

# Acoustica Mixcraft 9 Pro Studio DAW

By Paul Lau

**M**ixcraft 9 Pro Studio continues Acoustica's ascendance in recent years as one of the premiere DAW developers in the PC world. Whether you are a novice or seasoned pro, there are useful tools for everyone in this latest version.

## First Impressions

I was first impressed by how streamlined and clean-looking Mixcraft 9 was in terms of its interface and visuals. The layout of the screen panels invites smooth movements and offers quick and easy transitions.

So what else does the new Mixcraft 9 offer beyond a sleek look? We should probably ask what it doesn't do...

We can start with the endless audio and MIDI tracks, which allow you so much freedom in the endless landscape of your music creation. But it's more than that! With the live instrument panel, it's more than a recording DAW; it's your performance hub for setting up sounds to translate to your studio or live performance via controllers like Ableton's Launchpad or your favourite keyboard controller. The programming is quite simple and the assignment of knobs and faders in any studio or live application is quick and easy!

The straightforward MIDI editing and notational part of the program allow for algorithmic MIDI programming via a mouse or keyboard controller and can be done quite efficiently and easily, especially with step-recording (for those not too proficient in playing keyboards or in time).

Also impressive are the many palettes of sonic colours that Mixcraft 9 has to offer. Even before you start recording your own audio tracks, there are 7,500 quality and useful instrument loops to whet your appetite for inspiration and creativity. Among the available virtual instruments is a treasure trove of high-end, sample-based instruments like the Acoustica Pianissimo Virtual Grand Piano along with all kinds of classic synths and organs, strings, guitars and basses, drums and percussion, and more.

Another cool feature in Pro Studio (but not included with the more basic Recording Studio version) is Voltage Modular Ignite, a modular synthesizer with 45 different modules that offers precise control for anyone that loves to tweak in the realm of synthesis!

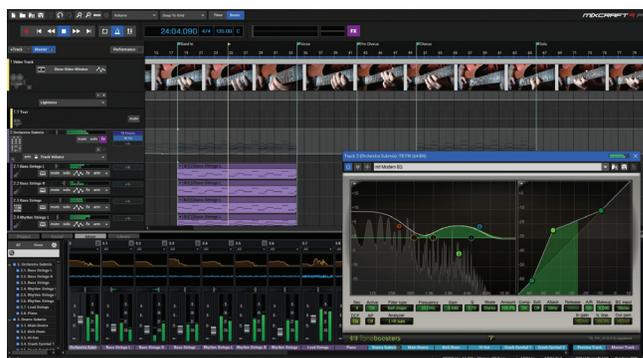
Even with the mountain of FX plug-ins from previous versions included, Mixcraft 9 includes new and useful offerings like: Acoustica Vocoder, Toneboosters plug-ins like compressors, de-essers, parametric EQs, and reverbs, and more.

## In Use

I really enjoyed the flexibility of the new detachable panels. These days, with a multi-screen set-up being accessible, you can customize your workspace and visual workflow to your liking. I personally like my plug-ins on the left side on one screen and virtual instruments on the right with my tracks and mixer in the middle. And being able to dock and undock the transport anywhere is awesome!

The new mixer design affords better visual awareness of knob and fader levels, which translates to where your mix is as individual tracks and as an entire mix. I also appreciate the ability to re-arrange the sections of the mixer to my desired order. In general, Mixcraft 9 Pro Studio shines in terms of customization and personalization.

The new Curved Automation and Tempo and Pitch Automation is such a creative tool. It enhances the ability to create smooth, complex curves for all types of automation – a step up from the usual straight line that creates unique new possibilities for your music. And with the new ability for tempo and pitch automation on all audio clips and



master tempo envelopes, you get smooth tempo transitions with interesting audio enhancement characteristics throughout a track.

The ability to convert any monophonic audio clip into MIDI notes with a single click is such a game-changer. Making your audio editable like a MIDI file is just so helpful in efficient music production. Imagine having a live bass track that has a few notes just a little astray from the kick drum. You can convert to MIDI and then quantize or drag-and-lock the bass and kick for a tight groove. Or, in the writing stage, you can sing a lead line and then audition different instruments for it to find your ideal tone.

Mixcraft 9 Pro Studio also includes Melodyne, offering world-class pitch correction capabilities. The suite of plug-ins and effects also results in a pretty robust mixing and mastering workflow. Finally, with the onboard video editing capabilities letting you create, produce, and score to video, we have pretty much all of our production bases covered.

## Summary

Mixcraft 9 Pro Studio is incredibly conducive to creativity and efficiency. It's very easy to use and a lot of fun to play with and explore, making it just as conducive to a fast, efficient workflow as it is down-the-rabbit-hole creativity and inspiration.

Check out Mixcraft 9 Pro Studio from Acoustica – a DAW for our times.

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