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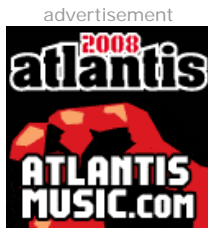
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## SOURCE AUDIO Hot Hand Wah and Wireless Adapter

Nov 1, 2007 12:00 PM, By Michael Ross

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Control this effects processor with a ring on your finger.

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Source Audio's Hot Hand Wah lets you do everything you can with a traditional wah pedal, and more, just by wiggling your finger. And with the Wireless Adapter, you can control the wah just by gesturing in thin air.

### Hot Box

The rugged floor unit has three rotary knobs and two large, flat footswitches. The Effect knob lets you select from 11 effects types: a classic wah-wah, an auto-wah, a volume swell, four multipeak

Source Audio's Hot Hand Wah (\$349) is an effects stompbox you control with a motion-sensor ring worn on your picking hand. The ring is tethered to the box by a rather cumbersome wire tucked beneath an armband. Fortunately, you can set the ring free by also purchasing the Hot Hand Wireless Adapter (\$150). The wireless system's ring transmits its signal to a small receiver plugged into the Hot Hand Wah. The Wah and Wireless Adapter are bundled together for \$474.

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Who has been the most influential electronic instrument designer?

Dave Smith

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This is not a scientific poll but a tabulation of readers responses and is purely just for fun!

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filters, and high- and low-resonance lowpass and bandpass filters. The Frequency knob lets you adjust filter frequency, and the Motion knob adjusts the unit's sensitivity to the ring. You can use the knobs to customize the effects and then store your configurations in one of four presets. One footswitch steps sequentially through the presets, and the other switches the effects on and off.

In addition to ¼-inch in and out jacks for your guitar and for expression pedals, the Hot Hand Wah has an in and out for the sensor and a connection for the optional 9 VDC adapter (the unit usually runs on four AA batteries). One motion-sensor ring can control several chained Source Audio units (a phaser/flanger is available, and more are in development).

The Wah lets you control devices from other manufacturers as well as its own effects. The Expression Out jack generates an adjustable voltage from 0 to 5V, proportional to the Hot Hand's control signal. The output can drive any device with a voltage-based expression pedal input, such as the Line 6 POD XT Live, the Voodoo Lab Ground Control Pro, or the Moogerfooger Ring Modulator I used.

The Wireless Adapter includes the lightweight wireless ring, the receiver, and a DC adapter that charges the ring's lithium-ion battery. The system is based on frequency-hopping 2.4 GHz radio technology and is licensed for worldwide wireless standards. Source Audio says the system allows you to roam as far as 100 feet from the floor unit while modulating its effects. Though my 15-foot audio cable prevented me from verifying that claim, the system worked perfectly between rooms, so I'm inclined to believe it. You can use as many as four wireless adapters without them interfering with each other, and use separate rings on each hand to control different parameters.

### With This Ring

The Motion knob has three adjustable areas — Pick, Strum, and Flail — and a button to invert the controller's effect. The Pick area gives the most filtering with the least movement, so I could pick funky lines while affecting their EQ coloration using the Classic Wah setting (see [Web Clip 1](#)). Strum worked best for rhythmic multipeak filtering applied to chord accompaniment (see [Web Clip 2](#)).

Flail was perfect for grand gestures and came into play when I switched off the Wah's effects and connected its Expression Out to the Moogerfooger Ring Modulator's Frequency input, allowing for long pitch sweeps punctuated by dramatic arm waving (see [Web Clip 3](#)). Switching to the Moogerfooger's Rate input, I could speed up and slow down the effect's modulation rate (see [Web Clip 4](#)).

I patched the Wah's audio I/O to a send and return on an M-Audio 1814 FireWire interface. Though the Hot Hand's input and output are labeled Guitar, they had no trouble with line-level signals. I set up an Ableton Live session featuring a rhythmically chopped string-sample loop. When I used varying hand motions to filter the loop with the bandpass and lowpass effects, the Hot Hand inspired sounds that might not have occurred to me, or that would have been unwieldy if not impossible using other forms of filter control (see [Web Clip 5](#)).

### Wah's Happening

Because Source Audio has been marketing its products to guitarists, my first thought was, "Don't I already have enough to do with my hands?" So I was surprised by how natural it felt to use the motion-sensor ring while playing. With very little practice, I discovered expressive possibilities in the slightest movements of my ring finger.

The Hot Hand Wah offers new avenues of control to guitarists, no matter what style of music they play. It frees them from the tyranny of filtering with a footpedal. The Wah system should be ideal for DJs, laptop jockeys, and keyboard players too, as well as electronic experimenters of all ilk. Performers other than guitarists may find that the Source Audio system adds greatly to their visual presentation as well as their audio palette.

**Value (1 through 5): 3**

Source Audio  
[www.sourceaudio.net](http://www.sourceaudio.net)

### BONUS MATERIAL

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## The Electronic Century Part 4



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