

Soundcraft Ui24R £899

The popular remote-controlled digital mixer range has a new arrival. **Jon Musgrave** hooks up the latest 24-channel design

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KEY FEATURES **I/O:** 22 inputs (10 combi mic/line, 10 XLR mic, 2 phono), 10 outputs (2 XLR/TRS, 8 XLR) **CHANNELS:** 32 channels DAW I/O via USB, **TRACKS:** 22 track recording and playback via USB stick, Integrated Wifi and Ethernet, HDMI, Lexicon, dbx and Digitech processing





Soundcraft's Ui mixers combine a wi-fi equipped hardware interface with remote software control. The Ui24R marks a bit of an upgrade over previous models (the Ui12 and Ui16), and not only in terms of scale but also in terms of spec – key improvements include 20 quiet Studer-designed mic preamps, 22 track audio recording and playback via onboard USB stick (USB A), and full 32-channel USB DAW I/O (USB B). The Ui24R also has considerably more connectivity, with ten combi mic/line inputs (two switchable to Hi-Z), ten further XLR mic inputs, two line level phono inputs and eight XLR auxiliary outputs, as well as main outputs (XLR and 1/4 inch jack) and two headphone outputs.

Making the connection

The Ui24R feels very solidly made and is housed in a rugged 4U rack which is equally at home rack mounted or simply sat on the floor. In addition to the USB recording and playback mentioned above, another USB slot provides audio playback of stereo files (WAV, AIFF, MP3, OGG, FLAC, AAC). Two further USB slots can be found on the side (for keyboard, mouse and touchscreens) alongside an assignable footswitch jack and an HDMI port for wired screen connection. Two wi-fi antennas help achieve stable wireless performance either using its own hotspot or connecting to an existing wireless network (2.4GHz and 5GHz are both supported), and there are also two regular Ethernet ports.

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At the heart of the Ui24R is a 24-channel mixer with six VCA groups, six subgroups and four onboard FX busses. Two mixer channels are dedicated to the stereo USB stick playback, however the other 22 can be freely patched from the physical inputs, multitrack USB stick or USB DAW I/O.

The mixer and all onboard processing is controlled from a browser-based app available in one of two styles (desktop or tablet) and the browser-based implementation means it's identical cross platform. Features include EQ and dbx dynamics on channels, subgroups, auxiliaries and FX busses, Lexicon reverb and delay processors on the four FX busses, and Digitech amp modeling on inputs 1 and 2 (which are Hi-Z capable). Processing options do vary slightly across channel types (there's a de-esser on the main channels and graphic EQ on the auxiliaries for example). Even so, the processing and effects are easy to use and sound excellent.

On the routing front, the channels are hardwired to send pre-processed signals simultaneously to the multitrack USB stick and USB I/O. However, if you want to process or group signals prior to recording this

can be done via the 8 auxiliaries and the stereo master output, which feed the remaining 10 USB I/O channels. One final feature worth mentioning is 'More Me'. This allows quick balance between specified (Me) and non-specified (Band) channels routed to the same physical auxiliary, and is ideal if you're using said auxiliaries to feed stage monitors, for example.

Ultimately, my only real gripe with the Ui24R is the onboard headphone outputs, which can only be sourced from the main outputs. This point aside, it's a great unit that's flexible, easy to use, and given the spec, is priced pretty competitively. **FM**

FM VERDICT

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The Ui24R is a decent upgrade on their previous Ui mixers and is equally at home handling recording and live setups

THE PROS & CONS



Universal browser-based software control

Plenty of hardware connectivity

Flexible communication via Ethernet or dual-band wi-fi

Premium dbx, Lexicon and Digitech processing

Well spec'd routing and auxiliary bussing



Would benefit from more flexible onboard headphone options