

PRODUCT EVALUATION

Videoquip's Handy Digital Monitor

Tom Vernon

An item I consistently pack in my toolbox is a Radio Shack utility amp. It is an essential device because it's small and inexpensive, and allows me to check quickly for presence and quality of audio signals. Great for analog, but ineffective for digital.

Recognizing the need for a handheld digital utility device, the folks at Videoquip Research Ltd. in Toronto designed the DM-1 AES/EBU Digital Audio Monitor. Within this small box are a D-to-A converter, a stereo headphone amp and an LED display to indicate the incoming sampling frequency, be it 32, 44.1 or 48 kHz. Power comes from a 9V battery or external supply.

The DM-1 contains a D/A converter, a headphone amp and an LED display.

The front panel contains the power switch and indicator, stereo headphone jack, level control, and sampling frequency indicators. An XLR connector for digital input signals, a switch to select or deselect the 110-ohm terminating resistor, and the AC adapter jack are found on the rear panel.

Although the DM-1 is set up to monitor AES/EBU signals, it can handle S/PDIF audio as well. It lacks an RCA jack and proper termination, but for general listening, this is not a problem. You'll need to make your own XLR-to-female RCA adapter.

Battery life

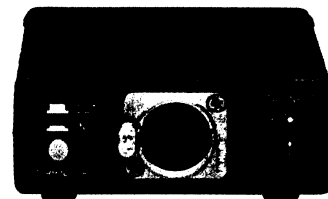
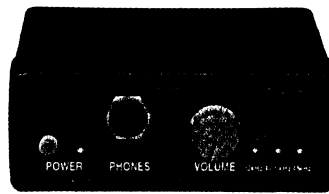
The quality of workmanship in the DM-1 is very good. All components are on one circuit board, which has component designations silk-screened on the surface. Mechanical construction is solid, with metal end pieces and a plastic

box that fits together accurately.

How long will the 9V battery last? In an unscientific test at the factory, a DM-1 was connected to a CD player set up to play the same CD continuously. Headphones were connected and cranked to full volume. The battery held out for about eight hours. This suggests you'll get more performance time in the field, where off-and-on use is less strenuous.

In the field

There are a couple ways you may want to use the DM-1. You can stuff it in your toolbox and take it in the field



Front and Rear Views of the DM-1

for quick checks, or attach the included rubber feet, power up with an AC adapter, connect an amp, and use it for

working in a high-sound-level environment or if you enjoy pain. My only See VIDEOQUIP, page 30 ▶

Videoquip Earns a Spot in Your Toolkit

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gripe is the lack of an RCA connector on the back for S/PDIF signals. An XLR-to-RCA adapter is just one more thing to lug around in your toolbox, or one more thing to forget.

If the rest of Videoquip's gear is as good as this digital monitor, it may be a company to watch.

The DM-1 measures 6 x 3.5 x 1.25

inches. It comes with a two-year warranty for parts and labor, and is available for purchase directly from the factory.

Cost is \$249. You can order at (888) 293-1071.



Tom Vernon is a multimedia consultant working in Philadelphia.

Reach him in c/o RW.

Videoquip may not be a household name in American broadcast circles, but it has been in business since 1981. Its current product line includes a range of audio, video and automation equipment.

Of special interest to radio broadcasters are Videoquip's 20-bit A/D and D/A converters, as well as its routing switchers. Coming soon are S/PDIF to AES/EBU format converters. For more information on the DM-1 and other Videoquip products, hop on your Web browser and pedal over to www.videoquip.com

ENGINEERING

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Product Capsule:
Videoquip DM-1 AES/EBU Digital Audio Monitor

Thumbs Up

- ✓ Long battery life
- ✓ Ease of use
- ✓ Cost
- ✓ Quality of construction

Thumbs Down

- ✓ No RCA jack for S/PDIF
- ✓ Need headphones for field work (no internal speaker)

For more information contact Videoquip Research Ltd.
 Toronto at (888) 293-1071 or visit
www.videoquip.com
 or circle Reader Service 222