Radio Project Guide

Introduction

Presenting **“MAGIX audio studio school version”**, part of the **MAGIX media world 2004/2005** CD provided free to schools on “**media world 2004/2005**". The graphic interface allows users to easily arrange and mix tracks within a program that can be rapidly learned. The **MAGIX audio studio school version** program is particularly suitable for radio broadcast production and mixing.

Formulating Tasks

Select, together with the pupils, some arbitrary themes that the pupils themselves would want to hear on radio – such as pop music or musician portraits. To accomplish this, pupils may wish to research newspaper articles, television interviews, websites and magazines etc. Collect the results and together with the pupils work out the general tone, style and content of the radio broadcast.
You will find more task-based ideas further down in the text.

Editorial Preparation by Pupils

Editorial teams

The pupils are divided into teams, as group work should be practiced. Suggestion: create teams by drawing lots each half-year and assign tasks that must be performed by the team. Tasks within a team may include the following:

- Who will provide the material (newspaper articles, music CDs, internet printouts)?
- Who will summarize the gathered information?
- Who will formulate the commentaries?
- Who will decide how the music is edited?
- Who will oversee the scheduled progress of the group work?

Research

The pupils are asked to decide upon a pop group or a music style of their choice. Pupils typically possess a good deal of knowledge about the music scene and usually keep youth and music magazines at home. They may also research the internet for such information as music biographies.

Formulating voiceover contributions

Firstly, the collected information should be assessed, structured and summarized:

- What is important?
- Should the production be informative only?
- Should it be funny or sarcastic?

Pupils are familiar with the way in which music and speech interact on radio and television broadcasts. Productions should be brief, informative and (if possible) witty. The main task for the team may lie in gathering meaningful material.

Choosing music

In order to keep the length the radio production within reason, the pieces should only be alluded to. Therefore the following questions should be answered:

- Which music is to be played?
- Which parts of the pieces?
- Which sections are suitable for the intro or finale.

Pupils will more than likely have enough CDs from which sufficient musical material can be used. For a first project of this kind, it is advisable to use only to two music pieces. The whole production should last just two minutes. Such a small task as this nevertheless will make substantial demands upon the pupils. Pupils used to working in teams or independently can be given more demanding tasks. However, no production should be longer than five to six minutes (using three to five music pieces).

The Storyboard

On a sheet of paper in the horizontal format, draw three to four lines in which music and voiceover sections are entered from left to right. Add a timeline above the sections. A continuous line along the music line symbolizes the volume curve. This will illustrate fades (in and out), crossfades, quiet and loud passages as part of the overall timeline. Enter the voiceover sections in the line below the music. Either use designations such as Text1, Text2 etc. or (if the sheet of paper is large enough) enter the entire text into the time periods.

Didactic advice

The radio project is highly suitable for subjects such as music, language, media studies or religion:

Language

- Summary of the collected information (excerpts, underlining, marking).
- Phonetics (the groups read out their radio contribution aloud, the other groups repeat).
- Story writing.

MAGIX audio studio school version is flexible enough to handle a wide range of audio production:

- Newscasting (researching, editing, formulating, speaking).
- Radio plays (literary synopses, sound editing, adding sound to poems, ballads, creative text handling).

Media Studies

The role of the media (e.g. in advertising, consumer awareness, informational perception, etc.).

Religion

- Idolatry
- The meaning of life
- Values and morality

Needless to say, separate subjects can be combined within a project.

Teamwork

Interesting group processes occur with the editorial work. The instructor is required as a moderator – but no more than that: The pupils should feel supported, not controlled. Pupils not at all used to teamwork in may try to evade initial demands. The allocation of tasks, results analysis and editorial decisions in the team should sharpen the view of individuals as regards the goals of the whole team.

This offers insights into the work of editors and journalists. The teams work according to experience at different speeds. A faster team can be the first to learn the program. These pupils can subsequently work as tutors within the class as a whole.

Musical basics

This project can also serve as an introduction to music as a formative element in radio production. The same text can, for example, work completely differently with different background music.
The correct volume and mood of the music is also important. This can be adapted with the help of the trapezoid-shaped serrated line or with the volume fader on the left-hand side of each track.

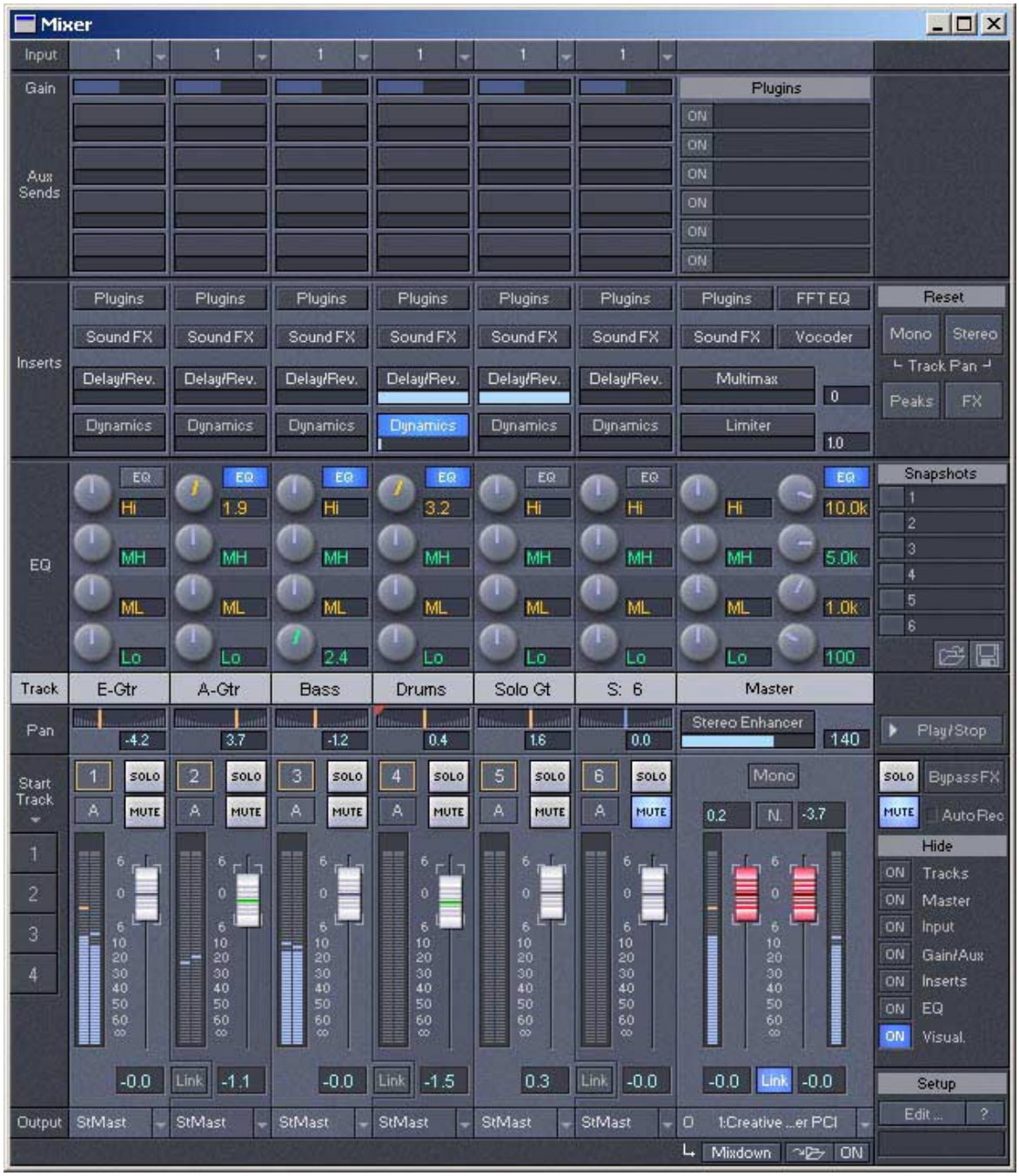
When the editorial work is done, it's time for the voiceover recordings.
First, sketch all voiceover sections (objects). Afterwards, the un- used parts at the beginning and the end can be edited out, or re-integrated again later if necessary.

The Arrangement

The audio objects can be shifted and arranged at will. The volume of the tracks can be adjusted globally in the mixer ("M" key). If individual objects vary in volume or should be faded in or out, the colored lines on the tracks should be of help. In the second track, two lines with so-called handles can be seen. The line running at half the height (in the original blue) is responsible for the panorama. Shift the sound file stereo width by moving the handles up and down. The panorama line is preset to run centrally, i.e. the stereo width is balanced out.

The other line (in the original yellow) is responsible for the volume. It controls any fading in and out as well as loud and quiet passages. The general principle will become clear when working with voiceovers and music.

You may also use handles in the draw mode (s. menu bar) or simply sketch complete volume or panorama curves.



Experiment with mood music. In addition to the volume, try editing the music with an equalizer.

Frequencies created by the voice should be reduced with an equalizer (using the “M” key in the mixer). This improves voice comprehension when music is also being played.

Try to work with the stereo width too. If several speakers are present in the project, use the stereo width to position them to the left and to the right. The music should always remain in a neutral position – because it has usually already been mixed correctly.

In principle the pupils should copy the songs they want to build into their project onto their local hard disc. That is particularly recommendable for better performance of the program. The program even has a Grabber function with which one can quickly select and copy tracks onto the hard disc.

The interaction of this Grabbing function with a CD-ROM drive only works with an ASPI driver, which ensures that the program can cooperate directly with the CD-ROM. ASPI drivers can be attained online. Installation is fast and easy, but must eventually apply to all connected school PCs.