

QSC TouchMix-30 Pro Compact Digital Mixer

By Nathan Petrie

QSC's new TouchMix-30 Pro has the features and functionality that will satisfy the most demanding live sound professionals while also boasting a simple and straightforward set-up and workflow, making it perfect for production professionals, live performance venues, and even artists. Let's take a closer look at what this new compact digital mixer had to offer.

Out of the Box

At a quick glance, the console has a very professional look and made me eager to get my hands on it. All the XLR-3 and TRS inputs and outputs are chassis-mounted, which means they can be replaced individually if need be. It has a hard steel frame and is very compact and light – perfect for van touring or even fly dates.

The TouchMix-30 Pro has 32 inputs in total: 24 XLR-3 inputs, four of which are TRS/XLR, as well as three stereo pairs of balanced 1/4-in. line inputs. There's also the Talkback input for the handy RTA (Real Time Analyzer) built into the console. On top of it all, there's also a USB playback input for playing sound cues or house music via a USB drive.

On the output side, there are 14 XLR-3 outputs plus a dedicated left/right Main output and a left/right Monitor output that allows one of the other mixes (or the cue mix) to be output with independent level control to an amp or speaker system, giving the mixer a total of 16 simultaneously operable outputs.

Power & Flexibility

The TouchMix-30 Pro has a lot of power built in. This console offers a total of eight sub groups, eight DCAs, and eight mute groups with an additional FX mute button.

There are some very clever features when it comes to the input strips. All 30 channels come equipped with a four-band parametric EQ, compressor/limiter, a gate, and signal delay. This gives any mixing engineer tons of control over what's going into and out of the board.

A neat feature – especially for novice or inexperienced mixers – is the Simple option used in conjunction with factory EQ presets. When a user enables this feature, some of the more advanced options pertaining to EQ, comps, gates, and effects disappear and the user is left with basic functions for intuitive but simple operation. Also via the factory presets, a new user can load a common starting point for instrument and vocal EQs, comps, etc. and work from there.



Once you've roughed in your mix, the TouchMix-30 Pro has six independent FX engines plus Pitch Correct, which could be used to fix intonation or detune instruments or vocals for a thickening effect. You don't need to give up any aux mixes to use all of the FX, and the presets can also be altered and saved to the console's preset folder or any drive connected via the USB port.

Other Features

The console comes with a very cool feature that, as far as I know, is unique to this family: the Gain, FX, Anti-Feedback, and Tuning wizards. If you're not familiar with how to properly set gain for individual instruments or how to tune a PA, the TouchMix can get you started.

For gain, you can simply click the Wizard button on the console and select "Gain." The console will then ask you to turn the trim pots on top of the console to give you a great starting point for your input gain.

The Tuning Wizard is pretty much the same. Plug your analyzer mic into the Talkback input and start the wizard. It will show you the peaks and valleys that your PA system is reproducing and assist you in flattening the sound – again, a great starting point for your mix.

Finally, the Anti-Feedback Wizard helps get the user the most gain before feedback. It slowly increases output gain until a feedback ring is heard. Then, it drops one of 12 notch filters on top of the feedback frequency and keeps going until it's told to stop or all 12 filters are used.

The TouchMix-30 is also equipped with full multitrack recording capability. This can be used by either connecting to a Mac running a DAW (in which case the TouchMix serves

as a 32-channel I/O device) or by attaching a USB drive directly to the console and hitting "Record." I found this feature really handy for giving clients a recorded copy of their shows for post or for my own benefit, recording mixes and listening back to identify areas for improvement.

And here's a big one: the TouchMix-30 Pro comes with a great feature that allows one to connect multiple iOS or Android remote devices via a WiFi router plugged into the Ethernet port on the back. That means individual artists can mix their own wedges or in-ears if desired. Multiple devices can be programmed and features the musicians don't need can be locked out. This can take some stress off of a FOH engineer pulling double-duty while enhancing the musicians' onstage experience.

Summary

I'll just outright say that every time I used the TouchMix-30 Pro, the results sounded truly spectacular – and it often took a lot less time to get there than I'm used to. From live and recorded music to speech applications, it handled them all with ease.

This is a great tool with unique features and an accessible price point, considering its feature set and flexibility. In fact, I enjoyed my experience so much that I asked to hang onto the mixer for some high-profile shows with the one and only Jerry Seinfeld.

Keep your eye out for this amazing little machine.

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