

Richard Ashcroft's engineers gear up for summer with DiGiCo

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During the summer, outdoor events make touring even more exciting, with changeable weather and a huge spectrum of venues, from fields in the UK to arenas and stadiums across the world. For Richard Ashcroft's engineers this is not a problem thanks to their well-prepared touring package including DiGiCo consoles and Fourier transform.engine. Front of house engineer Eds John and Monitor engineer Matt Lewis explain the forward-planning that goes into creating timeless summer festival magic moments.

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"This year we have come from an arena tour almost straight into our summer run, so most of the spec was put together at the beginning of the year and has carried through," John says. "We have a simplified setup for the summer, with a raw festival feel for the core band. We have removed some of the live aspects and added a strings track to retain Richard's signature sound. Control packages will be picked up locally for a lot of the shows and I will be moving between the DiGiCo Q338 and Q852. Being DiGiCo, it's so easy to convert my file between the consoles. No matter where you are in the world, you can always find a DiGiCo to suit your needs."

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Being the headline act for festivals comes with the benefit of longer sound checks, so setting up in a 20-minute window is not often a requirement for John and Lewis, giving them much more time to make sure everything is perfect. For the summer of 2026, the pair are utilising many of the core DiGiCo Quantum features, with John enjoying the Copy Audio function and Lewis appreciating the Mustard processing.



“As headline act, we either get in early on show day or the night before, so there is plenty of time

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to get what you need done," John continues. "I'm using the Waves port for virtual soundcheck so, after line checking with the crew, I turn on the Copy Audio function and sound check with the last show I recorded. This is useful because the band are not always available. I'm also using the Fourier transform engine. I cannot do without it for any of the bands I mix now. When started using it I just had a few plugins running while I got up to speed, but I now process a huge amount of my mix via it and I don't use any other outboard so it's a super tidy setup of DiGiCo and Fourier!"

For Lewis, as the band have scaled up so have his desk choices. With its super sharp screens the Q338 has been a welcomed change.



"I've used pretty much every series of consoles on this gig over the years and for the last two years I have specified a Quantum 338 for all my shows," he adds. "To be honest, I was always very happy with the SD12 when the band was a four piece, but as soon as it scales up, the Q338

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comes into its own. I've always been a fan of the three screen DiGiCos, but the sharper resolution screens and extra processing power, like the Mustard processing and Aux Nodes, is really useful on the bigger shows. It's just a very enjoyable surface to be in front of."



Foldback on stage is heavily reliant on d&b wedges and side fills. As Richard Ashcroft is not a fan of in-ear-monitoring, Lewis mixes the stage loudspeakers in a similar way to a front of house mix, delivering an immersive experience for the core band on stage. The band's drummer is using

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IEMs to enable him to keep in time with any tracks that may be used, but with a variety of setups throughout the summer, this can change, meaning the RF count varies. Lewis relies on Snapshots to tweak mix sends and, with so many open mics and loudspeakers on stage, the adaptability of the DiGiCo console surface really helps keep his workflow simple.



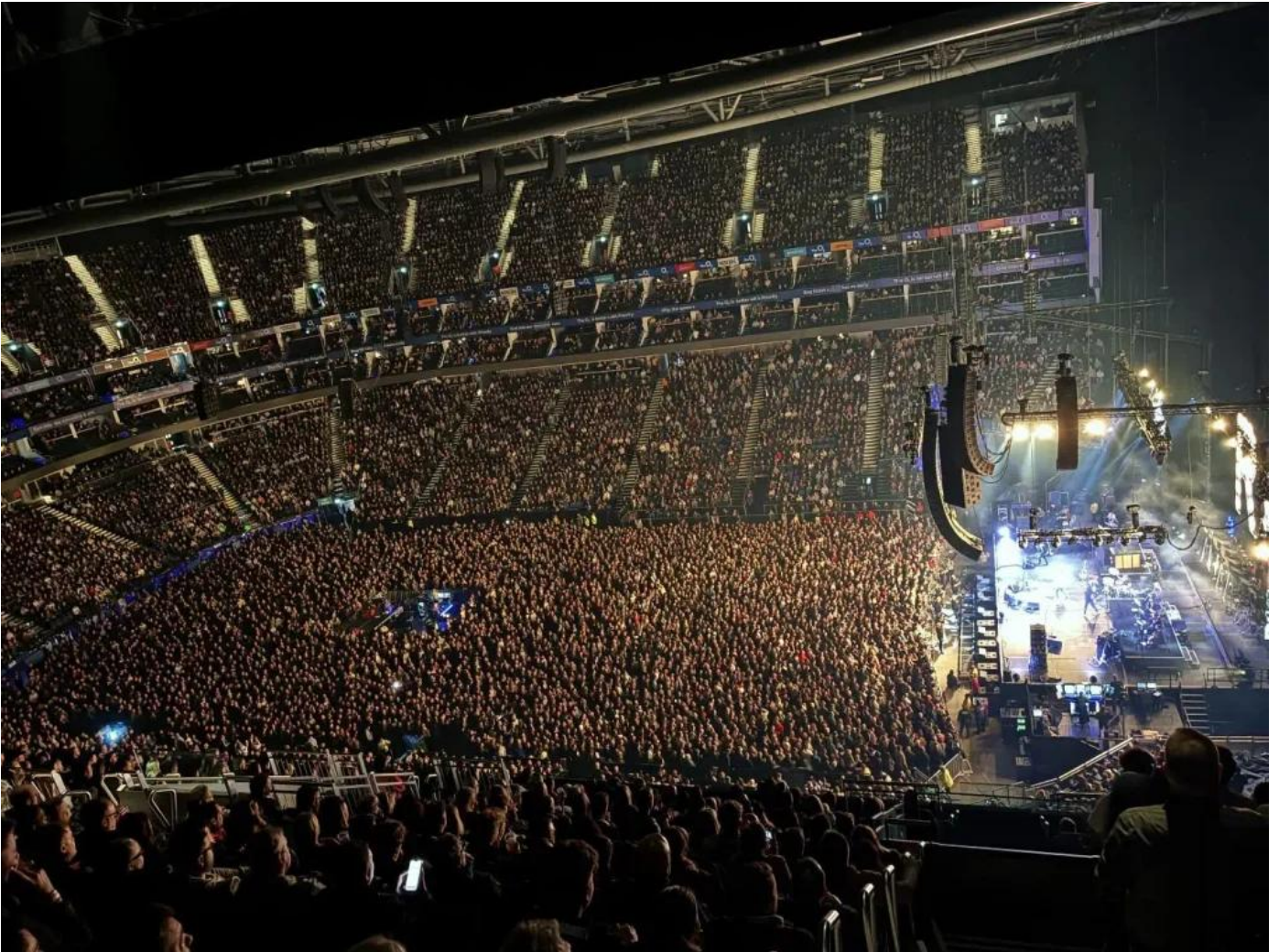
"The gig is only as good as the stage sound coming through those boxes. This is where I live and die during a show," he says. "The lineup on stage can change a lot during the year. We often have string players come in for his bigger shows, and recently backing vocals were added for the UK arena tour last March. All of those were suited to being on IEMS, which brought the RF count up to 12 and a total of 21 mixes overall. I've been using DiGiCo on this gig since 2018, when I was able to change from the previous desks. It's been a constant for me since then; I know how I want this gig to look and sound and DiGiCo helps me get there fast. I setup the banks in a very particular way so that I have quick access to all the important parts of my mixes."

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The unpredictability of a British summer is something that needs to be leaned into, but with DiGiCo on their rider Lewis and John are sure that every performance will be a refreshing breeze and never a wash-out. As the pair conclude, forward planning, technical excellence, and a well refined workflow will make this summer one to remember for all the right reasons.

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"I always know immediately how I want my file to look on a DiGiCo and it's very scalable, no matter how big or small the surface is," Lewis concludes. "DiGiCo has always been a constant for me, I know how I want this gig to look and sound and DiGiCo helps me get there fast. I love mixing outdoors, some of my favourite shows have been headlining festivals. The crowd has been there all day building up to this moment, so the atmosphere is magic. We will be picking up a variety of control packages over the summer, and I will be moving between a DiGiCo Q338 and Q852. Being DiGiCo, it's so easy to convert my file between all the consoles and, no matter where

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you are in the world, you can always find a DiGiCo to suit your needs."