

# Behringer V-Verb Pro

Brad Watts find himself attracted to this dual-engine reverb.

Good ol' Behringer! They certainly provide a sure-fire path to upmarket concepts at bargain basement prices. While its traditionally been easy to be patronising about some of the 'inspiration' behind some of its designs, you can't dispute Behringer's sheer unrelenting tenacity in creating highly useable equipment at eye-poppingly low prices.

Among Behringer's new releases at the recent NAIMM show emerged the V-Verb Pro. The V-Verb is, according to the Behringer press machine, 'an ultra high performance 24-bit/96k dual-engine reverb modeller'. Most staggering is the price. At well under \$700 the V-Verb costs far less than most software effects plug-ins. I don't know how they can live with themselves!

So what's the V-Verb got to offer? Professional interfacing is where things kick off. AES/EBU digital I/O puts the unit into the 'as used by professionals' category, as does the wordclock input and optical S/PDIF I/O. Analogue connection to the V-Verb comes via balanced XLR or 6.25mm jacks. A full complement of Midi I/O allows integration and automation via any respectable recording system. Of course, the 96k digital path bestows a degree of future-proofing to this device. Oddly, internal clocking rates offer only three options: 44.1k, 48k and 96k – no 88.2k setting. Clocking to 88.2k requires external syncing – possible via AES/EBU, optical S/PDIF or wordclock. Power is supplied via the standard IEC connector, and auto-switches between international voltages. The build quality adheres to Behringer's use of 1mm sheet steel casing, with the front panel enclosure and rack-mounting ears fashioned from brushed aluminium.

Hats off to Behringer for the easily navigable operating system. Via the 128- by 64-pixel LCD the V-Verb OS makes driving the V-Verb a doddle and, in fact, is reminiscent of the operating system found in effect units from TC Electronics – such as the FireworX, TC Intonator and Gold Channel – which is definitely no bad thing as the TC operating system is one of the best around.

To put you more in the picture as to the actual operation, let's jump into the driver's seat. Four rotary pots adjust patch parameters with a virtual display of the pot's position appearing on screen. These four pots also offer push-button operation for functions requiring an on/off decision. To the right are 12 System buttons for selecting between the two effects engines or running in 'Combi' mode; editing and scrolling

through each effects setting's pages; as well as for accessing functions like Compare, Bypass, Store and Global Setup. All buttons are dedicated to a single function apart from the Tap Tempo, which doubles as the Patch Recall button. The 'Graph' button switches the edit screen over to a graphical mode, thus displaying a patch's parameters as graphs rather than numeric figures. Very tidy. The large jog wheel has one simple function – scrolling through the 400 patch memories. Driving the V-Verb is a piece of cake – you can pretty much turf the manual if you wish.

Because the V-Verb offers two separate effects blocks and can handle two sets of I/O, you can set the unit up in parallel, as two discrete stereo effects, or run both effects blocks in series. Ten separate methods of configuration allow the V-Verb to cover any patching situation.

Ease of use is of course a secondary consideration to the actual sound. Behringer has taken the path of 'modelling' various well-known reverb units. They don't actually reveal the units they've had on the test bench – there are laws against that – but judging by the preset titles such as 'Mega', 'Church 960' and 'Vintage 250' we're looking at a similar batch of reverbs as emulated



by the TC Electronics M3000 and perhaps the recent Reverb 4000. In short, you'd have to say Behringer has chosen wisely, as the classic/industry standard units in question are well worth the emulation. Combined with a single Analog Devices SHARC DSP chip, Behringer could hardly go wrong. The result is a very usable collection of reverbs. I won't go so far as to say they're as good as the emulated products but they do come close. The bottom line is of course the pricing. Nothing else will give you this much functionality and ease of use for the same dollar. I can see the V-Verb being sold by the truckload.



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