Subject: Help Needed for Submixes and New MEC Expansion Module
Posted by raymack on Sun, 10 Jan 2016 05:24:00 GMT

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I have two questions that I could use some guidance in getting resolved. I've been sitting on a MEC expansion module for a while and never used it because I was concerned about generating a problem with no Emu support. Now that I know about this site, I would like to connect it. Anyone have any tips on what I should and shouldn't do to get it plugged in and operating?

Also, most of my projects thus far did not required very many tracks. Now I'm getting ready to start some major projects that will require more tracks. Following the directions along with trial and error, I have not been able to get the submixes to work. So, I need more than 16 tracks but haven't been able to get additional submixes to play. Again, any tips out there on getting this resolved? Probably an easy one but I'm stuck!

Subject: Re: Help Needed for Submixes and New MEC Expansion Module
Posted by kerryg on Sun, 10 Jan 2016 20:45:03 GMT

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Heya Ray - first, a few questions about your setup so we can give a bit more focused advice. A simple setup should "just work" so if it doesn't the odds are good that it's just a setting needing tweaking.

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What computer/OS? How much RAM?

How many EDS cards? How many MECs? It sounds like one of each, directly attached to each other but want to make sure.

What version of PARIS? Which drivers, the originals, Chris Thoman's 2003-ish reboot. or Mike's newest?

How are you getting audio *out* of the MEC into your monitoring setup? From the Master outs (1+2) or the Monitor outs (3+4)?

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What's the symptom of the submix not working? Hit "G" then hit "play" - are you seeing audio in the meters, but not hearing it? Or not seeing the expected audio in the meters for that submix?

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A note on PARIS' idiosyncratic submixes - when you create a submix you then have to assign it (you do both of these actions in the "Master Mixer" that pops up when you hit "G") to a submix type:

- "card" (that submix is run "live" through an EDS card, so everything should be audible)
- "native", meaning it's running on the CPU like most other DAWs nowadays - no "PARIS mojo" but should just work
- "virtual" (meaning you will only hear the current contents after you hit "update" - it's really just a stereo render of whatever's in that submix). This could cause you to not hear audio (or - if you've updated the submix previously - to not hear any changes you make until you update it again)

All three types of submixes should play back through the audio outs of your MEC. Basically you use "card" sub mixes until you run out of tracks, and after that choose one of the other two types.

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Workflow - you might consider for example putting groups of tracks that you'll work on all at once (submixed vocals; drums) on their own sub mixes, rendering them and leaving them alone while you work on other stuff, using the Master Mixer to adjust their level against the main track, and switching that submix over to "card" when you want to work on it in detail.

- if you need to have all the tracks "live" at once (say your workflow needs you to be tweaking individual levels of lots of tracks all the time) then the "native (CPU)" sub mixes might work best. Watch your levels on this type of submix - this is NOT the same as a "card" submix, which is amazingly forgiving of "going into the red". You do not want to see any red lights on the channel strips, this will give you digital clipping instead of PARIS' nice "analog squish". But handy in a pinch, particularly for "clean" tracks.

- if neither of these works and you absolutely need more "card" submixes, EDS cards are dirt cheap, and they're all you need (you wouldn't for example need a second MEC, the audio from all submixes is internally mixed and appears at the first MEC's outputs anyway). Each one - to a total of 8 (or until you max out the PCI slots on your motherboard, at which point you have to buy an expansion chassis) gives 16 more live tracks to a total of 128.

Subject: Re: Help Needed for Submixes and New MEC Expansion Module
Posted by raymack on Fri, 15 Jan 2016 02:54:18 GMT
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Hello Again KG!

I have a custom computer built back in 2003. I don't recall the RAM but the OS is Windows XP Pro. I have all the packages for it but I just moved so it's not easy to find things right now. I have 1 EDS card and 1 MEC and they are directly connected. Basic setup. I actually just learned recently from this site that more than one MEC or EDS card is possible.

I have the 3.0 version of PARIS. The drivers are the Chris Thoman drivers. My output is coming through the Monitor outs 3 and 4.

What's the symptom of the submix not working? Hit "G" then hit "play" - are you seeing audio in the meters, but not hearing it? Or not seeing the expected audio in the meters for that submix?

It has been a while since I tried it (since it wasn't working for a while) so I don't recall the details exactly but I was following the manual and couldn't get submix audio. I'll try assigning it as you suggested and see what happens.

I guess I'll try the "card" submix but I have not heard of these three options. I guess I'm a bit lost though. Doesn't PARIS come with 128 tracks right out of the box - meaning with one MEC, one C16 and 1 EDS?

Subject: Re: Help Needed for Submixes and New MEC Expansion Module
Posted by kerryg on Sun, 17 Jan 2016 22:05:14 GMT
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Great - my strongest recommendation right now, and IMHO your best PARIS investment bar none at the moment, is to spend $50 and download Mike Audet's much newer drivers which superseded Chris' years ago; they even have a simplified installer which makes getting up and running a breeze. Chris' drivers were a brilliant step forward for the platform in the day but we're a decade past that in refinements and stability now.

They are much more modern with significant bug fixes and are in active development (Mike is probably refining them right now as we speak, he's always tweaking the drivers in response to user feedback). But most importantly you'll get direct and active tech support - that thing we couldn't have dreamed of for ages after PARIS' discontinuation.

Not that guys like Mike won't help you on the old drivers anyway! The community always wants to get folks up and running, no matter their system or drivers - but the new ones require far less intervention to "just work" (for example, the old system of having to do complex things to lock the driver to a core is long gone, as are a number of challenging bugs).