Disc Jockey News

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Mobile Beat DJ Show and Conference

As the holiday season sets in, mobile entertainers around the country set upon one of their busiest seasons. But beyond that, the light at the end of the tunnel can be seen in February. As a matter of fact, the singular word 'light' is a moderate description of the brightness of Las Vegas, Nevada, again home for the annual Mobile Beat DJ Show and Conference, a/k/a MBLV08!

Seminars at the Mobile Beat DJ Show strive to present you with the best possible selection of topics, with something for everyone from the novice to the seasoned veteran. Here's a look at what's in store for MBLV08, February 12-14,2008…

When Guerrilla Marketing was first published in 1983, Jay Conrad Levinson was considered a pioneer with his innovative, take-no-prisoners approach to marketing for the small- and medium-sized business owner. Guerrilla Marketing has become a landmark book, translated into more than 40 languages, for one simple reason: it works—like no other marketing—to maximize your profits and minimize your investment. Small and large businesses alike have applied the principles of guerrilla marketing because of their simplicity, common sense, and record of being proven in action. Jay will kickoff the show with two powerful presentations.

While you can find full descriptions of the content on the Mobile Beat website www.mblv08.com <http://www.mblv08.com/> here are highlights of the other presenters and their topics:

Randy Bartlett tells you why the microphone will allow you to control the pacing, emotion and energy of the event. Manny Otero will show you how to create your own unique entertainment elements for weddings, corporate events and private parties. Your clients deserve the best...so give it to them! Learn how to focus your efforts to run a successful business while providing outstanding service with Paul Kida. DJ/producer Russ Harris will show you how to open a song up on the computer and edit it like the pros do, for use at future events without worrying about any aftermath. Peter Merry will explain why we say things without really thinking about why we say them. Can they be stunting our chances to achieve success?

Ken Day will provide a unique understanding of what it takes to become a $5000.00 per wedding DJ/Entertainer in any market. Take a detailed look at the important social matters of the DJ profession and their effect upon public perception with Larry Williams. Entertainment marketing expert K.C. KoKoruz answers the question (specifically for DJs): What is effective marketing and how is it achieved? Tom Haibeck, author of the bestselling books The Wedding MC handbook and Wedding Toasts Made Easy, will walk us through the key planning points every wedding DJ needs to cover in order to do a great job as MC.

Learn from Jorge Lopez how to deal with different situations and create better rapport and trust…which will help you to book more business. How about some Tips and tricks from the improv comedy world to help the mobile DJ with Mike Ficher ? Julia Markel will share key elements that you can incorporate to make your bridal show experience more profitable. Other presenters include David Van Enger, Doug LaVine DJ Zan "the Man" and DJ "World Wide" Webb.

Add to that Mini-Topic Tuesday, sponsored seminars, and DJ Idea Sharing, so come to learn! But at night, the fun begins..three nights of parties featuring appearances by Freedom Williams of C+C Music Factory and Tone Loc!

Full show passes now though December 31 are just $199. To register go to the Mobile Beat website or call 515-986-3300.

Disc Jockey News

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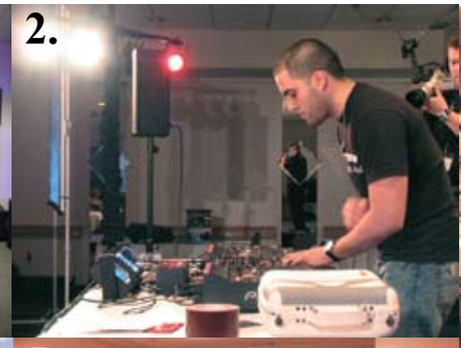
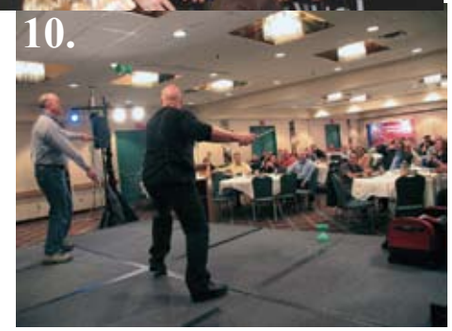
Northern Disc Jockey Conference 2007 Photo Recap





The Disc Jockey News 2007 Northern Disc Jockey Conference hit the Minneapolis area this past October 28th-30th. A great group of professional disc jockeys from around the country spent three day at the conference networking, learning and growing themselves and their business.

1. Metro Sound & Light and EV had a great demo room to show off the latest EV sound equipment along with some of the newest LED lighting effects.

2. Pioneer DJ sponsored DJ Unique who demonstrated his skills on the Pioneer DVD mixing system.

3. Todd McDonald was the Tuesday morning keynote speaker teaching high end sales and customer skills.

4. Cortex representative Bernie Howard was answering questions on the new Cortex digital playback systems in the Metro Sound & Light room.

5. Cover band legend Johnny Holm answered questions and gave his insight on the entertainment business and the disc jockey's roll in entertainment.

6. Mark Ferrell was the Monday evening keynote speaking to a full house.

7. Jim Cerone, Bill Hermann and Mark Ferrell answered questions on their wedding philosophy.

8. Over 125 disc jockeys took the pledge to be worth more.

9. Bob Holl of Wisconsin won one of the door prizes sponsored by American DJ and Metro Sound & Light. 10. Monday mornings keynote session included a bit of crowd interaction as Mick worked with an assistant from the crowd and demonstrating how a street performer works his space.

The 2007 conference was a great event! Look for more upcoming information on the 2008 events at http://www.discjockeynews.com

Thank you to all our show attendees and sponsors!!

-The Disc Jockey News

Tis The Season

By Dude Walker

For rebates and others sorts of hassles and scams concocted by corporate America. Protecting yourself with a few basic protocols can give your the leverage to win an impending argument with some DOLT in your not so distant future.

Rebates are in their simplest form, a way for the corporate world to fleece Americans out of their hard earned cash based upon the premise of some gain tomorrow. In the BOLDEST PRINT they entice you but what they don't tell you is that the fine print, terms are disclaimers are written to trick you out of your due rewards by actions of their design.

Let's take cell-phone rebates for instance. My personal experience with Alltel's $79 Razor was really a $179 Razor with a 2 year contract agreement with a $100 mail in rebate form. I had to pay the full price up front and fill out the paperwork to receive my own money...back? Hmmm...., sounded kind of fishy but I indulged and played along with the salesperson that was obviously overwhelmed by their "tweener" job.

Aside from the hour and 15 minutes I spent with the sales person going over the phone plans and programming the phones, moments I will never ever regain in my life, I was fairly proud with my purchase.

Almost as proud as the personal cell phone in office sales visit with my first cell phone purchase in 1992...well maybe not.

Being the methodical person I am, I read through the rebate form carefully. I cut the UPC proof of purchase from the box and then had to wait. I needed to provide a cell phone that was one billing cycle after the date of purchase proving that my phones were actually in service. So I looked at the date on the rebate form and the timeline was still doable. So I laid the rebate form on the kitchen island and left a reminder note on the dash of my van.

Finally, I received my cell phone bill. Oddly, I found myself desiring a bill, but then again, there was $200 riding on the cell phone bill. Needless to say, the elation in receiving the bill has since subsided.

So I hurried home and went to look for the previous rebate form. Hmmm, apparently my wife is up to the old game of hide and seek with my paperwork. Off to basement I went to begin the archeological dig. Normally letters and papers contain dates...most recent being on top, shouldn't be that hard. Box 1...nothing. Box 2...nothing. Box 3... nothing. Grrrr...re-check all the boxes...still nothing. Wife finally gets home and I ask her where she may have placed the rebate forms that were on the island. Every married man alive knows all too well the next response. "What rebate forms?" 1...2...3...4...5... -serenity now! The rebate forms that have been on the island for the past month. "What did they look like?" 1...2...3...4...5...- serenity now! The rebate forms for the cell phones. "Oh,...those? I think I put them into one of the boxes in the basement." 1...2...3...4...5... - (CENSORED) Hey! I'm human.

FYI, they had been placed in a shopping bag and placed upon my table saw. I only found them by accident a week later when cleaning things up in the shop.

I looked at the due date and there was still time. Not wanting anything to go wrong I made copies of everything and mailed the rebate information via certified return receipt mail. I wanted proof that the Alltel rebate center received my information.

Now the next detail is the most important. When mailing rebates to corporations that have created a schemes where success is based upon a customers failure to redeem said rebate, make sure that you can prove that you've done what is required. I intentionally filled out the rebate forms with my HOME address since my billing statement goes directly to my accountant. I also filled out the return receipt card return address as my office. Now the waiting begins!

Nearly 12 weeks had passed. Then one Saturday morning I received a postcard from Alltel regretting to inform me that they were unable to redeem my rebate request due to: Incomplete or missing rebate information. So I dialed the number provided on the postcard and spent the next 90 minutes either on hold or bouncing from one incompetent Alltel representative to another until I finally reached a supervisor...who oddly sounded like the first person that I spoke with. After sharing what seemed to the 100th rendition of what happened, I received a categorical. "We're sorry sir...there's nothing we can do for you." Perhaps it was the tribal drums beating in the back of my head or maybe the insolent tone of the Alltel representative but there was NO WAY that Alltel was getting away with my money.

I curtly and directly made a demand for payment. The moron recited the same "we're sorry" - MANTRA. I told him not good enough and proceeded to explain why Alltel would be honoring my rebate.

This is where the previously mentioned IMPORTANT DETAIL comes in handy! I explained how I know that they received my rebate information because I have a signed

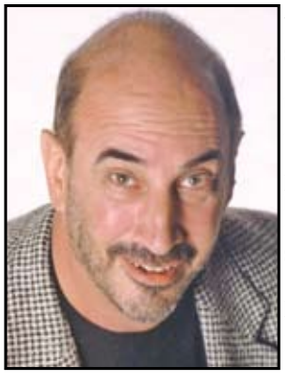
Continued on page 13

Is It Satisfied Customers You're After? NO!

By Jeffery Gitomer

I'm sick of customer satisfaction. The worst companies in the world tout the fact that they won some satisfaction award. It's not just a bad joke. It's a pathetic statement.

Every company is hoping that their customers will reorder. They're hoping that their customers will spread the word about how great their products are, and about how great their people are. And they're hoping to proactively encourage others to place an order or do business with them.



That is NOT customer satisfaction.

That is customer LOYALTY.

Every company must have loyalty as its mission, not satisfaction.

Every company must have loyalty as its imperative, not satisfaction.

Corporate drivel mission statements talk about exceeding customer's expectations, talk about being number one in the world, talk about shareholder value, and say NOTHING about the one word that makes all of these things happen: LOYALTY.

The reason that companies, especially big companies, don't stress loyalty is because it's much more difficult to achieve, and requires both an investment, and a commitment on the part of senior management to instill.

Customer loyalty is a hallow statement unless it is preceded by a mission.

REALITY: The company and its executives must be loyal to its employees, loyal to its product quality, and loyal to its service excellence. This means they must both invest in and support a loyalty imperative.

HERE'S THE SECRET: Loyalty must be given before it is received.

No company can ensure customer loyalty until they have secured employee loyalty. It amazes me that big companies will layoff thousands of people in the name of profit or shareholder value, and think nothing of what it does to internal morale, or the impact that it has on the reduction of service to its customers -- even a reduction in the quality of its product.

Loyalty is both an action and a process.

Look at the best companies in the world. They have great employees. They have great products. They give great service. And they're easy to do business with. This makes them attractive. And these are the elements that create loyalty.

The one element that is most important is great service. Memorable service. Loyalty-based service. And that flies in the face of satisfaction (the lowest level of acceptable service).

In my seminars, I teach the 5,000-year-old ancient Chinese proverb, "To serve is to rule." Giving great service is an integral part of the loyalty process and it's a fundamental part of "giving loyalty before loyalty is received."

Here are a few ideas to incorporate into your company's loyalty imperative:

1. List all reasons that customers call you for service. There are probably less than 25.

2. List all barriers that you place in front of a customer connecting with you. There are probably less than 10. (Automated attendant, voicemail, lack of 24-hour availability, inadequate website.)

3. Once you have all the opportunities and all the barriers listed, have a weekend retreat with senior management and front-line people to determine best practices, generate new ideas for serving, and making it easier to do business with your company. Document (record) everything.

4. Put the ideas and the best practices into action. Create a training program for best practices, and invest whatever is necessary for making your company "barrier-to-place-an-order" free.

5. Rather than announce all of these changes in the form of a bragging advertisement, or internal hoopla, let your customers have an opportunity to react and respond to your new and better way of doing business. Let the referral part of your business begin organically. Let it be earned, not asked for.

5.5 All members of senior management must support this process both verbally and visually. If you're going to evolve from satisfaction to loyalty, it has to be "hands on," not just "words on."

I wish more companies would add to their mission statement that they'll be loyal to their employees -- so that their employees would be loyal to their customers -- so that their customers would be loyal to the company.

That is a loyalty chain. And it doesn't start with satisfied customers. It starts with senior management understanding that loyalty is a way of life, not just a word. That loyalty starts at home, not at a customer's place of business. That loyalty is earned by a process, not by a wave of a wand, or even by product excellence.

And loyalty is easily measured. Just look at your repeat business.

Satisfaction is also easily measured. Just look at the customers you lost.

If you would like one more great loyalty idea, go to www.gitomer.com, register if you're a first time visitor, and enter the words LOYALTY IDEA in the GitBit box.

Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of The Little Red Book of Selling and The Little Gold Book of YES! Attitude. President of Charlotte-based Buy Gitomer, he gives seminars, runs annual sales meetings, and conducts Internet training programs on sales and customer service at www.trainone.com. He can be reached at 704/333-1112 or e-mail to salesman@gitomer.com.

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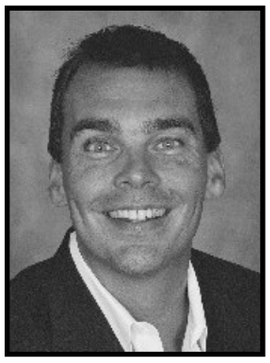
The Q Corner, Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

I'm on a flight home from Minneapolis back to New Jersey after attending the Northern Disc Jockey Conference and with some thoughts fresh in my mind I thought I'd try to write something suitable for this article. After seeing a few days worth of seminars as well as hosting one of my own, I am inspired to talk specifically about "Sincerity."

I read a very funny line years ago about that word. A College Football Coach was talking about motivating his players and he said "Sincerity is the key. Once you learn how to fake that everything falls in to place."



The joke of course being that if you "fake" it, it's no longer sincerity.

As a public speaker, I think that's something to keep in mind. Because the audience knows. They can sense it.

One of the highlights of this trip was seeing Mark Ferrell give his "Getting What You Are Worth" seminar. I had seen Mr. Ferrell present these ideas many years ago at a Mobile Beat Expo in Cleveland. At the time I was adamant about keeping our prices below a thousands bucks. My reasoning was that if we wanted to booked volume I didn't want to scare people away with a four figure price. Seeing the "GWYW" seminar, followed later that summer by Randy Bartlett's :"Raising Your Rates and Lowering Your Guilt" was the one-two punch I needed to finally get over that hump. As a company we've never looked back.

So listening to Mr. Ferrell speak I was just as interested in his content as in his presentation. And if you've ever seen him give a public talk I'm sure you'll agree, this guy means what he says. There's no faking sincerity with him.

The result? Mr. Ferrell held a packed room in the palm of his hand for almost two hours. It was an incredible experience to witness and one that I thank MAPDJ for providing since I understand it was their dime that brought the seminar to the show.

Repeatedly Mr. Ferrell implored us to care for our clients. To love them even. And as he said it, I had no doubt that he loves his own Brides and Grooms. You could hear it in his voice and see it in his eyes. And yet there is pain there as well. Pain and frustration that we as an industry still shoot ourselves in the foot when it comes to raising our rates and improving our nationwide reputation. He and others have been promoting this message for years now and change, though it is coming, is taking its sweet time. His message nonetheless was conveyed with honesty and sincerity.

Mr. Ferrell was not alone in that. I listened to many speakers at this show and was impressed at not only their content but at their belief in their message. Carr Hagerman, in his seminar "Top Performer" offered some great insight on the approach and attitude of successful performers. He showed many examples from street performers that were interesting and useful for our industry as well. And though I didn't agree with every point he made, specifically when he urged everyone to "prepare less" I appreciated his sincere and passionate presentation of his content. I get his point that spontaneity is important in entertainment but he and I will have to disagree on the importance of preparation. I happen to think it is actually the key to spontaneity because once you are fully rehearsed and prepared than you can have the confidence to be real and in the moment. But Carr meant what he said and I had no doubt about that.

As DJs and Emcees a large portion of our work falls under the banner of "public speaking" so I think the point about "sincerity" is a universal one. When you speak to a crowd, are you there fully? Are you emotionally invested in the day? Is your Energy and Enthusiasm coming from a sincere place? Or do you fake your excitement because you some how think you are supposed to be pumped up at your events? Trust me, the audience knows.

If you are having a tough time getting people to follow you at events (dance when you want them to dance or cheer when you want them to cheer) maybe it's not what you are saying but how you are saying it. Maybe it's that they don't feel your passion for that moment. Maybe you need to go back to square one and rediscover your sincerity. Why do you want them to dance? Why do you want them to cheer? Is it because, like Mark Ferrell, you care for your clients that much, or is it because you're just hoping to get to Eleven O'clock as soon as possible so you can collect a check and get your gear loaded out?

Being a successful public speaker involves many different talents and attitudes but I think it all begins with your belief in the message. If you truly mean what you are saying you are going to have better results. Sincerity, there's no way to fake it!

Mike Walter is the owner of Elite Entertainment of New Jersey and a nationally recognized expert in the area of multisystem company development and staff training. You can contact Mike at mikewalter@discjockeynews.com.

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Starting From Scratch

By Jeff Richards

Starting from scratch is a monthly column that will help those new to the Disc Jockey industry. Each article will cover what it takes to be a successful mobile DJ. Today's topic: Choosing Your Clients.

Most DJs think that the client will "choose you" to entertain for their event, but in all reality you are in control of your business and "You Choose" who your clients will be.

There are several items that can dictate whom your clients are, how you choose them and what you are capable of charging. Let's start with your advertising. The images in your marketing materials can determine your success or your failure. What does your advertising, business cards, brochures & web site say to those looking for a DJ? Does it say "Music for all Occasions"? Does it list every type of event there is to DJ? Does it read or look as if you're new or not the best qualified DJ? Do you have pictures of drunk patrons spilling beer on the dance floor while women's underwear are hanging from a ceiling fan (I have actually seen this) Does your advertising image say to potential clients "I'm a CHEAP DJ that will do anything for a buck? Is this really the image you want potential clients to view?

Does your advertising look professional, full of helpful information and speak directly to those you wish to work with: Wedding Receptions, School Dances or Corporate Events. I mention these three only because they should have three very different and distinct types of marketing used to get the best results. You can do all three of these types of events but your advertising should really focus on the ONE type you wish to work the most. With a focused marketing image it will bring in the clients you really want to work with the most along with all the other types of events you can provide.

What does your DJ set up look like? Is it messy, wires and cables everywhere? Do you have huge speakers and a gigantic light show set up in a very small room? Does your set up say to the room "I'm a loud obnoxious DJ who does what ever the heck I want". Do you still hang a banner with the business name and phone number on it? Is this the image you want potential clients to view?

Do you have a non intrusive set up that fits the size and style of the event? Do you discreetly fit into the room and play the appropriate music at the appropriate levels? Does your set up speak to clients as "I am a Professional DJ with talents and skills?" Is this the image you want potential clients to view?

How do you dress when you meet with a client and/or when you are performing at an event? Do you wear whatever you just happen to put on that day? Do you dress in a polo shirt & baseball hat with your company name on it? Do you wear slacks & shirt with a tie or do you go all out and wear a business suit or business dress attire or a tuxedo or tuxedo type outfit? A polo shirt & hat may get you $300 to $500 events, but it won't help you book $1000 to $2000 events. If you have the talent, skills and desire to perform for a higher then "Average" rate, then you must also look the part. When you look professional it gives a more relaxed feeling to potential clients allowing them to focus their attention on your service, talents and skills and not your rate.

Where do you meet your potential clients? In a professional looking office? At the local Bar & Grill? In their home? At the Mall? The meeting location can also speak greatly to a potential client about who you are and the service you will provide.

All of these questions I have asked here determines who "You Choose" as your clients. Every piece of information in your advertising will cause potential clients to either see something they like or relate to and call you or something they dislike and go onto another DJ who has what they are looking for. You may not even be aware how your image could be stopping you from booking those events that you are working so hard to be able to perform. If your images and text say "I'm a $300 DJ" then it will be very difficult to locate clients who are willing to pay the rate that you are truly worth.

If you have pictures of Frat parties in your advertising, then that is whom most likely will call you for business. If you have pictures and information for upscale, elegant Wedding Receptions then that is whom is most likely to do business with you. If you have big screen video equipment showing the latest videos from MTV then you are most likely to work at high schools and college events.

You are "Choosing" who your clients are by giving them pictures, information and the general image of you and your business. Make sure you are projecting the business image that you want and will attract the clients you need. They say a picture paints a thousand words, I believe that your marketing images can say so much more.

Another way "You Choose" your clients are with your rates. How much you charge to do an event will determine which clients will or will not call you. Typically (not always) the lower the rate the lower the quality of the client, the location site and the quality of guests you will be working for. Most clientele can gather up a few hundred bucks for a DJ to perform at a sweet sixteen, frat party or the local bar. If these are the clients you like to work with then perfect, but if you're looking for more upscale, elegant Weddings or events that are not a "Drunk Fest" then you will need to charge appropriately. This will help to weed out the less desirable events and book the parties you really want to work.

As an example, many, many years ago when I was a "Discount" DJ, I was booked solid but I was working in some of the worst places imaginable. I was entertaining for people who only wanted to get drunk to music. I was working for people who didn't understand my craft and had little to no respect for a DJs talent. I knew early on that this wasn't the kinds of events I wanted to work. I raised my rates to above what was the "Average" rate in my area and it immediately improved the quality of the events and the clientele. As my talent, skills and professionalism continued to improve so did my rates. For the last few years I have reached the level where I'm working only the events and with the clientele that I enjoy performing for.

I will be completely honest and inform you that at this higher rate scale, there will be a decrease in the number of quality clientele available but at these higher rates you won't need to work as often as you did working for so much less. The locations at which these parties take place as well as the bridal couples are typically a higher quality. They tend to understand the value of a DJ and are not afraid to spend the money necessary to make their dreams come true.

Once again to be perfectly honest with you, with this higher end clientele there are much greater responsibilities and quality levels that I must reach every night to ensure my business will stay successful, but the outcome and personal satisfaction is well worth the extra time & effort. The extra special service, quality, talents and skills are why the client is investing their hard earned money and trust in me.

There have been a few times at the initial meeting with potential clients that I decided I really didn't want to work for them. Because of the things they were looking for in a DJ wasn't what I am or wanted to represent in my business, I had to decline the job. Even though they were willing to pay my higher rate, because I knew the job could hurt my image, my future business earnings and potential opportunities, I had to pass them onto another DJ who could provide them with what they desired. This is just who I am and strive for. You have to decide for yourself what events you like to work and the clientele you enjoy working with. Then change your image, advertising, set up, clothing and/or what ever else you need so you can "Choose you Clients."

Read Jeff's blog at www.discjockeynews.com click on the Blog/News button then click on "Starting from Scratch"

To respond to Jeff's column send an e-mail to jeffrichards@discjockeynews.com. Jeff Richards has over 25 years of experience as a DJ/Entertainer and is the Executive Vice President of the Midwest Association of Professional Disc Jockeys, He speaks at National DJ Conventions and for local DJ Associations. Jeff also offers private consultations to DJ services.

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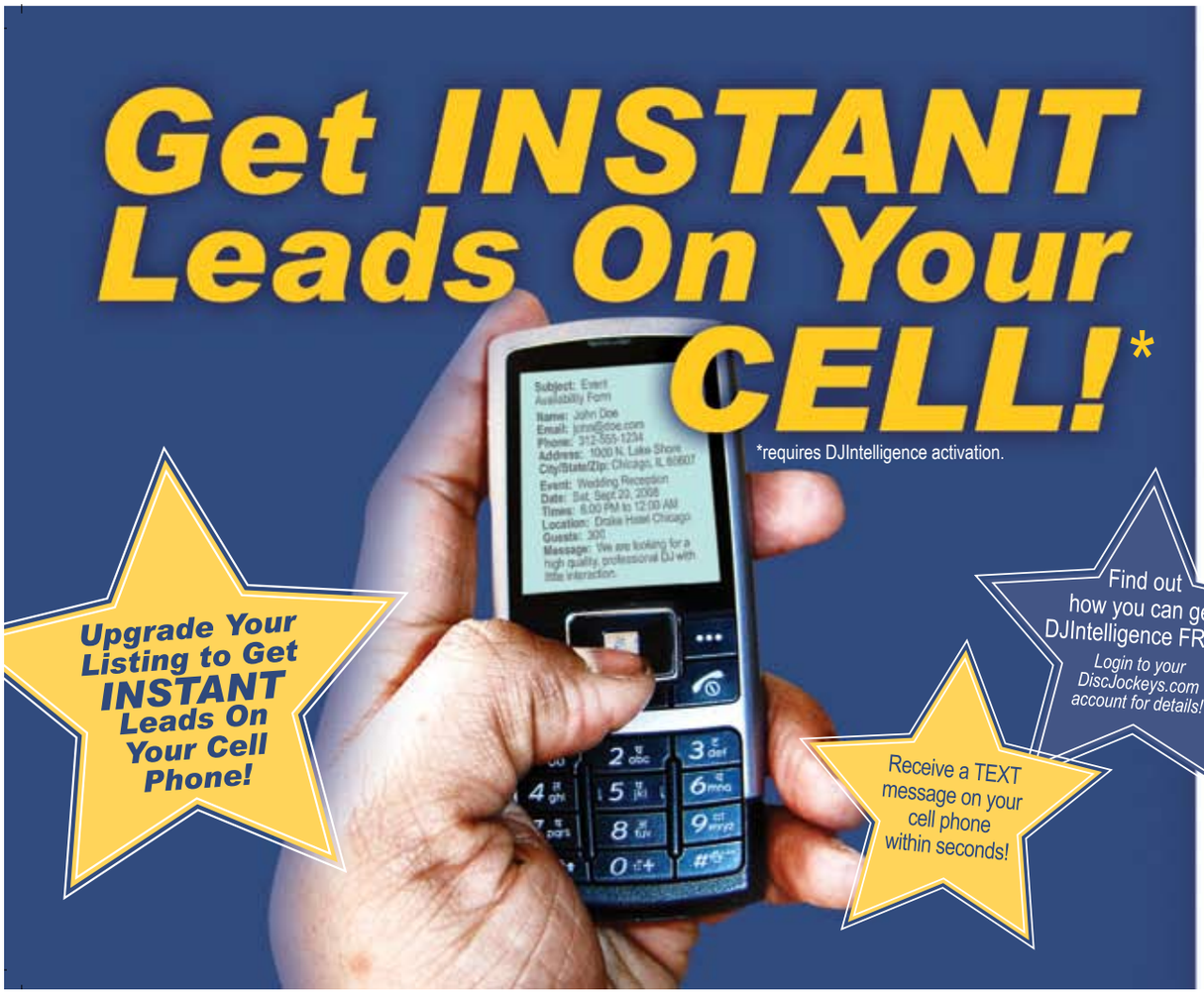

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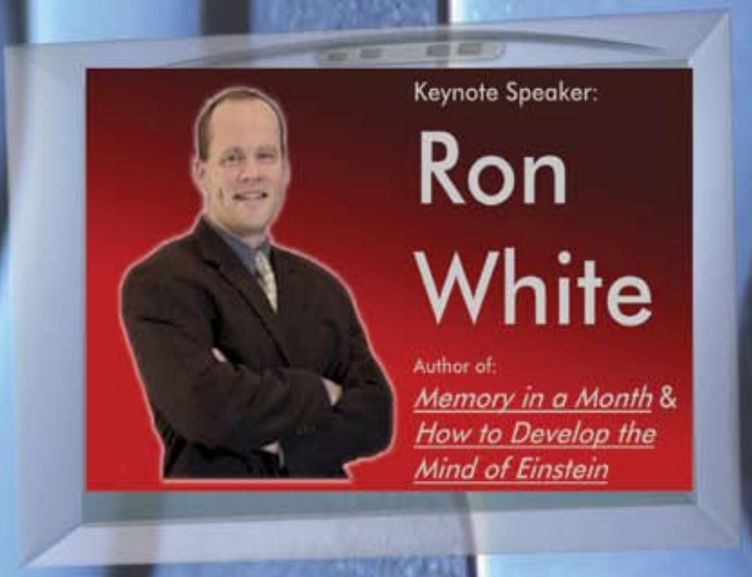

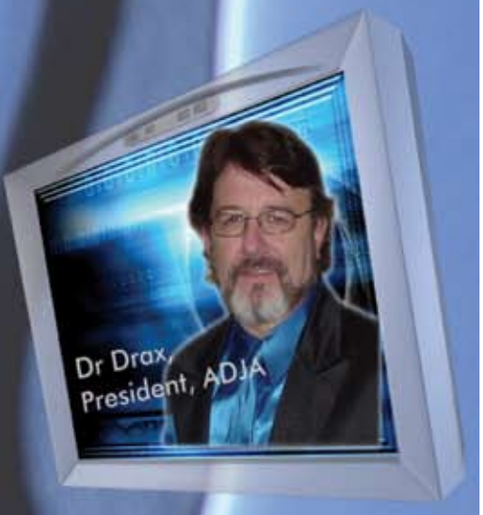

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The Tests Of Timing

By Dr. John C. Maxwell

The Law of Timing – When to Lead Is As Important As What to Do and Where to Go

In my experience, the toughest law of leadership to teach is the Law of Timing. As an intuitive skill, timing is intangible, which makes it extremely difficult to explain. Many veteran leaders describe their timing for major decisions with phrases such as, "I had a gut feeling the moment was right," or "I sensed we couldn't wait any longer." For an aspiring leader in search of answers, this lack of concreteness can be more than a little frustrating.

The goal of both this lesson and the next issue of Leadership Wired is to de-mystify the Law of Timing by identifying six areas of awareness that affect timely decision-making.

Awareness powers a leader's internal clock so that he or she can exercise the right timing in decision-making. In this edition of LW, we'll unpack three of the six areas of the environment to which a leader must be attuned for proper timing. Within each area of awareness, we'll also look at tests that can be applied to assure the potential success of time-sensitive decisions.

Timing's Areas of Awareness

#1 Awareness of the Needs Around You

Leaders interact in an environment abounding with needs. Customers, partners, and coworkers all have needs.

Needs are all around us, but they are also within us. Leaders are able to look beyond their own needs to sense and respond to the needs of others.

The Listening Test - "Am I aware of other people's needs?"

The philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "If a man can make a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mousetrap than his neighbor, though he builds his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door." But Emerson was wrong! You must beat a path to the customer's door to find out what he wants and needs. Stunning innovation and brilliantly designed new products are only part of the answer. Fortunately, Mr. Emerson made his living as a philosopher – not as a company president.

The Values Test - "Who am I?"

The legendary Greek philosopher, Socrates, implored his pupils to "Know thyself." As true now as it was for the ancient Greeks, leaders clarify the needs around them when they get in touch with their deeply held beliefs and convictions.

The Mission Test - "What is my purpose?"

Discern the connection between the needs around you and the calling within you. At this intersection, you will make decisions that make a difference.

The Priority Test - "Should I do this?"

Eradicating world poverty, widening the roads causing traffic congestion in your neighborhood, and finding copy machines that jam less frequently are all valid needs, and each may resonate within you. However, with limited time and resources, leaders must prioritize attention and effort to be effective.

In the words of W.E.B Dubois, "Nature makes men narrow in order to give them force."

The Reality Test - "Can I do this?"

Before taking action, a leader must honesty assess present resources to determine whether or not the timing is realistic to pursue the remedy for a perceived need.

#2 Awareness of the Reality Before You

Decisions have consequences—positive and negative, intended and unintended. Leaders with a flair for timing are able to foresee the implications of their courses of action.

The Murphy's Law Test - "What could possibly go wrong? Could I accept the consequences?"

Murphy's Law says that if something can go wrong, it probably will. When assessing the ramifications for decisions leaders must take into account the repercussions of failure.

The Common Sense Test – "Does this opportunity make sense or am I trying to make sense out of it?"

Opportunities can be alluring, and CEO's at the highest level have been known to fall in love with impractical and costly pet projects. Plain common sense can be the best deterrent to far-fetched opportunities.

The Preparation Test – "Am I prepared to do this?"

Consider the sacrifices involved before jumping into an opportunity. Overcommitment is one of the most energy draining and stress-inducing flaws of a leader.

However, keep in mind that preparation is not total consensus or knowing all of the answers before starting. All too often, would-be decision-makers keep collecting, analyzing, and reanalyzing information, hoping for that one last convincing detail that will dictate the correct choice.

Former Secretary of State and 4-star General, Colin Powell, in a Time magazine interview, said that if zero represents no data and 100 represents all of the data needed to make a decision, he usually waits until he's at about 60, then he uses gut instincts, intuition, and personal experience to make the choice.

The Option Test – "Do I increase or decrease my options by waiting?"

Will the passage of time shrink available options or create new ones? Sometimes, the opportunity becomes narrower and more difficult to pursue in the future. However, other opportunities expand in the light of new developments.

The Deadline Test – "When is the best time to make the right decision?"

Quite simply, several opportunities come with a "take it or leave it" tag. Time dictates that the opportunity immediately be grasped or lost. With other opportunities, time diminishes their value. As Lee Iacocca said, "The right decision is the wrong decision if it's made to late."

#3 Awareness of the Influencers Behind You

Every organization has key influences that must be on board in order for pivotal decisions to be made. To excel at the art of timing, leaders must court the support of these influencers.

The Respect Test – "Have I earned the influencers' respect?"

Everyone has the right to speak, but you have to earn the right be heard. Do your words carry the weight of respect?

The Commitment Test – "Are the influencers affirming or committing?"

Verbal affirmation is encouraging, but when you begin to confront the obstacles of a new initiative, you had better be sure the influencers behind you are willing to fight with you in the trenches.

The Resources Test – "Will the influencers provide what is needed?"

Many leaders make the mistake of chasing after attractive opportunities, only to be hung out to dry when a major donor or investor backs out of their pledged assistance. Can you count on the support of the influencers behind you?

Dr. John C. Maxwell has authored over 30 books, including such New York Times best-sellers as "Failing Forward" and "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership." Global Truss Introduces A Portable Archway System

Harness Your Brainpower

By Harvey Mackay

Knowledge is power.

How much do you know about everything? How much do you know about a lot of things? Okay, how much do you know about a few things?

If these seem like odd questions, stop and ponder what you know versus what you don't. Then consider how you would get along if you needed good information on topics that were outside your comfort zone.

As former U.S. President Woodrow Wilson said, "I not only use all the brains I have but all that I can borrow."

I would add this: and all that I can buy, if necessary.

I rely on experts for all kinds of information. I preach the importance of building a network of experts before you need them so that they are there when you do. Whether it's a surgeon, realtor, auto mechanic or a master salesperson, I want the best. And I will return the favor whenever I can, whether it's business advice; a reference; or tickets to a sporting event, concert or the theatre.

But let me make this very clear: I also rely on my own instincts, because eventually, it all comes back to me. I weigh the information I receive from others, and make the best judgment I can. For instance, I am the first to admit that most technology baffles me. But show me how a new gizmo can make my life easier, my business more successful, save me time, or just add to my fun, and I'm sold. That's why I use a Blackberry.

I try to absorb and retain as much information from my experts as I can. You never know when it will come in handy, or when you will find another application for it.

Carl Ally, founder of Ally & Gargano, one of the 20th century's most successful advertising agencies, had an interesting take on knowledge: "The creative person wants to be a know-it-all. He wants to know about all kinds of things: ancient history, nineteenth century mathematics, current-manufacturing techniques, flower arranging and hog futures. Because he never knows when these ideas might come together to form a new idea. It may happen six minutes later or six months or six years down to road. But he has faith that it will happen."

All of us have the ability to gain more knowledge. The brain is amazing. While the old theory that we use only 10 percent of our brains has been widely debunked, there's plenty of evidence that we can increase our brainpower, retention and focus. Plenty of books and websites offer all kinds of help. I'm not endorsing any specific method, but I would encourage you to check out ways to expand your horizons.

In the meantime, you can take some basic steps to improve your knowledge:

Read. Pick out books, newspapers, websites, encyclopedias, anything with information that teaches you something you didn't already know. Play Trivial Pursuit or watch Jeopardy. Learn something new every day. In my opinion, there are no such things as useless facts. If it's part of our world, it's worth knowing. I will get on my soapbox here again: embrace lifelong learning.

Listen. Sounds simple enough, but it's so easy to be distracted. Focus on the speaker. If you don't hear it the first time, ask the person to repeat it. Make sure you understand what's been said. You will be surprised what you can learn.

Pay attention to what's happening around you. According to MENSA, the organization for people with high IQs, current research shows that at least 52 percent of our intelligence is based on our environment.

Exercise and eat healthy. What's good for the body is also good for the brain. Another reason not to put off taking care of yourself!

Get some sleep. Our country is chronically sleep-deprived, which negatively affects our thought processes. So along with "beauty sleep," go for the "smart sleep."

You will soon learn that you are capable of more than you imagined. You will also learn to recognize your limitations. If you know that you don't know something, or don't know how to find an answer, you'll know it's time to ask for help. Tap into all the brains you need—they just might not all be housed in your head.

Mackay's Moral: Sometimes being smart means recognizing when you're not.

Reprinted with permission from nationally syndicated columnist Harvey Mackay, author of the New York Times #1 bestseller "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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Continued from page 3

certified receipt card detailing who signed it and when at the Alltel rebate center. The supervisor was not pleased. However, he retorted that just because I have proof that they signed for my rebate information, doesn't mean it was properly completed. So I reached for my file and rattled off the terms of the rebate and shared the related information that I sent Alltel.

The supervisor had the audacity to claim that "his record show"....blah, blah, blah.

At that very moment I chuckled and pointed out the crookedness of Alltels scheme, error of their ways and how I can prove it.

Summarizing my tirade: I received a postcard from Alltel denying my rebate claim which contained my home address which was ONLY SHARED UPON THE REBATE FORM. (an entirely different address than my billing address) I have proof that Alltel signed for the letter which contained my rebate information. I have copies of all the information I sent to Alltel. When will I be receiving my rebate?

I was placed on hold for another 5-10 minutes. When the supervisor came back he was crass enough to ask if I was still there. I'm not sure if it was the feigned helpful nature that got me or the additional 10-12 weeks that I would was told to wait for my rebate when I WENT OFF on the supervisor.

Suffice to say. I received my rebate check in 7 days.

All in all, I figure with the portion of my life that I will never get back, Alltel still owes me big for my time involved in recouping what was rightfully mine in the first place. What an absolute waste of time! In essence I loaned a major US corporation $200, interest free for 13 weeks. @#$% :-(

So when dealing with rebates this season. Read the terms carefully, send it timely, send it certified and use an alternate address that the company wouldn't normally have on record.

If you have concerns about unscrupulous business practices contact your states Attorney General Consumer Protection Division and the Federal Trade Commission at < https://rn.ftc.gov/pls/dod/wsolcq$.startup >

Dude Walker can be reached at dudewalker@discjockeynews.com.

Product Review
DJ Skirts Mobile ProBooth

A clean, professional setup... this is one of the things that djs from across the country struggle with as they design and redesign their sound and light shows.

The folks at DJ Skirts have been very active helping the dj industry clean up their look with their mobile friendly products. We had a chance to play with their latest product for the professional disc jockey: the Mobile ProBooth.

The Mobile ProBooth consists of a very flexible system of pipes and fabric which can be set up easily to fit table top dj setups from 4 foot wide to 8 foot wide.

The booth stands a bit over 48 inches tall and covers the front and the sides of the table.

Disc Jockeys at the Northern Disc Jockey Convention also were introduced to the Mobile ProBooth for the first time. Attendees were very impressed at the clean look, the durable fabric, ease of setup, and the durability of the assembled wall in regard to people coming up and leaning on the front.

Some addtional points on the Moble ProBooth:

•Adjustable to 3-sizes

•Standard 4-foot, 6-foot, and 8-foot folding tables fit snugly inside the Pro-Booth

•Fast and easy set up, tear down, and transport

•Wheeled bag included. Handles on top and opposite wheeled end. Bag zippers open on 3-sides like a suitcase.

•The free wheeled bag measures 19 inches wide x 48 inches long x 7-inches high

•Your image is given a professional appearance

•Equipment, electrical cords, cables, valuables, tickets, money, beverages, note papers, etc. are tastefully hidden from view

•Help keep people from having access to items on your table/work area

•Invert for displaying products

•Frame is strong and stable (will withstand people leaning their elbows on it)

•Pipe frame connects via removable internal fittings (one slides into the other)

•Total blackout material (cannot see through)

•No clips or fasteners of any kind needed! Completely hassle free!!

•Roll up around one pipe until next use

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Pop

1	Timbaland	Apologize
2	Colbie Caillat	Bubbly
3	Rihanna	Hate That I Love You
4	Alicia Keys	No One
5	Finger Eleven	Paralyzer
6	Kanye West	Stronger
7	Daughtry	Over You
8	Timbaland	The Way I Are
9	Chris Brown	Kiss Kiss
10	Fergie	Clumsy

Rock

1	Seether	Fake It
2	Foo Fighters	The Pretender
3	Finger Eleven	Paralyzer
4	Sixx A.M.	Life Is Beautiful
5	Alter Bridge	Rise Today
6	Three Days Grace	Never Too Late
7	Ozzy Osbourne	I Don't Wanna Stop
8	Linkin Park	What I've Done
9	Godsmack	Good Times Bad Times
10	Kid Rock	So Hott

Urban

1	Chris Brown	Kiss Kiss
2	Alicia Keys	No One
3	Kanye West	Good Life
4	Trey Songz	Can't Help But Wait
5	Playaz Circle	Duffle Bag Boy
6	DJ Khaled	I'm So Hood
7	Dream	Shawty Is Da Shid
8	Keyshia Cole	Shoulda Let You Go
9	Cassidy	My Drink N My 2 Step
10	Soulja Boy	Soulja Girl

Country

1	Carrie Underwood	So Small
2	Kenny Chesney	Don't Blink
3	Garth Brooks	More Than A Memory
4	George Strait	How 'Bout Them Cowgirls
5	Josh Turner	Firecracker
6	Jason Michael Carroll	Livin' Our Love Song
7	Clay Walker	Fall
8	Dierks Bentley	Free And Easy (Down The…)
9	Taylor Swift	Our Song
10	Montgomery Gentry	What Do Ya Think About That

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For Sale: Lightly used DJ/KJ equipment. 2 complete Systems. Peavey, Gemini, Numark, MBT, BBE, American DJ, complete light show and more. Central Florida area. Call 1-352-303-5834 or email: williamnmillsjr@embarqmail.com for list/prices.

For Sales: Digital amps, xovers, EQs, ACL DMX par 38s with software, ProBeam Meteor, SKB cases, Crank up tripods, fog machines, mirrorballs, Primecut CDs, TopHits CDs, training and DJ educational CDs/DVDs/VHS, Martin 812s,JBLs new in box. Multi-system close-out sale too much to list: for lists, descriptions, photos and links to videos on YouTube on craigslist in Minneapolis search "Dassel DJ" or call 888-449-7386.

For Sale: Download a Free BPM List of the Top 250 DJ Songs at www.bpmlist.com. The BPM List 2007, with over 10,000 songs, is also available in printed and downloadable formats for just $25 per index (by BPM, Style, Artist, and Title).

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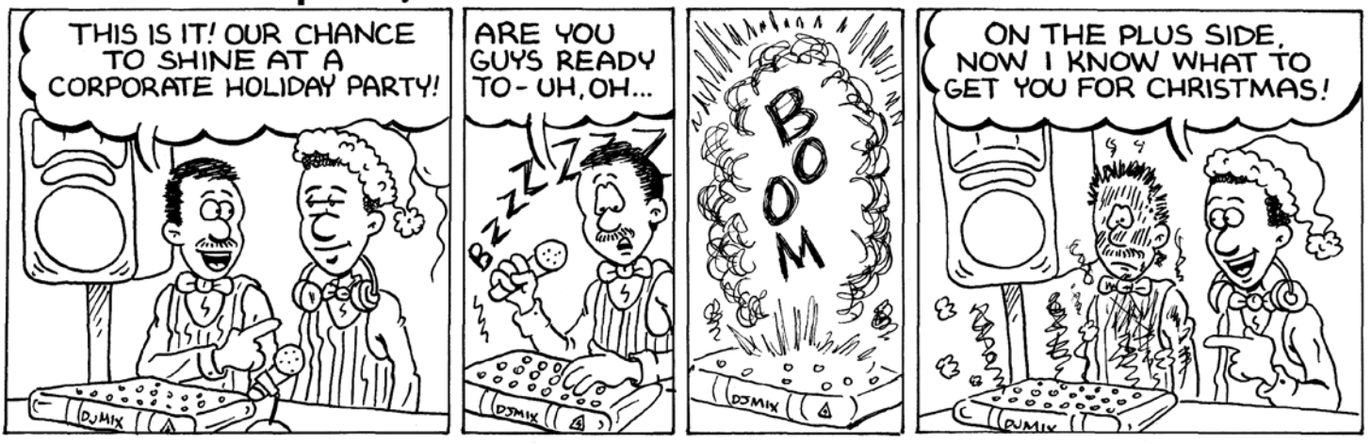

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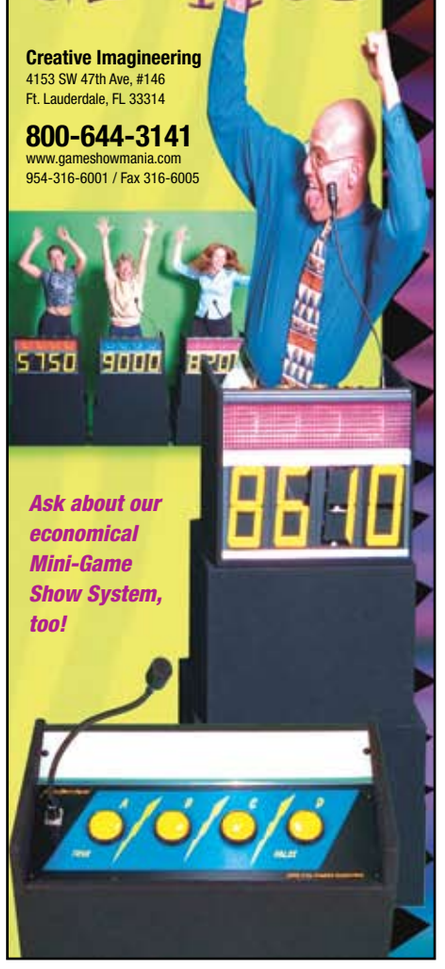

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