

YURT DJ MANUAL

Composed by John Bruner, Maxime Simonet, and Andy Locke – Spring, 2010
Edited and Updated By Michael Capodiferro – Spring, 2011

Introduction

Hi! You've managed to get a hold of this document because, for some odd reason, you have a Yurt show. Weird, I know. Because of the multitude of users Yurt radio has, it's important to make sure everyone knows protocol. That is, it's important to have everyone on the same page, these pages.

So, this is accomplishing it, literally.

Equipment

-The Yurt Master Computer

This one has the big screen and the label "Yurt Master." It contains pre-recorded shows, some songs, and a lot of sound bites and advertisements. When you come into the Yurt, this computer should be the only one playing anything. A playlist on the Yurt Master iTunes called "Shows for Replay" will be looping with a variety of pre-recorded programming and songs.

A program called "SoundByte" should be open on the computer at all times. You can use this program to play ads, bumpers and stingers during your show. We recommend playing a few Yurt ads during your show.

To control the volume of this computer's output, use the "YURT MASTER" sliders.

If there isn't a show following right after yours, make sure the "YURT MASTER" sliders are up and playing "shows for replay" on iTunes. We want The Yurt to be broadcasting 24/7, so make sure wonderful sound is playing before you leave.

-The Yurt Recorder Computer

This is the computer on the right side of the desk. It listens to what the soundboard is sending out and can be used to record your show.

Currently, only one application should be opened. Audio Recorder will have a window up, and will be listening to the "Line In" input, and can record your show with very little work on your part. Just click the record button when you start, and the stop button when you end. It should automatically save to the right place.

Upon stopping the recording, you will be prompted to name your show file. This is the current naming protocol: [Semester] [Show name] [Date]. Eg: S10 The Intimate Hour 2/28

-The Soundboard

The mixing board is the middle-man through which every piece of audio equipment in the Yurt runs. Using it properly will ensure a professional-sounding show.

There are 16 channels on this sound board, four subs, and a main mix. Let's not worry about the subs or the mains just yet. Instead, let's talk about channels.

What is a channel? Well, just look at the far left of the board. There's a label reading "Mic 1", and above it, a white slider called a fader. Above that, there are some buttons, and then a long row of many different-colored knobs, two stereo ports and an XLR port. All the parts of the board in this row – fader, buttons, knobs, and ports – when taken as a whole, are called a channel.

Fortunately, the only things you need to worry about on the sound board are the faders and the mute & send buttons (right next to the faders) – in other words, you just need to make sure everything's at the right volume.

DO NOT ADJUST ANY KNOBS OR CABLES. If you know what you're doing and think one of the channels should be adjusted, ask a signer first, or at least let us know what changes you have made.

The mute button is simple to work: if it's down, that channel is muted. The mute button is very useful, as it allows you to find a good level for your input with the fader, and then switch to a different input and back again with having to re-adjust your levels. (For example, once you've introduced yourself on-air and checked the monitor to see that you're loud but not too loud on the mic, instead of fading out to zero on the mic, just hit mute. That way, when you're ready to talk again – say, after the next song – you can just un-mute the mic and go. No more fiddling with the mic fader for the rest of the show!)

Each channel controls a different input (sound source, like a laptop or the mics) but they all work the same way. A signal comes into the channel, it runs through the channel (becoming louder or quieter depending on where you've set the volume), and then it goes to the SUBS, provided the little buttons in the channel labeled "1-2" and "3-4" are pushed down. We have four subs, and they're set up to control the left and right channel of two different things: the headset amp, and the broadcast. We'll talk about the headset amp in a second, but for now, just remember to NEVER TURN THE BROADCAST SUBS BELOW TEN. In fact, if you're doing everything else right, you shouldn't need to touch the broadcast faders at all.

Now that we know how to use the faders and the mute button, let's go through the inputs on the board (each one has its own label) so we know what each one does.

- Mic 1 and Mic 2 – The desk-mounted microphones, appropriately labeled. One channel for each mic. Good for talking into.
- Yurt Master – (See above) – has a left and a right channel corresponding to the left and right channels of stereo sound. Unless what you're hearing in the headphones sounds unbalanced, you'll probably want them to be equal. Make sure these channels are un-muted and up at a good level before you leave.
- Turntables – see "The Tower and other Peripherals" – has left and right channels.
- Ext. Input A and Ext. Input B – Both of these inputs work the same way. They control an input from a mini jack, such as a laptop or iPod. Has left and right channels.
- Dome – a microphone pointing at our skylight that picks up everything in the Yurt. Good for loud acoustic music, quiet amplified music, and live audiences.
- Omni – a microphone hanging from the ceiling that can be lowered to your desired height.

Good for guests and quiet acoustic music.

- DJ Mix – controls the volume of the CD, cassette, and record players.
- Phone – controls the volume of the phone over the air.

The headset amp is slightly different. What the headset amp is for is “cueing,” that is, listening to a song off the air before you broadcast it. This is a very good skill to have, both in the Yurt and in traditional radio stations. To cue something up, press the “3-4” button so that the channel you want to cue is not going to broadcast. Then press the “1-2” button on the channel that you DO want to broadcast while you’re cueing up your next track, so that you won’t hear that channel in the headset amp. Now, put on the headphone coming out of the headset amp, and listen to your hearts content – no one is hearing what you’re hearing. When you’ve got whatever you were previewing ready, just put all the “1-2” and “3-4” buttons back down, and you’re good to go!

Finally, there’s the fader labeled speakers. This fader is just the volume for the speakers set up in and around the Yurt. You should turn them up if you want to hear the music you’re playing – but be careful! Our speakers are not made of titanium, and will break if you crank that baby up to 11. Also, it’s VERY IMPORTANT that you TURN THE SPEAKERS DOWN ALL THE WAY BEFORE USING ANY MICROPHONE. Failure to do this will cause feedback and / or a weird reverb-y effect in the broadcast. If you want to hear yourself while you’re talking, put on the headphones.

-The Tower and other peripherals

The tower, or DJ mix, has two professional-quality variable-speed CD players, a cassette player, and a belt-drive turntable. If you want to play something off a CD, cassette tape, or vinyl record, this is where you want to go.

For the most part, it’s pretty simple. The players work just like regular players, with on/off switches and play buttons and so forth. They also have some fancy bells and whistles – feel free to play around with them as long as you return all settings to their original state before you leave.

The important thing to note with the DJ mix is that it has its own mini-soundboard with a big red power switch, five faders, six knobs, and some buttons. The same rules apply to this soundboard as to the main sound board – adjust the faders so that your volume’s good, and leave everything else alone. The faders correspond to the two CD players, the tape deck, and the record player, and you won’t need to turn them up or down unless you’re cross fading from one to the other. (Say, for example, that you want to go from a song on one CD to a song on another CD without stopping – just turn down player 1 while turning up player 2 and you’ve performed a smooth, professional cross-fade.)

We also have two high-quality direct-drive turntables with a DJ mixer. Unless you have been trained on this equipment, it’s best just to steer clear. If you want to learn how to mix and scratch, I’d recommend joining the Hampshire Hip-Hop collective student group.

The phone works like a phone, except when it rings, a red light next to the monitor will flash. Make sure it’s turned up on the soundboard or no one tuning in will hear what’s going on the phone. You also talk into the microphones to talk to your caller and not into the phone itself.

-The Monitoring Screen

Check the monitor on the wall to see at what decibel level the Yurt is broadcasting and adjust

accordingly. It will also show if the Yurt's server is actually up. If the levels aren't moving and the Icecast window seems to indicate the server is down, try pressing the connect button, and email or call a signer ASAP.

Getting Started

If everything is fine, you should walk into the Yurt with the Yurt Master computer playing that "Shows for Replay" playlist.

To get started, here is what we recommend for most users:

First, plug in your external device into one of the extra inputs (if you have one.) This is a laptop, iPod, Walkman, whatever. Get a song cued up. Cross fade your cued song with Yurt Master. Hit record on the Yurt Recorder. Pause iTunes on Yurt Master, and put up its volume again. If you do this correctly and leave the volume up, you should be able to use Yurt Master's stingers, ads, and bumpers on SoundByte throughout your show.

When your song is ending, mute the mics and bring up their volume. Right when the song finishes, unmute and begin talking. Have someone make sure the external device is now paused or muted. Talk normally, but make sure to look up at the monitoring screen and the monitor on the Yurt Recorder to ensure you are not over modulating OR too quiet.

At the end of your show, bring down Yurt Master's volume and start playing shows for replay. After your final song, or discussion on air, fade up the Yurt Master and bring the volume down on the mics. Stop your recording, and name your show.

Remember: naming protocol for shows is:

[Semester] [Show name] [Date].

For example: S10 The Intimate Hour 2/28