

Disc Jockey News

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The Monthly Disc Jockey Newspaper

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The Q Corner, Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

When I get my staff together every year around this time to talk about “Holiday Parties” it inevitably sounds like the question the youngest male asks at the Pass-over table: “Why is this time of year so much different than anything other time of year?”

There are so many answers to that question that typically our “Holiday Party Meeting” runs close to two hours.

Holiday Parties are not weddings (thank you Captain Obvious.) My staff does a majority of weddings all year long and then December comes and we

take a sharp turn and do a bunch of Holiday Parties. It’s like training for a Marathon only to show up at the start line to find out it’s a triathlon. Your Marathon training will help, but you sure have to make some changes.

I start with the most obvious yet harshest reality: A Holiday Party, unlike a wedding, may not be a true celebration.

At most weddings you have a room full of family and friends who are genuinely happy for the couple. But Holiday Parties, especially those for companies as opposed to organizations, may contain a number of guests who are less than happy to be there. Maybe they didn’t get a raise or bonus this year. Or maybe a few of their closest co-workers just got laid-off. Whatever the back story is, you, the poor unsuspecting DJ walks in ready to throw a party, only to be greeted with folded arms and glaring eyes. Uh, oh. Time to make some adjustments.

Holiday Parties are also events where just about everyone is equal. Sure

there’s a boss and a planning committee and you have to listen to them and their instructions, but unlike a wedding you don’t have a bride who has absolute veto power over any and all requests. Add to this the fact that many company’s demographics are wide and varying, and we prepare ourselves to play a little bit of everything at our Holiday Parties. For example, maybe the woman you spoke to in HR didn’t mention it, but you better have some smoking hot meringues and salsas for the three tables of Latina women.

You also lose some of the natural MCing platforms that exist at weddings. There are no bridal party introductions or cake cutting so we go out of our way to make sure we are on the microphone and involved as much as possible. If they are doing door prizes, we volunteer to MC. If they are giving away awards, we make sure we have music for each winner. We also have a number of “ice-breaker” routines we’ve accumulated through the years that not only give my

DJs a chance to be seen and heard early in the party, but also give us a better chance of getting people on the dance floor.

Years ago I used to perform at over 20 Holiday Parties in the month of December. I’d be going almost every night of the week starting early in the month right up till December 23rd. These days I let my staff take the bulk of that mid-week work which means I need to be a different kind of manager during the month of December. I am very cognizant of when my DJs work late at night and I never call them early the next day. I also make random calls to my guys who have done three or four events in a row just to pump them up and remind them to take care of their voices. It’s a unique time of year that can burn a DJ out but it can also be a joyous time of year as you spread your Holiday Cheer night after night.

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.

Somebody... Give Me A Pencil

By John Young

Wow.. the pages grew!

You are looking at the very first edition of the Disc Jockey News that is considered a periodical (newspaper by the post office standards).

The size is different, the mailing handling is different, but you are now reading this in the first part of the month instead of the end of the month!! Whoo Hoo!!

One interesting part of working on a newspaper for DJs or the conferences is the number of interesting (yet similar) conversations you find yourself involved with daily. I am not talking about those conversations held in the office between coworkers, or even the friends chatting online. I am talking about (what I would consider) cold calls from readers (or facebook fans) who want to talk shop!

I have gotten calls from DJs from across the US as well as a few from some international markets. Some call with questions, some call to share an idea, but most call to vent about the state of our industry today.

I have been in the DJ world for a while, not as long as many, but this has been my main source of income for longer than most people hold their ‘day’ jobs.

In that time, we have seen the changes from vinyl to tape, then from tape to CD, and finally from CD to MP3. While many that I talk to lament those changes (the MP3 killed the DJ industry), lets look at a couple of different directions which are effecting how the industry has changed for those of us in the 20+ year category.

The other day I was looking for something exciting to do, and wouldn’t you know it, the most exciting thing that came to mind was cleaning up my desk in the house! Yeah, I know, I DO live on the edge!

So, off I went to discover lands lost to man over the past months (the top of the desk).

Here is an offshoot on how I have changed over the years. My OLD way of cleaning was to put things in boxes and folders and find a spot to store them. This led for the need for additional storage areas and cabinets/closets for countless tons of old receipts, owners manuals, and even the occasional Polaroid gig photo!

But, that was then. Today, my cleaning methods include a garbage can on wheels that comes right up to the desk!

So, I am digging into the drawers on my desk, (yes, I know I was looking

to get the top cleaned off, but someone might come look in a drawer someday and I want them to be impressed!) and I am finding some receipts from back when we bought our first sound system!

Now, we were smart when we started. We didn’t buy a sound system until like our 4th or 5th event. For our first gig, we rented a sound system. We rented some big old Peavey speakers that were all woofer and horn. I remember it took 3 of us to put them up on the stage at the school we played at that night! We pushed them with an old CS800 amp which stood about 4 rack spaces tall and

weighted a slight bit less than the speakers.

In our next two gigs, we rented and did the ultimate in DJ cheapness; we brought our home stereo stuff from home!

That second rental wasn’t as bad. I did a bit of searching and found a photo very similar to the speakers we rented for this second event! As you can see from the photos, they were not much to look at, and they could handle a WHOOPING 150 watts per cabinet! These speakers were able to sit on stands (which we were too cheap to rent, so they once again sat

Continued on page 2

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Continued from page 1
on the stage) and they were a ton smaller than our first rentals!!

The next gig was the home stereo gig. Yes, I know, we all did it, but there is just something we found cool about using our home Kenwood amp and Fisher speakers! We went for the four home speaker system with HUGE 10" woofers! The system was so great that we had to watch the bass because it kept shutting down channel 3 and 4 in the amp if we pushed it too hard!

Why did we run some cruddy gear? Because we didn't know any better. That is the calling card for most of the 20+ year guys. Our experience with DJs was so very limited, that we didn't know what was good gear (quality, professional PA gear) and what was not worth taking out (tape decks? really?).

My first speakers (remember the receipt I found) was \$700 for the pair of Peavey speakers. In today's numbers our total first system (speakers, amp, mixer, mic) would be nearly \$4000!! Needless to say, back then, gear WAS a huge limiting factor for who got into the business. But, gear wasn't always the biggest limiting factor back then. Sometimes the knowledge needed to entertain was what kept some out.

Back then, we also didn't know what other DJs did; what was good and what was bad in the world of entertainment. All we really knew was music. If we wanted to take in another DJ's performance to get some new ideas, we might have found 1 or 2 playing on a given weekend in a club. But, those guys were just doing straight music playback and the microphone was almost unheard all night. We had to learn 1. how to use a mic, 2. when to speak, and 3. what to say through trial and error.

When we started, it took nearly 3 years worth of events (20-50 shows) before a person would have some level of quality. You would learn from your mistakes because the industry was just learning what it meant to entertain with recorded music effectively.

Gear was proportionality expensive, knowledge of performance was tough to get and the quality observed was generally very elementary, and of course music was very tough to find.

Let's compare that to today's generation of DJs.

Today, you can buy a sound system that sounds WAY better than our 80's gear with mixer for under \$2000. Taking this backwards, that would have been less than a \$1000 investment back when we bought our first system (inflation ad-

justment).

But, gear is just a small part. Yes, music figures in here pretty quickly (song access, expensive CDs in the 80s, and tapes were -well, tapes), but we have mentally beat up the whole 'download a library and you are a DJ' thing to the point of death.

I want to look at the performance learning curve. I mentioned it took YEARS for our generation to learn the craft to a reasonable level. We would have to drive miles to watch others perform because preforming DJs were few and far between. If you took off two nights a month to check out other DJs and happen to stop in and see a crappy DJ, you just wasted one night and learned very little. In the course of

a year, you might have only witnessed one or two DJs of quality (which is why many got into the business, we only saw those one or two bad jocks and KNEW we could do better).

So let's look at today. A person wants to DJ and arranges a gig for this Saturday night. After the start up DJ buys his DJ system (\$2000) and buys his music online (\$500) on Monday, he has the ability today to research and learn more in the next four days and we would have learned in 10 years! This person can learn more on Youtube searching for videos showing DJ skills and microphone use (including games and routines) than some have learned in their 20 years of performing!

Some would say today's access to educational components level the playing field between those with years of experience and those relatively new. I would actually go a step farther: today's motivated new DJs tend to work harder, learn more, and practice their craft at levels not heard of in our generation. This leave us with a generation of DJs (20+ year guys) that find themselves wondering what happened to their business?

Times have changed, yet how many of us still are thinking like a 80's DJ? Today's start up DJ is better than we were probably in our first 5 years. They have a hunger to learn and grow which will push out those that rely on yesterday's bag of tricks. They watch the videos, buy the books, read the paper, and will eat up the events if the 'old guys' decide to phone it in and not work on their craft.

Yeah, times have changed. I really feel for those that call and are meaning well, but are still stuck with their experience level and mind set stuck back in the 80's.

Mainly, because who wants to lift those speakers?



Letter To The Editor

Re: "The Q Corner, Where Quality Meets Quantity" by Mike Walter

In last month's article, Mike Walter expresses his optimism on the debate of whether or not readership will drop from the Disc Jockey News publication. Although I'd love to help him prove John wrong, I believe there will in fact be a change in readership with some of your past readers dropping off.

I don't know the latest statistics but a certain percentage of our population is definitely made up of cost conscious consumers. Their loyalty is determined by the price tag and nothing else as Mike had shared some great examples with us for which we can all relate. However, there are indeed those customers that will remain loyal to the service an organization provides, regardless of the price (to a certain extent). So I say "Yes", you will likely lose readership with your original subscribers because it's no longer free. However, at only a dollar and change per issue I suspect that it will be a small drop.

But who said that's a bad thing? Corporations raise prices all the time in an effort to improve their company image. Just ask Volkswagon when they dropped some of their less expensive models to make higher priced, better quality vehicles earlier in the decade. To share

in Mike's optimism, I think your publication will increase overall readership as you replace the loss in subscriptions with new subscriptions, and then some. I know this because I witnessed the effectiveness of your advertising first hand this morning. I've been a DJ for over twenty years and I had never heard of Disc Jockey News until I glanced this morning at a Facebook ad. It immediately caught my attention. I get the sense that the latest "buzz" generated by this and other social networking sites will help increase your readership.

When I read the August 2009 back issue (which is how I found this article), I was impressed with the quality of the articles and immediately subscribed. Come on, what other publication has Mike Walter and Harvey Mackay in the same issue? I still use "Swim With the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive" as a key sales tool.

I am happy to say that I am a new subscriber and I look forward to reading more in the coming issues. Keep up the great work. Happy Writing!

Regards,
Michael Kazis
Dynamite Productions

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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: Corporate Events.



It's that time of year again when we begin booking and performing corporate events for the holidays.

I mostly limit my DJ service to covering weddings and corporate events all year long. Sure I'll do the occasional birthday/anniversary or holiday event but, I stick mostly to weddings and corporate because this is what I do well and enjoy performing. They also have a tendency to have the higher pay rates when it comes to DJ entertainment. During the winters here in Minnesota when it gets extremely cold and feet deep in snow, the wedding business almost disappears while the corporate events take over my business.

In all my years of being in the business I have seen major changes in the corporate events being booked. Back in

the day (pre 9/11) corporate party planners would hire a DJ for a "dance" for the employees but from my experience and from speaking with other DJs or reading on DJ chat sites - I have found that a typical dance at a corporate event doesn't always go over well with the employees. The smaller the group the harder it was to get the employees up to dance. At some parties, the spouses were not even invited to which made it even harder to find people willing to shake their groove thing in front of their co-workers. No one wants to get up and dance and possibly look silly in front of their co-workers who will on Monday be talking about their Elaine Benes (Seinfeld) moves around the water cooler.

I remember back when I worked a day job and the employees didn't get along. There were "clicks" or groups of employees who literally hated other clicks or groups. One department didn't associate with another and the factory workers didn't care for those in the main office and the office workers didn't care for the management. At the party you could literally see the separation of the clicks/groups as they came in to find a place to sit down. Basically the employees only showed up at the event to suck down the free food and drink, possibly get a holiday gift and then as soon as the prizes were given out they were out the door.

Event planners got wise to this situation and then decided to hire other "entertainment" as a way to keep employees there longer. They hired a magician, hypnotists or have a casino night. Then, as an after thought they would have a DJ to play background music and/or hold a dance.

That worked for a few years, but then the employees once again got bored with the same old thing at the parties. Several years ago when the corporate planners stopped calling for my DJ service, I called them and asked why that was. They liked me and what my service did but the employees insisted on something other than the typical dance and wanted events that didn't make them look like an idiot and/or embarrass them. They wanted something a little more updated and interactive that is not only entertaining to watch but also fun for the employees to take part in.

I then purchased "Game Show Mania" for my service. It is a fun interactive trivia contest with podiums, buzzers and microphones for the contestants to stand at and play the games like on their favorite TV game shows. In the last few winters I have not performed one "dance" at a corporate event but have performed "Game Show Mania" and other fun things for those events instead.

One corporate event planner hired me to host their event which included the game show followed by the interactive Wii games. They brought in the Wii games (2) and set it up with projectors

(2) so that there were different games being played at each end of the room. I was the host/commentator doing my best Michael Buffer impression. (Let's get ready to rumble)

If you want to improve your bottom line - especially during the slow months then you may want to invest in some other types of fun entertainment for corporate events. Creative Imagineering (ad on page 15) is one of the original game show supply companies for DJs. If you have the Wii system you may want to purchase a projector and cabling so that you can turn your home system into a money making business. (note: the Wii systems can only be used for PRIVATE events, not public performances)

The latest trend in our industry is that we DJs need to have something other than "just music" for our corporate parties. The greater the variety of activities and the more fun those things are the more likely that the same company will call you back year after year. If you can offer several unique activities then each year they can hire you to provide something different for their parties and keep your clients and employees happy and returning to see what you will have next time thus ensuring future return business.

To respond to Jeff's column send an e-mail to jeffrichards@discjockeynews.com

Time To Reinvent Our Image

By Kelly Suit

This time of year is one of the busiest for my company. In Florida, fall is still busy with weddings and we are in the middle of home coming dance season as well.



By the end of home coming season my staff and I enjoy a little break before the holiday season starts. I usually don't map out our vision for the next year until early January, but I felt led to

start early.

This past Sunday, I'm sitting in church listening to my pastor preach and his sermon is on Vision. He goes on about how to achieve great things; you must have a vision and pursue it with a vengeance. He was speaking about the vision of the church, but his sermon was moving in my heart in a different way. I came home from church that day convicted that my business vision had become cloudy and if I wanted to achieve great success, I needed to have a clear vision.

For the last two years I've been running my business like shotgun shell when I should have been running it like a sniper bullet. 2009 is on the back nine and its time to make sure that 2010 succeeds in areas 2009 failed. Since the "recession", I have been letting the business run me rather than the other way around. Prior to 2008 our company had a clear-cut vision of what we wanted to be, when we wanted to get there, and

how it was going to look when we got there. Once the bottom fell out our focus stretched us in lots of directions trying to recoup lost income. Ultimately most of these attempts were fruitless and this year has been more about regrouping and refocusing.

So with 2 months left in 2009, what is your vision for 2010? Where do you see your business coming from? Are you going to grow or whither this coming year?

One of my favorite clichés is "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail". A Premier Entertainment is laying down a concrete plan now for 2010. We are committing to a certain amount of networking events, a certain amount of vendor meetings/lunches, a certain amount of investment into bridal shows / advertising / and marketing efforts. We have laid out the goals for where we expect to get our events, how many we expect, and how much each event will average. We are exploring social networking, viral marketing, as well as traditional methods for growing and expanding our business. Our business plan is fluid enough to allow us to redirect our course as needed, but focused enough that all expenditures and effort is pointing to the goal.

My challenge to you this month with 2009 winding down is to do the same. Decide exactly where you want to take your business next year. Write your goals down and share them with others (family, friends, co-workers, clients) so that you have accountability partners. Decide what you need to do to achieve your goals and write them down as well. Commit to working on your goals daily! If you have a clear and focused vision, well defined goals, a plan to achieve these goals, and you pursue your vision

with a vengeance, good things will happen!

I keep hearing that it could be two to four more years before the economy is back at full strength. With that said, there are still businesses (even DJ businesses) that are not only surviving, but flourishing. Unless you are the only DJ in town and no one is having any events what so ever, someone is getting these

events. There is work out there for the cunning, talented, and persistent. So get to work, dig in, 2010 is going to be an exciting year!

Kelly Suit can be reached at kellysuit@discjockeynews.com.

The Swap Shop has gone digital

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You can find the free classifieds online at:

<http://www.discjockeynews.com/swapshop.html>

You can sign up for the bi-weekly Swap Shop email at:

<http://www.discjockeynews.com/emailsignup.asp>

email your swap shop 'for sale' or 'wanted' ads to: swap@discjockeynews.com

The Swap Shop emails reach over 2500 DJs every other week with Tuesday delivery. The Swap Shop is for personal DJ classified items only (DJs selling gear or looking for something). Business links are available.

Do You Take YES For An Answer?

By Jeffery Gitomer

I'm at London Gatwick Airport two hours before my flight home to Charlotte. I wandered into the Ted Baker store. I love Ted Baker clothing.

I found a few things I liked, but they didn't have one of the items I wanted in my size. I was assured I could get it online. Great!

I completed my purchase, and went to the airline lounge to get on my computer and buy the other item.



Easy online access, found what I wanted in less than a minute. But when I went to complete my purchase, I could not find the USA as one of the 40 or so "ship to" countries.

So I chose the online "live chat" option to help me buy and here is what ensued:

Chat Information

Hello and welcome. One of Ted's Personal Shoppers will be right with you.

Chat Information

You're now connected with one of Ted's Personal Shoppers.

Karen: Hello I'm Karen, one of Ted's Personal Shopping Assistants!

Karen: What brings you to our website today?

Jeffrey: Why can't I get a garment shipped to the USA?

Jeffrey: Nuborn Size: 6 Colour: Red

Karen: I'm afraid, Jeffrey, we don't ship to US at the moment.

Jeffrey: You ship to Bulgaria, but not to the US?

Jeffrey: How do I get this garment?

Jeffrey: I can give you my FedEx account number

Karen: I can understand that. Do you have any relative or friend in the UK?

Jeffrey: What are my options?

Karen: You can get the item delivered to someone who is in the UK.

Jeffrey: You can't put the garment in a box with my FedEx number?

Jeffrey: How about shipping it to your store in Las Vegas? I'll be there next week.

Karen: I'm sorry, I'll not be able to do that due to the security reasons.

Jeffrey: What?

Karen: I'm afraid, it will not be possible.

Jeffrey: What's unsafe about a sweat-shirt?

Karen: I will not be able to place the order due to the security reasons.

Jeffrey: Please explain "security"

Jeffrey: Please give me a phone number of a senior manager at Ted Baker

Karen: We are not allowed to place the order for any of our customers.

Karen: You can call on our customer service phone number 0845 130 4278 Ext 1 between 9am and 6pm, Monday to Friday

Jeffrey: No -- I want a direct line to a manager.

Karen: I'm sorry, I don't have his number with me.

Jeffrey: I cannot tolerate lies

Jeffrey: You have a number -- I'll find it tomorrow -- call the manager -- and report you.

Karen: Ok, for the stores information of US, please emails us at ask.ted@ted-baker.com.

Karen: Our team will help you to with the details about the availability of the jacket in the stores of US.

Jeffrey: I don't want a TEAM -- I want a person.

Jeffrey: Please give me a phone number of a senior manager at Ted Baker.

Karen: We are not allowed to place the order for any of our customers.

Karen: You can call on our customer service phone number at 0845 130 4278 Ext 1 between 9am and 6pm, Monday to Friday

Karen: There will be the person who will give you the details.

Karen: Jeffrey, if you want I can help you with some options.

Jeffrey: How about this -- I can be reached at 704-333-1112 -- have someone call me tomorrow, late or Sunday or Monday -- you know what I want -- have someone contact me to get the order

Jeffrey: Nuborn Size: 6 Colour: Red

Karen: I can understand this Jeffrey and it's really good for us that you like our products, but at the moment we don't ship to US.

Jeffrey: You can't understand anything -- you're a corporate robot that refuses to take "yes" for an answer.

Karen: If you have any of your relatives or friends in the UK or in other countries, they can help you to place this order for you.

Jeffrey: Thanks for nothing, lies, and a lousy experience -- I've just spent my last dime at Ted Baker thanks to you.

Karen: I'm sorry I couldn't help you much.

Jeffrey: You couldn't help me at all.

Jeffrey: Have someone from the US call me.

Jeffrey: Have your boss call me.

Jeffrey: They should teach you how to say yes.

Karen: I wish that I can help you to place the order, but it's not in my hand.

Jeffrey: Then pass it to someone al-

lowed to think and help customers.

Karen: I'm afraid no body can do that.

Jeffrey: What a joke.

Jeffrey: No one can think or help?

Jeffrey: Pathetic.

Hello! We're in a recession. I'm trying to give them some of my hard earned money, and they refuse to take it, "for security reasons." Huh?

Now granted this woman is probably in a call center in a foreign land, has never been to a Ted Baker store, and is reading from a script prepared by people who have no concept of sales or service. BUT they left my money on the table, and frustrated me to a point that I'm telling you about it.

And please don't miss the point. This is NOT against Ted Baker, although they do look rather foolish. This is a lesson for YOU. How many of your customers are being told "no"?

RULE ONE OF CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION: Tell me what you can do, not what you can't do!

Want a few more rules of customer service and loyalty? Go to www.gitomer.com and enter the words LOYALTY FORMULA 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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It's Time to Organize Your DJ Business...

Planning The Holiday Season

By Mitch Taylor

It's that time of year again and thoughts and preparations are underway for holiday parties. How's your calendar? Full? Not as full as you'd like? Let's find a way to fix that. We may not be in enough time to help you this year but take a moment and clip out this article, put it in your database or planner and follow through for next year. What? You don't have a planner or database. Check out my good friend Troy at www.djeventplanner.com. He'll hook you up!

At Mobile Beat 2007, Rob Peters of Rob Peters Entertainment in Massachu-

setts had a GREAT seminar, one that has made my business better. It was called DJ Business Calendar. Rob went on to explain and break down what items you should be working on in your dj business for each month of the year. During the month of October Rob suggested that all of your clients work somewhere. These people already believe in you, love what you did and/or are doing for them, and are probably in need of someone to perform at their work holiday parties. You may be thinking to yourself "Yeah...but how do I find out who to call?" Simple. Ask your client. They know who's in charge of what and can usually get you in touch with the person or people you need to talk to.

How about New Years Eve? If you don't have a regular yearly event...stop in and see some of your venues. What are they doing New Year's Eve? Do they host a regular holiday party for the community? This year I was able to pick up a community holiday party (one hosted at a venue for those businesses

not large enough to throw their own where it's open to the public and each company will have its own little area of the room. This will pay dividends for me and I was able to pick it up by keeping my ear to the ground and knowing when to make the call (back in late August by the way).

This time of year for those of us in the Midwest and East Coast is normally a slower time of year for bookings as well. It's a time to recharge your batteries and take a break from the seemingly endless sea of events that we have throughout the peak months of our calendar year. Take time away from your business and spend it with your loved ones.

David McKay, a Mormon prophet has a famous quote that says "No other success can compensate for failure in the home." STOP. Think about that for a moment. By taking time out each day to recharge and taking vacations or mental breaks during our slower times of the year, this allows us to remain fresh and cutting edge for our future clients...

therefore allowing us to reap the rewards of success in business and lead a well balanced life. Thanks for reading. I'll be back next month with a look back on 2009 with what I've learned.

Mitch Taylor is a 17 year veteran of the mobile disc jockey industry, starting out on the cruise ships of Carnival Cruise Lines. He is a member of the American Disc Jockey Association and WED Guild™. Mitch owns and operates Taylored Entertainment in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and can be reached at 906.786.6967 or via email at mitch@discjockeynews.com.

Good To Great - How I Get There

By Dan Nichols

I bring the best gear; even my back up equipment is top shelf. I bring more songs than I could possibly play in a lifetime. I arrive 2-3 hours before I play and I make sure all the evenings details are ironed out and in order. I am even careful to work with the clients that feel right to me. Truth is, 80% of my clients over the last 18 years make a b line for my table after an event to thank me for the job well done. I was one of only 2 independent operators in my state to make the Knot Magazine's Best of List which is quite amazing when you consider the odds against an independent running in the primaries with a much smaller reach.

If this feels like I am bragging, I'm not. I am however stating some facts to validate the fact that people like my work. I even matured enough over nearly 2 decades of doing this to know simply that I am good at what I do. With all that said there was something that kept me from being great. Something so subversive I couldn't see it, couldn't recognize it and could only at rare times feel it.

After a ton of soul searching over a period of 42 years it came to me that though I was all about the bride and groom having a good time and wanting to serve them - I was far, far away from taking good care of myself. I was not loving me for who I was and where I was at as a mobile dj. I felt embarrassed when people asked what I did. I beat myself up thinking yeah, I'm a 35 year old dj, 36 year old dj, 37 year old dj and so forth. I would only share this self abuse with my wife and a few close friends but it was there. You see at the age of 14 or so I determined I was going to be a motivational speaker and real estate investor -- not a frikkin dj. That wasn't even on

the radar screen.

At some point down the road I determined that part of getting to the pro speaker category would require me being comfortable in front of crowds. So I decided I'd dj for a few years, make some money and get in front of crowds at the same time. One year became a dozen and then eventually 18 years. I had actually grown to not just dislike myself but have disdain for myself. If there were laws against mentally, verbally and emotionally abusing one's self, I'd have been on death row in solitary confinement for multiple offenses - a danger to my "self". I didn't like me. I would regularly beat myself and my business up. I disrespected God's divine work in me, and the world could feel it.

What I'm learning about me is that being gentle and caring for myself is paramount to being a better husband, a better father and a better dj. I learned that when I did an event with appreciation and a grateful heart, when I did an event with love for me, where I was at in my journey that in an instant I could go from good to great. That shift in my opinion of self made all the difference in the world. It affected the world around me and changed my reality. When asked what I do now, I pump up my chest just short of thumping it and say, I'm a mobile dj.

I go to gigs now with a grin I can't wipe from my face. I get to deliver this evenings entertainment. I stand there in a sea of excellence as the chosen one, the emcee of this evenings event and a custodian of this page in this couple's life story. Time and space synchronized to make this moment possible and this couple chose me to make their event, the event they dreamt of. What are the odds? Are they even calculable? Not only am I here to deliver a great time for the client but I am here to deliver a great time for me.

This dj/client relationship is symbiotic. This may seem uber-spiritual but science is beginning to back it up as well. When I love what I am doing and who

I am, they can't help but feel that emotion. I used to get fleeting glimpses of this ecosystem, now I see it clearly more often than not. I am experiencing a tipping point from feeling separate from the whole. I don't feel so much of the us and them anymore. I now feel more a part of the whole of life, a unity, a oneness than I do a separateness. Today and hereafter, I am a Deep-J. Today and hereafter I will love me and respect me so I can share this true authentic love and respect for those I play for. There will be no sugar water. I will deliver exactly what I have for all of us to enjoy. Today we will all enjoy this time together as one. My client will only "get" my excitement to

make this the greatest day of her... our life.

Dan Nichols is a professional business coach and published author based in Michigan. He also has 18 years experience as a mobile dj. He's looking for some entrepreneurs to review free of charge his latest audio release "8 Degrees 2008". For a free copy email him your contact info at admin7029@businesslaunchexpert.com

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From The Other Side...

By Jake Palmer

Last month I talked about the importance of the details of your clients wedding, from the sales process, planning, to the execution of the event. In an effort to help you become better at what we do, I am using the experience of planning my own wedding as a useful learning tool.

For many of you with years of experience in this business, some of the things I am discussing will seem like review, and that's ok. Sometimes we get so caught up in our own "dance floor world" that we overlook the obvious. I hope that some of the things I can share with you about my experience will help to remind you of what it is that makes us successful, and propels us to the top.

How much time do you spend preparing for each wedding you do? Several years ago, when I worked for a larger "Mc-Wedding" type company, our DJs were required to have one (1) phone conversation with a client no later than Tuesday before the event. I was always amazed at the number of young, cocky, DJs that would never call, or call at the last possible minute. They would spend 10-15 minutes on the phone discussing the dance with the client, then, they were upset when things didn't go smoothly and they didn't get a tip. How many pieces of "flair" do you wear? Are you doing the bare minimum, and then letting your talent carry you through the event? What I am talking about is follow through!

It is truly amazing how many vendors simply do not follow through on the little details that seem so important to the bride and groom. You take the time to sit with your clients, talk with them about the image of their event. Coordinate with the caters, hall, photographer, ect... but if you don't follow through with the details, it's just time wasted.

Last month I mentioned that details are the little things that most people

won't notice if done properly, but stick out like a sore thumb if not done at all. At my reception this summer, I had a groomsman in a wheelchair, no big deal... I reminded the hall to set up a ramp to the head table risers, they did... but no one thought to remove the chair from his place setting. This is not a big deal, but again, these are the details I am talking about. My DJ, a long time friend of mine, failed to play some songs we really wanted to hear at our dance... why, because I never told him we wanted them. I made the mistake of ASSUMING he would play them. Have you ever assumed something about your dance that turned out to be wrong? Have you ever thought that just maybe your client is assuming something about you and your service that isn't correct?

Take the time to go through all the details with your bride and groom... and this is important... tell them exactly what you are going to do for them, and how you are going to do it. This way there is no confusion, everyone will be on the same page, and nothing gets assumed, or forgotten.

The other factor here is what I call building value or creating value. What makes those little, unseen details so valuable, is making sure the client knows you are doing them. Cover all the bases so the client knows you are going to take care of more than just the music, then DO IT.

I like to joke with my DJ friends, that if the limo driver is late picking up the Bride and Groom at the church, the DJ catches hell all night. It's because we are the last contact they have with a vendor. We also spend the most time with them that day, imagine how difficult it would be if they are mad at YOU, because YOU dropped the ball. It's up to you to create the image of yourself, and the image your client want for their event. The average bride and groom spend almost a full year planning their wedding day... how much time do you spend to make it happen?

Jake Palmer can be reached at jakepalmer@discjockeynews.com.

Don't Be Left Behind

By Ron Ruth

I attended the Wedding MBA Conference last month in Las Vegas along with a little over 1000 other wedding professionals from across the country. Now, I've been going to DJ industry conferences for at least the last 15 years, mostly National but I've also supported a number of regional conferences, as well.

There's no doubt that I've always found inspiration in what I've learned from the various speakers at these functions and I've often come back to Kansas City with an eagerness to improve my talent, skill and business practices. But other than the

time when I heard Mark Ferrell speak in Vegas a few years back about "Getting What Your Worth," I've rarely felt the same personal, immediate call to action that has overcome me since the Wedding MBA Conference ended.

No. It has nothing to do with raising my rates. Although, at the time I heard Mark and wanted to make that leap, I remember feeling somewhat overwhelmed with the many steps I'd have to take to accomplish that goal. In short, for me at least, the question was always, "Where do I begin?"

At the Wedding MBA Conference, a great many of the presentations were devoted to the surge in on-line social networking and how important it is to any wedding related business to not only increase their on-line presence but to be active participants on the multitude of sites from Facebook to Twitter to LinkedIn to Blogger, Word Press, You Tube and the list goes on and on. These are just a few of the new ways my clients, your clients, will be finding all of us to-

Unpacking Concept: Networking

By Ken Petersen

The little guy is only as big as the folks they network with; making no limit as to how big the little guy can become.

Let that sink in. Read it again.

"The little guy is only as big as the folks they network with; making no limit as to how big the little guy can become."



Many recognizable businesses, artists, and personal dynasties got where they are today by whom they know and how they

utilized resources around them. These people and businesses knew who to surround themselves with. Steve Jobs continuously credits those around him for much of the success of Apple. Sam Walton took a very small store and built a dynasty.

It's certain many of you are enthralled by the stage that U2 is currently touring with. That's a stage and sound rig that grew from a 30-year relationship between Joe O'Herlihy and U2. That stage was a design concept, an idea, was thought up during the Joshua Tree tour. That album was released March 9, 1987. It took 22 years to see that monster spaceship take form. 26 years ago U2 made history playing in a freezing rain at Red Rocks. O'Herlihy was there for that.

Any "big thing" started by being a little thing. Every big name started by being just a name. Sure, someone with limitless financial resources can throw countless dollars into marketing to become "seen." But, that product being marketed is still nothing until it is felt. How we interact with people is how we are felt. In just a couple interactions, the people you network with can get a feel for you, as well as you getting a feel for them. By keeping them in mind, you are keeping yourself in their minds. Help them to help you.

You have your company operating in your market. That's all the bigger it really needs to be. But are you the biggest thing sought after? How "hot" are you? Water isn't hot until it has an outside energy introduced to it. Networking is the outside energy that can be applied to you. Adding one new person to your networking loop can make a huge difference in how you feel about your business overnight. Having one person say one thing new about you can revitalize you for months. But, you have to go out and get them.

In the last issue, I spoke of many of the opportunities that attending a bridal show/fair. The other event professionals at the bridal show are some of the basic folks you should be connected with.

day and in the future. But its not enough just to be seen and heard in cyberspace, you've got to know how to "dress the part" and what to say that will make you stand out from all others. Having a web site is no longer enough if you want to compete effectively. And, assuming you have a web site, how easily can it be opened and read on a cell phone?

I'm no more technically savvy than I am a writer and I've got to tell you, I'm overwhelmed by how much work I've

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Expand your circles a bit more. Get to know your local Young Professionals group as well as booth Young Republicans and Young Democrats. Get your name out to the other small businesses in your area. There are countless entrepreneurs just around the corner. You'll be surprised to know they are in the same boat as you!

Many DJs have cute ways of stating the same thing. I've heard "netWEAVING," "REALationships," and a slew of other word pictures in recent times. The words are only valuable until you do it. I broke out of my little circle a couple weeks ago, by setting a booth up at the local ZONTA expo. In case you are not aware of who ZONTA is, they are a group of Professional Executive Women. I had nothing to market directly to any of the attendees. I knew that going in. What I came out with was a big stack names of ladies willing to spread my name in and around their circles. The other booths were aggressively networked with. In fact, I took pictures of most everyone's booth, handed those in the booths a card that stated three things: Name of my company, a Facebook logo, and a copy of the "Become a Fan" button. I told the folks in their booths to look me up, become a fan, and label their pictures. I didn't go to market directly, I went to expand my circle of connections with everyone else's circle of connections. I've even offered my cargo trailer to a gal I met at the expo to help her move. She chats to her customers and mentions me and the offer I extended her.

For some strange reason, networking is being touted as direct reciprocity - you do for me/ I do for you. That is sad that DJs see networking that shallowly when all you need to do is talk favorably about those people.

Remember, you are only as big as the people that know who you are and talk about you.

Ken Petersen can be reached at kenpetersen@discjockeynews.com.

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What's Wrong...

By Ken Day

...with My Wedding Show Booth?

I'm certain if you do or have done wedding shows you've asked yourself this question to one degree or another. Most of the time what you are really asking is "Why doesn't my booth get me more weddings?" I'm going to help you



answer that question with a great deal of information that you can put to use right away.

First, let's look at what the purpose of your wedding show booth. Well, in a minute.

Now, we have come up with ideas for our booth to make it look cool with things like a great audio system, be it high tech, compact, a wall of sound, flashing lights, gobos, special backdrops, and you in the "Just Right" attire and a smile on your face. We have designed the most cool looking handout piece with the perfect details about us and our services. We've spent a great deal of time and money to create that "Wow Factor" to draw those brides and grooms to our booth only to hand them that piece of marketing, which is the one item that will get them to contact us. We might even get to say a couple of words to them before they head off to the cake and caterer sampling tables.

Then we wait and wonder why, why didn't they contact me?

The reality is that ever vendor is wondering the same thing. Because, they had a cool booth as well and all the other DJs had, pretty much, the same thing you did with little variation. You blended in with almost every other vendor there by having a "cool" booth and handing out one piece of information that had everything they (Brides and Grooms) needed to contact you. And, just like everyone

else at the show you later get a brides list and send 1 e-mail - right away.

Ok, now we can go back to the purpose you're your wedding show booth. There is only one, that's right 1 single purpose for your booth.

To Make You Money - That's right, deposits in your bank.

Everything else is fluff. So, now let's examine what will aid you in being a business and money making machine through your bridal show booth.

The booth itself, only need to make you identifiable as a DJ. You could put up a sign that says "Wedding DJ" of course, you want it to look professional. But, that is all you really need. Now you say, what about sound and lights? Nice fluff, I say. You are not selling equipment or lights. That's all stuff you can do show and tell with later at your first or second meeting. Besides, everyone else has that stuff in their booth. The reality is that all DJs pretty much have the same "professional" equipment, lights, and music these days. So, showing it makes you no different than the next guy. After many bride and groom panels and client surveys. The Brides and Grooms just want to know what service each booth is providing and the rest is fluff, especially for DJs. They assume that since you are there that you have the professional equipment, lighting, and music that they want to have for their wedding. As for music the assumption today is that if you don't have their music you can download it or they can give it to you from their I-Pod, unlike all the way back in the 80's and 90's when only the DJs and audiophiles had "all" the music.

Here's one idea I've used to draw people to my booth. If the show producer allows it, set up a water cooler on the edge of your booth. With all the food sample going on the brides and grooms just want some water to wash it down. They see your water cooler and you pleasantly offer them some water and conversation because you are the person that thinks about the client and attention

to the details.

On to Your handout material with all the information that will allow them to contact you. You are handing out 1 piece of information about you and your company with the expectation of the bride and groom being so impressed with your handout that they call you and book right away. This places you at a serious disadvantage and provides you with a wasted opportunity to make more of an impression than the other vendors put together. How is this you ask? Well, you are doing exactly what everyone else is doing by hanging you hope, dreams, and bank account on 1, yes 1 piece of paper, that you call your wedding show marketing material. Innately, people are lazy and if that have to put any effort into contacting you it won't happen - ever. The first expectation you have is for them to accept your marketing material at the show and then when they get home, with the other hundreds of similarly crafted marketing materials, they will notice and read all the enticing details you have provided in your materials and feel compelled to contact you and you alone. I know this is really a pessimistic view of our marketing materials, but unfortunately is holds true.

Here are a few ways to cause your marketing materials and your company recognition to change by leaps and bounds, thereby placing you ahead of all the other vendors.

Create multiple materials to provide to the Brides and Grooms. Make a couple of them pieces that assist them with their wedding planning. Such as bookmarks that have your company information on one side and the other side is set up for the bride to write down the contact information for her vendors or an entertainment comparison worksheet or a guide to get through all the information they are collecting at the bridal show. I have one that states "Are You Getting Too Much Information" and tells them how to quickly and effectively go through all the material they are collecting at the show. This will offer multiple opportunities to place you and your company in front of the potential clients eyes. You are also setting your-

self up as the authority and the solution to other elements of their wedding beyond being their DJ. Every time I have used these and other materials at wedding shows the attendees express their gratitude for the assistance and how I am helping them because no other vendors were looking out for them, the brides and groom. It made a difference when I contacted them as well, they were much more receptive. Ask for their contact information at the show. These are warm contacts and will usually go much more smoothly. (If you would like samples of these materials, please e-mail me and I'll e-mail them back to you.)

A quick note about attire in your booth. Referring back to the Bride and Groom panels, common statements about the DJ attire in the booth was as follows:

Tuxedo - Too Uptight - Dinner Party

Tux Vest & Tux Shirt - Cheesy
Suit & Tie - Not Approachable - Too Business like

Suit & No Tie - Right Amount of Professionalism & Fun mix

Polo Shirt & Dress Pants - Partyer - Too Casual

Shirt & Jeans - Low Budget & Not Professional

The follow-up is where most of us really fall on our faces and feel one e-mail was enough. Remember, people are lazy and if they have to work at it to contact you, they won't. So, take that list and devise a multifaceted campaign to improve your bank deposits. They first step to making your new clients campaign work is while you are at the show, Ask every bride and groom or family member if it's ok if you contact them and that it won't be a high pressure sales follow up to the show - promise. When you get the show list wait for 2 weeks before you send out your e-mails. The e-mail should have something of value for the potential client in, an upgrade at no charge if they setup a meeting in the next 2 weeks. Another e-mail should go out 2 weeks after that asking if they got the other e-mail and tell them you are sorry, they lost the free upgrade opportunity, but you'd still

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Sales: Up Close And Personal

By Harvey Mackay

In the Broadway musical "My Fair Lady," Professor Higgins has driven his prodigy Eliza Doolittle to exhaustion teaching her how to speak proper English. The professor shows little acknowledgement of her hard work, even when her pronunciation improves markedly.

Later in the play, Eliza is again frustrated when her would-be sweetheart Freddie talks about his affection for her in romantic phrases—but keeps his clumsy distance and doesn't kiss her.

"Words! Words!" Eliza explodes. "I am so sick of words! I get words all day through. First from him, now from you! Is that all you blighters can do?"

Then she admonishes him: "Don't talk of stars burning above; if you're in love, show me! Tell me no dreams filled with desire. If you're on fire, show me!"

There is a profound lesson here for sales people, as well as lovers. Or, for that matter, for anyone trying to persuade someone to their point of view. An old proverb says: Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. But involve me, and I'll understand.

Everyone in sales is familiar with the four Ps—product, price, place and promotion. I think there should be a fifth P—personal, as in make it personal.

There are any number of ways to personalize your product and approach. I'm not just talking about making things personal by customization. Plenty of products out there can have a name or monogram stenciled on, from jewelry to towels to furniture. Hundreds of thousands of U.S. businesses offer some level of personalization for their products. And

this trend is certainly not slowing due to our ego-centric marketplace.

But to really hit close to home, I'm talking about making things personal by helping people understand how they will be affected. Showing people what a product or service will mean to them. Taking the pitch right to their level, so that it seems the product is made for them and no one else. Because in reality, it is.

A personalized approach is even more important today with so much of our communication on a very impersonal level. People order on-line and do their banking at ATMs with no social interaction. Infomercials clog the airwaves, followed by automated phone ordering. Even grocery and home improvement stores have self-checkout lanes, making it possible to shop with a hundred other people and not speak to anyone. We've lost a lot of that human touch.

Ever notice how the most effective commercials on television have a spokesperson who could be your next-door neighbor? Someone you could trust, someone who would be completely straight.

A prime example right now is the health care debate. Doctors and patients are telling their stories, sharing very personal experiences. Both sides of the debate know that those representatives will be more effective than the politicians who are absent from the ads, even though they will be making the decisions.

Politicians in campaign mode operate quite differently. They shake hands and make appearances in the tiniest of towns, just to reach voters. A surrogate wouldn't have the same effect.

Similarly, when you have an opportunity for face time with a customer, make it really memorable. Seemingly mundane products are necessary to most businesses, but your approach needn't be boring.

Our company sells envelopes by the

millions, but I still get excited when I can help customers improve their business, present a sharper image or streamline procedures. Who knew an envelope could do all that? What I am selling isn't the envelope; it's what the envelope will do for them.

During World War II, the U.S. government began offering soldiers a life insurance policy with a \$10,000 benefit if they were killed in combat. In one unit, a young lieutenant delivered a polished presentation on the details of the plan. No one signed up. Then an older sergeant quietly asked the lieutenant if he could talk to the troops.

"Men," he said, "if you get this life insurance and you get killed, the government is going to send your family

\$10,000. If you don't get this insurance and you get killed, the government isn't going to send your family anything. So who do you think they're going to send up to the front lines—the ones who'll cost \$10,000 when they're killed, or the ones who won't cost anything?"

All the soldiers immediately signed up.

Mackay's Moral: *If you want to really grab your audience, use a personal touch.*

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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got in front of me to pull my company into the 21st century. But, what I heard and what I learned at the conference is also my immediate, personal call to action and I've set out to make certain that my company does not get left behind by creating a short list of my most pressing goals.

Facebook: I've had my personal page up for sometime and am only a couple friends away from having 150. Woo-hoo! But, my business page is still sitting in the que waiting to be published while I try to figure out exactly what I'm going to put on it that will make it different and unique. My friends say I over think things. They may be right.

Twitter: Still considering it. Does anyone really care what I'm thinking at any given moment? Perhaps they should.

LinkedIn: I've got a profile and am a member of 3, wedding industry groups. Although, it appears that, no matter how much information I provide in my profile, it will never be more than 55% complete. Short of submitting a DNA sample, I'm not sure how I'm ever going to get it to 100%.

Blogger: I've got a blog. Haven't posted to it since February of this year. Why? Blogging is hard! I even bought and read books about "how to blog" in an effort to get better and make it easier. I do, however, have some interesting things I could post but, again, blogging

is hard. Do I need to go back and fill in posts that I've not made since February to make it more relevant? Should I delete the old posts and make it look like I'm just starting? Regardless, I plan to blow the dust off of it in the next couple of weeks.

Word Press: I've heard that Word Press is better than Blogger because you can integrate it into your web site which gives it a greater presence. So, I downloaded the program and began reading the instructions. I think Blogger will work just fine.

You Tube: I'm really enjoying this one and am wondering why I've not posted here sooner. I've started editing videos of past performance that I hope to have up in the very near future. But, done right, the process is extremely time consuming.

So, that's my short list but its also only the beginning. With ever evolving technology, I'm certain that, even when I think I'm finally caught up, which is going to be a while, new innovations and new on-line networking sites will have presented themselves.

The question for you, if you've not already taken the steps to make your presence known, is "Where are you going to start?" Better yet, "When are you going to get started?"

Ron Ruth can be reached at ronruth@discjockeynews.com.

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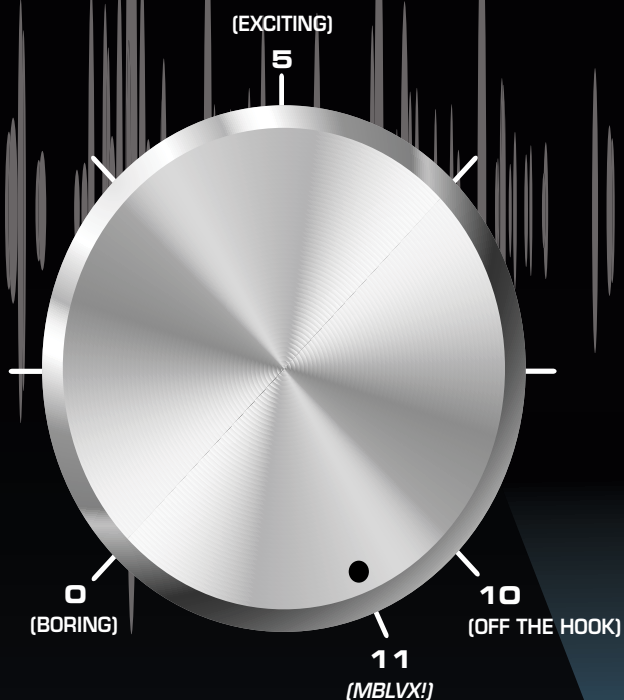
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Gear Review: Chauvet O-Beast

By Kirk Holslin

Chauvet has launched a new derby effect called the O-Beast. The first thing I noticed after unpacking the O-Beast is its eight huge lenses. They produce a 115 degree beam spread that is wide enough to cover most any dance floor. The light weighs slightly more than six pounds. You are also able to string up to 25 units together using the additional power out on the back of the unit. (At 120 Volts) The auto switching power supply allows the light to automatically adjust to a worldwide voltage range of 100-240 volts.

The O-Beast contains three 1 watt LEDs (Red, Green & Blue) and is capable of operating in 4 Channel DMX or Master/Slave Mode. Channel 1 is used to select your colors. Channel 2 is used for controlling the strobe speed. Channel 3 is color macro speed. (Used for changing colors within the built in programs) Channel 4 is controls the rotation speed of the motor

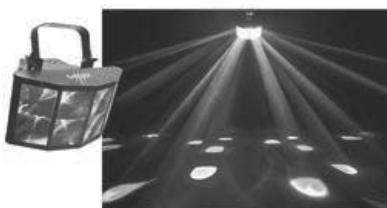
The O-Beast also has built-in automated programs as well as built-in sound

activated programs in DMX or Master/Slave mode. If you are using the light in Master/Slave mode there is a microphone sensitivity control.

As I have stated in previous articles, "I want to be sure that the piece will work within my current setup and the type of events I perform. If it doesn't currently work, how could I incorporate the new piece of gear for future setups or event types?"

I first tested the O-Beast in Master/Slave mode. I was curious to see how the fixture ran as a typical derby effect. I set the dip switch settings to "Master sound-active" and turned up the music. The fixture functioned as expected; patterns of dots spinning around the dance floor to the beat of the music. With that said, the built in programs do give different patterns, strobe and speed rotations. This is a plus. If I just had to watch the RGB dots rotate to the music I would have to limit the amount of time the light was active.

Round two of testing was done in



DMX mode. I connected the O-Beast to my light controller and set the fixture to channel one. Using a fixture in DMX mode provides many more options to create the most desired effect on the dance floor.

I'm sure most of us prefer to place the light into one of its pre-programmed, sound active modes and let the light run throughout the night as we program the music and entertainment skills. (This can be done since there is no duty cycle for the light.) However, I would not recommend that. I would recommend taking some time and learn to tweak the light while the dance is going strong. This can really help you add more energy to your dance floor.

The O-Beast does have several controller options that allow it to become a more versatile fixture within your setup. Remember you have the ability to control the colors, rotation speed and strobe effect. Just because it falls into the "Derby" category does not mean it has to stay there.

Imagine that you are entering a slow music set. Select one of your pre-programmed "slow scenes" and you can transform our dance floor into an intimate, romantic get-away. If you don't have a scene pre-programmed, you could do what I did. I set the color to red and set the motor to a slow rotation. This created a nice soft effect across the dance floor. If you're a bit creative and

use a mirror ball, see if you can shine a couple of beams onto the mirrors.

As you begin to understand the various DMX control settings on the light, the O-Beast shows greater potential as you move into high energy dance music. The strobe action coupled with fast color changes and fast motor speed adds a great deal of energy to the dance floor. The lights within the fixture are quite powerful and really can dance with the music

As a primary dance light fixture the O-Beast could be used at small to mid size school events and basic wedding dances. If you wanted to use the O-Beast in a large school system or club system it would need to be linked together with a few more O-Beasts. Given the flexibility of looping DMX and power in/outs it wouldn't be hard to set a few up within a couple of minutes.

Price Point: Scanning the web I saw price points from \$180 to \$200. The price point is reasonable, but I would prefer to see it around the \$150 to \$175 price.

If there is a piece gear you would like me to review feel free to send me a note at kirkholslin@discjockeynews.com. I'll see what I can do for you.

You can contact Kirk at kirkholslin@discjockeynews.com. If you would like your product reviewed, please contact the Disc Jockey News at sales@discjockeynews.com

Press Releases

American Audio's User-friendly DP2 Media Controller Makes It Easier Than Ever To Play Digital Files

Friends are always ready to lend each other a helping hand, and that's certainly the case with American Audio's new DP2 Digital Media Controller. A super user-friendly and very versatile digital controller, the new American Audio product helps DJs and mobile entertainers make a smooth transition from playing CDs to digital files thanks to a variety of convenient features and the intuitive layout of its control panel.

Light-weight, compact and rack mountable so it's easy to transport and set-up, the DP2Universal Midi Controller is an all-in-one performance tool. The DP2 features a built-in 2-channel mixer, sampler, scratch jog wheel and four on-board effects.

Offering the best of both worlds, the DP2 makes it easy to play and mix music from a computer, while still offering the familiar tactile feel of traditional CD player hardware. Designed to be very DJ-friendly, the unit's dual player decks have a layout that's just like a traditional CD player, with familiar features like a large jog wheel and 4 Hot Cue buttons on each side. The fact that the DP2 has a look and feel that's familiar to DJs makes it very easy to get used to – in fact, doing things like loading tracks, loops, scratching and adding effects are as easy, if not easier, on the DP2 than they are on a traditional CD player.

A really cool feature of the DP2 is the fact that it has 4 sample buttons on each side, with an adjustable 8-30 seconds per sample and multi-layered sample playback. Other CD-deck-like features include a Scratch Effect; Seamless Loop;

Smart Loop; Pitch Lock; Pitch Bend; and a Pitch Adjustment Knob (+/-4%, +/-8%, +/-16%).

"Because of its traditional CD player layout and features -- and the tactile sensation you get when operating it -- the DP2 makes it easy for DJs and mobile entertainers to make the transition from playing CDs to digital files," said Tom Freret, National Sales Manager for American Audio.

The DP2 also makes it easy to mix up tracks with its convenient on-board 2-channel digital mixer. Featuring a crossfader and volume faders, the mixer includes Bass/Treble adjustment, microphone volume adjustment, master volume, and track and deck selectors – all the tools a DJ needs for easy professional mixing. The four on-board effects (flanger, echo, filter and bit crusher) make it very easy to add extra dimensions to any performance.

With its portability, all-in-one convenience and simple operation, the DP2 is ideal for mobile DJs and clubs that want access to a large song library and the ability to perform easy music playback and editing. "If you've made the switch to digital music, and you're looking for something that will play, edit and mix music from your computer, this one unit will do it all," said Freret. "Plus, it's smaller and more affordable than most other MIDI controllers you'll find out there."

In addition to the hardware, the DP2 package includes its own PCDJ DEX LE software, and it will also work with most popular DJ programs. Minimum system requirements include: Windows XP or Windows Vista operating system (32-bit and 64-bit supported); PIV 1.2 GHz com-

puter (SSE2 CPU), AMD 64 or greater; 1024x768 SVGA video; 1 GIG RAM (XP), 2 GIG RAM (Vista); 40MB free on hard drive (200MB recommended).

The DP2 features USB Input, Headphone Jack, Microphone Jack, and Channel 1&2 RCA Outputs on the rear panel. The unit measures 19"L x 5"W x 3"H, and weighs only 5 lbs. The MSRP of the DP2 MIDI Controller player/mixer/soundcard unit, including PCDJ DEX LE Software, is \$499.95.

For more information, contact American Audio at 1-800-322-6337, or visit the company's website www.adjaudio.com

TASCAM UPDATES PORTABLE USB AUDIO INTERFACES

US-122mkII and US-144mkII Feature Improved Audio and Streamlined Design

TASCAM has upgraded their best-selling audio interfaces to the US-122mkII and US-144mkII USB 2.0 Audio/MIDI Interfaces. The US-122mkII features improved audio performance along with a new, eye-catching compact design. The US-144mkII shares the design improvements, adding S/PDIF digital audio I/O for four channels of 96kHz/24-bit audio to and from a computer. Both interfaces use USB 2.0 technology for hiccup-free low-latency performance to Mac or Windows computers.

The TASCAM US-122mkII and US-144mkII feature a pair of XLR microphone inputs with phantom power for re-

cording condenser mics into a computer. Balanced line inputs and a guitar level in are also provided. MIDI in and out jacks allow for synthesizer and control messages to be passed to the computer, and the unbalanced line outputs connect to studio monitors. The US-144mkII has the addition of digital in and out, for a total of four channels, and a dedicated headphone level control means you don't need to switch off your monitors when recording on phones. A copy of Steinberg's 48-track Cubase LE4 is included to begin recording right away.

TASCAM's US-122mkII and US-144mkII will be available from TASCAM retailers in October. Estimated street price for the US-122mkII is \$129, the US-144mkII is expected to sell for \$149.

Features:

- Bus-powered USB 2.0 audio interface
- (2) XLR microphone inputs with phantom power
- (2) 1/4" balanced line inputs
- Switchable guitar level input
- 1/4" stereo headphone output
- MIDI input and output
- S/PDIF stereo coaxial input and output (US-144mkII only)

• Individual Line and Headphone out level controls (US-144mkII only)

• Up to 96kHz/24-bit audio resolution

- Zero-latency hardware monitoring
- Mac and Windows drivers included
- Steinberg Cubase LE4 48-track recording software included



Press Releases continued on page 11

Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway

By Dr. John C. Maxwell

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born into wealth and prestige, and as a young Harvard graduate, he seemed destined for success. By the age of 30 he was elected as a state senator, and a few years later he was appointed as Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

However, shortly before Roosevelt turned 40, tragedy struck when he contracted polio. It's hard to imagine the fear he must have felt upon suddenly



losing motion in his arms and legs. FDR could have let the fear of living with polio debilitate him, but he rose above it. Through therapy, he regained the use of his hands, and he

learned to walk with braces. Eight years later he became Governor of New York, and he was eventually elected President of the United States.

Interestingly enough, when Roosevelt became President, the American nation was paralyzed. How appropriate that a person who had personally conquered fear would lead a nation filled with fear. In steering the country through the Great Depression and World War II, FDR put his stamp on society and gained notoriety as one of the greatest American leaders of the 21st century.

Facts about Fear

1) Every generation experiences fear.

In the past 100 years alone, Americans have felt the fears of World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, the prospects of nuclear war with the Soviet empire, international terrorism, and the present financial recession. Our fears change with the time in which we live, but every generation has fears.

2) Every individual has fears.

Each person has something they're afraid of. Commonly held phobias include public speaking, sickness, insects, heights, loneliness, or financial problems. Leaders aren't immune to fear, either. Peter the Great trembled and wept whenever he had to cross a bridge. Julius Caesar was terrified by thunder and would hide in a cave during severe storms.

3) Fear is destructive

Upon taking office, FDR saw the crippling effects of fear creeping across the USA. That's why, in his first inaugural address, he famously told Americas, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Let's look at some of the ways fear undermines leadership.

Destructive Effects of Fear

1) Fear breeds more fear

By avoiding what we're afraid of, our fear breeds lack of experience. In turn, inexperience breeds ignorance, which results in even more fear. It's a vicious, downward cycle.

2) Inaction

Fear paralyzes and immobilizes us. In the words of John F. Kennedy, "There are risks and costs to a program of ac-

tion, but they are far less than the long range risks and costs of comfortable inaction."

3) Divided thinking

Fear removes focus from a person's life. Like worry, fear divides the mind and prevents concentrated thinking.

4) Isolation

We withdraw from others in an effort not to have our fears exposed. As Michael Pritchard said, "Fear is that little darkroom where negatives are developed."

5) Procrastination

We delay what we're scared to do. In my opinion, the only person worse than a quitter is the person afraid to begin.

6) Misused energy

Fear is the energy to do your worst in a new situation. I compare fear to gunning the engine when your car is in neutral. You're making lots of noise, but there's no accomplishment.

Three Responses to Fear

1) We Can Avoid Fears

2) We Can Wait for Fear to Magically Disappear

3) We Can Face Our Fears and Overcome Them

Of course, there's only one healthy response to fear-facing it courageously. Fear undercuts personal dynamism. Instead of self-confidently emitting enthusiasm, fear causes charisma to erode and gradually robs a leader of influence.

How to Constructively Face Fear

1) Discover the foundation of fear.

Fear usually resides in feelings rather than facts. Drill down into your emotions to figure out the basis of your fears.

2) Admit your fears

We never help people by trying to cover up our failures. Admit them and realize you'll make them. Something

about owning up to our failures helps us deal with the fear of making them.

3) Accept fear as the price of progress.

We have the terrible idea that we can eventually rid ourselves of fear. However, if you want to grow, then you will encounter fears the rest of your life. The good news: each victory over fear adds to your confidence and helps you to overcome fear again in the future.

4) Develop a burning desire within you.

Get red hot. Desire propels you to go where you're afraid to go and to do what you're scared to do.

5) Focus on what you can control.

For example, I can control my attitude, but I can't control the actions of others. I can control my calendar, but I can't control life circumstances. Remember: it's not what happens to you, but what happens in you that counts.

6) Feed the right emotion and starve the wrong one.

We have both fear and courage within ourselves. Here's what I've learned: you cannot purge either one. However, you can weaken the emotion of fear by starving it. Whichever impulse we feed dominates. When we feel fear, but act anyway, we deprive fear of nourishment and strengthen the impulse of courage inside of us.

CLOSING

I'll close with a quote from FDR's wife, Eleanor Roosevelt, a fantastic leader in her own right.

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.' The danger lies in refusing to face the fear, in not daring to come to grips with it. If you fail anywhere along the line, it will take away your confidence. You must make yourself succeed every time. You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

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

Press Releases

Press Releases continued from page 10

• Aluminum case construction

For more info, visit: www.tascam.com

American DJ Adds Revo 4 Matrix-Producing Moonflower to Award-Winning LED Effects Series

American DJ has revved up its Revo Series with the launch of the Revo 4 -- the newest and most boldly breathtaking addition to this award-winning family of RGBW LED moonflowers. The company's designers have devised a totally new and different kind of moonflower effect by thinking "inside the box" -- literally. They programmed the Revo 4's razor-sharp 256 red, green, blue and white 5mm LEDs to produce unique "box-like" patterns -- matrixes, grids, squares, and other geometric designs -- all with an edgy, high-tech look that ordinary moonflowers can't match. Bottom line: the Revo 4 isn't just outside the box, it's also over the top when it comes to creating eye-popping visual excitement on the dance floor.

No halogen moonflower could possibly produce the Revo 4's unusual-looking matrix patterns, said Scott Davies, General Manager of the American DJ Group of Companies. "One of the big

advantages of LED-powered effects is that each individual LED can be turned on and off separately. So when you've got 256 LEDs, as the Revo 4 does, you've got the tools to get pretty creative in designing patterns and chases," said Davies. "Our designers really took this to a new level and let their imagination run wild with the Revo 4. Its matrix-like patterns go well beyond anything you'd associate with a typical moonflower."



Ideal for nightclubs, discos, bars and mobile entertainers who want a really standout light show, the Revo 4 has a 50° beam angle and a wide beam spread that can project its unique patterns over large areas of walls, floors and ceilings. It comes equipped with a built-in strobe effect that can ramp up the excitement even further. Like all members of the Revo Series, it contains not only red, green and blue LEDs, but also white ones. The white LEDs give its beams a rainbow-like aura and make the other color appear bolder and richer.

Although it can be run as an easy-play, sound-activated effect to its own built-in programs, the Revo 4 is also DMX-512 compatible, allowing users to create their own customized effects and programs with any standard DMX controller. It features 2 DMX operat-

ing modes -- 4-channel and 256-channel -- and has a convenient 4-button LED DMX display. The Revo 4 can also be operated with American DJ's UC3 universal remote controller (sold separately), which provides easy "unwired" control over basic functions like blackout, strobing and program selection. When a larger light show is called for, Revo 4 units can be linked in multiples via XLR cable and run Master-Slave.

Unique programs aren't the only advantage of the Revo 4's LED lamps. LEDs also operate at a cooler temperature than halogen fixtures, so the Revo 4 can run all night without having to shut down for duty cycles. Entertainers on the go will appreciate this feature too, since they can pack up immediately after the show is over without waiting for the fixture to cool down. Another advantage of LEDs is their long lamp life; the Revo 4's LEDs are rated at 100,000 hours, freeing users from worries about lamp replacement.

Although it's got RGBW LEDs, the Revo 4 is strictly one-color -- green -- when it comes to environmental friendliness. Bright and bold as it is, it consumes just 29W of electricity, an enormous energy savings over comparable halogen fixtures.

Great for use virtually anywhere, the Revo 4 features multi-voltage operation: AC 100-240V, 50/60 Hz. It comes with a convenient hanging bracket and is extremely compact and portable, measuring 12.25"L x 12"W x 13.25"H and weighing just 10 lbs.

The MSRP of the Revo 4 is \$419.95.



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I Have 20 Years Of Experience...

By Dean Carlson

So I received this letter from a friend of mine about 5 days after I wrote my last article. And I thought it important enough to share with all of you. She is a Professional Wedding Planner / Coordinator in my area.



Hi Dean; I am coming off of a bad phone call with a DJ. I was thinking you may want to share this (unless you already have)

in your DJ class.

DJs do not need to tell people repeatedly how long they have been in the business. Every other word out of this man's mouth was "I have been doing this for XX years". Who cares??? It sounds like he is a know-it-all. I am sure he is saying it to give himself credential but his professionalism will speak for itself. You can do a job for XX years and still suck at it!

When we asked him if he could do something specifically for the wedding instead of just saying "yes" he went on about how he can "do anything". Why can't he simply say "yes, I would be happy to do that for you". I left the meeting worried that he was so cocky and worked awfully hard at selling himself that he must be covering up some flaws.

DJs (as well as many other wedding vendors) need to respond to requests with things like "that sounds like a great idea", "I would be happy to do that for you", "I can make that work for you, no problem", "That may not work but would you consider..."

I have yet to work with a DJ that was simply kind and helpful. They all seem to be so over-confident that they rarely produce what they promise. If I am asking a question, or the bride and groom are, obviously we don't know the answer and it is not helpful when someone says things like "I know, I have been in this business for ...years". Tell your DJs to share their experiences but in a way that is helpful and not trying to be a know-it-all.

It's funny, I actually had not had a chance to work with this particular Wedding Planner / Coordinator before. Then

2 weeks after this email I had the luxury of working with her and her partner. It really began to make me think about how I handle other Wedding Professionals. Do I come off as arrogant to people I am working alongside? How many times have I used "I have 20 years of experience"?

The multi-op I run has been around for 20 years, I have been DJing now for 20 years, and the other DJs range in experience from 0 to 9 years. Is it fair to advertise that we have been around now for 20 years, and exactly what does that mean to a client anyway? When did we run out of things that we do better than anyone else, that now we have to rely on years of experience to sell ourselves to potential clients and vendors?

XX amount of years in the business really doesn't mean that you are good at what you do. While it does help, years of experience doesn't equal Wisdom per say. We have a DJ that works for us who has only been at this for 3 years, and I think he is probably better than I am. Sometimes years of experience can make your view of what we do different, it can cause you to lose your passion and performances can become mechanical or stale. Not always, but it can.

Heck, from your client's point of view, 20 years DJing may make you seem too old to understand them, or two years may make them think "inexperi-

enced", when neither may actually be the case.

Events are a sum of many parts. When those parts are not well oiled, they do not work well together, and that can cause friction which will lead to less than stellar events. Don't we owe it to our clients to make their event the best it can be? We as an industry need to learn that other professionals are just that - professionals. They deserve respect and clear answers. They deserve a better answer than "I have 20 years of experience." And even if other professionals don't keep their end of the bargain, our honor should be greater. Like the old saying goes, treat people how you would like people to treat you.

I teach all the DJs here that communication is the key to awesome shows. If you don't connect, then all the great mixing skills, and MC skills in the world won't make a difference. Strive to make your connection with other vendors as great as your connection with your clients. The Monday following the show I performed with this wedding planner, my phone rang and she asked if I had a certain date open. Ka Ching ! Good Luck and Great Shows!

Dean Carlson can be reached at deancarlson@discjockeynews.com.

Preparing for 2010

By Rick Brewer, GetMoreBrides.com

Each year in the Wedding Business, there are three magical days which account for 35-40% of all the engagements that will occur during the year (the three days are Christmas, New Years and Valentines day). Being properly prepared



for getting the word out to this HUGE group of Brides begins now.

In recent weeks as I have spoken to large groups of wedding professionals, I have heard the same stories. "I have never seen a year like this in my 15 years of business", "Business is so off I have had to consider taking a part time job", "The brides just hid for the year" and the comments go on and on. My natural follow up question is "how is next year looking?"

So far, some have responded favorably to the follow up and others are a bit concerned. The thing I mention next is that not everybody had a bad year this past year. In fact, I have seen many businesses that have expanded this past year. There is a reason why some businesses are expanding and others are going out of business; Marketing.

Think about this, nothing is going to happen until your marketing works. If your marketing doesn't work, the brides won't hear about you. Brides are very unique customers:

- 85% are "first time brides"
- They have never bought your products/service before
- They will never buy it again
- They are buying more products/services for the one day than they will ever spend again

Now, let's take a look at what is happening with your marketing. In my working with wedding vendors, I have seen

three typical problems. These problems are magnified by the fact that most of the wedding vendors who suffer from these problems do not feel as if it is a problem or that it is a problem that they are responsible for. Here are the three problems:

1. There are 8 typical ways in which I have researched and found that brides typically find the vendors that they are going to use. The average wedding vendor is typically only taking advantage of 2.8 of these 8.

2. When I look further into the average 3 ways they are trying to get brides, they are using the wrong methods to reach out to the bride (they talk in the wrong way about the wrong things and the bride promptly ignores them).

3. Further, they look at marketing as an event rather than a process. The marketing you start now will have an effect 6-8 months down the road. Again, if you do not market, or you market badly, you will have bad results down the road.

Here is something that if you get nothing else from this article you need to fully understand:

You are 100% FOR YOUR results.

If you put a great ad in a bad magazine, you will get the same results as if you put a bad ad in a great magazine. If you show up to a networking meeting with the wrong objective, you will walk out of there with zero results. If you go to a bridal show and there are brides there and you have the wrong preparation, the wrong display and the wrong actions, you will walk away with zero results.

Again- whose fault is it-the magazines? not necessarily. Is it the bridal show that's bad? not necessarily. Is it that networking doesn't work- absolutely not. You may need a tune up on what you are doing.

By tuning up what you do and how you do it, you stand to turn around dismal results that were experienced in 2009 and make 2010 more profitable and let's face it- More Fun! (Everything is more fun when you are making more money and are

busy rather than bored).

You can find additional tools that you need to help you get a better handle on your marketing to brides at www.getmorebrides.com/promotions.htm

This promotion is a once a year offer that we put out to help you prepare for the upcoming year. This is an investment that will pay itself off in saved money (learn how to track properly to know what works and what doesn't) will make you money (learn how to put out the right message and

have the right target to get the right brides) and save you time and frustration (learn how to shorten the process by understanding the process in which brides buy).

Rick Brewer is the author of the "Get More Brides Business Success Kit" available at <http://www.getmorebrides.com>. Rick has spoken at numerous wedding professionals' meetings around the country including the Disc Jockey News Conference. You can contact Rick at: Getmorebrides@aol.com

Behind The Mic

By Dave Winsor

Get out from behind the Mic!

Take a moment to think about what you can do to take your presentation to a higher level of performance and increased revenue. Those two things are linked!



Here's an equation that helps to define talent:

Your ability for near perfect performance multiplied times the audience's expectation!

Think about it for a moment. It's not complicated, but it's thoughtful. Ok, here's how it works. When you start your business, you want everything to be just right, and for the most part it is but there's a learning curve and you make mistakes. The "audience" (vendor, fellow DJ, the person who hires you) will make a decision about your talent and may think that you made some mistakes, but dang you're well meaning and aggressive.

As you perfect your performance, the people who hire you will begin to see that you are really talented and will start to refer you to others. The vendors you

work with on a regular basis will see this also and EXPECT that level of performance each time they see you. It's a self fulfilling prophecy. It works on the way UP as well as on the way DOWN.

If you've risen to the top, the changes you make become smaller but they are more impactful than their size. They are also harder for find. Let's say you decide to become a better narrator because it's uncomfortable to tell a coherent story in front of a group of people. It may be something as simple as s-l-o-w-i-n-g down. That small change may pay big dividends but it may not be clear to you. Now, how does this all work in reverse?

You start to slack off, not practice, not stretch your limits. You don't care as much as before and it shows in your performance. We ALL experience this, it's normal. Those that perform at the highest levels fight these feelings with a passion that exceeds those negative feelings. They want to know "WHY" it feels like that. If you don't fight them, they manifest in many ways, being irritable to clients, being abrupt or worse, being apathetic. The clients notice and the venues notice it more and they will distance themselves from you, you're violating a built up trust.

How can I help?

www.behindthemic.biz

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