
Subject: New DAW.....Native has arrived
Posted by [Deej \[5\]](#) on Sat, 24 May 2008 04:56:33 GMT
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Well, the last couple of months or so has been one of the most stressful periods of my entire life as far as work goes. Chuck Norris jokes seemed like more of a sane reality than the insane reality of what's been going on here. I got sick in February.....real sick, and wasn't able to really work for about 3 weeks and during that time I needed to be working at least 50 hours a week on a drilling program that I had committed to, so when I got well enough to work, the shit had hit the fan, I was behind the 8 ball and so I spent the next 60 days trying to stay ahead of 5 drilling rigs that had moved into this area (because I told them I could do what needed to get done to keep them busy)and unless I pulled a rabbit out of my hat, they were going to sit idle to the tune of \$17,000.00 per day....and that was just for one client. another one had me doing some other stuff that was even more stressful so anyway, I know I've been abraisive and cranky oand a little whacked out so thanks for not kicking me out of the group.....and during this time, I've had Chris Ludwig build me a new DAW.

It's an Intel Quad Core machine and is capable of playing back 40 tracks at 1.5ms latency while recording 8 more with a 70% DSP load of UAD-1 plugins. In Parisspeak, that's roughly a 3 MEC system running lots of UAD-1 plugins at zero audible latency with a wonderful cue system, VSTi's, and every bell and whistle you can imagine, without using ASIO direct monitoring. ADK did a great job on this box and it wasn't real expensive. the cores are running at 3.2GHz per, it's got 4G of RAM and 4 x 500G 7200 RPM SATAII HD's configured into a RAID 10 Array. I'm also running a pair of 750G SATAII drives for audio samples and backup, respectively.

Does it sound like Paris? Nope, but it sounds very good. It's possible to mix in Native and get "BIG". It's just a different prescription. The Neve 5042 tape emulator doesn't hurt either.

I ordered it with two system drives, one running Win XP Pro and the other running Win XP x64 Pro. The first drive I tested was with Win XP64. The good news was that this DAW is quite a bit more powerful than my dualcore Opteron 185 so I was able to achieve the 1.5 ms latency target that I was hoping for. My VSTis' are as follows:

GPO
Ivory
NI B4
NI Bandstand
BFD
BFDII
Jamstix II
Trilogy
Drumagog

I was able to load all but one of my VSTi's and that one was Ivory. This one wouldn't play nice with a 64 bit OS.

Despite speculation from Native Instruments that the NI installer would not work in Win XP x64.....all of them did load.....NI B4II, GPO and Bandstand work fine in both the standalone and VSTi formats. It's just a matter of pointing them elsewhere instead of the default path it wants to use and they run just fine.

Performance was good at low latency, but not "as good" as I had hoped with high track counts. For instance, I had 60 + tracks record enabled at both 32k and 64k buffers and was getting between 25% to 35% CPU loads. Also, there was quite a bit of ASIO loading in Cubase when streaming samples in BFD and BFD2. More really than with my older Opteron system.

After working a while with XP64 I started loading the same programs on the system drive running Windows XP32. I can record enable over 100 tracks at 32k buffers an the CPU load is around 10%.

An even bigger difference is seen when playing back a project that is loaded down with plugin count. Playing back a 40 track project with a 70% UAD-1 DSP while recording 8 x more tracks was getting a little dicey at 64k buffers on XP64 (ASIO meter occasionally spiking). With Win XP32, the ASIO load during dubbing on this same project is much lower and the overall system performance is more solid. Sample streaming in BFD at low latencies is much improved.

At higher latencies the ASIO performance is roughly equal but the overall performance nod goes to the XP64 because it can utilize all 4 x G of RAM for use with virtual instruments. However, the main point of getting this machine was to take advantage of it's capacity for operating at lower latencies. As far as low latency performance is concerned, the margin between the two OS'es give Win XP32 a significant edge.....significant enough to where I have decided to go exclusively with XP32. I have a fairly powerful systemlinked slave DAW to take up the slack if I run low on RAM in a mix and need more VSTi's (not to mention the freeze function).

and yes James.....I'm sure a Mac Pro can run circles around this, but a Mac Pro, tricked out to this degree would cost considerably more ;o).

For me these days, it's about achieving a certain benchmark and that benchmark is to be able to use a native DAW with no audible latency, in the same way that I used Paris. that has been accomplished now.

I just wanted to give you guys a heads up about this and also to apologize for being such a cantankerous wiseass (even more than usual) lately. I did buy some Brie recently as a gesture of solidarity with my socialist bretherin in France....

Cheers,

;o)
