Focusrite RedNet at the heart of Marshall Studio



Focusrite is delighted to announce the latest in our series of case studies. This time we look at the state-of-the-art Marshall Studio, part of Marshall Amplification. At the heart of this incredible space is Focusrite's RedNet Audioover-IP system, which Marshall employ to make their equipment work flawlessly over a complex build.

Marshall Amplification is synonymous with guitar amplifiers since 1962, and its offerings are still as relevant today as they were back then – and just as popular. When it comes to audio it's fair to say that Marshall knows a thing or two and Marshall's state-of-the-art recording and mixing studio is a testament to their expertise. However, creating the perfect studio wasn't straightforward, even for experts like Marshall.

"I don't think anyone at Marshall, including myself, had any idea of… just how much is involved in building a world-class recording studio", said Adam Beer, Studio Manager at Marshall. What complicated the build over and above the normal difficulties was the installation of a vintage Neve 8048 console. Marshall's Neve is a classic 70's desk that provides warmth, clarity, and that sought-after Neve sound. It was originally in the Pathé Marconi Studio D in Paris.

"When we got the Neve we split the console in two, the patch bay at the end became the centre. This enables you to have Pro Tools, your mouse and your

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keyboard looking straight at the console”, Adam continues.

“Arranging it like this meant we were able to then add that ginormous patch bay next to our lovely RedNet system on the side. It's two consoles that mix together, which means that it sounds like nothing you've heard before. Drums and guitars absolutely sing through it. It's a real marvel. And the fact that it's been completely rebuilt by an expert means that every single part of it works.” “Before the RedNet R1, I would have a talkback mic in my makeshift control room to make sure I could talk to the talent and let them know that we’re rolling and stuff like that. With the R1, that’s got four different talkback routings. So, when we do a shoot now, I’ve got a talkback to the band with the individual headphone boxes, I’ve got one routed for the label, I’ve got a talkback to the video crew and I’m using the R1 as my main headphone amplifier - and it’s a really powerful, good-sounding headphone amp.”

“Not only have we got the usual things: LA2As, 1176s, but we've got some really special BBC Neve compressors with passive 320 millisecond delays in them. We use them all the time and it makes everything sound massive. We've got a couple of PYE compressors that Blake made himself from broadcast PYEs, which are really amazing. We've got all this wonderful gear, but we use it with the RedNet into Pro Tools Ultimate, and that really gives us the flexibility to use the vintage gear in a really tasteful way.”

As well as an impressive list of equipment, Marshall Studio offers a fantastic range of facilities. “The building itself is not just your usual recording studio. It’s got a huge live room, a huge live space for 250 people” says Adam. “There’s a fully licensed bar and a wonderful new room upstairs, which is used as an artists' development space and a mix room.”

Making everything work flawlessly over such a comprehensive studio layout is key to the success of the Marshall Studio. Four Focusrite RedNet A16R, six Focusrite RedNet AM2 and two Focusrite RedNet HD32Rs are used to power the system.

“I had no prior experience of RedNet before I started here, and it is definitely a story of conversion. I thought, ‘Well, I'll give it a go, I mean, I've heard good things about this RedNet system,’ and honestly, I've been blown away” says Adam.

“For us, the most important thing is the conversion. The greatest compliment I can give to the Focusrite conversion is, I don't ever worry about it or notice it. Everything we do here has the lovely, warm Neve punch. The microphones, everything sounds great, because the conversion is great. It's really been instrumental in us maintaining the wonderful Neve sound that we want to have here, and the added bonus of course, is the Dante. Having the Dante capability has meant that we are able to have some Martin Audio speakers in the roof of the live room for playback.”

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