



A photograph of a five-member singing group performing on stage. They are all wearing matching sequined pink tank tops and colorful, patterned pants. The pants feature a vibrant, abstract design with large flowers and geometric shapes in shades of yellow, blue, red, and black. They are standing behind microphones on stands, singing into them. The background shows stage lighting and equipment.

OUTFITTING YOUR GROUP WITH **MULTI-PURPOSE & FLEXIBLE STAGING**

by Rick Roe

Today, schools all over the country are finding it difficult to meet the demands placed on them to provide the best possible education as well as making sure that their students get the most out of their education. If you are a group that competes and travels, the parents and students see what the other groups have for risers or staging and look to you to supply the equivalent for their kids.

Everyone wants to have the best system that is safe, enhances their presence on stage, and allows them to perform at their best. This can be difficult for smaller schools that may not have the full backing of the community as the sports teams or have a very limited budget that the school can allocate to the performing arts. Words like multi-purpose, flexible, or modular become an important part of your vocabulary if you want to gain the support you need to outfit your group.

Top-Level Equipment for Competing at the Highest Level

Many teachers and directors are great negotiators and top-notch fund raisers on top of their many other gifts. These fortunate ones have unlimited access to extremely wealthy donors, intensely active parents or boosters organizations or have an altruistic local company or organization that supports their every need.

For the rest of the teachers and directors, they have to work to find the extra money to support the programs. For the schools that do not have the free flow of financial support,

it is imperative that there are creative ways to find the funding to get the kids the top-level equipment that allows them to compete at the highest level. Finding other departments that have close to your same needs and are willing to find a cooperative solution may be the best in-house option.

A few ways of joint collaboration with other departments or the administration may allow you to find additional applications for staging or risers that can help them justify the purchase. If the collaboration is possible, the best place to start is to call on the other departments that share your passion for

supporting the kids and the performing arts programs. The overall impact can be reduced if you can come to a consensus on what the bulk of the staging needed is, and what is really needed for both programs to share. Then you would only need to add the specialty items that you need specifically to fit your exact needs. The Band Director collaboration would yield either the individual drum risers, key board risers or a large raised percussion platform that can make his orchestra or band look spectacular for the winter and spring concerts. These platforms can then provide you with the nine stage panels to build your 3 x 3 Show Choir configuration.

The Graduation Stage

Another great area of concern that administrations are constantly trying to overcome is the graduation stage that is moved into the main gymnasium and only used once a year. To purchase this is costly for only one use a year, and rental options are at a level that they can buy a system after only a couple of years of renting. Ultimately, the long-term value to the district to buy the system makes the most sense.



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An advertisement for Dornink Show Choir Apparel. It features two women in purple dresses singing with their arms raised. The background is dark with some other people visible. The text "READY TO WEAR & CUSTOM DESIGN" is at the top, and the brand name "dornink" is in a large, stylized font at the bottom. Below that, it says "men & women show choir apparel" and provides a website and phone number.

If you look at the normal graduation stage set up, an average of 16 panels are set at either a flat height of twenty four or thirty two inches. Your graduation stage could be completed by utilizing the standard 4x4 Show Choir Riser System decks, and with the addition of a few supports of appropriate height, you can show a great return on the investment for the district and provide your students with a top-notch platform for performance.

As you move forward and look for ideas to help build the solid base that you require for your performance, think in terms of collaboration and multi-purpose to allow you to have the very best with the limited amount of impact on your budget.

Rick Roe has 23 years of StageRight sales experience serving all divisions through the years with the last 13 years as the StageRight School and Church Market Manager. Rick is based out of the home office in Clare, MI.



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