

# iZotope Dialogue Match

Post mixer **MIKE AITON** renders some artificial intelligence



Some audio plug-ins can be complicated to learn, and therefore sometimes difficult to review. For me, the best tools are the ones that you will reach for often in your workflow, which have that winning combination of simplicity of use, and are both effective and powerful, and can save you time (and therefore money). So what have the boffins at iZotope been cooking up with Dialogue Match and does it cut the post production mustard?

Dialogue Match is an AAX AudioSuite plug-in, and therefore available for Avid's Pro Tools only. It is a product that fuses iZotope's A.I. machine learning technology with the genius of Exponential Audio's reverb guru Michael Carnes. Its lofty aim is to learn the character of one piece of dialogue and apply it to another source which may be from a different microphone or acoustic, to help create a smooth and seamless dialogue mix.

Often, due to the camera shot or angle, post mixers have to create a smooth transition from personal mics (which may be buried under costumes) to booms (in echo-y rooms) and to dry ADR (recorded in vastly different conditions) and back, sometimes even within the same sentence! To achieve this without jarring the viewer has often required (apart from the years of learning the black art) masterly manipulation of EQ plug-ins, noise reduction, futz distortion control, reverb matching, delays, mangling with external processors etc. The list goes on, as there are many ways to 'skin a dialogue cat'.



/ The profile section and the advanced section are collapsible to make a smaller window for when screen real estate is short

This can take a considerable amount of time to achieve – so just remember that when your directors reach for the 'fix it in post' get out of jail card!

Dialogue Match has three main sections:

- 1) Profile Section** where you "learn" and collect the profile of the reference audio and you capture the original source audio to which you wish to apply the changes to
- 2) Modules Section** where you choose which modules you wish to apply, namely EQ, Reverb and Ambience (or "noise" as I like to call it), and the amounts of each.
- 3) Advanced view** where you can change and edit the parameters of the module currently selected in the module section.

## Matching microphones in post

Once the reference and the 'dry' audio source that you would like to 'apply the reference sound' to has been captured, the individual modules will populate with machine learned suggestion of settings.

In the EQ section, each individual band of EQ that the plug-in has chosen can be changed to a bell, filter or shelf and its level, Q and on/off status can be edited.

In the Reverb section, you can change the algorithm to be plate chamber or hall, add a global low pass or high pass filter (6 or 12 dB/Octave), and even change the reverb density. You can then further change either the early reflections or the reverb tail by clicking on different tabs. All the parameters are graphically clickable and moveable in a superbly easy to understand simple graphical format. Anyone who has spent time in any Exponential Audio reverbs or in The Cargo Cult's Slapper will be instantly whizzing around, it is simple enough to understand what is happening. A superb balance of ease vs. power with enough for the dedicated reverb user or the dabbler alike.

The Ambience section has a graphical display of the noise spectrum it would like to apply. I think, now that I have been using it a while, a high and low pass EQ in this section might be nice as it can be effective to make this more mid-band and reduce some of the HF hiss.

Much thought was given to

application use and workflow during its beta phase, and iZotope have adopted a system of snapshots, similar to the system I use when using RX7 and a rendered workflow (in case you need to back it off a bit). Handy tip: I tend to press \* to get to the timecode counter within Pro Tools, then Command + C to copy the timecode of the current clip to the clipboard, then paste that as the snapshot name along with microphone, character name and location etc.

Auditioning the changes you would like to apply is by hitting the usual Audiosuite speaker icon on the bottom left hand side. Whilst that is looping, if you wish to refer to the original that you are trying to match, a little ear icon appears in the reference profile section that you can click and hold.

## Ambience detection game changer

EQ matching is not a new process (and can be achieved with Ozone, Fabfilter ProQ3 or indeed Nugen SEQ-S), nor is the application of noise to a signal (as in iZotope's RX 7 Ambience Match), but the big game changer here is the detection of reverb. How good is it? Like many solutions, it is not always perfect and is occasionally way off the mark, but it is often very good and sometimes stunningly so. Bravo iZotope this is a game changer indeed.

As a post sound mixer, I approve of collaboration and teamwork, and if the dialogue editor can get me some of the steps nearer matching the dialogue (as long as they are not heavy handed), then what's not to love? For the savvy re-recording mixer this is a fast set of tools that work very well and are tweakable enough to get the job done. This product, like iZotope's RX Pro will only get better with every iteration. A post must have! **T**

## resolution/VERDICT

**PROS** Time saving, powerful, simple interface, intuitive operation.

**CONS** Price (\$599, currently \$499), occasional AI hiccups.

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