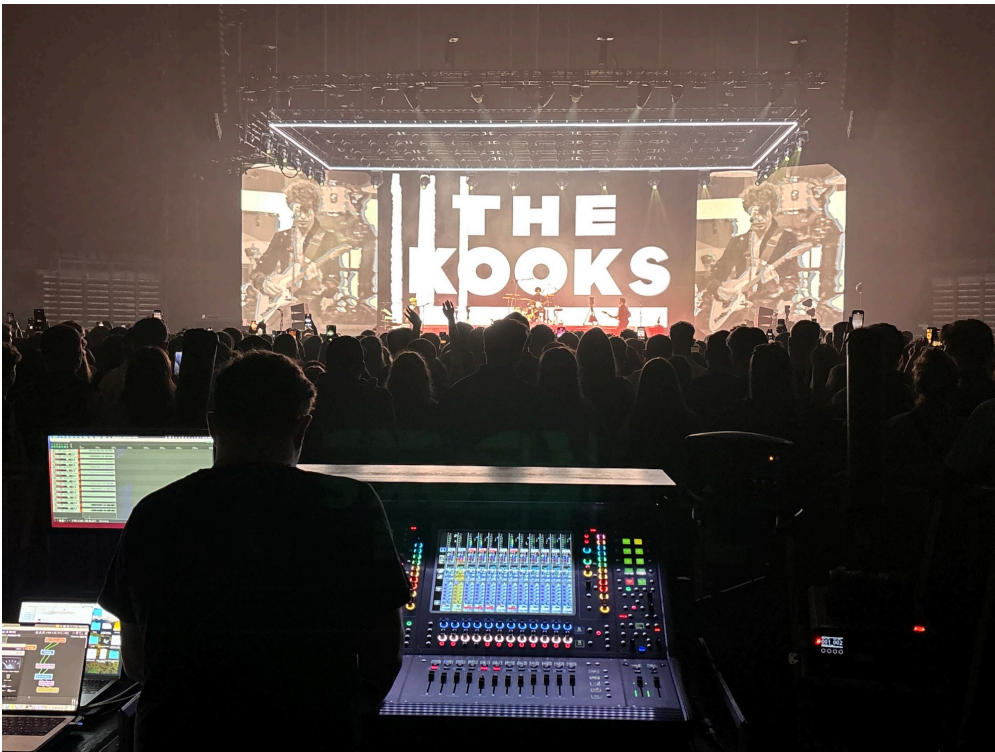


DiGiCo Quantum 326 consoles provide sonic consistency for The Kooks on tour

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The Kooks started out in Brighton in 2004. After achieving near-instantaneous acclaim, over the next 20 years they built a reputation for excellence with huge album sales and now, millions of streams every month. Their latest European tour begins in

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February 2026 and runs straight into the festival season. Accompanying the band is front of house engineer Russ Miller and Ralph Smart at the monitor position, both are using DiGiCo Quantum 326s supplied by rental company, Adlib.

Miller joined the crew in 2021, with Smart joining in May 2022. As Miller explains, the band were already very sure about their audio setup and thanks to DiGiCo's clarity, there was no way that the consoles were going to change.



“The Kooks is the first band I’ve worked with where the console has been a permanent fixture. We inherited the gig in 2021 from another pair of engineers who Ralph and I knew, they were pretty entrenched in the DiGiCo ecosystem,” Miller recalls. “The decision was made to not change anything just for the sake of it and keep that consistency. We were very happy with the SD12 96s that were being used, but then the Quantum range came out and the SD12s were harder to get hold of, so we swapped. We started with the Quantum 225, then went up to the Quantum 326 to benefit from the larger console surface.”

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No one knows the music better than the people who composed it, so when making choices that impact the sonic quality of the music, Miller believes it is vital the artists are 100% happy. For him, this point of view is key to all his work and especially with the Kooks. As he continues, the band are absolute experts in how their music should be heard and although the language of sound engineers and musicians may be slightly different, the talent, skills and professionalism are exactly the same.

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“I’ve been mixing a for a while now, but when you first start off as an engineer, there can be a tendency to think, *I’m the audio engineer, I have the technical knowledge,*” he says. “The fact is, there’s a reason, aside from brilliant songs, that those musicians are up there on stage and that is, they’ve got really good ears. They know exactly how they want their songs to sound and can hear the most subtle changes. So, we make sure that we’ve got consistency at both ends of the multicore, that’s really important.”

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It is not just sonic quality that keeps musicians and engineers coming back to DiGiCo, the control surface is just as important. The intuitive, customisable surface of the Quantum 326 ensures that Miller's focus is always where it needs to be: with the band.

"Mixing is a dance, it's a performance; you're performing almost as much as the band. Having the same console under your fingertips all the time means you can learn that dance," he expands. "I would wager that no matter what console somebody uses, they will try and make everything the same on every console, not just sonically, but the actual physicality of it. People in studios do the same thing, maybe their kick drum always comes up on Fader 19, or the vocal is always on 20, etc."

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At the monitor position, Ralph Smart appreciates the Quantum 326's features, relying on benefits like the larger matrix and increased Quantum processing power. For him, consistency is also a major factor in his use of DiGiCo consoles. Performing globally can make it difficult to guarantee the brand and type of console you may receive, but by opting for DiGiCo on the rider, its global network of distribution means it is less of a gamble.

"Having a setup we know we can replicate across all territories via local suppliers has been crucial for consistency. Last year, we made the leap to Quantum and I haven't looked back," he says. "The additional matrices and macros on the Q326 have given me some really useful routing options with all my tech-mixes that were not possible when we were on the SD Range. I have been utilising the Mustard Source Expander, which has been great, especially in the bigger venues, it's a really useful tool. I've also had great results experimenting with the tube emulations and the Mustard compressors on the console."

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The winning combination of performance and support is something that DiGiCo and its commercial partners are well known for and Adlib is no exception. Based in Liverpool, the company has traded for over 40 years and supplies the full range of DiGiCo consoles and accessories. It also provides crew and engineers, several of whom have joined The Kooks on tour. It's another combination that has worked well for the band and the engineers, as they conclude.



“Adlib have a kindness that clearly comes from the top down. Everyone who works there has it, it’s like a house attitude. I love working with them for that reason, and the gear is always top notch, too,” Miller finishes. “David Grimes was the systems tech on the tour, he’s amazing and Emma, who was our stage tech, is incredible, plus our PA techs Sam and Jamie, they’re all really knowledgeable and great engineers as well. It’s great to have extra sets of experienced ears on tour.”

“Support has been great for this tour,” Smart agrees. “Dave Jones and all the guys at Adlib have been amazing; the kit was prepped perfectly with excellent crew. DiGiCo support has always been

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second to none. We had a festival a couple of years ago that we would have had to cancel after our console took a bath during a stage evacuation in Europe. As we were discussing pulling the show, a DiGiCo rep appeared and gave us a brand new Q338, gig saved! They always come through for us.”