

RNC1773 Really Nice Compressor

Chris Reiger has some really nice things to say.

A small grey looking box lands on my desk. The accompanying documentation describes it as a 'Really Nice Compressor'. Oh yeah? To call your product the same as you perhaps would have some reviewer describe it... well, it's comparable to calling a song you've written 'A Really Nice Song'.

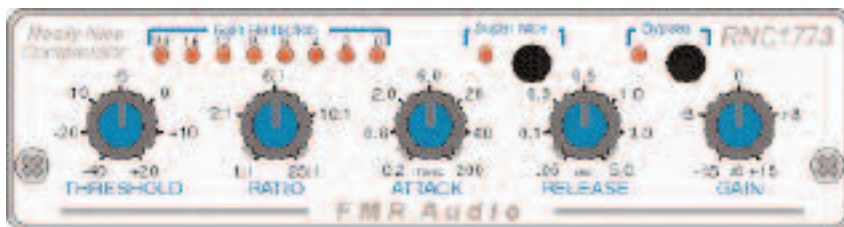
I spent an afternoon trying the RNC 1773 across a number of instruments and mixes and it didn't take very long to convince me that it does exactly what it says 'on the tin'. The RNC 1773 far exceeds the quality level of similar 1/3-rack devices we saw years ago from Alesis

Super Nice mode it was wonderfully transparent. It is an extremely good compressor for vocals – once again very transparent and with a very low noise level. The manufacturer's description of Super Nice mode indicates that a three stage compression system is used, which might explain why it sounds so smooth. The next thing I ran through the RNC 1773 was two-track program. Of all of its features this is where this little dynamo really makes you sit up and take notice. I know I keep using the word 'transparent' but the RNC really is just that. I ran a mix through it of something I had been currently working on.

Suffice to say, I knew every nuance of this piece and could certainly judge the effect it was having across the mix. It did a fantastic job. It gave the mix presence, did not squash or noticeably flatten the dynamics of the track, yet kept a lid on it allowing an overall gain increase. Smooth is a word that applies here.

The comparison between the RNC 1773 and much more expensive compressors is a valid

one. This little beast will only set you back some \$500 compared with prices in the \$1500 to \$4000 range yet it really is a very, very good compressor. Firstly there are the semi pro or home users who would certainly benefit from having this in their rack as their main compressor. It handles everything with ease and costs very little, the price is fantastic for what it does. Secondly, pro users would be crazy not to have at least one of these in their system. In fact, three of these units fit into one rack space and for a combined outlay of some \$1500 you would have three excellent stereo compressors to call up at anytime. The cost of three RNCs would buy you one medium range stereo compressor from one of the established manufacturers and would not only more than compare favourably with it sonically, but would probably eat it for breakfast. This really is a really nice compressor... really nice.



and Boss. In fact, this compressor compares with compressors which cost five or six times as much – it really does. It's transparency amazed me.

It essentially has two modes – Normal, and Super Nice. Normal mode is as it suggests. It operates as any normal compressor would, from very subtle compression to sledgehammer squash and flatten, and everything in between. When applying it across a bass track I found the level of control was exceptional, without the distortion of some other low priced units, and it certainly didn't rob the sound of low end or high end presence or clarity. Very, very clean. Vintage compressors are sought after and with good reason, but each often has its own specific sound. Some work better across certain instruments than others and they can often 'muddy' the sound depending on how they are used. There's none of that colouration here. The bass sound I ended up with was punchy and in your face. The front panel controls are very precise. If it indicates an attack time of 2ms, it means 2ms. It is fast and so smooth. I also used it across a drum loop. Across the drum loop I made it pump, suck and squash. The range of effect and overall sound quality makes it the perfect companion for a digital recording system.

Super Nice mode is perfectly suited to stereo program material as well as dynamically sensitive program like vocals and acoustic guitar. Across the acoustic guitar in

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