



iZotope RX 5

£239/£815 PC MAC



At this rate of progress, we're starting to wonder how long iZotope can keep the meaningful updates coming! Here's yet another belter...

> Every version of iZotope's RX so far, since its debut as an ahead-of-its-time audio repair and restoration package in 2007, has impressed us. Today, RX is a full-blown, plugin-hosting, multi-tabbed audio editor - still specialising in rescuing and enhancing audio, and still indisputably leading the pack.

Similar to iZotope's equally acclaimed Ozone mastering suite, RX 5 centres on a standalone application that plays host to a range of restoration modules (De-Noise, De-Click, De-Hum, Spectral Repair, etc), most of which are also included as individual plugins (VST/AU/RTAS/AAX). The software comes in two flavours: RX 5 and RX 5 Advanced, the latter including extra modules but costing significantly more.

RX's most prominent feature is the large spectrogram editor, using contoured colours to represent frequency and amplitude over time. This alternative to the standard waveform view - which is also included - allows for a very instinctive audio 'Photoshopping' experience, complete with range, paint brush and lasso tools. This type of editing is ideal for selecting distinct frequency areas for processing - isolating ringing overtones in a snare, for example, or the body of a vocal recording.

The new Instant Process tool lets you apply a predetermined function with a single click. For example, if you have Instant Process set to the Attenuate, anywhere you click using the familiar

selection tools will instantly apply the current Attenuate settings from the Spectral Repair module. This means you no longer need to keep the module on screen, saving a lot of mousing for the process button after each selection.

Chain gang

The Module Chain tool is another delicious workflow asset that lets you configure a chain of modules (including third-party plugins) to be triggered as a one-click process. Modules can be easily rearranged, added or removed, and you're free to use multiple instances of the same module, each configured independently of the others. This is particularly helpful for anyone who's developed their own set of regularly used processing sequences, as now you can save them as Module Chain presets (20 are included to get you started).

Speaking of presets, there's been a general overhaul of them for some of the modules. Most notably, the Advanced edition gets the addition of presets for its Ambience Match and EQ Match modules - more great time savers.

The previous six-band Equalizer module has been upgraded to the eight-band Corrective EQ module, also kitted out with a selection of new presets and featuring even more detailed shape controls for crafting surgical EQ curves.

The updated Markers and Regions allow you to annotate audio in an RX document, then

search those annotations in order to navigate large editing jobs. And finally, the visuals throughout, including font rendering, have been tweaked: everything is smoother and easier on the eye, with full support for Retina displays.

RX 5 makes for another very strong update that should appeal to existing users for its workflow refinements alone. Those completely new to the software, meanwhile, won't believe the things it can do. Sure, it may not be the ideal audio editor for entry-level producers, but anyone working with less-than-ideal recordings will want to give it some serious consideration for its abilities in that area alone. **cm**

Web www.timespace.com

Alternatively

Sony SpectralLayers Pro 3
N/A » N/A » £266

Spectral editing, audio repair and pitch correction, interoperable with Sound Forge

Adobe Audition CC
N/A » N/A » £18/month

Well-established audio editor with spectral editing that works in a similar way to RX

Verdict

For Awesome Module Chain

Retina support; easier on the eyes

Markers and region search

One-click Instant Process tool

Against No built-in audio browser

Clip Gain only operates on full spectrum

Can't preview selection for processing

RX was already the market leader in audio restoration and editing, and v5 fortifies that position. We'd score it 11 if we could

Advanced features

The big new feature in RX 5's pricier Advanced edition is the De-Plosive module. Plosives are those 'thuds' that can occur when too much air hits the microphone too fast, usually following a word involving the letter P or B, such as 'Pow'. Previous versions of RX were already good at dealing with plosives using Spectral Repair, but this dedicated module is tuned to specifically detect them for removal - another time saver, delivering utterly convincing results.

There's more good news for those working with vocals, as the Leveler module has been expanded to include sibilance and breath detection, and is now split into two modes: one for music and one for the human voice (Dialogue), each with its own tailored algorithm.

Lastly, the new Signal Generator can generate silence, various noise profiles, and oscillator tones that can be rendered 'naive' or with configurable anti-aliasing.