

Stage Noise

Personal Monitor Mixing's Number One Enemy

So maybe you're standing there scratching your head. You just bought SamePage Mix, got it up and running but you can't get everything to sound right. If you haven't already, start by reading "Get the Right 'Headphones'", and make sure you have some good In Ear Monitors (IEMs). Now that we've covered IEMs the second most likely issue and the number one enemy of SamePage Mix is stage noise.

The reason you're standing on that stage is to produce excellent music for the audience. It is really all about them, not all about you. On the other hand you have to be able to hear yourself and you have to enjoy making the music. One of the biggest advantages of Mix is its ability to lower the noise pollution coming from the stage. It is much easier to get a good mix in the house if you don't have to fight stage noise. This is especially true in small rooms that often have bad acoustics. You as the musician have to hear yourself and the rest of the band. Personal mixing systems are intended to totally recreate the listening environment for each musician (through a good set of IEMs). Just like talking on the phone or having a conversation with someone face to face, the lower the noise levels around you (ambient noise) the better. So how do you do this?

- **Get rid of your wedges and stage monitors** - If you still have a choir or back ground vocals that don't have IEMs then just try to minimize the volumes. **Resist the urge to straddle the fence when you switch from traditional monitoring to IEMs, meaning don't leave the wedges turned on until you get used to IEMs. This will only make it harder to get good sound with the IEMs.**
- **Lower drum noise** – If you have acoustic drums then get them in a cage with mics, if at all possible. Another alternative is to use electric drums. Butt kicker makes an attachment to a drum throne to help recreate the "feel" of the music.
<http://www.thebuttkicker.com/musicians/index.htm>
- **Guitar and Bass amps** – There are a number of ways to get rid of guitar and bass amps on the stage. There is something strange about volume knobs on electric guitar amps, they might actually turn up on their own...Weird! Here are some suggestions.
 - Get rid of amps all together and switch to a pedal. Line6 makes some great pedals that can recreate almost anything. <http://www.line6.com/#>
 - If your electric guitar player is completely in love with his tube amp then put in a back room and mic it. That way he can't touch the volume knob and he still gets the same sound.
 - Do the same thing for the bass player and if he still complains that he can't 'feel' the music then check this out.
http://www.thebuttkicker.com/musicians/products/bkp_kit.htm
- **Get a decibel meter** – this will allow you to measure the levels on the stage and keep them at an acceptable level.