



READY TO GO WIRELESS?

During the last few years wireless audio technology has emerged as a game-changer, offering performers unprecedented freedom and flexibility. By eliminating the constraints of traditional wired setups, wireless audio systems allow us more flexibility than wired solutions, reducing the clutter and hazards associated with cables, but also ensuring reliable and clear sound transmission – crucial for delivering an exceptional performance.

As we delve into the myriad benefits of sending audio signals wirelessly, it's evident that this innovation is revolutionising the performing arts, making it an indispensable tool for modern-day mobile DJs.

One of the companies at the forefront of this technology is Xvive, distributed in the UK by JHS. There are nearly 40 products listed on JHS's Xvive page, three of which are perfect for mobile DJ use: the Xvive U3 receiver and transmitter modules, the XP3 Bluetooth audio receivers and the U4T9 in-ear monitors.

All three products are at the forefront of wireless technology and could enhance your DJ setup immediately.

Xvive U3 (by Eddie Short)

The Xvive U3 is a digital audio transmission system that can be used to send an audio signal wirelessly. It comprises a compact transmitter module with an XLR input socket and an equally compact receiver module with an XLR output socket. Both units feature internal rechargeable batteries and the system can be switched for use with either mic-level or line-level audio, meaning that it can be used to transmit any type of audio signal.

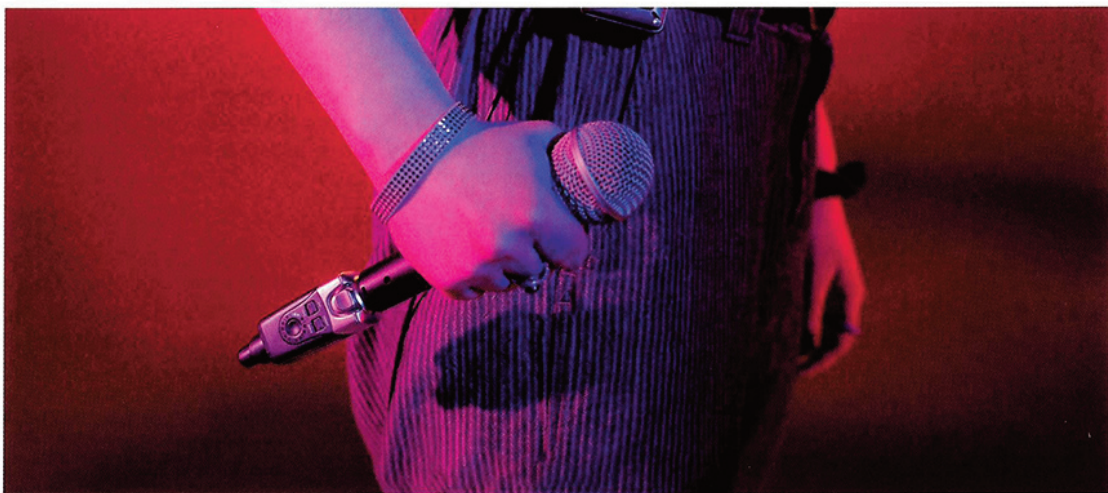
Before I go on to share my experiences of trying out the Xvive U3, I thought it would be worth first explaining some of the ways that this unique little tool could prove useful to mobile DJs. I'm aware that on first glance some readers may assume this isn't for them and skip forward, but it's actually a very versatile tool that I think could find a place in most mobile DJs' gig bag.

First off, the most obvious use for the U3 is to convert any standard corded mic into a wireless version. The small receiver unit will lock onto the XLR socket on the end of any standard vocal mic to create something that very much resembles a regular wireless mic. However, the obvious question is why would you want to do that when you can pick up a decent wireless mic kit for the same as – if not less than – the U3? The simple answer: flexibility.

Assuming you use a decent dynamic mic for making announcements – for example, the 'industry standard' SM58 – you're probably not keen on the idea of letting a tipsy guest get their mitts on it, even if your client has specifically asked for their best mate to be allowed to say a few words. With the U3 it would be very easy to surreptitiously swap your SM58 for a cheap and cheerful alternative when it's time to let someone else speak.

Similarly, if you find yourself asked to plug a keyboard into your PA for the birthday girl's best friend who's going to play a song, or hook up a guitar for the best man who's going to sing his speech, the U3 provides a quick, simple and cable-free solution. It doesn't matter where the music source is in a room, you can hook it up to your system with minimal hassle.

The U3 can also be used to transmit an audio signal to a powered speaker. This means that if you ever find yourself asked to DJ from somewhere away from your speakers, it's easy to connect your DJ mixer to them without having to run a cable. Likewise, if you need to put an extra speaker in another part of a venue – or outside on a patio – you can easily connect from the 'Thru' output on an inside speaker to the 'Input' on the outside cab, without the need to trail an unsightly cable or create a trip hazard. ▶▶



Xvive XP3 (by Fabio Capozzi)

The XP3 kit contains two P3 receivers powered by internal rechargeable batteries, boasting up to six hours of operation and a stable connectivity over 100ft (line-of-sight) – plenty of scope to cover weddings, celebrations and general events.

I got to use the system during a ‘fun day’ at one of my regular venues. The event manager wanted support audio outside on the deck area, as well as the usual setup in the main room inside. The DJ controller had a booth output (not all controllers have this feature) which is what the Bluetooth transmitter was connected to. This had the added advantage of allowing for separate volume control for the outside and inside audio, which was essential for later in the evening when the outside sound had to be reduced for residential reasons.

The XP3 is perfect for those situations where you have people chilling and chatting in the garden with lower-level music whilst the volume inside is at a higher level for dancing and keeping the room energy up, making everybody happy.

I also had an excellent opportunity to try out the receivers in a more private situation. Whilst on holiday, I set up two active battery-powered speakers outside on the patio for a BBQ with friends. The XP3s were ideal, as there were young children running and playing, so no cables to worry about. I plugged the two receivers into the XLR port of each speaker, then it was easy to link them in stereo using the stereo-link button – and ‘boom!’ away you go. They lasted the whole evening on varying levels of sound and performed brilliantly without any noticeable lag or drop out.



Xvive U4T9 in-ear monitors (by Steven Honeyball)

In-ear systems offer different benefits over traditional on-ear or over-ear headphones. Some factors to consider when choosing in-ear monitors include:

Sound isolation: It's well recorded that IEMs provide better sound isolation compared to regular headphones. Using them helps block out external noise and allows you to focus on your mix without distractions.

Comfort: Well-fitting IEMs can be very comfortable for extended use, as they don't put pressure on the head or ears like traditional on-ear headphones might. The included earpieces will help make that match for your ear whilst upgrading the cable to a custom moulded unit will be top of the range.

Sound quality: Look for IEMs with good frequency response, clear mids, defined highs, and impactful bass. Sound quality is paramount for mixing.

Detachable cables: IEMs with detachable cables are practical, as they allow for easy replacement if a cable gets damaged. (If needed, Xvive's U4T9 system allows you to replace each individual part, available to order from your local retailer.)

Low latency: Minimal latency is important for DJs, as it ensures that what we're hearing is in sync with our actions.

Like most DJs, I work in intensely loud environments and until now I've relied on a combination of moulded ear protection (ear plugs) and headphones. However, I find I need my headphones even louder than normal in order to hear over my -18dB plugs, which then makes me wonder if I'm defeating the whole purpose of wearing protection at all!

T9 in-ear monitors

The Xvive T9 IEMs are clear bud-like housings that contain all the sound-producing hardware. Designed in the US, they feature pro-level audio quality, and a 2m cable with 3.5mm jack feeding the two-pin connectors into the buds.

U4 transmitter

The transmitter is a small (90gsm) unit with an XLR port that plugs straight into a desk or, using the 6.3mm to 3.5mm jack adapter, into a DJ controller. It also offers simple-to-use controls and two switches (aux/line and power/mute). You also have selectable channels (up to six), so you can use multiple devices at once – useful when back-to-back DJing, for example, or of course for members of a band. ▶▶

Speaking of bands, the system operates on the 2.4GHz band but the selectable channels should help to avoid interference. I certainly didn't have any issues during testing in three different locations.

U4 receiver

The receiver is a belt pack-style unit weighing in at an acceptable 120gsm. Xvive state a maximum 'line of sight' receiving range of 27.5m (90ft). In testing, I found I had more range outdoors than inside. That said, for DJs using this product, you're generally very close to the transmitter, and this will also be the case for bands. I had no issues at any distance when working events.

On the receiver unit you'll also find a rotary knob for volume, channel selection to match the transmitter, two LEDs which show the signal to transmitter and low-battery warning, and a 3.5mm headphone socket with on/off slider switch. On the side is the charging port and a belt clip.

I've used the U4T9 in both indoor and outdoor environments for a wedding and party; the system delivered flawlessly with no noticeable lag in audio transmission. I also used the system in the office (connected to my Rodecaster Pro) for wedding music prep, and on Teams and Zoom meetings, and the system delivered flawlessly. All frequencies were easy to hear. Personally, I'd prefer a tad more bass, but that's probably just the DJ in me.

Thanks to the 3.5mm jack, you could easily switch the T9 element to a bespoke moulded option from a different company like ACS, which would give you a personalised product with the T9 kept as a backup.

Based on my tests, I'd guess that as a DJ you could work two standard five-hour bookings from one charge. Although to be on the safe side you'd probably want to charge them for each booking. Using USB, the system charges to full in 1.5 to 2.5 hours. So if you charge as you're setting up, they'll be ready to go from the moment you hit play!

Overall, the U4T9 is a great product from the team at Xvive! It feels solid and well-made and has opened my eyes to the benefits of using an in-ear system. The price is on point for DJs looking to get into IEMs and the sound quality is perfectly acceptable if you use the correct earpieces. I am very tempted to keep the system and try it for a few more bookings before ordering some custom plugs from ACS.

Conclusion

The Xvive range of wireless products make a compelling argument for having more flexibility whilst ditching those cables. Latency issues of old are gone and this new range of products are easy to use straight out the box. At the very least, the Xvive range will enable any DJ to move their speakers further out quickly and easily without having trailing cables, turn standard microphones into wireless ones, and stop that equipment-damaging pull back as you walk away from your controller with your headphones plugged in!

You can purchase all of the products from:

<https://ivormairants.co.uk/collections/xvive> 

