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Helpful links:

- https://cycling74.com/support/challenge/
- https://cycling74.com/support/ilok/
- https://cycling74.com/support/faq/

Product: FAQ: Mode

- Mode General Questions
- Plugin Questions
- Mode Authorization and Licensing
- Pluggo, Mode, and Hipno Known Issues

General Questions

How powerful should my computer be to really run the Mode plug-ins?

For decent track counts, we recommend G4 1 Ghz or greater on Mac, and P4 1.5 Ghz or greater or equivalent on PC.

Which hosts will Mode work in?

We have tried to test as many different hosts as we can, and would like to say that Mode works fine in every Audio Unit and VST host on the Mac, and every VST host on PC. It also works as expected with Pro Tools (RTAS) on both platforms. Using the most recent Pluggo engine, host time sync is available for Pro Tools users.

Due to the large number of hosts out there, it may be possible we have some issues with your favorite host.

The graphics are really cool. However, is there any real benefit to having cool graphics?

We think so. We spent a lot of time tweaking the look-and-feel of the package to make it not only "cool looking", but efficient in use. For example, the knobs in MONO will glow as the value increases. That way, when you open a preset, you can quickly see where all the "action" is in the patch. We also use a lot of sliders, since it's really easy to eyeball what's happening when you look at a batch of sliders - it's one of the reasons we are fans of synths like the Arp 2600.

How come some of the presets are distorting in my host?

Its output level is too high. Turn down the output level control. This may vary by host.

Plugin Questions

Why do you say there are 23 plug-ins, but I only see 5 in most of the pictures?

The original MODE set was only five plug-ins: BANG, MONO, POLY, SPIN and WASH. We started showing them at the Musikmesse in 2003, but there were some delays in development (mainly, we needed the Pluggo technology running on OS X). This was in place for NAMM 2004, and we showed running versions of the plug-ins at that time. However, a number of people kept asking questions like "Can I change the order of effects in SPIN?" or "Is it possible to use the distortion effect from MONO on my audio tracks?"

It became clear that people (correctly) saw the MODE plug-ins as combinations of cool modules combined into monolithic plug-ins, and wanted access to the individual modules as well. So, post-NAMM, we went through the "big five" plug-ins and split out 18 of the best "modules" as stand-alone plug-ins. When we showed this at Musikmesse 2004, it caused a lot of those same people's eyes to bug out.

The fact is that, in our own use, the "modules" turn out to be as fun as the "big five". We were able to do some freaky stuff with Pluggo-style modulators, weird little synchronized effects and CPU-efficient mini-synths that make the whole package a lot more fun. Of course, the package will probably be evaluated based on the "big five", but there is a lot of excitement over the modular synth-like qualities of having a bunch of small processors and synths.

What is the point of BANG? It doesn't have a sequencer, and there's only one sound!

Well, it comes from a specific view of percussion programming. There are a lot of "standard" drum modules, sets of 8-32 percussion sounds (often based on samples) that cover a lot of drum sound stuff. Also, almost all of the sequencers have excellent drum programming tools (both Digital Performer and Cubase SX have killer drum programming sequencing systems).

So, instead, we wanted to make a plug-in that could be used in addition to other, more standard, drum programming tools. BANG, and the BANG-based modules, are particularly effective at creating blats, whizzles and floops that elude the typical percussion-playback synths. By combining sample playback, FM and analog-like programming tools, the BANG tools allow you to create that "something special" that can make your percussion programming better.

Also, the BANG tools are "pitched", which mean that they respond to the MIDI key that triggers them. This is important - it means that BANG (and the BANG modules) are really general-use synthesizers that happen to have a percussive nature. This is one of those plug-ins that will grow on you if you give it a chance.

Why isn't MONO a polyphonic synthesizer?

The inspiration for MONO was the old Yamaha DX-100. That synth had one of the crappiest keyboards imaginable, so people seldom used it for much other than single-note lines. MONO is focused on squealing leads, rumbling basses and cool arpeggiations - all the strengths of a monosynth. Especially when used with the arpeggiator, it becomes clear how the FM voicing of MONO works especially well as

a monosynth.

The Poly Arp section of POLY is really interesting. What was its genesis?

We've always been entranced by polyphonic arpeggiators - the one found in the Korg Z1 was stunning. However, it seemed to take a PhD to program the darned thing, and we never seemed to be able to find the time to do it.

So we started looking at what it takes to create a simple poly-arpeggiator, and started to do some experiments. By watching our hands while we played chord and comp lines, it became clear that low and high notes were important "moving" sounds, while the middle fingers tended to hold less-active (but still important) comping chords. Once we figured this out, the basis of the arpeggiator was born.

In order to create even more variations, the octave jumps were added. This ended up being the real kicker, since simple Poly Arp setups, with some simple octave jumps and modest keyboard work produced really exciting backing lines. Once we wrapped a synth around it, it was (to our minds) golden.

What's with the weird step selection thing in SPIN?

This comes from a very specific place - the love of odd-time cycles. Way back when, Opcode Vision had a very cool feature; it had the ability to loop sub-sections of a track with a single mouse-drag. More recent sequencer have similar features, but we decided to take that original idea a bit further. First, this allows for cycling the effects processing, rather than the track contents. Next, because we divide things up into 32nds, it means that we can do cycling at less-than-a-beat turns. It provides a lot of effects fun.

So, for example, we have the ability to do filter sweeps in 28/32nd steps, which means that it will repeat every eight beats. This is especially cool when using the SPIN-based modules; you can set each one to use a different step time, which is especially interesting with the filter and panner combination. Try a filter at 27/32nds, and a panner at 19/32nds. This will cause the filter and panner to cycle at different speeds, and turn a simple pad into a swirling sweep that seems to have a life of its own - but remains, somehow, "in sync".

Mode Authorization and Licensing

How does the copy protection on the Mode plug-ins work?

We use Pace Copy protection on both platforms. You may choose to authorize using the hard disk Challenge/Response system, or with an iLok USB key. The demo works with a small buzz in the audio every minute or so. For more authorization details, go to the support page.

If I use several sequencing programs on the same hard disk, will I need to Authorize Mode to run with each one?

No.

I use Pro Tools on my desktop machine and Digital Performer on my Powerbook. Do I need to purchase two copies of Mode to use with both machines?

The license says you can install multiple copies, but you can only use one at a time. So, as long as you aren't using Mode on both machines at the same time, you are complying with the terms of the license. However, don't take this to mean that you can install Mode on a hundred computers at Goldman Sachs or in a university lab where you would claim that only one copy of Mode will be in use at any one time.