

For a safe staging environment

List of important questions to ask

This question list only covers the most important aspects to consider before buying or renting outdoor staging equipment.

- Type of stage, hydraulic, constructed or hybrid i.e. hydraulic flooring with a constructed roof?
- Name of manufacturer and stage model?
- Also the following details on the stage are critical:
 - Specify if custom-built
 - Specify if prototype (Note, a prototype is a stage that is a new design with custom built and off the shelf components not tested. Tests should include several set ups and tear downs under various and extreme weather conditions.)
 - Number of stages identical in activity?
 - How many times has the product been used?
- Ask for a stamped document from a professional engineer, attesting that the equipment conforms to all applicable standards (CNB, IBC, etc.).
- Ask for details of the following design criteria:
 - Wind load, must be rated to withstand at least 60 mph with wind wall and 90 mph without wind wall (note, a scrim over 50 mph acts like a rigid wall or a PVC Wind wall.). If the capacity is said to be 60 mph without wind wall, while specifying that they can be quickly removed in case of heavy wind, keep in mind that the very nature of wind is unpredictable and that they are very likely to come too quickly for the operation to be completed in time. Make sure that the company has an established procedure in the event of heavy winds.
 - Take note that Stageline DOESN'T endorse the ESTA standard which stipulates that with windwalls, wind resistance can be reduced under 60 mph, exception made for structures lower than 16 feet of height and/or smaller than 517 square feet of surface area.
 - Check if wind factor is rated at 1.5, as this is the standard minimum.
 - Rigging points: Should be 2 to 1. Example, a 1000lbs rigging point should be tested at 2000 lbs. If statement indicates UDS, Unified Distributed Load, ask for specifics and rated trussing or points with safety factors. It should be at least 1.5 as this is the CNB 2010 standard minimum and 1.6 for the American standard, IBC. This document must be stamped by an engineer.
 - If the equipment isn't self standing, make sure that it is being anchored to the ground with stabilizing cables and maintained with sufficient weights. Ask for a signed confirmation by a professional engineer.
 - If the structure has to be anchored, make sure that the appropriate amount of weight is being utilized and that the cables have the required capacity to maintain such weight. Ask for a proper and signed ground analysis that details the type of soil and the recommended anchoring if required.
 - Make sure that there is no step in the setup where the stage could be vulnerable to any kind of unpredicted situation. For example : Stabilizing cables being installed at the end of the setup.

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- If the stage's roof is made of canvas, beware of its shape to avoid any water accumulation that could overload it.
- Is the stage manufactured by workers that have the appropriate welding certifications? If they are not available, the stage might have been fabricated by unqualified manufacturers and workers.
 - For Canada, CSA W47.1 and CSA W47.2. (Take note that the certification is ruled by the CWB and that you can verify that your supplier has the proper certification by clicking on the following link : <http://eng.cwbgroup.org/Pages/default.aspx>)
 - For US, AWS D.1.1 and AWS D.1.2. If not provided, your stage may have been built by unqualified labor and manufacturer.
- Details on the company:
 - Number of years in activity as a manufacturer
 - Safety track record of company
 - Provide list of incidents if any
 - Provide complete lists of end users and events having used the same stage in the previous weeks. List must include e-mails and phone numbers to validate referrals.
- Responsibility of manufacturer:
 - Manufacturer must confirm that all components used in the staging products have been duly tested at their plant and that manufacturers assume the full responsibility of all components and sub-contractors.
 - Manufacturer must provide details on the safety device of the equipment and list the redundancy in the safety features
 - Provide details on the manufacturing procedures
 - Provide details on the quality program (Ideally ISO 9001 or equivalent)
 - Experience of chief technician with stage set up and tear down (including name and previous credentials.
 - Emergency procedures in case of difficult weather
- Type of terrain: ask what's underneath the designated surface.
 - Is it backfilling?
 - Is there an underground parking underneath?
 - Type of soil irrigation and water flow (important for sloping terrain)