



Model 216

Announcer's Console

The Model 216 Announcer's Console is designed to serve as the audio control center for announcers, commentators, and production personnel. This tabletop unit supports applications utilizing the Dante™ Audio-over-Ethernet media networking technology. The Model 216 is suitable for numerous applications including on-air television sports broadcasting, stadium announce, and corporate AV. The unit integrates all on-air, talkback, and cue audio signal routing in one compact system. Four pushbutton switches allow the user to control the main and talkback audio output channels. Ease of use, configuration flexibility, and sonic excellence are some of the unit's highlights.

Key Features:

- Dante™ Audio-over-Ethernet technology
- Extensive feature configuration
- Excellent audio quality
- One main and three talkback audio output channels
- Four headphone audio input channels
- PoE and 12 volt DC powering
- Headphone output with sidetone function
- Rugged, compact enclosure

Overview

The Model 216 is compatible with the latest broadcast and audio system environments that use the Dante technology. An Ethernet connection with Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) power is all that's required to make the unit part of a sophisticated, networked audio system. Connect a microphone and pair of headphones (or a broadcast headset) and the installation is complete. Whether it's the on-air audio, the talkback audio, or the headphone cue feed, superior audio quality is always maintained. A range of configuration choices allow the desired operating parameters to be easily selected. And while flexible, the user is presented with an easy-to-use set of controls and indicators.

User Controls and Status Indicators

Four pushbutton switches, five LED indicators, and three rotary controls provide the user with a clear, easy-to-use interface. One pushbutton switch controls the status of the main output. This is the audio channel intended for on-air, announcement, or other primary uses. Two LEDs display the on/off status of the main output. Three additional pushbutton switches control the status of the talkback output channels. These are the audio



signals used to communicate with producers, directors, spotters, or other behind-the-scenes production personnel. A status LED is associated with each of the talkback pushbuttons. The pushbutton switches use gold-plated contacts for reliable long-term operation and include backlighting using white LEDs. Three rotary controls allow the user to adjust the content and level of the headphone output.

Microphone Input

The Model 216 provides a high-performance microphone pre-amplifier which offers low-noise, low-distortion, and high headroom amplification over a 19 to 64 dB range. The gain is adjustable in 3-dB steps using pushbutton switches accessible on the bottom of the unit. A 2-digit display indicates the amplification in dB. The microphone input is compatible with balanced dynamic or condenser microphones. Phantom power is provided and meets the worldwide P48 standard. It can be enabled or disabled as required. A dual-color LED indicator serves as an aid for optimizing the setting of the preamplifier's gain. Microphone signals are connected to the Model 216 by way of a standard 3-pin female XLR connector.

Output Channels and their Operation

By way of the Dante interface, the Model 216 provides a main output channel and three talkback output channels. The main output channel is designed to serve as the on-air, stadium announcement, or other primary audio feed. The talkback output channels are intended to provide production trucks, control rooms, or support personnel with talent-originated cue signals.

A large part of the Model 216's unique power is the ability to configure the operation of the main and talkback functions. To meet the needs of the many specific broadcast and production applications, a variety of pushbutton operating modes are available. The main pushbutton can be selected to operate from

among four modes. In the “push-to-mute” mode the pushbutton performs a momentary mute of the audio signal associated with the main output channel. In this way a “cough” pushbutton function is created, something typically required for television sports broadcasting. In the “push-to-talk” mode the pushbutton provides a momentary active function for the main output. This mode would be appropriate for an application such as stadium announcement. An alternate action “latching” configuration allows the pushbutton to enable or disable the audio signal associated with the main output channel as desired. This is useful in radio broadcasting, announce-booth, or voice-over applications. The fourth mode provides a hybrid function, supporting both push-to-talk and tap-to-enable/tap-to-disable operation. This operation is similar to that found in many broadcast intercom system user stations.

The three pushbutton switches associated with the talkback functions can be configured to operate from either of two modes. One of the modes supports a “push-to-talk” function. This is typically used for on-air broadcast applications. The other mode provides a hybrid function, the operation of which is discussed in the previous paragraph. The hybrid mode is especially useful when the Model 216 is used in a production-support application.

Overall Model 216 operation can be configured from among one on-air and two production modes. The Model 216’s on-air mode is appropriate for on-air television, radio, and streaming broadcast applications. When on-air is selected the audio signal associated with the main output channel will always mute when one or more of the talkback functions is active. This prevents audio that’s intended for production or support personnel from being sent out the on-air audio path.

For non-on-air applications, the Model 216 can be configured to operate in either of two “production” modes. These allow the main output to be used as a third talkback output channel, rather than always muting when a talkback function is active. Using these production modes the unit can be even more powerful when used in a live event application, such as serving as a small “IFB” console for a sports-event spotter, musical director, or production assistant. In addition to changing how the main output functions, one of the production modes also supports using the headphone output for connection with amplified speakers. The headphone output level will automatically be reduced (attenuate or “dim”) whenever the main or talkback output channels are active. This can enhance intelligibility and help prevent acoustical feedback from occurring between the speakers and the active microphone.

Headphone Output

The Model 216 provides a number of configuration choices that relate to the headphone output. These choices impact which audio sources are utilized, how the rotary level controls function,



and what sidetone action will take place. Four headphone control configuration modes are offered. These modes impact how the three rotary controls adjust the four Dante input channels and the sidetone audio signals. The first two modes support standard on-air applications and use only Dante input channels 1 and 2. In the broadcast world these two signals are often referred to as talent cue or IFB audio. They typically originate in production trailers or control rooms and provide one channel of program-with-interrupt audio and a second channel with program-only audio. The third and fourth configuration modes allow all four of the Dante-provided audio sources to be utilized. These can be useful for more complex or specialized situations.

The three headphone level controls (“rotary pots”) are provided for setting the “mix” of the selected sources as well as adjusting the overall headphone output level. How these controls function depends on the selected headphone control mode. As previously mentioned, the first mode is intended to support traditional on-air sports applications. In this mode the left and center controls act in a dual-channel (“level/level”) fashion, allowing independent control of the left- and right-channel volume.

For use with dual-channel or stereo cue signals, the second mode provides a stereo (“level/balance”) mode. In this mode the left control adjusts the level of both input channels 1 and 2, while the center control allows adjustment of the left/right level balance. In both modes the right control is used to adjust the level of the sidetone signal.

In the third headphone control mode the left control adjusts the level of both input channels 1 and 2, the center control adjusts the level of both input channels 3 and 4, while the right control adjusts the sidetone level.

The fourth headphone mode uses the left control to adjust the level of input channel 1, the center control to adjust the level of input channel 2, and the right control to adjust the level of both input channels 3 and 4. In this mode the sidetone function is not active.

The sidetone function allows audio from the Model 216’s microphone preamplifier to be routed to the headphone output. This can be useful, providing the user with an aural confirmation of the signal connected to the mic input. It is especially important

when a “mix-minus” talent cue signal is provided for the user. For application flexibility the sidetone function can be configured from among four choices, specifying when it will be active in relation to the status of the main and talkback functions.

To help minimize the chance of broadcast cues being missed, the action of the level controls can be configured so that there’s always a minimum headphone output level. Alternately, the controls can be configured to fully mute when they are at their minimum (fully-counterclockwise) position. When the level control on the right side is used for sidetone it will always allow the sidetone signal to be fully muted.

The headphone output was designed to meet the needs of contemporary headphones and headsets. Specifically, the output circuits act as voltage drivers rather than power drivers. In this configuration they can provide high output levels with very low distortion and noise, along with minimal current consumption. The output circuits can safely drive stereo or mono loads. This ensures that all types of headphones, headsets, and earpieces can be directly connected.

Dante Audio-over-Ethernet

Audio data is sent to and from the Model 216 using the Dante Audio-over-Ethernet media networking technology. For flexibility in meeting a variety of sonic requirements bit depths of up to 24 and sample rates of 44.1 and 48 kHz are supported.

Audio transmitter (output) and receiver (input) channels on associated Dante-enabled devices can be assigned to the Model 216 using the Dante Controller software application. This makes selecting the way in which the Model 216 fits into an application a simple matter. For example, the main audio output channel can be assigned to the input of an audio console. The talkback audio output channels could be assigned to inputs on a matrix intercom system. No special routing or “multing” using cables or patch points is required to send the output channels to multiple destinations. And a single mouse-click is all that’s required to reroute the audio signals.

On the input side, the Model 216 allows up to four headphone cue sources to be received from an audio console, matrix intercom system, or a variety of other Dante-enabled devices; the sources don’t need to originate from the same device. “Program” audio could be supplied by an audio console while “IFB” (interrupted foldback or talent cue) audio could be supplied by a matrix intercom system.

Ethernet Data, PoE, and DC Power Source

The Model 216 connects to a data network using a standard 100 Mb/s twisted-pair Ethernet interface. The physical interconnection is made by way of a Neutrik® etherCON RJ45 connector. While compatible with standard RJ45 plugs, etherCON allows a

ruggedized and locking interconnection for harsh or high-reliability environments. The Model 216’s operating power can be provided by way of the Ethernet interface using the Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) standard. This allows fast and efficient interconnection with the associated data network. To support PoE power management, the Model 216’s PoE interface reports to the power sourcing equipment (PSE) that it’s a class 2 (low power) device. The unit can also be powered using an external source of 12 volts DC. For redundancy, both power sources can be connected simultaneously. If both sources are connected PoE will power the unit. Four LEDs display the status of the network connection, PoE power source, and Dante interface.

Configuration and Flexibility

Model 216 configurations are made using twelve DIP switches and two pushbutton switches. The 12-position switch array configures parameters such as the pushbutton operating modes, sidetone function, headphone control assignment, and the system mode. The pushbuttons are used to set the gain of the microphone preamplifier and control the on/off status of the microphone phantom power function. The switches and pushbuttons are accessible via the bottom of the Model 216’s enclosure; the unit does not have to be disassembled. Changes made to any of the configuration parameters become active immediately. To prevent unwanted access to the configuration switches and pushbuttons a security panel, included with each unit, is attached to the bottom of the enclosure.

In the world of broadcast and production audio it’s fair to say that applications vary widely. To this end, one or two additional XLR connectors can easily be mounted into the Model 216’s back panel. Multiple 3-position “headers” located on the Model 216’s circuit board provide technician access to many of the input and output connections. Using a variety of optional factory-supplied modules and interface cable kits allows a Model 216 to be optimized to meet the needs of specific applications. For example, some applications may prefer to use a multi-pin XLR connector to interface with a headset. This can easily be accomplished by installing the appropriate 6- or 7-pin XLR connector kit and making a few simple connections. Other applications may benefit from having “mult” or “loop-through” connections, something easily incorporated into a Model 216. And access to the relay contacts can be made adding a 4-pin XLR connector kit.

Two general-purpose relay contacts are provided on the Model 216’s circuit board. Accessible using 3-pin “header” connectors they allow specialized configurations to be created. Under software control, the form-A (normally open) solid-state relay contacts follow the state of the main and talkback 1 pushbuttons. Taking advantage of the two locations provided for additional XLR connectors, a technician may easily implement a variety of functions such as a tally indication or audio muting during talkback.

