

POWERED MIXER



Dynacord PowerMate 1000-3

Top Secret

It's the stuff of which spy thrillers are made: a courier delivers a packet with highly sensitive contents. Time is of the essence, as the editorial deadline is approaching and as yet no one knows exactly what the package contains. Behind closed doors, we put a Stanley knife to the edges of the cardboard, open the lid and steal a glimpse at the contents, which at the time are still classified information...

The brand-new Dynacord PowerMate 1000-3. "Brand-new" here isn't just advertising fluff but the literal truth: SOUNDCHECK was given the very first of this greatly coveted breed of powered mixer to test, before the rest of the music world had any idea a new model was even on the way.

low-cut and voice filters are all familiar from previous PowerMate generations the tried-and-tested features of which have been retained. The Voice filter is a special, asymmetric filter element that was originally specially developed for vocals to which it adds penetration and clarity. Those with a gift for experimentation soon discovered,

– especially given the compactness of the console. The familiar quartet of Mute, PFL, Pan pot and channel fader follows. The inputs section also has a classic look, featuring the standard pairing of balanced microphone and line inputs. An insert is another standard feature as is phantom power, which is switchable in blocks.

» Delay intervals on the PowerMate can be synchronized to the tempo using the Tap button.«

The new PowerMate generation comprises three models differing in size. The 1000-3 made available to us, which offers six mono and four stereo inputs, will shortly be joined by the PowerMate 1600-3 and the PowerMate 2200-3, offering twelve and eighteen mono channels respectively as well as in each case four stereo ones. The spec of all three models is otherwise identical. On the input side, the PowerMate offers a well-rounded and well-realized feature set. The three-band semi-parametric equalizer,

however, that the Voice filter delivers excellent results with a good many other types of signal besides, so even with sources other than vocals, it's well worth trying the Voice filter out and seeing how it sounds.

The channel strip continues with a total of six auxiliary busses, of which two tap the signal pre-fader, two post-fader, and two pre- or post-fader according to choice. All six can be used in parallel, so there's a lavish feel to all this

Let's look more closely at the output section.

We spoke just now of six auxiliary busses. In the same vein, the new PowerMate generation boasts two integrated effects processors. Each offers 100 presets and space for 20 user programs. The presets can be edited comprehensively and easily. For the purpose, an **encoder** is provided as well as four push-button switches beneath the display. The two processors share a common Tap key to facilitate the syncing of delay times to the tempo of the music. Like the effects busses, the monitor busses are lavishly equipped – in the new PowerMate, each even has its own notch filter for the suppression of feedback. If you've been counting, you'll have noticed

Encoder: important control element in the world of digital technology. Unlike an ordinary potentiometer, which has a limited range of rotation, the encoder is endlessly rotatable. Usually multiple functions are assigned to each encoder.

LPN: Stands for 'Low Pass Notch', a special filter developed by Dynacord to optimize the transient response of bass loudspeakers.

TECHNICAL DATA

- Inputs 6 x mono, 4 x stereo
- Busses 8 + 2
- Interfaces USB, MIDI
- Effects 2 x multi-effects processors
- Power 2 x 1,000 W / 4 ohms
- THD < 0.005 %
- Crosstalk < -85 dB
- S/N 105 dB
- Frequency range 15 Hz–70 kHz (-3 dB)
- Dimensions 510 x 160 x 570 mm (table-top)
480 x 130 x 440 mm (rack-mount)
- Weight 14 kg

that there are two auxiliary busses missing from our account. True. The last pair, as it happens, are freely assignable; they can be switched from the master section either pre- or post-fader and are therefore excellently suited to all possible applications. You could use them, for example, as additional monitor or effects busses or to provide ancillary mixes for a live recording, a centre cluster or front fill.

Another quick look at the sum. The new PowerMates offer two independent line level outputs and an 11-band graphic equalizer that can be introduced into the sum (Master L/R) or else into either or both of the monitor busses as desired. As if that wasn't enough, there's a USB interface as well. This can't, admittedly, be used to play back sounds from an MP3 stick, but it more than makes up for it in other ways! By connecting a desk- or laptop computer to the USB port, you can turn your PowerMate in no next to no time into a small four-track studio. Just install the requisite ASIO drivers, which are supplied

and virtually latency-free in their operation, and you are ready to begin work. The USB port can be used to record on your hard disk either the sum (i.e. the Master L/R channels) or the monitor sends – and in each case AUX 1 and AUX 2 at the same time! A great practical help in this context is the LE version of Cubase, which is included in the delivery. And, fortunately, the data flow isn't one way: the USB port can also be used to play back signals through the PowerMate – up to four tracks of digital audio simultaneously.

This interface offers interesting possibilities, too, in live performance. A stereo live recording plus ambient microphones? No problem. Just route two ambient microphones to the appropriate bus and you can record them too. What about a second mix, this time without vocals? Just route the relevant channels to one of the auxiliary busses and record. Easy. You could even make a complete four-track live recording in this way.

don't need the power amplifiers for the front-of-house PA, you can patch them into the monitor sends – another configuration that is swiftly and easily implemented.

With the display and the encoder, you can control a far wider variety of functions than you might suppose. One such is the speaker protection function, which regulates the output of the power amplifiers dynamically in various steps, allowing you to match the output to your loudspeakers. This does not involve some crude level reduction but, rather, a tailoring of the output to the existing constraints. Short impulses of importance to the dynamic range, for instance, pass unhindered; it is only when the output oversteps the defined limit for any length of time that throttling back occurs. This prevents the voice coil succumbing to overheating. The routing of the equalizer is another of many parameters that you can program using the PowerMate's menu. All in all, this desk offers so

» With 2 x 1,000 watts into 4 ohms, the new PowerMate offers oodles of power.«

With 2 x 1,000 watts into 4 ohms, the new PowerMate offers oodles of power. What's more, the numbers don't lie: the output claimed is duly delivered. The source is a power amplifier module located in the rear of the PowerMate. The introduction of a switched-mode power supply here has made possible a drastic weight reduction when compared with the earlier models, which used linear power supplies. You only have to pick up the PowerMate using the handle integrated into the protective lid to appreciate the difference. Fourteen kilos was, until recently, the weight of a mixer of equivalent size. The new PowerMate offers power amplification as well at the same weight! It represents, therefore, not only a highly convenient but also a realistic mobile solution for medium-sized venues, provided no more than one amplifier channel per side is required. But even if that's not the case, the new PowerMate still has a few tricks up its sleeve: for a powered subwoofer, for example, a line output is provided, and for multi-way systems, there's an external input to the power amps of the PowerMate. This means you could loop in external processors and drive multi-way systems with it. Furthermore, if you

many features that we could not possibly cover them all here. We will, however, be publishing a further test as soon as the first series-production models become available.

In a nutshell, the new PowerMate is great fun to use! Unlike the very first powered mixers, this is a tool to be taken seriously; one that not only sounds but even feels like a serious professional device. The days when using a powered mixer involved inevitable compromises in terms of handling, effects or channels are well and truly over. The PowerMate's effects are convincing, their programming absolutely satisfactory, the output power wholly adequate, and the provision and flexibility of the busses convincing.

✦ Uli Hoppert



The new top-secret PowerMates from top to bottom: Dynacord PowerMate 2200-3, PowerMate 1600-3 Et PowerMate 1000-3

AT A GLANCE

Dynacord PowerMate 1000-3
Distributor Bosch/EVI Audio
www.dynacord.com
Price (RRP) 2.430 €

- ▲ numerous features
- ▲ intuitive operation
- ▲ cleanly programmed effects
- ▲ high power amplifier output
- ▲ very flexible bus structure