

## Best Accessory



## WINNER

## LOOPMASTERS LOOPCLOUD 5

FREE TO £17.99/MONTH  
Contact [loopcloud.com](http://loopcloud.com)

Loopcloud is the ultimate way that you can select and interact with samples – both millions from Loopmasters own roster and also, now, from your own collection. It has had many fast and dramatic updates, but version 5 saw the addition of some superb and imaginative features which push the application further into creative DAW territory than ever before. In fact, it even has its own multitrack recording feature that allows you to put together sketchpad ideas quicker than you might believe. There are also effects and a couple of instruments, but the real fun is to be had in the sample editing side of the software where you can create incredibly complex patterns and rhythmic ideas either using a single sample or longer sections of audio.

You can get into Loopcloud for free or with three levels of subscription. The free version gets you the software and you get five free sounds a day to download. The Artist subscription is £5.99/month; Studio costs £9.99 and Professional £17.99. The more you pay, the more free samples you get per day and cloud storage: up to 50 samples a day and 250GB of storage on the Professional sub, for example.

With version 5, Loopcloud has come of age. In our review, we said: "The bottom line is with each upgrade – and especially this one – Loopcloud is getting more creative with your audio. What was the master of sample management is fast becoming the fastest and most inspirational block-busting writer's tool out there."

HIGHLY  
COMMENDED

## AUDIENT NERO

£375  
Contact [audient.com](http://audient.com)

Audient has long been regarded as one of the real industry leaders when it comes to mixing consoles and interfacing, however the company's attention to quality is still evident across their other products, the Nero is a tactile monitor controller that replicates the monitor sections of vintage mixing consoles and presents them in a desktop studio form. Its remarkably well built and has solid buttons, knobs and digital inputs that support up to 192kHz/24-bit signals.

In our review, Adam Crute said "Nero comes in a chunky, solidly built black enclosure that's perfectly sized to sit alongside your computer keyboard or DAW controller. The device's controls all live on the top surface of the enclosure, which is angled so that the controls are tilted towards you, as they would be on a large-format mixing console. It's a well-built monitor controller that's just like the monitor section of a mixing console"

## Best Outboard



## WINNER

BLACK LION  
AUDIO SEVENTEEN

£699  
Contact [blacklionaudio.com/scvdistribution.co.uk](http://blacklionaudio.com/scvdistribution.co.uk)

When it comes to classic studio outboard like 1176, there have been plenty of remakes and clones over recent years. This versatile solid-state compressor/limiter can be used for everything from unobtrusive levelling of vocals and bass to dramatic dynamic compression. Black Lion Audio's Seventeen is in no way a clone of it though, more of a reimagining. As we found out in our recent interview.

Seventeen is a single-channel (mono) FET compressor that features flexible input/output configurations and a wet/dry mix control for New York-style parallel-compression techniques to be performed. The extra filters include a five-position sidechain high-pass filter, a low-pass filter and high-pass filter on the processed signal.

In his tests, John Pickford put Seventeen through a range of studio tasks, and found it has bags of character and makes vocal tracks sound fuller and richer. On drums John noted: "I'm able to create a multitude of kit sounds, ranging from tight and punchy at moderate compression settings to explosive, surging and pumping effects."

From smooth levelling to producing wild, explosive sounds Seventeen is a fantastic advancement of the original 1176 and a very worthy winner of MusicTech's Best Outboard gear. As JP concluded: "This is hands-down the best 1176-style compressor I've used to date. Anyone looking for a fully featured single-channel compressor to create almost any type of dynamics control from subtle to severe should put the Seventeen right at the top of their audition list."

HIGHLY  
COMMENDEDCRANBORNE  
AUDIO 500 SERIES

£299  
Contact [cranborne-audio.com/soundtech.co.uk](http://cranborne-audio.com/soundtech.co.uk)

British company Cranborne Audio is relatively new but already making a splash with some great products and richly-deserved awards. The Camden 500 is a 500-series microphone preamplifier offering both a transparent mic gain and two types of 'Mojo', which aim to emulate the sound of the colourful, vintage consoles. John Pickford tried both modes in a wide variety of recording situations and found it exceptional in all of them "Camden is a fabulous microphone preamplifier," he said. "I would be raving about it at twice the price, but as it is, it's practically a gift. I would have no hesitation using the clean signal path to make highly critical, natural-sounding recordings and, as you may have gathered, the Mojo controls offer a whole world of sonic enhancement."