6 setup mistakes every sound and vibration engineer should avoid

SOUND AND VIBRATION TESTING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE COMPLICATED – BUT SIMPLE MISTAKES DURING SETUP CAN DERAIL YOUR ENTIRE TEST PROGRAMME. AVOIDING THESE SIX COMMON ERRORS WILL SAVE TIME, PREVENT INVALID DATA, AND REDUCE COSTLY REWORK.

#1: Am I using the wrong transducer?

Choosing the wrong tools corrupts your data from the start.

Not utilizing the IEEE 1451 standard for smart transducers. All analysis systems need information on how to power a transducer, and how to convert the transducer's electrical signal into engineering units for the signal analysis calculations. Entering this information incorrectly, such as putting a decimal in the wrong place for a transducer Sensitivity value, can ruin your data.

How HBK solves it: HBK's Fusion-LN and LAN-XI data acquisition systems support TEDS technology, which recognises your transducer and configures the system accordingly. The system reads the transducer's built-in memory chip and automatically configures settings and parameters.

The result: Capture accurate data from your first measurement without configuration errors.

#2: Skipping system verification and calibration

Hidden failures corrupt entire datasets.

Transducers and cables can become damaged thru mishandling. A damaged sensor continues generating plausible-looking numbers that bear no relation to reality, while deteriorated cables inject spurious signals that appear as legitimate data.

How HBK solves it: HBK's BK Connect analysis software includes built-in verification tools that check your entire signal chain before you start testing. Detect cable faults, identify damaged transducers, and verify measurement accuracy.

The result: Confirm system integrity in minutes, not after hours of questionable data.

#3: Using the wrong analysis type for your problem

One analysis method can't solve every problem.

For example, steady-state analysis identifies continuous hums effectively but cannot detect transient impacts. Time recording captures when noise and vibration events occur without revealing the underlying frequencies responsible.

How HBK solves it: BK Connect software bundle includes multiple analysis types in one comprehensive package – FFT, octave analysis, time recording, and order tracking. The software's guided workflows help you select the appropriate analysis method for your specific problem.

The result: Apply the right analysis method to reveal the actual problem.

#4: Overcomplicating the setup process

More settings mean more opportunities for error.

When first using S&V testing software, engineers often assume they need to customise every parameter before making their first measurement. The result: hours of unnecessary setup and an increased chance of configuration errors.

How HBK solves it: BK Connect is designed with intelligent defaults and guided workflows that handle most measurement scenarios. The software's intuitive interface guides you through setup logically, highlighting the parameters most relevant to your test.

The result: Make meaningful measurements within hours without convoluted setups.

#5: Not saving and reusing test setups

Inconsistent setups invalidate comparisons.

Engineers new to S&V testing often recreate configurations for each measurement session, unaware that setups can be saved and reused. Most engineering work involves repetitive testing. Without saved configurations, teams waste time and introduce inconsistency between measurements.

How HBK solves it: BK Connect makes it easy to save your complete test configuration as reusable templates. Test electric motors regularly? Save that setup. HBK's system preserves transducer assignments, analysis parameters, and display settings.

The result: Make valid comparisons while saving hours on repeated tests.

#6: Neglecting data comparison across test runs

Can't improve what you can't compare.

You've identified a vibration issue, made a design change, and retested the system. But without the ability to directly compare before-and-after results, how do you know if you've fixed the issue at hand? Many engineers end up eyeballing printouts or trying to remember what the previous plot looked like.

How HBK solves it: BK Connect includes powerful comparison tools that let you overlay results from different test runs directly. The software provides clear before-and-after analysis with full export to Word, Excel, and PowerPoint for reporting.

The result: Transform subjective observations into quantified engineering decisions.

THE PATH FORWARD

These mistakes aren't inevitable – they're preventable with the right strategy and tools.

HBK's Troubleshooting Analyser – a complete plug-and-play solution combining BK Connect analysis software with either Fusion-LN or LAN-XI data acquisition hardware – eliminates these challenges from the outset.
The system delivers automatic transducer recognition, built-in verification, comprehensive analysis options, intuitive workflows, template management, and powerful comparison capabilities.

Ready to transform your S&V testing?
Visit our application page to learn more about the complete solution, or contact our experts to discuss your specific requirements.

HBK – Hottinger, Brüel & Kjær
www.hbkworld.com
info@hbkworld.com