

Panadapter

On the February 14th meeting of the KARC/BMRC club, Neil Weber did a presentation on setting up a Panadapter for use controlling your radio. Unfortunately, the meeting coincided with valantines day and the turnout was rather low. He has put together these comments on the program for those who missed the presentation.

A panadapter will change the way you think about amateur radio. In short, if you have computer control of your radio, it can be set up for use with a panadapter. A panadapter will allow you to have spectrum analyzer capability and look across an entire band visually and change frequencies with a mouse click instead of rotating a dial and searching for a signal.

The panadapter that was presented during the presentation was the SDRPlay RSP1A coupled with the SDRUNO Spectrum analyzer software. This is available readily on ham radio outlet for about 120 dollars. <https://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-015965>

There is a little bit of connection necessary, but see the following link to demonstrate the capability of SDRUno software control of the radio. Notice how the whole band is available with a mouse click. There is no more searching for those signals. You can also easily distinguish a strong signal from those weak distant DX stations to allow you to easily control your radio! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cxkwF1Dp6k>

Many newer radios have an antenna output off the back of the rig. If you radio has this capability, it makes hookup easy. For

instance, My radio is the Kenwood 590SG which has an output that can be setup via the software in the radio. However, this feature is not available on the older Kenwood 590. If the radio does not have an antenna output on the back of the rig, it will be necessary to buy an additional piece of equipment to protect the SDRPlay. I recommend the MFJ 1708 which is readily available on HRO for under \$100. What this piece of equipment does is allow the SDRPlay to see the same signal from the antenna that the radio will see. However, when you transmit, it blocks the signal from going to the SDRplay thereby protecting it. You will only apply 100W of power to the SDRplay once because it will instantly destroy the box so be careful hooking it up and make sure it is protected. See the following youtube video and ham radio outlet link for more info. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmZ4Ru99fR8>
<https://www.hamradio.com/detail.cfm?pid=H0-016181>

I hope this helps and opens up a new realm of amateur radio to you. The total cost will be somewhere between 120 to 250 dollars depending on your need as described here. It has really made a difference in the way I operate. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me with any questions.

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