

AudioTools® Voice

Introduction

Dialog intelligibility is a critical part of any successful mix for film, television, or commercial media. When people speak on screen, they're meant to be heard and understood. When viewers struggle to discern what is being said, impact is replaced with frustration as they are abruptly pulled out of the moment. Even if your mix is right in the studio, loudness processing and encoding for distribution or transmission can further diminish the separation and space present in your original mix.

Like any critical element in the mix, dialog needs to sit comfortably “in the pocket”, remaining clear, dominant, and concise, but also needs to blend cohesively into other audio elements in support of the visual content.

With the importance of easily understanding dialog in mind, The Telos Alliance is pleased to introduce AudioTools Voice – the first and only dialog intelligibility enhancement tool that draws viewer’s attention to the human voice without adding gain, EQ or any other type of traditional signal processing. Drawing upon the results of significant research into how humans respond to, perceive, and process sound, AudioTools Voice allows the audience to more easily hear and concentrate on the spoken word within a mix. This provides dialog with the elusive and much sought-after sense of space by adding critical missing cues that our brains need to fully comprehend a signal as if were live and real.

The AudioTools Voice plug-in will be available for the industry-leading file-based audio automation platform, Minnetonka Audio’s AudioTools Server, which is in use by most if not all major broadcasters around the world.

What to Expect When Hearing AudioTools Voice

The first thing you will notice after AudioTools Voice is applied is that you don’t have to work as hard to understand the spoken word, or strain to comprehend dialog as it fights for attention against other elements in the mix. In some cases, you may even discern an increase in high end clarity or identify the dialog as measurably louder. However, if you were to measure the dialogue before and after processing with AudioTools Voice, you would see that there is no difference in gain, no change in the EQ curve, and no change in density. The only difference is that you are perceiving and “experiencing” the sound differently because the audio processed with AudioTools Voice provides cues that our brain uses to tell us which sounds should receive our attention.

For Mono, Stereo, or Multi-channel Audio

For dialog-only mono tracks, AudioTools Voice will bring out the clarity of the voice and improve comprehension. If the mono track is mixed with other mono sound elements, AudioTools Voice will draw attention to the dialog and allow the spoken word to stand out.

For stereo tracks, the dialog is presumably mixed in with other sound elements. As is the case with a mono mix, AudioTools Voice will draw attention to the spoken word and increase intelligibility. While effective on a full stereo mix, the recommended practice whenever possible is to process the dialog with AudioTools Voice prior to mixing.

For a multi-channel mix of 5.1-channels and beyond, AudioTools Voice should be applied to the center channel prior to mixing whenever possible. However, as with stereo tracks, it can also be effective when applied to the full mix.

Upmixing

Upmixers vary widely in their impact on dialog intelligibility, both on the upmix and the downmix side of the equation. The nature of the original content itself can also influence how dialog survives this process. AudioTools Voice ensures that dialog remains easy to hear even when center channel audio struggles against music and effects.

System Requirements:

- Operating System: Mac OS X 10.6.8 - 10.13 / Windows 7 - 10
- AAX plug-in for Pro Tools 10.3.6 - 2018.10; Media Composer Family 8.1 or higher
- 32bit / 64 bit VST 2.4 plug-in
- Pace iLok USB Smart Key and PACE iLok.com account required (not included)



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The 'AudioTools voice' logo, with 'AudioTools' in a large, bold, white font and 'voice' in a smaller, white font below it. A small orange icon of a speaker with sound waves is positioned above the 'o' in 'Tools'. The logo is set against a background image of a smiling couple sitting on a couch.

AudioTools[®]
voice