

# The Numark Mixdeck Express:

Helping Disc Jockeys in the Modern Era Take  
the Easy Way Out

As reviewed by Hunter Most



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## Audience & Purpose

This review is targeted towards Disc Jockeys, or DJs, who are in the market for mobile professional audio equipment and are interested in the Numark Mixdeck Express (NME). The most common potential customer base for such products are DJs who are relatively new to the field and are looking to purchase professional equipment for either the first or second time. Potential readers will be familiar with basic technique and terminology commonly used in the Mobile Entertainment industry.

The purpose of this document is to give an unbiased technical description of the system features as well as both positive and negative opinions from more experienced professional DJs who have had experience using the product in the intended setting. This information will allow the readers to make a more informed decision about whether the equipment meets their specific needs. Because the readers are professionals, the most important factors in deciding whether or not to purchase the NME are versatility, usability, convenience, and reliability of the device as compared to the purchase price.

## Introduction

The Numark Mixdeck Express (NME) is a popular all-in-one professional audio system comprised of two decks in tandem with a 3-channel mixer. This document examines the features of the system as expressed by the manufacturer in conjunction with the personal experiences of four professional Disc Jockeys from one of the largest Mobile Entertainment markets based in the Greater Philadelphia area.

## Reviewers

### Hunter Most

Hunter has been in the Mobile Entertainment industry since 2007. He has worked with five of the largest companies in the market, and has personally performed at over 350 events for audiences ranging from 25 to 2,500 people. Hunter has mastered the set-up, breakdown, and use of over 100 pieces of industry equipment including over one dozen professional audio configurations. He currently serves as the Technical Manager for Pulse Entertainment, responsible for reviewing and training employees to use equipment, especially the NME.

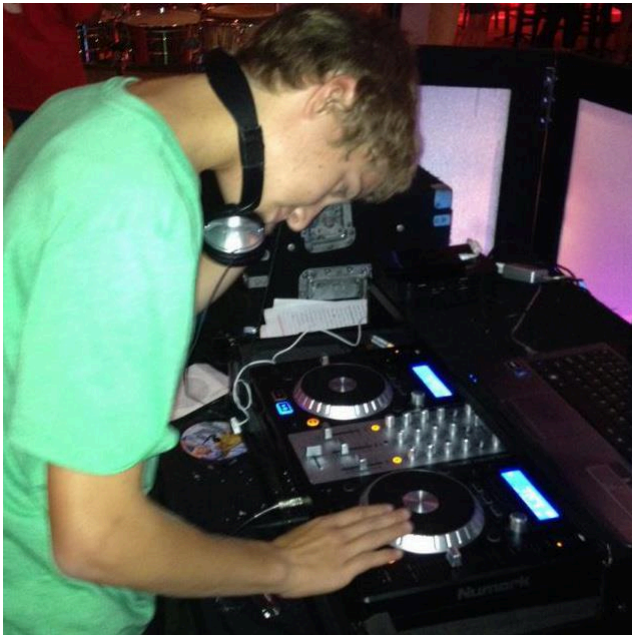


### Dylan Weisman

Dylan has also been in the industry since 2007 and has experience with more than one dozen professional audio configurations. As President of Flare Event Group, he has purchased over \$100,000 in entertainment equipment for all possible uses. Dylan has traveled the country teaching seminars about being a professional Disc Jockey at events such as the DJ Times Expo in Atlantic City, New Jersey and the Mobile Beat Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada.

## Cole Yeager

Cole has been in the industry since August 2008. His experience has been focused around four professional audio configurations including the NME, which he has used exclusively for over a year. He currently serves as the General Manager for Pulse Entertainment.



## Sam Cluff

Sam has been in the industry since 2010, and is a well known up-and-coming Disc Jockey. He has also mastered four professional audio configurations including the NME which he has used for over 1,500 hours.

## Best Uses

The NME is most commonly used for mobile entertainment applications as the primary audio source. The system is also used quite often as a permanent installation for in-house entertainment systems in bars, restaurants, and catering halls. These locations use the system to have music readily available for patrons while a professional DJ is not present.



Figure 1.  
Mobile Entertainment Application

## Software & Accessories

The NME is compatible with multiple DJ software platforms such as Virtual DJ, Serato, and Traktor. Specific set-up instructions vary for each platform. The most common accessories for the system include microphones, headphones, cases, and laptop stands. Microphones and headphones are common DJ accessories for all systems and offer a wide variety of combinations. Any reliable brand of microphone or headphone is a recommended accessory for the NME. Cases and laptop stands are more specific accessories in that they require the correct dimensions. Though multiple case companies offer the correct size case, Odyssey seems to be the most reliable retailer for cases and laptop stands.



Figure 2.  
NME Software  
Compatibility

- ❖ Very compatible with Virtual DJ
- ❖ No extra driver download required

- ❖ Not nearly as compatible with Serato DJ software
- ❖ Extra Drivers and accessories needed for more complex input structures

## Costs

The NME is available through most professional audio retailers. The Manufacture's recommended retail price of \$499.99 is the most common price. Retailers occasionally offer sales for the product, which can provide the customer with sizable savings. Accessories can range considerably in price depending on type and brand.

### Helpful Links:

[http://www.americanmusical.com/Item--i-NUM-MIXDECKEX?src=Y0802G00SRCHCAPN&gclid=CjwKEAiAj-KiBRC48YzhnLSg0D0SJAClOhK36k3nfroezNgXtq8Tu\\_JWdoIVsRtBkDKhvFThVB6lnRoCos3w\\_wcB](http://www.americanmusical.com/Item--i-NUM-MIXDECKEX?src=Y0802G00SRCHCAPN&gclid=CjwKEAiAj-KiBRC48YzhnLSg0D0SJAClOhK36k3nfroezNgXtq8Tu_JWdoIVsRtBkDKhvFThVB6lnRoCos3w_wcB)

[http://www.proaudiostar.com/numark-mixdeck-express.html?utm\\_source=Google\\_Shopping&gclid=CjwKEAiAj-KiBRC48YzhnLSg0D0SJAClOhK3LuVLnZCvwL5XQ0BrVYQM2vgT87mFVuegvH8qY7KlGRoCBcPw\\_wcB](http://www.proaudiostar.com/numark-mixdeck-express.html?utm_source=Google_Shopping&gclid=CjwKEAiAj-KiBRC48YzhnLSg0D0SJAClOhK3LuVLnZCvwL5XQ0BrVYQM2vgT87mFVuegvH8qY7KlGRoCBcPw_wcB)

[http://www.fullcompass.com/product/416804.html?utm\\_source=google\\_ps&utm\\_medium=shopping&utm\\_campaign=googleps&gclid=CjwKEAiAj-KiBRC48YzhnLSg0D0SJAClOhK3VW6IMkIFU913biWAXNQBs\\_23wi0P6Y7Fv9Xf6qpMBoCuKLw\\_wcB](http://www.fullcompass.com/product/416804.html?utm_source=google_ps&utm_medium=shopping&utm_campaign=googleps&gclid=CjwKEAiAj-KiBRC48YzhnLSg0D0SJAClOhK3VW6IMkIFU913biWAXNQBs_23wi0P6Y7Fv9Xf6qpMBoCuKLw_wcB)

❖ Price point makes for an excellent first or second system

❖ Classic case of, "You get what you pay for."



## Equipment Features

### -Turntable



Figure 3.  
Right  
Turntable  
Zoomed  
View

The turntable is the primary piece of the system. It functions as the complete controller of the track being played. The primary Play and Cue Buttons are located at the bottom of the turntable. The Eject Button is also in this location.

The oversized Jog Wheel offers the ability to either scratch or search the track. The Jog Wheel mode is controlled easily by the Scratch Button and Search Button located below the Wheel.

Above the Jog Wheel is the Mix, Loop, and Display controls. The NME provides a basic Loop control structure including In, Out, and Reloop Buttons. The Reverse, Break, and Tap buttons allow the user to properly beat-match the mix, and also add certain effects. The Display controls allow the user to flip between Play Modes, Time Settings, and Track Programs.

All Playback Speed controls are located on the outer side of the turntable. The large speed slider allows the user to be very precise with speed matching. The magnitude of the slider can be altered with the % Button located above it. Below the slider, the Pitch Bend buttons allow the user to alter the pitch to counteract distortion from speed changes.

The upper outside corner has more controls, which allows the user to change the source type for the track. The Source Button can be used to toggle between USB (port located directly above), CD, and Midi Controller. The Select Wheel helps the user search through track lists and load tracks onto the deck.

The LCD Screen located at the top of the turntable gives the user feedback on every functional aspect. It offers information about the chosen track such as Name, Source, Time, and Speed.

- ❖ Lack of traditional Hot Cues leaves much to be desired out of the Loop Structure
- ❖ Turntable lacks the ability to easily activate effects, making the user do so on the computer itself
- ❖ Eject Button flips deck display information while in Midi Source Mode

- ❖ The ability to scratch with a large Job Wheel allows the user to integrate scratching early in his career
- ❖ CD Capability offers an excellent backup for computer DJs

## -Mixer



Figure 4. Mixer Zoom View

The Mixer portion of the console is comprised of three channels and four lines. Each of the channels has a two-choice toggle to select the source. Once the source is selected the user may use the Gain, Treble, Mid, and Bass dials to adjust and equalize the sound. The bottom of each channel has the volume slider. The left and right channels allow the user to toggle between PC and CD sources, as well as LED dB monitors. The center channel allows the user to alternate between the Aux In Line and the Mic 2 line. The mixer also includes a Cue system with is controlled by each channel's Active Cue Button, the Cue Gain Dial, and the Cue Mix Slider. These controls work together to allow the user to isolate channels through the headphone output. The Crossfader located at the bottom of the mixer is used to fade between the outer channels.

- ❖ Too Few Lines
- ❖ Must choose between Mic 2 and Aux In

## -Front

The front face of the NME has a very simple layout, which includes headphone output jacks, Mic 1 input jack and controls, and CD trays. The NME gives the user the choice between a 1/8<sup>th</sup> and 1/4<sup>th</sup> inch jack for headphone connection. Gain, Treble, and Bass dials are available to adjust the sound of the Mic 1 line. The input jack for Mic 1 is 1/4<sup>th</sup> inch.

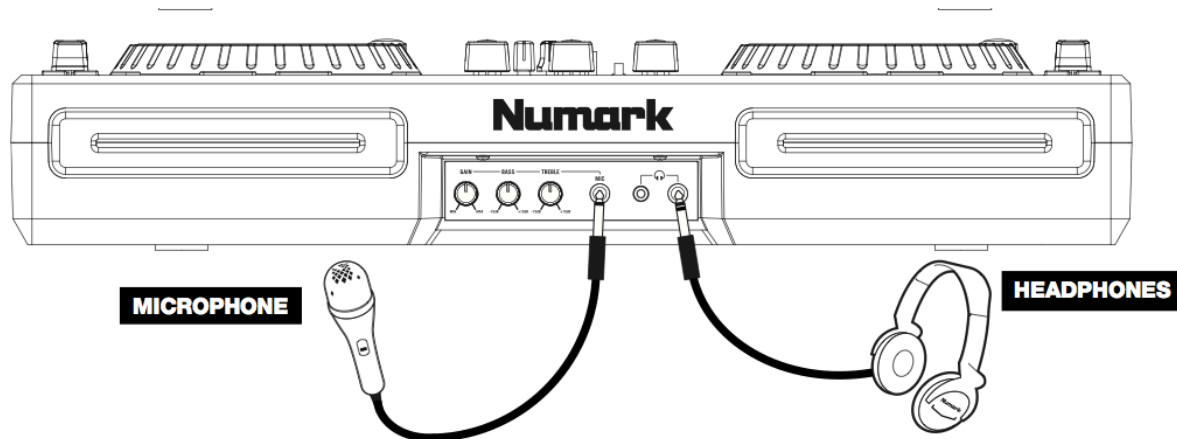


Figure 5. Front Face View

❖ Having the option for a 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch headphone jack is very convenient in case a 1/8<sup>th</sup> → 1/4<sup>th</sup> inch adapter is not available

❖ The controls for the Mic 1 line are limited, essentially forcing the user to use the Mic 2 line, and lose the Aux In opportunity

## -Back

The back face of the NME features input and output jacks for both signal and power. The NME offers the opportunity for up to three output channels. The primary output jacks are the left and right XLR jacks located on the left of the face. Two secondary RCA output jacks can be used for other master outputs. The Stereo/Mono Switch also controls these output channels. The NME has three signal input jacks on the back face. The RCA Aux In jacks and the 1/4<sup>th</sup> inch Mic 2 jacks are controlled by the Line/Phono Switch and feed into the center channel on the mixer. Finally, the face also holds the power input jack and Power Button.

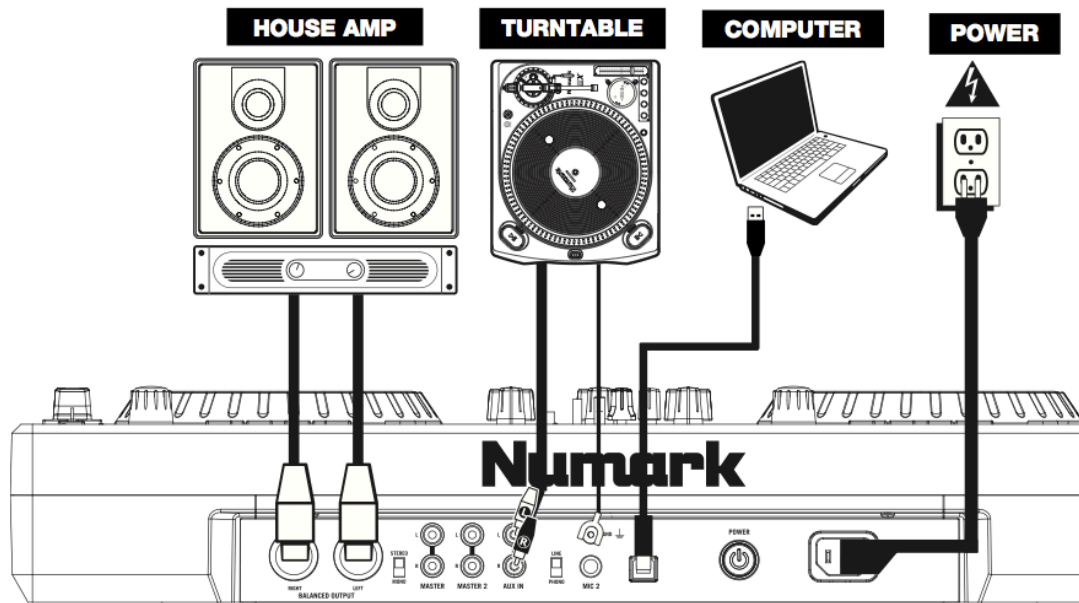


Figure 6.  
Back Face  
View

- ❖ No Subwoofer Output limits the possibility for expanded sound applications

- ❖ Multiple output jacks gives the user versatility
- ❖ Power Button location helps avoid accidental restart

## Other Feedback

- ❖ Versatility with inputs and outputs allows the user to correctly adapt to the environment
- ❖ Quick (20 Min) set-up makes system very convenient
- ❖ Comparable with Numark Predecessors
- ❖ Few points in signal chain allows for easy troubleshooting



Figure 7.  
Quick  
Set-up

- ❖ Plastic body casing makes the system look more like a toy and less professional
- ❖ Does not compare to higher quality All-In-One systems from other manufacturers like Pioneer
- ❖ Full system encased in one body makes repair more difficult. If one part is not functioning properly, the entire system is unusable

## Conclusion

The Numark Mixdeck Express is currently one of the largest and most controversial pieces of equipment in the Professional Audio industry. The system incorporates a number of features that give the user immense versatility. However, lacks other features that keep the user from achieving the best possible performance. The price point for the system is a great entrance into purchasing an equipment arsenal, but with it comes with multiple caveats. The NME seems to overall lack that professionalism and reliability that is necessary for high-end events. For lower-end entertainment contracts, however, it has everything needed to get the job done. Before purchasing the NME, one should weigh the pros and cons of this project as well as his other options.

**Ultimately the decision is yours!**

## References

"Cole Yeager NME Review." Online interview. 21 Oct. 2014.

"Dylan Weisman NME Review." Online interview. 21 Oct. 2014.

**(Figure 5 - Cropped)**

**(Figure 6 - Cropped)**

Guide, Quickstart. "Numark Mixdeck Express Quick Start-up Guide." 4.1 (n.d.): n. pag. Web. 15 Oct. 2014.

**(Figure 2 - Cropped)**

*Mixdeck Express Angle*. Digital image. *Numark.com*. Numark, n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2014.

**(Full Image on Title Page)**

**(Figure 3 - Cropped)**

**(Figure 4 - Cropped)**

*Mixdeck Express Large Top*. Digital image. *Numark.com*. Numark, n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2014.

**(Figure 7 - Cropped)**

*Mixdeck Express Set Up*. Digital image. *Ebay.com*. Numark, n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2014.

"Sam Cluff NME Review." Online interview. 21 Oct. 2014.