



Lewitt

# LCT 640

Is the flagship model of Lewitt's Authentica series a case of Lewitt or leave it? **Huw Price** finds out.

## LCT 640

Manufacturer **Lewitt**

Price **£779**

Contact **Sonic8 0330 2020 160**

Web **www.lewitt-audio.com**

Lewitt is a new microphone manufacturer, but company founder Roman Perschon spent many years working as a project manager for microphone giant AKG. While there he formulated ideas about microphone design and manufacture that eventually inspired him to start producing his own products. Lewitt microphones are now designed and engineered in Austria and built in China at Ken Yang's factory.

The LCT 640 is the first Lewitt microphone we have seen since Sonic8 became the company's UK distributor. It's a multi-pattern, large-capsule condenser with solid-state components and an electronically balanced output.

### Key Features

- 1-inch dual-system capsule with low-mass diaphragms
- 5 directional characteristics
- Dynamic range: 135dB
- Self-noise: 10dB
- Key Lock, clipping history and automatic attenuation
- Noiseless push-buttons for attenuation and HPF selection
- Includes LCT shockmount, windshield and leather bag

The package includes an aluminium case containing the mic itself along with a suspension mount, windshield and a classy zip-up pouch.

Putting the controls on the front rather than the back is surely an acknowledgement that today's mic user is just as likely to be a musician as an engineer. The wide, open suspension mount allows easy access when fine-tuning the 640's response, while the backlit display makes everything easy to see.

### Button it

Three push-buttons control the 640's settings. The middle button picks the pattern from a choice of five – cardioid, omnidirectional, figure-8, broad cardioid and super-cardioid. The right button activates the bass roll-off

### Measuring Up

As we mentioned, the LCT 640 seems set to become a direct competitor to AKG's legendary and long-serving C414 (£745). But if you're looking for a multi-pattern solid-state condenser with attenuation and HPF switching, check out the Audio-Technica AT4050 (£532), Sontronics Orpheus (£349) or the sE 4400a (£469).



frequencies. Our only gripe is the 640's slightly low output level, but the noise floor is commendably low.

### Smooth operator

When you add them all up, the LCT 640 shares many of the features of a famous microphone called the AKG C414. Besides the designer's background as an AKG employee, we're looking at another compact, solid-state,

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(frequency settings are linear, 40Hz, 150Hz and 300Hz), while the left button selects attenuation pad settings of 0dB, -6dB, -12dB and -18dB.

Besides the backlit display the LCT 640 may seem like a fairly conventional microphone, but it has some interesting and innovative hidden features. Once you've chosen your preferred settings you can activate Key Lock by keeping the pattern-select button pressed for more than two seconds. Then there's the automatic attenuation function, which automatically adjusts the attenuation setting when the mic detects clipping. There's a clipping history display, too, where the status indicator flashes red and white to show when clipping has occurred.

The sonic performance of the 640 exceeded our expectations of a mid-priced condenser. Every setting sounded balanced, uncoloured and consistent in tone and level. For instance, figure-8 often sounds a bit 'off' and nasal with mid-price mics, but here it combined intimacy with a hint of ambience – just as we hoped for.

The 640 is not a bright-sounding mic and it doesn't have the aggressive, up-front character of some modern condensers. There's some degree of character, too, with a 'warm' and full quality to the midrange combined with well-defined bass and the merest suggestion of sparkle in the treble

large-capsule condenser with multiple pickup patterns, multiple HPF frequencies and pad switching.

More significantly, though, the 640 dealt impressively with everything we threw at it – exactly what we'd expect from a C414. Without ever sounding hyped, the 640 captured detailed, natural-sounding recordings with a true sense of refinement.

There is an interesting parallel between Chinese mics and Japanese guitars. The term 'Japanese guitar' was often used pejoratively, but by the late 70s many players had realised that Japanese guitars were often just as good – if not superior – to their big-name counterparts. It has become apparent that the same is happening with Chinese-made mics. The Lewitt LCT 640 is obviously designed to meet the big boys head-on – and frankly, they'd better watch out. **MTM**

### MTM Verdict

#### WHY BUY

- + Detailed, natural sound
- + Innovative and practical features
- + Low self-noise

#### WALK ON BY

- Low-ish output level

**A particularly refined-sounding and versatile large-cap condenser.**

