

Engineers choose two DiGiCo Quantum 338s for Halsey's Back to Badlands World Tour

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Front of house engineer James Butera has been touring with Halsey since 2023, and Schyler Blackman, monitor engineer, has been with them for almost a year. Both engineers are enjoying the DiGiCo Quantum 338, supplied by Clair Global for this high-energy world tour.

Halsey is an American singer song-writer, originally from New Jersey and her global appeal is underlined by over 31 billion streams, five chart topping studio albums and 29 singles. Halsey's latest sold-out world tour *Back to Badlands*, was a celebration of her album *Badlands*, which debuted in 2015. The tour started last October, visiting the USA, Canada, Mexico, Europe, ending in Australia in February 2026, with many extra dates being added due to huge demand.

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The switch to DiGiCo Quantum 338s happened in 2023, after a catastrophic failure of Butera's previous console. The desk failed at the top of his very first show with Halsey and, coupled with compatibility issues, he made the choice to switch to a different manufacturer. His main concerns were stability and reliability, plus proven compatibility with the existing Dante playback system. It was an added bonus of choosing DiGiCo that he was also able to streamline the audio rig with DMI Dante cards, reducing rack space too.

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"DiGiCo's I/O flexibility and stability were the two big selling points," Butera recalls. "We cut the amount of rack space and gear in half when we switched to DiGiCo and we no longer started festival set changes with, 'hold on, I need to power cycle', which was great! Global availability is also excellent. Every festival you walk into, it's a DiGiCo, which is reassuring. There are a lot of administrative details that make DiGiCo an easy choice for a global act."

World-wide large-scale touring is a dream career for any live sound engineer and knowing you have the choice of the world's best equipment at your fingertips makes it just that bit better. For Butera, standing behind a DiGiCo console is not unlike standing in front of a high-performance vehicle, it smooths the edges of your audio-experience and makes life a little less complicated in the process.

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"I think all the major players have great sounding consoles, it's like Porsche versus Ferrari. They're both beautiful cars and they both go fast," Butera continues. "At some point, it becomes a personal preference, but there are definitely some shortcomings in terms of flexibility if you leave the DiGiCo ecosystem. There is so much flexibility, all the network options on hand are great. Built-in Dante on the Quantum 112 looks really good, DiGiCo is just really hard to beat."

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DiGiCo Halsey Back to Badlands: Schyler Blackman (monitor engineer), Shannon Fitzpatrick (audio tech), James Butera (FOH engineer)

It's not just the front of house experience that is frictionless, communication between consoles is also improved with a DiGiCo ecosystem. Blackman can easily and quickly share data from the monitor position with the Console send/receive functionality, via the Optocore loop. This function is available to any consoles on the loop and removes the need for additional multicore runs by

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easily assigning any send as a latency free port, instantly visible to other consoles via the network.



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With the stresses of global touring, it is unlikely that any piece of equipment will make it back to

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the warehouse completely unscathed. If the worst should happen, using DiGiCo means that there is a whole world of support available, whatever time-zone the tour is in.

"I've been flitting in and out with DiGiCo since 2015, depending on whether I get to choose, obviously," Blackman explains. "It's the flexibility, stability and reliability, that really stand out. No matter, where you're at in the world, whether it's Topeka, Kansas, or London, you can find a DiGiCo somewhere close. I was on a gig this summer in Seattle and one of the cards in our stage rack developed a fault, we discovered it at power-up and within 20 minutes, we had another one on site from a local audio vendor. That's not always the case with all manufacturers. Just being able to source parts on the rare occasion where something does go wrong is amazing."

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Mixing with a DiGiCo console is more than great sound and an ergonomic console layout. The DiGiCo family is just that, a global network of people who really understand the pressures of audio engineering and whether that is happening in a stadium, surrounded by fans, a theatre or a broadcast studio, DiGiCo equipment and people have got you covered. That feeling is very comforting when dealing with as many moving parts as Blackman and Butera are and as they conclude, DiGiCo support goes above and beyond, giving them the confidence to do the same.

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"I like having the IO flexibility too, DiGiCo is friendly with everything," Blackman finishes. "I'm using a LiveBox, a bunch of outboard gear and Dante. Having one system that is compatible with all of the different players in the game is really, really nice."

"The support is pretty impressive, we were doing a show in Minneapolis and needed some help," Butera ends. "Matt Larson, Group One Vice President was travelling home at just the right moment and he jumped off the plane to come straight to us. The commitment is amazing, the

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DiGiCo team just can't get enough!"