

REVIEW**A.E.D. Deck Stand Booth Pro (SSP £699)**

A setup that is neat, tidy and looks professional is becoming ever more important for mobile DJs, especially those who work in up-market hotels and other quality venues for weddings and corporate events. Gone are the days when banqueting managers and clients would tolerate a DJ who set up a mass of wires and shabby boxes in a grand ballroom that had been painstakingly decorated and prepared for the event. What's more, as Mark Walsh wrote in his article in the last issue, venues managers now expect mobile DJs to have fully self-contained systems that don't require the venue to provide a table or any other item of furniture. The new Deck Stand Booth Pro from British manufacturer Advanced Event Designs helps with both of these requirements. It provides a professional front to a mobile rig, covering up equipment and cables, while also providing a surface on which to stand equipment.

Designed by working mobile DJs in the UK, the Deck Stand Booth Pro has a distinctive design. Its side panels are at an angle that is slightly larger than 90 degrees, which gives the booth a trapezoidal footprint and a stylish wedge shape. The top portion of the booth is also angled backwards to further protect and hide the gear behind it. Flexibility is also at the heart of the Deck Stand Booth Pro's design, as it is available with a number of different fabric covers. The basic model is available with a choice of black or white heavy-duty cotton clothes, while more expensive models are also available with professional theatrical grade black wool serge or even LED starcloth. The vari-

ous cloths are also available separately so it may be worth investing in black, white and starcloth versions and then offering the client a choice. The more we can tailor our service to a specific client's preferences, the more unique and therefore valuable to the client our service becomes.

The booth frame folds down to a single flat unit that measures 1400mm x 1025mm x 155mm, which is fairly bulky, but should squeeze into a large estate or people carrier and easily fits in a decent sized van. While I was able to lift the frame single handedly, it is pretty heavy and I wouldn't want to have to carry it a long distance or up stairs without a helper.

Setting up the booth is easy and extremely intuitive; I erected the review model single-handedly for the first time in less than five minutes without any instructions and having never seen it done before. The side wings of the booth fold out on hinges from the front section and then the angled top sections fold up, on further hinges, and sit in place. Two thumb screws are provided to secure the corners of the top section in place, but that's all that is required to build the booth frame.

The top, bottom and side edges of the frame are fitted with velcro, which is used to secure in place the fabric cover. I found the task of securing the front cloth in place surprisingly easy, as I imagined that it would be difficult to get all of the edges neat and the cloth taught across the whole frame. It turns out that simply attaching one side of the velcro and then working across to the other, secur-



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www.deckstandbooth.co.uk

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ing top and bottom all the way around, created a near perfect finish first time. Because the cloth is secured all the way around the bottom of the frame there is no risk of it lifting up during a gig to expose the equipment and cables hidden behind.

This basic booth can be used as a surround to an existing goalpost deck stand, portable table or wheeled flight case. The booth is very sturdy and will afford a good level of protection to the equipment behind it. However, for DJs looking for a surface on which to stand their gear, two shelves are also provided that can be fitted to the booth. Each shelf simply sits over four locating pins, two at either side of the booth, and locks securely in place. Each shelf provides plenty of space, measuring 670mm deep by 1400mm wide at the back, increasing to 1880mm at the front (due to the angle of the booth). The top shelf is positioned at a height of 900mm and is intended for playback and control equipment, while the second shelf sits at 500mm from the floor and is ideal for amplifiers and other secondary control equipment. I found that the top shelf was at a perfect height to support my mixer flight-case in a good working position; however I would have liked the lower shelf to be further down allowing more room between the two shelves. Of course this is personal preference and the designers have had to opt for two heights that they hope will best please all users. While the booth is sturdy on its own, the addition of the two shelves makes it even more secure, almost completely eliminating any wobble. Each shelf is rated at an impressive 50kg,

which should be more than enough to support any DJ's control equipment.

While this is an excellent piece of professional gear, if I had to find fault it would be with the booth's overall height. I don't think DJs should be hidden away behind their equipment, but visible and accessible to their crowds. I am 5'10" and felt that I was obscured too much behind the 1310mm high booth. I know also know of fellow DJs who are shorter than myself who would be literally dwarfed by the booth, of course for a jock who is well over 6' this won't be a problem.

A number of optional extras are available for the Deckstand Booth Pro to add to its flexibility and usability. A 2.5m wide overhead lighting goalpost kit is available, which attaches to the sides of the booth and has a variable height of between approximately 2m and 2.5m. Alternatively, add-on brackets are also available to connect existing overhead lighting bars to the booth. A professional flight-case is also available for storing and transporting a Deckstand Booth Pro system in order to keep it in pristine condition.

The Deckstand Booth Pro is a unique product that has been designed specifically for the top-flight of professional mobile DJs. It is certainly not a budget product, but in my opinion, offers good value for money. The booth is very well built, easy to setup and has a very professional appearance. If you regularly perform at the top venues in your area, or would like to, I definitely advise that you consider investing in a Deckstand Booth Pro.



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