

EV DC-One Processor



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The EV DC-One speaker processor is a long-awaited product that is huge in the value quotient (features and performance divided by cost to own). I took delivery of the DC-One and the first thing I noticed was the size of the unit.

While it is the expected one-rackspace high, the 14 inches of depth is way beyond the usual amount for these processors. When I inquired about this, the designers uniformly said that customers complained about having to make patches to shallow depth processors when in a rack of full-size power amplifiers. Given the go-ahead on depth the designers made good use of the space and concentrated on DSP features and budgets.

The Gear

The next observation of the EV DC-One processor was the fresh metallic and black front panel with plenty of LED metering and LCD readout, but absence of encoder wheels. This set of cosmetics reminds me of modern auto dashboards where high visibility under dim lighting conditions is an engineering consideration. From left to right, the DC-One starts with a cute illuminated EV logo with a USB-B jack below for loading in patch information. Next, two 8-LED bargraphs track input signal levels from -30 to over +6 dBu levels plus a clip LED around +15 dBu. The maximum input is +21 dBu; this early warning is intended to give notification to the user before the input actually clips.

The blue backlit 192 by 32 dot LCD provides three lines of information with a  variable contrast feature for differing environments. After the display, 16 white push-buttons allow entry, editing, and sub-menu selection of common input and output section features. For the pre-crossover side, the sub-menus are HPF, PEQ, GEQ and Delay. For the post-crossover side, the sub-menus are X-over, PEQ, Delay and Level. Completing the front panel are the typical six groups of mute pushbuttons and LED bargraphs for each output channel. But unlike other speaker processors, the EV DC-One uses dual LED bargraphs for each channel. The first bargraph is your typical -15 dB to clip array of eight LEDs with the scaling to the limiter threshold instead of hard dBu values. The second bargraph contains another eight LEDs with the top four set to -3, -6, -9 and -12 dB gain reduction indications of signal compression. The last four LEDs are just plain good information for indicating sub, low, mid or high frequency channel assignment.

The back panel of the EV DC-One is no frills with the metallic finish surrounding the usual groupings of XLR jacks and the power on/off IEC input panel. The analog inputs are nicely grouped with in and thru jacking for

ease of daisy-chain connections. Also, a pushbutton -6 dB input pad switch is included for those especially hot input signal levels (-21 dBu before clip with switch engaged). This pad is inserted pre-A/D converter to ensure that the converter is not clipped by a hot signal. The max input is +21 dBu without the pad engaged and +27 dBu with the pad engaged. For digital audio, a single XLR-F is provided for AES/EBU input interfacing. The six output channels are grouped together with XLR-M connectors with no other special features. Rounding out the back panel is a 9-pin D-sub connector for external line/relay controls.



The Gig

I found the DC-One intuitively easy to operate, even without the extensive owner's manual available. Being a Mini-drive user, I found the output channels a bit naked without a select button, but soon got used to the way the output menus wrapped around to all the settings with needing a channel select control. So, if you just tweaked in a subwoofer low-pass filter you can push up or down the entire parameter list to get to the high frequency parametric filters without channel selecting. Pressing a parameter button repeatedly scrolls through the same parameter for the other outputs).

EV made a conscious design decision on the DC-One processor for 20 user-configurable memory locations and provided 50 factory presets as templates to edit from. While you may not have Telex/EV speakers to steal presets from, if you have the brand speakers, setup will be a recall and store breeze. Since I had the tri-amped QRx212 over QRx218 subs, factory preset F28 was easy to get to and close to my ever-tweaked settings that I used before the DC-One came out. The factory settings were not shabby either as my SMAART frequency and phase traces confirmed.

Out at the gigs, the EV DC-One did as expected, performing flawlessly without any hitches or audible artifacts. I intentionally cranked down on the limiters and found they did their job and did not crush the sonics too badly in the process. I found no niggles in my review, but I did hear of beta users having issues with the human interface early on. But now the bugs are gone resulting in a very fine piece of gear.

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What It Is: Speaker processor.

Pros: Low cost, professional feature set, clean processing.

Cons: None.

How Much: EV DC-One Processor: \$980 SRP.

Web site: www.electrovoice.com

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