

INCLUDES AUDIO

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WHAT IS IT?

Software-based mastering system with standalone and plug-in versions and new vintage processing modules

CONTACT

Who: Time+Space (iZotope)
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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Codec Preview
- 2 Upgraded Maximizer with IRC IV
- 3 Vintage modules

PRICING

Ozone Standard
£169
Ozone Advanced
£339



iZotope Ozone 7

from £169

iZotope's Ozone gets some vintage processing power in the latest update. **Bruce Aisher** checks out its old-school credentials

Ozone is firmly established as one of the best-known and popular dedicated software mastering suites – maybe

because it has been part of the DAW pantheon for over 15 years, but certainly also due to its perceived effectiveness and quality of results.

As always, it is important to detail some disclaimers. Software won't replace a skilled, experienced and sympathetic human-being (in a decent-sounding room). Equally, it will not be able to turn a bad mix into sonic gold. However, mastering was once a technical necessity – transferring from one medium to another – but now it is largely viewed in more singular creative terms.

Computers and digital audio have changed the mastering landscape in many ways – technically and philosophically speaking. Recalling and tweaking mixes is much easier, yet it is prohibitive to 'master' a mix each time you make a change. Plus, there is a pressure to make demos more radio-ready/media-friendly from the start. The stark reality is that producers want access to mastering tools that streamline the process and make the 'black art' more accessible – even if common sense dictates that it's best to get a professional to do the final job.

Ozone fits neatly into this space. Most of the tools and processing it harnesses are not unfamiliar to the average DAW user, though bundling

them together is a useful way of utilising them with one goal in mind.

Ozone 7 comes hot on the heels of Ozone 6 which represented a change in both aesthetics and functionality (but it did remove certain features as well). Ozone 7 sticks with this look and feel. Headline features are an updated Maximizer – traditionally one of iZotope's strengths – an improved Dynamic EQ, a Vintage Limiter module and the ability to export audio in an expanded range of formats. The advanced version of the software sees a larger array of 'vintage' elements – Tape, EQ and Compressor all now coming in old-school flavours.

Ozone 7 Advanced still allows you to load each module as a separate plug-in and includes iZotope Insight analysis and metering software, but a significant new draw will also be the Codec Preview feature. This is something I've used successfully in the past with Sonnox Pro-Codec. Given that so much music is being subjected to lossy audio coding, it is extremely useful to be able to hear how dynamic processes and audio encoding interact. The only real flaw here is the audible gap in playback when switching preview on and off.

Take it to the max

Whatever your views on the 'Loudness War', audio limiting has always had a

