

# **ID Controller** *by WK Audio*

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**New Product Guide**  
**December 2003**



## New Product Guide

# ID Controller

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### Preamble

The **ID** controller hardware for Nuendo has been developed in cooperation with *WK Audio* Germany. While Steinberg brought in all its software and DAW know-how, *WK Audio* was very profitable to the project with over 25 years of experience in custom built mixing surfaces for audio professionals. For more than two years, the **ID** hardware controller has been developed closely together with the Nuendo software team under constant examination of the existing market for hardware controllers. The result is a breathtaking interface for the Nuendo software which simply cannot be compared with any existing hardware controller. **ID** is a dream come true not only in hardware design but also in software implementation from the Nuendo side.

During the process of development and ongoing market research it has become very clear to both *WK Audio* and Steinberg that a high profile product like the **ID** controller has specific demands in order to best serve the customer's needs and expectations. As a result of this, Steinberg decided to hand the vending and servicing of the **ID** controller completely back to *WK Audio*. This not only enables Steinberg to continue concentrating on the Steinberg core business, which is audio workstations, but also guarantees optimal support for the **ID** hardware controller, as no one knows the unit better than *WK Audio*. One other positive side effect of this decision was that the pricing structure for these hand built hardware units that consist of exclusive electrical and mechanical components could become a lot more customer friendly by choosing the direct distribution model from *WK Audio* directly to the Steinberg distribution net. Naturally, Steinberg will continue to market **ID** as the number one control surface for Nuendo and promote it on shows and clinics worldwide.

*WK Audio* is currently setting up the distribution network and will contact the existing group of Steinberg distributors in order to evaluate which distributors are interested in taking this perfect addition to Nuendo on board. While shipment of the **ID** hardware controller will start initially in January 2004 in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, *WK Audio* is planning on spreading this over the rest of Europe and most parts of the world during the first quarter of 2004.

**Tagline**

*“The ideal Nuendo hardware controller”*

**Positioning Statement**

*“The **ID Controller** by WK Audio is a hardware DAW Controller precision-built using premium components that integrates perfectly with the Nuendo software. The hardware consists of four segments (Edit Section, Fader Section, Channel Section, Control Room Section) offering faders, encoders, a trackball and jog dial, keys, LEDs and displays. **ID** is connected to the computer via USB, can replace mouse and computer keyboard and features analog audio interfacing for headphones and a talkback microphone. The basic unit is easily extendable with up to 4 additional fader packs.,,*

**Product Summary**

The **ID** hardware controller is offers not only a range of what have become standard hardware devices and features. **ID** combines outstanding build quality with a range of features and solutions, some of which are completely new to hardware controllers. plus it features many new, previously features.

- 12 touch-sensitive motorized faders (12 bit resolution)
- 40 encoders with push pull function
- 12 Control room potentiometers
- 30-segment meter bridge: 24 for channels, 8 for Master
- Jog Dial supporting project arrangement editing
- Unique and extremely fast channel access features
- Perfectly integrated with Nuendo software
- More displays, LEDs and Keys than any other controller
- Trackball and ASCII Keyboard
- Extendable with up to four fader packs allowing for 96 channels in direct access

## Competitive Situation

Before analyzing who are the competitors, the question is “who is the target customer”?

In the case of **ID**, this is the owner of a professional studio working in the field of music recording, music mixing, audio editing, post production, film mixing and broadcasting. Price and feature set of **ID** are not aiming at project studio customers.





The only real competitors for **ID** are the products Pro Control and Control 24 by Digidesign. Although they cannot be used in conjunction with Nuendo they can be understood as competing due to the fact that the Digidesign software is the strongest competitor for Nuendo. Smaller controllers like the Mackie Control for example cannot be considered competing products, since they do not meet the needs of a professional user – the target group **ID** is designed for. Nevertheless, the Mackie Control is listed in the following chart as an example for smaller controllers, illustrating the lack of competition among smaller controllers by showing the superiority of the **ID** feature set.

What professional users are looking for is a controller which covers all areas necessary for working with a DAW. A major weak point of all the competitive products is the absence of a good edit section, allowing for direct editing of the project arrangement. Furthermore, the high number of encoders and the two-line displays put **ID** far ahead of the competition when it comes to plug-in editing. Also the superior channel navigation in large projects has to be mentioned, a feature not implemented in any of the competing products. **ID** offers unique navigation features such as the automatic tracking of channel strip classes (MIDI channels, sub groups, Effect returns, etc.) as well as other highly developed features for fast and intelligent access to channels. The flexibility of the control room section is also far superior to its static and analogue realization in the Digidesign products. Besides many smaller details such as the ergonomic and efficient dial editing section, **ID** is much more integrated in the DAW environment than any other hardware controller. Performance-wise, **ID** is at this time by far the most interesting product for professional users.

## Short overview of advantages

- Better plug-in editing
- Superior channel strip navigation
- Better DAW integration
- Greater expansion possibilities
- Higher resolution encoder
- Higher resolution meter than in all other controllers
- More displays than any other controller
- More encoders than any other controller
- More keys than any other controller
- Superior components
- Excellent ergonomics
- Many unique features not available on any other controller (see below)

## Comparison Chart

	ID by WK Audio	ProControl	Control 24	Mackie Control
<b>Product photo</b>				
<b>Expandable</b>	yes	yes	no	yes
<b>Channels in direct access</b>	24	8	24	8
<b>Large faders</b>	12	8	24	9
<b>Small faders</b>	12	no	no	no
<b>Maximum # of channels in direct access with fader packs</b>	96 (max 4 fader packs)	48 (max 5 fader packs)	24 (no fader packs)	40 (max 4 fader packs)
<b>Plug In Parameter in access</b>	24	8	24	8 to 32
<b>Rotary Encoders</b>	40	16	29	8
<b>Push-pull Encoders</b>	yes	no	no	yes
<b>Lines of displays</b>	104	17	26	16
<b>2 line displays</b>	yes	no	no	yes
<b>Jog dial</b>	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Dial edit</b>	yes	no	no	no
<b>Mouse replacement</b>	Trackball	Touch pad	no	no
<b>ASCII keyboard</b>	yes	yes	no	no
<b>Channel Matrix</b>	yes	yes	no	no
<b>Reverse intelligence</b>	yes	no	no	no
<b>Analogue components</b>	1 Talk back mic. 1 Headphone pre amp	1 Talk back mic 8 channel monitoring	16 mic pre amps, 8 mix returns, 6 channel monitoring, 1 headphone out	none
<b>Digital control room remote</b>	yes	no	no	no
<b>Meter bridge</b>	32 meters 30 Segments	24 meters 15 Segments	30 meters 20 Segments	8 meters (not permanent) 8 Segments
<b>Connection</b>	1 x USB per unit	Ethernet	Ethernet	MIDI
<b>Platforms</b>	PC only	PC/Mac	PC/Mac	PC/Mac
<b>Chassis material</b>	Aluminium, steel	plastic	plastic	plastic

## Target Customers

Customers the **ID** controller are professional Nuendo clients from anywhere within the audio industry (Film, Television, Game Sound, Music, Multimedia). All of them have to guide their projects through similar basic processes: Recording, editing and mixing. Since **ID** perfectly meets the demands in these working stages it appeals to editors, engineers and artists in the following locations:

### >> Recording Studios

Optimal overview for the project is provided by **ID** while working on the project. This not only reduces human errors, but also allows the focus to be kept where it needs to be – on the sound itself and the performing musicians, narrator or sound effect person.

### >> Editing Suites

**ID** breaks completely new ground in audio editing. Standard editing functions can be performed using the jog dial allowing fast speed editing. Another speed factor is the large number of strategically arranged freely assignable keys which enable different editors to port their personal way of working onto the controller they are working with.

### >> Mixing Facilities

By using **ID** the sound engineer gets the only appropriate tool for mixing. A mouse simply cannot replace faders and rotary encoders in all situations, especially since a mouse cannot move multiple faders at once like the human hands can. With **ID**, one of the essential features in mixing, automation becomes absolutely transparent and controllable just like on standard automated mixing consoles. The well thought thru segmentation of the control surface makes **ID** the ideal control centre for the complex signal routing environment needed while mixing. **ID** helps immensely to keep the overlook and makes plug-in editing a breeze, further speeding up workflow. The handling of all surround panners within a mixer channel is supported by the included channel strip section. The unique control room section puts the important task of monitoring back on the map.

## General controller selling points for a hardware controller

### >> Cost reduction

Costs for conventional mixing consoles with comparable features offered by software DAWs today in terms of automation, total recall, flexibility and integration are extremely high. But it is exactly these points which make users decide on software solutions.

### >> Workflow optimization

Picking up the pace is one of the strengths of hardware controllers. **ID** takes this further than any other controller by extending existing possibilities and adding new solutions. For the customer who has booked a studio, a hardware controller opens up room for him to sit next to the operator and follow the processes that his project is being taken through. Pleasing the customer is of highest importance after all.

### >> Quality optimization

Just like in a classic mixing desk environment, all parameters are put under direct control of the operator when using a hardware controller. The limitation of screen size and the fact that mouse and keyboard can only trigger functionalities in a serial way make a control surface the optimal tool to prevent user weariness, provide overview, re-establish communication and allow perfect focussing during work. All of this directly improves the quality of the project that is being worked on.

### >> Image gain

Image definitely is an important point for studios. Well chosen locations, good furniture in the studios and a good choice on the right equipment is needed to impress the customer, let him know why his investment was right and to also play in the desired league of studios. Especially a hardware controller replacing the mixer in the centre of each studio is an object needed to create the right level of attention.

## Unique selling points for the ID controller

### >>Edit Section

No other controller currently features an edit section enabling the user to control more than the mixer and a few transport commands of the software. **ID** does. Not only the mixing and full transport control but also the editing in the project can be using the controller itself. Mouse and keyboard are not necessarily needed although offered within the controller itself.

### >>Digital Control Room Access

**ID** is the only controller which accesses the control room functionality of the software. While all other manufacturers have to utilize external analog solutions, **ID** makes use of the Nuendo audio hardware and is thus flexible to adapt to any control room functionality needed.

### >>Reverse View Intelligence

When using the unique reverse view intelligence feature, the user gets a view on his project he has never had before but longed for so much. Any last action done by the user inside the fader or channel strip section is being displayed on the Matrix section of **ID**. If “rec ready” for example was activated last, the user can instantly examine the “rec ready” status on up to 96 channels. Instantly he can see which other channels are in “rec ready” mode and any of the 96 channels can be influenced to change their “rec ready” status immediately on the Matrix without having to step thru channels.

### >>Channel Class Detection

Until now the available mixer channels could only be viewed with help of standard bank/channel buttons or by up/down stepping. With the Channel Class Detection integrated in **ID**, specific channel classes can be searched after and sorted by. For example, all effect return channels can be layered on the available faders. With a single keystroke, all channels are identified, sorted and displayed for a quick overview and direct access options.

### >>Expand

Expand is a way of analyzing a complete channel with all its incoming or outgoing connections. Layering all group faders for example on the desk with help of the inbuilt channel class detection as described above is helpful but what if you would like to know what channels of your mix are routed to a specific group? The Expand function immediately lines up all feeding channels next to a group channel or orders all sending channels next to an effect return channel.

### >>Global Access

If the user decides to execute a certain function as “global“, all channels are influenced instead of only one. For example can AUX Send 1 on all channels be routed to the same reverb.

### >>Super Channel

A complete channel strip can be displayed on **ID**. Other than controllers from competing manufacturers, **ID** can display all parameters of a channel on its displays with phase, gain, 8 AUX sends, surround panner, 4 band parametric EQ, 8 inserts, input, output, label, solo, cut and ISO. And of course **ID** instantly allows editing of all of these.

## Key Features & Benefits

Feature	Benefit
Extensive hardware controls	12 large and 12 small faders grant direct channel access. The quality and amount of LEDs, displays, keys and rotary encoders is unequalled among today's controllers. Mouse and keyboard are provided by the controller and jog dial supports many editing features of the Nuendo hardware.
Future proof feature set	<b>ID</b> was developed after a detailed market research and thus provides everything needed in studios today. In addition many things already are integrated on the controller in order to serve future Nuendo software developments.
Optimum software integration	<b>ID</b> and Nuendo were developed in parallel always ensuring optimal cooperation between software and hardware. All controls on the hardware surface are not only placed with ergonomic benefits in mind but also were chosen to best reflect and complement existing Nuendo software features.
Many unique features	Basically, <b>ID</b> covers all latest feature standards found in hardware control surfaces today. In addition, <b>ID</b> features many unique functions not to be found anywhere else. An edit section on the controller with jog dial support, digital access to the control room functionalities, the super channel and the advanced channel selection features set <b>ID</b> apart from the competition. Functions like Expand, Global Access and the reverse view intelligence set new standards in terms of workflow and usability.
Great expanding options	Up to four fader packs, each adding 12 small and 12 large faders, 48 displays and 24 rotary encoders can be used to enlarge the controller. Options for joysticks are available as well for those involved in surround mixing.

## Key Messages

- The perfect hardware controller for Nuendo
- Grants faster workflow and high usability
- Provides a perfect image for customers
- Best hardware control surface in the marked
- High end product
  - Designed and manufactured in Germany
  - High quality components
- Many expanding options
- Future proof hardware selection

## Technical Specification

- 12 touch-sensitive motorized faders (12 bit resolution)
- 12 Control Room potentiometers
- 40 encoders with push/pull function
  - 64 positions with fine tuning option
- 380 keys (backlit, framed, 10.000.000 key cycles)
- Displays:
  - Characters total: 378
  - 104 lines each with 7 characters
  - 2 lines each with 10 characters
  - 2 lines with 5 characters
  - 14 7-segment LCD displays
- LEDs: 1705 in total (red, green, yellow, blue)
- 30-segment meter bridge: 24 for channels, 8 for Master
- Steel housing (no interspersion)
- 12 processor boards
- Wood side panels: real mahogany
- Padded arm rests
- Industry standard trackball according to IP60, protected against dust and water, 50 mm
- ASCII keyboard (English layout)
- Non-reflecting surface
- Can be extended with up to 4 fader packs
- Option-slot for joystick
- Precision built in Germany
- Power supply: integrated 120 Watts with 50% overhead.
- Connections:
  - 1 USB, 1 power chord
- Dimensions:
  - Base unit without side panels:
    - W: 1012 mm / D: 760 mm
    - H at fader block: 93 mm
    - H at meter bridge: 275 mm