

Scoop

By R. A. Lindquist

At some point in time, while growing your DJ business, you're likely to start asking yourself, "What else can I do?" While there are many logical entrepreneurial pursuits you can add to your DJ entertainment service, the most seamless is on-site sound amplification (PA). While you may eventually aspire to do sound for major shows and concerts, most of the bread and butter work is on a much smaller and more manageable scale. Most of your work will probably come from theatre groups, schools, churches, choral groups, corporations and garage bands located throughout your community.

With the right tools and a good grasp of how to properly set up a PA system, you may find this to be a lucrative niche that's been ignored. The best news is, unlike the individual starting from scratch, you may already have many of the pieces in place. As we're not talking about doing huge events, a solid 200-watts-per-channel amp with well-matched speakers will make a good foundation. Add to this a quality multi-channel mixer, good microphones and a stage monitor system and you're on your way.

But First...

A word of caution: When offering your services as a purveyor of sound reinforcement, it's essential that you not only meet (and if possible, exceed) the client's needs, but do it with a level of confidence that proclaims, "I have this all under control." If you think you run into a lot of well-meaning know-it-alls offering up advice on how to run things at your DJ events, you ain't seen nothing yet. Recently, I was sitting in for a friend who was doing sound at a multi-band music fest. Everything was working perfectly—my friend had labeled everything, so it was a real no-brainer. That was until one of the bands insisted on using their own mini-mixer and sending me a feed from the stage. By the time a few "Good Samaritans" sitting up front got through changing things, the set-up was so discombobulated that I had no idea which cable went to which mic. When the idea finally failed (the band apologized to the crowd for delaying the show) everything had to be restored to its previous state before the show could continue.

Adding to the problem was the fact that it was dark and it wasn't my gear. While multi-track mixers may look similar, the layouts and functions of each switch can sometimes vary greatly. This is why it's so important that you know every knob, button, input



SOUND



Opportunity

DYNACORD'S POWERMATE 1000 IS THE PERFECT TOOL FOR THE DJ WHO WANTS TO OFFER MORE.

and output like the back of your hand. In addition, you must be able to get up and running quickly, leaving as much time for a soundcheck as possible. Adjusting the mix during a performance is annoying to everyone at the show.

...Back to the Point

Given the criteria described, an impressive multi-track mixer with a built-in amp for all-purpose PA work in smaller venues is the PowerMate 1000 from Dynacord. While you may not be familiar with the Dynacord name, it's a brand that's been around for quite some time, and was relatively common in the states during the '50s and '60s. Last January, I had the pleasure of visiting the Telex/Dynacord plant in Straubing, Germany with several others from the audio press. The trip included a factory tour, where we observed Dynacord products being meticulously assembled and tested.

The PowerMate 1000 provides 10 input channels and two channels of amplification. The amp section is rated at 500

watts per side at 4 Ω , 250 watts/side at 8 Ω (20Hz-20kHz). Along with a laudable spec sheet, the list of features includes electronically balanced inputs, four bands of EQ on the mic channels, two 18-bit stereo effects units, a feedback filter, a voicing filter, a very handy patch bay and a whole lot more. Enhancing its road-worthiness is a steel cover that snaps tight to protect the unit from speakers bouncing around in the back of your van.

Quite Capable

When shopping for a multi-channel mixer (powered or not) your primary focus should be on flexibility and expandability. In order to make your new venture pay, you need to be able to provide amplification that fits the application. This is an area where PowerMate 1000 really shines. On its own, you can use one side to power a house system and the other for the stage monitors. If you need more power to the house, simply run a feed from the handy patch panel to outboard power amps. If ten channels aren't

enough, or you need to run your DJ mixer in tandem with the PowerMate, it's easy to do and you won't lose an input. To further simplify matters, the owner's manual explains all the possible configurations with illustrations even the most non-technical person can follow.

You'll find that the layout of the PowerMate 1000 is very easy to navigate. All controls and inputs are mounted topside, leaving the back clear of everything beside the Speakon™ output connectors and the power switch. The two effects units provide 99 program presets, selectable with up/down buttons. They include reverb, echo, delay, flanging, and chorus effects. You have plenty of control over effect levels and routing.

On the road, we found the PowerMate 1000 easy to work with. The amps stayed cool throughout the night and there was ample headroom. Onboard fans kick in when necessary to keep the unit in its optimum operating range.

Multiple Opportunities

A crucial concern in selecting a multi-channel mixer is how the power output meets your requirements. Rated at 250 watts per channel, the PowerMate 1000 has enough boot to kick out the jams in your average-sized high school auditorium and then some. If you need more inputs, the PowerMate 1600 adds six. If you need more power, the PowerMate 2200 offers dual 700-watt amps (4 Ω , 20Hz-20kHz) and 22 inputs. THD for all three models is less than 0.2%.

For more on the extensive capabilities of the PowerMate 1000 or its kin, head over to the Dynacord Web site. This is just the kind of high-quality console that could provide your launching pad into the lucrative realm of on-site sound reinforcement. *

PowerMate 1000 - MAP: \$2,199

PowerMate 1600 - MAP: \$2,499

PowerMate 2200 - MAP: \$2,999

Dynacord (Telex)
12000 Portland Ave. South
Burnsville, MN 55337
Tel: 952-736-3865 / 800-392-3497
Fax: 952-736-4702
www.dynacord.com