Focusrite RedNet Components used at Loyola University New Orleans



Lovell “U-P” Cooper

The Department of Music Industry Studies at Loyola University New Orleans lets students explore the business of music in one of the world's great cultural capitals. With state-of-the-art facilities, an industry-recognized and GRAMMY-winning faculty, and a comprehensive curriculum, students gain practical, hands-on experience with the latest industry technology and practices. The program’s alumni roster speaks for itself, including rapper G-Eazy, GRAMMY winner Woods Drinkwater and CAA Marketing Executive Lucy Kozak, as well as current employees of Google, Apple, Warner Music Group, Sony Music, Def Jam Recordings, Universal Music and HBO.

The five-studio production facility that has grown up around the program also has a tale to tell: it’s completely connected by a Dante network infrastructure, accessed via an arsenal of Focusrite RedNet and Red interfaces that let students and instructors access any signal, anywhere on the network, at any time. No matter what platforms they’re working on, from the Solid State Logic AWS 900+ analog console in Studio A, to the Solid State Logic controllers (two UF8’s and one UC1) in Studio B, the two Slate Raven MTi 2 digital touchscreen boards in Studio C, or the in-the-box production and mixing environments of Studios D and E, RedNet links them all seamlessly and reliably.

That RedNet network has been built up over the course of the last five years, says Lovell “U-P” Cooper, Professor of the Practice of Hip Hop & R&B, and the facility’s Recording Studios Manager, starting with recommendations from Sweetwater sales

Phoca PDF

consultants. “We outfitted the first studio, Studio A, with a pair of RedNet A16R 16-channel analogue I/O interfaces with a RedNet HD32R 32-channel HD Dante network bridge, and it worked so well in letting us access any signal from the studio that we quickly put the same combination of RedNet/Dante technology into Studio B,” he says. In fact, says U-P, he quickly found that Focusrite offered an array of interfaces that were perfect for the entire facility’s needs. That included the Red 4Pre 58-In / 64-Out Thunderbolt 2 and Pro Tools | HD compatible audio interfaces – with Thunderbolt 2, Pro Tools | HD, and Dante connectivity – that are the main network interfaces for Studios C, D, and E. And ultimately four RedNet MP8R eight-channel mic pre and A/D converters would come to facilitate the program’s “remote” recording capability: racks that are placed in the program’s two tracking spaces and performance space, along with a roaming one able to plug into the school’s network anywhere on campus to create ad hoc recording environments as needed. “We’ve had instances where we needed to use the tracking room in Studio A, but the control rooms for Studios A and B were both occupied with other projects. But we could use any of the other control rooms, routing the tracks from the recording room via Dante and RedNet,” he explains. “No matter what the configuration of the spaces was, RedNet gave us a way to work with it.” In fact, he adds, RedNet’s compatibility with the Dante networking protocol has led the program to mandate Dante certification for those students who wish to access and use the studios on their own for projects. And for a planned Dolby Atmos suite, the program has acquired a RedNet PCIeR Card.



Phoca PDF

But perhaps the single most critical RedNet component turned out to be the RedNet AM2 stereo audio monitoring unit, often used as a powered headphone interface. Those were installed in every studio over the course of the school's Covid shutdown, and when students and faculty were allowed back on campus, they proved to be a lifeline for in-person teaching and learning. "We had an AM2 in every isolation booth in every studio, along with a microphone and a pair of headphones - and an air purifier," Cooper recalls. "We had entire classes working remotely, yet in synched-up ensemble, safe in their own environments on campus but also able to interact in real time. I don't know how we would have gotten through the return from Covid without RedNet." That capability has only become stronger with the recent addition of two RedNet X2P 2x2 Dante audio interfaces. Next up will be the addition of RedNet R1 desktop remote monitor controllers. "The R1 has the key feature that I've been looking for: integrated talkback capability," Cooper says. "A built-in talkback microphone with an internal mic preamp and a high-powered headphone output, so I can monitor audio inputs and outputs, and interact with talent in another location. RedNet has something for everything we need here."

Additionally, the program has deployed a Focusrite ISA 828 8-channel mic preamp, as well as components from other brands in The Focusrite Group, including ADAM Audio and Sequential. ADAM Audio monitors have been added to the five studios plus a lesson room, including S3H, A8H, A44H, A4V, T8V and T5V pairs, as well as Sub12 and Sub10 units. As Cooper notes, "The ADAM Audio studio monitors have quickly become student favorites. Now that the ADAM Audio monitors are in the studios, students prefer them over everything else in our studios." Two synth units from Sequential are also in use.

www.focusrite.com

Phoca PDF