We're going to repeat the last verse one more time." These are words a worship leader should be able to tell the band during a church service. The use of in-ear monitoring systems makes this a problem. Radial Engineering has a solution. The total audio isolation of in-ear monitoring systems makes stage communication difficult. While some in-ear systems include microphones on the personal mixers, this is an imperfect solution. Enter the Radial Relay Xo, a remotely controllable version of the Radial DM-1 that enables users to easily talk directly with the band without broadcasting into the house mix.

HOW IT WORKS

Like the DM-1, the Relay Xo is equipped with an XLR female input and two XLR male outputs. Connect the Relay Xo in-line with a balanced XLR cable coming from a microphone. Then connect the two balanced outputs to your mixer. The front-of-house console now has control over two channels for the same microphone source with one

distinction. Using either a latching or momentary footswitch (JR-1L/M not included) or the side-access switch on the Xo, the user can alternate which channel is passing the microphone signal. From the FOH point of view, one channel can be used for mixing through the house and the other channel is for passing the signal to an in-ear system, intercom or wherever.

The Relay Xo includes an output selector with red and green LED lights for the AB

THE RADIAL Xo ACTIVE DI ENABLES USERS TO EASILY TALK DIRECTLY WITH THE BAND WITHOUT BROADCASTING INTO THE HOUSE MIX.

REVIEWER / CHRIS HUFF

indicator. Also included is a ground lift switch to help eliminate hum and buzz caused by ground loops. The Relay does require power and an AC power plug (wall-wart style) is included.

MORE THAN A TALK-BACK CONTROL

The Relay Xo can serve many purposes, the obvious being a talk-back control between a worship leader and the band. It can also be a mixing tool. Before any audio tech says anything, let's be honest and admit we don't

all mix on digital consoles and we can't always predict the actions of the worship leader. Use one channel on the Relay Xo for their singing mix with effects, and the other channel as their talking mix. When they want to talk between songs or during a song, tap the switch and switch between the two. No more noticeable reverb when they segue between songs.

Several Radial Relay Xo's can be linked together for multi-channel switching. Equipment with stereo sends or even multiple microphones could be sent to multiple boxes controlled by the first Xo in the chain, either through the side-switch or the optional foot pedal. Here's an example: Say a church has three singing microphones and wants to dual-purpose them as talking microphones. By providing flexible channel assignments, the Relay Xo allows the sound tech to have a bank of singer mic channels and separate talking mic channels. This might be a situation where the Xo would be located within the sound booth, not on stage.

OUR EXPERIENCE

Adding the Xo to our system was a snap. But it gets tricky if it's used with wireless systems since the Relay box needs to go between the receiver unit and the mixer. If the musician is to control the unit, a better choice may be Radial's DM-1 Stage Mic Toggle that has a top-mounted switch. For a musician to use the Relay Xo, the optional footswitch is required.

When I showed the Radial Relay Xo to our worship leader, Eric Radecki,

of Greenwood Christian Church in Greenwood, Ind., he says "I could tell a musician they were off a measure or playing too fast, and that's great."


There's another benefit of the Relay Xo regarding the talk-back application: talking to the production crew. The worship leader has a unique perspective and if the rear projector freezes up or something else occurs in which the technical director or stage director needs to know ASAP, the Xo (or the DM-1, see above) would provide that ability. This was another area that excited our worship leader and musicians.

Since the control switch is located on the side of the box next to the ground lift switch, the standard Relay Xo is really better suited for use by an off-stage tech, or by the engineer in the sound booth.

While the footswitch is an option, it's not included. As mentioned above, the Radial Hotshot DM-1 Stage Mic Toggle is purpose-built for microphone switching by on-stage musicians.

THE TAKE AWAY

The Radial Relay Xo Remote AB Switcher can provide talk-back functionality or expanded mixing options. This controllable signal router gives both the musician and the sound tech options they don't normally have available. The Relay Xo retails for \$199 and includes the high quality and durability level that comes with the name Radial.

CHRIS HUFF is a regular contributor to Church Production Magazine. 

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