

Acoustic Technologies SFM09

Trevor Cronin blows the cobwebs out with this low-profile, high-output Australian made floor monitor.

Acoustic Technologies is an Australian-based pro audio manufacturer. Located in sunny Brisbane, the company is a very popular supplier of speaker systems at venues throughout Queensland. On many concert tours up in that part of the world I've used a range of the company's products. Acoustic Technologies produces high quality gear built to a professional standard, and capable of producing a very high SPL. A 15-year-old 'AT Viper' wedge that we own here at Sound Around has stood the test of time and still sounds good 'n' loud after all that time...

New to the product line is the SFM09 compact floor monitor. It's a low profile wedge, standing only 235mm off the stage (just above ankle height) with a curved front. This modern looking floor monitor design is similar to the Clair Brothers classic 12AM model and is now adopted by many as the defacto wedge design standard – no complaints here on that front.

The unit features two eight-inch drivers, one of which is a dual-concentric unit (with a one-inch high frequency driver mounted in the centre of the speaker cone). This type of setup is very popular for in-car audio and was made popular in pro audio by Tannoy.

Bass ports run along the front of the cabinet, which is seriously robust, constructed from 18mm Finnish birch plywood – no MDF in sight. A carry handle is formed in the woodwork below the port making it one of the most manoeuvrable, least back-breaking wedges on the market.

Externally the cabinet is coated in 'AcoustiCoate' a low-sheen, black, hard-wearing elastomer finish. The front of the unit is protected with a strong pressed steel grille with a foam liner to protect the drivers from dirt and moisture.

Internally, the drivers hail from the well-respected Italian manufacturer B&C. These are fastened to the cabinet with service-friendly allen head screws. Tucked away inside, at the back of the enclosure, is the unit's custom-built passive crossover which is made from over-spec'd components. Connections to the unit are via the industry standard Neutrik Speakon connectors. The unit has three input/output connector positions, one on either side and one on the front. This allows for various stage setups, including laying a bunch of the units side by side. In this configuration the SFM09 has the ability to provide a fairly *massive* onstage SPL.

Laying floor monitors side by side can lead to high frequency phase problems (if two horns are next to each other). In the case of the SFM09, this is easily rectified

by the user, by reconfiguring the side of the enclosure that the HF driver is positioned. Many floor monitors on the market require quite some tweaking of the EQ before they're safe to use at high SPL. The SFM09 unit sounds great with no setup time. I used a variety of dynamic and condenser microphones during the testing of the unit and was very happy with the results.

The low profile of the unit will make it very popular in applications where sight lines are very important such as television and high stages. For its size, this monitor delivers a massive output of 123dB SPL and can handle 850W program! A serious wedge and no mistake.

It's not often that you can 'accessorise' your floor monitors so I think you'll find this interesting. For \$70 Acoustic Technologies will sell you a fibreglass cover that slips easily on and off the SFM09. The beauty of this is you can paint the cover (or have Acoustic Technologies do that in its workshop) any colour you like to blend into the surroundings – a godsend for permanent installs or TV studio sets.

This is a high quality, loud, compact floor monitor. Thanks to its modern design and use of very high quality components, it's the equal of anything currently available in this sector of the market. I've no doubt that the SFM09 will spread Acoustic Technologies' fame even further afield, as it's a world-class product. I gather Norwest Productions have taken delivery of 16 of these babies, which isn't a bad endorsement. Hats off and respect to this hard working Australian manufacturer.



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• Acoustic Technologies
Phone: (07) 3376 4122
Web: www.atprofessional.com.au

Price

• \$1,995