

Sound Station

1 "Introduction"

SoundStation is a complete sound software solution for your PC. It functions like a home stereo system and provides all the essentials for sound recording and playback. SoundStation is a Windows application with individual components—CD player, MIDI (synthesized files), Wave Digital Player/Recorder (digitally recorded files)— that can be turned on or off.

SoundStation includes the following components:

Mixing console

A mixing console provides complete control over recording sources and playback volume levels. Requires a sound card with appropriate mixing capabilities to operate.

CD player

A full featured compact disc player for compact discs. Requires a CD-ROM drive with audio playback capabilities to operate.

Digital player / recorder

SoundStation allows you to record digitally and play back WAV files. Requires appropriate WAV drivers and digital recording/playback hardware to operate.

MIDI player

Plays MIDI files on your sound card through its built-in MIDI synthesizer. Requires appropriate MIDI drivers and hardware.

1 "What is SoundStation?"

SoundStation is a one-stop solution for controlling your computer's sound card and/or CD-ROM player using Windows 3.1 and the Windows Multimedia facilities. SoundStation allows you to play Windows WAVE (.WAV) and MIDI (.MID) files through your sound card. You can also use SoundStation to control your computer's CD-ROM player as if it were an audio CD player.

SoundStation's main screen looks similar to a stacked stereo component system. The logical arrangement of the functions into one tightly integrated "system" with a familiar face should help both the novice and the expert to learn the program quickly.

One of the main features that we like to point out is the program's extensibility. In other words, if you don't like the way something works, you can probably modify the functionality to suit your tastes.

Another interesting feature of SoundStation is the application of graphical elements and symbols instead of text on many of the buttons and displays. The little button with the right-facing single arrow indicates Play, not only on the CD player, but also on the WAVE player and the MIDI player. In other words, once you've mastered one component's operation, you're well on your way toward understanding the other components—just like buying all of your real stereo components from the same manufacturer.

tc \l 1 "Using SoundStation"§

tc \l 1 "Getting Started"§

tc \l 1 "Installing SoundStation"§

SoundStation is installed during the UltraSound Bonus Software automated installation. If you need to re-install SoundStation for any reason, consult your UltraSound installation guide for details on how to do a manual install.

tc \l 1 "Starting SoundStation"§

Double-click the SoundStation icon in the Program Manager's Gravis UltraSound group to launch SoundStation.

tc \l 1 " On-Line Documentation (Help)"§

SoundStation features extensive on-line help as well as a graphical "help" file. If you want additional information on a product feature, press the right mouse button while the mouse pointer is over that feature or element. On-line help can also be reached from the *Help Button* of SoundStation.

tc \l 1 "Drag and Drop"§

SoundStation supports Windows Drag and Drop. This feature allows you to load files automatically by dragging WAVE and MIDI files from Windows' File Manager to SoundStation. You may drag both WAVE and MIDI files to SoundStation at the same time.

For both the WAVE and MIDI players, you can set up dropped files to replace the current play list or to be added to the current play list. See the sections "The WAVE Player Setup Dialog" and "The MIDI Player Setup Dialog" for more information on drag and drop options.

If you drop files in SoundStation while the device that uses that type of file is playing, the dropped files will be ignored. For example, if the WAVE component is playing or recording, then dropped WAVE files will be ignored. Also, the play list for any component is limited to 50 files. Files dropped after the file limit is reached will be ignored.

tc \l 1 "The Rack System"§

The *rack system* is our name for the full-blown default mode of operation for SoundStation. It's the one that looks like a stereo system, full of neat displays and loads of buttons (Fig. 1 – page 1). Most functions are available from this mode.

tc \l 1 "The Mixer"§

The *mixer* lets you control your SoundStation environment.

Packed into this component are many different controls that allow you to adjust the sound and operation of your system. There is also a digital clock for your convenience.

tc \l 1 "The VU Meter"§

The *VU Meter* allows you to see the output from the sound card via a pair of bar graph meters. There are several options for operating the VU meters, selectable by the buttons along the right side of the meters. The VU Meter is always turned off when SoundStation is started.

The VU meters operate in *normal mode* or *peak hold mode*. Select normal mode by clicking on either half of the VU meter's ON button with the left mouse button. The word "ON" will light up in bright green. The VU meter should be active if some input is present on the sound card.

Press the PEAK button to switch to *peak hold mode*, and the meter will hold the last highest level it recorded for approximately one second. The peak is indicated by a steady red bar.

By selecting the right half of either the ON button or PEAK button, you select single bar mode. Instead of a "stack" of bars indicating VU information, only a single floating bar is visible, representing the level. When single bar mode is active for either the normal or peak hold modes, the word above the button turns yellow and the right half of the corresponding button is depressed.

For sound cards that cannot record from more than one input source at a time, you will have to select the active

source with the appropriate Record Input (Rec) Button on the mixer panel. This allows that input to be monitored by the VU meter. Also note that when the WAVE player device is playing, the VU meter mirrors the VU meter in the WAVE component. This means that any other inputs to the sound card are not reflected on the VU meter while the WAVE device is playing.

Note! The VU meters do not work with MIDI files.

tc \ 1 " The Power Button"§

The PowerXE "" button turns SoundStation off, exiting the program completely. When you are finished using SoundStation, just press the Power button or <Alt-F4>.

Note that if you exit SoundStation while it is playing WAVE or MIDI files, or if SoundStation was controlling your CD audio, all playing will stop. If you want to continue playing music without displaying the SoundStation screen, see the sections on "Remote Controls" or "Component Selection Buttons."

tc \ 1 " The Mute.i.Mute_"§ Buttons

The Input Level and Master Volume Controls have Mute buttons. The mute buttons temporarily reduce input or volume levels to minimum. Note that the previous setting for the muted channel is saved and is still displayed in the associated control's bar graph display. When the Mute is released, the previous level is restored.

Pressing the Mute button for an Input Level Control mutes only that particular device. However, if you activate the Mute for the Master Volume Control, you cause all audio output to be muted. Press the Master Mute again and you'll be back to the previously selected volume and input levels.

It's easy to tell when Mute is activated for a particular input or the Master. Each activated Mute button has its red LED lit. If it's off, the displayed input or output level should be set. Each mute button is a toggle. That is, pressing it once turns it on and pressing it again turns it off. Note that if the flashing LED is annoying, it can be set to solid through the Setup button.

tc \ 1 " The Default Button"§

The DefaultXE "" button is a quick way to return all mixer volumes, and the Master volume, to a user-defined setting. The states of the mute buttons are also saved as part of the default setting. To set the default, first set all of the mixer levels to the desired settings, and set mutes on or off. Then, press the Setup button on the rack system. Press the Set button under the label Mixer Level Defaults to save your level and mute preferences. Note that you can have SoundStation use these default settings on start-up, also. To activate this feature, select Preferences from the Setup dialog. In the group labeled *Save/Restore Volume*, turn on the checkbox labeled *Use Default*. Then, click OK. Now, whenever you start up SoundStation, the mixer will preset all of your levels and mutes to your default settings.

tc \ 1 "The Input Level Controls"§

The Input Level.i.level_; controls .i.controls_; cover several components, including the WAVE player, MIDI player, CD player, Line input and Mic input. For each level input control, there is a level display and two buttons, one to increase input level and one to decrease it.

To increase the input signalxe "signal" level for the selected component, press the button with the up arrow. To decrease the input signal level, press the button with the down arrow.

For boards that allow separate leftxe "" and rightxe "" level adjustments, pressing the left third of either level adjustment button only adjusts the left channel input level. Pressing the right third of either button adjusts only the right level, and pressing the middle third of either button adjusts both left and right channel input levels simultaneously. This allows balance control.

The input level display shows two columns of 15 horizontal bars. The left column indicates the relative input level of the left channel of the selected control, while the right column indicates the relative input level of the right channel. When all of the display elements are bright cyan (light blue), the level is at the board's full setting. If all the bars are a darker blue color, the level is at the board's lowest setting (usually off). Levels in between are displayed by a number of brightly colored (lit) bars in the display.

tc \ 1 "The Master Volume Control"§

The Master Volumexe "Volume" Control allows adjustment of the volume of all input sources in one control. The control has a level display and two buttons for increasing and decreasing the output level. The Master Volume

control looks like the Input Level control and operates the same way.

When a setup allows individual input level controls for each component, but does not support a master output control, the program will often simulate this feature by internally adjusting all of the input controls proportionately. This adjustment will not be reflected in the individual input's display controls.

tc \l 1 "The Component Selection Buttons"§

There are three component selection.i.component selection_; buttons along the bottom row of the mixer panel of the rack system.

When each control is activated, the corresponding component appears below the mixer panel in the rack, stacked on the bottom. If one of the buttons is turned off, that component disappears.

It is not necessary for a component to be visible in order for it to play. For instance, you could load a CD and start it playing. Then you could deactivate the CD player button to make the CD component disappear, and the CD would continue playing. Of course, in order to do anything with the CD player other than work with the volume level, you would either have to re-activate the component or switch to one of the Remote Controls.

tc \l 1 "The Setup Button"§

The Setup button brings up the Setup dialog. In the Setup dialog, you can configure SoundStation for your hardware, or select one of several other dialogs to configure specific parts of the program.

tc \l 1 "The Setup Dialog"§

To access the Preferences dialog, the Information dialog or any of the component setup dialogs, choose the appropriate button from the Setup dialog.

To preset the current input and volume levels and Mute button settings as the default, press the button labeled *Set Mixer Default*. Pressing the default button on the rack system will return these settings whenever you wish to return to them.

The program's Version number is displayed in the Setup dialog. Please refer to this number when calling for technical support.

tc \l 1 "The Preferences Dialog"§

The Preferences.i.Preferences_; dialog allows you to set various options which determine how SoundStation runs.

Each section in the dialog is enclosed in a Group Box with an appropriate label. Each of these groups is discussed below.

tc \l 1 "Save/Restore Volume"§

The Save/Restorexe "/Restore" Volume group has checkboxes for the input levels on the mixer and for the Master volume control. The checked level is saved on exit from the program and is used to restore the setting on the next program start-up. If an item is left unchecked, the current sound card setting for that particular level is used by the program on restart.

To have the program use the defaults, check *Use Defaults*. This overrides the remaining selections in this section.

tc \l 1 "Start-up Mode"§

The Start-up xe ""Mode radio buttons allow you to select the mode that the program uses at start-up. If you select Last Mode,xe "Mode," the program will start up in the mode it was in when last exited. If you select Rack Modxe "Mod"e, then the program will always start with the Rack system and components initially visible. If you select Remote Modxe "Mod"e, the program will always start with the selected remote control type (see Remote Type section, below) initially visible.

tc \l 1 "Save on Exit"§

The Save on Exitxe "on Exit" group allows you to select whether the program will save the rack and remote positions (moveable remote only) to use on the next start-up. If left unchecked, the appropriate device will be placed at the Windows default position the first time it is made visible during each run of the program.

tc \ 1 "Remote Type"§

There are several different types of remote controls supplied with SoundStation so that you can select the remote control that works best for you. Note that if you do not want a remote control at all, you can select the None (Iconize) option, and the rack system will minimize to an icon at the bottom of the screen when the Remote button is pressed.

If you want the selected remote control to always be on top of any application windows that happen to overlay the remote, check the Remote on Top checkbox. This will make it impossible to cover the remote control with other application windows. Turn the checkbox off to make the remote behave like most other Windows applications and disappear behind other windows when they overlay the remote control.

The two general types of remotes provided with SoundStation are described below:

Moveable

The moveable remote allows you to drag the remote control around the screen. To restore the rack system, press the "Rack" button on the remote.

Tool Bar

The Bar remotes are similar to other applications' toolbars. The buttons are arranged in one horizontal row. The Bar remotes can be attached to either the very top or the very bottom of your screen. To restore the rack system, press Rack on the remote.

tc \ 1 "Flashing Mutes"§

Enabling the Flashing Mutes checkbox causes all mute button LEDs to flash when the appropriate mute buttons are activated. If the Flashing Mutes checkbox is not checked, active mute buttons will have a solid LED.

tc \ 1 "Flashing Pauses"§

Like flashing mutes, above, but applies to the pause buttons on the components and the remote controls.

tc \ 1 "Clock Seconds"§

If the Clock Seconds checkbox is checked, the clock on the rack system will show seconds in addition to the hours and minutes. If the checkbox is not checked, then the rack system clock will show either an A for AM or a P for PM in place of the seconds.

tc \ 1 "The Wave Options Dialog"§

The Wave Options dialog allows you to control how the WAVE player runs. Each group of options is discussed below.

tc \ 1 "Drag and Drop"§

Select one of the two options in the Drag and Drop group to determine how the program will handle new .WAV files that are dragged from File Manager to SoundStation and dropped.

Adds to Program adds the dropped .WAV files to any .WAV files that are already selected. Replaces Program replaces any previously selected .WAV files with the dropped .WAV files.

tc \ 1 "Recording.i.Recording_"§

Select one of the two options in the Recording group to determine how WAVE files will be recorded. The default selection, *Starts immediately*, means that once you press the Record button, all necessary setup actions are performed, then recording starts.

To cue a recording session with more accuracy, it is better to select the *Pauses initially* option. When this option is selected, and the wave Record button is pressed, the usual housekeeping occurs, but then the Pause button comes on and the wave player is ready to record immediately when the Pause button is released.

The Counts Up and Counts Down option determines how the Wave Player display will operate during both recording and playback of Wave files.

The Coordinated CD Pause Release option allows more accurate recording control from the CD-ROM drive. When

this option is active, the CD's pause will be released at the same time that you release the pause on the Wave player to start recording.

The Wave Record Path option allows you to designate the drive and path to which you want your new Waveform recordings to go.

tc \ 1 "Additional Options"§

The *Pause after playing each waveform* option allows you to pause the WAVE device at the end of each selection in a multiple-selection playback. Check this box to pause between each file; uncheck it to allow normal sequential playback.

The *Limit waveform recording to:* option allows you to make sure you don't inadvertently fill up your hard disk with a huge waveform recording. This is a safety net you can use to limit the amount of recording you can perform at one time. To remove this safety net, enter a 0 for the time, and you can record until your hard disk fills up if you wish.

tc \ 1 "The MIDI Options Dialog"§

The MIDI Options dialog lets you determine how the MIDI player runs. Each section in the dialog is discussed below.

tc \ 1 "Time/Track Defaults"§

The Time/Track Defaults section determines how the time and track display on the MIDI player will operate when the rack system is running and the MIDI player is active. When a new list of MIDI selections is generated, the program finds the length of each song and the total length of all the songs. The totals are shown on the MIDI display for five seconds before it reverts to the default time and track display mode. If you press the Time or Track buttons to alter the display, the display also reverts to default mode after five seconds.

If the Default on Timeout checkbox is checked, the display always reverts after a period of five seconds whenever the Time or Track buttons are used to alter the display. Turning off the checkbox will cause the Time and Track display to show the last setting instead of reverting to the default display.

tc \ 1 "Reverse Skip"§

Reverse Skip lets you customize the operation of the MIDI player's Reverse Skip button. By default, the Reverse Skip button, while the player is in Play or Pause mode, returns to the beginning of the current song if the current position in the song is greater than 2 seconds, or skips back to the previous song if the current position in the song is less than or equal to 2 seconds. If you select Previous Track, Reverse Skip will always skip back to the previous song, no matter what the current position in the song.

tc \ 1 "Drag and Drop"§

Select Adds to Program to add dropped .MID files to any MIDI files that are already selected in the program. Select Replaces to replace any previously selected MIDI files.

tc \ 1 "MIDI Song Title Display"§

You can decide whether the MIDI component's "component" displays the full path and filename or filename only of the currently playing MIDI song. Select either all uppercase or all lowercase.

tc \ 1 "Additional Options"§

Pause After Playing Each Song allows you to pause the MIDI device at the end of each selection in a multiple selection playback. Check this box to pause between each file; uncheck it to allow normal sequential (or random or repeated) playback.

tc \ 1 "The CD Player Setup Dialog"§

The CD Player Setup.i.CD Player Setup_.; dialog allows you to determine how the CD player runs. Each section in the dialog is discussed below.

tc \ 1 "Time/Track Defaults"§

The Time/Track Defaults section of the CD Player Setup works the same as the MIDI Player Time/Tracks Defaults

section.

tc \l 1 "Reverse Skip"§

The Reverse Skip option in the CD Player Setup works the same as Reverse Skip in the MIDI Player Setup.

tc \l 1 "The About Button"§

The About buttonXe "button" brings up a dialog with information about the program and WinSoft_. This is known as an *About Dialog Box* in common Windows terminology. Move the mouse pointer more than about 15 pixels, or press the left mouse button to remove the dialog from the screen.

tc \l 1 "The Info Dialog"§

The Info buttonXe "button" provides visual feedback regarding the status of your sound board. This dialog box indicates what functions of the sound board were found on your system. Marked items are available. Unmarked functions are not available on your sound board. The information gathered by this dialog box is the same information used to set your SoundStation functions.

The Info dialog also lists the version number of your copy of the program. Whenever you need to contact us about problems with your program, always get the version number from the Info dialog before calling. This will help us to determine whether there is a newer version of the program which addresses the problems that you are experiencing.

tc \l 1 "The Clock Display"§

The Clock Display.i.Clock Display_; shows the current time with an AM or PM indicator. Select the *Clock Seconds* option from the *Preferences* dialog to display seconds.

tc \l 1 "The WAVE Player"§

The WAVE Player.i.Wave Player_ ; component allows you to cue one or more digitized waveform files for playback, or to record your own waveform files.

tc \l 1 "The Program Button"§

The Program buttonxe "button" pulls up the WAVE programming dialog. With this dialog, you can create a program, or play list, of waveform files. See the section "The WAVE Programming Dialog" for more information on creating waveform play lists.

tc \l 1 "The Mode Button"§

The Mode buttonxe "button" changes the recording mode of the WAVE player when it is not currently playing or recording waveform files. The Mode button cycles through 8-bit mono, 8-bit stereo, and if you have an UltraSound MAX installed, also through 16-bit mono and 16-bit stereo modes(if available with the selected recording rate). The selected mode is displayed in the wave player's display area.

tc \l 1 "The Rate Button"§

The Rate buttonxe "button" changes the recording speed (or sampling rate) of the WAVE player. The Rate button cycles through 11 kHz, 22 kHz, 44 kHz, and 48 kHz rates if you have 16-bit recording capabilities and if the rate is available in the selected recording mode. The selected rate is displayed in the wave player's display area.

tc \l 1 "The Record Button"§

To record waveformxe "waveform" audio data, press the Record button on the WAVE player. Before pressing Record, however, you should probably set the desired recording mode and rate, described above. Also, you will probably want to select the input source from which you plan to record. This is covered in the section "The Record Input (Rec) Buttons."

The suggested mode for initial recording start-up is to set Pauses Initially in the WAVE Player Setup dialog. This way, once the recording is set up, you can set the input mixer level(s) for the component(s) that you are recording from. Adjust the input so that the dual meters in the WAVE display window rarely enter the yellow areas and the red areas (peak) do not light up at all, or as little as possible. This will help to ensure a good quality recording.

Once the levels are set and the material that you want to record is starting, press Pause to release the pause mode and start recording if Pauses Initially is set, or press Record if Starts Immediateixe "Immediate"y is set in the Recording options in the WAVE Player Setup dialog.

tc \l 1 "The Play Button"§

The Play Button starts waveform playback. The waveforms can be selected using the WAVE programming dialog or by dragging and dropping waveform files from the File Manager.

tc \l 1 "The Other Buttons"§

The remaining buttons perform the functions indicated below.

- Reverse Skip**xe "Skip" Skips backward in the play list by one file.
- Forward Skip**xe "Skip" Skips forward in the play list by one file.
- Rewind**xe "" Skips backwards in the current file at small intervals.
- Fast Forward**xe "Forward" Skips forward in the current file at small intervals.
- Stop**xe "" Stops playing the play list.
- Pause**xe "" Pauses the playing of files until released.

tc \l 1 "The WAVE Programming Dialog"§

The WAVE Programming Dialogxe "Programming Dialog" allows you to select a waveform file, or several waveform files, to play on the WAVE component. You may select up to 50 files to play at one time. Additionally, you may save your list of files by giving the list a unique name. Then, you can recall your list later by selecting the name of the list from those that you have saved.

tc \ 1 "Selecting and De-selecting files to play"§

Bring up the WAVE Programming Dialog by pressing the Program button on the WAVE component or the Prog button on the remote control while the WAVE device is selected. On the right side of the dialog are two list boxes labeled Directories and Files. Above both of the list boxes is the currently selected directory.

To move around your disk, choose the appropriate directory from the list in the Directories listbox. Select the [...] symbol to move up a directory. Double click the left mouse button on the desired directory path to change to that directory. Your choice will appear above the list box. Any WAVE files found in the currently selected directory path will appear in the Files listbox. If you wish to change to a different disk drive, select the desired drive by dropping down the Drives box, and clicking once on a drive letter.

Mark files from the Files listbox by clicking on them with your mouse.

Once all of the desired files are marked, press the button labeled <<Add underneath the Files listbox to add them to the Selection List listbox in the order that they appear in the Files listbox.

The Selection List listbox operates in a similar manner as the Files listbox. You can remove files from the Selection List one at a time by double clicking on the files, or mark them and press the Remove button. You can clear the whole Selection List by pressing the Clear button. You can also select all files in the Selection List easily by pressing the Select All button.

tc \ 1 "Saving a Selection List"§

Once you have created a list of WAVE files to play, you can choose to save the list by giving it a name. To do this, press the Save List button. An additional dialog will appear, prompting you for a name for the list. Type a name for the list and click OK. Note that the name you give your list is NOT a filename, so you may type in a complete sentence such as *Cartoon Sound Effects*, if you wish. Your selections and the name of your list will be added to the WAVE list database.

To recall your list later, select the dropdown box labeled *Program* at the top left of the dialog box. Scroll through the entries until you find the one you want and single-click the left mouse button on that entry's name. The list of files assigned to that name will appear in the Selection List. If you want to remove files from the list, use the procedure described above for removing files from the Selection List. If you want to add new files to the list, select them with the procedure described for adding files to the Selection List. Press the Save List button to update the database.

Create a new list by pressing the New List button. Note that if you select or de-select files while there is a name present in the Program box window, you are modifying the indicated playlist. You will always have a chance, however, to cancel changes to an existing playlist if you attempt to make a new list.

tc \ 1 "Playing your selections"§

To play the files selected in the Selection List, click OK. You will be returned to the rack (or remote). The program will then compile information on the files that you selected. Once that is complete, you are ready to play your selections. Press Play, and playback will start.

One final note: You do not have to name a playback Selection List before you can play it; you can leave it unnamed if you wish. Note that any unsaved changes made to an existing list or to an unnamed list will cause a "WAVE Program has Changed" message if SoundStation is turned off. This gives you a final opportunity to save your changed list. If you want to discard any changes you made, just press the Cancel or No button when this reminder appears.

tc \ 1 "The MIDI Player"§

The MIDI Player component.i.MIDI Player component_; allows you to cue one or more MIDI song files for playback.

To use the MIDI player, refer to the instructions in the following sections.

tc \ 1 "The Program Button"§

The Program button pulls up the MIDI programming dialog. With this dialog, you can create a program, or play list, of MIDI files.

tc \ 1 "The Button Group"§

Along the bottom of the MIDI player are control buttons for performing functions on the MIDI player. These buttons are:

Repeat	Repeats the current song, or the entire play list, in a loop. <i>Repeat deselects Random (see next page).</i>
Reverse Skip	Skips backward in the play list by one song.
Rewind	Skips backward in the song in small intervals.
Pause	Pauses the playing of MIDI songs until released.
Stop	Stops playing the songs in the play list.
Play	Starts playing the songs in the play list.
Fast Forward	Skips forward in the song in small intervals.
Forward Skip	Skips forward in the play list by one song.

To the left of the MIDI display are other control buttons that provide functions used only with the MIDI player. These are:

TrackXE ""	Switches the display between the current song playing and the total number of songs in the Play List. Use the Preferences button in the setup dialog to determine the default state of this display option.
TimeXE ""	Switches the display between the current song time index and the total time of the songs in the Play List. Use the Preferences button in the setup dialog to determine the default state of this play option.
RandomXE ""	Setting this button ON causes the MIDI player to select a song from the Play List randomly to follow the current track. Random deselects Repeat.
ProgramXE ""	Refer to the section "The MIDI Program Dialog" for more information on creating MIDI Play Lists.

tc \ 1 "Display screen"§

The MIDI player displays user information concerning the status of the MIDI player. The following represent the various indications available.

- o Total tracks and total playing time
- o Track currently playing
- o Time of currently playing selection
- o Track count down time
- o Track count up time
- o Total count down time

- o Total count up time

tc \ 1 "The MIDI Programming Dialog"§

The MIDI Programming Dialog^{xe} "Programming Dialog" lets you select a MIDI file, or files, to play on the MIDI component. You may select up to 50 files to play at one time. Additionally, you may save your list of files by giving the list a unique name. Then, you can recall your list later by selecting the name of the list from those that you have saved.

tc \ 1 "Selecting and De-selecting files to play"§

Bring up the MIDI Programming dialog by pressing the Program button on the MIDI component of the rack system or the Prog button on the remote control while the MIDI device is selected. On the right side of the dialog are two list boxes labeled Directories and Files. Above both list boxes is the currently selected directory in which to look for MIDI files.

To move around your disk, choose the appropriate directory from the list in the Directories listbox. Select the [...] symbol to move up a directory. Double click the left mouse button on the desired directory path to change to that directory. Any MIDI files found in the currently selected directory path will appear in the Files listbox. To change to a different disk drive, select the desired drive by dropping down the Drives box, and clicking once on a drive letter.

Mark files from the Files listbox by clicking on them with your mouse.

Once all of the desired files are marked, press the button labeled <<Add underneath the Files listbox to add them to the Selection List listbox in the order that they appear in the Files listbox.

The Selection List listbox operates in a similar manner as the Files listbox. You can remove files from the Selection List one at a time by double clicking on the files, or mark them and press the Remove button. You can clear the whole Selection List by pressing the Clear button. You can also select all files in the Selection List easily by pressing the Select All button.

tc \ 1 "Saving a Selection List"§

Press the Save List button to save a list of files. Type a name for the list and press OK. Note that the name you give your list is NOT a filename, so you may type in a complete sentence such as "Upbeat Jazz Tunes", if you wish. Your selections and the name of your list will be added to the MIDI list database.

To recall your list later, select the dropdown box labeled *Program* at the top left of the dialog box. Scroll through the entries until you find the one you want and single-click the left mouse button on that entry's name. The list of files assigned to that name will appear in the Selection List. To remove files from the list, use the procedure described above for removing files from the Selection List. If you want to add new files to the list, select them with the procedure described for adding files to the Selection List. Press the Save List button to update the database.

Create a new list by pressing the New List button. Note that if you select or de-select files while there is a name present in the Program box window, you are modifying the indicated playlist. You will always have a chance, however, to cancel changes to an existing playlist if you attempt to make a new list.

tc \ 1 "Playing your selections"§

To play the files in the Selection List, click OK. You will be returned to the rack (or remote). The program will then compile information on the files that you selected. Once that is complete, you can play your selections. Press Play.

One final note: You do not have to name a playback Selection List before you can play it; you can leave it unnamed if you wish. Note that any unsaved changes made to an existing list or to an unnamed list will cause a "MIDI Program has Changed" message if SoundStation is turned off. This gives you a final opportunity to save your changed list. If you want to discard any changes you made, just press the Cancel or No button when this reminder appears.

tc \ 1 "The CD Player"§

The CD-ROM player.i.CD-ROM player_; in your computer can also play standard music CDs. The CD-ROM component provides a number of ways to control how the unit performs.

To use the CD player, refer to the instructions in the following sections.

tc \ 1 "The Program Button"§

The Program button pulls up the CD programming dialog. With this dialog, you can create a program, or play list, of CD files.

tc \ 1 "The Button Group"§

Along the bottom of the CD component are control buttons for performing function on the CD player. These buttons are:

Repeat	Repeats the current track, or the entire CD, in a loop. Repeat deselects Random (see next page).
Reverse Skip	Skips backward by one track.
Rewind	Skips backwards in the track in small intervals.
Pause	Pauses the playing of CD tracks until released.
Stop	Stops playing the CD.
Play	Starts playing the CD.
Fast Forward	Skips forward in the track in small intervals.
Forward Skip	Skips forward to the beginning of the next track.

To the left of the CD display are other control buttons that provide functions used only with the CD player. These are:

Track	Switches the display between the current track playing and the total number of tracks on the CD. Use the Preferences button in the setup dialog to determine the default.
Time	Switches the display between the current track time index and the total time of the entire CD. Use the Preferences button in the setup dialog to determine the default state of this display option.
Random	Setting this button ON causes the CD player to select a track from the CD randomly to follow the current track. Random deselects Repeat.
EjectXE ""	This button stops the CD from playing. If your CD is equipped with a power media drawer, the drawer will open. If your CD is not equipped with a power media drawer, no further action will occur.
LoadXE ""	This button loads the track information from the CD player. This includes both track times and track numbers. Note that after loading a new CD, you may either press this button to obtain this information, or just press the Play button to load and then start playing.
ProgramXE ""	Refer to the topic for more information on reading CD play lists.

tc \ 1 "Display screen"§

The CD player displays user information concerning aspects of the status of the CD player. The following represent the various indications available.

- o Total tracks and total playing time

- o Track currently playing
- o Time of currently playing selection
- o Track count down time
- o Track count up time
- o Total count down time
- o Total count up time

tc \1 "The CD Programming Dialog"§

The CD Programming DialogXe "Programming Dialog" allows you to select a random order of tracks to play from a currently loaded CD. You can select the same song more than once, and you can essentially program the track order however you like. You may select up to 99 tracks to play in this way.

tc \1 "Selecting Track Play Order"§

Pull up the CD Programming dialog by pressing the Program button on the CD component or the Prog button on the remote control while the CD device is selected. You must have a CD loaded in the CD player before you can program it.

Note!

This dialog will not come up while the CD is playing or paused.

When the programming dialog appears, you will notice a list of the tracks on the CD in the listbox labeled "CD Tracks." Each track is numbered in sequential order, and the list contains the time of each track.

To select a track to play, double click on the track in the CD Tracks listbox, and it will be added to the Play Order listbox. Select each track that you want to play. Remember that you can use a track more than once, and you do not have to use every track.

To clear a single selection from the Play Order, double click on that entry with the left mouse button. To clear the entire list, press the *Clear* button under the Play Order list.

tc \1 "Turning Play Order On or Off"§

Enter the CD Programming dialog, select a play order, and click OK. The Play order becomes active. This is indicated by the LED on the Program button (or Prog button on the remote) remaining lit after you exit the dialog. You can turn off the Play order using one of several methods: Selecting Random or Repeat mode, ejecting or re-loading the CD, or selecting the Cancel button from the CD Programming dialog will all turn off the Play Order.

tc \l 1 "The Remote Controls"§

Remote controlsxe "controls" allow you easy access to SoundStation's components while you are using other Windows applications.

There are three modes for the remote control window. These are:

- None (the rack will minimize when asked to do so)
- Moveable
- Fixed, top button bar or Fixed, bottom button bar

The remote window can be configured to stay on top of all other windows on your screen. This allows easy access to the controls.

To move the moveable remote, grab the remote control with your mouse pointer anywhere except on a button. Click and hold the left mouse button, and a thin outline box appears on the screen. Drag the outline to the desired location and release the mouse button to move the remote control.

Note that the remotes have component selection buttons (WAVExe "", CD, xe "" and MIDIXe ""). Only one of the three buttons is active at a time, indicated by the green LED on the button being lit. When the desired component's LED is lit, the remaining buttons on the remote control are used to operate that particular component.

Note that the Mute button and volume buttons on the remotes affect only the Master volume control for SoundStation. Also, the Rand (Random) and Rpt (Repeat) buttons are only valid for the MIDI and CD components. The Load and Eject buttons are only valid for the CD component.

At the top of the moveable remote, and to the right of the bar remote, is a small indicator window showing the currently selected track or song for the MIDI or CD player. This indicator is not active for the WAVE player. Also, a clock is visible near the bottom of the moveable remote and is not available on the bar remotes. The clock shows the time, repeat modes (when applicable) and has a moving bar indicator that is active when any of the three main components are playing. A small right-hand arrow near the moving bars indicates play mode while the double vertical bars further to the right indicate pause mode.

These remote control panels allow less control over SoundStation than the rack system. Note that fewer options are available with the fixed toolbar remotes.

tc \l 1 "Custom Settings"§

There a number of custom setting options xe "options" with SoundStation. These are presented when you select the Setup button on the "mixer" component. Press the button on the Setup dialog for the device you want to customize.

tc \l 1 "Hardware-specific Issues"§

Since we have had more experience with hardware that is directly supported by the program, the information contained in this section deals mainly with those products. Please refer to this section and the section "Why Doesn't the Program Do This?" before calling us when experiencing problems with the program.

A good rule of thumb to remember with any program is that if a function has worked fine day after day and suddenly doesn't work correctly or the same way anymore, something else has changed in the system to affect the particular program. Before calling us to report a bug with a function that has worked for you before, make sure that you have not installed or removed software, drivers, or hardware that may affect the way that SoundStation operates.

tc \l 1 "Mixer Input and Master Level Controls"§

Different sound cards have different onboard mixing capabilities that affect the appearance and operation of the SoundStation Mixer panel. In particular, some sound cards support onboard volume adjustments for items like the line level input and CD-ROM input, while others do not.

The Advanced Gravis UltrasoundXE "" card has a full complement of mixing capabilities; however, please note that earlier versions of the card (board rev. 2.2, 2.4, and 3.4) required controlling the Mic, Line, and CD levels at the source. Only WAVE and MIDI synthesizer output levels can be controlled at the mixer with these earlier sound cards. The onboard mixer also allows the Mic and Line In inputs and Master output to be turned on and off.

The mixer panel on SoundStation simulates a Master output level control by internally scaling the WAVE form and MIDI inputs as you adjust the Master level. Note that changing the Master level will not adjust Line In, Microphone or CD-ROM volume levels. However, pressing the Mute button for Master will turn off all output signals. Pressing the Mute button for the Line In or Microphone will turn off output from the respective devices. Pressing the Mute button on the MIDI synthesizer will not always immediately terminate all output sounds, as any notes that are already playing will decay in volume before the channel is silent. All mixing hardware control for the UltraSound is performed through the card's Windows drivers.

tc \l 1 "The Recording Input (Rec) Buttons"§

The Advanced Gravis UltraSound XE "" allows the user to record from the MIDI synthesizer, Line In, Microphone and CD-ROM inputs, either individually or in combination. To prevent recording from the Line In or Microphone inputs, you must press the Mute button for that particular channel, or ensure that no input is being presented to that channel. To prevent recording from the MIDI synthesizer, ensure that no MIDI songs are playing. To prevent recording from the CD-ROM player, you must stop the CD-ROM from playing. Due to the arrangement of the UltraSound mixer, the Recording Input selection buttons have been eliminated from the SoundStation mixer panel, as they would essentially be duplicates of the Mute buttons.

tc \l 1 "Device Drivers"§

SoundStation is dependent on the MCI xe ""(Multimedia Control Interface) drivers xe ""that are usually supplied with newer sound cards and CD-ROM players. These are Windows-specific drivers. If you have an older sound card that did not come with drivers that you had to install via the Control Panel Drivers applet in Windows, a lack of functionality is probably due to the fact that you have no current drivers. We recommend that you contact the manufacturer of your equipment to see whether drivers are now available. In most cases, you should be able to obtain current Windows drivers at little or no cost.

tc \l 1 "Windows 3.1 supplied CD-ROM MCI Driver"§

The generic CD-ROM driver supplied with Windows provides incomplete or quirky operation when used with SoundStation and certain older CD-ROM devices. This is probably due to the fact that it is a generic, catch-all driver that is not targeted to a specific hardware standard. We recommend that you contact your CD-ROM manufacturer to see whether current drivers are available for your equipment.

tc \1 "Troubleshooting"§

There is always the possibility that something will not work as designed. For that reason, we have addressed here some of the more common question concerning SoundStation.

tc \1 "Questions About SoundStation"§

Why can't I record MIDI files?

The MIDI player was designed solely to play existing MIDI song files through the built-in MIDI synthesizer present on most all sound cards. It does not attempt to use the external MIDI input/output port. There are many excellent programs available for the recording, playing, authoring and modifying MIDI song files using the computer and external MIDI compatible equipment.

I have an Advanced Gravis UltraSound card. When I play MIDI files with SoundStation, there is a slight pause before each song starts, and disk drive activity. What is it doing?

UltraSound uses the Windows patch caching feature, loading instruments from its 5.6 Megabyte General MIDI set into the onboard RAM. Loading only the instruments that the MIDI song requires means that the highest quality instrument patches can be made available to the song. It also allows the freedom to expand the sounds available, and substitute patches from other sources—like third party patch sets, additional general MIDI instrument sets, even instruments that you make yourself with UltraSound's patch editor.

When you press the Play button, the UltraSound driver looks at the MIDI file, quickly determines the instruments the song will need, and loads those patches onto the UltraSound. You can expand the RAM on the UltraSound to load more patches for highly orchestrated songs, or change the performance settings in the UltraSound driver dialog to 'conserve memory.' This allows twice as many patches, but at a slight loss of fidelity, as the normally 16-bit patches will load as 8-bit. For instant-on MIDI play, you can also pre-load a set of patches. See the UltraSound manual for details on how to do this.

Why don't you add more components to SoundStation to handle other devices such as laser disc players, VCRs, onboard TV tuner cards, etc.?

We are investigating support of other devices such as this. Watch for developments in these areas with future releases of SoundStation and other products from WinSoft Development.

I got some MIDI files from a bulletin board and attempted to play them with SoundStation, but all I get is silence, or only one or two instruments play, or some of the instruments are not correct.

MIDI files contain information that indicates which instrument is to play each part of the composition, and which channel of the device is to play each part. As the instrument information embedded in the file is in the form of a number, and not an actual instrument name, the actual instrument that plays is a function of what instrument is mapped on the playing device to the number indicated in the file. The intended instrument may be different on another person's equipment than it is on yours. In other words, your computer's MIDI setup may have Instrument #1 mapped as a piano, but the author's equipment had Instrument #1 set up as a Tuba. Obviously, the song that the author composed with a Tuba will sound markedly different with a piano playing the same part.

Some MIDI files have no instrument information embedded, but only channel information. In this case, the author's equipment probably depended on the author having the proper instrument samples loaded in the proper channels of the equipment. As long as the author performed this manual setup of his equipment, playback of the song would sound fine on his equipment. However, once you get the song, you may have no idea what instruments the author intended to be assigned to each channel of the equipment. Also, some MIDI drivers in Windows cannot assume that an instrument is preloaded in a particular channel and therefore will reward you with dead silence when you attempt the play such a song.

What is the solution? First, most newer sound card MIDI drivers provide a General MIDI mapping. General MIDI is a standard agreement on which instruments are defined by which instrument numbers. When you search bulletin boards for MIDI songs to try, check whether they are General MIDI compatible. This will help ensure that several minutes of downloading will not go unrewarded.