
Subject: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Tue, 02 Jan 2007 10:27:57 GMT
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I saw on the planetz forum DJ mentioned there were some summing tests that Neil did posted here yet I can't find them.

Can anyone point me in the right direction?

Jesse

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Nil](#) on Tue, 02 Jan 2007 14:15:39 GMT
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"Jesse Skeens" <jskeens@gmail.com> wrote:

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There's just this one posted so far... I've got a couple others almost ready.

<http://www.saqqararecords.com/MiscAudio/DracoClip-ITBvsStemmedIntoPulsar.mp3>

Neil

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Tue, 02 Jan 2007 16:29:06 GMT
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"Neil" <IUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

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>"Jesse Skeens" <jskeens@gmail.com> wrote:
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>Neil

Thanks Neil.

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Tue, 02 Jan 2007 16:43:49 GMT
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"Neil" <IUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

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>Neil

Neil,

Can you give a little info on the process here. I deffinatly see and hear the Pulsar mix (second one) is about 1-1.5db louder rms wise and overall it seems a bit more open (but I didn't compare at equal voluke yet).

Anyways I'd like to recreate this and see what I come up with.

Jesse

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Neil](#) on Wed, 03 Jan 2007 03:07:15 GMT
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"Jesse Skeens" <jskeens@gmail.com> wrote:

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>Anyways I'd like to recreate this and see what I come up with.

Jesse... here's what I did - it's the same mix on both cuts, but I did have to do a couple things differently in order to stem it out into 4 stereo submixes to sum it in Pulsar. The Native (CubaseSX) ITB mix had a limiter on the 2-buss - it was the limiter from Izotope's Ozone - which is a very good quality transparent limiter, so not being able to insert a vst plugin across the Pulsar 2-buss, I used their mastering limiter in Optimaster, set to the same settings, which was basically at -2 or -3 db threshold... very light, just keeping any peaks from going over, basically & maybe smacking down some of the bigger hits a bit, in the case of both mixes.. Then I split the mix in Cubase into four stereo submixes going out via lightpipe... across each of these submixes I inserted a transparent peakstop limiter just to make sure I had no digital overs. On the drum submix there were only a handful of overs across the entire song, and across the lo-end submix there were even fewer, just 3 or 4 IIRC, the other two busses had no overs registered , but I left the limiters on those just to be safe - in all those cases, the limiters were set for "0" threshold, and -0.03 output level, so they were hardly affecting the sound, if even at all.

That's it, really. I split the mix as follows to go into Pulsar:

Submix #1: Drums & Drum Room 'verb

Submix #2: Bass, Lo-end Keys, and Rhy. Guitars (no verbs or

delays)

Submix #3: Hi-end keys, most all other guitars (no verbs or delays)

Submix #4: Vocals, any solo or fill instr. that weren't on #2 or #3 and all reverbs & delays except for the one for the drums.

Neil

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?

Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Wed, 03 Jan 2007 13:22:58 GMT

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

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Neil,

Thnaks for the info. I would like to hear a test on more fair ground though.
Removing the limiters and either letting the overs happen or lowering the mix so they aren't present.

I'm actually finding I get more transparent results just clipping SX than I do using limiters, even great ones. I recently had a mix that sounded nice and loud and punchy but was clipping SX's bus. So when it came time to actually bounce it I lowered the master and applied limiting instead.
Turns out the mix sounded much better without the limiting and just clipped.

Do you have any intention on doing a comparison with the limiters removed from the equation?

Thanks,

Jesse

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?

Posted by [Neil](#) on Wed, 03 Jan 2007 15:38:43 GMT

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"Jesse Skeens" <jskeens@gmail.com> wrote:

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>lowering the mix so they aren't present.

You can call it fair, you can call it unfair - having limiters that are barely kissing the peaks isn't going to affect the depth & detail to the degree you're hearing the diference in these two files. If I lowered the gain on the sumbixes then someone would say it's unfair because I didn't have as hot of a level set going to Pulsar. All I can do is the closest comparison possible, and this is it, IMO. If anything, having the limiters on the out-busses from Cubase into Pulsar would tend to CLOUD the mix if they weren't transparent, rather than clarifying it - how do you explain that? You can't. If I took the limiters off, and had some heat going into the lightpipes, then someone would say that THAT wasn't fair because I had clips going out into Pulsar & that made the Pulsar mix "brighter & more present", whereas the 32-bit architecture in the ITB Cubase mix handled those overs in a difference manner. I guess there's really no point in me doing any more of these -

everyone can just go buy their own Pulsar card now & see for themselves if they find it useful or not.

>I'm actually finding I get more transparent results just
>clipping SX than I do using limiters, even great ones.

I hate clipping in SX, personally - if you like it, then go for it. Poor management of gain structure in Native scenarios is part the problem with summing issues therein, IMO - I'm not saying you can't get a good mix out a pure Native ITB situation; in fact, I've argued that point ad nauseum herein & even some weeks ago posted some examples of the same mix summed ITB in Cubase; Stemmed out into five submix files, then reimported into a new project in Cubase; and also summed in Paris (no limiting across the submixes there, because I was going into Paris via analog, not digital), and while there were definite distinctions between the three, there was also no consensus that one mix stood out as being better than the other. If you're clipping stuff & liking the results, then who am I to criticize, but personally I think you're doing yourself a disservice by having 44,1000 mistakes per second in your songs if you're redlining the 2-bus, multiplied by however many tracks you've got going if you're redlining there, as well. If you like that kind of math, then go for it; personally, I don't.

>Do you have any intention on doing a comparison with the
>limiters removed from the equation?

Do your own - I'm not trying to gain converts here and I'm not trying to prove a favored position... I've just been posting some findings & my observations & clips of one thing or another so people who might be interested in this stuff could benefit from hearing the differences before they fork over the money. I could care fucking less if they agree with me or not, and now I'm frankly tired of one person saying I rigged an earlier test one way or another because I wasn't "pushing Paris like it should be pushed", and another accusing me of hiding things because I didn't tell people in advance which version was which (well, than that wouldn't have been a true a/b, would it?), and someone telling me that the reason a Cubase ITB mix clip I posted that sounded better than another band done in the same musical genre but in PTHD & mixed through an SSL, sounded better in Cubase because I didn't know how to use an SSL....What the mother-fucking fuck is that???? Now you're saying you want to hear this on "more fair ground", and asking: "do you have any intention of...?".

The answer is: "No, I have no more intentions of...". Build

your own damn summing rig & do your own damn tests...
I'm not the Berklee College of Mixdowns here, ferchrissakes!

Where's my coffee?

Neil

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [DJ](#) on Wed, 03 Jan 2007 16:38:49 GMT
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>I'm not the Berklee College of Mixdowns here, ferchrissakes!<

LOL!!!!.....sounds like someone woke up on the wrong side of the
Tyrannosaurus Rex.

.....c'mon over and I'll brew you a cup of my organic
Tthree Mile Island Thermonuclear.and we can try some summing experiments
using coconut shells and hemp twine.

;o)

"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote in message news:459bbff3\$1@linux...

>

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> Where's my coffee?
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> Neil

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Wed, 03 Jan 2007 17:49:50 GMT
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"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

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>"Jesse Skeens" <jskeens@gmail.com> wrote:

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>going out into Pulsar & that made the Pulsar mix "brighter &
>more present", whereas the 32-bit architecture in the ITB
>Cubase mix handled those overs in a difference manner.

I do think the limiters (and quite possible more to do with Optimaster) have affected the test. The RMS level in the SCOPE version was as I said about 1-1.5db higher. We all know louder sounds better generally with this sort of thing.

And using limiters doesn't make the test any more meaningful than just letting it clip. Whether a limiter squashes a peak or if you just let it clip you're still sending hot signals that have been converted to integer format down the lightpipe. In comparison it sounds like the SX mix didn't have any limiting until the final 2 buss, correct me if I'm wrong.

If anything maybe what you've shown here is that it sounds better to limit a mix over a course of 4 stereo busses instead of just the master fader.

That could explain why its more open, less stuff like drums triggering the dynamics of guitars, vocals etc..

Although not sure if you mentioned this but when you bounced the SX version did you have the peakstop limiters still turned on (the ones you used prior to sending out to Pulsar)?

Also when you used the Optimaster did you have it in multiband mode? I know from experience it can deffinatly liven up a mix.

Why not just make a mix that doesnt peak in the first place and use that.

Then you can forgoe all this limiting affecting the sound. If the test is meant to cover summing then the absense of peaks in the mix shouldn't make a difference.

Saturation/limiting and summing are two different issues...

>I guess

>there's really no point in me doing any more of these -

>everyone can just go buy their own Pulsar card now & see for

>themselves if they find it useful or not.

Neil,

Sorry if I came across as critizing your test. I understand you don't owe anybody info beyond what you have sought for your own needs in the first place. Just so you know I own a Pulsar sysyem, for about 4 years now so I can and will do my own tests. I was just curious if you had planned anymore, I'm not suggesting you should on my or anyone else's behaf.

>

>>I'm actually finding I get more transparent results just

>>clipping SX than I do using limiters, even great ones.

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>I hate clipping in SX, personally - if you like it, then go for

>it.

Clipping in software is clipping no matter where its done unless the particular software is designed to limit via some sort of complex algorithm. Paris, SX, Logic etc... all just flat top the peaks, nothing special or different.

Now the old way some software (like Paris's native mode)handled overs was to wrap around signals which did sound bad. Hence the bad name clipping

digital intially got.

>Poor management of gain structure in Native scenarios is
>part the problem with summing issues therein, IMO - I'm not
>saying you can't get a good mix out a pure Native ITB
>situation; in fact, I've argued that point ad nauseum herein &
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>if you're redlining the 2-bus, multiplied by however many tracks
>you've got going if you're redlining there, as well. If you
>like that kind of math, then go for it; personally, I don't.

Well it matters what you define a "mistake" then. Hard clipping can be much more transparent than a limiter which in most cases imposes an envelope upon the signal. My SX example showed that. And everyone who has ever "pushed" Paris into the red has used the same exact clipping as what I'm talking about.

All Paris did was clip transients, SX does the exact same thing. Now perhaps Paris has other things going for it, but when it comes to saturation they are doing the same thing.

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>SSL....What the mother-fucking fuck is that???? Now you're

>saying you want to hear this on "more fair ground", and
>asking: "do you have any intention of...?".

As I explained earlier these comments weren't meant to be taken like that.
It seems some of your tests were meant for more subjective comparisons.
But with this one I feel like to truly test the summing you'd have to take
care of some of the variables here.

But again if you think you've learnt something useful from these tests more
power to you. What bothers me is then the results of this get posted on
forums, (such as Planetz) etc.. as "summing" tests and then people end up
forming an opinion based of it and spread it around when its not really testing
summing in its pure form.

Jesse

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?

Posted by [TCB](#) on Wed, 03 Jan 2007 19:26:32 GMT

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Hey Neil,

While I disagreed strongly with your initial reaction/attitude to Pulsar
stuff, I agree completely here. People, Neil is trying to give out useful
information for free. If you think the tests could be improved, feel free
to approve them. It's like free software projects where someone complains
that a certain feature is really crucial but missing. The maintainer responds,
'Patches always welcome.'

TCB

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

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>"Jesse Skeens" <jskeens@gmail.com> wrote:

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Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Neil](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 04:30:03 GMT
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Louder doesn't sound wider & clearer, plus what if I had reduced power on the Pulsar mix so that the RMS levels were identical, then I would've been accused of manipulating THAT in some unfair manner... you know, I didn't realize there was going to be a fucking test or else I would've maybe studied more back in grade school.

You need to do three things:

- 1.) Go read my reply to your post on the Pulsar forum - if you're going to use my name in public & state that I said something, you'd better be fucking clear about what it is that I stated, and not leave out information or infer something as you did therein.
- 2.) Do your own comparison & arrive at your own conclusion - I'm sure you're the OOOONLY one who can do this "fairly" and "without a difference" between the two.
- 3.) Send me a check if I am to give you any more teutelage, or

if you want any more of your questions answered... my open rate is \$100 an hour.

As I've said, I don't have a dog in this race, and I'm not "Pimpin' for Pulsar", so WHY WOULD I SKEW THE TESTS????

And now to paraphrase that famous barbershop scene in 'Coming to America': "Fuck you, fuck you, fuck you, and fuck you... who's next!?!?"

Neil

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Nil](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 04:41:52 GMT
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"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:

>

>Hey Neil,

>

>While I disagreed strongly with your initial reaction/attitude to Pulsar
>stuff, I agree completely here. People, Neil is trying to give out useful
>information for free. If you think the tests could be improved, feel free
>to approve them. It's like free software projects where someone complains
>that a certain feature is really crucial but missing. The maintainer responds,
>'Patches always welcome.'

Thanks Thad, I appreciate it (fucking ingrates!).

What did you disagree strongly with me about?

- a.) That the Pulsar reps misrepresented their product, or just don't know it as well as they should?
- b.) That they will whine if you mention this to them?
- c.) That the platform doesn't sync to a not-so-uncommon samplerate & will temporarily render your system a little bit fucked-over if you try this.
- d.) That I think the Pulsar Plugins are very clean, but rather so-so & kinda "plain vanilla", for the most part?
- e.) That six SHARC chips render a remarkably low level of DSP power at samplerates over 48k, perhaps explaining their staunch defense on their forum of 44.1k as the samplerate to use, contrary to everyone else in the industry who makes multisamplerate-capable stuff not giving a big shit about which samplerate you choose to employ?
- f.) Something else that I perhaps missed here?

:D

Neil

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 11:37:42 GMT
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"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:

>

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>

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>information for free. If you think the tests could be improved, feel free
>to approve them. It's like free software projects where someone complains
>that a certain feature is really crucial but missing. The maintainer responds,
>'Patches always welcome.'

Thad,

I appreciate the info from Neil. But I don't see how a constructive criticism of how the test could be improved is a bad thing. I've spent a lot time doing tests on how Paris clips, was laughed at for my findings, even told I must be smoking crack to hear what I heard yet I kept posting info to try and show people what I'd found. And eventually some people at least opened their minds a bit to take it in and saw what I had discovered.

If Neil stands by his tests then I respect that and I'll just concentrate on doing my own.

Jesse

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 11:47:48 GMT
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"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>

>"Jesse Skeens" <jskeens@gmail.com> wrote:

>>

>>I do think the limiters (and quite possible more to do with
>>Optimaster) have affected the test. The RMS level in the
>>SCOPE version was as I said about 1-1.5db higher. We all know
>>louder sounds better generally with this sort of thing.

>
>Louder doesn't sound wider & clearer, plus what if I had
>reduced power on the Pulsar mix so that the RMS levels were
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>is \$100 an hour.
>
>As I've said, I don't have a dog in this race, and I'm
>not "Pimpin' for Pulsar", so WHY WOULD I SKEW THE TESTS????

Neil,

I never said you were trying to skew the tests one way or another. And yes I could have explained your use of limiters more on the PlanetZ forum. My point of writing that was that it wasn't a straight up comparison regardless of how lightly they were being used. And I really suspect Optimaster has something to do with this. But of course I could be wrong.

You seem to be taking these comments quite personally, its just a summing test man. If you're not inclined to take them into consideration fine, I understand but why all the hostility?

Jesse

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?
Posted by [Jesse Skeens](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 13:01:56 GMT
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"Neil" <OIUOIU@OIU.com> wrote:

>2.) Do your own comparison & arrive at your own conclusion -
>I'm sure you're the OOOONLY one who can do this "fairly"
>and "without a difference" between the two.

I just have and here it is reposted from PlanetZ:

"Ok I just did a test on my own. Took a track and divided it amongst 4 stereo busses. Drums in 1/2, Bass in 3/4, Vocals in 5/6, and synths in 7/8.

I lowered these 4 busses by an equal amount so they did not clip. I then sent them out to SCOPE and summed there and recorded the mix via STS5000.

I then bounced 4 pairs of audio files within Cubase from the same busses at the same level they were at for SCOPE. I imported these into a new project and summed them in Cubase.

I then took the two files and compared them in Cubase. I looped small sections over and over on 2 separate tracks. Didn't hear anything different. Even turned down the monitor so I couldn't see which was which, let it loop and tried to spot one take from the other, no luck.

I did try inverting the phase of one in relation to the other and they didn't cancel, there was high end info present. But due to capturing the mix using the STS the bounces weren't exactly aligned. And I didn't hear a change anyhow so this delta doesn't seem important anyways.

I have to say I would love SCOPE to provide better summing and clearer mixes just by running busses to it yet I don't see that happening here. I truly don't believe summing is an issue in mixing today, it's always down to other factors.

Jesse"

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?

Posted by [TCB](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 17:03:05 GMT

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Sort of none of the above. First, you are NOT working in a vanilla environment. Of the main sample rates 44.1/48/88.2/96 88.2 is BY FAR the least common, so I'm not all that surprised that of the four it caused the most problems. In the end it was possible to make it work, and yes the CW folks should have an internal database of previous trouble tickets that they could search to give you a fix. However, when you were not happy you sent the card back and gave you your money back. No blood, no foul. So I'd say their performance was B-/C+, I've had much, much worse from pro audio companies. Like one who

tombstoned their gear, screwed their users, and left me with a near worthless DSP system named after a famous city in Europe.

But the real problem I had was the 'Why doesn't this just fucking work' thing. Like it or not, doing things like DSP summing for high track count audio projects at 88.2 means you're an early adopter. Early adopters get their noses bloodied, it's part of the deal, you get cooler toys with better performance than the rest of the world but you get to find some answers for other people. I've been doing that in the audio world for 10+ years now, posting on forums and mailing lists with what I've learned, and by now I've had my nose bloodied so many times I've quit expecting anything else. When I posted a few suggestions and encouragement to you I got a screed about how it all should 'just fucking work.' Which was actually a useful, watershed moment for me, because I realized that there's no real reason I should fucking help fucking anyone anymore. 10 years seems like a very reasonable contribution to the computer audio community, I'm sure there are lots of people more capable than me these days to do the job, and I work a demanding enough day job that I should really concentrate whatever music time I have on my own music, not on fixing other peoples' computer problems.

To me, someone completely self taught in digital everything, that has taken time and effort and frustration and mistakes to get this knowledge, it's like a novice guitarist buying a strat and complaining he doesn't sound like Hendrix. 'I went to the store, and I bought a strat. It's a fucking '65 reissue, and the guy in the store said it's exactly the same model Hendrix used, and it doesn't fucking work. I don't sound anything more like Hendrix. So, do I need to get a Marshall too or does this strat just suck?' Exaggeration, yes, but at the core it's the same thing.

And I want to stress, I'm really not pissed off, it's nothing personal, and it was a very useful thing to think about. I think it's time for me to pitch in occasionally with silly jokes and advice about highly specific things and leave the rest to other people, while concentrating my real effort on things like the Catalyst web framework and my own music.

TC

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

>

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>:D
>
>Neil

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?

Posted by [DJ](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 17:36:50 GMT

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> think it's time for me to pitch
in occasionally with silly jokes and advice about highly specific things<

hmmmm.....OK.....I need a vacation anyway....

;o)

"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote in message news:459d2539\$1@linux...

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>>:D
>>
>>Neil
>

Subject: Re: Neil's Scope summing examples posted?

Posted by [Nil](#) on Thu, 04 Jan 2007 23:40:18 GMT

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"TCB" <nobody@ishere.com> wrote:

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>In the end it was possible to make it work, and yes the CW folks should have

>an internal database of previous trouble tickets that they could search to

>give you a fix. However, when you were not happy you sent the card back and

>gave you your money back. No blood, no foul.

But WHINING about giving me a refund is a no-no, especially when they misrepresented what the product was capable of doing... in that case there should've been no whining, it should've been more like: "You know what, Neil, I fucked up, let me offer to cover the shipping for you to send it back, as well".

>But the real problem I had was the 'Why doesn't this just fucking work' thing.

Only because I WAS TOLD it would 'fucking work' - I have no problem if I elect to take my chances & embark on attempting to make a DAW work underwater or teach a midget to play goalie for the Maple Leafs or some other kind of unnatural act. I'm not naive, but I do tend to trust people who are representing a product when they say will do a certain thing. I guess I figure that they should know all about the product they're selling... in most industries if you don't, yer fuckt. I guess if we as pro audio consumers continue to accept mediocre salespeople who don't know their product and I'm the only one that bitches about it, then I guess we all get what we deserve - an ongoing churn of people who are less than knowledgeable than they should be - or flat out & out misrepresent stuff without penalty.

>it's

>like a novice guitarist buying a strat and complaining he doesn't sound like

>Hendrix. 'I went to the store, and I bought a strat. It's a fucking '65 reissue,

>and the guy in the store said it's exactly the same model Hendrix used, and

>it doesn't fucking work. I don't sound anything more like Hendrix. So, do

>I need to get a Marshall too or does this strat just suck?' Exaggeration,

>yes, but at the core it's the same thing.

Not a good analogy to my situation, because in your example the dialogue between the purchaser & the sales clerk at the store did not go something like:

PURCH: "Will this Strat make me sound just like Jimi Hendrix, and if so, do I need anything else like a Marshall, for example, in order to accomplish this?"

tell the purchaser: "this

CLERK: "Yes, it will, in fact, make you sound just like Hendrix, and no you don't need a Marshall, or for that matter, an amp of any kind, nor anything else from my store in order for you to do so."

Neil
