



SOUNDCRAFT'S Vi5000 AND Vi7000 HAVE LANDED

PROVIDING A WIDER RANGE OF OPTIONS TO ITS INDUSTRY-LEADING Vi SERIES OF DIGITAL MIXING CONSOLES, HARMAN'S SOUNDCRAFT INTRODUCED THE Vi5000 AND Vi7000 MODELS AT PROLIGHT+SOUND 2015. THE NEW ADDITIONS OFFER OPTIONAL 96KHZ PROCESSING, UPGRADED CHANNEL COUNTS AND RELIABLE HARDWARE TO THE END USER. WITH THE NEW PRODUCTS SET TO REPLACE THE COMPANY'S POPULAR Vi4 AND Vi6 CONSOLES, TPI'S KELLY MURRAY ASKS Vi PRODUCT MANAGER, ANDY BROWN, HOW THIS EXCITING NEW DEVELOPMENT CAME INTO FRUITION.

Soundcraft's new Vi5000 and Vi7000 products are set to replace the company's flagship Vi4 and Vi6 consoles. With such well-known products already firm favourites with many engineers, the design process for this next generation of product must have been critical to get right. How long were these products in development, and what do you feel are the key features that will reassure Soundcraft users that this is the next logical step?

Development has been taken place over the last few years, and although the 5000 and 7000 are replacing the 4 and 6, it's really an ongoing development of the original consoles, based almost entirely on all of the feedback we've

gathered over their lifetime. Although we've been developing the Vi4 and 6 continuously over the years, there comes a point when they will outgrow the capabilities of their original hardware such as DSP power and processor speeds.

What we've done with the 5000 and 7000 is upgrade all of the hardware to latest technology and made use of un-tapped DSP power in the Studer-designed engine and I/O system, in order to increase the input channel capacity up to 128, run the console at 96kHz and add some classic BSS DPR901ii dynamic EQ processing which is a fantastic problem-solving tool. There are also new operational features including the ability to monitor the battery and RF information

on Shure ULX-D and QLX-D radio microphones, more recording feeds out of the console and improved iPad remote control. There are lots of other features yet to be revealed too, which will be announced over the coming year. It's a very exciting time for Soundcraft.

For those potentially switching to Soundcraft for the first time, what are the primary selling points of this series that are able to make touring life a little smoother?

For those who have not used a Vi console before, the most noticeable thing would be the Vistonics knobs-on glass user interface, which gives a comfortable and enjoyable way to operate a mix, and the more pressurised the

Opposite: The Harman Soundcraft Vi7000 digital console; The consoles were shown at the Palais Frankfurt during the Prolight+Sound tradeshow; Vi Series Product Manager, Andy Brown; The Vi5000.



job, the more important this benefit becomes. However, in the new 5000 and 7000 we have the wonderful BSS DPR901ii Dynamic EQ, new encoder assign functions, user key shortcuts and updated screen graphics, as well as slicker layer changes thanks to a faster, cooler running surface control processor.

The products were unveiled at this year's Prolight+Sound in Germany. How was the response to the products on the show floor?

It's always great to be there to see the reaction of a launch event when something we've spent so long working on is finally unveiled, and PL+S is a great place to do that as there are so many international visitors as well as all of the major UK rental companies in attendance. The reaction was fantastic, I think there was a lot of positive surprise, as we'd kept the development fairly quiet whereas some launches by competitors had already been rumoured.

You've collaborated with Universal Audio on the console's MADI interface. How did this come about?

Harman have had a relationship with Universal Audio for some years, and we were already licensing our Lexicon reverbs and Studer tape saturation effects to them. UA are known for studio-based plug-in products and we both got together one day and decided it was an obvious idea to collaborate in order to bring UA plug-ins to the live sound market with some purpose-designed, rugged hardware. The Realtime Rack is the result of our working together and offers a great alternative to the other popular plug-in products that are around.

Soundcraft has stated that its predecessors were a highly requested console on touring and live event riders over the last eight years. Clearly a brand that people believe in, where do you hope the new products will place the company in the live console market now?

We've never been an arrogant company, what we want is to make products that engineers enjoy using and which are known for great sound. I think we are known as a 'listening' company for that reason. Hopefully by doing that our products will end up on riders and sell

good numbers. Even then, I'm more interested in the fact that if they continue to sell well, they will be easier to find in any location for those working on the road, which at the end of the day will further benefit the touring engineer.

Can you reveal if any rental companies have invested in the product since the show?

The first rental company in the world to purchase a Vi7000 was one of the largest in Poland, °Gigant Sound-Letu with being sold into the install market. In the UK, touring experts Adlib Audio have also announced their intention to buy the new console.

So where can we expect to hear the new desks during the upcoming festival season?

We don't use engineer endorsements as such, but we do have a community of loyal Soundcraft users who have been helping us develop these products in recent years, and I'm sure we'll see both the Vi5000 and Vi7000 at some high-profile events this summer. Watch this space!

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