

ORRA AUDIO · PRODUCT MANUAL

Version 2.0.0

ORRA LINK 2

CROSS-DAW SIDECCHAIN SENDER

*Any track, keyed from anywhere.
Drop it, name it, pick it in any Orra plugin — in any DAW.*

Orra Audio LLC · 2026

Welcome

Orra Link 2 is a **sender**. It sits on a track, passes the audio through untouched, and broadcasts a copy of it — along with the track's **name and color** — onto a shared bus that every Orra plugin in the session can read. Receivers like **Orra Ducker**, **Orra Press**, and **Orra EQ** then list that track in their own sidechain menus, ready to pick — no DAW routing, no bus sends, no fighting hosts whose sidechain support stops at one input.

Version 2 makes the whole thing name-first: where the original Orra Link asked you to co-ordinate numbered channels, Link 2 defaults to **Auto** — drop it on a track and the track simply appears, by name, in every receiver's menu. The numbered **Link 1–36** channels are still there for the classic workflow and for older Orra receivers, which keep working unchanged alongside Link 2.

Link 2 also publishes lightweight **telemetry** — level, loudness, stereo correlation, and (on request) a 48-band spectrum — which powers the Orra session dashboard and features like Orra EQ's masking overlay. Telemetry beyond the basics is pull-based: senders only do the extra work while something is actually listening, so an idle session pays nothing.

System Requirements

Formats	VST3, Audio Unit (AU), and AAX (Pro Tools).
macOS	10.13 or later (Universal 2: Apple Silicon + Intel).
Channels	Mono or stereo. Mono senders are duplicated to both detector channels on the receiving end.
Latency	Zero. Orra Link 2 reports no latency and never delays the track it sits on. Receivers account for the one-block bus transit on their side (see the receiver's manual).

Interface Tour

One compact panel: a channel selector and status readout, the SEND toggle, the OUTPUT knob, the track-name plate, and live meters.

Control	Range	Purpose
Channel	Unassigned / Auto (Dashboard) / Link 1–36	How this sender claims a slot on the bus. Auto (the default) claims a free slot silently — drop-and-forget; receivers list the track by name. Link 1–36 are the classic numbered channels, visible to every Orra receiver old and new. Unassigned parks the sender: audio still passes through, nothing is broadcast.
Send	on / off	On = broadcast this track. Off = mute at the source: receivers still see the slot, but read silence — handy for A/B-ing what a duck or a compressor is doing without tearing down the routing.
Output	–24 to +24 dB	Gain-stages the send only — what Orra receivers hear and what the meters here show. The track's own audio always passes through untouched, so you can drive a ducker harder (or ease it off) without changing your mix.
Track Name	text	The name receivers and the dashboard show for this track. Filled automatically from the host where supported (VST3 / AAX); double-click to type your own — the override is remembered with the session.

Status readout

The status well always tells you what the sender is actually doing:

Readout	Meaning
Auto slot N — Live	Auto mode has claimed a slot and is broadcasting.
Link N — Live	The chosen manual channel is broadcasting.
Link N — taken by another instance	Another Orra Link picked the same numbered channel. Manual channels are last-writer-wins; pick a different number on one of them.
Unassigned	No slot claimed; nothing is broadcast.
Bus unavailable	The shared bus could not be opened — see <i>Sandboxed hosts</i> in the Compatibility chapter. Audio still passes through.

Below the status well, the meter and readouts show the **send** — the level, peak, and correlation the receivers and the dashboard are getting (including the OUTPUT gain). The DASH group lights when a dashboard is attached and pulling extended telemetry.

How the Link Bus Works

All Orra plugins in a session share a small region of memory, outside any single DAW's routing graph. Senders write audio into slots; receivers read whichever slot you point them at. Because the bus lives outside the host, it works **across plugin formats and even across DAWs running side by side**.

Auto mode and names

In **Auto**, the sender claims any free slot from a large pool (the session can hold well over a hundred) and publishes the track's name and color with it. Receivers list live tracks by name, so the slot number is invisible and irrelevant — and if a slot is orphaned by a crashed host, Link 2 reclaims it automatically rather than leaking it. A receiver's named pick is remembered **by name**, so it reconnects after session reloads even if the underlying slot number changed.

Manual channels and older Orra plugins

The numbered **Link 1–36** channels are mirrored onto the original Orra Link bus as well, so receivers that haven't been updated — an older Orra Press, for instance — keep seeing them exactly as before. Two senders picking the same number stomp each other (last one wins), just like v1; the status well tells you when that happens. New-generation receivers prefer the Link 2 copy of a channel and fall back to the old bus automatically.

Telemetry for the dashboard

Every broadcasting sender publishes basic meters continuously (RMS, peak, true-peak, momentary and short-term loudness, stereo correlation, clip events) — a few numbers per block, effectively free. The 48-band spectrum used for masking analysis is **pull-based**: senders only run that analysis while a dashboard (or a receiver feature like EQ's masking overlay) is attached and asking for it.

Using Link 2 with Orra Receivers

The workflow is the same everywhere: drop Orra Link 2 on the source track, then open the receiver's sidechain menu and pick the track by name.

- **Orra Ducker** — Source picker on the SIDECHAIN card. Pick the track by name; the picker face tints in the track's color while it is live and flags the name if the source disappears.
- **Orra Press** — per-slot SIDECHAIN picker, same by-name list, plus LISTEN to audition the key signal and a source meter.
- **Orra EQ** — per-band sidechain sources for dynamic bands, plus source-spectrum and masking overlays drawn in the track's color.

Timing

Link 2 itself adds no latency and never delays the track it sits on. The bus transit costs up to one audio block; receivers that need sample accuracy (the Ducker, Press) delay their own input by one block and report it to the host, so everything lines up after delay compensation — including under host look-ahead engines (Reaper Anticipative FX, Cubase ASIO Guard, Studio One Dropout Protection), which the stamped bus reads are designed for.

Offline renders and commits

A **full-mix bounce** renders the sender and the receiver in the same pass, and the stamped reads keep them sample-accurate. A **solo-track commit or freeze** renders only the target track — the host never runs the sender, so the key signal simply does not exist during that render. Orra receivers detect this and fall back safely (the Ducker, for instance, uses its DAW sidechain bus if routed, and otherwise ducks nothing). If commits are part of your workflow, route the source to the receiver's DAW sidechain as a backup before committing.

Sandboxed hosts

A few DAWs run AU plugins in a sandbox that blocks the shared bus. The status well reads **Bus unavailable** in that case; audio still passes through. Use the VST3 in those hosts, or fall back to conventional DAW sidechain routing.

Tips & Workflow

Drop and forget

The default Auto mode needs no decisions: insert Link 2, and the track is on the menu everywhere. Reach for a numbered channel only when an older Orra receiver needs to see it, or when you want a fixed, documented routing in a template.

Name your tracks

Receivers list what the host reports. In hosts that don't pass track names to plugins (some AU hosts), double-click the name plate and type one — 'Kick In' beats 'Auto slot 41' in every menu you'll ever open.

Stage the key, not the mix

OUTPUT only changes what receivers hear. If a duck isn't biting, push OUTPUT up a few dB instead of lowering the receiver's threshold across the board — you're driving that one key relationship, and your mix balance stays put.

SEND as a bypass that keeps the wiring

Toggling SEND off mutes the broadcast at the source while every receiver stays pointed at the track. It's the fastest way to hear 'with and without' on a duck or a keyed compressor — no routing torn down, one click back.

If a numbered channel reads 'taken'

Two Link instances picked the same number; the newer claim wins. Move one of them — or better, let both sit in Auto and pick them by name in the receivers.

Orra Link 2 is a product of Orra Audio LLC.

For support, updates, and documentation: orra.audio