

A “Killer” Review

Written By: Harm Schopman, Monitor Engineer for The Killers

Nothing can bring more stress to a Monitor Engineer than a poorly regulated RF environment, a faulty In-Ear Monitor, or issues with the output of an antenna. However, a remarkable product known as the Invisible Waves Analyzer is gradually becoming an irreplaceable tool for those in charge of a wireless landscape, in need of the ability to identify these problems.

Harm Schopman, Monitor engineer for The Killers, tells us his story:

“On a daily basis, the Invisible Waves Analyzer provides me with the ability to walk in a new venue, fire up the laptop (I run my Invisible Waves software using Parallels on my Mac), and start scanning to see what the wireless environment looks like. First off, with the Invisible Waves components pre-configured in its carrying case, it's really quick to set up. It's a matter of connecting two cables (power and USB) and you're set to go! The program adds some very nice user touches too, like 'profiles'. These enable me to quickly switch back and forth between four sets of frequencies, whilst doing the morning scan! It's also useful to have the white space calculator quickly show me where there are useable gaps in the spectrum. I can't stress enough how quick the system is to use... On most days I'm done in about ten minutes!

Aside from my normal setup, when I run into problems with antennae, cabling, or hardware units, the Invisible Waves is a godsend. I can quickly set it up so that it scans just what I want to look at, then change what I think is broken and measure for improvement. No longer do I have to walk around with a set of IEMs and listen to headphones to determine if the signal cuts out earlier or later...

For example, one of our IEM units lost signal strength just before the band went on in Cape Town (isn't that always the case?), but I was able to quickly determine that it wasn't the cable or the antenna. This left the transmitter unit as the source of the problem, but we weren't able to make the system work before the show. Instead, we quickly ran out a hardware pack to one of the techs and worked around it. The Invisible Waves equipment had given us the measurement tools to determine what the problem was.

In Mexico I had a problem with one of our antenna cables. After measuring the output, we found it low compared to our normal level. My first attempted solution was to re-seat the antenna cable but this lead to no improvement. When we replaced the cable we suddenly had full strength. Quantifiable, quick and a far cry from the "try and listen" method that was used previously, the Invisible Waves once more identified our problem. This was a massive and confidence-inspiring improvement!

During the shows, I set up 10 Monitored Frequencies (8 In-Ears, a sax and main handheld). Once everything is settled, I disable 'Full Scan' and 'ROI Scan' features. This allows me to have the 10 Monitored Frequencies scanned quickly and continuously during the soundcheck and the show. It's great to be able to see what's going on at a glance.

All in all, the Invisible Waves Analyzer is a remarkable tool for setup and troubleshooting alike. Gone are the days of guessing and hoping. With one product I am able to have a speedy setup and a smooth show. All Monitor Engineers should have one!”

*For additional information on the Invisible Waves RF Analyzers for Pro-Audio Wireless, please go to www.RFAnalyzers.com

Kaltman Creations LLC is dedicated to the design & development of new and unique products for the wireless, professional audio, IT & broadcast industries. With the introduction of the world’s first handheld motorized cable coiler; a unique new cable tie product; and low-cost RF spectrum analyzers, Kaltman Creations is setting the pace for innovative and highly unique product offerings. For additional information, contact Ray Esparolini at 678-714-2000 or visit: www.kaltmancreationsllc.com

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