

ELECTRO-VOICE ETX

—EV STRIKES ACCORD—

BY JIMMY DEN-OUDEN

IT'S NO REAL SECRET THAT EV AND DYNACORD HAVE THE SAME PARENT COMPANY IN BOSCH COMMUNICATIONS. THE TWO HAVE A LOT IN COMMON REALLY – THEY'RE BOTH PRETTY SOLID PRODUCT. FROM A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE I'VE ALWAYS SEEN DYNACORD AS THE HEAVIER DUTY PRODUCT, BUT WITH THE RELEASE OF THE ETX RANGE THAT LINE SEEMS TO BE A LITTLE MORE BLURRY THAN IT USED TO.

ETX is a range of self-powered speakers. The whole family is built from 18mm 13 ply birch ply, and all the hardware is made by EV specifically. Handles, top-hats and amp chassis are all die-cast aluminium rather than plastic. The full-range models include eye-bolt mounting points as well as boundary compensation filters for floor, pole, or flown configurations. The brains don't end there either – dual limiters, linear phase crossovers, and intelligent thermal management add to the appeal. Using a pole to join a top box to a sub puts the front faces of the boxes out of physical alignment with each other – I'm told that the boxes know how to compensate for this, which is pretty cool.

The range encompasses a variety of models; 10" two way, 12" two way, 15" two way boxes all have nominal coverage of 90 x 60 degrees. The 15" three way is interesting if for no other reason than it's a less common configuration than a 15" and horn. It uses a 6.5" mid-bass and a 1.25" compression driver as well as a 15" LF unit. Physically it's a bit bigger than the others, and appears to be designed for

long throw applications with 60 x 40 degree nominal coverage. The range also includes two subwoofers – a single 15" and a single 18". The specs of the whole family are really well laid out in a table for comparison on the EV



website. Peak SPL across the range (pink noise at 1m) is between 134 and 136dB, so they all match together nicely for output.

Having the luxury of finding the entire range at my disposal in the loading dock (with multiples of some units), I naturally gravitated toward building the biggest cohesive system possible with what I had. Two ETX-18SP subs with an ETX-35P (that's the three-way 15") sitting on top. I won't lie – getting it all into the studio required me to enlist some help. Thoughtfully enough the subs have nice high quality wheels on the back, so they were easy. The ETX-35P weighs 38.2kg, so unless you're feeling especially tough it's worth getting a hand to lift it. Physically it's a big box, but feels well balanced enough that using it on the pole-mount wouldn't be unstable.

EV has perhaps borrowed from Dynacord for some of the DSP on the ETX range – why wouldn't they? There's inbuilt delay, EQ, roll-offs and the aforementioned boundary compensation. The sub also has polarity inversion and a cardioid mode I was keen to try. Going on the literature, the cardioid thing is pretty simple – just point the



THE BACKLIT
MENU
IS EASY TO
NAVIGATE



way to avoid that with any speaker. I only point this out because otherwise the range looks very neat and professional. Nice finishes, nice grilles, nice hardware. It feels very much like classic EV product in that regard – good and solid. Warranty is 3 years for the record.

The user interface on the ETX range is dead simple – a screen and a rotary encoder / button. Everything is controlled from the rotary, save for input on the ETX-35P which is a pair of standard pots. You can feed line or mic level into the box, and both it and the subs have a digital output level control on the display home screen. The menu is all straightforward and required no reading of instructions to operate. There are a couple of different “modes” on the box – “music” applies a bit of smiley EQ, “live” is flat, and “speech” gears it toward exactly that. EV has long been big on speech quality, and ETX is no exception.

Running some content through the system I liked what I heard. Voicing on the ETX-35P is consistent with my expectations of the brand, but it feels a bit more sparkly up top. I think that's a bit of a current fashion in some

ways, but it worked for me. The subs seem well up to task too, with claimed frequency response of 37-150Hz (+/-3dB) seeming pretty believable. I noted some emphasis around the 50Hz region and a little dip closer to 40, but my suspicion is that this was a room mode thing. It would be unfair to judge it on this without first listening in a more appropriate environment (Maybe I should have just put the 10" on a stick and listened to that instead?).

Anyhow, the point is that the configuration I tested yielded very pleasing results indeed. There was bucketloads of level (I couldn't even get close to hitting limiters), and the pattern control on all the boxes seems pretty good (as much as I could determine in a small environment). The thing I'm stuck on is how to categorise the product. Is it MI or professional? Reality is that it has footing in each camp, and solid footing at that. It's packaged like MI gear, it's friendly to use, and its performance would likely please most pro users.

BRAND: ELECTRO-VOICE
MODELS AS TESTED: ETX-35P & 2x ETX-18SP
RRP: ETX-35P - \$2599.00 INC GST.
ETX-18SP - \$2599.00 INC GST.
PRODUCT INFO: WWW.ELECTROVOICE.COM
DISTRIBUTOR: WWW.BOSCHCOMMUNICATIONS.COM.AU