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Subject: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?

Posted by [Robert Arsenault](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 12:56:59 GMT

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Anyone have/use one of these?

Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.

Thanks

Rob

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?

Posted by [Nil](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 14:59:24 GMT

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"Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote:

>

>Anyone have/use one of these?

>Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.

I have a 428, and I think it's great. Very smooth, the variable impedance thing is nice - and if you're getting the digital i/o option, that's a good thing to have, especially depending on what convertor box you use... if you're running at 48k or less it can basically give you 8 ins with the digicard option (4 with it's own pres, and 4 with the line-level inputs).

I find I like it best with condenser or tube mics, on stuff like OH's, Hi-Hat, Vocals. It's not a real aggressive preamp, so there's lots better for rock guitar, bass, etc. But it's a damn good one, really clean - not like a Grace is clean/pristine, the ISA has some very slight coloration, but it's nice coloration - and as I mentioned, very smooth; and at ~\$1600 it's a great deal for four channels of quality pres.

Let's put it this way - you can easily piss away \$1600 on lots of stuff you'd be a lot less happier with than the 428.

Neil

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?

Posted by [Robert Arsenault](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 15:35:21 GMT

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Gee Neil, thanks for the good info man. I can get one new here in CA for \$1899.00 kinda steep for my budget but.....!!!

Rob

"Neil" <IUOIU@OIU.com> wrote in message news:45c889bc\$1 @linux...

>

> "Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote:

>>

>>Anyone have/use one of these?

>>Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.

>

> I have a 428, and I think it's great. Very smooth, the variable

> impedance thing is nice - and if you're getting the digital i/o

> option, that's a good thing to have, especially depending on

> what convertor box you use... if you're running at 48k or less

> it can basically give you 8 ins with the digicard option (4 with

> it's own pres, and 4 with the line-level inputs).

>

> I find I like it best with condenser or tube mics, on stuff

> like OH's, Hi-Hat, Vocals. It's not a real aggressive

> preamp, so there's lots better for rock guitar, bass, etc. But

> it's a damn good one, really clean - not like a Grace is

> clean/pristine, the ISA has some very slight coloration, but

> it's nice coloration - and as I mentioned, very smooth; and at

> ~\$1600 it's a great deal for four channels of quality pres.

>

> Let's put it this way - you can easily piss away \$1600 on lots

> of stuff you'd be a lot less happier with than the 428.

>

> Neil

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?

Posted by [Deej \[4\]](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 15:47:20 GMT

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>Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.

It's won't hurt to look at it, as long as it's briefly, and from the window of a car driving by a music store going about 60mph. That way any signal that is being broadcast through speakers that are playing back any signal that is being amplified by the Onyx will be dopplered and your ears probably won't be insulted to the degree they would be if you were just sitting still.

;o)

"Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote in message news:45c87a39@linux...

>  
> Anyone have/use one of these?  
> Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.  
>  
> Thanks  
> Rob  
>

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?

Posted by [Robert Arsenault](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 19:17:08 GMT

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Eh...OK, so it would be safe to assume that you did not like the Onyx DJ ?  
You have a single channel Focusrite RED series pre rite, how do you like that one?

I'm in need of at least 4 pres rite now and I already have a sytek, which I love by the way.

Rob

"DJ" <www.aarrrrggghh!!!.com> wrote in message news:45c8a326@linux...

> >Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.

>  
> It's won't hurt to look at it, as long as it's briefly, and from the  
> window of a car driving by a music store going about 60mph. That way any  
> signal that is being broadcast through speakers that are playing back any  
> signal that is being amplified by the Onyx will be dopplered and your ears  
> probably won't be insulted to the degree they would be if you were just  
> sitting still.

>  
> ;o)

>  
>  
>  
>  
> "Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote in message news:45c87a39@linux...

>>  
>> Anyone have/use one of these?  
>> Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.

>>  
>> Thanks  
>> Rob

>>  
>  
>

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by Nil on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 20:01:40 GMT  
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"Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote:  
>Gee Neil, thanks for the good info man. I can get one new here in CA for  
  
>\$1899.00 kinda steep for my budget but.....!!!

\$1,640 - New (or so he states), on ebay:

[http://cgi.ebay.com/Focusrite-ISA428-Pre-Pack-4-Channel-Preamp-ISA-428\\_W0QQitemZ260015648093QQihZ016QQcategoryZ119018QQrdZ1QQssPageNameZWD1VQQcmdZViewItem](http://cgi.ebay.com/Focusrite-ISA428-Pre-Pack-4-Channel-Preamp-ISA-428_W0QQitemZ260015648093QQihZ016QQcategoryZ119018QQrdZ1QQssPageNameZWD1VQQcmdZViewItem)

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by Nil on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 21:15:30 GMT  
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"Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote:  
>Eh...OK, so it would be safe to assume that you did not like the Onyx DJ  
?  
>You have a single channel Focusrite RED series pre rite, how do you like  
that one?

Rob, I have a Red-8 & I can tell you that the Reds are nothing like the ISA's - the Reds are more aggressive, great for guitars, kick, snare, toms; you can push 'em into distortion. The Reds like dynamic mics - esp the Audix dynamics, IMO. A Red channel with an i5 going through it just kills for rock & metal guitar. a D6 through a Red on kick is super-solid/tight, with great tone unless the drum itself sucks, and same for a snare with an i5 - you're not gonna get that loose/soft snare tone with that combo or even a '57 going through it. Reds, OTOH, don't like a lot of condensers as much as the ISA's do, if it's a somewhat subdued or warm mic (like a stock M-147), then yeah; if it's something like a TLM-103, or a C-1, then nope; it's gonna be raspy. Even my E251C with its smooth/airy high end doesn't really sound all that great through the Red Series.

>I'm in need of at least 4 pres rite now and I already have a >sytek, which I love by the way.

What do you need them FOR...? That might be helpful in determining what kind(s) you should go with. Daking has a 4-channel box that's like \$1,800 - haven't tried it, though, but

I hear good things about his stuff. Do you need four identical pres or or just need four more channels total? Maybe you'd be better of going for 2 two-channel pres of different types for more coloring options.

Neil

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by [TC](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 22:02:02 GMT  
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You could also look at getting an API lunchbox and adding 500 series pres as needed, then you are only paying for one power supply, and boy is it portable.

I quite like mine with 2 512c's.

Cheers,

TC

Robert wrote:

> Anyone have/use one of these?  
> Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.  
>  
> Thanks  
> Rob  
>  
>

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by [Dimitrios](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 22:42:52 GMT  
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Dear Neil,  
I am waiting for my Isa 220 producer pack with AD .  
Have you ever tried them ?  
From what you are saying ISA sound close to Amek 9098 (same designer?).  
Regards,  
Dimitrios

"Neil" <IUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>  
> "Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote:  
>> Eh...OK, so it would be safe to assume that you did not like the Onyx DJ  
> ?

>>You have a single channel Focusrite RED series pre rite, how do you like  
> that one?

>

>Rob, I have a Red-8 & I can tell you that the Reds are nothing  
>like the ISA's - the Reds are more aggressive, great for  
>guitars, kick, snare, toms; you can push 'em into distortion.  
>The Reds like dynamic mics - esp the Audix dynamics, IMO. A Red  
>channel with an i5 going through it just kills for rock & metal  
>guitar. a D6 through a Red on kick is super-solid/tight, with  
>great tone unless the drum itself sucks, and same for a snare  
>with an i5 - you're not gonna get that loose/soft snare tone  
>with that combo or even a '57 going through it. Reds, OTOH, don't  
>like a lot of condensers as much as the ISA's do, if it's a  
>somewhat subdued or warm mic (like a stock M-147), then yeah;  
>if it's something like a TLM-103, or a C-1, then nope; it's gonna  
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>really sound all that great through the Red Series.

>

>>I'm in need of at least 4 pres rite now and I already have a >sytek, which  
>I love by the way.

>

>What do you need them FOR...? That might be helpful in  
>determining what kind(s) you should go with. Daking has a  
>4-channel box that's like \$1,800 - haven't tried it, though, but  
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>pres or or just need four more channels total? Maybe you'd be  
>better of going for 2 two-channel pres of different types for  
>more coloring options.

>

>Neil

>

>

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?

Posted by [Rob Arsenault](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 22:56:46 GMT

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Thanks Neil, I've got a high profile Bluegrass project coming up with Sammy Shelor from Lonesome River Band on banjo and I need a few more acc instrument and vocal pre channels.

Rob

>

> What do you need them FOR...? That might be helpful in  
> determining what kind(s) you should go with. Daking has a  
> 4-channel box that's like \$1,800 - haven't tried it, though, but

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> better of going for 2 two-channel pres of different types for  
> more coloring options.  
>  
> Neil  
>  
>

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by [Neil](#) on Tue, 06 Feb 2007 23:59:19 GMT  
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Dimi, I've never used the 220's... I think they're the same  
preamp section, though.

And, re: your "same designer" question... Rupert designed a whole  
shitload of stuff, none of which sounds anything like the other.  
Never used an AMEK of any kind, so I can't compare that sound to  
the ISA sound. but to me the ISA series does sound pretty close  
to the original ISA 110's, which I have used - not exactly like  
them, but damn close - and those preamps sucketh not.

Neil

"Dimitrios" <musurgio@otenet.gr> wrote:

>  
>Dear Neil,  
>I am waiting for my Isa 220 producer pack with AD .  
>Have you ever tried them ?  
>From what you are saying ISA sound close to Amek 9098 (same designer?).  
>Regards,  
>Dimitrios

>  
>"Neil" <IUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>>  
>>"Robert" <studiomanitou@gmail.com> wrote:  
>>>Eh...OK, so it would be safe to assume that you did not like the Onyx  
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>>?  
>>>You have a single channel Focusrite RED series pre rite, how do you like  
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>>Rob, I have a Red-8 & I can tell you that the Reds are nothing  
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>>guitars, kick, snare, toms; you can push 'em into distortion.  
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>>guitar. a D6 through a Red on kick is super-solid/tight, with  
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>>with that combo or even a '57 going through it. Reds, OTOH, don't  
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>>if it's something like a TLM-103, or a C-1, then nope; it's gonna  
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>>What do you need them FOR...? That might be helpful in  
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>>more coloring options.  
>>  
>>Neil  
>>  
>>  
>

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by [Neil](#) on Wed, 07 Feb 2007 00:02:02 GMT  
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Bluegrass, huh? Banjo, huh? Hmmm... couldn't tell ya how they  
(the ISA's) would work for that, specifically... they're very  
clean, though, so if it's purity you're looking for for that  
genre, they might do the trick.

Neil

"Rob Arsenault" <mani1147 AT hotmail.com> wrote:  
>Thanks Neil, I've got a high profile Bluegrass project coming up with Sammy  
>Shelor from Lonesome River Band on banjo and I need a few more acc  
>instrument and vocal pre channels.  
>  
>Rob  
>



>>  
>> What do you need them FOR...? That might be helpful in  
>> determining what kind(s) you should go with. Daking has a  
>> 4-channel box that's like \$1,800 - haven't tried it, though, but  
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>> more coloring options.  
>>  
>> Neil  
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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by [Deej \[4\]](#) on Wed, 07 Feb 2007 00:17:23 GMT  
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For Bluegrass I would recommend clean/uncolored preamps and mics. Grab as much truth as you can and then twist it as needed in the mix. I don't use my RED7 much for acoustic instruments other than drums. I prefer to use my Sytek, Forssell and Great river preamps for most acoustic instrument. Avalon pres are nice for acoustic instruments as well.

Deej

"Rob Arsenault" <mani1147 AT hotmail.com> wrote in message  
news:45c8fb74@linux...

> Thanks Neil, I've got a high profile Bluegrass project coming up with  
> Sammy  
> Shelor from Lonesome River Band on banjo and I need a few more acc  
> instrument and vocal pre channels.

>

> Rob

>

>>

>> What do you need them FOR...? That might be helpful in  
>> determining what kind(s) you should go with. Daking has a  
>> 4-channel box that's like \$1,800 - haven't tried it, though, but  
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>> pres or or just need four more channels total? Maybe you'd be  
>> better of going for 2 two-channel pres of different types for  
>> more coloring options.

>>  
>> Neil  
>>  
>>  
>  
>

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Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by [audioguy\\_editout\\_](#) on Wed, 07 Feb 2007 03:43:35 GMT  
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I have a 428 with the Dig card... love it. I can get great results with many sources, and the conversion on the Dig card is excellent. Big bang for the buck. Not colored by any means... just a nice clean pre.

David.

Robert wrote:

> Anyone have/use one of these?  
> Was also looking at the Mackie Onyx.  
>  
> Thanks  
> Rob  
>  
>

---

Subject: Re: Focusrite ISA 428, any opinions?  
Posted by [xpam\\_mark](#) on Fri, 09 Feb 2007 13:09:04 GMT  
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1699 @ SW

"Dave(EK Sound)" <[audioguy\\_editout\\_@shaw.ca](mailto:audioguy_editout_@shaw.ca)> wrote in message [news:45c94b4b\\$1@linux...](mailto:news:45c94b4b$1@linux...)

>I have a 428 with the Dig card... love it. I can get great results with  
>many sources, and the conversion on the Dig card is excellent. Big bang  
>for the buck. Not colored by any means... just a nice clean pre.

>  
> David.

>  
> Robert wrote:

>> Anyone have/use one of these?  
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>> Thanks  
>> Rob

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