

How Digital Audio Editors Can Help You Create Better Radio Programs

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Introduction

For radio stations that get some of their programming produced from outside their studios, the quality of the programs they're given is the number one issue they face. They get CD's, cassettes, or they download programs from internet sites that are either poor in audio sound quality, or the program runs way past the time that is allowed.

In the past radio station production managers had to take the programs and air them as they were recorded. If the programs ran too long, often the board operator had to just cut the program off in mid sentence. The abrupt ending of one program transitioning to the next event makes the radio station sound bad. Even though many radio stations are now automated, the sudden end of a program and the quick start of a station ID or commercial still makes the radio station sound unprofessional.

How can radio production managers improve the quality of the programs they get from outside sources? Fortunately digital audio editors can make their job a lot easier. This audio program can burn, rip, restore and add effects to amp up the sound to any audio file and create exceptional digital tracks. The production manager does not have to be a professional mixer or sound technician to perform basic audio editing tasks. Audio editing software can carry out a variety of functions and is easy to use.

This white paper will examine how radio station production managers can take pre recorded audio files and transform them in to quality radio programs.

The Challenges Of Poor Audio Quality

Sound quality is a major issue for radio stations that receive radio programs produced by amateur audio technicians. If the programs are recorded on cassette, there is always the chance that there will be a hissing sound on the tape.

Sometimes the outside program producer rotates the same series of cassettes to be used for their on air programs. Cassettes wear out after they've been recorded over several times. You can usually tell when a cassette is no longer useful, the audio on it sounds garbled or like it was recorded in slow motion.

This happens because the audio quality on a cassette is not as clear as it is on a CD. You get a much clearer sound on CD recordings than you do on cassette recordings.

Programs That Go Over Their Scheduled Time

When you let people produce radio programs outside your studio, one of the major problems you have is that the program that they give you for broadcast is way over the time that they are allowed.

For example, you have a program that is scheduled to air during a 30 minute time slot. The program is supposed to air between 28:00 and 29:30, so it will allow you to air a station identification and a commercial, public service announcement or two before the next program starts. However, the program producer brings a CD of the program and its 30 minutes and 30 seconds long. This will cut in to the time of the next program if it runs as is.

Programs That Start And End Abruptly

Some program producers break up their programs in two, three or sometimes even four parts or more. This generally means that the second and other parts of their programs start where they left off during their previous program. Sometimes the program may start in the middle of the speaker's sentence. The end of the program may also end in the middle of a sentence also.

These programs usually have pre-produced open & closes that are already saved in the radio stations automation equipment.

This makes the audio after the open sound choppy and awkward, and the audio before the close ends abruptly which may confuse the audience.

Steps To Producing Better Radio Programs

To enhance the audio quality of their radio programs, radio stations are using digital audio editing software to edit and fine tune the program they get from outside sources.

They're using two-track digital audio editors that include a powerful set of audio processes, tools, and effects for manipulating audio.

The software can be used with any Windows-compatible sound card to create record and edit audio files.

The Benefits Of Digital Audio Editors

When radio production managers use a digital audio editor, the following benefits occur:

- Audio can be faded in from $-\infty$ to 0db.
- Audio can be faded out from 0db to $-\infty$.
- You can tailor sound with predefined bands or a user definable envelope graph.
- The production manager can insert silence anywhere in the file.
- The volume in a file can be raised so that the highest sample level reaches a user-defined level.
- Audio file can be time-stretched, which will allow the user to alter the length of a program without changing its pitch.
- Sound data can be removed from a program.

What To Look For In Digital Audio Software

When looking for an audio editing software program, many factors should be considered including:

Audio Editing: Look for a program that has more than just a play, record, cut, copy and paste function. A good audio editing software program includes tools such as equalizers, processors, mixers, preset effects, filters and analyzing tools like the waveform.

Recording/Editing Ability: The best programs will record audio from files such as the sound card from a downloaded CD, mp3 file from the internet, as well as from outside sources such as a line-in from a stereo, MIDI device or microphone.

It is also helpful if the product includes burning software so that users can use their CD or DVD burner to save their edited files.

To be the most compatible, the product must be able to work with and convert many file formats, like the various WAV file types, Windows Media Audio (WMA), AIFF (Used by Apple) and Mp3 files.

Ease of Use: All key features of the product should be easy to find and use. It is accommodating if the product contains preset effects and filters placed in the drop down menus or icons, mouse, zooms, right click edits and unlimited undos. Fast recorders that search for sound cards or streaming audio automatically also are handy.

Help and Support: Audio editing software can be tricky for inexperienced audio editors and non-professional mixers to master. Comprehensible help and support obtainable through direct contact with technical support, help pages or other documents are necessary for this type of software.

The Sound Forge 7.0 Audio Editing Program

Sound Forge is an award winning digital audio editor that includes a powerful set of audio processes, tools and effects for recording and manipulating audio. This industry standard application is the professionals' choice for audio editing, audio recording, effects processing, streaming content creation and more.

Sound Forge 7.0 Provides These Unique Advantages

Automated Time Based Recording- Sound Forge software can perform automatic recordings of audio, including radio shows or any repetitive events, anytime you're not able to record manually. Set the new record time to start and stop recording based on your computer's system clock. Choose start time, duration, and end time. Items may be scheduled on minute, daily or weekly basis.

Audio Threshold Record Triggering- Sound Forge software can be configured to start recording when a predetermined audio input level reaches a pre-set threshold. Recording will continue as long as the level is exceeded and stop after the threshold is no longer maintained. Perfect for unattended and offsite recording, dictation or any time you want to record without having to be at your computer. You can also record audio when MIDI timecode is detected. Sensitivity are customizable with user definable threshold and release parameters.

Prerecord Buffer- You can eliminate dropouts and missed audio at the start of a recording session. Sound Forge 7.0 software includes a new prerecord buffer that readies your audio signal so that when you press record, Sound Forge software will start recording efficiently without delay.

About Sound Forge 7.0

To find out more about Sound Forge 7.0 visit www.sonycreative.com or call 608-256-3133.

