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Z-Systems unveils new OptiPatch™ Lightpipe™ Router

System stores and recalls up to 99 digital input/output routing patterns.



Gainesville, FL: Z-Systems Audio Engineering has announced the remarkable OptiPatch™ Matrix Audio Router that handles multiple sets of ADAT™ Lightpipe™-format digital inputs and outputs. Although Lightpipe connections are an easy way to transfer eight channels of digital audio at a time between mixers, recorders and signals processors, patching can sometimes be a problem. OptiPatch represents an ingenious solution to Lightpipe-format patching, eliminating wear and tear on optical I/Os caused by repeated plugging and unplugging of connectors. Users can simply connect inputs to digital audio sources, and outputs to digital audio destinations, press one front-panel button and the patch is made. Up to 99 I/O routing patterns can be stored and recalled by the unit. Suggested end-user price of OptiPatch is \$549.00.

“ADAT Lightpipe format is a convenient way to move digital audio signals in eight-channel chunks – hence its proliferation throughout every segment of the recording market,” says Z-Systems president Glenn Zelniker.

“Virtually every class of product is now outfitted with Lightpipe I/O: consoles, processors, workstations, instruments, recorders, and so on. But users are now faced with the same types of problems that necessitate the use of patch bays and distribution amplifiers for analog signals: sources often need to be fed to multiple destinations; many destination machines have fewer inputs than sources feeding them; and, most significantly, you need to be able to reconfigure ‘Who speaks to Who’ dynamically and quickly. Which is why we designed OptiPatch.”

Reconfiguring digital signal flow on the fly ...

Rather than constantly unplugging and re-plugging Lightpipe connections between a digital mixer, several multitrack recorders, a workstation and some outboard converters – to reconfigure the signal flow on the fly – all

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these devices can be connected permanently to OptiPatch and the signal flow changed at the touch of a button.

The unit's rear panel features a total of eight Lightpipe inputs and eight Lightpipe outputs, for a total I/O capacity of 64 digital audio sources and 64 destination channels.

Z-Systems has long been the market leader for digital audio interface products. The company is known throughout the world for its Digital Detangler™ series of digital audio matrix switchers, units that are purpose-built for mission-critical digital audio routing. “OptiPatch is a matrix switcher for Lightpipe signals that lives up to our fanatical standards for signal integrity and reliability,” Zelniker continues. “Despite stories to the contrary, not all digital signal routers are created equal; it's not as simple as putting some chips and connectors into a box. There are important considerations concerning circuit-board layout, grounding and signal termination, as well as choosing the right logic families to do the job properly. Otherwise, the router can introduce unpleasant artifacts such as jitter and crosstalk. Our routers have stood the test of time in the most difficult environments with the most demanding users.”

OptiPatch is Z-Systems' first foray into developing and innovating mid-priced tools for the project studio. “Advances in materials and manufacturing have allowed us to build a digital audio router that lives up to our highest professional standards,” Zelniker concludes, “without compromise in features, construction, or performance, at an affordable price.”

Note to Editors: High-resolution images of the OptiPatch ADAT-format Matrix Audio Router in TIFF/JPEG formats are available upon request

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Founded in 1993, Z-Systems specializes in the development of leading-edge digital audio interface and signal processing products for the recording, mastering, broadcast and post-production markets. www.z-sys.com