



House of Blues/Dallas, TX

House of Blues Gets a Lift



The Dallas House of Blues, the latest incarnation of the house that Jake and Elwood Blues built, mixes a funky atmosphere with top name music talent and a lively Southern-inspired menu that includes voodoo shrimp and po' boys. Located in the old White Swan warehouse near the Woodall Rogers Freeway, the club serves up live music nightly with a seating capacity of 300 in the dining room and 1,625 in the main hall. With the help of Kelley Hulk® Hydraulic Dock Lifts, the acts that hit the stage at this famed venue can be up on time with a minimum of strain to the setup crew.

Though the place was originally a warehouse, the dock wasn't set up for the kind of traffic this radically different tenant has to handle. According to House of Blues facilities manager Joshua Kibbe, "we have just one door into the back from the dock and from there we have everything that is going to be played, served, worn or used in the club going across this dock."

That means a variety of vehicles pull up to the dock ranging from refrigerated trailers to UPS trucks to laundry vans. The House of Blues dock needed a versatile means to handle this variety of loads, and for this location two Kelley Hulk® Hydraulic Dock Lifts were the answer.

Laura Harrison of Corgan Architects, the firm that designed this major remodeling, hit a snag when it became apparent they had only a 24" dock height on the existing building. This area was not originally designed for a dock so a solution had to be put in place to deal with just about anything that was to be loaded/unloaded at the House of Blues.



Hulk Dock Lifts – the Roadies Choice

- **ADAPTABLE.** Enabled the House of Blues to renovate a dock area to accommodate rapid load handling.
- **POWERFUL.** The 8,000 capacity lift handles the variety of loads that come into the House of Blues
- **ERGONOMIC.** The lift raises/lowers easily to position loads and prevent backstrain.
- **SAFER.** A number of features on the Hulk prevent injuries during load movement.

HOUSE OF BLUES



Having worked with Kelley in the past, Harrison reached Director of Lift Products Doug Mcleod to offer up ideas for handling these loads. "The best approach in my mind," recalls Mcleod, "was to go with one of our Hulk Dock Lifts."

The area they had to work with called for a hydraulic lift with a 6' x 8'

platform with some additional features. Unlike a typical restaurant, the House of Blues hosts national musical acts that come to the club mounting their full stage show, carried into the facility in large cases containing instruments, amps, stage lighting and backdrops. To handle these loads Mcleod recommended the KDL68-8, a hydraulically activated scissor lift with an 8,000 lb. capacity to handle anything that pulls up to the House of Blues dock.

This is a heavy-duty industrial dock lift, made of high tensile steel tubing for maximum strength. For the House of Blues dock the two pit-mounted, hydraulic lifts keep traffic moving in and out of the club efficiently within a pretty tight space and tight schedule.

"If this was a typical theme restaurant efficiency wouldn't be that big of an issue," notes Kibbe. "But here we have a different band performing every night with a lot of equipment that has to move in and out quickly."

Names on the Dallas House of Blues roster of national acts include the Dave Matthews Band, Taylor Hicks, Bowling for Soup, the Deftones (equipment shown being moved into the club) and the groups that perform at their popular gospel brunch.

"That's quite a stream of equipment cases coming in and out on a daily basis. We need a reliable way for the band trucks to access our facility," adds Kibbe.

The Hulk Hydraulic Dock Lift design brings the dock to the trailer, can any truck

height, and can raise or lower right to where the operator wants it in under a minute using its two powerful hydraulic cylinders. The operator has full control over the dock lift motion with the pre-wired, NEMA-4X hand-held push-button controller.

This capability brings added safety to the House of Blues dock, over which much of their traffic – especially the heavy band equipment cases – are caster-mounted loads that are pushed into the facility manually. The lift reduces the ramp angle to the back of the trailer so roadies can easily control how fast the equipment cases are off-loaded, and prevents back strain while re-loading the truck when the show is over.

The lift has an upper limit switch to prevent the crew from raising the lift above the height of the loading dock. Due to the tight space on the dock, the power pack is wall mounted **(at right)**.

Safety features on the Hulk Hydraulic Lift include mandrel form tubing

handrails that are removable for flexibility and to compensate for a variety of loads, beveled toe guards, a maintenance safety strut, safety chains across the operating ends and a safety tread plate steel deck. Velocity fuses on the lift cylinders prevent the lift from free falling in the event of power loss.

In the entertainment business the motto is "the show must go on."

Thanks to the Hulk Hydraulic Dock Lifts at the Dallas House of Blues, it will.

