

User's Manual

CLE2.0

COMPRESSOR /LIMITER /GATE



www.altoproaudio.com

Version 2.0 Dec. 2002

— English —

SAFETY RELATED SYMBOLS



This symbol, wherever used, alerts you to the presence of un-insulated and dangerous voltages within the product enclosure. These are voltages that may be sufficient to constitute the risk of electric shock or death.



This symbol, wherever used, alerts you to important operating and maintenance instructions. Please read.



Protective Ground Terminal



AC mains (Alternating Current)



Hazardous Live Terminal

ON: Denotes the product is turned on.

OFF: Denotes the product is turned off.

WARNING

Describes precautions that should be observed to prevent the possibility of death or injury to the user.

CAUTION

Describes precautions that should be observed to prevent damage to the product.

WARNING

• Power Supply

Ensure that the mains source voltage (AC outlet) matches the voltage rating of the product. Failure to do so could result in damage to the product and possibly the user.

Unplug the product before electrical storms occur and when unused for long periods of time to reduce the risk of electric shock or fire.

• External Connection

Always use proper ready-made insulated mains cabling (power cord). Failure to do so could result in shock/death or fire. If in doubt, seek advice from a registered electrician.

• Do Not Remove Any Covers

Within the product are areas where high voltages may present. To reduce the risk of electric shock do not remove any covers unless the AC mains power cord is removed.

Covers should be removed by qualified service personnel only.

No user serviceable parts inside.

• Fuse

To prevent fire and damage to the product, use only

the recommended fuse type as indicated in this manual. Do not short-circuit the fuse holder. Before replacing the fuse, make sure that the product is OFF and disconnected from the AC outlet.

• Protective Ground

Before turning the product ON, make sure that it is connected to Ground. This is to prevent the risk of electric shock.

Never cut internal or external Ground wires. Likewise, never remove Ground wiring from the Protective Ground Terminal.

• Operating Conditions

Always install in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

To avoid the risk of electric shock and damage, do not subject this product to any liquid/rain or moisture. Do not use this product when in close proximity to water.

Do not install this product near any direct heat source.

Do not block areas of ventilation. Failure to do so could result in fire.

Keep product away from naked flames.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

Read these instructions

Follow all instructions

Keep these instructions. Do not discard.

Heed all warnings.

Only use attachments/accessories specified by the manufacturer.

• Power Cord and Plug

Do not tamper with the power cord or plug. These are designed for your safety.

Do not remove Ground connections!

If the plug does not fit your AC outlet seek advice from a qualified electrician.

Protect the power cord and plug from any physical stress to avoid risk of electric shock.

Do not place heavy objects on the power cord. This could cause electric shock or fire.

• Cleaning

When required, either blow off dust from the product or use a dry cloth.

Do not use any solvents such as Benzol or Alcohol. For safety, keep product clean and free from dust.

• Servicing

Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel only.

Do not perform any servicing other than those instructions contained within the User's Manual.

PREFACE

Dear Customer:

Thanks for choosing ▲LTO CLE 2.0 Compressor/Limiter/Gate and thanks for choosing one of the results of ▲LTO AUDIO TEAM job and researches.

For our ▲LTO AUDIO TEAM, music and sound are more than a job... are first of all passion and let us say... our obsession!

We have been designing professional audio products for a long time in cooperation with some of the major brands in the world in the audio field.

The ▲LTO line presents unparalleled analogue and digital products made by Musicians for Musicians in our R&D Centers in Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Taiwan. The core of our digital audio products is a sophisticated DSP (Digital Sound Processor) and a large range of state of the art algorithms which have been developed by our Software Team for the last 7 years.

Because we are convinced you are the most important member of ▲LTO AUDIO TEAM and the one confirming the quality of our job, we like to share with you our work and our dreams, paying attention to your suggestions and your comments.

Following this idea we create our products and we will create the new ones! From our side, we guarantee you and we will guarantee you also in future the best quality, the best fruits of our continuous researches and the best prices. Our ▲LTO CLE 2.0 is the result of many hours of listening and tests involving common people, area experts, musicians and technicians.

The results of this effort is that you can acquired an extremely efficient and universal dynamics processor. It contains several new circuits design which make the unit an ultimate dynamic processor: intelligent program recognition, interactive Expander/Gate and super low distortion VCA (Voltage Controlled Amplifier).

Nothing else to add, but that we would like to thank all the people that made the ▲LTO CLE 2.0 a reality available to our customers, and thank our designers and all the ▲LTO staff, people who make possible the realization of products containing our idea of music and sound and are ready to support you, our customers, in the best way, conscious that you are our best richness.

Thank you very much.

▲LTO AUDIO TEAM

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1. INTRODUCTION

You are now the Owner of an ▲LTO CLE 2.0 Compressor/Limiter/Gate. The CLE 2.0 is a very powerful dynamic processor. We have included in it several innovative circuit designs that make the CLE 2.0 a very versatile processor: smart and fast recognition of the program, adjustable Expander/Gate and very low distortion Voltage Control Amplifier (VCA).

Feature List:

- **Smart Knee Control Compressor (SKC)**

Soft knee or hard knee? This is the question! SKC combines both: In the "soft knee" mode you control the program material so that the compression will be the most musical and inaudible. ON the other end, the hard knee function is used for better precision, limiting signal peaks with precision and will allow you to add creativity to the dynamic processing. This function also allows you to protect other equipment in the signal loop against distortion.

Clipping Area

Clipping Signal heavily distorted

Noise Area

Low level signal drowned out by noise



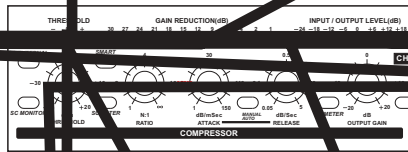
3. Ratio Control

This control determines the expansion ratio when the signal drops below the threshold level. The expansion ratio can be set from 1:1.2 to 1:8 (Low ratio level for Expander application or 1:8 for Gate application).

4. Threshold LED

The "+" Led lights up when an audio signal is below the set threshold. The "-" Led lights up in presence of an expansion

3.2 Compressor Section



Picture Controls of the Compressor Section

5. Threshold Control

This control adjusts the threshold level for the Compressor section in the range of -40dBu to +20dBu. The SKC (Smart Knee Control) is applied to the audio signal, which is a maximum of 10dB above the set threshold. Above such level (10dB) a hard knee compression will be applied.

13. SC Monitor Switch

You can connect the sidechain control signal to the audio output by mean of this switch and at the same time you will also mute the audio input. In this way you can also monitor the sidechain signal being returned via external signal processors.

14. Sidechain Filter Switch

A low-cut filter in the sidechain path is activated by this switch. This eliminates unwanted noise generated by low frequencies.

15. Smart switch

Hard knee mode will be converted into SKC mode by mean of this switch. If you want to get a very musical compression and you wish to get the most inaudible compression, use SKC.

16. Bypass Switch

This switch simply turns off the correspondent channel. It can also be used to make an A/B comparison in between processed and unprocessed signal.

17. Input / Output Meter Switch

When the switch is ON it will read the input level. When it is OFF it will read the output level.

18. Input / Output Level Meter

It will read the actual Input or Output Level. The range goes from -24dB to +18dB.

19. Gain Reduction Meter

It indicated the gain reduction. The range displayed is 1 to 30 dB.

3.3 Peak Limiter Section



Pic. 4 Controls of the Peak Limiter section

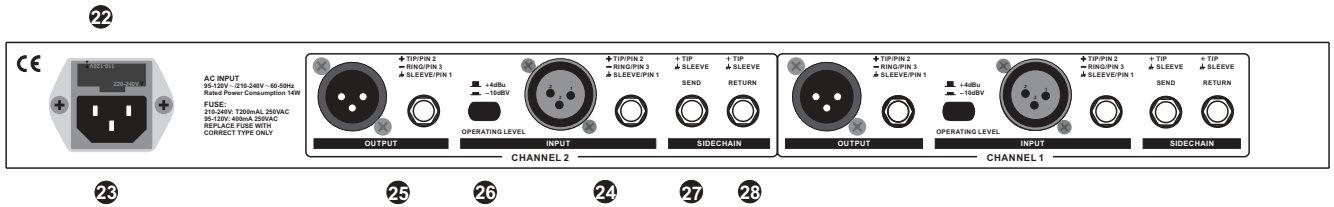
20. Threshold Control

The threshold level of the Peak Limiter is adjusted by this control.

21. Limiter LED

This Led will light up when the Limiter function is activated.

3.4 Connectors on The Rear Panel

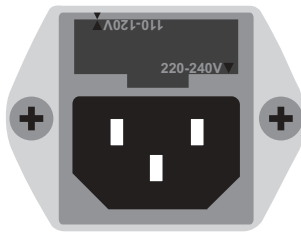


Pic. 5 The Rear Panel of The CLE 2.0

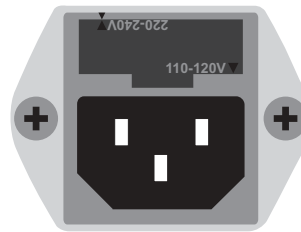
22. Fuse holder / Voltage Selector

This is a dual voltage unit. Before you attempt to connect and operate the unit, please make sure that your local voltage matches the voltage on the fuse-holder cover.

Caution: The fuse protecting the AC supplies circuits of this unit. The fuse can only be changed by a qualified technician, in the event of a fault or changing the supply voltage. If the fuse continues to blow after replacing, discontinue use of this unit before repaired.



THIS IS SET FOR
110V AC TO 120V
AC OPERATION



THIS IS SET FOR
220V AC TO 240V
AC OPERATION

The fuse-holder above the AC connector on the rear of the chassis has 3 triangular markers (please refer to the above pictures), with two of these triangles opposing each other, your unit is set to the operating voltage printed next to these markers.

To change, pull fuse-holder out and rotate 180°, then push in again.

23. AC Inlet

This connector is meant for the connection of the supplied main cord. Do not insert power cord into unit until voltage has been correctly set. Do not plug power cord into AC power until voltage has been correctly set.

24. Audio In

These connectors are used to input the signal source. You can input the signal via the balanced 1/4" TRS phone jack or XLR connector.

25. Audio Out

These connectors are used to output the signal. You can output the signal via the balanced 1/4" TRS phone jack or XLR connector.

26. Operating Level Control

This control is used to adapt this unit to either the -10dBV home recording operating level or the +4dBu professional studio operating level.

The Input / Output Level Meter (18) is referenced automatically to the selected level, i.e. an optimum operating range of the meter will always be ensured.

27. Sidechain Send

Through this 1/4" unbalanced jack the audio signal can be routed to an external processor.

28. Sidechain Return

The return signal of an external processor will be processed through this 1/4" jack.

4. READY TO ROLL?

4.1 Expander/Gate Section

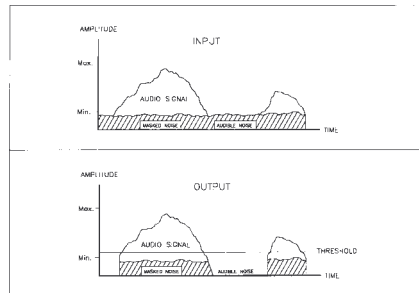


Chart. 3 Function of an expander

As we told you previously in this Manual the downward expander will reduce automatically the level of the audio signal when such signal is below a set threshold. So the expander is the opposite of the compressor/limiter. We also explained to you how the ratio curve of the expander is flat while a noise gate it is more brutal processor: It simply cut-off the entire signal below a certain set threshold. The CLE 2.0 is equipped with a new kind of expander, the SRC (Smart Ratio Control). The ratio of the SRC is automatically adjusted according to the audio signal level. In fact, conventional expanders could easily cut part of the musical program with unacceptable result: The gain changes become audible.

We have equipped the SRC with a non-linear ratio curve, which is soft and adjustable by the User. Thanks to the SRC low passages close to noise floor level will be processed with a minute ratio of expansion while for signals of reduced level a higher ratio will be used with resultant greater attenuation.

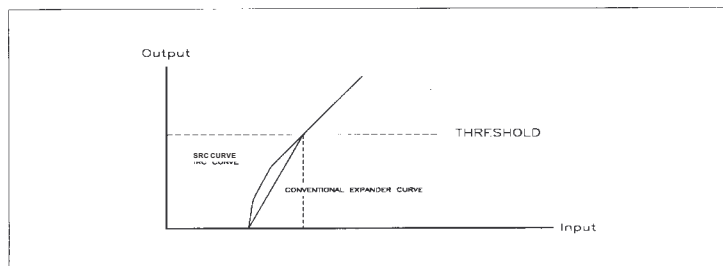


Chart. 4 SRC Curve characteristics of the Adaptive Expander

4.1.1 Threshold Adjustment

The threshold control covers a very wide range and it is efficient with any working level. Turn the threshold control fully counterclockwise and the Expander/Gate section will be completely off.

4.2 Compressor Section

4.2.1 Another Threshold Control?

The compressor threshold control sets the point where the input level starts to be reduced. Let's say the level is +12dBu and the threshold control is set at +2dBu: In this case up to 10 dB can be compressed. If the input level is the same and the control is set at 10dBu the maximum compression will be 22 dB. The operating range of the threshold control is -40 to +20dBu. Turn the threshold control fully clockwise and you will get a threshold level of +20dBu.

You must remember that the degree and the type of compression not only depend by the threshold control but also by other controls such as Ratio, Attack and Release.

4.2.2 Ratio control

This control sets the change of input level to output level but only for the signals that exceed the threshold. The scale of the ratio control on the front panel (calibrated in dB) indicates how much input level is required to increase the output level by 1 dB. If you have a ratio equal to 1:1 you will get the same level of input and output signal: So, no level change.

If you have a ratio of 2:1 this means that for every 2dB increase of the input level (above threshold) you will get an increase of output level of 1 dB. ON the same way, a ratio of 10:1 means that for every 10 dB increase of the input level (above threshold) you will get an increase in output level equal to 1dB, and so on.

You need to be aware that higher ratio settings produce less natural sounds so if you wish a more minute effect on the dynamic range of a program you should use a Ratio of 4:1 or lower.

With the SKC circuit (Smart Knee Control) you can avoid aggressive compression generated by using high ratios. How we achieve this? Introducing a "soft knee" curve in the range of up to 10dB above the threshold level. Hard Knee compression is then used beyond this range.

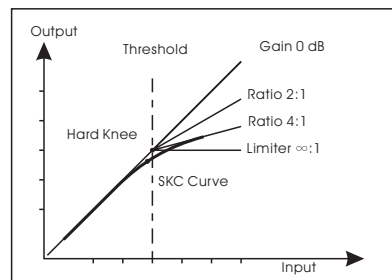


Chart. 5 SKC characteristic of the compressor section

4.2.3 Attack control

The attack time represents the amount of time that passes before the compressor start to lower the output level when the signal is above the threshold point.

For very fast transients such as drums, handclaps, etc, a short attack time will be used. These peaks are consequently carefully regulated by the compressor. Sounds of other nature will get advantages if longer attack times are used. Anyway, our advice is always to begin the process with longer attack times. Then you can start gradually to reduce the attack time. IN the CLE 2.0 the attack time can be set in a range of 1 to 150 milliseconds.

4.2.4 Release Control

This control determines how much time the compressor needs to get back to normal gain when the audio signal falls below the set threshold.

A too short release time will make the volume to fluctuate and you will experience pumping effect. A too long release time will give you pumping and breathing effect especially when you have loud passage followed by a quite passage. The release time on CLE 2.0 can be set from 0.05 to 5 seconds.

4.2.5 Auto switch

This switch turns off the possibility of manually set the attack and release times. An intelligent program recognition circuit will automatically set the attack and release times. In such way, undesirable effects such as distortion and pumping will be avoided.

4.2.6 Output control

This Control is indispensable to compensate the loss of level at output level generated by the gain reduction caused by the compression and limiting processing.

4.2.7 Bypass Switch

This switch simply turns off the correspondent channel. This is useful to compare quickly the processed and unprocessed signal.

4.2.8 Gain Reduction Meter

This consists of 12 LED on the front of the CLE 2.0. Through this Led meter you can visualise the amount of gain reduction at any given time.

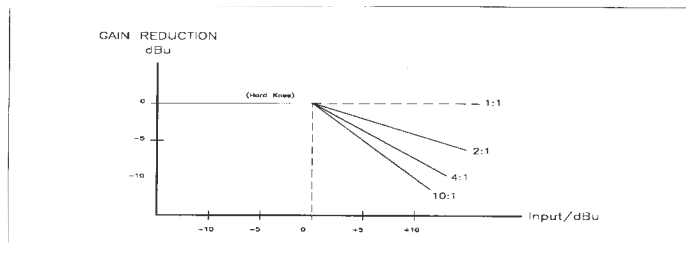


Chart. 6 The effect of a compressor can be expressed as the amount of gain reduction that is taking place for any given input

4.3 Peak Limiter Section

How fast is the compressor to react to a signal which is above the threshold point? This is determined by the attack time. A longer attack time is advisable to process low frequencies while shorter attack time is preferable for high frequencies. IN this way you will avoid undesired dynamic distortion. But what about if you are mixing a program with a wide range of frequencies? In this case you should choose a setting that would benefit the low frequency better.

Well, life is not that easy for conventional compressor/limiters. Ok you handle an audio signal made by a wide range of frequencies and you have chosen a longer attack time. But, if are using your CLE 2.0 as a limiter the fast high frequencies will pass through untouched because the attack time is too slow and such transients could cause distortion when the unit is connected to broadcast devices or taper recorders.

The solution in CLE 2.0 is represented by our Smart Gain Control (SGC) limiter circuit. The curve in bold is the output signal and the dashed curve above it is the input signal. The area in between the two is the amount of gain reduction.

The unit will activate the limiter when the signal exceeds the threshold for more than 15 microseconds. Then 1 second after that the signal is below threshold again, reduction goes back to 0dB and in this case input and output signals are again identical.

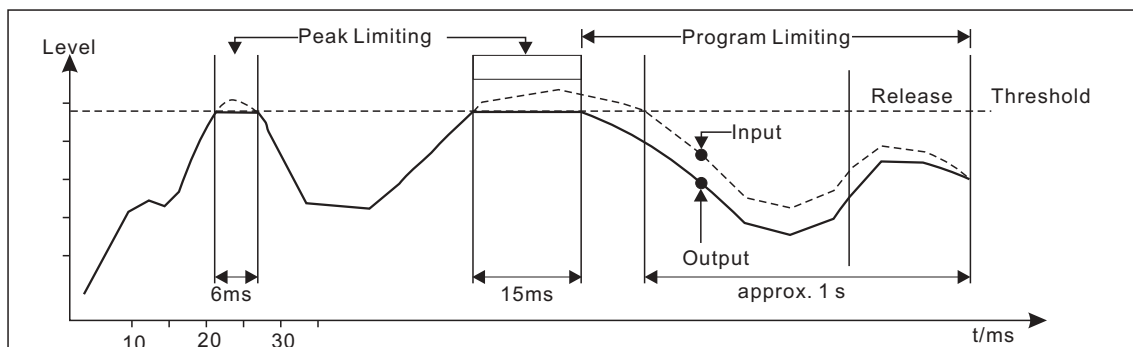


Chart. 7 SGC characteristic of the limiter section

5. INSTALLATION AND CONNECTION

5.1 Mains Connection

CLE 2.0 is provided with dual voltage plug. You must check the power supply Voltage available in your Country before connecting the power cord in the wall outlet. Please see Page9, paragraph 22 for further info.

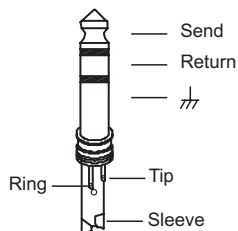
5.2 Audio connection

The CLE 2.0 Compressor/Limiter/Gate is equipped with balanced XLR connectors as well as 1/4" phone jack and can be connected with other units in different ways to support a vast range of applications without experiencing a signal loss.

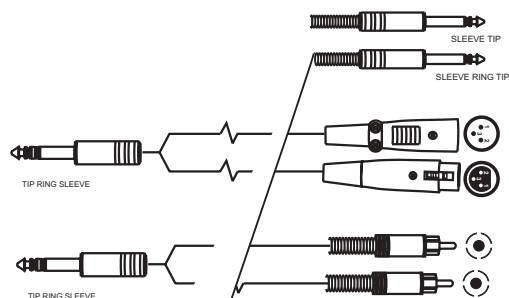
c. Insert Points Connection

In case you are using the main inserts of your mixing console and you have a single jack for SEND and RETURN, you can use an insert Y cable. Please see following drawing.

- 1/4" TRS insert



- Insert Leads



5.3 Rack Mounting

The most common mounting is on a universal rack shelf available from various rack manufacturers or your music dealer. The CLE 2.0 Compressor / Limiter / Gate fits into one standard 19" rack unit of space.

Please allow at least an additional 4" depth for the connectors on the rear panel. Be sure that there is enough air space around the unit for sufficient ventilation and please do not place the CLE 2.0 Compressor / Limiter / Gate on top of other temperature sensitive devices such as power amplifiers etc. to avoid overheating.

6. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

AUDIO INPUT	Type	Active balanced XLR and 1/4"JACK
	Impedance	Balanced: 50K Ohm Unbalanced: 25K Ohm
	Operating Level	+4dBu /-10dBv
	Maximum input level	Balanced and Unbalanced: +21 dBu
	CMRR	>55dB @1KHz
AUDIO OUTPUT	Type	XLR and 1/4" JACK
	Impedance	Balanced: 60 Ohm Unbalanced: 30Ohm
	Maximum output level	+21 dBu
	Bandwidth	20Hz to 20KHz at +0,-0.5dB
	THD +N%	0.01% typ.1KHz, @+4dBu 0.04% typ,1KHz, @+20dBu
	IMD	0.01% typ
	Noise	>-90dBu
	Crosstalk	<-100dB
SC INPUT	Type	1/4"JACK
	Impedance	>10K Ohm
	Maximum input level	+24dBu
SC OUTPUT	Type	1/4"JACK
	Impedance	2K Ohm
	Maximum output level	+21dBu
EXPANDER/GATE SECTION	Type	Interactive Expander
	Threshold	Variable: from OFF to +15dB
	Ratio	Variable: from 1:1.2 to 1:8
COMPRESSOR SECTION	Type	Interactive Compressor
	Threshold	Variable: from -40dB to +20dB
	Ratio	Variable: from 1:1 to ∞:1
	Manual Attack Time	Variable: from 1ms to 100ms/20dB
	Manual Release Time	Variable: from 0.05ms to 5s/20dB
	Auto Attack Time	Typ. 15ms at 10dB; 5ms at 20 dB; 3ms at 30dB
	Auto Release Time	Typ. 125dB/s
	Output	Interactive Peak Limiter
PEAK LIMITER SECTION	Type	Smart Gain Control peak limiter
	Threshold	Variable: from +4dB to OFF
	Ratio	∞:1
	Stage 1: Attack and Release	Clipper zero
	Stage 2 Attack Release	Program Limiter typ. <5ms typ. 20dB/s
FUNCTION SWITCHES	COUPLE	Linking CH1 (master) and CH2; stereo operation
	OPERATING LEVEL	Internal reference level: from +4dBu to -10dBV
	BYPASS	Bypass switch
	I/O METER	Switches input and output for the level meter
	AUTO	Enables the program dependent setting of the ATTACK and RELEASE times
	SC EXTERNAL	Switches the detector section to the external SC input
	SC MONITOR	Monitoring the external SC input, disengaging the normal audio
	SMART	Enables the ` Smart Knee Control ` characteristics
	CONTOUR	Allows for frequency dependent detection

INDICATORS	GAIN REDUCTION: 12 element LED
	INPUT / OUTPUT LEVEL: 8 element LED
	EXPANDER/GATE THRESHOLD: 2 element LED (under"+" above"-")
	COMPRESSOR THRESHOLD: 3 element LED (under"+" interactive"0" above"-")
	PEAK LIMITER THRESHOLD: 1 element LED (Limiter Function)
	Function switch: LED indicator for each
POWER SUPPLY	95-120V~/210-240V~,60-50Hz FUSE: 210-240V: T200mAL 250VAC 95-120V: 400mA 250VAC
POWER CONSUMPTION	14 Watts
DIMENSIONS	483(W) × 194.5(D) × 44(H)mm (19"×7.7" × 1.7")
WEIGHT	3.3kg(7.27lb)

7. WARRANTY

1. WARRANTY REGISTRATION CARD

To obtain Warranty Service, the buyer should first fill out and return the enclosed Warranty Registration Card within 10 days of the Purchase Date.

All the information presented in this Warranty Registration Card gives the manufacturer a better understanding of the sales status, so as to purport a more effective and efficient after-sales warranty service.

Please fill out all the information carefully and genuinely, miswriting or absence of this card will void your warranty service.

2. RETURN NOTICE

2.1 In case of return for any warranty service, please make sure that the product is well packed in its original shipping carton, and it can protect your unit from any other extra damage.

2.2 Please provide a copy of your sales receipt or other proof of purchase with the returned machine, and give detail information about your return address and contact telephone number.

2.3 A brief description of the defect will be appreciated.

2.4 Please prepay all the costs involved in the return shipping, handling and insurance.

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

3.1 ▲LTO warrants that this product will be free from any defects in materials and/or workmanship for a period of 1 year from the purchase date if you have completed the Warranty Registration Card in time.

3.2 The warranty service is only available to the original consumer, who purchased this product directly from the retail dealer, and it can not be transferred.

3.3 During the warranty service, ▲LTO may repair or replace this product at its own option at no charge to you for parts or for labor in accordance with the right side of this limited warranty.

3.4 This warranty does not apply to the damages to this product that occurred as the following conditions:

- Instead of operating in accordance with the user's manual thoroughly, any abuse or misuse of this product.
- Normal tear and wear.
- The product has been altered or modified in any way.
- Damage which may have been caused either directly or indirectly by another product / force / etc
- Abnormal service or repairing by anyone other than the qualified personnel or technician.

And in such cases, all the expenses will be charged to the buyer.

3.5 In no event shall ▲LTO be liable for any incidental or consequential damages. Some states do not allow the exclusion or limitation of incidental or consequential damages, so the above exclusion or limitation may not apply to you.

3.6 This warranty gives you the specific rights, and these rights are compatible with the state laws, you may also have other statutory rights that may vary from state to state.

SEKAKU ELECTRON IND. CO., LTD

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