

UAD 9.0 Update

Version 9 of UAD's software brings great news if you want new compressors thanks to two (very different) processors, while a unique doubling and mix widening plug-in has been developed by Brainworx. There's also good news for Thunderbolt-enabled PC users



API 2500 Bus Compressor £229

The API 2500 is a versatile stereo compressor offering several unique features. The main compressor parameters are in the bottom left-hand corner and, above these, there's a Mix dial to easily configure parallel treatments. Further to the right you'll find variable Knee control with Hard, Medium and Soft options, while a Thrust setting – with Loud, Medium and Normal switches – adds variable boost to dial in extra punch to low frequency content. There are also two compression types, labelled Old and New, which emulate the character of the API 525 and 527 compressors respectively. Also, unusually, there's a variable Left/Right link option to determine whether the signal will be treated 'evenly', or whether a variable amount of channel separation will be applied across the stereo field. This all adds up to an incredibly flexible compressor capable of depth, punch and a pleasing amount of detail assignable to the frequency bands of your choice. Great on individual and grouped sounds, as well as across the output mix buss.

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VERDICT 9.2



A/DA STD-1 Stereo Tapped Delay £149

Developed by Brainworx for UAD, this unusual Delay features an array of six bucket-brigade delays alongside modulation and LFO options, making it a ready choice for doubling effects like phasing and flanging, as well as stereo widening treatments. The main Tap Assign area is where delays are assigned to either Left or Right-hand busses, with central positions effectively switching Delay taps off. The shortest delay on the left is set at 1.3mS, while the longest on the right is at 55.5mS with intervening times set via the four taps in between. To the right, you can introduce variations to the Delays, by varying the Fixed (ie non-modulated) Delay time, or introduce a modulated Sweep which begins to vary the Delay length, creating Phaser and Flanger style effects. You can go further, assigning one of Taps 1, 3 or 6 as a Regeneration trigger, which feeds this specific Delay back into the input. Think less of the STD-1 as a regular Delay effect and more as a sound design tool for width-enhancement and doubling effects and you'll be along the right lines. In these capacities, the STD-1 is capable of everything from increased presence in source sounds to wild, evolving treatments.

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VERDICT 8.8



Townsend Labs Sphere Microphone System Free

If you're interested in the Townsend Labs Sphere microphone, UAD 9.0 brings its Precision Microphone System software to the UAD platform. The Sphere microphone is a modelling system which captures the nuances of rare vintage microphones to bring their characteristics to your recordings. These include classic designs from

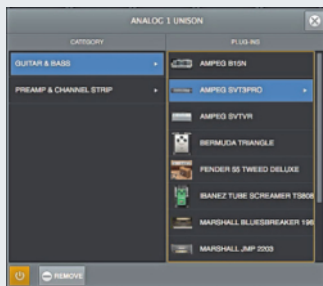
Neumann, Telefunken and AKG, allowing you to track and audition multiple virtual vintage microphones in real time. It should go without saying that the Sphere microphone needs to be purchased separately! Just as UAD has established its name emulating the sound of classic hardware, it's no surprise that microphone modelling systems are among its next targets and, up against similar technology from Slate Digital, it's going to be interesting to see how this area of the market develops through 2017 and beyond.

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VERDICT n/a

PC Thunderbolt compatibility

There is good news for PC users, in that Version 9 of the UAD software brings Thunderbolt compatibility to the Windows 10 platform. PC manufacturers had been slower to adopt Thunderbolt but it's well established now, so this news should come as music to the ears of PC users who might have been looking enviously at the potential of UAD hardware running over Thunderbolt on the Mac platform.



More platform developments

In further platform news, UAD V9 brings compatibility with Mac's Sierra Operating System, as well as the provision of using the Console 2 software with Apollo Firewire hardware systems. Lastly, the SVT-VR and SVT3-PRO Bass Amps are now compatible with Unison technology, meaning that you can now track through them directly at the recording stage.

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Chandler Limited Zener Limiter £229

Developed for UAD by Softube, this emulation of an EMI TG Limiter design, synonymous with late '60s Rock records made at Abbey Road, seeks to bring the characteristic snap and power of the original hardware. In fact, the development of the sound of this plug-in has a richer history still as Chandler Limited produced the hardware on which this emulation is built in 2006, in homage to the original EMI designs from 50 years ago. The famous warmth of this unit is widely attributed to its zener diodes, which have been faithfully captured here. The THD input stage lets you increase not only gain but variable harmonic distortion too, bringing huge musicality. The Side Chain control lets you rein in high frequencies without suffering a weakening of low-end character, while the plug-in offers features not seen in hardware, including a Mid-Side mode and easy channel linking options. This is a hugely flexible plug-in with myriad potential usages across your mixes.

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VERDICT 9.1