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ELECTRO-VOICE ZLX-15P LOUDSPEAKER

10/1/2013

The Electro-Voice ZLX-15P is part of a series of P.A. loudspeakers that can be configured for a variety of live-sound situations.

I'M ALL for big, crankin' P.A. systems—especially when I don't have to move them—but for local gigs, less is defi more. An ideal club system should sound great and be self-contained, simple to operate, and expandable for larg The Electro-Voice ZLX Series meets these requirements and then some by offering two models of powered louds with DSP (ZLX-12P and ZLX-15P) and two passive versions (ZLX-12 and ZLX-15).

For this review, Electro-Voice sent a pair of the ZLX-15Ps, each of which features a 15-inch woofer and a 1.5-inch driver mounted and time-aligned using EV's Split Baffle design. A built-in Class D amplifier in each delivers 1,000 peak power. The ZLX-15P produces a maximum SPL of 127dB; I got them up to around 115dB before common s self-preservation kicked in.

The ZLX-15P's front panel has a steel grille and an LED power indicator. Rear-panel inputs include two XLR/TRS jacks (each with gain control) and an 1/8-inch Aux input for use with an MP3 player. The aux input accepts a stere and sums the channels to mono. A small LCD screen illuminates when power is applied, and a single large knob the speaker's DSP functions and master volume. The unit's XLR output can feed the mixed inputs to another ZLX an EV ELX118P powered subwoofer for enhanced low end. Crossover frequency options include Off (no sub), 80 120Hz, or "ELX118P," making the addition of a sub painless.

A DSP Mode function engages different EQ curves for Music (pre-recorded), Live (voice and instrument), Speech Club (pre-recorded electronic music) applications, while the Location parameter compensates for proximity to bou offering choices for Pole, Bracket, and Monitor. Additional DSP adjustments include Bass, Treble, and LED on/off

Setting up the ZLX-15Ps was a breeze. The cabinets are easy to manage due to placement of the handles; I did n disk lifting them. For a singer-songwriter in a small bar, I used one ZLX-15P as a floor monitor and pole-mounted for the house. A vocal mic was plugged into Channel 1 of the floor monitor and an acoustic guitar (via DI) into Cha Output of the floor monitor fed the house speaker. The rear-panel LCD defaults to a two-channel input meter. If ga too high, the display shows "Clip." Once you've set the input gain, the master control determines volume.

Used with a Yamaha 01V96i to mix a small band, the ZLX-15Ps achieved SPLs between 105 and108 dB (C-weig while maintaining clarity and intelligibility. Kick drum and bass sounds were tight, which was somewhat surprising

cabinets flex at high SPLs. I set the front-panel LED to “Limiting,” in which it only blinks when limiting occurs. It wo been nice to have had the ELX118P subwoofers on hand for some extra whump in this situation, but the ZLX-15F well without them.

Electro-Voice has done an excellent job with the ZLX-15P. It sounds very good, is easy to use, and it can be the r a larger system. Small venues, DJs, and houses of worship with modest sound requirements will find this loudspe user friendly. And given the street price, it offers a lot of bang for the buck.

Steve La Cerra mixes front-of-house for Blue Öyster Cult and teaches audio at Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry campus.

SUMMARY

Strengths: Simple operation. High-quality sound. Easy system expansion.

Limitations: No phantom power on the microphone input. Limited EQ controls for monitor use.

$875 MSRP; $499 street
electrovoice.com/zlx

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