



The "GEMS" Method of Setting Up an Audio Console *after everything is connected....*

GAIN STRUCTURE

The first priority when starting to set up a console is to set proper gain structure. This accomplishes two things: All volumes across the board will be balanced, and each input into the console will be "line-checked". This is done in conjunction with the second item (EQ), while checking each input on the console. Have the performer play, and while watching the meter, turn the GAIN knob on the console until the meter registers an appropriate level of signal. Keep in mind the signal level, and apply the same level to each individual input. While working with this input, go on to the EQ section before going on to the next input. After completing this procedure DO NOT TOUCH THE GAIN CONTROLS AGAIN!

EQ AND PROCESSING

The priority here is simple: to get proper tone and dynamics control on each input. This is accomplished by utilizing the EQ section, and the compression/gating sections on the console. With EQ (you can refer to the other procedures we advocate) you want the tone of the instrument to sound like it does acoustically. This may sound overly simplistic, but it is not. When building a mix with this idea in mind, we find the overall result is clean and transparent. Adjust EQ accordingly, and then set up compression and gating if needed. Issues like feedback, etc. will be "rung out" and addressed as you work through the input list.

MONITORS

These are the most important mixes you will create. If the musicians cannot hear, they cannot perform up to the standard everyone wants (again, refer to the other procedures we advocate). There is a different procedure for wedge mixes versus IEM mixes. We suggest keeping wedge mixes simple, with just enough information for the musician to hear and "feel" the music. With IEM mixes, keep in mind many musicians struggle with getting a good mix. While using headphones, solo the auxiliary of the mix you are working on, and basically create a band mix, with the instrument of the performer the most prominent thing in the mix. Adjust as needed, getting information from the performer. Have the band play a bit, then stop and give you direction. Work with one musician at a time. It is important that YOU control and give direction to the soundcheck at this time, to alleviate confusion.

SERVICE (OR SHOW)

The house, or sanctuary mix, is the last priority! At this time, the musicians should be rehearsing, or warming up, You should be paying attention to overall SPL (volume) in the room, along with making final minor adjustments with EQ and compression/gating. Remember NOT TO TOUCH THE GAIN CONTROL – you will destroy all of the monitor mixes you have created if you do this! Make sure you have control of each instrument in the room. If you are achieving a good result, you should be able to "ride the faders" during the service, making adjustments that are MUSICAL in nature, as opposed to fixing problems! When the band is playing, make sure you can pick out each musician...a musical mix is achieved by "layering" the mix. This involves bring lead elements to the front, with supporting elements being pushed back.