

# Snake BITE

**We've found the perfect solution to that mess of cables you call an effects set-up...**

**Words: Chris Underwood**



I was pretty pleased when I found out I'd be getting a Stage Magic PedalSnake to review. My own pedal board consists of a number of stomp boxes gaffer-taped to a plank of wood. Some of these run MIDI information, one runs from the effects loop on the back of the amp and all of them require power. By the time you've added a channel footswitch into the equation, it all starts looking like a road map of central Calcutta.

to keeping the floor clutter free. Wireless systems are probably the solution to that problem. What it will do, however, is busy away all the little odds and ends that comprise your effects set up, leaving it spick and span, a bit like a house-proud new girlfriend barging in and creating peace and order in your filthy flee-tip of a bedroom.

As is often the case with brilliant inventions; cats-eyes,

footswitch. What's more, each cable is protected with the patented PedalSnake 'shielding scheme', which means no unwanted noise.

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The premise of the PedalSnake is simple: to tidy up this bowl of spaghetti. Who could not applaud such a well-intentioned device? Only the other day various members of the band were moaning that by the time everyone had set up, with backing tracks, mic leads, pedal boards and power supplies, it was actually quite difficult to see the carpet.

The PedalSnake won't answer all your problems when it comes

paper clips, the chip butty – the premise behind the PedalSnake is incredibly simple. In essence, it comprises a dirty great (22 foot) hollow cable. This, the makers call 'the base snake'. One end of the cable is finished with a blue sheath, labelled Pedal End and the other with a red sheath, labelled Amp End. What emerges at both ends of this cable is a number of MIDI connectors, colour-coded so you can make sure that whatever you plug into each connector at the pedal end matches what's plugged in at the amp end.

Being MIDI leads, the only thing these leads can do on their own is to transmit MIDI information, but here's the clever part. By using additional 'pigtailed' with either mono 1/4" jack converters, stereo 1/4" jack converters or power supply inputs and outputs on the end, they can also be used to carry audio signal, DC power or the signal for a

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All of the cabling seems to be of a high standard and the signal quality is good. The fact that all the connectors are moulded, however, is a bit of a drawback, as it means if they go, they're gone. Repairable jacks would have been preferable.

PedalSnakes come pre-configured with the appropriate pigtailed, depending on how complicated your set-up is, as follows: 1 signal and 1 power connector, 3 signal connectors and 1 power connector and 4 signal and 2 power connectors. The most basic is yours for just over fifty quid, while the 4 signal and 2 power version comes in at just under ton.

Because some show-offs have ridiculously complex set-ups, which can't be accommodated with these configurations, the company has now introduced a custom shop, which should be able to sort even the most convoluted

arrangements. Overall cable length can be increased up to a maximum length of 14 metres with a choice of fan-out lengths at the ends. You can also specify the type of MIDI connector including a 7-pin connector which is able to carry phantom power and MIDI In/Out information. There's even a choice of angled or straight jacks.

A device like this is going to prove most useful for people with complicated effects set-ups, to be honest if you're only using a couple of mono pedals then the expense won't really be justified. That said, any device that keeps cabling in order has to be a good thing, especially as with only one cable running between your pedals and your amp, the life of those connections should be significantly increased. There'll be less spaghetti for your band mates to tread on too. Even if your bedroom or studio is a tip, at least your effects set-up doesn't have to be. **PM**

