



D16 Group Devastor

by Ginno 'g.no' Legaspi





D16 Group - the Polish company that brought us virtual instruments like Nepheton, Drumazon and Phoscyon - has delved into the plug-in effects arena. They're expanding their product line with their first effects release, Devastor - a multi-band distortion plug-in, which is an enhanced version of the distortion section from their TB303-emulation synth, Phoscyon.

Installing the plug-in is a breeze. D16 sends you a key file by email after purchase, which you simply copy to the VST's plug-in folder. This key file activates the plug-in for unlimited use.

It is fairly easy to get familiarised with Devastor's interface. Once you fire up the gorgeous plug-in, the GUI welcomes you with its silver knobs, simple sliders+buttons and LED-style output meter. The layout is so well thought out that tweaking parameters to taste is quick. You can pretty much 'give it a go' without consulting the manual (PDF or online) as everything you need to adjust is right

there in front of you. No hidden menus or various tabs, which is great.

Devastor consists of three blocks; a dynamics-gain module, a diode-clipper distortion module and three filter sections (all three feature low pass, high pass, band pass, and band reject models as well as adjustable resonance and cut-off). The one-knob dynamic module will equalize the incoming signal's amplitude. The diode-clipper module simulates the behaviour of a diode-clipper from an analogue circuit. The signal distortion is caused by the circuit 'clipping' the top and bottom of the audio waveform, as the D16 Group describes it. The three separate filters' jobs are to process the full audio signal, whether pre or post-clipper. (The manual explains different possible configurations and signal flow for the filter section.) The final stage for the processed signal is the master section, which controls the overall volume. You can monitor the current level of the output signal with the LED-type meter, just below the master knob.



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In my opinion, Devastor is all about simplicity and accessibility. But does it sound good? Yes. Even though it only has one distortion algorithm, I achieved good immediate results while testing it. Application ranges from subtle to full-on distortion. I find it extremely useful for adding grit to drum loops. It is very musical, especially for dirtying up a Rhodes sound, and is indispensable for warming up stale and lifeless synth tracks. Also, subtle use of Devastor can enhance the timbre and character of gentler sounds... especially digital pads.

Devastor is shipped with 89 stock presets that provide a good starting point. The fun then begins when you tweak them. In case you need to cook up some more, there's room to save your own, in 'empty' slots.

Bottom line: At €29, Devastor is a good alternative if you're looking for a 3rd party distortion effect in your VST/AU arsenal. But don't let the price tag fool you; Devastor is a highly effective plug-in,

regardless of your audio source. It really shines when used sparingly yet can be one heck of a sound destructor if pushed to the max. At this price, it's too good to pass up. Highly recommended.

CONTACT:

E-mail: contact@d16.pl
Website: www.d16.pl

PRICE:
€29 (about US \$45, at time of writing)

COPY PROTECTION: Key file

FORMATS / SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

Devastor is available in VST and AU formats, for both PC and Mac. It has a dynamic library (.dll file) for PC (VST only) and Universal Binary bundle for Mac (VST and AU). To use the product you need Windows 2000/XP or Mac OS X 10.4.3 or later. It is not a standalone program so you need a VST or AU compatible host application to use it.