

# SONNOX VoxDoubler

£69



Can Sonnox's new plug-in save you time in the studio spent lining up layers of vocals? **Alex Holmes** prepares to double up...

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## Key features

- 2 plug-in effects
- Create believable double and triple vocal tracks
- Adds depth and width
- Humanise the pitch and timing
- Mix control, plus Aux mode
- Depth and tone controls to shape signal

A double-tracked vocal can help bring a song to life and give it a professional sounding sheen, but it requires a great deal of time and patience from both the singer and the engineer, and in some situations, you may only have a single vocal track to work with. Luckily, plug-in veterans Sonnox are here to help with the new VoxDoubler effects, the first in a new Toolbox range that aims to offer task-specific plug-ins in an affordable and user-friendly package.

## WIDE LOAD

VoxDoubler is actually two separate plug-ins, Widen and Thicken, which pretty much do what you'd expect from the names and can be used to quickly create bigger sounding vocals (or any other instrument), without the need for multiple layers. Although you'll need an iLok account, you can use hard drive activation to license them on two machines. Straight

off the bat, the clear, resizable GUIs are easy to use, with six main dials that are explained via a useful Quick Guide that can be recalled at any time. With the exception of one control, the dials are the same on both plug-ins, starting with a Mix control that takes the wet signal from zero up to being on par with the dry, with an additional Aux mode switch for cutting out the dry altogether for when you want to use it on a buss. The Humanise section at the bottom allows you to add in random timing and pitch variations, from tight, subtle waverings, to much looser, more dramatic detuning. You then have a Depth control that adds an additional amount of fixed delay, along with a super-subtle high frequency cut in order to help push the wet signal further back into the mix and to increase separation with the original. Finally, the Tone control uses a tilt EQ to brighten or darken the effected signal.

## COPY CAT

So what's that actual difference between the two? Widen creates two mono copies of the original that can be placed anywhere from mono to hard-panned left and right using the Width dial. Thicken, on the other hand, creates a single stereo voice, and Width is replaced by a control called Stereo Spread that allows you to pan the channels hard left and right at 100%, or invert them at -100%. The best bet

is to tweak them to see what works best on your material, but essentially, Widen works best for more noticeable effects like adding stereo interest to a chorus section, or doubling up backing vocals, whereas Thicken is better at more subtle bulking out of a lead vocal. For the most part, the plug-ins are good at retaining mono compatibility and lack the phasing sound of some other doubling effects.

## DOUBLE OR NOTHING

Ultimately, you can't beat real double tracking for natural sounding thickening, but in the absence of that, VoxDoubler is definitely one of the better sounding doublers that we've heard. The CPU hit and latency are a little high, possibly to allow for the double to occasionally precede the dry track, and it would have been slicker to just have one plug-in with a Mode switch, rather than two. These things aside, VoxDoubler is a pretty decent sounding effect that provides a quick and easy alternative to time-consuming double tracking techniques, allowing you to spend more time focusing on your music! **MT**

**MT VERDICT** 8/10

- Natural sound
- Easy and quick to use
- Clear, resizable GUI
- Fairly high CPU and latency
- Could have been one plug-in
- No volume compensation

An easy-to-use and natural sounding effect for adding depth and width to vocals and instruments, and an alternative to fiddly traditional techniques.

## Alternatives

**SOFTUBE FIX Flanger & Fix Doubler \$149**  
Two plug-ins in one package, the Fix Doubler part has a similar design that's

aimed at creating short, wide and phase-free doubles. It has a decent sound, with a little more control over the LFO, but less control of the overall width.

**WAVES Doubler \$99**  
Doubler offers more control overall, with up to four channels of duplicates that allow individual control of

pan, gain, delay, detune and modulation amount, plus high and low EQ shelves. However, it lacks VoxDoubler's natural sound and speed of use.