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Dynacord PowerMate³ FEATURE

Dynacord PowerMate3

What in the dim and distant part was known as a “mixing amplifier” is nowadays described as a “powered mixer” and used, as it was then, for a wide variety of applications. One of the most successful representatives of the breed is the Dynacord PowerMate, the third and improved generation of which is now shipping

The powered mixers of today are, of course, in no way comparable with the products of yesteryear but, rather, devices to be taken seriously. Without wanting to jump the gun, let it be said at the outset that the latest generation PowerMate is somewhat akin to the ultimate audio workstation in a compact format. It is suitable not only for musicians wanting (or obliged) to do their own mixing but also – without reservations – for sound reinforcement providers whose work sometimes takes them to smaller venues. Why for sound reinforcement providers? Because the PowerMate in fact lacks none of the equipment you would normally find tucked away in a side rack. That means less gear to lug

around, less tedious cabling, and less wasted space. Furthermore, the PowerMate3 comes in three sizes (with 10, 16 or 22 channels). What all three models have in common is a power amplifier section employing Class D technology and capable of outputting 2 x 1,000 watts into 4 ohms. In this area, a considerable weight reduction has been achieved. For this product test, it was the largest model in the series that was made available to us.

Equipment

The mono channels are each equipped with both Mic and Line inputs (balanced); an

Insert loop; Low-Cut (80 Hz), and Voice filters; rotary controls for Gain, Hi, Mid (sweepable), Lo, FX 1, FX 2 (for the two integrated effects processors), Aux 1, Aux 2 (switchable pre-/post-fader in the Master section) and Pan; Mute and PFL buttons (in each case with a status LED); Peak and Signal LEDs; and a fader (Alps, like the pots). Phantom power is switchable in groups of six. The twelve mono channels are followed by four stereo channels each of which is also equipped with a Mic input (with a separate Gain control). This is followed by the stereo input (L/R) jacks, the gain control for which is marked “GAIN LINE CD” (in the first two stereo channels) and “GAIN LINE USB” (in



An extensive range of peripherals increases the versatility of the PowerMate



Boxes with a lower power handling capacity can be connected without fear thanks to Power Control

if the worst should happen, prevents the power amplifier shutting down. The speaker protection dialog enables you to match the maximum continuous output power of the integrated power amplifiers to the connected loudspeakers, which you do by selecting between several discrete levels. This makes it possible to drive even quite small boxes sensibly, without having to pull down the master faders too far to do so.

The rear panel of the PowerMate, compared with the mixer interface, has a somewhat sparse look to it: mains power socket, power switch, MIDI In/Out, loudspeaker outputs on Speakons, and two fans that conduct themselves for the most part in a commendably subdued manner.

One could say more about the features, but the other possibilities are mainly of interest to the musicians themselves, explained very clearly in the excellent Owner's Manual, and capable of mastery even by those who are less than gifted when it comes to technology. In a nutshell, the PowerMate 2200-3 constitutes a thoroughly well

thought-out solution measuring 81.8 x 15 x 49.8 cm (W x H x D) and weighing 18 kg.

Practice

We tested the sound and handling of the PowerMate at an appearance by a band in a medium-sized hall. Since the kick-drum and bass rig could fend for themselves and required very little support, we decided to use only full-range boxes for the sound reinforcement. An external power amplifier was naturally also needed to drive the four wedges. The setting up and cabling of the PowerMate are completely intuitive, so after tuning the monitors, we could begin the sound check right away. Everything went superbly: the equalizers intervened effectively but not too aggressively, and the feedback filters for the monitoring proved extremely useful in practice. Setting the effects section to optimize the vocals took very little time and the gig could begin. We found that having features integrated into the console that are usually accommodated in an effects rack brings many advantages.

In short, the PowerMate impressed us in every respect at this concert and the power amplifiers provided all the power we could have wished for.

Summary

The third generation of the PowerMate shows that however good and successful a device may be, it can always be made more attractive, and, by listening to the wishes of users and finding exactly the right formula to appeal not only to sound reinforcement providers but also musicians without their own FOH men, the designers in Straubing have done just that. The key points to note about the PowerMate are that it requires very little space, is very light, is easy to operate and transport, is lavishly equipped, boasts features of real practical value, and delivers substantial output from its power amplifier section. The PowerMate 2200-3 has a recommended retail price of 93,370.

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The two fans at the rear of the PowerMate are mercifully unobtrusive and perform quietly in the background

