

MARSHALL COUNTY, IOWA

SHOWMOBILE® MOBILE STAGE CASE STUDY



SHOWMOBILE® MOBILE STAGE AND CANOPY



“Along with anchoring the annual BBQ Fest, the Showmobile is used at every single festival in Marshall County.”

*- Gordie Johnson
County Supervisor*

CHALLENGE

Find safe, user-friendly replacement for handmade wooden stage

WENGER SOLUTION

Showmobile® Mobile Stage and Canopy and Versalite® stage extensions



BENEFITS

- Enhanced programming options for county festivals and other events
- Double articulating roof canopy offers acoustical advantages
- Wireless remote control levels unit and deploys canopy and stage
- Additional stage platforms provide extra flexibility

HIGHLIGHTS

“When I was elected 10 years ago, we were using a wooden portable stage for events in front of our courthouse in Marshalltown,” said Gordie Johnson, County Supervisor. “It took a half-day to bolt it together and another half-day to take it down. It wasn’t safe or OSHA-compliant. I thought there must be a better option and we started looking around. In our evaluation process we looked at brochures from several companies. Wenger’s was the most impressive, and we liked the fact that the company was located nearby. Our people toured Wenger’s factory and brought pictures back. We didn’t visit any other company. When I saw the price for loaded Showmobile, I first wondered how we could afford it, especially after being accustomed to our “freebie” stage. We approached a leadership organization from our local college, made up of prominent people in town. Every year they select a service project and we challenged them to raise the money. They made significant progress and laid the groundwork, although they didn’t reach the goal.”

“Next I asked our local Rotary club, of which I’m a member. As part of Rotary’s 150th anniversary, local clubs were being issued a challenge to undertake service projects. They agreed to support the project and quickly raised the rest of the necessary funds – enough to purchase the Showmobile and fund an escrow account to cover ongoing maintenance. Once our Showmobile was delivered, we set it up in front of the local country club where the Rotary meets. Everyone was very impressed with the demonstration.”

“I personally visited all the small communities in our county, telling their city councils about the Showmobile’s availability for their local festivals and annual events. We asked for a \$500 donation – a little ‘skin in the game’ – to lock up a firm commitment for their particular dates. Since then, the usage of our Showmobile has snowballed to the point that it’s almost out of control. These communities pay \$400 to have the Showmobile delivered and set up, and watched over all day. The cost doesn’t slow people down – they don’t even blink an eye. We don’t want to make a profit, only break even. And the way we’re set up now, we’ll come close. Now everyone and their relatives want to rent it. There’s a waiting list. We’ve had inquiries from as far away as Mason City, Iowa. But we strictly serve Marshall County. Our population is 38,000, with 28,000 residents in the city of Marshalltown. The county covers 567 square miles.”

“Hardly a day goes by that we don’t talk about the Showmobile. It’s used for almost everything you can imagine. It’s unbelievable – and it’s not slowing down! The primary season lasts six months, and it’s out virtually every weekend – Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Sometimes even in the middle of the week. It goes to the county fair, it goes out to the communities in our county, including for every single festival in Marshall County. Our city orchestra plays on it four or five times each year, in front of the courthouse. We even used our Showmobile indoors recently when the governor of Iowa spoke at a local factory that was expanding. One of the factory’s roof beams was modified so the Showmobile could be fully opened inside the building. The Air Force Band played on it at our local veteran’s home. We’ll have a national BBQ contest here in a few weeks, and the Showmobile will have center stage.”

“We knew the Showmobile was a needed piece of equipment, but we didn’t realize just how needed it would be. We’ve been very pleased with it. The amount of people who want to use it has kind of caught us off guard through the years, but we’re handling it. It started out being used only a few times a summer, and now we’re just trying to keep it under control. There are people we’ve had to turn down, and they’ve been disappointed, but there are only so many weekends available.”

“We purchased stage extensions and skirting for the Showmobile – we’ve got everything except the audio system, because most groups have their own. We bought an extra trailer for storing/hauling extra parts. Our Showmobile is typically set up with the full stage extension. We had a custom tarp made that fits over the stage extension, to protect it from the weather if a storm comes up. We put graphics on it, including the Rotary emblem and “Marshall County Mobile Stage.” It’s very colorful. Our department of secondary roads delivers the unit, and we have one person supervise it the whole time. They open it up, put up the stage, and close it up at the end. They load up the extra trailer we use and away they go.”

PRODUCT LIST

Showmobile® Mobile Stage and Canopy, Versalite® Staging