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By: Florin Tibu, Editor, Software Reviews



Turbo JET Makes Nice AUDIO

Best Beta Build

I have always felt uncanny as I was thinking of installing and reviewing beta releases because almost all of them either sucked or crashed like hell; some have even wrecked my operating system while some have wrecked my nerves and now I look with suspicious eyes towards all that's tagged "beta". Some might say I overreact, but I won't change my mind at all: most betas suck; and, yes, the exceptions to this rule just make it stronger!

It was the same when one of my work colleagues came to me some days ago and told me that jetAudio have released a new version, the 7th, and he had updated this program in our databases; he also asked me to take a look at it as the new stuff seemed to him very nice. I remembered that some past versions of the Jet just kept on crashing and I had been quite mad at that time, so I thought of refusing the offer. He told me that it was really worth taking a peek so here I am, finally...

The Looks

Usually, betas look good, but don't work. Or can't. I suppose you have guessed by now that jetAudio 7 did both, otherwise I wouldn't have bothered to write any single word on it: even more, jetAudio 7 has impressed me in the most interesting way in what a nice GUI can be like, all backed by the very good functional issues.

Getting to our subject here, jetAudio 7 is one hell of a looker: by default more to the multimedia center-style than to a simple player, it had made a nice addition to my OS' desktop as it has a very "super-charged" yet ordered and ultra-functional display of elements. jetAudio 7 is truly an interface: a fixed-size window containing a huge number of information and operation/function-related objects, all with an almost glamour look and still retaining both functionality, excellent readability and a very serious logic. Technically, I would say that jetAudio 7 looks more like a Hi-Fi combo on steroids: classic CD-player deck numbered and programable appearance, a wide and very responsive VU-meter bridge, track no. out of #, remaining and elapsed time, old-fashion blue LED-screens and a very large, round volume dial.

It looks both space-age and vintage and the feeling its sight creates is rather weird, because of the nice and homely looks combined with extreme performance and countless features. From the very first peek, one could easily tell that jetAudio 7 is a piece of code strictly oriented towards direct access and instant functionality: the upper part houses the buttons which allow instantaneous access to the comprehensive features of jetAudio 7 such as: CD-ripping, audio AND video conversion, sound recording, CD burning, online broadcasting tool or web music shopping.

I really liked the very discrete dockable mixer at the bottom of the GUI; of course, I almost missed it completely, but as I began to get used to clicking even the most insignificant parts of the jetAudio 7's interface and discover new things, I estimated that the small arrow could mean something and I was right: a nice-looking and quite handy general mixer popped out and allowed me to set the volumes right - not an everyday operation for the listener, but nevertheless a nice thing.

I don't want this review to sound like an ad, but jetAudio 7 seems to have them all: I managed to take pics of interesting things in it, but I just had to leave some behind; anyway, anyone looking at the screenshots could get a very good idea on what is jetAudio 7 built like: clean and "aired" menus and additional devices make sure even the dumbest or inexperienced user can find his/her way through the software, whether it's about ripping a CD or simply listening to music. The developers of jetAudio 7 have succeeded in creating an almost perfect GUI (should a perfect one be possible) in both the front of the software AND the rest of it: jetAudio 7 has so many features and side-windows that it could have been most likely that some places were forgotten and remained not taken care of: well, I must confess that I have searched for such a menu or window and have not found it - and this means a lot of care for detail in what the GUI design and optimization mean.

One very nice feature in what interfaces are concerned is that jetAudio 7 has more than 3 display modes as usually met among today's software. Apart from the normal mode doubled by a minimalist one and (sometimes) the system tray mode, jetAudio 7 sports other 4, variations of the minimized mode offering the spectrum analyzer or a "short minimized" mode, or even an ultra-compact version of the software's GUI, still retaining almost 100% of its initial, normal mode functionality. External, off-the-main window spectrum analyzer and fullscreen-able visualization, along with the system tray icon make sure even the most die-hard eye-candy lovers will like the way jetAudio 7 looks.

The playlist is available at an express command and it is a very complete piece of the jetAudio 7: from it, the user can directly edit tags, command the playback of files or access the numerous theoretical playlists the software can manage (downloaded, 80's, have not heard recently, most played and other such categories). The only thing I haven't liked at all was the fact that the visualization window places an additional item in the taskbar and this is really annoying and silly.

jetAudio 7 looks like a very high-tech handheld device, or a smartphone running some complex application and for completely inexperienced users it may be a little bit of a hard job understanding and getting used to the full extent of tweaks and small in-site features. Even so, operating even the most complex sub-applications of the jetAudio 7 isn't at all such a dire endeavor, as the software has been developed to be very intuitive both graphically and, more important, functionally.

The Works

Theoretically, I guess I should write a great deal of pages if I was to detail everything to be found in the jetAudio 7 and this would make the present review way too long. This piece of software has so many features...especially since, at first, I thought it was an awesomely expensive player... and lived to see that jetAudio 7 was way more than a simple mp3 player; in fact, it offered a complete and very nice multimedia workstation loaded with many features whose separate value exceeds by far the almost 30 US dollars jetAudio 7 sells for.

The primary goal of jetAudio 7 is to play the music (generally speaking -audio) files on your hardware media such as CD, DVD, flash memories or HDD. The most of the default interface is dedicated to this operation and it's obvious that playing audio is what jetAudio 7 has been made for. Nevertheless, this cool piece of software does so much more than simply letting you play your fav songs; it contains an "onboard" ripping module which will easily convert your audio CDs to Ape, Flac, Mpc, Ogg, RM, Wav, Wma or Speex formats in no time, while letting you batch-tag all files you are about to process, everything according to 10 convenient presets.

Further on, the audio AND video batch converting facility lets you expand even more the limits of your audio works, as it permits fast and reliable "switching" between different formats; thus, you are sure to have the proper one when needed at a certain time. Full drag and dropping is supported throughout the jetAudio 7 and this makes your software experience more pleasant, less soliciting and why not - more fun.

Even if jetAudio 7 is mainly an audio player, this doesn't mean that this is all you should stick to: extensive recording setups are available at a click of a mouse. With jetAudio 7 you can not only do some recording, but also set EQs for this operation, pass-filters and band rejection, so that you adapt to the source and have a better recording session right from the start. Audio trimmer and pro-grade mixing recorder make sure you have the tools you need to produce good audio. The CD burner will instantly produce audio CDs containing your favorite audio tracks - what's really cool is the fact that the burner is so simple that even a child could learn how to use it in a matter of minutes; including the "erase CDRW" option!

The Broadcast feature lets your experience web-based radio the way you want it: providing lots of rich content in categorized lists online; all you must do is choose and then enjoy: one hell of a feature was that in the main window, as the user presses the large and intuitive Open button, the new window which pops up allows you to load either audio files or directly URLs; imagine the power and freedom you get while being able to load songs and web addresses from one single location, with one single click! I guess the jetAudio was the only piece of code to offer such direct behavior in what loading files and URLs are concerned... and it totally rocks! Finally, you can choose to get your music by downloading it from various web resources, either freeware or having to pay for it.

jetAudio 7 smoothly integrates in the Windows shell and it builds a new sub-menu in the right-click context, offering options such as "add to album" or "play with..", "create audio CD" or "convert with..". Without being intrusive, jetAudio can become a really handy tool for those who are in need of on-the-fly CDs or media conversions at just one mouse click away. Also a click away are other useful options like stereo widening FX, reverberation, extra bass and surround and other effects one might feel the need to use in certain situations.

Other features, commonly met in most players will control the repeat mode as well as the play mode (normal, random or program - I told you it looked like the old rack-CD player). A very handy thing is the alarm clock with timer - now you'll be able to wake up while your most vivid music thunders down from your speakers in the morning; you will also know that it's time for a certain action as the alarm can even be set so the music stops! JetAudio 7 sports a very well-built preferences menu from which you can technically access everything relating to the player and its environment. From mouse actions to a huge list of hotkeys, power management, on-screen-display and from karaoke to instant messaging, everything can be tweaked if not even customized according to the user's likes and needs. For example, one thing I haven't noticed until now, as I was finishing my article: when the focus is on the jetAudio window, pressing the volume up and volume down keys on my keyboard would control the player's master volume, while as I clicked anywhere else those same keys returned to their usual behavior, namely controlling the soundcard's master volume. Neat!

There would be much more to say about this piece of software, but I'd rather see you finding them by yourselves as I know you'll twist every knob in jetAudio the moment you have it installed on your PC and seen how cool it is. A big mark from me as jetAudio 7 is one of the coolest players I have seen lately, especially since I wasn't at all expecting to find all these features bundled in it!

The Good

I can't write again about the whole software, that's a fact :) ! I'll just name the nicest things I saw in jetAudio 7 and they are: the very good set of commands and the almost endless set of tweak and setup possibilities, the bundled applications which turn jetAudio in a true multimedia center, the cool and handy, all-purpose set of GUI-modes and the fair amount of memory it runs on.

The Bad

The not-so-good things about jetAudio 7 would be the slight mislead created by naming the custom playlists "albums" and small confusions generated by this when it comes to administer the media content on your PC. Not dramatic issues, but still to be mentioned.

The Truth

Truth is that the 29 \$ you have to spend on this jetAudio will provide you with a very powerful set of applications which will cover almost every need in the audio field you might think of, except for editing. Whether it's about a crystal-clear sound with fat, oily bass and shimmering highs or ripping/burning an audio CD, or batch-converting a pile of tracks, jetAudio will have your job done with exceptional results. Besides, it looks very good and it's easy to learn; and after you've learned it, it's even easier to use. Definitely an excellent multimedia center for a bargain price!

Inspect the screenshots below while preparing to face this elite audio software: