



Professional Audio and Music Production

Furman/PFPower M1500 Programmable UPS

by [Barry Rudolph](#)



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The M1500 (\$999) is the first product under the new PFPower brand from Panamax and Furman. Specifically designed for studios and home theaters, the M1500 is a programmable, uninterruptible power supply with voltage regulation, power line conditioning and integrated power-down sequencing.

Guaranteed for three years, the two-rackspace M1500 weighs 59 pounds, complete with a sealed lead-acid battery. Under normal operation, the 1500 is an AC line voltage regulator that outputs a constant 120 VAC and only switches to battery operation when the input line voltage falls below 88 volts or exceeds 147 volts.

Most UPS units are DC-to-AC inverters running on batteries kept charged by the AC line. They're okay for keeping a PC powered during a power failure, but worthless for powering audio and video equipment. Besides providing non-sinusoidal AC voltage that decreases the efficiency of power transformers and causes electrical noise and interference, battery-only UPS units do not have the current "headroom" required for the huge, instantaneous current demands made by audio power amps, powered speakers or a DLP projector lamp.

The M1500 produces 1,000W (1,500VA) of pure, 60Hz (+/-1-percent) sine wave 120VAC (+/-5-percent) output with 50 dB of noise and RF suppression from 100 kHz to 1 MHz. When the AC line fails, it will supply full power for eight minutes--much longer if the load is lighter. It can transfer to battery operation in 4 ms. This is an important feature for DAWs, as many computers' power supplies will not tolerate line voltage outages any longer than 6 to 10 ms

before they will restart.

The M1500 extends its utility by providing programmability through a rear panel RS-232 port and IR (infrared) ports. Via the RS-232 port and the included software, the UPS can be programmed using a PC for use with home theater gear and/or home automation. The IR ports use the "learn" feature in your remote control to configure sequential power-down commands in two steps to your A/V gear. Sent over IR flashers (not included), amps and powered monitors could be powered-down first, followed by all other gear.

A simple front panel display shows power-on/off, load level, battery condition, unsafe line voltage and any line faults such as broken grounds. Another great feature is that the onboard battery is replaceable while the unit is turned on and regulating.

With 1,000W available, I used only about 50 percent of the unit's load capacity to power my entire Pro Tools studio. The M1500 has six sets of circuit breaker-protected AC sockets: four for noncritical loads and two for critical loads. You can program the unit so that critical loads (DAW computer, interfaces, monitor, drives and recording chain) have more minutes of run time beyond the moment when noncritical loads (CD player, video monitor, lava lamps, etc.) shut down.

After a series of momentary outages in my neighborhood during a crucial recording project, I kept working, oblivious to the outside world. The mighty M1500 paid for itself that day in work/time otherwise lost. So I'm an owner now and if you're serious about protecting your DAW and--more importantly, the artistic audio assets you're entrusted with--don't fly without a PFPower M1500.

PFPower, 707/763-1010, www.furmansound.com.

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