

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship

>**Related article:** For your convenience, the article "WorshipLoops" from the 06/03/03 issue of the WorshipIdeas.com newsletter is the last page of this eBook.

### 1. FREE essentials:

>**Download the FREE working Acid Xpress demo:** With downloadable free loops on the Internet, Acid Xpress might be all you'll need to make loops! However, if you decide you really enjoy Acid, you'll want to purchase the new 4.0 version that comes with a separate sound editor and 8 CD loop libraries.

<http://www.sonicfoundry.com/download/freestuff.asp>

IMPORTANT! DON'T purchase Acid 4.0 directly from Sonic Foundry! It's \$399.99 at the Sonic Foundry website, and you can find it for \$149.99 at big music stores like Guitar Center (I even saw it at my dinky local music store for the discounted price) or at reputable online dealers like MusiciansFriend.com.

You'll need to register for the free Acid Xpress. Internet experts recommend getting a free Yahoo email account for things like this. That way you're not giving out your main email address. Here's a link for the free Yahoo email:

<http://mail.yahoo.com>

Don't be afraid to register. You get discounts and specials from Sonic Foundry. I just got a popup that offered 60 downloadable loops for the price of 10. Excuse me while I go shopping...

>**Free loops:** Make sure you visit AcidPlanet.com for free weekly loops, as free loop content does not come with Acid Xpress. Remember, you need a loop making program AND loop content (short 1 or 2 bar phrases of electronic drums) to make loops.

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship - 2

---

While in the Acid Xpress program, click the Help menu, then Sonic Foundry on the Web, then Acid News. If you're connected to the Internet, your browser will take you to a page with current free loop downloads, most notably the 8 Packs. The 8 Packs are pre-made tracks so you can see how a pro makes a loop masterpiece, and then you can scavenge the loops and use them yourself. There's so much here to see, hear and do!

Download my loop zip file: I've also uploaded a few of my favorite loops at MoreWorshipIdeas.com:

<http://www.heartstogod.com/MoreWorshipIdeas/DLLoops.shtml>

Make a folder on your computer's hard drive that says "WorshipLoops" and download this zip file to the folder. Unzip it... we'll get to it later.

>**Free catalog:** Register with your snail mail address and they'll send you a catalogue with all their loop libraries.

**2. How to make loops:** (this tutorial covers both the free Acid Xpress and Acid Pro 4.0)

>**Getting started:** Download, install and open Acid Xpress. The bottom pane of your Acid window is the explorer. You can find and demo WAVs on your hard drive or CD-ROM that you want to use (the WAV is the audio file format of Acid loops.)

Single click on a WAV file in the explorer pane to hear how it sounds.

Double click on a WAV file to enter it in the Acid track window at the top of your screen. Once the WAV is loaded into this track screen, you can "paint" the loop into the measures with your mouse. The loop will repeat over and over. Each WAV loop can have a track.

In the explorer window, go over to the WorshipLoops folder you created earlier. Open the MoreWorshipIdeasLoopDemo file in Acid. I have four of my favorite loops here. Hit your spacebar to start the loops. Each loop plays for 2 measures, then they all layer at the end so you can hear them together. Try singing "Here I Am to Worship" along with it, and you'll see how soon you can get addicted to this stuff!

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship - 3

---

In Acid Xpress you can adjust the volume of each track by using the little slider under each track name. Try it. In Acid Pro 4.0 you have the added feature of creating volume envelopes. I use this to gradually fade in and out of loops, and fade the loops out at the end of a song. Volume envelopes give you more control over the sound and texture.

**>Finding loops on the Internet:** Try a Google.com search for "free Acid loops." You'll also get free loops from AcidPlanet.com. Save these loops to your WorshipLoops folder.

And here's another reason why I love ParachuteMusic.com - they offer loop downloads for many of their songs, and the loops are awesome! I reuse their loops for several of our other worship songs.

**>Make your own loop library.** Acid Pro 4.0 comes with 6 loop libraries. Did I mention it's a great deal, with the sound editor? The included libraries have lots of weird, unusable loops (for church use, anyway) so I made my own library. With the Acid Pro 4.0 explorer window, I searched through my content CDs. When I found a loop I liked, I double-clicked it, making it a track. When I collected all the loops I liked, I titled the project "LoopLibrary" and saved it to my WorshipLoops folder. Now whenever I want to make a loop for a song, all my favorite loops are in one place. IMPORTANT! When you save the file, BE SURE to click the box in the save screen that says "Copy all media with project" or your loops will be lost and you'll have to start over! Checking this box saves all the loop WAVs to your hard drive!

**>Play with the program:** To learn all the features, have fun and try every button and menu. It's simple. You can even adjust the pan (left or right speaker) of the loop - click the "volume" arrow under the track name and you'll see a "pan" option.

Right click on a loop you've painted in the audio track and you'll find several more editing options. You can even pitch shift instrumental loops, and they'll stay in time with the rhythm.

**>Render the loop:** When you've built the loop the way you want it, go to the "File" tab, then "Render As." You can save your loop as an mp3, WAV or Windows Media File. WAVs are 10 times as big as mp3s or Windows Media files. Acid Xpress limits you to 20 mp3 or Windows Media renders, but Acid Pro 4.0 is unlimited.

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship - 4

---

When you select "Render As," look at the bottom of the screen. See the check box "Render loop region only"? Now look at the top of your Acid track window. See the little grayish bar with yellow arrows over the measures? That's your loop region, and that's the section that will be rendered if you check the "Render loop region only" box. Click and drag the yellow arrows to define your loop region.

**3. Edit audio tracks:** Another great feature of Acid Pro 4.0 (unavailable in the free Acid Xpress) is the ability to "beatmap" an audio file. Rip an mp3 or WAV file of a favorite worship song to your computer's hard drive, then find it in the Acid explorer window (you can rip a CD with the MusicMatch Jukebox - the link is elsewhere in this eBook.) You can double click it to enter the song in the track pane just like you would a short loop.

When you try to enter the song into the track pane, Acid will recognize that your song is not a short loop. It will ask you if you want to use the Beatmapper Wizard on the file. Acid will attempt to gauge the tempo, downbeat and measures of the song, and gives you the option to make sure measures are correct.

I use this magical, wonderful feature to fix all the wacky artist versions of praise songs I want to do. For instance, we enjoy "You Shine" from Integrity's iWorship CD. Unfortunately the recording of the song is fruit basket upset - verse, bridge, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, chorus, etc. It makes no sense! Please, worship doesn't have to be brain surgery. Just give me the simple verse, bridge, chorus format! Then, the song lunges into F# at the end - a killer key for the band and wayyyyy too high for the congregation.

Once again, we worship leaders in the real world must clean up after the record companies, and Acid Pro 4.0 makes this possible. I bought the iWorship track of "You Shine" and imported it into Acid. The program beatmapped the song. I nipped and tucked a few measures and got it basically ship-shape (you'll have to adjust measures a bit for live recordings like "You Shine," whereas Acid will perfectly beatmap a computer looped track like "You're Worthy of My Praise" or "Heart of Worship.")

Once the song was beatmapped and in the track pane, I identified all the verses, choruses and bridges. I duplicated the track several times, chopped it up a few times, and rearranged the song the way I want it to go just like a puzzle - verse, bridge, chorus / verse, bridge, chorus / bridge / chorus / chorus. I deleted the keychange and brought back the earlier, lower key chorus. The volume envelope feature of Acid Pro 4.0 makes these edits flow smoothly into each other. You literally can't tell that the song is edited, it's so natural. What a blast, and now I have a useable track we can use with the band!

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship - 5

---

I even chopped "You Shine" up into a shorter benediction - take a look at the end of the eBook for a screen shot.

### 4. Using loops in worship:

**>Here's how I started:** One of the first songs I used with a loop was "You're Worthy of My Praise" by David Ruis. I selected my loops and entered them in the track pane. I painted long loop strips of my primary loops. Open the demo Acid file You'reWorthyOfMyPraise in your WorshipLoops folder.

### **>Layout your song by using markers to show intros, verses and choruses:**

After 2 measures, I typed "M" to bring up a marker. I then double clicked the marker to add text - in this case I typed "intro." The 2 measures act as a count-in so the band can start together. I added other markers, like "verse" and "chorus" that follow our arrangement of "You're Worthy of My Praise." You might want to use Integrity's iWorship version.

Notice how you can add and subtract loops for texture. I added a shaker to the chorus to add more body. I took away a loop on the 2nd chorus to change the texture even more. Also notice how I adjust the volume for each track. With Acid Pro 4.0's volume envelope feature, I make these additions smoother with fades.

I stop the loops one measure before the last phrase we sing - "You alone are worthy of my praise" (I fade them out with Acid Pro 4.0's volume envelope feature.) This way the band is free to ritard at the end.

**>Playing loops in worship:** At first, with my antique laptop, I rendered the loops as WAV files and dumped them into my old Calkwalk midi program (the program is so old, mp3s weren't even invented yet!)

Then when I bought my new laptop, and purchased the Cakewalk Music Creator software, I could import mp3s instead of WAVs, saving lots of memory.

I started playing with Music Creator's own looping functions. I make quick loops on Music Creator now, still using Acid WAV loops, but bypassing the Acid Pro 4.0 program. When I really want a fancy loop, like the HymnCharts loop for "All Creatures of Our God and King," I make it in Acid with all the volume editing functions, export as an mp3, and import it into Music Creator. You could of course trigger the loop from Acid itself in worship, on a computer. I just use Calkwalk because I'm more familiar with the program.

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship - 6

---

Acid Pro 4.0 also has midi capability, and you could create midi tracks right along with the audio loops.

Don't have a laptop? Burn an audio CD of the loop. You can do this with the free MusicMatch Jukebox:

<http://www.musicmatch.com>

The first time I tried a loop in worship, I played it from an audio CD I burned. We hooked up my little CD Discman to the sound system, and I kept the Discman, on pause, right on my keyboard. When it was time for the loop, I just pressed "play." After the 2 measure click, the band started. As you experiment, you'll get better and better.

**>Recommended usage:** Start simple. Burn an audio CD and have your soundman start it at the appropriate time. I like to control things like this myself, so I can insure worship flow - that's why I set up the Discman right at my keyboard.

Try having an opening call to worship with an upbeat song, like "You're Worthy of My Praise." Start the loop and go to town! Our drummer is a young guy who's fairly familiar with recording, and he's used to playing with a click track. You'll need a drummer, not necessarily a professional, but one with a professional attitude and flexibility. Loops are also a great alternative if you DON'T have a drummer.

As I progressed with my loop proficiency, I started using my laptop instead of the Discman. I created tracks in my midi program and added loops. We'll usually do 2 upbeat songs in a row, each with loops, and something this technical needs the flexibility of a laptop. We might also have a loop in the call to worship or benediction. I also like doing a few live upbeat songs, then start a loop for a slower song like "Here I Am to Worship" or "You Are My King." Don't get "loopy!" - a loop on every song is overkill!

**>Bottom Line:** Sure, this takes time. But when the loop is done, you always have it, ready to pull out the next time you do the song. Have fun!

**>Next page:** a screen shot of my Acid Pro 4.0 edit of "You Shine."

1.1 9.1 17.1 25.1 33.1 41.1 49.1 57.1

4 intro 3 chorus 2 bridge 5 repeat chorus

127.965  $\frac{4}{4}$  BPM = A

1 YouShine Vol: 2.1 dB

2 Copy of YouShi... Vol: 2.1 dB

3 Shaker Vol: -2.1 dB

00:00:00.000 1.1.000

I use a shaker loop for a click track to get the band going, then fade out.

Notice the volume envelopes - they allow you to fade in and out.

I duplicated the track, isolated a chorus, faded the original out and faded the edit in.

WorshipLoops

- Wav
- WebTrends
- WINDOWS
- WorshipFlow
- WorshipIdeas
- WorshipLoops
- ziptank

Hp\_recovery (D:)

(E:)

(F:)

SharedDocs on Master Computer

My Documents

Network Neighborhood

Favorites

YouShine.wav

9/480 MB

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship - 8

---

### 06/03/02 WorshipLoops (WorshipIdeas.com newsletter)

It's summer! Now's the time to catch up on some new ideas since things are slowing down and we worship people don't have as much going on (insert laugh).

Over the next few weeks we'll be looking at how technology can greatly enhance your ministry. You don't have to be a techno-whiz, either. This stuff is so easy and so much fun that I can literally spend hours playing with it, with the added benefit of having a more exciting praise set. All you need is a computer, which I assume you have since you're reading this email, decent memory, performance, a soundcard and speakers - all standard equipment on most new PCs.

I started enhancing our worship with a \$400.00 laptop, 90 MHz, 32M RAM running on Windows 95. It was an open-box special I bought at Circuit City four years ago and it's still working! At the time, the salesperson said, "Oh, you don't want this! It's only good for writing term papers." Hmmmm. I midi sequenced all the Praise Song Packs on it, and then even ran live midi and audio (through the headphone jack, no less!) for church, and it worked great. Don't let yourself get upsold!

Now I have a new laptop because the latest programs I want to use need at least Windows 98, and my trusty antique just couldn't handle the new operating system. One of these programs is Acid Pro 4.0, for loop-based music production.

For the past few months I've been obsessed with loops. After I bought the software, and my ear became accustomed to the sound, I started hearing loops everywhere - on the radio, TV commercials, and the worship CDs in my own collection. Loops have that cool, percolating beat you just can't get with a live drummer or synthesizer. Nearly everyone, from N\*Sync, to Michael W. Smith, to the hardest rock band, has loops in their music.

A loop is simply a measure or two (or just a few beats) of an electronic drum sound "looped" over and over again. Instrumental sounds can also be looped, like a repeating guitar riff or even short orchestral passages. Login and listen to these two mp3 excerpts of popular worship songs that use loops:

<http://www.heartstogod.com/MoreWorshipIdeas/DLLoops.shtml>

"Here I Am to Worship" from Michael W. Smith's "Worship"  
You'll hear the loop with live instruments and drums playing along.

"You Are My King" from Philips Craig & Dean's "Let My Words Be Few"

## 06.03.03 Using Loops in Worship - 9

---

Do you hear it? If you're the least bit computer literate, and have a little time, you can create a similar texture for songs in your praise set. I hear you... "But I just don't have the time." Maybe, but you really won't believe how much fun this is. Plus, you'll be making tracks to use at church. Not a week goes by that we don't use at least one loop in our worship service!

You'll need software to create a loop, and loop libraries for raw material to build your loop.

### >Here are some programs to look into:

#### - **Acid Pro 3.0, \$69.99 at Best Buy.**

This older version of Acid works great, although it doesn't have the current features of Acid Pro 4.0. Comes with a small loop library. It's no longer in production, so Best Buy probably has limited stock.

#### - **Acid Pro 4.0, special price \$149.99.**

If you're serious, this is the best bet. Comes bundled not only with Acid Pro 4.0, but an 8 disc sound loop library and Sound Forge Studio (a WAV and mp3 file editor - I use it to fade my audio clips in and out, like this week's worship loop samples.) I found it at this special price at Guitar Center. I even saw it at my dinky local music store. You can also purchase it online at:

<http://www.musiciansfriend.com>  
(search for "Acid")

#### - **Fruity Loops, \$99.00.**

Cakewalk's version of Acid Pro. There's also a Fruity Loops Studio version, with more audio capabilities, for \$149.99. I've never tried it, but I've heard it's popular in Europe, whereas Acid is the software of choice in the US.

#### - **Cakewalk Music Creator: \$39.99.**

I bought my copy at Circuit City, and Best Buy also has it. Music Creator is an entry level midi sequencer that also utilizes loops. Loop library NOT included.

The Acid programs are very intuitive: you paint the loops into measures with your mouse. When you're done, you burn a CD and play the loop audio with your praise band. The loop acts as a click track. I trigger my loops from my laptop in the Music Creator software.

After the first Sunday we used loops, someone came up to me and said "Wow, the music today sounded just like the radio." Just what I want to hear!

>**Bottom Line:** Add texture and professionalism to your praise set - use loops in worship.