Producer Toy

VOCAL PILOT

User Guide



PRODUCER TOY

Windows & macOS | 64-bit & 32-bit | VST3 • VST2 • AU • AAX | DAW Host Required (Not Standalone)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 – Introduction 3

1.1 Welcome 3

1.2 Product Overview 3

1.3 Concepts and Terminology 4

1.4 Plugin Formats & Compatibility 4

1.5 Top Toolbar 4

Chapter 2 – Quickstart Guide 5

Chapter 3 – Interface and Controls 6

3.1 Interface 6

3.2 Controls 7

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Welcome

Thank you for choosing Producer Toy! In order to get the most out of your new Vocal Pilot plugin, please take a moment to read this user guide.

To install software and manage your licenses, sign in to your free Producer Toy account at producertoy.com. With a Producer Toy account you can keep track of your products, download updates, access tutorials, and stay up to date with new tools.

We suggest that you become familiar with the Producer Toy Support pages: producertoy.com/support. There you will find technical articles about installation, DAW sidechain setup, specifications, and contact information.

1.2 Product Overview

Vocal Pilot is an intelligent, real-time vocal leveling and mixing tool. As its name implies, it automatically rides vocal track levels. Instead of manually riding a console fader or tediously drawing volume automation in your DAW, Vocal Pilot does it for you in real-time, saving hours of mixing time.

All you need to do is set the target range of the vocal level in relation to the mix. Vocal Pilot adjusts the level so it stays within your target, raising or lowering the vocal volume in real-time. And unlike heavy compression, Vocal Pilot does not add any coloration or frequency smearing to your track.

- Keep consistent vocal & dialog levels automatically.
- Steady vocal levels without affecting their sound or tonal character.
- Achieve an open-sounding mix by avoiding over-compression.
- Real-Time means zero latency (0 ms) and no pre-scan needed.
- Intelligently adjusts vocal level based on dynamics of the music tracks.
- Write the automatic riding to an automation track for fine tuning.

1.3 Concepts and Terminology

The vocal production process can be divided into several stages: recording, comping, mix positioning, sound character adjustment (Dynamics/EQ/Effects), and gain riding. Vocal gain riding is the final stage, during which the vocal level is fine-tuned to make its position in the mix consistent throughout the song.

Vocal Pilot splits the elements of the mix into two main components:

* Vocal: All vocal tracks, with or without effects (as defined by the user)
* Music: The rest of the mix, minus the vocal tracks (fed via sidechain)

1.4 Plugin Formats & System Compatibility

Vocal Pilot is available in all standard audio industry formats across desktop operating systems:

OPERATING SYSTEMS:	Windows (PC) & macOS (Intel & Apple Silicon M1/M2/M3/M4)
ARCHITECTURE:	Both 64-bit and 32-bit architecture natively supported
PLUGIN FORMATS:	VST3, VST2, AU (Audio Units v2 for Mac), AAX Native (Pro Tools)
SUPPORTED DAWs:	FL Studio, Ableton Live, Logic Pro, Pro Tools, Studio One, Reaper, Cubase

PLEASE NOTE: NOT A STANDALONE APPLICATION

Vocal Pilot is an audio effect plugin. It requires an audio host application (DAW) to run and cannot be used as a standalone executable. To use Vocal Pilot, insert it onto an audio or mixer track inside your DAW.

1.5 Top Toolbar

Use the bar at the top of the plugin to save and load presets, compare settings (A/B), inspect sidechain status, and access the settings gear for GUI scaling and licensing.

Chapter 2 – Quickstart Guide



- Insert Vocal Pilot as the last plug-in on your vocal or vocal group track.
- Send your instrumental tracks, post fader, to a bus, just like a headphone mix.
- Set the sidechain input on Vocal Pilot to the instrumental bus.
- Begin playing your song, then set the Vocal Sensitivity and Attack controls.
- Set the Target control by moving the transparent screen to the Vocal range peak.
- The main Rider fader will begin to move automatically, leveling your vocal.
- In Live situations, if the fader moves when no vocal signal is present, adjust the Spill control to differentiate unwanted ambient stage noise, for better tracking.
- Limit the amount of automatic gain change by setting the range faders.
- To correlate the vocal level to the instrumental level, adjust Music Sensitivity.
- Arm your host to write automation, then Press Automation Write at any time to send the Vocal Pilot Fader to your host application automation edit lane, make your manual edits, and then press Read.
- Using your ears, find the sweet spot and trim using the output fader.

Chapter 3 – Interface and Controls

3.1 Interface



Interface Overview:

- **Target Control:** Sets vocal loudness reference range
- **Attack Switch:** Fast / Slow ballistics selector
- **Spill Level:** Isolates background acoustic bleed
- **Vocal Sensitivity:** Word beginning / ending detection
- **Music Sensitivity:** Instrumental sidechain tracking
- **Range Faders (Min / Max):** Sets upper and lower riding limits
- **Idle Arrow:** Resting position during vocal silence
- **Pilot Fader:** Intelligent automatic riding fader
- **Automation Mode:** OFF, WRITE to host, and READ lane
- **Output Trim:** Post-riding master level makeup trim

3.2 Controls



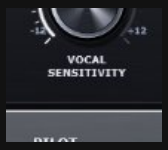
TARGET sets the reference range for vocal mix positioning. Since Gain Riding is relative to the Target position, changing the Target setting will move the Rider Fader's '0' calibration, re-focusing the correct level range.

Range: 0 to -42 dBFS
Default: -21



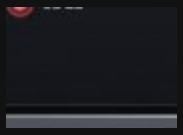
SPILL differentiates between vocal signal and unwanted ambient stage noise, to provide better tracking.

Range: -12 to -48 dBFS
Default: -48



VOCAL SENSITIVITY controls the vocal detector sensitivity, which differentiates vocal content from noise floor, spill, and ambience, and identifies the beginnings and endings of words.

Range: -12 to +12 dB
Default: 0



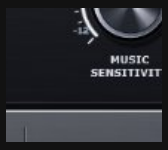
VOCAL ACTIVITY DISPLAY indicates when vocal activity is detected.

Range: Ride, Idle
Default: Idle



ATTACK sets the vocal detection attack behavior, affecting both detection timing and fader riding speed.

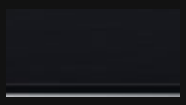
Range: Fast, Slow
Default: Slow



MUSIC SENSITIVITY determines the amount Vocal Pilot adapts to changes in instrumental levels. (“Instrumental” refers to all tracks other than the vocal).

Please note: To use this control, the instrumental mix bus must be assigned to the Vocal Pilot side-chain input.

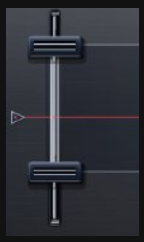
Range: -12 to +12 dB
Default: 0



MUSIC SENSITIVITY LED indicates when and how much Vocal Pilot is affected by instrumental levels. When the LED is soft green, vocal riding is less affected by instrumental level; as vocal riding is more affected by the instrumental level, the LED gets brighter.

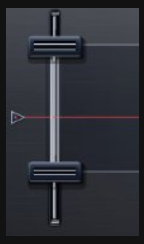
Please note: To use this control, the instrumental mix bus must be assigned to the Vocal Pilot side-chain input.

Range: Soft Green to Bright Green
Default: Soft Green



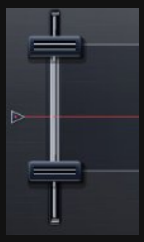
RANGE MIN sets the lower boundary of the Rider Fader movement range, setting the maximum possible Rider Fader attenuation.

Range: -12 to +11 dB
Default: -6



RANGE MAX sets the upper boundary of the Rider Fader movement range, setting the maximum Rider Fader gain.

Range: -11 to +12 dB
Default: +6



IDLE ARROW sets the Rider Fader value when there is no vocal activity. Typically, it is in the middle of the range, to avoid drastic gain changes between words.

Range: -12 to +12 dB
Default: 0



EFFECTIVE RANGE displays the total gain range available for automatic riding. Users can also double-click to manually type an exact dB range.

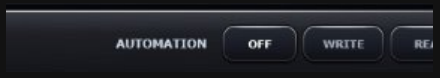
Range: 1 to 24 dB
Default: 12



RIDER FADER is Vocal Pilot's automatic control, which moves according to the internal detectors' algorithm to level-out the vocal, similar to manual fader riding. (The TARGET control is used to set the Rider Fader '0' calibration.)

If touched by the mouse, the Rider Fader allows manual gain adjustment. Once the mouse is released, the Rider Fader will continue automatic riding.
When using a control surface to manually override the Rider Fader, press the control surface's Manual button, then begin riding.

Range: -12 to +12 dB
Default: Idle value



AUTOMATION MODE controls the Rider Fader operation.

When set to Off, the Rider Fader will use its internal engine and will not send out nor read automation.

When set to Write, all Rider Fader movements are sent to the host application automation lane. (DAW host automation must be enabled in write/touch/latch mode, and the Rider Fader must be armed for automation).

Though the Rider Fader moves automatically, it is treated by the host application as if automation is being written manually. When set to Read, the Rider Fader uses the automation lane to define its movement, disregarding Vocal Pilot's internal engine.

Range: Off, Write, Read
Default: Off



OUTPUT trims the vocal output gain, post-auto riding; the CLIP LED shows when output is clipping (> 0 dBFS). Click the CLIP LED to clear the warning latch.

Range: -12 to +12 dB
Default: 0

Direct Value Editing:

Double-click any numeric box (Range, Pilot Gain, Output Trim, or Target) to manually type exact values with your keyboard. Standard Ctrl+C / Ctrl+V clipboard shortcuts are supported.