

CONTACT

Racelogic – www.driftbox.com
01280 823803

PRICE

Driftbox – £465
Antenna for improved signal – £25



RACELOGIC DRIFTBOX TEST

We test Racelogic's latest speed measuring device. It's apparently accurate and cheaper than its competitors. Too good to be true, or a bargain bit of kit? We test one to find out...

There are a fair few 'performance meters' on the market all claiming to be able to accurately time your car. They usually fall into two camps; expensive GPS meters, and cheaper accelerometers. In our experience the very expensive ones work very well, and the cheaper ones are usually a bit rubbish. So for under £500 which category would Racelogic's latest gadget, the Driftbox fall into? It claims to be a whole lot more than a regular performance meter so we strapped it to a variety of cars, over a variety of test conditions and our resident technical guru Stavros put it through its paces.



The Driftbox is screen mounted with one lead going to the fag lighter, and one to the roof mounted antenna

WHAT'S THE DRIFTBOX DO THEN?

Driftbox is a GPS based device from Racelogic. It has four main functions:

- (i) Performance Meter – For measuring straight line speed/acceleration
- (ii) Drift Analyser – For measuring drift angles and drift speeds
- (iii) Lap Timer – As the name suggests, for logging lap times
- (iv) Data Logger – All the above info can be downloaded and analysed

The Drift Analyser aspect is what we're most interested in, as it's a unique product, with no one offering anything similar. Racelogic also claim their equipment is highly accurate, something that cannot be said for the rest of the 'cheaper' performance meters on the market.

SO IT DOES 0-60s AND ALL THAT?
 Yup. Racelogic also sell the VBOX, which is a very accurate GPS performance meter, so it stands to reason that the Driftbox will employ the same kind of speed measuring technology. The Driftbox can do standing start times from zero to any speed right up to 200mph in 1mph increments, and the same again to test braking performance from up to 200mph down to zero. Not only that but you can do rolling start acceleration timing, in 1mph increments again, so you can do 30-70 times, 50-150 times, what ever you like.



WHY DO I NEED A DRIFTBOX?

If you're into drifting it's hard to gauge from inside the car how well you're doing. What feels like huge angle and speed is often almost nothing when viewed from the outside, so a meter to show you how much angle and speed you're really achieving is a brilliant tool for practising and perfecting your skills. If you're running a set drift course the Driftbox can divide the track into sectors and can give you your speeds and angles for each individual corner, and will even award you a score too! But if you've no interest in drifting, it could still be a useful tool to own due to it also being a pukka performance meter, and track day tool.

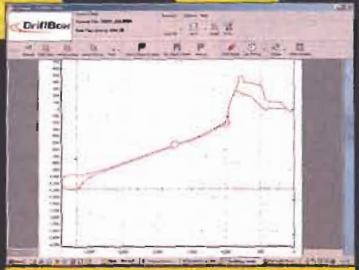
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER FEATURES?

The Driftbox also features a lap timing mode where you can time laps of absolutely anything you like, track or road. Because it's GPS based you set your start line, and if you're not doing a full circuit you can set an end point too, and the equipment will automatically time you between those two points. As well as that you can preset split

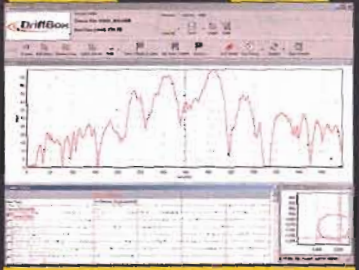
points so can see your times at, and between previously chosen parts of the course. The most useful aspect is that all of the Driftbox's features are automatically recorded by the data logging function, enabling you to download the data from the Driftbox to your PC and analyse your driving in incredible detail. The data can be transferred to a PC via a USB connector, or via the memory card that fits into the front of the unit.



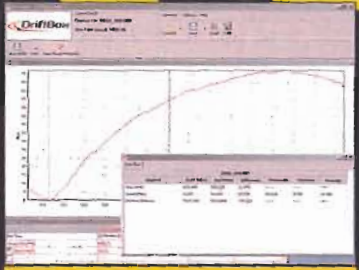
Angle & G-force displays to monitor your drifting ability (or lack of!)



Lap display graph enables you to analyse your track day performance



Speed/time graph shows how hard you accelerate and brake



Selecting portions of the speed/time graphs enable you to check 0-60s etc

BUT DOES IT WORK?

It's loaded with features, but if it's not accurate it's useless, so we put it to the test. Due to Stavros' drift shed being out of action, we employed the expert services of Phil Morrison in the Driftworks S14a to show us the drift mod by taking us for a mad sideways passenger ride at Silverstone! The Driftbox display updated with lightning speed so you won't miss a beat, and had no problem keeping up with even the unbelievable stuff Phil was doing. After his session he was keen to see how the Driftbox had fared. After looking at the downloaded info he was extremely impressed with the level of detail it provided, and believed that it would be a useful tool for him to own. Drifting aside, the data logging function would be useful for any track day regular to assist with perfecting lines, and to aid consistency. A great tool for a trackday fanatic wanting to improve their performance.

HOW ACCURATE IS IT?

The ultimate test of its accuracy is a test against some professional timing equipment, so that's exactly what we did! Enter the Datron MicroSat GPS, an expensive and mega accurate bit of kit, the best there is, and if the Driftbox can show times even close to the Datron stuff, it's a winner. We set up the Driftbox and Datron in a Skyline R34 and gave it some welly. Comparing the Driftbox to the Datron acceleration times it was accurate right down to 0.1 second increments the Driftbox shows in its inbuilt LCD screen. When we downloaded the data from the Driftbox onto the data logging software the results were just as interesting. The acceleration graphs for the Datron and Driftbox looked identical to the naked eye, and when particular details were checked we discovered that the Driftbox was very accurate; we checked a particular gear change time on a 0-60 run and it was identical, right down to .001 of a second! Other results varied slightly, but never more than 0.15 of a second, and human error is a factor when getting times off these graphs, so we wouldn't call it an inaccuracy as such. Bearing in mind Datron is the world leader in timing technology, and is one of the few pieces of timing equipment officially recognised by the Guinness Book of Records, and costs around ten times the price of the Driftbox, the almost identical times achieved is nothing short of remarkable.

SO DO WE LIKE IT THEN?

The simple answer is yes! At under 500 quid it's not going to break the bank, and whether you're into straight line performance, track days, or drifting, it's a perfect tool to analyse your performance. It's very accurate and the detail it shows is quite incredible. The data logging program does take a little time to get used to, and we wish the performance times shown on the LCD screen showed the times to two decimal places, but they're only minor niggles in what's one of the best performance products we've seen in a long time. We love it!



GPS antennas: Driftbox on the left, Datron on the right