

Electro-Voice R300 Wireless Microphone System

By Mark Desloges

For years it seemed like the people who were most likely to be interested in or using wireless systems in real-life settings were the pros, audio lab coats, and gear pigs. When these systems first started to hit the market, they were expensive and required a healthy knowledge of the equipment and the principles at-hand.

As time has passed and technology advances and becomes more widely available to the market, we've started to see wireless systems popping up all around us. One thing that has remained constant is the availability of expensive models that provide features for true audiophiles to drool over – units that require a higher amount of requisite knowledge and dollars from your bank account; however, something that has emerged is newer, simpler wireless systems popping up in the market that are affordable, yet offer many of the same features as the more expensive models.

This year, EV released its own competitively-priced wireless system: the R300. Aimed at the general user with an affordable price, the R300 offers an impressive amount of features in relation to its humble price tag. Unlike days past, when less expensive meant little to no control, poor signal, plastic boxes, and plastic mics that always broke and were never dependable, the R300, with its handheld and belt-pack transmitters, is a workhorse literally made of metal.

This was a huge selling point for me. Having spent a number of years on the road with mid-level touring bands on budgets, I have seen so many wireless systems break or malfunction due to poor construction and lackluster engineering. Whether it is a just conclusion or not, when you pick up a piece of equipment and it feels sturdy, it instills confidence in the user; we all know that a metal frame is far more likely to survive the harsh world of the music industry than its plastic

counterpart. On top of this, available as an after-market accessory, you can buy metal rack mounting hardware. This not only appeals to the younger road warrior side of me that wants to throw it in a road case and chuck it in a van, but the wiser install-driven side of me who sees many practical applications in smaller systems, like churches or community centres.

As wireless systems have become more affordable and people become more dependent on them, they're starting to appear in places you never would have expected. What has also become apparent is that there is a market of users who want to own a wireless system but don't want to have to take a course to understand how to use it. One thing I wanted to point out in this review is that, from start to finish, taking this system out of its packaging, setting it up, and actually using it took me less than 10 minutes.

Like many of today's top-shelf wireless systems, with the push of one button, the R300 has the capability to scan for available wireless frequencies, find the most reliable frequency, and with the push of just one more button, sync the microphone to the receiver. There are many other features worth exploring; however, I felt it very

prudent to point out that an inexpensive wireless mic that can be self-programmed by pressing two buttons can really appeal to the mid-level market and user. The kit comes with everything you need from receiver to mic, antennas, power supply – it even comes in a nylon carrying case. There's a certain peace of mind that comes with the ability to get everything you need in one stop and not being forced to buy it piece-by-piece.

What this all boils down to is that not everyone wants to (or is able to) spend thousands of dollars on a wireless microphone system. Realizing this, manufacturers are starting to offer more reliable and cost-effective models, which actually appeal to the weekend warrior on a budget. EV has hit this market square between the eyes with the release of this product. The company has put out an easy-to-use, sturdy wireless microphone system that sounds good at a price that seems too low for what's on offer.

Gone are the days where only the well-to-do audiophiles could afford to have quality wireless. Enter the dependable mid-level market, where people of all walks of life are free to roam the stage without the pains of being chained to an XLR.



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