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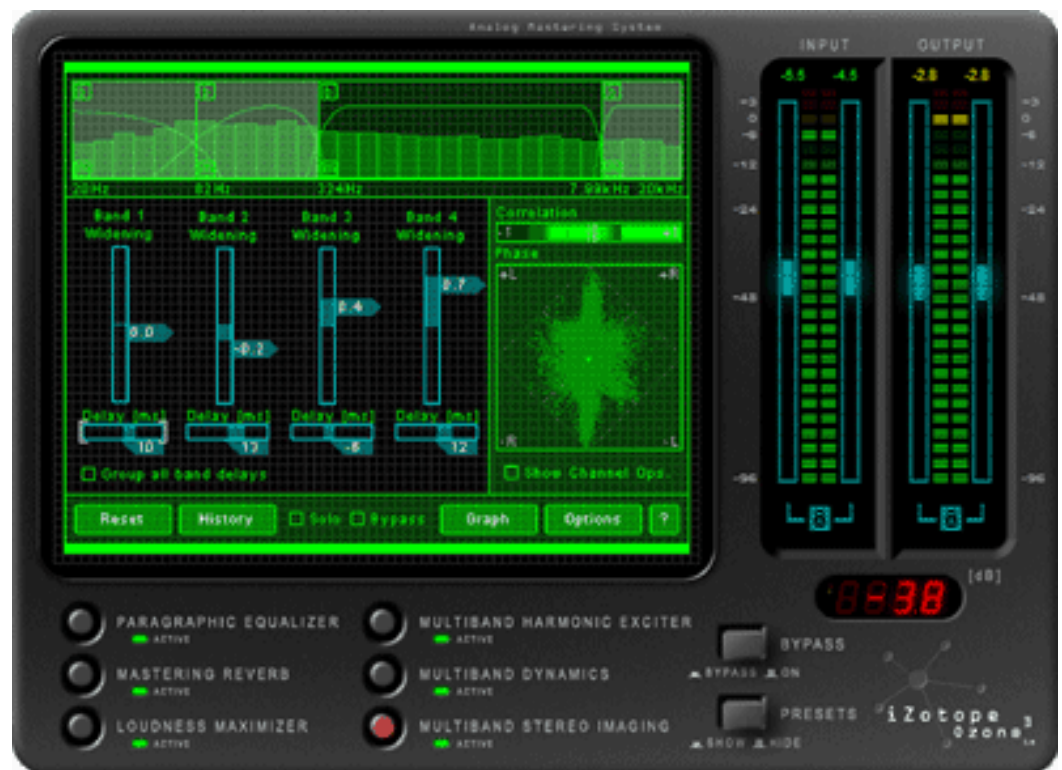
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The polymaths at iZotope, the company that came up with the innovative Spectron and Trash plug-ins, have significantly redesigned the manufacturer's popular Ozone 2 analog-modeled mastering suite and christened it Ozone 3. With more than 30 improvements, Ozone 3 is a DirectX-based stereo mastering plug-in that comprises six separate processors running within a common control panel interface. While it is an amazingly deep and comprehensive mastering "finishing tool," with

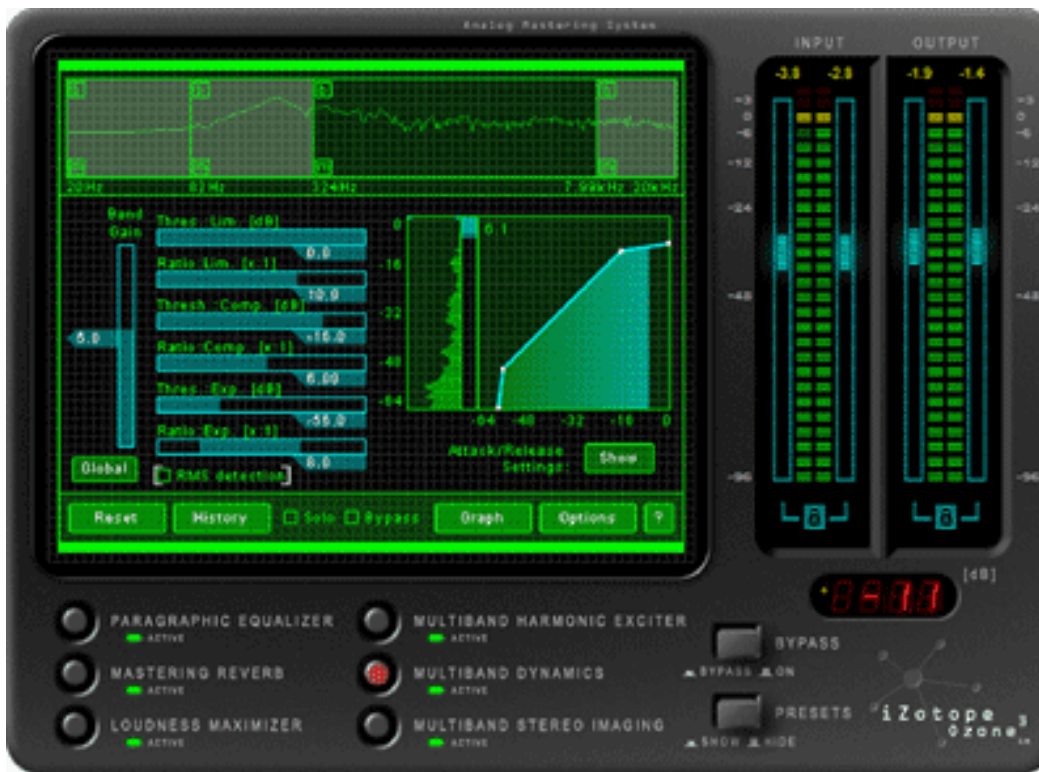


MultiBand Stereo Imager

internal 64-bit precision and the ability to run up to 192kHz sample rates, Ozone 3 also makes an excellent individual stereo track processor. CPU load is not light, but in a 2.8GHz Nuendo P4 PC, I was able to run a session with 60-plus tracks, many plug-ins and reverbs and still have enough steam left for four of six (possible) Ozone 3 processors on the stereo master fader. Even my pokey 800MHz Celeron PC running Cubase SX 2.0 did fine with up to five of them running on a finished stereo mix. Ozone 3 supports Cakewalk's Sonar Record Automation option; you can automate Ozone from within Sonar by moving an Ozone control. Ozone 3 will be available for both VST and Pro Tools systems soon.

## CALLING ALL PROCESSORS

The six processors in Ozone 3 are paragraphic equalizer, multiband dynamics, multiband harmonic exciter, multiband stereo imaging, loudness maximizer and mastering reverb. The sequence of these processes can be shuffled in any order and it's easy to bypass any of them with a mouse click. Master control panel features affecting all six processors include ganged (or not) stereo input and output faders with peak reading meters; global bypass (bypassing any individual processor relinquishes CPU power); and a drop-down menu of handy factory presets and your own stored concoctions.



MultiBand Stereo Dynamics

Like Ozone 2, most work begins around the paragraphic equalizer where, besides switching between a modeled analog or digital phase linear EQ, you have up to eight different overlapping frequency points or nodes to affect. Being a sonic surgeon, I love this tool because it allows me to have this much control over frequency, level, Q and the "shape" of each node. Combining a high-shelf, high-pass-band, peaking, low-shelf and lowpass filter types produces a resultant EQ curve that is

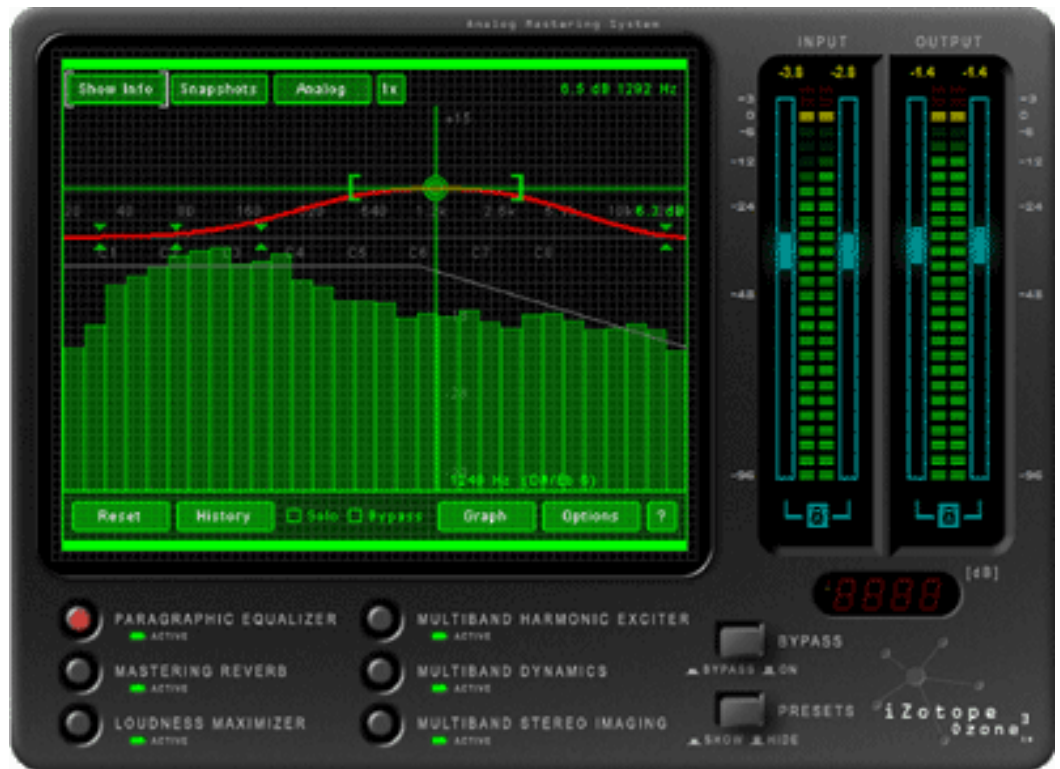
unique and usually unobtainable. To this end, there is improved resolution of the graphical display with choices of 1x, 2x, 3x or 6x magnifications. The colorful graphical display instantaneously shows both the spectral content of your music and the algebraic sum of all the filters. You may take a spectrum "snapshot" of any moment of program, store it and use that EQ curve again over any other music program or track. "Matching" allows you to further modify this rendered curve manually by mouse-clicking and redrawing it.

Ozone 3's loudness maximizer has a new gain reduction meter to show the amount of limiting. Also, a new Intelligent mode is available, along with Ozone 2's stalwart analog-modeled soft or brickwall limiter settings. The intelligent maximizer is said to sound more neutral and transparent, which I verified in my test on track mixes. However, the other limiter modes sound better on individual tracks.

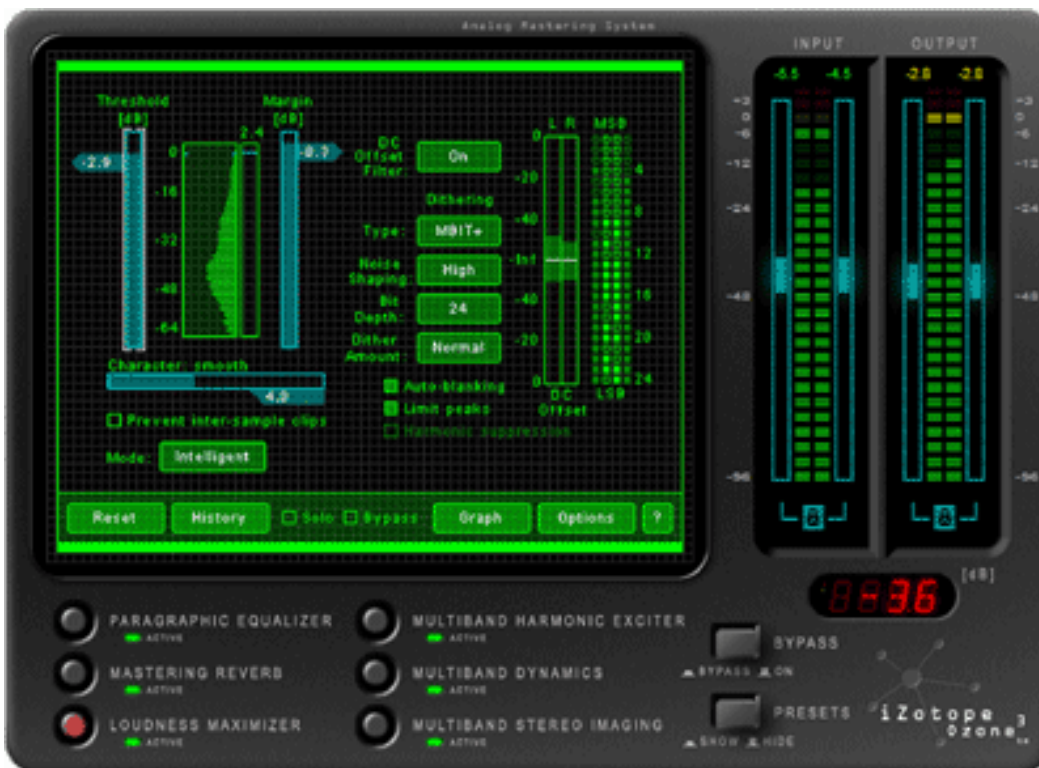
## WAIT, THERE'S MORE

All the multiband processors now have both analog and digital linear phase crossovers and you can now specify the Q or bandwidth for each of the crossovers. Multiband Dynamics has both a peak compressor/limiter/expander and RMS compressor/limiter/expander. I like multi-band dynamics for stereo pair processing like backing vocals or huge keyboards that I

needed to scale back dynamically. The very serviceable Mastering Reverb now has a pre-delay parameter and you can select between Ozone 2's plate and a new-modeled room reverb. Ozone 3 also introduces the MBIT+ dither algorithm that reduces quantization distortion with minimal perceived noise for a very smooth, quiet and almost analog sound. The Multiband Harmonic Exciter now has three algorithm choices: Retro, Tube and Tape saturation across all four bands.



Stereo Paragraphic Equalizer



Loudness Maximizer

## WRAPPING IT UP

Everyone from mastering engineers to master recordists will find Ozone 3 to be the engine that allows them to translate their wildest processing dreams into reality. I found the learning curve and interface easy to use and the results superb. iZotope Ozone 3 sells for \$199 as a download or \$229 for the CD-ROM; you can upgrade from Ozone 2 for \$49 via download or \$79 with a disc.

iZotope

[www.izotope.com](http://www.izotope.com).

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