

Chord Electronics Alto



Chord Electronics, the British amplification and digital audio specialist (est. 1989), has launched the Alto, a new professional headphone and nearfield monitor amplifier which distils the company's 35-year UK amplifier manufacturing expertise into an unrivalled monitoring tool for the industry. Unveiled for the first time at The NAMM Show 2024, the ground-up-design Alto (£2,580) is a highly transparent headphone amplifier for up to four pairs of headphones, plus a nearfield monitoring amplifier offering extraordinary resolution. Handmade in Great Britain, the Alto ushers in the Chord Electronics' renowned proprietary ULTIMA amplifier topology, which uniquely features advanced dual-feed-forward error-correction technology, which monitors then immediately corrects signals before the output stage, for astonishing accuracy and transparency.

With amplifier know-how finessed over three decades, the Alto is the perfect tool for monitoring in today's high-resolution environment. It offers 50 watts per channel for nearfield monitoring, plus enough drive for its four headphone outputs simultaneously, via two front-panel 3.5 mm and two 6.35 mm outputs. Designed to fit into 19-inch racking, the 1U-tall Alto benefits from both balanced and unbalanced inputs, plus a pair of balanced XLR outputs for bypass/external monitor control.

Further features include Chord Electronics' legendary proprietary ultra-high-frequency power supplies and the company's unmistakable industrial aesthetic. As with all of Chord Electronics Professional products, the British-made casework is precision-machined from aircraft-grade aluminium, with high-quality anodising undertaken locally. The Alto follows a line of recently introduced full-width ULTIMA-technology Professional amplifiers, including the 1,000-watt ULTIMA PRO Mono and 350-, 500- and 750-watt ULTIMA PRO Stereo power amplifiers.

Chord Electronics' founder, owner and chief designer, John Franks, said: "The new Alto offers levels of performance not yet seen in any headphone/nearfield-monitor amplifier. It features our advanced ULTIMA circuit topology to give this new amplifier the high-energy power levels and fast transient power that Chord

Electronics' products are known for."

The ULTIMA topology is a state-of-the-art amplifier design featuring John Franks' latest circuit creation. ULTIMA is the ultimate expression of the finest high-performance, ultrafast, high-power amplifier technology available today. ULTIMA draws on the company's three decades of research, design and engineering in Great Britain. ULTIMA's technology is based on a technical paper by Dr Malcolm J Hawksford (emeritus professor at Essex University) which was taken up and refined by Bob Cordell of Bell Labs. Chord Electronics' owner and Chief Designer, John Franks, then took the theory and developed it to a much higher level; a progression of Cordell's advanced dual-feed-forward error-correction topology incorporating Franks' own advanced concepts in ultra-high frequency power supplies, which have been a cornerstone of the company's proprietary technology amplifiers since its inception in 1989.

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