

Beck Studio

Upgrading to Pro Tools HD

After running a purely analogue studio for many years, Dave Smith, Beck Studios' chief engineer, wanted to bring the Wellingborough-based facility fully up to date with a digital audio workstation and control surface.

"Before the new installation, I was using quite an archaic system that gave me half decent results, but as far as editing was concerned, it was a nightmare," said Dave. "I had some idea of what I needed - there were certain essentials, but equally I was ready to be convinced as to what the best system for me would be. I decided on a Pro Tools HD system because it seemed to be industry standard."

A hands-on solution

Complementing the Pro Tools HD system, Avid's C24 surface was chosen to provide hands-on control, a large array of analogue inputs and outputs and to help Dave retain the feel of the studio's analogue heritage. "I could have gone for a software-only system or integrated an analogue desk [...] but everything that's run on Pro Tools can be controlled by the unit here. It's really quick, really easy to master, and being able to edit online is a real time-saver. I can also be a lot less precise than I used to be when it comes to tracking because nothing's destroyed," said Dave.

Installing the system

After delivery, the system was installed by Jigsaw24's Rob Holsman. "[Rob] installed it but he didn't just get on with it, he involved me in it so I knew what was going on as well," said Dave. "He was able to tailor the installation to my specific needs, which are quite quirky in this building. A lot of cabling and connection had to be changed. I have a particular headphone loom system that needed adaptation as well."

Dave has since added a Focusrite Liquid Channel preamp to his setup, which he uses to emulate analogue compressors, EQs or preamps when recording vocals. On Rob's advice, he's also made his output more diverse with a range of plug-ins including Melodyne, which helps him adjust vocalists' pitch, performance, volume and length of words.

"It's opened me up to a lot of new work. [...] From a commercial point of view, people buy on what they see, and a lot of the technical guys want to see lists and lists of plug-ins and hardware. We've got all that kit now. I can also benefit because I've kept my old kit, and I still use outboards so we can do a mixture of Pro Tools and analogue, so we're kitted up for pretty much any format now," said Dave.



Video gallery

To view the video visit the URL:
<http://bit.ly/UADVDe>



In a nutshell...

Who are Beck Studio?

Beck recording studios in Wellingborough were established in 1969, and since then have counted amongst their clientele such luminaries as Helen Shapiro, Frank Ifield, Joe Brown and Bauhaus.

What did they need?

Beck wanted to update their studio to a fully digital workflow, for better audio quality and ease of use.

How did Jigsaw24 help?

We provided an Avid Pro Tools HD system and C24 control surface, as well as full, speedy installation and cabling.

What were the benefits?

- A modern digital system has given Dave a stronger position in the industry to attract bigger clients.
- The up-to-date solution gives the best chance to capture the recording room's character.

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Dave Smith, Chief Engineer, Beck Studio.

For more information about our full range of post-production equipment and services, get in touch on the details below.