

For The Technical And Production Professionals

ETA EXCLUSIVE: Interview with Pangdemonium's James Tan



REVIEW



Robe Jams out with City65

KNOWLEDGE HUB: Static VS Dynamic Video Mapping

EXHIBITION REVIEW: SLV Symposium

THE ALEX SCHLOESSER COLUMN

Tuning and Setup of a Sound System



This topic is important for me since more than 30 years now and thinking about squeezing anything useful into a page seems like a ridiculous attempt. So here we go: In my early years in the industry, doing any kind of proper tuning work included very expensive gear, which was difficult to afford.

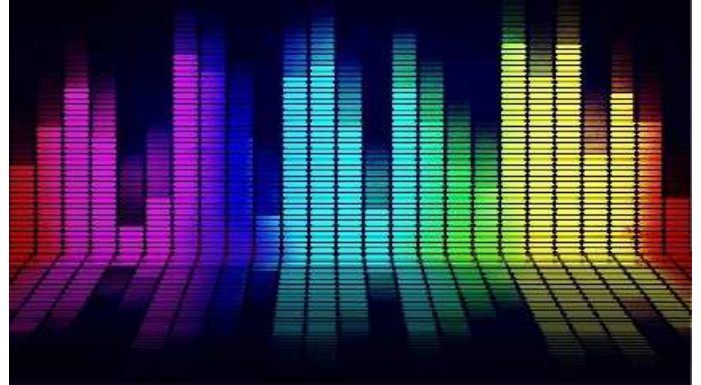
To use parametric equalizers versus Graphic equalizers was something you needed to be a half god for. Things have changed for good.

I recognize that a lot of my colleagues globally now only believe in what they see on some computer screen and they rely on information, which they rarely verify and of course colorful pictures from simulation programs are nice and make our job look more professional. If you don't understand what your software is showing you, you will not be able to read the colorful pictures properly. This is a challenge and teaching about this has become a business in our industry. I have also found that I spend a lot of time verifying data and performance for gear that I use and the reason that I sometimes buy expensive stuff is, that I trust those manufacturers, that when they charge me all this money, they will deliver something decent.

However, the best set of tuning tools has been given to you for free and you should better make good use of it. If it looks good on the screen, but it sounds poor in the venue, what are you going to do? Your ears are your most trusted and reliable partner and you should keep them in good shape and treat them with respect. Together a good set of ears and a decent piece of measurement software will give you all that you need these days.

I do believe that the "Tuning" of a system really is only 20 % of getting a good result and as much as it sounds silly, making sure your gear is fully functional is far more important than tuning it to death. I have come up with some simple steps for myself on this task:

- Check all your systems and drivers in the system and check it each time you use it
- Choose the right gear for the right application, there is no "one size fits all"!
- Find the best possible position for each system and put the system in place properly
- Point and aim your systems as exact as possible, you can never correct via EQ what you have screwed up acoustically. Sometimes a "wedge" or a "tilt shot" can do wonders.



- Make sure that your crossover frequencies and levels between systems are set correct
- Time align / tune the system so that Delay, Phase and Frequency response are even

Once you get the first four points right, the last two are straight forward. Since time constraints are a permanent problem in our industry it also helps that you can do the system check and selection of gear before the job already. We learn so much about the last parts, that many times we are missing out on the earlier four. In the past 31 years I have saved my job too many times by finding some broken gear, which I was assured is working fine. If you are also passionate about this topic, **I will be offering some System Tuning workshops around Asia and if you want to participate in one, please watch out for dates and locations near you. For any further information on dates and locations, please send a PM to alex@asaudio.de**