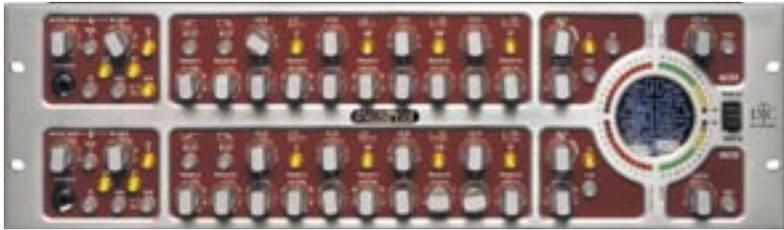


MindPrint DTC DI-Mod

It's not a new box but this two channel recording channel now offers a variety of digital I-Os to complete its case. **GEORGE SHILLING** likes its style.



MINDPRINT DTC'S is now offered at a lower price (UK£1319 +VAT) than it was when it was first launched. The 3U dual recording channel has a rather striking appearance, but plenty of thought has also apparently gone into the circuitry. The unique purple-blue illuminated window reveals dimly glowing tubes, with LED meters embedded in the surround. The thick front panel is separated into logical sections of input, EQ, compression/limiting and output.

The mic input uses a custom transformer, lending the unit a bright, upfront yet rich sound that has great character and detail, ranking favourably alongside competing high-end units. The comprehensive EQ is a joy to use, as long as you grab the correct knob — they are fairly closely spaced (and I found one to be a bit 'scrapey'). The circuitry is intelligently designed, with some unusual features. The four

bands work in parallel, with the shelving top and bottom including a Q control for a dip or peak at the corner frequency. The two mid bands feature narrower cut Q than boost, and a huge range of frequencies is covered by these. If any two bands interact to boost the same frequency, things never get out of hand, as the circuitry won't allow more than a 20dB boost. Rather, the filter curve changes shape. It operates with incisive precision but with a sweetening musical tone that is very inviting.

Although not quite in the LA-2A league, the clever two-knob compressor-limiter on each channel is better than you might expect for such a simple interface. The compressor gradually turns into a limiter across an extended soft knee, with the valve circuitry tweaked to emphasise the uneven harmonics. Tweaking the release time, it is easy to achieve a pleasant sound with just about any signal, and the limiting ensures no digital 'overs'.

MindPrint's dedicated DI-Mod digital conversion boards are now available in three flavours. The cheapest is a useful USB connector with a bonus SPDIF output, the next in line is a fully featured



SPDIF board, while at the top of the range is the one fitted to the review unit and which additionally offers AES-EBU (UK£280 +VAT). All are 24-bit, 96kHz capable. Usefully, the D-A and A-D can be separately clocked for completely independent operation. In Auto mode, the converter will clock to any valid source, and if none is present the board assumes the role of master, with settings for 44.1, 48 and 96kHz (but not 88.2). All of this means that it is possible, for example, to monitor the DAW digital output while feeding it a recording source, all using just the DTC. And the DTC can even be used to master and sweeten 96kHz source material and convert it to 44.1kHz. ■

PROS Excellent audio performance; detailed and characterful sounding mic amp; sweet sounding EQ; simple to use limiter-compressor; digital board options.

CONS EQ knobs a little crowded; mic amp too 'upfront' for some tastes; no hardwire bypass when using Line In; DI-Mod digital boards cost extra and are dealer-fit only; no Word clock.

Contact

MINDPRINT, GERMANY:
Website: www.mindprint.de
UK, SCV London: +44 208 418 1470