

Knowing Your Limits

Ultrafonic's Andrew Steel previews 10EaZy, a system to manage venue noise without limiters or fines.



Above: 10EaZy report screen.
 Top centre: All OK. Levels below limit.
 Bottom centre: Levels high. Approaching limit
 Top right: Risk of violation. Reduction required.
 Bottom right: Reduction successful. Don't change.

10EaZy IS A LOW-COST hardware/software system that lets venues manage noise control without negatively affecting the quality of the sound. It is designed to work hand in hand with local authorities, DJs [really? DJs?! – *Ed.*] and sound engineers, managers and neighbours.

Noise complaints are nothing new – but what to do about them is still a contentious issue. Much of the difficulty occurs when a regulator (it depends on your area – it could be a local council, EPA, licensing authority, etc.) uses a standardised metric like LAeq to measure the noise, but the venue or performer has a straightforward sound level meter. The regulator wants to make sure no one is exposed to noise equivalent to a certain dose of noise over a period of time whereas the sound level meter just shows what the level is now.

So until now, venues haven't had the tools to comply with the regulators' requirements resulting in the possibility of fines, closure or the need for limiters which either cut power to the PA

– never a good option – or ruin the sound quality.

But SG Audio in Denmark has come up with 10EaZy, a system that gives venues the same metrics as the regulator. It even has a display that predicts how the equivalent noise level will rise based on recent history called MAM (Maximum Average Manager). When the MAM starts going red, the limit will be exceeded if action isn't taken. This means all that is required is a reduction in level (MAM even tells you by how much) and things will stay within the set limits for equivalent noise.

In the words of the manufacturer: "In a world of increasing demands for staying within sound level limits, 10EaZy provides the guy at the fader with intuitive and unambiguous information. At the same time, through 10EaZy's tamper-free and fool-proof design, we ensure that the organisers and authorities receive IEC compliant measurements with the level of detail that they require and with guaranteed accuracy and reliability".

10EaZy runs on a Windows PC (commonly a netbook) and can be configured to boot directly to 10EaZy so that it can't be modified. The hardware consists of a calibrated Type 1 microphone and dedicated interface.

Additional features that make this tool so versatile and useful for managers and regulators include free software upgrades, the ability to watch measurements from a remote computer via web browser (ie., you can check out the results in real time on your mobile device), and a mail server that will ship emails immediately after a measurement session if connected to the internet. In fixed installs, a launch scheduler ensures 10EaZy will start and stop automatically at designated times, ensuring complete hands-off design. ✉

Ultrafonic: www.ultrafonic.com.au or (07) 3103 0591

Price: Complete system including microphone, software and notebook computer \$5995 (inc GST)