

Disc Jockey News MIDWEST

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The Quest for a great dance

The chant starts on the right side of the dance floor, "Juniors! Juniors! Juniors!" which is joined by junior class members from all over the dance floor for a rousing chorus only a sporting event junkie would love. Then, from the middle of the dance floor, the chat of "Seniors! Seniors!" starts to take over as the two large group of dancers make their presence known.

This is Homecoming 2004 in Paynesville, Minnesota. Paynesville is having their first Home-



coming dance in over 5 years.

Homecoming dances after football games are a part of Americana. Yet, many schools are struggling to continue this tradition as extenuous factors cut into the dance turnout and many schools face the tough decision to continue to lose money on the dance or to pull the plug on the final event of Homecoming week.

Paynesville Senior High was one of the schools which chose to stop hosting Homecoming dances because of poor turnouts

in the late 90's.

It often becomes an economic decision. If only 50 students show up, even at \$5.00 per person they are not generating much funding to cover the event's expenses.

Paynesville looked at possible reasons for the poor turnout. Students suggested the dance be moved to EARLIER in the week, not over the weekend. This would allow those with part time jobs, those involved with weekend tournaments or those with weekend family obligations to still attend the dance.

So, Thursday night after Coronation, the students moved right from the auditorium to the dance floor.

"I love it! More people come to dances on a week night," explained Paynesville Senior Ashley. "Everyone was here because they could come to the dance and not have to work or anything else."

Paynesville's new model for mid week dances may become a trend as more schools try new things to reach the students effectively.

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Getting Into The Groove...The Right Way

By Dude Walker

Have you ever heard, "You made HOW much from this show? Wow, you must be RICH making that much! I wanna be a dj too!"

This statement has been uttered for years in shows performed across the country. It has been uttered by the young (high school event) the seasoned (at a wedding or in a night club). Many look at the disc jockey industry as a quick way to make extra money to pay the bills. Yet, things have gotten tighter and tighter for the disc jockey industry over the past few years and many who have been successful in the past now are finding it an up hill battle to stay in business. The question is, why?"

As of fall 2004, there were 17,414 high schools operating in the United States. Every year each high school, on average, produces one new potential disc jockey. That's 17,414 new competitors each year. These new disc jockeys enter an uncertain and saturated disc jockey market making it more difficult for these new disc jockeys to survive. If you are among the luckiest to survive their first year as a mobile disc jockey company, by June 1st next year you will have thousands of established disc jockeys still in operation ahead of you and 17,414 new competitors working for the same bookings you seek.

Most prospective disc jockeys enter the arena with the idea that they know music "better than the last guy we had at the dance" and these disc jockeys believe that with a computer full of songs, a decent CD collection, and some PA gear they'll be able to carve their niche in the industry. The unfortunate reality is most

of these new disc jockey companies don't last long enough to have a listing in the next phone book.

Most people love the thought of owning their own company rather than establishing a solid company and they forget the part about building a profitable business. The "homework" of this industry is continual research, sales, marketing and bookkeeping. That is far from the glamour of the cool sound system and the wild lights while being the life of the party. The entertainment portion is a very small part of running a successful disc jockey company. The fun and glitz might be the motivation in why you get hired, but how you invest in growing yourself business-wise is the key to your success.

The Stark Reality of Numbers!

Currently (2004) there are approximately 60,000 mobile disc jockeys in the United States. At the current rate of expansion by 2010 there could be close to 100,000 mobile disc jockeys in the United States. How much business is there and will there be enough to go around?

The two major types of dances most disc jockeys perform are weddings and high schools. In 2003, there were approximately 2,300,000 weddings in the United States. Approximately half (1,150,000) of those weddings did not have a wedding dance. There are 17,414 high schools in the United States. On average each high school will have approximately 3 dances during a school year. (52,242)

1,150,000 wedding dances + 52,242 school dances = 1,202,242 dances. If each of the

60,000 disc jockeys in the United States has an equal share in these dances, each disc jockey will net about 20 dances annually. In 2010 the average number of dances could drop to as little as 12 dances annually.

Keep in mind that the national poverty level in 2003 was \$9,573 and most established mobile disc jockey businesses have overhead expenses which can be 50-90% of total revenue collected. Even if everything is paid for, running your disc jockey business as a real business means you have expenses involved with anything you do. Hobbyist view disc jockey work as "easy money" rather than a true profitable business. These individuals are simply proving how little is known about running a business and the mobile disc jockey industry in general.

20 dances x \$1,000/dance = \$20,000 - 50% expenses = \$10,000
USA 2003 Poverty Level \$9,573 a year

20 dances x \$900/dance = \$18,000 - 50% expenses = \$9,000

20 dances x \$700/dance = \$14,000 - 50% expenses = \$7,000

20 dances x \$500/dance = \$10,000 - 50% expenses = \$5,000

20 dances x \$300/dance = \$6,000 - 50% expenses = \$3,000

How many disc jockey companies out there can average \$900 per show? Many potential customers feel that \$350 (including mileage) for mobile disc jockey entertainment is fair compensation. A mobile disc jockey would need to do 55 dances (many of these may be high school dances which have the highest production costs) to make \$52 more than the 2003 poverty level guidelines.

It is all about knowing your expenses. Each show costs money to produce. You live, you

eat, you wear out your pants. Each show has expenses and to not know what it costs to do business or to choose to ignore the fact that it costs you money to do business is a horrible dis-service to yourself and your company.

The mobile disc jockey industry has hit a proverbial wall. Slashing prices and offering large "book it today" discounts to get more events doesn't net the same results as 10-20 years ago. Disc jockeys that continue this practice without the knowledge of actual expenses are closer to bankruptcy than they realize.

Today, the mobile disc jockey industry has changed. The rough pioneer disc jockeys that have paved the way for the next generation have created the necessity for savvy business sense and self aware individuals. Tomorrow's mobile disc jockey will most likely need a degree in Business and Economics to compete in the marketplace.

The best advice any experienced disc jockey could offer is the suggestion of working for an established company for 2-3 years. Working for an established company gives the opportunity to learn and observe how a mobile disc jockey company operates. Newer disc jockeys will have the chance to observe where the successes are made and the pitfalls to avoid. Many may discover during their training that they don't like the unglamorous grunt work of mobile entertainment. Discovering this fact before investing thousands of dollars into music, gear and advertising may prevent several costly mistakes other disc jockey hopefuls have made.

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Who do you want to be when you grow up?

By Harvey Mackay

I've always been fascinated by the Japanese carp, otherwise known as the koi. It's a fish with seemingly unlimited growth potential. If you put the koi in a small fish bowl, it will only grow to be two or three inches long. In a larger tank or a small pond, it will reach six to ten inches. A bigger pond, and it gets to be a foot and a half. But if the koi is placed in a large lake, where it can really stretch out, it can grow up to three feet long. The size of the fish is proportional to the size of its home.

Well, it works that way with people too. We grow according to the size of our world. Not physically, of course, but mentally. You too can be a mental giant!

They say you learn something new every day. I would take that statement one step further and say that you need to learn something new every day.

Waiting for someone to teach you a lesson, (translation: the hard way), is a poor way to get an education. You have to make the effort to learn and grow so that you are worth more to your employer, coworkers, friends and family. Your potential is unlimited.

The beautiful part is that you can grow as much as you want. Your mind

has plenty of room to hold information. In fact, I recently read that we typically use only 10 percent of our brains. Would you be satisfied to get that little service out of any other part of your body?

My guess is that most folks fall into some comfortable habits and are content with the status quo. When anything has been done the same way over a long period of time, sometimes it's a good sign it's been done the wrong way. Now don't go changing things just for the sake of change. Try something new because the result could be better.

Is it up to your supervisor to prepare you for a promotion? Maybe a little, but the real responsibility belongs much closer to home. You have to let your boss know that you're always ready for a new challenge and will do whatever it takes to prepare. You want to be qualified before the next job opens up, not disappointed after. You want to be interesting at the office and after hours. Your coworkers and friends can only hear the same stories so many times.

I'm a big proponent of lifelong learning. You don't go to school once for a lifetime; you are in school all of your life. That's why they call gradu-

ation "commencement" -- it's just the beginning.

There are growth opportunities everywhere for both work and leisure. Take a class. Get a library card -- and use it. Learn to play a musical instrument. Study a foreign language. Visit an art museum. Sign up with a Toastmasters group. Drive home a different way. Taste a new food. Surf the net on a topic you've wanted to know more about. Coach a team. Read a different section of the newspaper. Volunteer for a job that nobody else wants. Cut your apple in half horizontally instead of vertically and look for the star in the middle.

Grow. Stretch. Transform yourself. A simple bar of iron is worth about \$5. Made into horseshoes, the value rises to about \$50. Transform it into needles, and now you're talking \$500. But if you take that bar of iron and make it into springs for a Swiss watch, it could be worth a half million bucks. You started with the same raw material; the value grew as the material was formed and developed. It's the same with people.

My friend Zig Ziglar challenges his audiences: "Go as far as you can see and when you get there, you will always

be able to see farther." Christopher Columbus took his advice and didn't even know it!

We live in the information age, the space age, the dawn of the new millennium. Technology has given us access to facts and figures and people and places at the touch of a button. We have every opportunity to learn and grow at any hour of the day. Today is the right time to start expanding your mind.

Mackay's Moral:
The largest room in the world is the room for improvement.

Reprinted with permission from nationally syndicated columnist Harvey Mackay, author of the New York Times #1 best-seller "Swim With The Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive," and the new book "We Got Fired!...And It's the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Us."



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Starting From Scratch

By Jeff Richards

Starting From Scratch is a monthly article that will help those who are just starting out in the DJ business. Each article will cover what it takes to operate a successful mobile disc jockey service. Start-up information for small businesses is available free of charge from the Small Business Administration at <http://www.sba.gov/mn>. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development offers information and assistance at http://www.deed.state.mn.us.bizdev.smallbus_assist.htm.

Today's subject is choosing a name for your business, and what you will need to do with that name to get it established.

It may sound simple, but over the years I've learned the importance of choosing the right name. Your business name can go several different ways. Some people like to use their own name in the title, such as "Bob's DJ Service," while others use an assumed name, "Party Time Productions." Which ever direction you may go is up to you.

Whatever name you choose, your business name should do several things for you. 1) It has to tell people what you do. Are you a DJ service, lawn maintenance guy or music store. 2) It has to grab people's attention. A dull name

won't attract potential clients to your name in a phone book or web listing. 3) It has to be memorable. What good is a name if people don't remember it? 4) It has to be clear and simple. A name that is too long, complicated or has made up words can confuse people.

These guidelines are very important when it comes to an internet listing. Start by making a list of possible names you would like to use, five to ten names should do. Narrow it down to three by showing these names to friends and family and have them select the best three.

Now take those three and do a little research to make sure that those names are not already being used, and be sure to look at business names other than just DJ services. "Bob's Music Central" could be many things, including a DJ service or a music store. Start with your local phone book or internet yellow pages.

When you have the top two or three names that you like, you will need to research the internet to see if your name has already been taken for a web site domain. This is very important to the success of your business. You might not need to have a web site at this point in time but I will guarantee that with in one year you will want and need to have a web site

to advertise your business.

When you find the one name that isn't taken by an established business or as a web site domain, grab it right away. Pay the money necessary to own the domain name. Normally this is around \$150.00 to \$200.00 a year to own the name. Make sure that you in fact own the name and not the organization or web master that established it for you. This can hurt you later in life if you are not the sole owner of the name. There are some unethical company's out there that will actually own your name and let you use it. Then they will raise the monthly or yearly price or sell it outright to another consumer. I will get into more details about web sites in a future article when your ready to set one up.

Next you need to list your company name with the state you live in. Some states require a license to be purchased, some just need some forms filled out and sent back. You need to do this as quickly as possible so that the state will recognize you as the owner of the business name. Hundreds of new business start every year in every state, so if you think your name is a good one, chances are someone else may think the same.

Now that you have your business name

listed with the state and the world wide web, you may want to go national.

You can also register your name nationally so that no one in America can use your name without your consent. A business law firm can make this happen, but it could be expensive. This will cost you more money but it may be important enough to you to take this step.

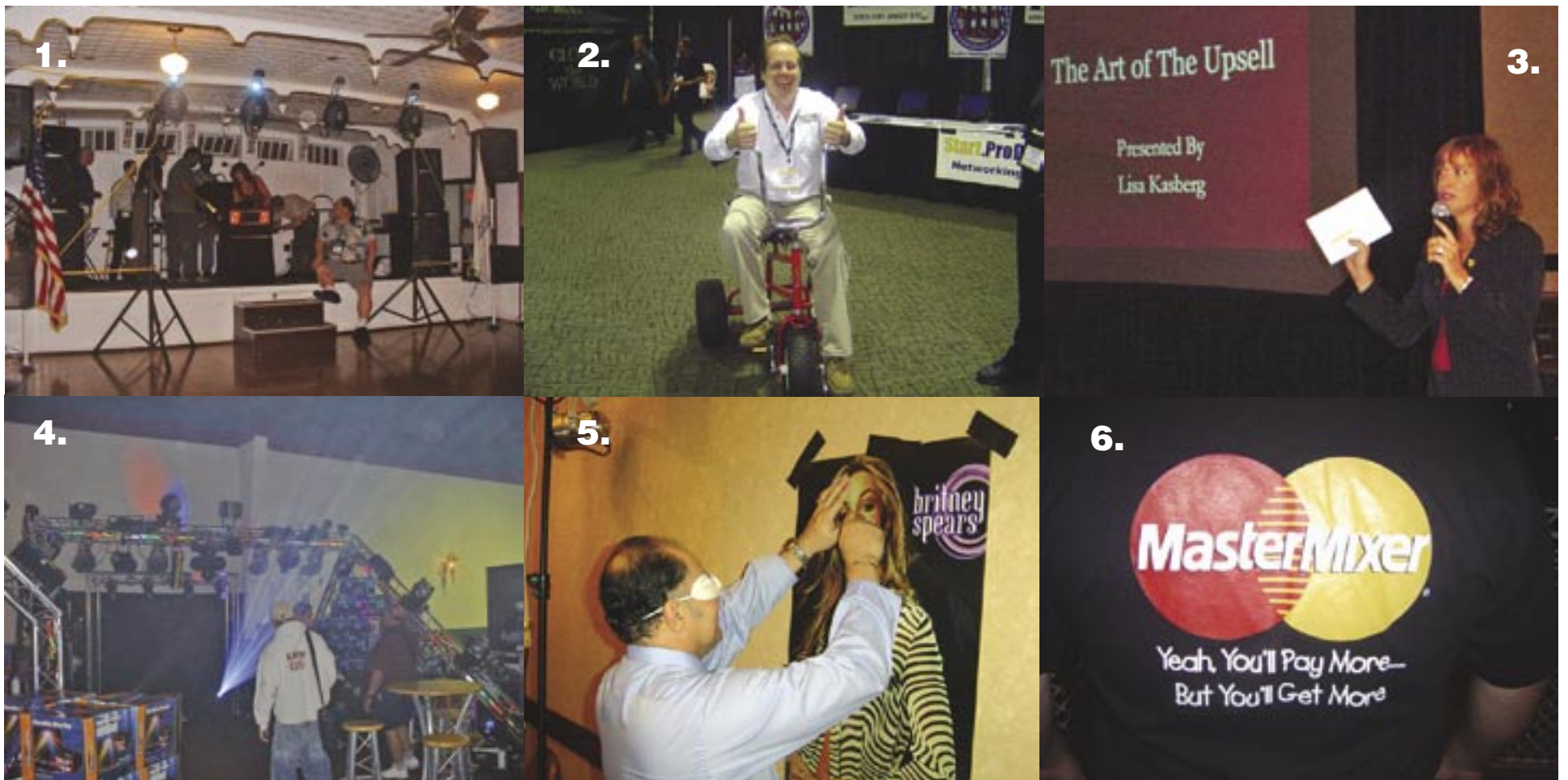
When you decide on that perfect name, remember that you will use this name for twenty years or more so make sure it is the name you want to use. Once you have yourself established with one name it can be very challenging to change names, so expect to use this name for a very long time.

You may now want to get a graphic artist involved to design the perfect logo of your name for you to use on your business cards, pamphlets, web site, vehicle graphics, phone book ad listings and anything else that you would want your name to show up on. I will talk more about this in a later article about advertising.

Until next time, keep on rockin'!

Jeff Richards: Owner/Operator of Party Time Productions. Comments and questions can be directed to Jeff at jeffrichardsptp@yahoo.com.

Mid America Convention: Louisville



1. The Mid America Convention features a party on a riverboat. Pictured are members of the Kentucky ADJA setting up for the show. 2. Prodj.com's Ryan Burger demonstrated the adult trikes during the show. 3. Lisa Kasberg was one of the featured speakers. 4. The exhibit hall had eye candy for the djs. 5. DJ Games were demonstrated during one of the seminars. 6. Don't forget the unique tee shirts.

The Q Corner, Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

Casting the Net

Two millennia ago, Jesus Christ told his early followers, "I will make you fishers of men." He was confident he could teach his disciples to "recruit" successfully and today, two thousand years later, about a third of the world's population counts themselves as Christian. That's approximately two billion folks. I'd say they did a decent job!

Our goal's are a lot easier to attain. After all, as many leads as we get, I doubt I could book two billion DJs!

Most of us would be happy finding one or two quality people from any recruitment push. When I start to "cast out the net," which I do twice a year, I set my goals at finding five good music mixers of which one or two would make potential emcees. I'll be discussing the advantages of using a two person package and how it is a win-win for any multi-op in a future article, but for now, suffice to say that I recruit with an entry level position in mind which we call "music mixer." Our criteria is not that demanding for this position and the training is much easier than the intensive work that goes into emcee training, so we have much more success bringing in newbies.

Which brings us to that oft asked question: Where do you look? Or As I put it, Where do you cast your net?

To return to that "dream list" we drew up last month, we are looking for young people. I start with placing ads in a few local high school

papers and also two local college papers. These ads are very inexpensive (in fact one school gives us free ad space since we do their school dances at a reasonable price.) We get a half page ad for less than I pay for a classified ad in the local paper and with that size ad, we can jazz up our look. We are trying to attract the young hip person so we throw in pictures of speakers and lighting and sometimes a packed dance floor. I want to attract the kid who is going to clubs on the weekend, not the math club on Wednesday afternoon.

To augment the school ads we also place bathroom ads. These are ads we've been doing with great success for the last ten years. There are a number of clubs in our area that sell ad space over the urinals in the Men's Room. And as any guy will tell you, when you are standing in a crowded men's room doing your thing, you pretty much keep your attention focused straight ahead of you. So viola! There we are. A nice inviting ad that says, "Stop being just another guy at the party. Start being the center of attention!" As the Heineken ads say: "Brilliant!" Think about it, people that go out to clubs are night people. They like to dance and have a good time. And they are probably more into music than your average person. So we've already narrowed the field by filtering out all the guys that DON'T go to clubs. And now, we've got their undivided attention for a minute or two. The only downside is you hope they haven't had too many of those Heineken's

and can remember your phone number in the morning.

No recruitment push would be complete without the dreaded classified ad. I say dreaded because anyone who's ever put a help wanted ad in a newspaper knows it's like trying to take a sip of water from a fire hose. Your phones will ring off the hook and no matter what qualities you claim to be looking for in your ad, you will get calls from the absolute dregs of society. Our ad says we want "outgoing personalities" yet we get calls from the walking dead. We list "Energy and Enthusiasm a must!" yet we get calls from people with no pulse. We also claim that a "driver's license is needed" yet we get calls from 14-year olds. Suffice to say that whatever "filters" you put in your ads will be ignored by the masses. So it falls to you to chat with these people and weed out who you want to invite in and who you don't. I can normally spend about forty-five seconds on the phone with someone before I know if they have even the barest of potential.

So why bother you ask? Because hidden among all that rabble are some sparkling gems. When I look over my roster, I can pick out the emcees that I found by placing ads and bringing total strangers into my office and offering them a job. In fact one of my key people, Dominic Sestito, who is not only a top emcee performing at 100 events a year for Elite but also one of two sales people who work for me in my office and books hundreds

of events a year, he came from a simple 4 line classified ad that I placed 8 years ago. I probably answered forty calls that day and blew twenty of them off in the first minute. But I heard something in Dominic's voice, a spark of enthusiasm that screamed "potential," and I invited him in. And the rest, as they say, is history.

If you've never done a recruitment push of any sort, start small. Decide how many people you'd like to bring in, how many people you'd eventually like to hire, and if it's a small number, start with one or two ads. No need to cast that net too wide. But go for it and you'll be surprised how it can motivate you. Finding a new recruit with potential to be an emcee always invigorates me and motivates me to get that person trained and started as soon as possible. I think it'll have the same effect on you.



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Upcoming Events • Upcoming Events • Upcoming Events**Red River MAPDJ Meeting**First Tuesday of Month
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<http://cidja.com>**Kansas City ADJA Meeting**Second Tuesday of Month
<http://www.kcadja.org>**Chicago AJDA Meeting**Second Tuesday of Month
<http://www.chicagoadja.com>**St. Cloud MAPDJ Meeting**Third Monday of even Month
<http://www.mapdj.org>**Twin Cities MAPDJ Meeting**Third Tuesday of Even Month
<http://www.mapdj.org>**M.A.P.D.J. Annual Meeting**

November 7

<http://www.mapdj.org>**Midwest Disc Jockey Convention**

November 7,8,9

<http://www.mapdj.org>**WeDJ.Com Cruise**

January 9, 10, 11, 12

<http://www.wedjcruise.com>**Mobile Beat DJ Convention**

February 22,23,24

<http://www.mobilebeat.com>**Building For The Future Conference**

May 2-4, 2005

<http://www.djkj.com>**Midwest Disc Jockey Convention**

November 6-8, 2005

<http://www.midwestdjconvention.com>Have an upcoming event or meeting? Email the information to us at djnews@meltel.net

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K&D Systems Inc. unveils the biggest step forward for DJs since the turntable

Handicap accessibility is now a reality; employers have ability to become equal opportunity.

K&D Systems Inc. is proud to announce that we have made a breakthrough that makes the DR.DJ® 1200 System compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We will be unveiling the system and debuting the worlds first disabled professional disc jockey's public appearance* at the upcoming MAPDJ convention on November 8, 2004 at the Bloomington Holiday Inn Select. We will demonstrate proficient operation at basic skill level, and extended ability into advanced functions. In addition we will show the ways the DR.DJ® system enables its' user. There will be a special private preview Thursday 10/28/2004 5:00PM-6:00PM, please inquire about an invitation to this affair. Our goal is to educate the public, specifically the disc jockey and handicapped communities.

The DR.DJ® 1200 model (Digital Revolution Disc Jockey®) is the ultimate one, two or three-piece, fully integrated system designed for simplistic set-up, and stable efficient operation. The trademarked system is a computer-integrated audio, video, and lighting performance machine.

The DR. DR.DJ® 1200 system, which

took, over five years to design and build is broken into three manageable pieces: the amplification, processing, and control sections. The three components can be then used separately with additional equipment, or join to form a bigger more powerful machine.

K&D Systems Inc. has identified the second goal for the 1200 model is to make the system easy to use for the beginner without offending the experienced professional. The DR.DJ® 1200 model has a familiar feel and an intuitive ergonomic design. The control section features a K&D Systems Inc. patent pending rack-mount touch-screen monitor, and a full powered rack mount computer embedded into its wing-top design. You must see this system to fully believe it.

DR.DJ® is produced by K&D Systems Inc., and is part of the company's new and original line of Digital Integrated Systems (D.I.S.) and accessories. K&D Systems Inc. is a joint venture of Chaz Charles Enterprises Ltd. and D.M.R. The rack-mount monitor design was developed by K&D Systems Inc. Custom design services are available. The monitor, computer system, case and components are also available for sale separately. Please see our web page at <http://www.DRDJ.net> for photos and product information.

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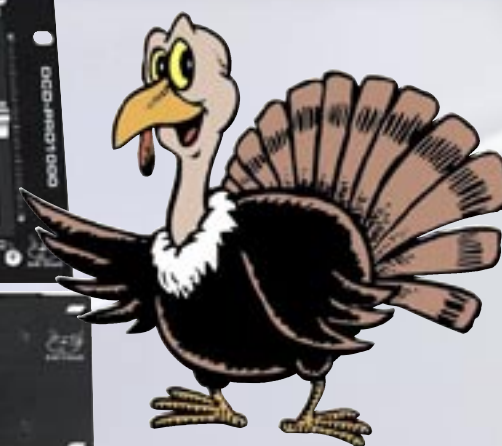
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Building Your Music Library

Mannix Clark, Music Mix Entertainment

The music we play at our events is one of the many ways that we keep the dance floor full. Our clients expect that we will stay on top of what's popular, much like we expect that our tax advisor keeps up to date about the new tax laws and how they might benefit us. They put their confidence in us to help make their event successful. In 2004 there are many ways to build a music library, this article will focus on an inexpensive and effective way to build and maintain a music library.

Do your homework. One of the reasons that a person hires a professional DJ is because of the wide variety of music we have or should have in our music library. In a professional DJ's arsenal, there should be music from all genres. Each year Mobile Beat magazine does a Top 200 list, this is a great list to use as a guide to build and maintain your music library. There are also several books that talk about popular songs over the past 60 years. Many of these books are inspired by the Billboard top 200 chart and can be found at your local book store or library in the music section. Look at your target audience and start building your library with them in mind. If your initial plan is to do weddings, you will need a variety of music with a high concentration on the all time favorites that never seem to go away. If you are doing school dances or the club scene you might want to start with more recent music.

If you are not able to buy an entire music library at one time, a used CD store is a great way to begin collecting CD's for your music library. After you complete your homework this is a great outlet for building and maintaining a music library. There have been several good music compilation CD's over the years and many of them can be found at used CD stores. Once you frequent the stores, you will get to know the staff and they will keep an eye out for those hard to find CD's that you need for your music library. You will also find that when you build a library, you will end up getting the same song on several CD's. A used CD store will provide you an opportunity to trade them in to get other

CD's for your library.

One DJ once said that a good DJ should have at least 95% of the music requested at an event and that some of the other 5% are things you really wouldn't play anyway. There will be a time that a person at one of your events will ask you for a song that you do not have, you should keep a list of those songs and do some evaluation as to whether or not you want to add those songs to your music library.

To stay on top of current music, I would recommend that you subscribe to one of the many DJ only compact disc series. Your selection of which series to choose depends on the types of events that you do. If you do lot of club/dance type events, you might want to choose some of the remix series. For traditional events, there is 3 series that I recommend, Promo Only, TM Century Prime Cuts and ERG – Nu Traxx. Promo Only has a variety of different series including the Mainstream radio series that provides you with the clean versions of popular top 40 songs each month. TM Century-Prime Cuts is another company that provides current music. This is a weekly series and each disc has popular songs in Adult Contemporary, Top 40, Urban, Country, Rock, Dance and Christian Contemporary. Entertainment Resources Group sponsors the other DJ only collection with its Nu Traxx series. The current Nu Traxx series is produced two times a month.

The above companies along with several others produce several other compilations of different types of music from dance remixes to jazz. I would encourage you to check out their web sites to get more information.

This month we highlighted a few ways to build your music library. In the next few issues we will focus on ways to use traditional television, radio and retail magazines and web sites to help shape your library and provide a good musical background for you to use as you work with your clients as well as look at various ways, techniques, etc. to keep track of your music library.

Ask The Tech

By Phil Frank

"How are speaker wires measured? What size of wire is good for different applications? What is the difference between shielded and non shielded."

To answer your first question, I'll assume you are referring to the diameter of the speaker wire, and not the length. This diameter is the gauge of the wire. The most common sizes for pro audio speaker cables are 16 gauge (.0508"), 14 gauge (.0641"), and 12 gauge (.0808"). As you have probably noticed, as the gauge number decreases, the diameter of the wire increases.

When choosing your speaker wire gauge, the most important factor is how much power you intend on pushing down the line. For pro audio applications, you will want to use at least a 16 gauge wire, but most likely a 14 or 12 gauge will be appropriate. If you are using 200 watts or less, 16 gauge wire can be used. For applications of 500 watts or less, 14 gauge wire will work fine. For anything over 500 watts, I would recommend a 12 gauge wire.

As for the difference between shielded and non shielded wire, non shielded is the most commonly used and works in most mobile applications. Shielded wire, which has a foil wrap between the two conductors and the outer jacket, is used primarily in installs where it is necessary to run speaker wire next to lines that are carrying AC power. The shielding keeps the speaker wire from

developing a 60 cycle hum that is generated by the AC line.

"What type of flood lights and bulbs are the best for my light tree?"

When dealing with PAR 38 cans that have a standard screw-in base, my experience has been that you are best to just get a standard flood bulb for a couple of reasons.

First of all, availability. When your bulb decides to go, it doesn't give you a warning, it just goes out. It's nice to know that, if necessary, you can go to your local hardware store or WalMart and get the bulbs you need when you need them.

Secondly, cost is a factor. Flood light bulbs from your local hardware store are going to cost you the same or less than what you get from a specialty lighting store.

The only reason that I can think of where you might want to get PAR 38 bulbs from a stage lighting retailer is if you needed a bulb with a medium or narrow beam. This is something that your local hardware store isn't going to have.

I would recommend staying away from DYS and reflector systems as well. The bulbs are more expensive, have shorter operating life, and have little practical application in a mobile DJ rig.

Submit your audio or technical question to "Ask The Tech" at tech@discjockeynews.com

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Self Improvement, Part 2

By Dr. John C. Maxwell

Did you make any New Year's resolutions this year? More importantly, have you kept them?

I once heard an amazing statistic about such annual goals: 91 million Americans make a New Year's resolution each year, and—here's the startling part—70 million of them break those commitments by the end of the first week.

I can't point to a scientific study that explains why so many people fail in this regard. But if



I had to make an educated guess. I'd say it has something to do with the measurability—or lack thereof—of the resolutions. Let's say your goal is to read more books about leader-

ship and career development this year. Which resolution are you more likely to keep: "I'm going to read more this year than I read last year," or "I'm going to read two chapters every day?"

When you attach a measurement to an intention, you're not just blindly shooting

for some ambiguous goal. You have a real way to gauge your progress, which makes it much more likely that you will actually have some progress to gauge.

This is a key principle to remember as you start tackling the self-improvement projects I talked about in the last issue of Leadership Wired. You cannot manage what you cannot measure. If growth in a certain area is essential to your success, you have to find a way to measure your improvement in that area. Otherwise, you won't improve.

Here are six other insights about improvement that will help you to develop—and stick to—a blueprint for your own personal growth.

1. Set realistic expectations for your improvement.

Ian MacGregor says, "I work on the same principle as people who train horses. You start with low fences, easily achieved goals, and you work up. It is important in management never to ask people to try to accomplish goals they can't accept." In other words, set realistic expectations for yourself. Think about what you can tackle in a day, because whatever you tackle today, you also need to tackle tomorrow and the next day.

2. Continual change is essential for continual improvement.

This is one of the great paradoxes of success: The things which got you there

are seldom the things which keep you there. There's no way around it. If you want to improve, you have to change.

3. Motivation gets you started; habits keep you going.

You can only stay fired up about working out at 5 a.m. (or learning to speak German, or teaching yourself how to build an internet site, or whatever you're working on) for so long. After the novelty wears off, the daily discipline you established early in the process will spur you to continue.

4. We overestimate what we can do in a month, and we underestimate what we can do in a year.

As a society, we are infatuated with big and fast. We're always looking for a shortcut or a quicker way. But as anyone who has ever lost weight and kept it off will tell you, the improvements made over time are the ones that last.

5. Focus.

Notice what well-known psychologist William James said about this: "If you would be rich, you will be rich; and if you would be good, you will be good; and if you would be learned, you will be learned. But wish for one thing exclusively, and don't at the same time wish for a hundred other incompatible things just as strongly." His point? You can't achieve everything. You have to decide what is most important, and focus on that.

6. Spend 80 percent of your time work-

ing on your strengths.

As I often say, people don't pay for average. Rather than trying to improve weak skills, devote most of your energy to developing your gifts and abilities. This might sound like a strange bit of advice, but think about it. If, on a scale of one to ten, your marketing abilities are about a two, hard work might bring you up to a five, but that's still average. If you want to succeed, you must figure out what your strengths are and grow in those areas. (When I talk about strengths and weaknesses, I'm referring to skills. Two weaknesses that must be addressed are a lack of self-discipline and a bad attitude. You could have all the skills in the world, but if you have a poor attitude or you lack self-discipline, you will literally sabotage yourself.)

Finally, as you formulate your strategy for self-improvement and begin to work on areas that need refinement (or perhaps even a complete overhaul), ask this question continually: Is what I am doing today getting me closer to my goal tomorrow?

If so, you're on the right track. If not, there's no time like the present to regroup and start moving in the right direction once again.

Dr. John C. Maxwell he has authored over 30 books, including such New York Times best-sellers as "Failing Forward" and "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership."

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1	She Will Be Loved	Maroon 5	19	Move Ya Body	Nina Sky	5	Lean Back	Terror Squad
2	My Happy Ending	Avril Lavigne	20	My Boo	Usher & Alicia Keys	6	WhyJada	kiss
			ROCK					
3	Pieces Of Me	Ashlee Simpson	1	American Idiot	Green Day	7	Locked Up	Akon Feat. Styles P
4	Let's Get It Started	Black Eyed Peas	2	Breaking The Habit	Linkin Park	8	Headsprung	LL Cool J
5	On The Way Down	Ryan Cabrera	3	So Cold	Breaking Benjamin	9	Nolia Clap	Juvenile-Wacko-Skip
6	Goodies	Ciara Feat. Petey Pablo	4	Vitamin R	Chevelle	10	No Problem	Lil' Scrappy
7	Sunshine	Lil' Flip				COUNTRY		
8	Breakaway	Kelly Clarkson	5	Somebody Told Me	The Killers	1	Live Like You Were Dying	Tim McGraw
9	Lose My Breath	Destiny's Child	6	Just Like You	Three Days Grace	2	Girls Lie Too	Terri Clark
10	If I Ain't Got You	Alicia Keys	7	Getting Away With Murder	Papa Roach	3	Suds In The Bucket	Sara Evans
11	Leave (Get Out)	JoJo	8	Cold	Crossfade	4	Here For The Party	Gretchen Wilson
12	I Like That	Houston Feat. Chingy	9	Duality	Slipknot	5	She Thinks She Needs Me	Andy Griggs
13	Lean Back	Terror Squad	10	(Wake Up) Make A Move	Lostprophets	6	Too Much Of A Good Thing	Alan Jackson
14	One Thing	Finger Eleven	URBAN			7	Stays In Mexico	Toby Keith
15	Dip It Low	Christina Milian	1	Goodies	Ciara Feat. Petey Pablo	8	That's What It's All About	Brooks & Dunn
16	1985	Bowling For Soup	2	Diary	Alicia Keys Feat. Tony! Toni! Tone!	9	I Hate Everything	George Strait
17	Breaking The Habit	Linkin Park	3	My Boo	Usher & Alicia Keys	10	Feels Like Today	Rascal Flatts
18	Broken	Seether Feat. Amy Lee	4	My Place	Nelly Feat. Jaheim			

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Breaking out of the "I can't make a sale" Doldrums

By Jeffrey J. Mayer

When I was selling life insurance for the Northwestern Mutual Life many years ago I had a very interesting experience one afternoon. I was on the phone cold calling for business and dialed Gary's phone number.

Gary's name and photo had recently appeared in the local newspapers because he had been promoted to a VP at his company. At that time in my life - and sales career - I was searching for prospects by combing the business section of the Chicago newspapers for leads.

When I called and introduced myself, using my Elevator Speech, he said, "I just got married and was thinking about buying some life insurance. When could you come over?"

I told him that I was in meetings this afternoon, but could "squeeze" him in at 4:30pm. (I really didn't have any other meetings, but I didn't want him to know that. You know, ego, pride.)

When I arrived at his office we talked about his financial planning needs, his thoughts about getting married and starting a family, and he bought a life insurance policy from me right on the spot. We filled out the forms. He gave me a \$1000 check, and I made a quick \$500.

I was on top of the world - and full of myself - because this sale was so easy. And I thought I was just a superstar. (If only I could do this every day. Five sales a week. Two hundred and fifty sales a year. I would be a top producer.)

Unfortunately, the euphoric feeling didn't last long.

Within a few days I had returned to the drudgery of calling the same people over and over again, and not getting any results. In no time at all I was back in the I-can't-make-a-sale doldrums.

What I didn't realize - or know - at the time, was that the joy and euphoria I was feeling after my meeting with Gary was the same joy and euphoria - and sales success - I should be experiencing every day.

Solve Your Customer's Problems.

During the past week I received some interesting e-mail's. Jean wrote me saying in part, "... I keep hearing that it takes approximately 7 'touches' to gain a new customer, and in my business this is usually the case."

And when I wrote in a recent essay about letting go of people who aren't buying, David wrote, "investing time in prospects that may result in only small sales - or no sales at all - may have a long term payoff in the form of free word-of-mouth advertising or significant future business from the same prospect."

First, I would like to offer my thoughts on Jean's comments. I think we've all been brain-washed. Why do we need to "touch" a prospect 7 times before she buys? We don't!

Why can't you do it in 1, 2 or 3 touches? You can! If you think it takes seven touches. It does. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you think you can close the sale in 1 or 2 interviews, you will! It's your attitude! It's your frame of mind!

If someone has a problem and you can solve it, they'll do business with you. But how can you discover a prospect's needs, wants and desires if you're talking about yourself, your

products and your company. You can't!

When you're making a sales call, you should be asking great questions - and listening to the answers. Asking questions isn't about Yes - No questions vs. Open - Closed questions.

Selling is about asking

- * The right questions,
- * To the right person,
- * In the right order,
- * At the right time.

And listening to the answer!

Then, based upon the answer, you ask a second, third, or fourth follow-up question as you drill down and get more specific.

Who does the customer care about? You, the salesman? Or herself, the customer?

The only thing she's interested in is if you can give her a better future by saving her time, money, energy, effort, or worry. If you can make her life easier or better, you've got yourself a customer. Give great service, and you've a customer for life.

If you're talking about yourself, your products and your company, you're boring her to death.

Mark, one of my consulting clients, helps people with their financial planning. He had been in the habit of telling prospects all about himself, his professional background, and the products and services he offered. He was having lots of client meetings, but wasn't closing many sales.

At my suggestion he stopped talking about himself and started asking his prospect some questions.

During a recent client meeting with Tom, he asked, "What are you trying to accomplish with your planning for yourself and your family?"

For the next 45 minutes Tom told him what he wanted to do.

Mark sat there, asked more questions and took detailed notes.

Tom finally asked Mark, "Do you think you can help me with this?" Mark said sure, Explained the steps that had to be taken next, and closed the sale in an hour.

When he told me the story, he was beaming ear-to-ear with pride.

Regarding David's comments about investing time with people who aren't buying so you can hope to get good word-of-mouth from them, I feel that this is a terrible waste of time. It shows a lack of focus.

One day I was sitting in the office of the VP of Human Relations at a major accounting firm. He told me - with a great deal of pride - that he always sent letters to applicants telling them that they weren't going to be offered a job.

When I asked him why, he explained that he wanted them to feel good about the accounting firm because someday they may be in a position to bring business to the firm.

At the time of our meeting, one of his Chicago clients - a \$100,000 year account - was leaving because they weren't getting satisfactory service. I know because I was on the company's board of directors.

This guy's focus was wrong. He's hoping that a recent college graduate will do business

with him 10 or 20 years from now, while a \$100,000 a year client is walking out the door. Why wasn't his firm focused on keeping its clients happy? Your guess is as good as mine.

You're in business to solve problems, find solutions, sell products and make money. If you're spending your time with people who aren't buying, you're not making any money. Your company isn't making money. And both of you will soon be broke.

Think of selling as fishing.

1. Go where the fish are.
2. Look for BIG fish.
3. Have great bait.

Selling is a time management issue. You must spend your time with people who have an interest - and a need - for the product you sell. It's a mistake spending your time with people who aren't going to buy because you 'hope' they will say nice things about you at some future time.

Find a prospect who has a problem that you can solve, give them great service, and you've a customer for life.

Then you can use her as a reference, she'll introduce you

to the people she knows, or maybe she'll just tell her friends how wonderful you are. There is nothing better than great word-of-mouth from a satisfied customer.

Twenty years ago I developed my One Percent Rule, which states: Only one of every hundred prospects will do business with me. Once I came to this realization life got so much easier for me.

When I sold an insurance policy to Gary, or when Mark sold a financial plan to Tom, these were the One-Percents. The one of a hundred that was going to buy. That's why it was so easy. We found prospects who were in the market to buy at the time we called them up.

Spend your time looking for prospects who have a need for your product or service, and you'll close a sale and have a new customer... Today.

Ask great questions. Solve problems. Find a need. And you'll be much more successful.

It's not about working harder or working smarter.

It's about working less!

Jeff is president of *SucceedingInBusiness.com*, author of the Best-selling books include: "Opening Doors with a Brilliant Elevator Speech," "Winning the Fight Between You and Your Desk," "Overcoming the Fear of Cold Calling," "Success is a Journey," "Time Management for Dummies."



Veggie Platter Revisited

By Peter Merkle



Comparing the plight of hard working DJ's striving to gain the respect of professional status to climbing Mount Everest, Mark Ferrell says this: "The highest peak, the pinnacle of achievement, something to strive for; Mount Everest. As DJ's looking to elevate our industry to professional status, we are sitting on the couch at our coffee table reading the travel brochures. We have not even reached the base camp." I paraphrase of course. Yet the image is evocative.

Therefore, to the Heartland and Chicago, the Windy City, comes one of the most controversial and influential figures in the history of our industry.

If there was any indication that we were beginning our approach to the assault of a mighty peak, it was the chill and bluster in the weather. As Mark and Rebecca Ferrell hurried to their car after dinner the night before the third stop of their recent Worth Symposium tour we felt the urgency that Mark had been expressing at the other stops all week.

When you listen to the Getting What You're Worth CD series covering Realizing, Believing, Communicating and Being What You're Worth you get a sense of everyone joining in the party. There is a liberating feeling of celebration in the crowd response on those CD's. It is as if DJ's are expressing their relief after a challenging history of fulfilling work ultimately paid for with the high price of financial security. Now they must steal themselves for the hard climb to that ultimate peak by provisioning with determination, confidence and faith.

We do so much to hone the skills and master the techniques, as Mark puts it in

his seminar. Being many things, such as, a salesperson, counselor, referral network, event planner, roadie, technician, board operator, lighting operator, problem solver, on-site coordinator, announcer, master of ceremonies, disk jockey, karaoke jock, music specialist, music mixer, comedian, actor, dancer, singer, entertainment specialist and crowd motivator. We need all the power we can muster to begin the trek to the higher elevations of a full-time living as a DJ. It is this realization that we do so much which should begin to set our feet walking the trail.

A perceived fear factor can make the heights dizzying. It's what Mark describes as the sphincter factor 9.4. When you first quote a higher price for your services and your butt cheeks are clenched so tight you could turn coal to diamonds. It is this fear that keeps us from creating the success we so desperately desire.

When you add in this fear factor, it is no wonder that we might be grasping for the oxygen tank. Mark delivers that pure oxygenated air so well. It can be had in the best quantities when you get in a room of DJ's supporting each other to improve.

A number of attendees have not heard Mark speak. However, for those that have, when asked what they remember the most they say: Veggie Platter and Twelve Hundred Dollars!

It is interesting, listening to the Getting What You're Worth CD's and hearing the crowd repeat back the \$1200 figure. Which, of course, Ferrell calls an example of a national average and that the price may vary in your area based on multiple economic factors.

Each time someone in the audience on the CD shouts out the figure; it rises, as if in some raucous auction, to higher increments.

Yet there is a difference in Mark's approach this time. His tone is not always as convivial. There is a compassionate exasperation, however, that says, "Come on people." It is reflected in the music played after his introduction. Gwen Stefani's new release "What You Waiting For."

Mark has been an advocate throughout a ten plus year span of our young industry. Not always received in some circles with the same jovial celebration as on the CD's, still the message heard by thousands of DJ's across North America has created positive change. Erroneously called an extremist, a price banger, and a DJ Messiah, in truth DJs have elevated the level of professionalism, the value of their services, and their earnings based on principles laid out in Mark's straightforward and enlightening presentation.

Ben Miller, a national board member of the American Disc Jockey Association, introduces the second

half of the evening's presentation. This is a rare opportunity to ask Mark any questions about everything from his background to what he did specifically to run his business. His wife Rebecca joins in the conversation early, as she had a great part in helping to implement the Worth principles in their business.

Mark discusses bridal show strategies. He answers questions on how his rate increases occurred and how many events he did each year at those rates. He talks about his belief in relationship sales. He describes how to read prospective clients in meetings through body posture and defining their personality types. He urges people to avoid copying routines and concepts. Rather he encourages everyone to create and develop something that no one else is doing.

This event was sponsored in part by the American Disc Jockey Association and the Chicagoland Chapter. Mark said that we haven't even left the coffee table and are still reading travel brochures. Well, certainly the base camps have begun to be set up and provisioned. Climb on!

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