MasterControl Windows Driver Installation Procedure

A. FIRST STEP: READ THIS DOCUMENT

NOTE: THE ALESIS FIREWIRE DRIVERS REQUIRE WINDOWS XP SERVICE PACK 2 OR WINDOWS VISTA

These are 32-bit drivers intended for use with Windows XP Service Pack 2 (or higher) or Windows Vista.

64-bit Windows (XP or Vista) is not supported.

FOR TROUBLE-FREE RESULTS, DO NOT CONNECT YOUR MASTERCONTROL TO YOUR COMPUTER UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

B. SECOND STEP: INSTALL THE WINDOWS DRIVER

1) Uninstall any previous versions of the Alesis Firewire drivers and Control Panel by using the Add/Remove Programs feature within the Control Panel.

2) Open the zip file ***B--Alesis_FW_install_WIN_3_3_3_3355.zip***. From there, drag the ***Alesis_Firewire_install.msi*** file to your desktop.

3) Double click ***Alesis_Firewire_install.msi*** to install both the driver and the Alesis Firewire control panel.

The installation process will add the Alesis Firewire control panel to your computer, including a shortcut for the control panel on your desktop.

4) Click “Continue Anyway” if you are prompted with a Windows logo certification warning.

5) At the end of the installation, a dialog box will prompt you to “Please attach your device to this computer any time after the installation has finished.” Click OK.

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6) Now, connect your MasterControl to your computer and power it on. Wait for the MasterControl's display to show the words "Firewire Connected" before proceeding.

7) Follow the installation steps. Choose to install the drivers automatically (rather than from a specific location). Click "Continue Anyway" whenever you are prompted with a Windows logo certification warning.

Depending on whether this is a new or an upgrade installation, the installer may cycle through as many as four different installations. These installations are for the ASIO, WDM, MIDI In and MIDI Out drivers. A yellow balloon at the bottom right of your screen will inform you of your progress and tell you when the installation is complete.

8) You may now delete both ***B--Alesis_FW_install_WIN_3_3_3_3355.zip*** and ***Alesis_Firewire_install.msi*** by dragging these files to the trash.

C. TECHNIQUES FOR OPTIMIZING PERFORMANCE

a. Depending on your computer, you may find that performance will be dramatically improved if, while using your MasterControl, you do one or more of the following:

- Turn off your computer's wireless networking.
- Disable your computer's network card (from within Device Manager).
- Close Microsoft Outlook and other programs/processes that could eat into available computer power.
- Review and address extreme DPC (Direct Procedure Call) latency in your computer using a tool such as Thesycon's DPC Latency Checker, available for free here:

  http://www.thesycon.de/deu/latency_check.shtml.

b. You may find that the channel names show some corruption in your DAW or while managing your Input and Output channel configurations in the Control Panel. If so, change your device's nickname in its Control Panel tab. Choose a nickname of no more than twenty characters.

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D. FEATURES OF THE ALESIS FIREWIRE CONTROL PANEL

System Sounds

Enable or disable the Windows system sounds (startup, shutdown, trash, error, “you have mail” etc.) here.

When working with ASIO audio, it is generally best to disable the Windows system sounds. When working with WDM applications, sounds must be enabled.

System Sounds Configuration

These options allow you to map your inputs and outputs in accordance with the various sound schemes (5.1, 7.1 wide, etc.) that Windows supports. (You can see these different schemes within Windows by going to "Sound and Audio Devices," choosing the "Audio" tab, pressing "Advanced" under "Sound playback," and then exploring the options available under "Speaker Setup.")

Troubleshooting your system sounds configuration

If you find that, when using these mapping features, you cannot create the mapping that you want, it is because some other configuration (quad or 7.1 or one of the others) is using the audio channel you want. To solve the problem, switch over to the other "Multichannel configs" and remap the location using the channel you want to another channel.

System Latency Compensation

Windows works on an "interrupt" basis. Every piece of hardware and every process in your system "interrupts" Windows to ask for attention. The hardware and processes wait for a reply from Windows and then continue their tasks.

Some hardware, and some hardware/software combinations, require significant time to process these interrupt requests. If the time becomes long enough, it can interrupt your audio, leading to dropouts and glitches.

If you experience such dropouts, the first and best approach for you to try is to close nonessential applications. Also, disable your wireless and wired networking cards using Windows' Device Manager. If this doesn't solve the problem, or if it is impractical for you to do so, then experiment with the System Latency Compensation settings. These settings add progressively more "safety buffers" to the Alesis drivers to overcome any long interrupt cycles caused by other pieces of your system.

Like Goldilocks, you are looking for the sweet spot for your system. A system that works great with a "low" setting may not work so well with a "high" setting. Experiment to find the best combination of buffer size and System Latency Compensation for your computer. And don't worry about sample alignment in your DAW: whatever setting you choose here will be accurately reported to your DAW software. Note that a slightly larger buffer size is preferable to the next higher System Latency Compensation.

Advanced Users will find the following information useful while using a latency checking tool:

System Latency Compensation Setting	Latency Compensation
none	<3.1mS
Low	< 6.2mS
Medium	< 14mS
High (last resort)	>14mS

Note that each of these settings allows a different number of buffer size values that can be selected manually.

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E. IN CASE OF DIFFICULTY

If you have difficulties installing the driver on top of an existing installation, go to Control Panel and then Add/Remove Programs. Remove every Alesis reference; then install the software again.

If problems persist, disable any spyware/malware protection programs. Depending on how you have them configured, these might block the Alesis software and driver installation process.

Alesis's customer support team is available for further troubleshooting and consultation. Call (401) 658-5760.

Thank you for using Alesis products. Best of luck to you in all your creative endeavors!

The Alesis Team