**Press Release**

For Immediate Release

**The Weeknd Upgrades to Sound Devices Astral Wireless for Ongoing Stadium Tour**

*Elite audio and RF team explores the finer points of audio fidelity and RF integrity on massive stages*

**LOS ANGELES, CA, September 17, 2025 — The Weeknd’s** [**After Hours Til Dawn**](https://www.theweeknd.com/tour/) **Tour has circled the globe multiple times since it officially kicked off in 2022. During that time, the four-time Grammy-Winning alternative R&B singer and producer has found himself performing at large stadiums to some of the biggest audiences of his career and embracing a level of audio and video production to match. To elevate the sonic fidelity of these performances and make an increasingly complex live machine easier and more reliable to operate, the elite team of live sound professionals behind this – led by Front of House engineer Derek Brener, monitor engineer Lewis Lowder, and RF technician Diego Correa – have made Sound Devices Astral ARX16 receiver and Astral HH Wireless Microphones the centerpiece of the Weeknd’s touring setup.**

**Teamwork, communication, and a bit of paranoia**

The key to any massive touring operation is the cooperation between the members of the backstage crew and a sense of unity on the level of quality to be delivered. This attention to detail is essential for the After Hours Til Dawn Tour, and its principals behind-the-scenes have united on possessing a healthy level of paranoia when it comes to making sure every box is ticked before showtime. “We’re only as good as the crew and we’ve got an incredible crew on this tour who share a sense of pride in what we’re able to achieve,” says Brener. “What I love about working with Lewis and Diego – and this extends to everyone else – is we’re all a little paranoid about ensuring every detail is right.”

“You gotta be paranoid on a gig like this because there’s no room for failure!”

Brener’s finely tuned ear and innate sense of caution is well-earned, given his experience working larger systems and having to diagnose unexpected points of failure at lightning speed. Given that, he and his team ultimately make upgrades gradually to ensure a smooth experience for the artist as well as their own workflows. “We’re all in this together and we’re constantly looking for ways to iron out even the smallest problems in the setup,” he explains. “It gets very tricky for the size of stages we’re working now, however, so that’s led us to explore new solutions”

“We’re always paying attention to changes in audio and wireless technology to ensure we’re delivering the best possible product for both the artist and the audience,” adds Lewis. “Ultimately, we’re trying to deliver something consistent, but sometimes something comes along that makes you want to rock the boat a little for the sake of getting an ‘extra gear’ of fidelity or RF range.”

“We’re not trying to reinvent the wheel, but when the Astral devices started coming along, we saw an opportunity to make a smart upgrade that would positively impact the show without drastically changing anything for [The Weeknd]’s performance.”

**Increased smoothness with a side of problem-solving**The team initially started exploring Astral ARX16 and the Astral HH to address a long-standing ‘ghost in the machine’ that had made itself more noticeable as the shows had increased in size. A barely perceptible audio issue had begun to tweak Brener’s ears and he swore to track it down. The research started in Brener’s garage before the tour rehearsals kicked off. Brener explains:

“I’d been chasing this very subtle intermodulated distortion that had begun to manifest once the systems got larger. I drove everyone crazy with it because once I was the only one who noticed at first, but once I pointed it out to Diego and Lewis, we *all* heard it and wanted it gone. We came to realize that it was the result of the combination of [the Weeknd]’s unique vocal timbre and the hyping of compression and high-end. This being companded gave us this high-end ‘rizz’ in certain areas. After months of trying to figure this out and swapping things out multiple times for other brands, we were introduced to the Sound Devices Astral and the Astral HH product line and realized we finally had a solution.”

The then-new Astral HH handheld provided better headroom and fidelity for the audio overall, and its use of Sound Devices’ Gain Forward technology removed the need for companding. The results were immediate. “It really sounds like a wired microphone to me – not something you can say for most wireless units,” Brener says. “It’s a really flexible mic in terms of aesthetics and customization as well, so we tricked it out in a gold shell and used [The Weeknd]’s favored Sennheiser 5235 capsule and he took to it without saying anything – the ultimate compliment!”

“Most importantly – the ‘rizz’ was gone,” he adds. “It solved this big problem that had been plaguing us for years, and suddenly we had a lot more flexibility in the RF setup as well.”

**Flexibility and reliability**

The RF end of the equation has Correa utilizing an Astral ARX16 receiver with another unit as a redundant backup. Managing RF on stages of this side presents its own unique challenges, which he was eager to tackle with the Astral-series increased range and flexibility of frequencies from 169-1525MHz with built in Real Time Spectrum Analyzer. “We were really excited when we first heard about Astral and its wide-band frequency capabilities,” Correa adds. “We’re on a monster stage here – long and wide – so we need our RF capabilities to be strong, reliable, and versatile to deal with any number of issues that can crop up in a production of this size.”

“We used to just throw voltage at the problem, anything to get another 50-100 feet out of the system, so realizing we wouldn’t have to do that anymore was a major help!”

“It gets tricky with these ranges so you do everything you can to make things efficient and stable,” he continues. “Having Astral gives us the ability to pivot in ways we never could before. We figure these issues out in minutes rather than hours, and account for all these variable ingredients that make the job challenging. It really helps with the paranoia, and has given the team one less thing to worry about!”

“It felt very smooth going to Astral HH and Astral ARX16 and we’re impressed,” concludes Brener. The Sound Devices guys really thought of everything.”

To learn more about Sound Devices Astral Wireless, please visit: <https://www.sounddevices.com/astral/>

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**About Sound Devices:**

For more than 25 years, Sound Devices has created premier audio equipment that helps sound professionals capture superior audio. The company's products have been used for an array of applications, from award-winning feature films and television shows, to live events, houses of worship, and educational applications. Sound Devices designs, assembles, and supports its products at their Reedsburg, Wisconsin, headquarters and their Madison, Wisconsin, and Rickmansworth, UK, offices. For more information, visit [www.sounddevices.com](http://www.sounddevices.com/).

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