Transoniq Hacker

The Independent Newsletter for Ensoniq Users

Some Basics on PARIS!

Eric Montgomery

There is something so wonderful about being in the land of romance and beauty. If you could imagine the sound of a needle being scratched across the surface of a record (some of you are probably going to ask, "What is a record?" Just go ask your parents) that is what I would like you to hear at this point. Yeah, I am talking about the other PARIS, Ensoniq's hard disk recorder PARIS. This phenomenon known as PARIS is going to, in my opinion, change the way music is created and recorded.

Looking back there have been a select few that have substantially changed the making of electric or electronic music. Those few would probably start with Les Paul (electric guitar and multitracks), Ensoniq (with the Mirage, the first affordable sampler) and Yamaha (with the DX-7). Now I believe that Ensoniq is going to make history again with the Professional Audio Recording Integrated System, PARIS.

"What's the big deal?" you ask. Well, I'll tell ya. PARIS is the very first audio recording system or DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) that is affordable to regular people like us. We now have tools that we would have had to spend several thousands of schimolians on. The same tools that have made great CDs, movies, commercials and even made digitally re-mastered Elvis sound better can now be in your hands.

For starters, PARIS can record several tracks at once. It can go up to 128 tracks of audio. Like we'll ever use it. Each mixer channel has 4 bands of Parametric EQ. Each band is completely "sweepable," meaning that the frequency you want to cut or boost is selectable. On regular mixers you are stuck with using the set frequencies that they think you should use. I know some of you know all of this stuff but sometimes you have to assume that there may be someone saying "Huh?"

The PARIS Mixer Window

To continue down the console, there are a total of 8 aux or auxiliary sends that can be configured in stereo or mono. They can be set to be pre (before) or post (after) fader. Aux sends can also be used for plugging in external effects processors like the DP-4, 4+, DP-2 or maybe the DP-Pro. You have mute, solo, pan, and volume per track also.

The volume, panning, mute and auxs for each track can be automated as well. If you aren't sure, automated means that PARIS will remember what fader movements you make and play them back while mixing your song. Moving on to the rest of the software mixer, you have all of the standards of a regular mixer as in your aux returns, master volume and monitor volume control. On the master section of the console is the effects editing and selection area. Up to 16 effects can be used simultaneously. The effects are the same quality as the DP-Pro effects processor. All of the effects can be edited for your use in the project and saved as your custom effect, so yes, they are completely programmable. PARIS also has an open architecture to accept plug-ins. A plug-in is an addition to your program that gives the user extra features that he or she did not have with the original application. In our case it will be effects. And there are companies that are going to make effects

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plug-ins for PARIS. An example might be a plug-in that allows PARIS to use physical models of different room effects or maybe noise reduction.

The PARIS Editor Window

Now, here is where most of your work will be done — the Editor. The Editor Window will display the waveforms, names, editing tools, time rulers and many other features.

You can do such edits as recording a vocal part at the beginning of the song and literally copying it and pasting it to another part of the song. Pitch can be changed and time expansion/compression can be done. The Editor Window shows you not only the names of each track but can also show the waveform, bars and beats, seconds and SMPTE to help in editing and time location in your project. Other standards in multitrack recorders or DAWs are markers and loop points which pretty much sound like what they are. You can "mark" areas in the song as in the first chorus and second verse of your song. You may want to do this if you have a part of your song that you need to play over several times to get something right or parts of the song that you need to jump to quickly.

The PARIS Control 16

The Control 16 dedicated hardware controller/mixer surface has been specifically designed to work with the PARIS software. It provides immediate physical access to all of the PARIS software features.

The Control 16 gives you much faster access to the editing and mixer features than any other system out there. You now have direct access to the transport controls (Rewind, Fast-Forward, Stop, Play, Record), EQ, volume, panning, solo, mute and the Auto Locator. The Auto Locator pertains to the loop-start/end and punch in/out markers. The multi-function numeric keypad provides quick access and control for markers, screen views, data entry and user-assignable functions. There is also a large weighted shuttle wheel that can be used for jog, shuttle and editing functions. After looking at several other DAWs I have found that the next closest system to PARIS is around $8,000 more, and you DON'T get the Control 16.

Next time we will get into more detail about the many features of PARIS and how they work. For certain, PARIS is the dawning of a new age in music production and in the recording industry. As users we will have to really develop our understanding of recording and how we want our projects to sound, because we are in the driver's seat. For the first time we are in complete control of our musical and recording destiny. Now we can do our own sound, much like Peter Gabriel, The Artist (He'll always be Prince to me), Sting, Michael Jackson and many others. If you're reading this magazine you probably own some of the best keyboard gear in the world. Now it's time to go to PARIS. C'est le vie! ▬

Bio: Eric Montgomery is a up-and-coming song writer/producer who has published his work with Salt Records, Integrity Music and several local compilation CDs in Gary Indiana and in CAMS of Chicago, Illinois.

Front Panel

RND (♪♪)

Hacker News

Well, as you can see, we've started a little bit of PARIS coverage. We'll be having more on this as things develop. Craig Anderton is scheduled to receive a unit and should be getting a review to us in the near future.

This issue is also a little bit of an experiment — we're trying to see just what we can fit in here and still have it readable. The Interface section (everybody's first read) came out pretty well. It's taking up about half as many pages as before — but it really has pretty close to the entire column. Since Ensoniq added our letters site to their web page as a good resource for getting questions answered, we've been getting a lot of "Where do I get drivers for my soundcard?" type questions. By merely eliminating these and other "easy edits," we're able to jam the whole column into its present spot. The result is about 50k bytes — about what a hefty column used to run six months back. For those completists out there, the entire beast is available both on our web site and in our e-mail version: eTH.

No more news just yet on where Ensoniq is going in the keyboard market. Two things we did want to clarify/add to last month's announcement: The MR Rack should have been included in the list of current instruments, and, in spite of the intense situation in the keyboard market, Ensoniq remains a fundamentally sound company — mostly because of their soundcard division.

Third Party News

Tech Star now has a web site — http://members.aol.com/sonicwaves. Check it out. There's now also a link to it from our "Related Sites" page.

eTH — A Faster, Cheaper Hacker

If you can receive e-mail via the Internet, you can take advantage of avoiding the post office and get a faster, cheaper, e-mail version of the *Hacker*. The e-mail *Transoniq Hacker* contains all of the same information and advertising as the printed version, but it's only $20/year — anywhere. Plus, if you convert over from the printed version you'll get extra issues added to your sub. Interested? Just send a message to us at eTH@transoniq.com and we'll send you complete information.

Call For Writers!

In spite of their current god-like status, writers for the *Hacker* were once mere mortals — just like you! If you're noodling around with Ensoniq gear, you too can join their elite ranks. We're always looking for new writers, and yes, there is actual payment involved. If you're toying with an idea for an article, how about giving Editrix Jane a call at 1-503-227-6848 and listening to her soothing words of encouragement?

CDR-8: Orchestral

Tom Shear

Product: CDR-8: Orchestral.
For: EPS-16+/ASR/TS/MR compatible samplers.
Price: $99.95.
From: Ensoniq Corp., 155 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern, PA 19355. Phone: 610-647-3930 (voice), 610-647 8908 (fax).

Gather 'round kiddies and I'll tell ye a tale; a tale about when CDs first appeared on the market many moons ago. People were astounded by the sound quality... and further astounded by the price. "They'll never catch on aside from a few audiophiles," the naysayers said. But while they were busy saying nay, the CD was silently becoming the overwhelming format of choice for music listeners. Little could we have predicted at that time that CDs would also become an incredibly popular and high density storage format (after all, we were using computers with a whopping 512k — that's kilos, not megas — of RAM) But now we take the sound quality of CDs for granted, and CD-ROMs are everywhere. Thankfully, music manufacturers started making their products compatible with CD-ROMs, and we now have quick, easy access to a whole ton of incredible sounds on a single disk.

One such disk is Ensoniq's new Orchestral CD-ROM developed by InVision. This collection covers all the bases you might need to produce convincing orchestral music on your sampler. The selection is thorough and the programming is immaculate. If you're producing soundtracks, classical music, or simply have a love for orchestral instruments, I can't imagine this disk not fulfilling at least the majority of your needs. As is to be expected, high quality requires high block numbers. While they get an incredible amount of sounds out of those blocks, there are still plenty of them. A few of the sounds will not be loadable in an EPS-16+ or unexpanded ASR. Just something to keep in mind.

The first section of the disk (which is logically, and neatly organized) covers stringed instruments. The first of these is a selection of string sections. Both entire sections and just violins are provided in standard and specialized variations such as Legato and Marcato. The Marcato Violins sounded very unnatural to me at first, but I soon realized it was because of the way I was playing it... it says Marcato, play it Marcato! The quality of these string sounds blows away anything I've had from my sampler before. They are so organic sounding they literally breathe. This is thanks, in part, to extremely realistic vibrato and very well matched multi-samples. The solo strings turn out to be just as wonderful. You can practically smell the rosin! The three violin variations are emotional and beautiful. Even the solo Fiddle was practically screaming to be included in the soundtrack to whatever mega-documentary Ken Burns puts together next. And if the Pizzicato Violins doesn't fill your head with images of Sylvester hot in pursuit of Tweety Bird, you, my friend, had a different childhood than mine.

Next up are a bunch of acoustic guitar samples. Geared more toward classical work, these tend to be the nylon variety and all have a very mellow, rounded tone to them. I could see these being easy to use for jazz work very easily as well. Weighing in at 3914 Blocks, Classical Guitar 1 was one of my favorites. Multisample splits are tough to pick out (especially if you are playing it like a guitarist would), there are separate samples for hard and soft velocities, and one of the patch selects even sets up an up and down layer which makes for extremely realistic strumming simulations. Since I can't play guitar to save my life, it's a joy to play a sample like this and sound like you've been playing for years.

The guitars are followed up by a selection of harps. These range from your standard Concert Harp in two versions, to my favorite, the Elizabethan Harp. I don't why this sound appealed to me, but I think it's because it has sort of an unusual quality to it; it still sounds like a harp, but it has a much more hollow tone to it. As with any sample, how you play it is going to make the different in how well you are able to pull off a convincing simulation. This raises the question of how to replicate those intricate glissandos harps are renowned for. There are no less than 6 instruments here that are nothing but glisses of every variety imaginable that will help you will in the blanks. And yes, they integrate perfectly with the regular harp samples... mixed correctly, you should be able to use them in conjunction with one another fairly easily.

The next major category we have is Wind & Brass. This begins with a selection of different flutes and recorders. The Solo Flute, at 3435 blocks, has a sad breathiness that is really beautiful. The sampled vibrato (which is one thing that helps these sounds sound so realistic), gets a little seasick in the low end, but this is really out of the flute's range anyway, so it's not really an issue. The flutes are followed up by a nice, and even fairly memory-efficient Clarinet. After that, it's on to the double reeds. Here we find a Bassoon, English Horn, and two Oboe variations. The standout here is by far Solo Oboe 1, which has a wonderful sense of dynamics that the other double reeds are lacking. Very expressive, and very beautiful. We follow this up with a stroll into brass territory with a Trumpet and Flugelhorn that were probably the weakest links of the set. They're not terrible sounds, but I think in most cases these stick out as sampled sounds and not the real McCoy. Fortunately, the Trombone, Tuba (oompa, indeed) and Brass Sections fare much better. Actually, the Brass Sections would be equally as useful in rock and pop music.

After the Baritone and French Horns, we move onto our next major category: percussion. The percussions here is extremely powerful and bombastic. I could see these really adding a whole new level of realism to any orchestral simulation. Lots of fun to play and, heck, even an ASR-88 takes up less room than that set of tympanis you've been eyeing. Bass, Tymps, Cymbals, Military Snares... everything you need is all right here. Although it's a bit of an odd fit, the next subsection is for Hits & Blasts. The three variations here allow access to different hits through the patch select keys. The sounds are BIG! Very full and powerful and they don't sound like some cheesey sample from a drum machine or something. Some of these are really more appropriate for film and classical work than dance or pop music, but there is enough variation here that you'll find something for everyone.

Finally, we round things out with the Mallet & Bell section. First up are three different Glockenspiels. It was nice to see these not just for the sake of being complete, but honestly, how many Glockenspiel samples do you have laying around the house? True to the rest of the set, the samples are clean, clear, and seamlessly looped and multi-sampled. You won't use it often, but when you need it, you'll be glad it's there. And finally, we are given 4 different gongs or varying timbre, resonance, and length. Why just settle for a "Gong" sample when you can choose from China Gongs, Earth Gongs,

or Wind Gongs?

So there you have it. Not a bad sound in the bunch, and plenty of variations to choose from. These are some of the most convincing acoustic samples I have ever heard. Period. They're so well done and playing them was definitely inspiring. Some of the sounds I literally played for hours. As always, playing technique will make or break you in terms of getting a convincing simulation, but this disc gives you the tools to do it... If it doesn't sound like the real thing in your tracks, it ain't Ensoniq's fault. ▬

Bio: *This portion of the page has been left blank intentionally.*

Ensequencing Part 8:

For Your Information

Jack Stephen Tolin

Let's face it, we are entering an era where information is very much a commodity. Computers are continuing to change the way we think about daily living. The Internet, along with the World Wide Web, is becoming the next big thing. It really all comes down to information. The computer allows interface to that information.

As we all know, hardware sequencers are computers, too. They have the capability to give us an incredible amount of information. However, not all sequencers allow access to certain kinds of information. The trick is that the company has to make a sequencer which allows access to that kind of information. If you buy some kinds of sequencers, some kinds of information will not be accessible to you.

The great thing about Ensoniq hardware sequencers is that they allow access to kinds of information never before accessible by the older models (and many other new sequencers from other brands, too). This month, we will be taking a look at some of these special doorways of information available, especially the SQ Series, KT Series, and so on. Many of the newer Ensoniq samplers have similar features as well.

The area we will be scrutinizing is located in the Song Bank. Press Edit Sequences, then the button for Song Bank, then the button for Screen 3: Song Information. This amazing little feature offers information about — well — a song obviously. But, really, it offers more than just the average bear. Features offered include number of steps, the size in events, and the total song time.

Watch your step: Number of steps

This particular read-out will display the size of your song in terms of number of sequences. If you remember, step can refer to step recording. It does not refer to that kind of step here. When you edit song steps — Song Bank, Screen 6 — that is the kind of information reflected here. A step in this case includes one sequence and the number of repetitions, and the mute and transpositional data per track for that sequence (for your easy key changes, etcetera) — it's all here represented by each step. Let's say, for example, you have a song which has a one sequence intro, followed by a two sequence verse, followed by a two sequence chorus, followed by a one sequence verse, followed by a one sequence chorus, followed by a two sequence bridge, ending with a four sequence chorus. We can depict that pictorally in this way:

1 seq intro + 2 seq verse + 2 seq chorus + 1 seq verse + 1 seq chorus + 2 seq bridge + 4 seq chorus

At first glance, this appears to be a 13-step song. But, if you look more carefully, you will notice that the verses are all the same sequence, and the choruses are all the same sequence. (You will have to take my word for it, but I know — it was a song I must have written long ago. It's also something you hear quite a bit on the radio.) The two sequences that make up the bridge are both different. Therefore, there only need be eight (8) steps altogether; repetitions can be included in each song step.

The next event — pole-vaulting: Size in events

This display will allow you to know how many times something went up and down — the keys, that is. This is the stuff that memory is made of when it comes to MIDI sequencers. If you have many dense passages, this number will be high, or higher than, well... than songs with passages that are less dense. Duh. But, anyway, this feature is great for, well...it's great for people wanting that kind of information. And, for your information, I did a little experiment trying to figure out this feature. Here is what I came up with: I recorded a few sequences and, afterwards, put them into a song. For this particular feature, there is no difference among time signatures. For one song having one sequence having one note played in it, the song size was equal to 16. Rather interesting, so I thought. Having added another song step with the same sequence, we yielded this chart:

# of steps:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Song size:	16	18	21	23	26	28	31	33	36	38

Initially, there is no obvious explanation for this information, despite the fact that there is a pattern after the first step. Changing the number of repetitions for each step does not change song size. In fact, adding modulation via modulation wheel or pitch wheel does not affect song size either. "Oh, but how about adding notes per sequence?" One song with two sequences of ten notes each yields a song size equal to 18, which is the exact same value for one song with two sequences of one note each. Go figure. (For those people who want that kind of information...)

Time flies when you're having fun: Total song time

This is one of my favorite features. The neat thing about this feature is that you have an automatic readout of, well... of the total song time of course! It was always an annoying thing to have to get out my stopwatch with my earlier sequencers in order to clock my songs. Here you have the complete time right down to the hundredths of a second. Be forewarned! (They say it's also being forearmed.) If you are using anything like a reverb in the effects for your song or sequences, or you end by playing a crash cymbal or some other sound with a long sustain, keep in mind that when your song ends, the sequencer will cut off all sustains from both effects and sounds. A good way around this is to simply lengthen the last sequence a bar or two; give everything time to fade out naturally. If your last sequence is just a repetition of another sequence, another way to do the same thing is to record one sequence with the same preset settings and the same tempo. Record one note, and change its volume to 00. Go to the Edit Song Steps page and tack this sequence on the end. "But wait! How long should the sequence be? One bar? Two bars?" As long as it takes to allow everything to fade out naturally. Unfortunately, the down side is that the readout in total song time will obviously be affected; it is the length of the sequences that are all being measured, not the length of all of the events that you hear. Keep this in mind just in case you are

trying to get as accurate a reading as possible.

Let my memory go: Total Sequencer Free Memory

Here is another feature which we will find helpful — not to mention extremely useful — in the Control Bank; Press Edit Sequences, then Control Bank, then Screen 6. This baby tells you exactly what percentage of available sequencer memory remains in your unit. "If you want to increase the amount of available sequencer memory, at this page, simply press the up arrow until free memory equals 100% or so." Wrong! This particular feature is, just as the title of this article suggests, for your information only. It may serve as a good warning against how far you have left to go on a particular piece of music when working in a particular all-sequences bank. Or, it may serve as a relief when you become worried that you are using too much of your memory!

There you have it: all sorts of neat information you can access all because you purchased an Ensoniq! Now, don't you feel informed! That's all for this month. Bye for now, everyone, and keep your sequences on track! ▬

***Bio:** Jack currently attends Nazarene Theological Seminary and works for Sprint in much, much, much of his spare time.*

Hacker Reinitialization — Newbie's Corner

One of our most common requests from new subscribers (new owners) is for more basic tutorial information. We've all been there. Unfortunately, the *Hacker* is usually "there" when a new instrument first makes its appearance — and then we move on. While back issues can answer many questions, not all are still available and they do represent an additional expense for the new reader. Hence, *"Hacker Reinitialization"* — yup, old goods in a new wrapper. We feel a little funny about the whole reprint thing — so we're going to keep it small. In some cases minor updates have been made to include newer instruments.

SQ/KS/KT/E-Prime: How Sounds Work — Part 1b

B-3^2

Mark Clifton

If you read my last article, *SQ-1 = B-3*, you are no doubt thirsting for more down-and-dirty grit on the art of Hammond B-3 emulation for the SQ-1. I've discovered several new tricks since my release from the MIDI Madhouse and have pondered this strange equation in my many group sessions. So, as part of my 12-step recovery program, here's the follow-up.

Velocity Response

In the last article I failed to mention that the B-3 is not velocity-responsive. That is, the volume and characteristics of the sound do not change with the hardness of the keystrokes like they do on the piano. Make sure that all parameters that pertain to velocity are at either OFF or 00.

Leslie Speaker Distortion

The Leslie rotating speaker is famous for distorting nastily when the volume is cranked up all the way. Many synths and effects processors with a rotary speaker effect have a programmable distortion parameter but not the SQ-1 (it is present on the VFX and SD-1, though.) If you have an external effects processor with a regular, or even better, a tube distortion effect, try feeding your B-3 sounds through it to get that harder edge. If possible, modulate the distortion amount from an external MIDI controller from your SQ. Try assigning the mod pedal to Volume (MIDI controller #7) and controlling it from there. That way as you move the pedal, the volume and the distortion effect will change simultaneously. This may take some tweaking, but the results should be worth it if you like that nasty, distorted Leslie sound.

Simulating Double Manuals

The B-3 has two five-octave (C — C) manuals that can contain a separate independent drawbar setting for each. This is very convenient for synthesizing B-3 sounds since this is the standard size of most synth keyboards. The SQ-1 is particularly suited to B-3 synthesis because the Preset feature allows you to assign different B-3 patches and layers to different MIDI channels. This allows you to play one patch on the SQ's keyboard and another patch from the keyboard of another multitimbral synth and/or even a MIDI pedalboard. All you have to do is set up a Preset (the manual will tell you how) that contains all of the sounds that you want, plus the necessary layers. Set MIDI status (in the parameter bank) of each track to LOCAL. This way, the SQ will play all notes received over MIDI or played on its own keyboard without transmitting any MIDI data. If you want to send MIDI data such as program changes or notes to a sequencer, set this parameter to BOTH (the default). Then set the MIDI channel (also in the parameter bank) of each track that you want played by the SQ-1 to the SQ's base channel and those to be played by the external controller to its receiving channel. Any sounds that are meant to be layered should be set to the same channel, as this would trigger the sound meant to be played from the SQ's keyboard.

With two keyboards and a MIDI pedalboard MIDI'ed up in this fashion, you can do some heavy-duty pounding. If you do like playing dense chords with multi-layered sounds you can eat up polyphony pretty quickly when playing with this kind of set-up.

Weird Special Effects

Many old B-3 players would feed the sound of their organs through various microphones, speakers and effects devices to change or enhance the sound. There are basically no rules as to what you can do to here. Some commonly used devices were outboard guitar effects such as chorusing, flanging and wha-wha pedals. Some players would retrofit their organs and Leslies to get different variations on the sound. You might try feeding your B-3 patches through a real rotating speaker for added realism.

Well, I hope these extra tips were enough to get you wallowing in B-3 bliss again. If you have any of your own tips to add to this, be sure to write the *Hacker Interface* and let everyone know about 'em. I myself am always thirsting for yet more information to contribute to the great Grand Unified Theory of B-3 Synthesis. ▬

Bio: Mark Clifton is a player and composer of Jazz, New Age, Orchestral and Rap (yes, Rap!) music.

Crashing the VFX/SD as an Art

Dara Jones, female

I set out to compile a list of error messages of the VFX/SD series keyboards. My SD doesn't crash often, but when it does, what I wouldn't give to know how the problem was caused. It's not always evident whether it was the hardware, the software, the disk, or something stupid that I may have done. I spoke with Steve Coscia of Ensoniq in hopes of gaining some insights into this often puzzling phenomenon we've all more than likely experienced from time to time. Unfortunately, I discovered that the translations of these messages are often written in computerese and would not be of much value to most of us regular joes and janes.

Steve faxed me a copy of the fax-back writeup on Ensoniq system errors:

"What are system errors?"

"System errors are unexpected events that interrupt the normal operation of your keyboard. They have the effect of 'confusing' the keyboard. They are not caused by one specific action, but are instead the results of 'combinations of actions' As you can imagine, these combinations are almost infinite, making diagnostics extremely difficult."

Hmm, "combinations of actions," eh? Let me see. Last time the old SD crashed, I was loading something from a disk. I've heard that the best way to find a solution is to figure out what caused the problem. I wonder if I can crash it on purpose...

Well, there's that freeze-up that occurs when I am loading new sounds on occasion. I'll bet I can whisk that error message right on out. First I put in the disk, press that button there and this one over here and, oh wait a second. Oops, it's working properly. Maybe I didn't press the buttons in the right order. What if I try pressing them another way. Hmm...still working perfectly. That's disappointing. Where's a good crash when you need one? Maybe it was the disk I used. I'll pull out one of the oldies. Load kustoms2... press yes... AHA! "Disk error — bad data press any key to continue." Wait, does this mean the SD doesn't care for my composing techniques? And it didn't even care enough to give me an error message number! I have a feeling it means I haven't backed my data up often enough. I think there was a future hit on that disk, too. Carelessness. Tripped up my one chance at fame, sigh. :-)

Okay, back to work. There's got to be the right sequence of events to give me an error message number. This one that says "carla5 (bad data)" ought to do the trick. Eureka! It gave me not one, but two errors — Error 130 and 192. Great geewilikers. But what do they mean?

Well time to take a look at the info Steve faxed over once again.

"Common System Error Messages"
32 Effects download errors
33
129 These errors usually indicate that there is bad sequencer data
130, 131, 137, 195
144 This means that there is a buffer overflow. Most commonly caused by too much MIDI data being received at the MIDI-in port. Also, data that is received that has errors in it or it is received too fast.

#130, eh? I see, so it looks like I have bad sequencer data on this disk. Let's try that one more time... Oops. All my sequencer data is wiped clean on this disk. It won't even offer me a no-files screen. Uh, oh, maybe that hit was on this disk instead... Mariah Carey could've recorded it... I start to panic...

Oh, wait, I see, the sequencer itself is gone. The good files on the disk are still safe. Whew! What a close call. I'll just pull out the OS disk and reload the sequencer.

As I load in other old overused disks I can make the SD crash from time to time, but my newer disks don't seem to give as much of a problem. I ponder. Could it be that the old VFX/SD series has gotten a bad rap, NOT due to its infamous glitchy nature but that it could just be an old-fashioned crashed disk problem? Nothing to do with its innards at all? Wow — I've lost at least two record deals just writing this article!

Time to go buy lots of backup disks.

A day passes...

I thought I had this figured out until I fired up the old VFX-SD to test it. I plug it in, I turn it on. It crashes. It's one of those total freeze crashes, too. That was not supposed to happen. The article is already finished. Now I look really silly. I 'll just have to turn the VFX-SD off and on 7 times and hope for resurrection. Whew. It's working again. Now to try to figure out if the problem is internal or external. Hey, look, here's some hope. I was using some SD1 sequences in it. Maybe that was the problem. I'll just load this puppy in there again and see what happens. Bingo! A little minicrash. I reload both SD sequences and sounds several more times and discover that it dislikes SD sequences intermittently and that it really, really dislikes the pic-snare wave used in some of the patches. It makes it crash every time. Okay, I think I have an easy solution here. I Just won't use SD software in a VFX-SD. But I'd better test this theory out.

I made a VFX-SD-only disk and have used it for several weeks without one crash. Until today, that is. While, sequencing a track, I began to think enemy planes were overhead, dropping their bombs. No, it is a train coming through the living room. What? It is the VFX-SD?!!!! Look at all those lights blinking! Maybe it is trying to take over my apartment like Hal in the space station. This might mean it will play only the music IT wants. No, no... Anything but country!! HELPPP!!!!!! Wait, I'll just turn it off. What a close call. That got rid of that awful noise and I am safe again. But now the unit is frozen. Sigh. I fear it may be time to send it off to my friendly Ensoniq technician.

Stay tuned next time and see... If the technician was able to fix this dangerous problem, and if Dara will regain control of her apartment or if she has learned to like country music... ▬

Many thanks to Steve Coscia and Ensoniq for allowing us to reprint part of the document on error messages in this article.

Dara Jones reacts in horror as she realizes her VFX-SD is trying to take over her apartment.

Antares: The GranDesign — Joe Rodriguez

CD: *Antares: The GranDesign* (c) 1997 Antarian Music, BMI
Artist: Joe Rodriguez
Contact Info: P.O. Box 300944, Fern Park, FL 32730, Phone: 407-332-7896, Email: antarian@magicnet.net, Website: http://www.binarymusic.com/rock/antares/index.html
Equipment: ASR-10, Washburn guitars, ART effects, Hughes & Kettner amps, ADATs, Tascam mixing board.

Joe Rodriguez states in his bio, *"I'm just doing my best to take instrumental guitar to the next level; away from the showboating, self-indulgent 'Dig me, I can shred...' aspect and more toward a higher plane where the music is a feast for the ears and it conjures pictures for the mind."*

Antares: The GranDesign is truly a feast, and Guitar is clearly the main course. It seems that "showboating" and "self-indulgence" exist mainly in the attitude of certain artists, not in their compositions. Joe's guitar is unashamedly front-and-center and in the spotlight on his debut CD, but his amazing playing is not self-serving: it serves his music. And what a servant it is! Let's listen...

1. The GranDesign — The CD opens with a wash of panning keyboard pads building until it explodes into a regal guitar symphony which could be the soundtrack for the next generation of sci-fi epics. It morphs into track 2 with guitar feedback and more keyboard effects.

2. HemisFear I — Another heavy, minor-key soundtrack rocker with raging guitars. Keyboard pads are joined by fat, crunchy guitar laying down a bedrock of open fifths over which Joe solos his butt off. His amazing arpeggios often start with palm-muted runs which race up and down, and up the fretboard again, ending in a wammy-wanging wail, only to dive-bomb to the depths and re-emerge in an undulating demon scream dripping with the kind of angst only a guitarist can express (apologies to all other musicians, and the English language).

3. HemisFear II — This stop-start odd-metered rock shuffle reminds me a bit of Al diMeola's prog-rock feel. Just when you think Joe might be taking this all too seriously and expressing only heaviness, he throws in a bluesy riff or two to let you know that he has a tongue-in-cheek attitude at his disposal as well.

4. ...With the Grace of a Sledgehammer — This track opens with a crowd cheering the sounds of a sledgehammer/bell, giving the feel of a raging mob cheering the defeat of a boxer who is down for the count. Joe's guitar soloing on this one is filled with what I once heard described on a guitar instruction video as "Egyptian" scales (by an unnamed guitarist whose helpfulness extended primarily to, "Uh, well, just, well, play it like this..." before launching into an avalanche of "Egyptian" arpeggios; guitarists... you gotta love 'em!). More crunch per square inch here than Fiber One. Amazing panning guitar at the end... should be listened to on headphones.

5. Diamonds in the Dirt — Just when you think Joe can only rage at volume eleven, he pulls out the nylon string guitar and treats us to an emotional journey in this ballad. In my opinion, the percussion track and strings are too hot in the mix, stealing the limelight from some truly exceptional nylon guitar stylings, and making it sound like he is once again competing for the top volume slot in the mix. Then as if he realizes that he really does need more volume than he can get out of the acoustic, he picks up his Washburn electric and cries and wails over the ballad progression.

6. Dana's Song — Just about every composer I know who is a parent, names at least one of his or her songs after their child. In this case, Dana introduces "her" song in a cute little sound bite at the front. A sweet sax solo by Chris Charles moves this tune into an "adult contemporary" style niche, but Joe's dual lead solos keep us from forgetting that this is a guitar project. A rather abrupt keyboard fade at the ending, though.

7. Lost in Austin — Another rock shuffle, this one begins with what I believe country drummers call "swing" (I learned this during a stint playing 'boards in a country band that never rehearsed, so my introduction to playing country was at a large outdoor gig, never having rehearsed with the band, and the drummer yelled to me, "This is a swing in F, but start on the four," then proceeded to pound out what to my ears was a shuffle; the guitarist looked at me, shrugged, and said, "Country swing." Whatever.) But don't confuse this with a country tune; it is a driving rock shuffle with a positive feel to it; a nice contrast with some of the more heavy, "regal" tunes earlier in the CD.

8. Long Days of Summer — The funky slap-bass of Dave LaRue along with more sax from Chris Charles lightens the feel of this long jam. The three instrumentalists trade fours, so we get treated to some really tasty bass licks and blistering double-hand tapping from Joe. This would play well at a long, hot summer dance.

9. Into the Badlands — Really cool keyboard sound effects introduce this kronchy guitar feast. A large canvas for Joe the Guitar Artist to absolutely cut loose and paint his six-string pictures. Classic Joe Rodriguez.

10. Ultraviolence — Back to the heavy soundtrack genre... Sampled, stuttering vocal overdubs paint a dark picture of the "violence" theme. One has to be careful not to make a song about violence sound so cool that the listener isn't sure whether you're for it or against it. The vocal overdubs include the following: "It's a central nervous system stimulant: violence; you are no longer in control of you; your pulse will be racing (suicide); the drug is in control of you; you can become addicted to this drug." In the larger context of Joe's music, it couldn't be more obvious that Joe is making a statement against senseless violence, but in isolation, this could almost be taken as supporting the notion that violent people are not responsible for their actions ("the drug is in control of you"). Okay, end of social commentary. It is a wonderfully creative montage of various audio media. By the way, it continues with the voice saying that he would feel a lot better if the perpetrator put his/her gun away, and ends with an almost Beatlesque piano dirge, apparently signaling the sad ending of a violent life.

For the most part, Joe uses guitar effects for tone, not to enhance his technique. For example, many guitarists will layer multi-effect on top of multi-effect, yielding a

wall of awesome sound that the rest of the band (or mix) can't compete with (and every guitarist reading this is going, "And, so...?"). Joe uses artistic restraint with his effects, even though he obviously has a myriad of sounds at his disposal. His playing sits in the center of the mix, and in the spotlight, which in Joe's case is a great thing, because the tapestries he creates with his axe are wrought not from electronic gizmos, but from a heart full of music pouring out through amazingly talented and disciplined hands, wringing every drop of music he can out of his guitar.

Let's not forget the keyboards here, after all, this is the *Transoniq Hacker*. Joe has a superb ear for the different sonic elements in a mix, and tends to keep the different instruments from walking over each other. For example, guitar tones tend to live in the midrange, so Joe's keyboard pads are either lower or higher range so as not to compete with his main instrument's niche. Same with the percussion tracks, which for the most part are absolutely superbly programmed. Except when an electronic feel is desired, Joe has sequenced his drums with a very human feel. He obviously put an amazing amount of time and effort into creating these rhythm tracks. How can I tell? Because they don't have any of the telltale "I'm sequenced" signs, but sound like a slammin' drummer jammin' live with a guitar maestro. Same with the sequenced bass parts. Two enthusiastic thumbs up on Joe's sequencing and keyboard chops! Overall, the production and engineering are likewise superb, with the above-noted exception (*"Diamonds in the Dirt"*) where the drums and keys were too loud. An otherwise completely professional production.

We at the *Transoniq Hacker's* Basement Tapes are not the first to discover Joe Rodriguez. His bio includes enthusiastic quotes from the likes of Eric Johnson, Brad Gillis, Guitar world, and various trade 'zines and indie publications. Expect to hear much more from this rising star.

This CD is not light listening. It is intense, focused music, not taking a back seat to consciousness, but demanding your ear. But it is rewarding. If you enjoy listening to a virtuoso playing the hell out of his instrument, and doing it with taste, excellence, soul and passion, and specifically, if you like guitar, then you will certainly love this CD. You can even own one for $12.99 plus $2.00 s/h ($3.00 outside U.S.) if you contact Joe at the above address or visit his website. You'll get more guitar per buck than anything I've heard recently. So get off your keyboard bench and learn a thing or three from a Spanker of the Plank.

If *you* want your tape run through the wringer, err, Hacker, just mail it off to: Basement Tapes, *Transoniq Hacker,* 1402 SW Upland Dr., Portland OR 97221. Please include your e-mail address!

Bio: Steve Vincent produces demos and CDs at his home- based Portent Music, and can be reached via email at vincents@harbornet.com, or at his website at http://www.kspace.com/vincent.

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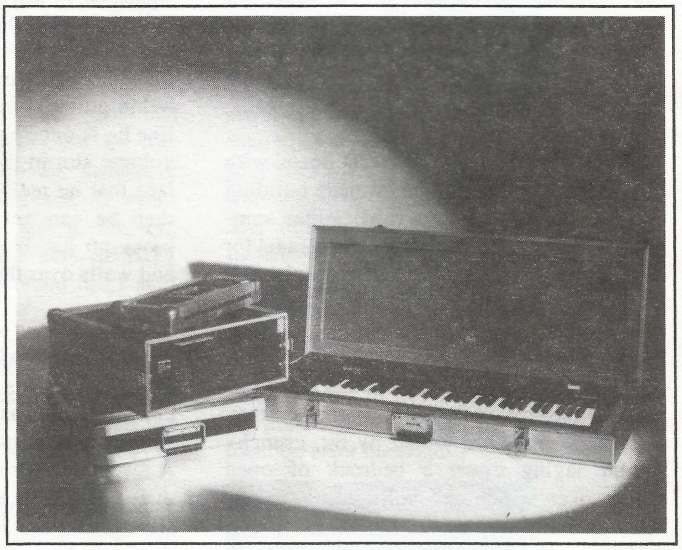

Shown: 4-space rack with EPS-16 PLUS module, 2-space rack, Eagle-I VFX-sd case

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The Interface

Letters for The Interface may be sent to any of the following addresses:
U.S. Mail - The Interface, Transoniq Hacker, 1402 SW Upland Dr., Portland, OR 97221
Electronic mail - Internet: interface@transoniq.com. In many cases a quick answer can be obtained by posting to our interactive, on-line Interface at our Web site (http://www.transoniq.com/interface.html) or calling Ensoniq CS at 610-647-3930.
This is probably one of the most open forums in the music industry. Letter writers are asked to please keep the vitriol to a minimum. Readers are reminded to take everything with a grain of salt. Resident answer-man is Pat Finnigan (PF). Letter publication in the printed version of *TH* is subject to space considerations.

To: TH & chickeneps@willmar.com

I write on behalf of a friend (without e-mail) in Eire who writes:

I was puzzled to see an odd mistake in the Ensoniq home page relating to approved SCSI storage devices. I would like to record Disk Tracks on my **ASR-10**, so I thought I would buy the Iomega JAZ (1GB). Were we not told time and time again in the pages of Transoniq Hacker that the JAZ was approved by Ensoniq for TWO TRACK AUDIO DIRECT TO DISK RECORDING, and that the zip (its predecessor) was not? According to the Ensoniq home page it's the exact opposite! Also, what's the significance of the numbers 1 and 2 beside the YES in the Disk Tracks Approved Table?

Thanks for your time and I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

For and on behalf of Michael O'Sullivan, Ireland.
John Evans
Rsevansandco.Ltd@btinternet.com

[Garth (Rubber Chicken) – This is a good example of not getting the most current information – the information you have is a year old. As of 9/26/97, Ensoniq's site (www.ensoniq.com/mid/scsi.htm) posted a big fat NO across the board for Jaz compatibility. I believe this page has said this for several months. Our Chicken site (www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/hd_compt. html) says NOT TESTED YET.

Earlier in the year (March), Ensoniq noted that the current Jaz Drives could not be formatted or written to by the EPS/ASR and that several drives "were on their way" to Ensoniq for testing. That's the last I've heard of the issue. I've worked with Jaz Drives made last year that worked, but now they don't.

The Zip Drive went through a similar problem (Iomega changing the firmware "midstream" – for more info, check www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/rcs_tips.html #ZipDriveTips), but through the efforts of several folk, Iomega changed the firmware back to a compatible arrangement. This was late 1995 – early 1996. Presently, all Zip Drives made nowadays work great. However, there are bunch of refurbished drives making the rounds, and they very possibly could have the incompatible firmware made back then.

I don't recall anything in the Hacker, even before the incompatible firmware came into being, that said that the Jaz Drive worked, except a Interface writer who could have been mistaken.

Since information changes, it's best to check the Net or call for the most current information.

P.S. The Syquest SyJet 1.5 gig drive has proved to be a good competitor to the Jaz, and it commonly costs only $100 more than the Jaz, and the carts cost the same. We have not tested it, and Ensoniq does not mention it at their site, but I have heard from direct sources that it works. RCS is also selling a 540mb removable drive.]

[PF – Michael, John: I've tried a Jaz drive on my ASR-10 and it simply wouldn't format. Most removable media is "hard-sectored," i.e., the interleave and sector/cylinder counts are NOT changeable. Plus, since they're considered a SCSI-2 device, the Jaz drives are not ASR compatible.]

Hi,

I got your address for support on older Ensoniq products from the Ensoniq home page.

I have had an **EPS-16+** for about 7 years, and the unit has always given me trouble with freezing up and keyboard failure. I brought it in for service twice, but the problems always reoccur. It now sits in a box unused due to its unreliability. I use OS 1.10.

Do you know what could be causing this problem, and what could be done to fix it?

rjsolomon
rjsolomon@MCI2000.com

[PF – RJ: You want to get O.S. Version 1.3. It's not only the latest and greatest OS for the 16+, it's MUCH more robust than 1.1. Feel free to download it from www.ensoniq.com. The keyboard issue has been covered in great detail – the keyboard assembly uses a connector to join the two keyboard printed circuit boards together. This connector is the culprit. Either (A) clean the connector with a zero residue cleaner, or (B) remove the connector and solder the two halves together point-to-point. Method (A) you can do by removing the keyboard assembly and cleaning the connector. (B) Is a guaranteed fix, but I'd have your FRIENDLY Ensoniq Authorized Service Center perform this fix for you. Your local tech can order this fix from Ensoniq and have you up and running in idyllic samplitude in no time. But don't forget about O.S. 1.3.]

[Mark (dancel@gte.net) – I use an EPS-16+ as my main controller for my studio. I have it sitting on a flat table top in front of my computer monitor. My EPS-16+ will freeze up if it's on too long and it overheats. I placed a small 6" fan facing right at the back of the keyboard and since then, it never locks up. Good luck, http://www.midimark.com.]

Hi,

The floppy drive in my **VFX** has gone south. I am a computer technician and would like to change the drive myself, however I have had a few problems. The original drive is a Sony MP-F63W-00D which has been discontinued. Ensoniq has said to replace the drive with a Sony MP-F420-2. Unfortunately, this has also been discontinued, and the only place I can find this exact drive is the Ensoniq distributor here in Canada for the low, low price of $200. Sony has not been much help although he said that somebody was living it up in Hawaii at that price.

Anyway, do you know what type of drive was originally in the keyboard and what the differences are between a standard PC drive? (The tech at Sony told me it was just a standard PC type drive, although the tech at the distributor said that some jumpers had to be set on the drive.) I did try a standard floppy drive and all I got was a "Drive Not Ready" error.

Thanks for any help you can give.
Geoff Van Brunt
Computer Central
gvanbrunt@oln.com

[PF – Geoff: A replacement drive is available for $59.95 plus shipping (in US funds) from Rubber Chicken Software. Call Garth Hjelte and company at 1-320-235-9798 to order. At that price, don't even try to reverse-engineer a Macintosh drive (the MP-F63W-00d is a Mac FDHD floppy drive minus the motorized eject and power connector) or a PC drive to work. Point your browser. to http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps for the details.]

Hey,

I have (or is it had?) an Ensoniq **ESQ-1**. A so-called repairman, who doubled as my band's former soundman (no longer), tried to fix a "ground hum" from my MIDI port (?!), charged me 96 bucks, and ended up frying out my motherboard by running a screw through the ribbon cable. I didn't even get an "I'm sorry" from the jerk.

I put it in my local AUTHORIZED repair shop, ADS Audio, in AB Stephens Music, Huntsville, AL.

I have since learned that the motherboard is no longer available from Ensoniq. While the ESQ-1 is no longer a cutting-edge synth, it worked quite nicely for what I used it for, and, to be honest, I hate losing a piece of gear.

To make a long story not quite so long, I was wondering if you might have a motherboard for the Ensoniq? If not, and I know this is not standard Ensoniq procedure, would you have a schematic of the motherboard? I am not any sort of tech or repairman who would profit in any way from it, other than having my synth operational again. My friend just graduated with his Associates degree in electronics, and said he would try to help me fix it. He wants me to join his band, so he has to be nice to me :-)

If there is any way that you could help me, or anyone you could refer me to, I would be forever grateful.

Sorry to take up so much space, and thanks,
jamieb
jbell3@peop.tdsnet.com

[PF – Jamie: This is a new frontier we're entering here. Ensoniq has simply exhausted the remaining supply of parts, fabs, and boards for most of the earlier Ensoniq instruments. As a technician myself, it's sad to see great products die by extinction, but I'm afraid this is exactly the case.

Yes, Ensoniq could spin off a new fab of the logic board, they could order a production run of their proprietary VLSI chips and such, but the manufacturers of these chips typically won't set up the dies and do a run of less than 100,000 parts. And the cost would be staggering, not to mention economically infeasible. This is not only true for Ensoniq, but ANY electronic manufacturer.

I truly empathize with you: I was the first guy in Indiana to have an ESQ-1 back in 1987. I paid cash for it in March and took delivery of it in August. Tom Darling was the Ensoniq rep for the Midwest back then, and this keyboard started the "workstation" revolution. I got with friends and hooked up SEVEN MIDI devices just to see if the ESQ-1's 8-voice polyphony carried over to the sequencer and limited the sequencer MIDI out to 8 notes. It didn't, and thus began the dawn of an earlier frontier that most manufacturers are still trying to catch up with...

I'm sorry some electronic imbecile took your child away from you this way. All I can recommend at this point is to either locate a used ESQ-1 or have you migrate to an SQ-1 or SQ-1+. Either are 3 times the instrument the ESQ-1 was, but I know that doesn't soften the loss. Be well...]

[TH – We here at the Hacker don't sell any kind of replacement parts (or hardware of any kind for that matter), but maybe some reader will respond.]

TH –

Is it possible to get my EPS samples (on floppies) into my hard drive on my PC? It would certainly be cool to have easier (and faster) access to those sounds.

P.S. I still use the sequencer in the TS-12, obviously..

Steve Mallett
tyandstv@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

[PF – Steve: Yes, you CAN save disk images of EPS floppies into your PC hard drive. Depending on what computer you have, I recommend the following:

(A) Gary Giebler's EDM (Ensoniq Disk Manager). This is a $40 package that runs under DOS.

(B) Ensoniq Disk Tools. This is a $60 package that runs under Windows (3.1, 95).

Both are available thru Rubber Chicken software (http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/). The Ensoniq Disk Tools Package also supports SCSI hard drives as well. Given, there are a number of "shareware" apps that will allow "kinda" the same thing. Giebler's utilities are available in a "runtime" version on THE SAMPLE BANK (a 300+ mb CD chock full of EPS/16+/Mirage/TX16W samples. RCS has this as well for around $40...]

TH –

Where can I locate a disk drive for my Ensoniq EPS sampling keyboard? Is there a Canadian distributor?

Michel R. Filion
mfilion@sympatico.ca

[PF – mfilion: This is getting to be a warm topic in the Hacker. Last month Ensoniq said they had enough drives for Authorized Service Centers to last six months. After that, they're gone.

So if you need one, I'd move fast, because they're about to become extinct. Contact Ensoniq directly here in the states at 610-647-3930 and ask for the Canadian distributor or order directly. And have your wallet ready: they're $250 here in the states – with the exchange rate and import duties in Canada I wouldn't even venture a guess.]

*[Steve Trembley, 7th Fret Music – Several years ago I removed an EPS (classic) floppy drive and installed it with no problems in my Amiga 500... I think I had to flop the cable position. Seems like the reverse should be applicable. Amiga floppy drives are *cheap*.]*

Hi Hackers,

(I promise not to use the "R" word today.)

I've been having a little trouble getting my MR's (OS.v2.10), Insert Effects assignments to play back correctly in "song" mode. e.g. Let's say Seq. location A uses Insert Effect #23 – DLL-->EQ on Track 4 – Overdrive. Works Great if saved as a .mid, .mfb, or .mf3 by itself. But now, if I load the saved .mid into Sequence location B, while another .mid sequence pre-exists in location A, which uses Insert Effect #07- NonLinReverb, and I create a playlist to play A & B consecutively, the B sequence seems to be using Effects from the A sequence and the guitar that used to use DDL on track 4, ends up using the reverb with a mix into the chorus bus.

Can I avoid this, or do I need to re-do the A sequence, and assign different effects? I thought I could use different effects in a song, as long as it was multi-sequence, and saved as a song. ...To be fair, I didn't originally "intend" for the 2 sequences in question to go together, but I wouldn't think that should matter. Any idea what I'm doing wrong ?

I suppose I should clarify that I know only 1 insert effect/sequence is allowed. (I'm not trying to get more than 1 insert effect into a sequence, because I know I can't do that.)

Thanks,
Tim Roche
TRWEBBS@aol.com

[PF – Tim: I don't know this for fact, but I think the rule is "One Standard MIDI File, One Insert FX Routing." If you've checked your fx routing in both sequence banks and they line up properly, this may be the case. You might want to check with Ensoniq Customer Support with this as I've never tried to switch Insert FX between sequences/songs.

But it sure looks like the sequencer only remembers a single Insert FX routing until another SMF is loaded with a different Insert FX...]

[Ensoniq – You are right. Resave the sequences as native MR sequences and reload them into memory. When you make the song playlist this time it should work okay.]

[Tim Roche – Hi again Hackers,

I just got MR O.S. 2.11 at the suggestion of Ensoniq Customer Support. They were unable to reproduce the problem I explained above, and I'm still having that same problem now, but I still love my MR. (even without the "desired" extra RAM). Thanks for trying to help.

Now, if only I could find an organ patch for my MR that doesn't sound like my old Poly-800 when played anywhere above C4. The "Rock Organ" patch on my Ensoniq Soundscape Elite Soundcard blows 'em all away in that range. I wish I could sample it "with a loop" and use it in my MR.... (Oh ya, and the HACKER shirts are Tuff.)]

*[PF – Tim: I love the organs on my Soundscape elite. I think they're part of the Joey DeFrancesco Signature Series Disks (samples) for the 16+ and ASR. Actually, if you have the Wave Expansion Board you could wash the EPS/ASR DeFrancesco sample into a *.wav format and load it into the expansion card...*

Those Hacker t-shirts are VERY cool – I've almost worn mine out...]

[TRWEBBS@aol.com – Hi again. Pat, if we're talking about the optional 4meg Flash Sample memory card for MR's, I do have one installed, it is awesome, and yes, I can make a .wav of that magnificent "Joey D" sample with my PC, but I can't make it "loop." I've tried the Awave software, and found it not much help, (not that I knew what I was doing with it,)...and an organ that doesn't loop, is just not very useful to me. I'd love to have that Soundscape sample in my MR though. I'd trade all the MR organs in for that 1 Soundscape sample. If you, or anyone else succeeds at making a looping sample of that patch, PLEASE let me know how you did it!!

Thanks, Tim (wearing my HACKER shirt now) Roche]

*[PF – Tim: Jeez, I never thought about that, but you're absolutely right. How DO you loop a sound in the Flash-RAM card? Yikes! I can't believe I never thought of this before, but you've hit the nail on the head. I've just loaded *.wav bleeps and boops into it. VERY good question. Dunno if the MR even recognizes loop start/end/position of samples loaded into FLASH. Any readers tried this?]*

[Ensoniq – It is not the shortcoming of the MR. It is a standard of the .wav format that does not allow samples to have loops when being transferred. For example, that is why the ASR-X writes its samples as .aif instead of .wav, so the loops will stay intact.]

TH –

More vintage Ensoniq questions!!!!!!!!!!

No battery in an Ensoniq ESQ-1 synthesizer. What type do I need and/or what are the specs for this *&&^%battery?

Thanks!
Michel R. Filion
mfilion@sympatico.ca

[PF – Mike: It's a 3V lithium battery (with leads), about 2/3rds the size of a AA penlight cell. My local Ensoniq tech tells me they're 1200 mAh (milliampere hours) and pretty robust – guess the ESQ-1 EEPROM's are pretty hungry. The easiest way to replace the old one with the new is to cut the leads on the old one near the battery (NOT near the circuit board) and trim the leads of the new one to fit and just solder the new leads to the old leads jutting up from the logic board.

Be sure to back up all sounds and sequences before doing this; they'll evaporate...]

[TH – And watch those polarities.]

[Steve Pretti – Be extremely careful when replacing lithium batteries, excessive heat from the soldering iron can actually cause the battery to explode. Apply heat to the battery leads, and not the ends of the actual battery. The best way to replace the battery is to take the time to remove the mainboard, desolder the dead battery, obtain a new battery with leads (take the dead battery to your electronics dealer as a reference), and solder the new battery leads into the mainboard. By soldering the leads you avoid applying excessive heat to the battery. To add an extra margin of safety, use heatsinks above the leads while soldering.]

TH –

My battery is low on my SQ-1. Is it an off-the-shelf battery and can I change it myself? I am a computer engineer so I am adept at working with digital electronics. I have not opened the unit nor do I know the board layout. Can you please advise?

John Melillo
CFLJOHN@aol.com

[PF – John: I vaguely remember speaking with you when I worked for Truevision, so hello again!

Yes: this is a field replaceable unit. If you know which end of a soldering iron to hold you're qualified to do this. The battery is a 3V lithium battery WITH leads. Physically it's about 2/3rds the size of an AA penlight battery. It's rated 1200 mAh (milliampere hours) and should be about a $5-$10 off-the-shelf item at any computer store or distributor.

The secret to doing the swap quickly is to clip the leads off the old battery very close to the battery itself (NOT the PCB unless you feel like dismantling the unit, pulling the logic board out and doing the job "perfectly"). This way

you have two pigtails to solder the new one onto without spending the hour to disassemble/reassemble the unit.

And be sure to back up your sounds and sequences: they'll evaporate as soon as you cut those leads.]

Hi there,

I've got an ole' **EPS** Classic, and copped a couple of instruments from another EPS user. They have a piano as the main sample, when you press the left patch select it turns into a B3, and the right patch select renders a DX7 Rhodes sample. How is this done? I would like to have an instrument with a sax as the main sound, but have it turn into a flute when I press the left select, and voices when I press the right.

I began with a new instrument, created a layer, and copied my sax to it. When I created layer 2 and copied the flute to it, both sax and flute could be heard. The same thing occurred when I created layer 3 and copied the voices to it. How do I designate the patch buttons to the different layers?

Thanks for any help,
Chip McCain
bigbigal@bellsouth.ne

[PF – Chip: You've copied all the wavesamples to the right layers. Now you have to assign which layers are active when certain patch select buttons are pressed. Select this multilayered instrument you're working on, then press "Edit" and "Instrument." Press the right arrow/cursor button till the display reads "00 PATCH= XXXXXXXX."

It is at THIS page where you select the patch buttons to select different layers. The leading two 0's in the display ("00 PATCH=) indicate neither patch select button is depressed: whatever layers are active will be numbered 1 thru 8. If you press the first patch button the display changes to read "X0 PATCH= XXXXX" and the numbers will change. Remember, the numbers indicate which layer is ACTIVE when a patch select button is depressed.

To edit which layer is active, press and hold the desired patch select button down and then use the right and left cursor (arrow) buttons to underline and select a layer. Pressing the up arrow selects it to be active, pressing the down arrow deselects it.

And for your patience, here's an easter egg (it's really in the manual as well as the above procedure, but nobody seems to be aware of this). You can LOCK patch selects by holding down the desired patch select buttons and THEN pressing the active Instrument/Track button. Now when you let go of the patch select buttons, the patch you just selected remains on. To return the track to its normal 00 status, just double click it...]

TH –

I recently upgraded my TS-10 to a **MR-61**. I am a avid amateur songwriter and keyboardist and have owned many Ensoniq keyboards including an EPS, SQ-80, SD-1 32voice, TS-10 and MR-61. I've had my MR for about 2 months and would strongly recommend it to anyone who primarily does song writing. I have seen may comments in the Hacker that recommend keeping both boards, but I definitely think the MR-61 is definitely the most creative extracting keyboard I have ever had (including my TS-10).

I do have one question regarding the sequencing ability of the MR. Is it possible to transpose a track that has already been recorded? I know you can transpose an instrument, but I was unable to do this to an instrument I have already assigned to a sequencer track?

Just a note to the designers of the MR – GREAT JOB, love the board.

P.S. I am looking for a used EPS or EPS-16+ rack or keyboard. Please email me at NScott9161@aol.com. I only have about $600 to spend, and also have a headset mic I could throw in for trade.

Thank you.
Nathan Scott
Gresham, OR
NScott9161@aol.com

[Mark Volpe (mvolpe@eos.ncsu.edu) – You can transpose a track by pressing the track button and turning the parameter knob. You'll see the same parameters as you do when you edit an instrument. The transpose parameter is somewhere in there. It doesn't change the actual MIDI notes, just the way the instrument sounds, so there's no way to transpose part of a track unless you split it in two. Perhaps a future OS will let you alter the actual notes.]

[PF – NScott: By the time I read this, Mark Volpe took the words out of my mouth...]

TH –

I would like to know if there is a backlog in inventory regarding the LED display for the **TS-12**? I've been waiting three months for repair. Is the LCD display compatible with the LED? Please indicate how long it would take for this part to be shipped after you receive the order. Also, how may I order a User's Manual for ASR-10?

Thank you,
ComproSam@aol.com

*[TH – There seems to be some (growing) confusion out there – we are *not* Ensoniq. We don't sell parts of any kind, we don't do repairs, we don't sell instruments. We are but a humble merchant of words.]*

[PF – ComproSam: "Acme Keyboard Parts Inventory, Inc., how can we help you?" You should call Ensoniq for these kind of answers at 610.647.3930. You can order an ASR-10 manual from there as well. We don't stock Ensoniq inventory here at the Hacker.

Seriously, though, I'll bet there's a HUGE backlog for any LED display as NEC quit making those for Ensoniq quite some time ago. And the LCD display is a retrofit for the ASR-10 display. It's not compatible with the TS-series – not enough characters available...]

[PF – ComproSam: More news... There IS a display available, but unless you speak fluent Russian it wouldn't do you any good. The only display available for a TS is for Russian export only, and was included in the last batch of TS-series instruments manufactured for Russia (at least that's what my FRIENDLY Ensoniq Authorized Service Technician explained to me today), so don't hold your breath...

I'd REALLY like to see that display, though – wonder how you spell "GNARLY-B3" in Russian?]

[Ensoniq – Ensoniq no longer has a direct ordering department. Manuals can be ordered from your nearest Ensoniq dealer or you may contact: Syntaur Productions, phone: 1-800-334-1288.]

TH –

I have just purchased the **MR-76** and I'm very impressed with its sound quality and sequencing abilities. I was wondering were there any instrument definitions for the MR series keyboards for use with Cakewalk Pro Audio. I really don't want to make one myself, but will if forced to.

Thank you in advance.
Tyrone Steels II
Kaph Records and Studio
webmaster@kaphrecords.provide.net

[PF – Tyrone: The only IDF cakewalk has for an MR-series instrument is the General MIDI IDF. To use it you've simply got to set the MR to its General MIDI status and away you go. To do any more with the MR is almost herculean – writing an IDF for an instrument that's capable of 84 Mb of waves is, well, herculean...

What you might want to do is to run a GM sequence into the MR, and then alter the track sounds to taste and then save in MR-format.]

[Frank Orlich (Frank.Orlich@rodgau.netsurf.de) – Since I'm not using Cakewalk, I'm not quite sure if this is what Tyrone is looking for. I found this file on the "Unofficial Web Site For Ensoniq MR Series."

"Here's a profile for Cakewalk users. Includes the Dance Expansion option."

Ins File mr_ins.zip (Size 7.17k) Contributed by: Michael Bedesem http://www.rain.org/~msavard/Software/MR_ins.zip.]

TH –

While using the **EPS-M** sequencer, we have encountered a problem. Specifically, at the end of a song the sequencer does not stop, but rather, it starts playing the entire song again right from the beginning.

The looping function is already off, so this is not the problem.

Would anyone at your site be able to identify the problem, and if so, tell us what we doing incorrectly?

Note that we are running version 2.41 of the EPS operating system.

Many thanks for your support.
Claude Tellier
aka DctrC

[PF – Dr: C: Here's the rX... Looping may be off, but this might be WAVE looping. The other issue that might be causing the problem is that you have the individual sequence LOOP switch off and the SONG loop switch on. Could be vice versa... Chances are the SONG loop switch is on.

Version 2.41 could be suspect if all the above checks out properly. I vaguely remember V. 2.41 with some older ROM versions let you sample at some illegal sample rate, something like 133k or something. I only saw it once, and then I replaced the ROMs in my EPS to allow changing interleave on my hard drives.

Ensure you've booting O.S. 2.49 (available from www.ensoniq.com) and you have the version 2.41 ROMs installed. This should alleviate all errant misbehavior from your EPS-M.

And remember the "Stop" button doubles as a "continue" button...]

Hello...

I've had an **ASR-10** for a little more than a year and am looking for resources for Windows programs that will allow me to create new effects algorithms. I am looking for basically software related to the effects processor. I am thinking of picking up some of the Waveboy disks, but am looking for something that would allow me to develop effects of that caliber on my own. I am especially in need of a wah effect without distortion. Even with the

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distortion input turned down, I still get annoying clicks.

Thanks for your input,
Ian
jiva@mindless.com

[PF – Ian: This is a touchy subject with Ensoniq. They've caught people overseas selling "new effect algorithms" that were just patent lifts of Waveboy code. I'm not aware of an FX Toolkit for the ASR, but the Waveboy FX series disks are probably a good start (as well as the only alternate FX for Ensoniq's proprietary DSP chip)...

...Which is the real issue. Since the DSP in an ASR is a proprietary DSP, you simply can't go down to the library and pick up a book on it (like you can for the 3210 & 56001), so I can't predict a great deal of luck on your endeavor. The only way I know of to do what you're attempting here is to reverse-engineer the DSP by tinkering with some Waveboy files. And unless you're familiar with assembler or MASM, it's gonna be a slow boat. But good luck: hope to see more stuff out there soon...]

Hi...

I'm just wondering if you know anywhere on the Net I could find some SYSEX sound patches for the Ensoniq **SQ1** or **KS** machine.

thx,
Bill Stone
lzanre@on.bell.ca

[PF – Bill: Point your browser to http://www/soundcentral.com and surf to the Ensoniq pages. They have quite a bit of sysex files for ALL Ensoniq synths as well as samples for our loopy friends...]

TH –

Two questions. I'd like to put all my hundreds of floppies on a SCSI drive for use with the **EPS-M** rack mount version of the EPS classic. I've consulted the compatibility list, but what worries me is that pretty much all that's available now are 1 GB and larger drives. Does the compatibility list include these newer drives? The second question concerns the Ensoniq SCSI guide. I think I've heard of such a thing, but it did not come with my EPS that I know of. If I'm not just hallucinating it, how would I get a copy?

Thanks,
Eric Tilleson
eric@edmark.com

[PF – Eric: The EPS SCSI guide was a document that described how the EPS organized file structures and directories on a SCSI hard drive, along with descriptions of macros, termination issues, and other SCSI related issues. Garth Hjelte at Rubber Chicken software has a FAQ on these issues, and Syntaur Productions has the SCSI Guide available. Check the "related links" header while you're here at http://www.transoniq.com/interface.html...

A 1 gig drive for the EPS is HUGE! The EPS/m writes smaller files than its later siblings, so anything over 500 Mb is gonna have a lotta free disk space on it. Then again, the old adage "No matter how big the drive, you'll fill it up sooner than you realize" comes to mind. Frankly, just about ALL SCSI hard drives for a Mac work famously with the EPS. All the Quantum mechanisms are compatible, and they're the most popular of OEM drives. Rule of thumb is if it'll work on a Mac it'll work on an EPS. Ensure your EPSm is running O.S. 2.49 and ROM version 2.41: this is the latest and greatest HW/SW available for the EPSm. Any other combination of OS and ROM will (a) not let you boot the hard disk at SCSI ID #0, (b) change interleave (very important for load speed) and (c) time out while formatting drives 1 Gb or larger.

But once you get the drive set up and configured for use with your EPSm you'll wonder (a) why you waited so long, and (b) how you ever got along without it...]

Hi!

Just bought a **TS-10**, and I hear there are TS-10 or TS-12 "construction set" files out there with some basic drum beats and maybe some style sequences? I would love to get my hands on anything like that. I would also be interested in getting on a distribution list for a newsletter or email etc.

Thanks!
Jonathan Lawson
jonathan-lawson@ti.com

[PF – Jonathan: Coupla URL's may rub you the right way. Try http://www.soundcentral.com and follow the leads to the Ensoniq pages. Also, www.ensoniq.com has the disk images of certain in-box sounds on their webpages as well...

Contact the Hacker and get your subscription going ASAP! The Transoniq Hacker is THE Ensoniq users group magazine, not to mention the OLDEST user group 'zine out here. Voice # is 503.227.6848: covers all Ensoniq instruments.]

Hi,

I hope you'll be able to help me with my problem.

I have an **SD-1**, that I bought new around 5 years ago. Lately, every time I hit Play + Record, I get the message "System Error 129 – Reinitialize.... Press any Key to Continue." Then the keyboard restarts itself. Also, the tone and volume fluctuate. What could this be?

Thank you,
Sheri B.
sheriew@bellsouth.net

[PF – Sheri: Your SD-1 needs a cleaning. We have nothing major going on, as far as problems are concerned, it's just the SD-1 is receiving intermittent data from its control surface when you enter record. If you bag a can of zero residue cleaner and spray the data entry slider most error messages will go away.

And REINITIALIZE your SD-1. First backup all your sounds and sequences to an appropriate source (either save to floppy disk on the SD-1 or sysex to a data device). Once you've done this, hold down the "Presets" button and press the top left "soft" (instrument) display button. This will give you the "Erase Memory And Initialize?" readout. Press the Yes button – the SD-1 will clear itself off all extemporaneous gobblygook and revert to a "plain vanilla" state. Once you've gotten this far, reload any sound/sequence data you need.

This procedure rectifies better than 94% of all errors encountered in normal SD-1 operation. The instrument is fallible: it's designed to do exactly what you tell it. If it has goofy data to work with, or you give it commands to manipulate this goofy data, goofy results occur. Suffice to say GIGO (garbage in; garbage out) rules here. By restoring the SD-1 to its normal factory state, you've cleared out any user-inspired errors that might be causing this "Error 129" prompt...

Check pg 1-11 in the SD-1 Musicians Manual for more details. This should resolve any software errors.

But while you're at it, it could be time for a new battery. Those lithium backup PRAM/ROM batteries could be going south at this point in your SD-1's life. I apologize

for sounding like a broken record, but my innate self tells me to explain to readers that the best service they'll get for an Ensoniq keyboard is an Ensoniq dealer. How conventional...

Ensure that you're running O.S. V.4.10 and the ROM version is 4.10 also. Other than that, you've got a bullletproof synth that Ensoniq should NEVER have quit manufacturing. The only other problems you may encounter are "preventative maintenance" errors, like the internal battery going away on you. Take your pet to a FRIENDLY Authorized Ensoniq Service facility, have them replace the battery, reseat the socketed chips on the logic board and clean and reconnect all connectors. Once this prescription is followed, your SD-1 will perform flawlessly for the next five years...]

If the problem is beyond that, email us back with more particulars – we'll get a bigger hammer...]

TH –

My band mates keep complaining of long load times for my **EPS-16+** workstation. Studying the manual, I came across the "Select Loadable Inst" function. This seemed to be the solution I was looking for, but it does not exist on my keyboard! I can insert the "load" in the sequence, but it does not load anything. Is there any way to load during a sequence?

FormatC4@aol.com

[PF – FormatC4: As I recall, they only way you could perform this function was with a 16+ that loaded from a SCSI drive, and then I'm fuzzy if you could do it while the sequencer was running. Might have been the EPS and not the 16+. There was a trick to the SCSI card you had to do on the original EPS like disabling a line on the SCSI adapter. On the EPS-16+ I dunno. Readers?]

[Ensoniq – This function does work but you have to first enable the track or tracks that you want instruments to load into. You then have to go into event edit mode and insert the necessary program changes to access the sound you want to load from the floppy or scsi. It will not make the instruments load any faster – just while doing something else. The only way to get them to load faster is to use SCSI.]

Greetings,

I'm a novice **TS-12** user, and have played around a little with the on-board sequencer, however I have not found any way to be able to play along in real-time with songs or sequences that I have saved previously.

Is this possible with the TS-12 or do I need to use MIDI and Cakewalk or some other configuration?

I have looked through Ensoniq's tutorial manual and main manual but unless I'm overlooking the method to accomplish this, I don't believe there is a way to do this, which would be a major bummer, since I know you can do this on some of the less expensive Roland synths.

Thanks in advance for any help you can offer.
Edward A. Ash
eash@us.oracle.com

[PF – Ed: Now THERE's an oxymoron: "less expensive Roland synths." Actually, to play along with a running sequence you simply have to select the track instrument you wanna play by selecting it with one of the "soft" buttons over and under the display. Select a sequence to be played, then press the track instrument buttons (either the 1-6 or the 7-12 button, depending on which track the instrument you want to play is on). If your sequence wasn't saved with a particular instrument you'd like to play while the sequencer is running, drop your favorite patch into a track, select that track, and go after it. No computer or sequencer software like Cakewalk is required. Enjoy!]

TH –

I have a friend who just bought an **MR-76** keyboard. He lives in the Seattle area and was told by the music store that Ensoniq was getting out of the keyboard business and was going to devote their main attention to PARIS (Ensoniq's HD recording system). He had to settle for a store demo of the MR-76 because the dealer said they couldn't get any more new models from Ensoniq because of this focus on PARIS. Is this just a ploy on the part of the dealer to get my friend to settle for a store demo model or is there really a problem at Ensoniq?

The reason I ask is that my friend has 30 days to check out his new keyboard. He is rather upset to think that he maybe left with a keyboard built by a company that may not support him in the future.

Can anyone shed some light on this rather distressing rumor?

Sincerely,
James Rosand
jrosand@olympus.net

[PF – James: The way I understand the issue, Ensoniq has just stopped keyboard manufacturing UNTIL PARIS is completed. To me this means they simply pulled the manufacturing team from keyboard assembly and deployed them to the PARIS team in order to get it out the door. As such, they probably aren't shipping any product (since none is being built) until the manufacturing team has its resources returned. Ensoniq has been touting PARIS since March – now that it's October, let's see it. Not an uncommon scenario for a small thinktank company like Ensoniq. Shame they have to cease production of one line to ship another, though...

Garth Hjelte pointed this out to me, so I think it's safe to say there's no immediate cause for alarm (unless you're an Ensoniq Dealer with 30 people waiting for delivery of an ASR-10)...]

[TH – And we checked this with Ensoniq...]

[Eric Montgomery, Ensoniq Technical Support – Ensoniq is no longer manufacturing MR-61/76 workstations. Ensoniq's main focus, at this time, is on Paris and the ASR-X. Support as in repairs, sounds and customer service (technical support) is still going to be available.]

*[TH – Upon further checking, we get answers that vary from (basically) "never again" to "not at this time." We *suspect* that what this means is that there are no plans to restart but that there's certainly no law that says that they couldn't change their minds at any time.]*

TH –

A little while ago, I asked the forum about problems regarding my **ASR's** 44-kHz effects. The scenario was this: The ROM 44-kHz delay and reverb both crackled whenever I used them. E-sage Pat Finnigan of the Transoniq Hacker advised me that it was a sign that the output board was about to go and that I should have it fixed by the Malvern pros. Before shipping it off, I loaded in a newer O.S. version (3.5.3.) to see if it would make a difference. It _seems_ to have corrected the problem. I think that I was using version 2, or something like that, beforehand to save space on my hard drive. Does anyone know if the older O.S. would result in the 44-kHz snap-crackle-pop I experienced? Also, I no longer get the occasional "sszzzzzwwWWAAAHHH" sound whenever I switch into the 44-kHz effects.

Anyhow, I'm hoping that someone can confirm my optimistic hypothesis that the newer O.S. is saving me from shipping my baby off to the big bad Ensoniq doctors.

Sean O'Donnell
sodonne@vm.temple.edu

[PF – Sean: My apologies. I assumed you were running O.S. V. 3.5.3 and were experiencing the problem. I've run into crackling on certain algorithms using 3.5.3, in particular, the "PARAM EQ" when loading the "Harboretum" sample from CDR-4.

You may well have resolved the issue, but if your ASR is still under warranty, I'd have a service tech check it out to be sure. It's quite possible the older O.S. was causing this DSP irregularity. Maybe the addition of DiskTracks (ATRK's) fixed this issue in 3.5.3.]

Hi.

I am the owner of an **ASR-10.** Current RAM version is 3.53 and ROM version is 1.50. I was trying to load files from the internal sequencer, but I was unable to make it work. Musician's Manual indicates that there is an event type to use in the EVENT EDIT TRACK page: LO (Load File). However, when I want to set up this parameter... it isn't available in the list options!! The question is: How can I load a file while the internal sequencer is playing?

Another question: I've been reading the EXTERNAL COMMAND SPECIFICATIONS Version 2.01.00 from Ensoniq, because I need to change effect parameters while sequencing (internal or external) via SysEx. Section 9.12 of EXTERNAL COMMAND SPECIFICATIONS indicates that:

- SysEx High Byte must be 30(hex)
- SysEx Low Byte must be 00 through 09
- Parameters & Ranges must be... ALGORITHM DEPENDENT! (??)

Please, tell me what I must to do to change, i.e, DLL time L/R value in ROM-10 effect in real time sequencing.

Can I do it from EXTERNAL sequencer?
Can I do it from INTERNAL sequencer?

Thanks a lot!
cmartine@bba.buenayre.com.ar

[PF – CMartine: You cannot load a sound while the sequencer is playing. If you successfully do it the outputs will be muted until the new sound finishes loading. In either case, the answer is no.

Ensoniq's "load while playing" means the ability to play one track sound while another is loading. A lot of people have interpreted this to mean "load while the SEQUENCER is playing," which is incorrect. The example of performing brain surgery on yourself holds true here...

I've been able to load different sounds into the ASR from hard drive while it was being sequenced from Cakewalk. However, once the sysex message to load is received by the ASR, ALL outputs are muted until the new instrument finishes loading, and then the ASR unmutes itself. It's a DMA (Direct Memory Access) thing...]

[Steve Pretti – To record changes to effects parameters while sequencing, assign the effect parameter to a controller, then use the controller to record effect parameter changes in a sequence.]

Gentlemen,

Do you know of any floppy drives that are compatible with the original 3.5" from the **Mirage** DSK? I suspect that the original drive has gone south, but Panasonic no longer makes the drive and I can't get the pin specs from them...

I need to replace this drive and get my keyboard back...

Steven.j.Fairchild@cpmx.saic.com

[PF – Steve: The Hacker published an article YEARS ago on converting an 800k floppy drive to Mirage use. It even sported a switch so you could effectively read and write to both sides of the floppy and store a disk worth of Mirage date on each side of the disk. You'll want to contact the Hacker at 503.227.6848 and request the eMail version of this document. It costs something like a dollar.

Point your browser to http://www.transoniq.com/index.html and click on the "Back Issues" link. You can locate the issue you need there thru the index...]

[TH – Good memory Pat! Actually, that was soooo long ago that it's not listed on the Index and not available via e-mail. It's Issues #52 and #53 (October and November, 1989), and they're $2 each (printed).]

TH –

I have a question on the Ensoniq **SQ-80** sound card. We have purchased these cards and are having difficulty installing them with some new IBM Systems. The cards are not autodetecting like they do on other systems. We cannot force the cards to install because in Win95, they come up with errors saying the device is not installed properly. We have tried 5 different cards on 2 different machines with no success. IBM has said that there is nothing in the system that should be any different from any other pc. If you have any ideas, or suggestions, please let me know as soon as possible. Thank you for your help...

Bryan Ignatz
Equus Computer Systems of Ohio
Technical Support.
BIGNATZ@equuscs.com

[PF – Bryan: The SQ-80 is an Ensoniq synthesizer keyboard that sold for $2495 back in 1988. I don't know what soundcard you have there, but it certainly isn't an SQ-80. What I recommend doing is identifying the soundcard, as Ensoniq only produces the Audio PCI (the only PCI-based card in their repertoire), and the Soundscape and VIVO90 cards, which are ISA-based. Once you've identified them as genuine Ensoniq soundcards (by the silkscreening on the board) and identified which model, you can download the appropriate drivers from www.ensoniq.com.

Windoze 95 won't recognize the Soundscape (nor will NT) as there is no Soundscape driver to install in the cabs files. Take a peek at the card and visit www.ensoniq.com – they have the latest version of drivers for all their soundcards at that site. Good luck!]

[PS from PF – Bryan: The new PC300PL's (as well as the newer larger desktops) have a nasty habit of sharing the interrupt of the ISA slot directly above them (PCI slot, ISA slot, PCI slot, ISA slot, etc). Ensure your soundcard (even if it isn't an Ensoniq soundcard) is not plugged into a shared interrupt slot with another card installed into it (PCI and ISA card in same # slot1, slot2, etc.)

Ran into this while I briefly did config at Ramstar, er, Vanstar...]

TH –

Just wanted to say that I like the web page having no graphics. Much faster!

Brian Albritton
GutRecords@aol.com

[TH – Thanks! That's the TH way. We're always in a hurry so we figure everyone else is too. (Or at least they should be.)]

Hi folks,

I just thought I would send in a small **ASR-10** meets SCSI success story. I got a new CD writer, a Yamaha 6x-write, 4x-read, and since I've read about people creating their own CD ROMs for the ASR, I thought, what the heck, I'll try it. The following procedure WORKS:

1) Using Adaptec Toast 3.5 (bundled with CD-writer) on my Power Mac 7300, using Copy-SCSI, I created a disc image of my Quantum ASR hard drive, or Syquest 270mb cartridge.

2) Burned a CDR of that disc image.

3) The ASR will now boot from the Yamaha drive, and load everything, HOORAY.

Why did I think it wouldn't work??

Now how can I use those cool 4-digit macros that Ensoniq has on their CD-ROMs?

Greetings from Mike Horowitz,
studio12@access.ch

[PF – Mike: Wonder why most of the success stories are Mac-based? Hmmm...]

[VonKrogh@aol.com – Just put your files two directories away from the root directory (i.e. DRUMS-EDRUMS-instrument) and make sure your CDR is SCSI 4. That should do it.]

[PF – Gang: I tried this and it works. Just be VERY sure the SCSI ID of your CDROM is set to ID #4 or it won't work at all...]

TH –

Q: My **EPS-M** does not accept the Syquest 44MB drive. It is supposed to work according to the Ensoniq compatibility list. I use a non-removable SCSI drive that works.

OK. My O.S is v2.40. Are there upgrades available, and if so where? At the present moment even the non-removable SCSI drive is inoperable. The EPS display reads as follows: "No scsi drive connected." I would appreciate any help or ideas that you might be able to provide concerning this problem.

Yours sincerely,
Ulf "Bruce (the moose) Doerksen"
bruce@mbox302.swipnet.se

[PF – Ulf: You should be using O.S. V. 2.49 with the V. 2.0 ROM. This combination of firmware and hardware will:

(a) Allow you to boot from SCSI ID #0. Try that with 2.40.

(b) Allow you to format drives larger than 1 Gb without timing out.

(c) Allow you to change the interleave of your writable SCSI devices. This is probably the issue with your Syquest drive, although my EPS keyboard doesn't recognize one.

It's also quite possible your SCSI adapter has gone south. As the original Ensoniq SCSI expander was not internally terminated (you are using genuine Ensoniq memory expansion and SCSI adapter, aren't you?), you may need to terminate the DB-25 connector coming out of the back of the EPS before you connect it to your SCSI devices. Try that first.]

Classifieds

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

MR-76 workstation. Two expansion boards, Dance, Sample BPS. 16-Track sequencer, drum machine, Idea Pad. Excellent condition. Asking $1900. Phone: 512-707-1080.

Ensoniq TS-10. Absolute mint condition, home use only, OS 3 (w/General MIDI). In original box, all manuals included. $1200. Joe, 931-647-4827, jrowand@sprynet.com.

Ensoniq MR-61, MRD-1 Sound Disk, Mark of Unicorn software (IBM), MR- Flash sample board. Like new, only home use. $1700. Phone: (937) 433-2455, Bill.

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