

SHURE PGX DIGITAL WIRELESS SYSTEM

SHURE'S LATEST WIRELESS SYSTEM USES DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY TO HELP YOU LOCK ON AND ROCK OUT. LET'S CUT THE CORD AND CRANK OUT SOME RIFFS. BY **PETER HODGSON**.

The Shure name is ubiquitous in both recorded and live sound. Who hasn't thrown an SM57 instrument mic up against a raging quad box, or wrapped their hands around a heavily-duct-taped (purely cos it looks cool) SM58 vocal mic and screamed their little hearts out? But Shure has been in the wireless game for an awful long time too, and their latest, the PGX Digital Wireless series, takes advantage of the wonders of zeroes and ones to send your sound from your instrument to your amp via nothing but stage fog.

IT'S A SHURE THING

When you unbox the set, you'll find a durable hard shell padded case which includes space for the receiver, the transmitter, the cord and two sets of spare AA batteries (a pair is included - thanks for thinking of our wallets, Shure!). It's a satisfyingly road-ready case that feels like it will protect everything well enough for most back-of-van situations.

At the heart of the PGX system is the PGXD4 wireless receiver. This teensy little unit, about the size of a guitar pedal, plugs in via an external adaptor and is suitable to be placed on top of your amp, in a rack or wherever else you might find yourself needing to plunk it down. It offers 24-bit 48kHz digital technology for authentic sound reproduction. Around the back you'll find both 1/4 inch and XLR output jacks, for a guitar amp or a mixing desk, respectively.

The receiver works with either the PGXD2 handheld transmitter - which works with a wide range of mics such as the SM58 - or the PGXD1 bodypack transmitter, which is capable of sending instrument or microphone sources. The PGXD1 has a recessed side-mounted dial offering 26 dB of continuously adjustable gain (anywhere between -16 dBV and +10 dBV), and it's darn near impossible to move the thing unless you actually intend to, which is very handy because the belt clip is the most secure that I've ever encountered on a wireless, and it's going to encourage you to pull out all of your Steve Vai swing-the-guitar-around-the-neck moves that would put you at risk of bumping the controls on a lesser wireless transmitter pack.

The transmitter also features a mute control, as well as power, mute and battery status LEDs. The battery door

feels very strong, and it's easy to access in the heat of battle while also being impossible to open unless you intend to, much like that gain control. I really appreciate the work Shure has put into making this unit utterly idiot-proof.

The transmitter's frequency range is 20 Hz to 20 kHz, giving you a pretty broad spectrum of tone to work with, and the input impedance is 1 M ohms.

The PGX system is very easy to set up. It features scan and sync, so you don't need to worry about any kind of overly-elaborate finicky pairing routine. Just press the button on the front of the receiver and off you go. The transmitter and receiver can speak to each other within up to 200 feet (60 metres), and you can get up to ten hours of continuous use from a single pair of AA batteries. The 900MHz operation keeps the system out of the range of troublesome TV signal interference, and up to five PGX systems can be used at once without messing with each other's signals.

LIVE AT THE WIRELESS

The 1 M ohms input impedance ensures a nice punchy, detailed translation of your guitar tone, while the transmitter's gain control is great for dialling in the right amount of boost or cut to work best with your rig. I found that while it was handy to use for practical purposes in terms of getting a nice level for the rest of the signal chain, it could also be used very much like a clean boost pedal might be employed, to increase the gain level being presented to the amp and therefore getting a little bit more pre-amp tube saturation. While sometimes this can introduce some pretty ugly clipping artefacts, the PGX system sounded clean, clear and purposeful when driven in this manner.

I moved as far away from my amp as I could during testing to see if there was any degradation of signal. Nope. In fact the only thing I noticed was that the latency between striking at note at one end of the house and hearing it come out of the amp way down the other end threw off my sense of time. Of course if you're playing on a stage of that size

PRICE: \$599

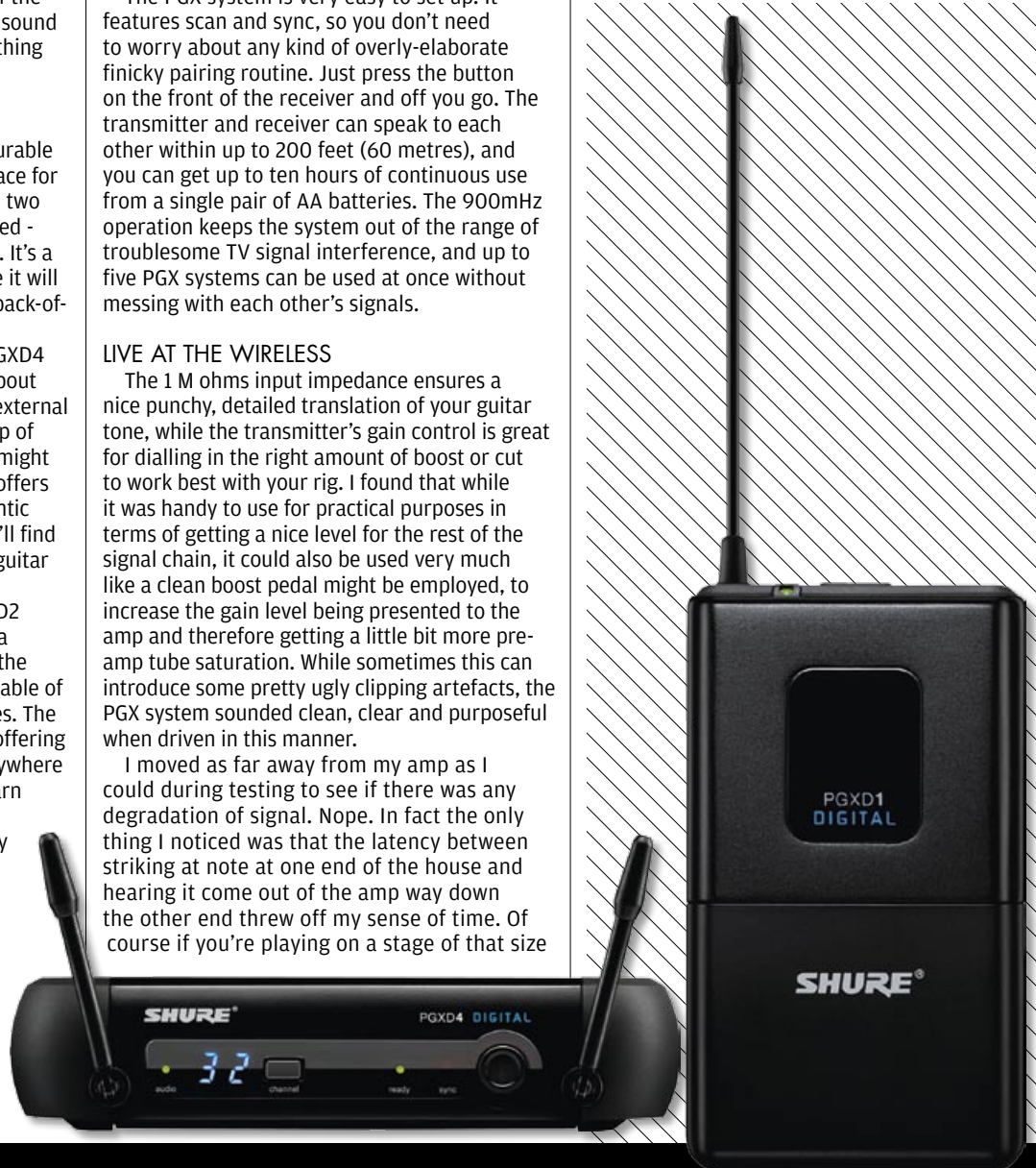
FEATURES

- Frequency range 20 Hz - 20 kHz
- Battery Life: 10 hours continuous
- Operating range 200 ft (60 m)
- Adjustable gain 26 dB
- I/O 24-bit / 48 kHz
- Sync one-touch automatic
- Outputs 1/4 inch, XLR

this won't be a problem because you'll have monitors, right?

THE BOTTOM LINE

The PGX is ridiculously user-friendly and road-ready. It does all the hard work for you, and unlike some other wirelesses and their finicky gain controls, I literally could not force it to sound bad, or could I pick up interference while jamming out at my desk surrounded by a mobile phone, a computer, an iPad and a home theatre system with a universal remote. **BB**



► WHAT WE RECKON

PROS

- Simple to use
- Long battery life
- Clear reception

CONS

- Must use the Shure cord

CONTACT

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