VOCAL EFFECTS CHEAT SHEET

REVERB VS DELAY

- Generally, you should rely more on delay than reverb to create space around the lead vocals
    - BUT a small amount of reverb is often combined with delay
    - It really depends on the genre and the vibe of the track
    - Just don't rely on reverb alone
    - In pop, mixers rely more on delays
        - However, reverb is making a comeback in the charts
    - But in acoustic genres, reverb is still heavily relied on
        - It's all about creating a realistic space
        - Putting the instruments in the same room
        - Creating a cohesive sound
- My go-to effect busses for lead vocals
    - Stereo Delay
        - Create a new effects buss
        - Send the lead vocal to that new buss
        - Add a stereo delay with 100% wetness
        - Set a low feedback (0-10%)
        - Different times on left and right (50-200ms)
            - Consider the tempo of the track
            - If it's fast, closer to 50ms
            - If slow, closer to 200ms
            - I normally start around 100-150ms
        - Adjust timing and volume to taste

- ○ Mono Delay
  - ■ Timed mono delay
  - ■ Can have higher feedback if desired (0-30%)
  - ■ Whole note (crotchet) or minim
  - ■ Time manually if you want it to stand out more
- ○ Plate Reverb
  - ■ Really short decay time
  - ■ For stereo width and sweetness, not noticeable reverb
- ○ Reverb Throw
  - ■ Long decay time
  - ■ Can cut all the highs and boost the lows for a deep 'sub reverb throw'
  - ■ Use as a spot effect (automate the send on the lead vocal buss)

8 essential REVERB tips

1. Use short decay times
2. Use one go-to plugin
3. Use reverb on a buss
4. Use less than you think, don't rely on it
5. Use delay instead, e.g. vocals or guitars
6. Reverb on delay channels
7. Use pre-delay for vocals or other forward parts
8. EQ the return, cut lows, mud, and experiment with boosting/cutting highs

Effect throws

- Automate sends to bring in effects on the last word of a phrase or section
- Be creative - add flanging, chorusing and saturation to your effects
- Can also apply effects directly to the vocal for sections
  - ○ e.g. the vocal telephone effect - cut all the lows and highs with filters, and add saturation

Want to create professional, radio-ready mixes at home?

Check out the free tutorials on the Musician on a Mission YouTube channel