Checking it Out

Know What Your Stream is Doing
Inovonics' 610 Internet Radio Monitor

By Grace Gonzales

[September 2013] At first, stations just put their audio stream on the Internet to see if anyone would listen. Quality and levels were hard to judge. Now, with the new Model 610, Inovonics makes it easy to know exactly what the streams are doing.

At KOHN Radio, we have been providing two audio streams feeding the Internet.

These streams do more than just allow listeners to hear our broadcasts. As a non-commercial Native American station, KOHN, or Hewel Ni'ok (literally: "Wind talking"), is charged with helping our members stay up-to-date with news and information on Tribal affairs, as well as music and other programs to keep our culture vibrant and relevant. That means we need to make Council Meetings available to members, even while maintaining our stream for listeners around the world.

Clearly, keeping track of the audio level and quality of the streams is important to us, as we want to ensure they are at appropriate and con-sistent levels, making the best of the transmission medium.

INOVONICS 610

A new tool to help us to accomplish that is the Inovonics Model 610 Internet Radio Monitor.

The Inovonics 610 Internet Radio Monitor

The main purpose of the Internet Radio Monitor is to provide uninterrupted monitoring of the online streaming radio performance. The monitor automatically decodes and displays live metadata for MP3, Ogg Vorbis, and AAC formats, including station ID, song/program info, level, and quality (format and bit rate) on the bright OLED display.

Our Station Manager, Sial Thonolig, finds the display is quick and easy to use. He says, "The most advantageous aspect of the unit is the visu-

al metering. All you have to do is look and see if there is audio being metered to know that the stream is up."

The jog wheel on the right side allows access to the programming features, including alarm features that permit the user to monitor the on-line stream, even when not watching the display.
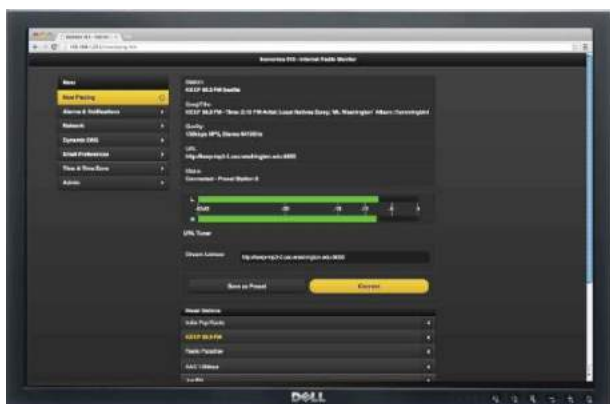
SETUP

The Model 610 is simple to install. All the takes for input is an Ethernet cable connected to the LAN with Internet access.

Back panel of the Model 610

The backside contains analog and digital audio outputs, as well alarms for Ground problems, Audio loss, Stream loss, or Internet loss. Alarms can be sent by email or text messaging. Also as part of the configuration set up, all email notifications are logged, and the Event Log can be downloaded for record retention and/or analysis via the Ethernet connection.

In addition to the front panel controls, the configuration for the Model 610 is easy to manage and can be set up via an easily understood web interface.

A web browser window assists in configuration

I did take some time to sample the settings for the timer and threshold for audio loss and found that I was able to make changes with ease.

In addition to the web browser-based GUI, we can also access the set-tings for the Model 610 using an iPad or iOS (or Android) cell phone app.

This allows me to be able to monitor audio levels and the Alarm log from any place I happen to be.

Remote Control can be via iOS and Android

FROM HOURS TO MINUTES

Currently our Inovonics 610 is set to email us in the event of audio loss, stream loss and Internet loss. This has reduced our response time for problems from hours to minutes.

There have been a few occasions where we have received email notifications that have indicated stream recovery without sending out notifications of stream loss, but having the logs will be a great troubleshooting tool.

About the only thing we thought might be missing would be the ability to monitor more than one stream simultaneously. Inovonics informs us that this feature is being considered for a firmware update.

GREAT MONITOR – RELIABLE DATA

All in all, we found the Inovonics 610 Internet Radio Monitor to be an excellent monitoring device.
Since the monitor was put into operation about a month ago, nothing has stopped it from operating well. Even after a power outage, the unit stays locked to the stream it is monitoring.

As Programming Assistant the Model 610 has been a great help in notifying us of any audio, Internet, or stream loss, and does so in a timely manner so that we can quickly address the problem. I have recommended that our GM purchase this product.

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