

AUDIBILITIES

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Professional Audio Services for Any Purpose You Can Think Of

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610-647-4341

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Why Digitize?

In recent years, a growing number of aware clients have discovered the wisdom of having their priceless original acetates, vinyl discs and audiotapes transferred to CD for permanent safekeeping. Digitizing is necessary because no one has invented a machine that would allow us to drop in original recordings at one end and have CDs pop out the other – sort of like a Xerox machine. Also, for technical reasons, transferring recordings directly to CD isn't practical either. Instead, there's a process involved that requires the highly skilled use of a digital workstation. Here are the reasons why.

➤ Program Recording Level

There is a rather strict limit to the absolute intensity of the recording level acceptable by a compact disc. Beyond that limit, distortion becomes both immediate and severe. Careful use of the digital workstation allows determining the overall level of original recordings as well as the exact locations of occasional peaks. Once digitized, the level can then be set precisely for distortion-free transfer to CD.

➤ Program Length

Professional CDs hold a maximum of 80 minutes of audio. Longer programs may require additional discs. Use of the digital workstation in dubbing to CD allows determining the exact running time of the program, as well as where a longer program might be appropriately divided for transfer to two or more discs.

➤ Program Condition

The greatest benefit of the digital process is the capacity to repair, restore or enhance poor-sounding recordings. Background sounds can be reduced, voices brought further forward, unwanted music or dialogue deleted, missing sections restored, annoying noises corrected, speed and pitch adjusted and monaural recordings enhanced for a pleasant stereo effect. All of these benefits are available to you only through the creative use of digital audio.

Summary

Skilled, creative use of digital audio to *determine* and then *control* the volume, length and condition of your original recordings provides you with maximum sound quality in transfer to compact disc. The secret, of course, is not the *system* but the *operator*.

IN THE STUDIO

Words

If you ever have to present and explain your business or profession on audio CD, consider the interview format. Instead of bragging about yourself, you put the listener in the position of a third party listening in to a *conversation* between two others. The listener is then far more open and receptive to new information. Here are some examples of how

recent clients have used this concept to profitable advantage.

Mellow Meditation

A treat for the ear were two ladies with smooth, mellow voices who used the interview format to create two separate but related programs.

In one, they presented the business aspects of a busy practice dedicated to providing instruction in meditation. The interviewer's obvious knowledge of the

subject lent credibility to her questions; the responses were comprehensive and in language useful to the lay person.

The second CD included instruction in meditation technique plus actual exercises. Both discs are extremely pleasant to hear.

Getting It Said

Attorney David M. Frees, III, has a way with words. When he speaks, others listen. It's a skill he's developed as a lifelong student of verbal communication. His new CD set explains how to develop the same skills by using a simple step-by-step process that will work for anyone.

The program is remarkably easy to listen to due to the way in which it was produced. Rather than just reading a prepared script, Dave and I simply had a conversation in the studio. I had a list of questions to ask; he had a few bullet points scribbled on a sheet of paper and did the rest spontaneously. As a result, the level of energy and excitement is way above the norm!

Mastering the skills presented in this series will enable you to make your point more clearly more of the time, and persuade more people to agree with your point of view more often. This is critically important if you work in sales! You may order your copies online at: www.successtechnologies.com.

Music

Happy Birthday!

For an unusual way to celebrate their daughter's 16th birthday, her parents booked a Karaoke session here for the daughter and four of her friends. Between giggles, they managed to record two popular tunes quite well.

New Music

A college-bound high school senior enhanced her multiple college applications with music. Arriving at the studio with pre-recorded music tracks, she was able to record three Broadway

Continued on Page 2

show tunes in about an hour. The result was quite pleasant to hear.

Change of Pace

Taking a break from his formal music studies, a college student has been coming in to record several original songs. For his first time in a studio setting, he's doing quite well.

Like a one-man band, he first plays and records an acoustic guitar part to use as a melodic and rhythmic foundation. Adding an electric guitar part fills in the gaps and provides instrumental harmony. Then the vocals are added, first the melody, then multiple harmonies on separate tracks. The ProTools® digital recording system expandable to 24 tracks gives him more than enough room to improvise and experiment. When final mixing is finished, the tunes may be used for a full-length CD.

The sessions included a free copy of my 18-page instructional article, *How to Make a Living in the Performing Arts Without Ever Becoming Famous*. If you're considering a career in the performing arts, this article will help you. Call 610-647-4341 for your copy.

Words and Pictures

♥ It was a pleasure to provide the narration for an instructional video on the American Hawk Bulk Waste Crane. With superb images by Niva Productions, the program was designed to make system operation easy, simple and safe for the operators of equipment that can be dangerous if used improperly. With the company president on hand to clarify terminology, it was an enjoyable opportunity to lend life to a valuable instructional program that might otherwise have seemed somewhat dry. Just because it's technical doesn't mean it has to be dull!

♥ Narration has also been completed for Johnson & Johnson's online educational program on the care and handling of stored and transported pharmaceutical products. I found the program to be extremely detailed, with step-by-step instructions anyone could follow. With helpful direction from the script writer, it was an enjoyable read.

♥ Working on a wide variety of AV projects through the past year, long-term storage of audio files proved extremely convenient. A training program originally recorded last February needed to be revised in May. The original files were available on several backup drives. When a single line of the same program needed to be revised in October, those files were available as well. With multiple hard drives, it's possible to store active sessions for as long as a year so that updates and revisions can be done quickly and economically.

FROM THE ATTIC

Words and Music

The War Years

During WWII, many materials became scarce. Among them was the material for producing sound recordings. This provided a challenge for a talented guy named Joe.

A fine professional singer and entertainer in civilian life, the war found him serving in the armed forces. The standard polyvinyl-chloride acetate discs being in short supply, Joe recorded on specialty discs made of plastic coated paper. The sound quality was surprisingly good, with very little of the typical scratchiness of the discs of the day.

Some recordings were conversational – what were called "Living Letters." Others were musical performances of popular tunes of the day. Recorded more than sixty years ago, these words and tunes are now fully restored and preserved on CD so that the singer's children – and grandchildren – can hear what he sounded like.

An original photo was scanned at high resolution and used to create a custom cover for the completed CD.

Words and Pictures

Ancient Art

The video of a museum tour had been produced ten years ago, and featured ancient works of art from the Far East. A recent review of the tape by the presenter discovered a minor technical error in the information presented. What could be done?

First, I had the client step into the studio to record the correct information. Next, using an exact word-for-word script, it was possible to create a precisely timed audio insert to replace the original. Then the original video and newly recorded narrative were hand-delivered to D2A2D Services in Yardley, PA.

Using a high-quality 4-head VCR for playback and a powerful Macintosh to record, we created an exact digital clone of the entire original video. Done in real time, this took about 90 minutes.

After separating the sound from the images, the new narrative was precisely aligned with the original and inserted. Because the revised section was several seconds shorter than the original, the video was edited to match. Another 90 minutes of computer rendering produced an updated version of the entire tour on DVD, with no loss of picture quality.

The public's perception is that anything done with a computer is easy, fast, simple, quick and cheap like the special effects on CSI. It ain't so! In this case, replacing slightly more than two minutes of audio took more than four hours of highly skilled labor.

Words

Family History

The client's daughter had used a tiny mini-cassette recorder to interview her grandparents. The conversations were very interesting. Having been working adults during the years of the first Great Depression, their comments described what life was like when jobs were scarce and many products either unavailable or in short supply. To provide for their families, they relied heavily on initiative, ingenuity and hard work. The CDs were completed with custom covers made from old photographs.

Writing

A Day at the Beach

It was a pleasure to begin editing an original story for kids about a day at the seashore. The original was actually scribbled into a small notebook during a father-and-son day on the New Jersey coast.