

RADIO 1973 SOUND

The demand for "listening type music" is widespread.

Radio stations featuring "good music" are numerous, a good many of them are FM stations.

Stereo AM-FM radios are the common thing today. There is hardly a large console sold that doesn't include FM. Portable radios with FM bands are also popular.

The stereo radio set grew in popularity as stations began broadcasting music in stereo. This desire to hear music as it was recorded has spread over into the phonograph field which is now moving from two channel stereo sound to four channel.

Those who have heard music on four channel stereo say the improvement over two channels is much greater and more dramatic than the earlier change from monophonic to two channel stereo sound.

In the pre-stereo era, many sound lovers felt even the best audio systems then available fell short in an important respect.

In any actual, live performance, the music originates from many different points and fills the room, auditorium or other listening area to create a rich sound field that envelopes the listener.

When the same performance is reproduced through a single loudspeaker, all the performers seem to originate from one spot, the single loudspeakers, as though they were jammed together atop one another at a single point.

No matter how good the quality of the system, if you closed your eyes you could never have any trouble telling the difference between the original live performance and the reproduced one.

Experimenters knew that feeding the monophonic signal to two loudspeakers, separated from each other, helped get rid of the so-called "point-source" effect by spreading out the sound.

It was only when engineers were able to separate sounds into two

different channels that the music suddenly sprang to new life with a richer, more satisfying quality.

The performers were not only spread out in a line before the listener but some could be heard distinctly on the left, on the right, at dead center and at points between. Different instruments and vocalists stood out in relief with a new clarity, no longer blurred together.

The effect was far more realistic than anyone had ever heard to that point. In more than one sense, a new dimension had been added to listening.

Now with four channel stereo, a new listening thrill is here. The rich resonance of the live performance, which approaches the listener from every direction, not just from the front, can now be recreated.

When the audience applauds during a four channel broadcast, for example, the listener can hear the applause all around, in back, even

right beside him. There is a feeling that you are part of the live event.

Several different techniques have been proposed for recording and broadcasting in four channels.

There is the so-called discrete four-track method, which pertains only to tape.

There is synthesized four channel stereo, which is compatible with all existing equipment and media, discs, tapes and broadcasts.

There are proposals for special broadcast techniques that would, by altering present FM transmission standards, permit four channels to be transmitted but would not be useful in recording.

There are also proposals for modifying disc recording techniques to incorporate four channels but which would not solve the broadcast problem.

In addition, there is the matrixing approach, which permits four channels to be mixed down to two and then recovered. This technique is

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