

I.E.M.

(Everybody wins...)

In Ear Monitor Systems

by **Bob Applegate**

The use of in ear monitor systems is a very viable choice for the music-oriented services in many churches utilizing praise bands or other moderately loud ensembles. To determine if your church could benefit from this technology ask the following questions:

To the band	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When you play (using monitors) is your attention drawn to the sound in the room rather than the monitor speakers? ○ Do you have difficulty hearing what they need to hear from your on stage perspective? ○ Are the stage monitors, acoustic output (drums) and amplifier output levels leaving a dulled sound in your ears by the end of the service? ○ Is acoustic feedback a problem in the monitor speakers?
To the Congregation/Mix Operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you turn down/off the main loudspeakers for the congregation does the band sound in the room appear to remain at nearly the same volume? ○ Do you have difficulty hearing what you need to hear from your perspective? ○ Are the main speakers, stage monitors, acoustic output (drums) and amplified output levels leaving a dulled sound in your ears by the end of the service? ○ Is acoustic feedback a problem in the monitor speakers? ○ Do you get complaints from the congregation that they cannot hear certain instruments or voices over the band?

The Solution - IEMs

If most questions are answered "Yes" then the use of a well designed IEM system can be the help you need for your ministry. The use of IEMs has become common in large touring bands and even local/regional musicians. A properly designed and implemented IEM system can protect the hearing of the musicians and congregation while providing the feed that the musicians require. Since the stage volume level can be kept to a minimum the negative interaction of the monitor and main speakers can be kept to a minimum. The IEMs do take a little getting used to, but in the end, they can be a very significant improvement to your sound system, on par with the correct loudspeaker and equalization. The bottom line is that if the band is willing to adapt, they can make a significant improvement in the quality of the service as they hear each other better and protect their hearing. In short, everybody wins....

Costs is generally less than the cost of a full blown wedge monitor system with speakers, equalizers, power amps, etc. and the clean look of the platform will impress even the die hard liturgical types who may have been questioning the use of a band in the service from the beginning. Again, everybody wins...

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