

Disc Jockey News

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The Q Corner, Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

I'm going to start with an S.A.T. type question (you remember that test you took in high school that determined whether you'd get into any of your target schools right?)

You (as a DJ) are to the song "Celebration" as an Irish Pub singer is to

While you contemplate that I'd like to share with you some things I discovered on my recent vacation to The Emerald Isle.

If you've been a long-time reader of this column you'll know I find "DJ Lessons" in many places and when I feel them worthy for public consumption I share them here. You may have read in the past about my trips to Memphis or Sweden. And I even once wrote an article about an experience at my local dry cleaner. I'm inclined to find DJ Lessons everywhere; so Ireland, a land that loves its music, was bound to inspire at least one article.

My girlfriend Kelly and I spent ten days in Ireland this June. What I loved about the trip is that every town we stayed in, from the big cities of Dublin and Galway, to the smallest roadside towns like Kinsale or Clarinbridge, had pubs that were full and alive every night of the week. And many of these pubs offer live music: traditional Irish or Contemporary, take your pick. And while Kelly and I didn't hit the pubs every night, we tipped back our share of pints of Guinness and heard many an Irish Pub Singer during our stay. Here are some of the things I took away from these grand experiences:

Involve Your Audience. Every singer we saw involved a member or two of the audience. The first singer we stumbled upon called up a young woman from the crowd who had a tin flute with her and had been playing along to some of the songs. He asked her to come up and play with him. She was shy about it but the crowd's applause won her over and she stepped up on the small stage and did a fine job playing along with him. Then he asked her if she could sing and when she said "yes" he asked her what song. They did "Fairytale of New York" which, as a transplanted New Yorker, is one of my favorite Irish songs. What this singer did was win over the entire crowd by including "one of us." I've no doubt that this was not a set-up. It's not like he had a ringer in the audience. He just spotted her playing the tin flute and probably figured what's the worst that could happen? The very next night in The Dingle we were watching another Pub Singer and he took a heckler from the crowd and asked him to come up and sing a song. He turned out to be not such a bad singer and I marveled at how he

(The Pub Singer) had taken a potentially divisive situation and turned it around to be a positive. And then the rest of the night he had a foil. He made jokes



about the man's hairline and age (though they both seemed contemporaries.) And he even brought a female singer up to serenade this gentleman with a hilarious song about young women not marrying older men (the song obviously predates Viagra since the problem the song talks about has since been cured.)

In both instances I was reminded how vital it is to break the "fourth wall" and include the audience. Become a part of them and they will root for you to succeed as one of their own. I will remember this at my events in the future as I've done from time to time (but without enough regularity) in the past. I'll allow guests at my parties to lead a line dance or sing into my microphone and when they do I'll utilize their names more and give myself a target for some humor. You can't tease every guest at a party (certainly the bride and groom are off limits) but depending on circumstances sometimes the best man can be a great comic foil.

End with a Bang. Every time we saw a singer we stayed till the end of the night (pubs were always within walking distance of our B&Bs, I should add, lest my Mom worry about me drinking and driving.) And each and every time the singer ended his night with an upbeat, recognizable number that had everyone in the pub singing and swaying. They sent us home each time on a high note. And though sometimes my clients insist on ending their parties with a slow song (even when I try to convince them otherwise) I was reminded at how essential that last song can be. How even ending a mediocre party (yes we all have those from time to time, come on, admit it) on a high note can have guests grabbing your business cards and promising to call you for their next event. You want to increase your referrals? I'd say one of my first pieces of advice would be to have a great last song of the night. And it's not just what song you play but how you handle it and what moment you cre-

ate with the guests of honor and their family and friends (and capture it all on video assuming the videographer's not packing his gear up during it.) When I

there. The Pub Singers were similar as each had CDs for sale and they mentioned them a few times during their sets. One time I heard, "don't forget we have free CDs available. Just ten Euro gets you a free CD."

Have Fun with Those "Played Out Songs." Ok the answer to the S.A.T. question that opened the article is "Wild Irish Rover." We heard that every night we went out and it was always a highlight of the night. Yet every Pub Singer, if he's got a stitch of memory left in his head, must be sick of playing it. In fact at one pub we were in, when someone from the back of the room yelled it out as a request, the singer had particular fun with it. He played about half the song straight and then stopped on a dime and said, "look, I've got to be honest, I hate this song. But every night someone, like that bloke right there, yells out for it. So if you don't mind, I'm going to finish this song with some of my own lyrics." Then he ended with some hilarious lines like: "No, I'll never, no I'll never no more. Sing this song sober, no never no more."

Now, I'm not saying you should interrupt "We Are Family" at your next wedding and tell the crowd how much you hate playing the song (ah but it would be nice to do so someday wouldn't it?) But what I was reminded of by these Pub Singers is that some songs are a necessary evil to your profession. We have loads of them don't we? "Mony Mony" "Old Time Rock n Roll" "Celebration." You could make your own list I'm sure. But the truth of the matter is that crowds, for the most part, love them. I mean it's a vicious circle, isn't it? A song is so good and so danceable that it becomes popular to the point where it's played out. Which makes us not want to play it (and makes some couples put it on their "don't play" list). Yet all that fine song did to earn that distinction was be fun

Mike Walter continued on page 5

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Let's Take A Shortcut

By Mitch Taylor

Summertime is here and millions of Americans take to the road for annual summer vacation. They cut across country looking for vacation spots... places to camp and occasionally run into that traffic jam and ultimately wind up looking for a shortcut. Sometimes the shortcut can work...most often it doesn't and leaves you even further behind.

If you're like most DJs...this is your busy season (with apologies to those in states where you slow down due to the heat). Client meetings...site visits...planning sessions...family time commitments...finding music...sending out emails...the list goes on and on. Phone rings...it's a person who saw you perform at her cousin's wedding two weeks ago. "GREAT!" you think... "This is a slam dunk!" So you proceed

to talk with her about all it is that you do and what you offer and quote her a price. She thanks you for your time and says she'll be getting back to you. You think to yourself "YES! Another one booked for September 10th, 2011!" and you go along your merry way.

A couple of weeks go by and all of a sudden you realize you haven't heard back from the cousin for September 10th, 2011. "Ah....must be an oversight... maybe the contract got lost in the mail" you think and proceed to call her. "Oh... she says....we went with someone else that we found a bit cheaper."

What happened? I mean...Every-one told you at that wedding that you ROCKED! You're the BEST dj ever! How could she hire someone else?

Answer: You shortcut the process... you cheated the bride and you cheated yourself.

The point is that when you shortcut the sales process, you lose money. You lose referrals and your potential client loses as well. Let's look at these individually.

You lose money: Well...duh...you lost the sale. That's pretty obvious. However...you didn't have to. Keep your sales process the same for every client. Don't just quote a price without

knowing exactly what they need first. We've all been guilty of this at one time or another in our lives, present company included. You lost the opportunity to close the sale, put money in your bank account and increase your bottom line for the coming year. You also may have to sacrifice and take another job for a client that may not want exactly what you have to offer just to fill the date....aah... but that's another article.

You lose referrals: How do you think that potential client will speak about you to her friend that recommended you? "I thought you said you met with him and went through things...he just quoted me a price and didn't even ask what I wanted. It seemed like he was busy and pre-occupied or something." Do you think that your previous client is going to want to recommend you to any of her friends anymore? Likely not.

Your potential client loses: What we offer is an intangible service to our clientele. It's not like they are buying a pair of shoes...they can't take our performance back. They only see the RESULTS of what we provide and while sometimes that's enough to get us the sale, we often make it look EASY to do what we do. Therefore a client, with nothing to compare a DJ against...will assume we are all the same...being a DJ is easy they think and they proceed to hire the least expensive one still expecting the same results as what you provided.

Now, you and I both know that her outcome could be drastically different if she went with a lower priced alternative but she doesn't know that yet. She won't likely find out until it is too late. Her results could be VASTLY different and part of that burden should fall squarely on your shoulders because you shortcut the process for her.

The KEY is to NEVER shortcut your process. Follow the same steps and treat every client how you would want to be treated if you just called your own company. They DESERVE your best. Put the distractions away and only focus on that one client and that one moment in time with them. As the old saying goes... "You never get a second chance to make a first impression". Follow your process...don't take shortcuts and you'll be on the road to the sale in no time.

Mitch Taylor is a 18 year veteran of the mobile disc jockey industry and got his start working on the cruise ships of Carnival Cruise Lines. He is a member of the American Disc Jockey Association, WED GuildTM, and recently earned his ACE of Sales certification from Jeffrey Gitomer. Mitch owns and operates Taylored Entertainment in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and can be reached at 906-786-6967. Mitch can be reached at mitchtaylor@discjockeynews.com

Talkin' Bride With Tamara

By Tamara Sims

Elegant, Classy, Upscale...we have all heard these words used by brides when describing their ideal wedding reception. But what about the words Fun, Creative and Memorable? Fun is often perceived as "cheesy" (a word we hate hearing from our clients when describing DJ Entertainment), but through media, television and wedding publications, many "experts" in the industry continue to view the Y M C A , Celebration and Chicken Dance as "c h e e s y" instead of "fun."

Here is what I challenge you to ask your brides when confronted with this issue. When you look back at your wedding album 10 years from now will you honestly be saying, "Wow, Aunt Susie looked so elegant at our Wedding!" Or would you rather see a cherished picture of Grandma Sally

leading the YMCA on the dance floor... for me the answer is simple.

I recently met with a bride and her mom who shared many memories with me. The bride got so excited when I mentioned that she could create a fun 'play list' and she immediately blurted out "Our DJ has to play Celebration!" What a nice change from the numerous brides who tell me the DJ "better not" play "Celebration." I dug deeper to find that the bride had vivid memories dancing in the basement to the song "Celebration" playing on her parent's jukebox. Her dad would take turns with all of her friends tossing them into the air to the sounds of Kool and the Gang! She recalled year after year as her and her friends grew older that it was increasingly difficult to toss them high into the air. We joked about how heavy her wedding gown is and that it may be a challenge for her Dad to toss her into the air at the reception. You better believe that we will have a packed dance floor when that song is played... and maybe even a few tears from dad.

Another couple shared their love for Disney with us. The groom proposed at Disney World and they wanted to create an elegant reception that also included some Disney "magic." We suggested

a Mickey Mouse Gobo for their dance floor and "Disney Blue" uplighting around the ballroom. I will admit, that for a brief moment I was worried that they would think our idea was too "over the top." But I also knew that taking a risk and putting yourself out there can really payoff with your clients. A few

these things cheesy at all if it is right for the client, and you better believe their guests will participate and have a blast.

Now that I have opened your mind to the possibility that "cheesy" and "fun" are NOT interchangeable, don't be afraid to explore different ideas with your clients so you can help them put the "fun" and creativity into their receptions. As for the cheese, here in Chicago we like to reserve that for our deep dish pizza!

To learn more creative wedding ideas, please visit Tamara's Blog: <http://www.something2dance2.com/blog/>

Tamara is the Director of Sales and Marketing for Something 2 Dance 2 DJ Entertainment in East Dundee, IL,

which she proudly owns along with her husband Jay Sims. She has over 20 years experience in the wedding industry and loves to create wonderful wedding memories for her brides and grooms. You can contact Tamara at: tamarasims@discjockeynews.com.



days after the wedding, the bride sent us an e-mail saying "thank you we loved it."

Many of our client's fondest wedding memories have included dancing to the Cupid Shuffle, wearing the Indian Head Dress during the YMCA, and laughing hysterically when the bouquet or garter gets caught in the chandelier. I don't find

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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: Dehydration on the job.



Summer is here and it is hitting hard in some areas of our great nation. The temperatures are well over one hundred degrees with high humidity making it feel oppressive if you're not sitting in a pool. I always try to be well prepared for the weather but on July 3rd of this year the weather got the best of me.

For days prior to the wedding I was eating food high in potassium as well as drinking gallons of water. I was confident that everything would be alright for me - I was so wrong. It was a very bright sunny day. 92 degrees with a humidity of 69% and a dew point of 66. It was TROPICAL! The wedding was to take place outdoors at a golf course with the reception inside the banquet room. At ten in the morning it was already in the high 80's and extremely humid as I loaded equipment into the truck. I brought a case of bottled water in an attempt to keep myself hydrated. By the time I was setting up the equipment I was already feeling the effects of the heat. I felt woozy, had the beginnings of a headache and was having cramps in my extremities. I was drinking the water as fast as I could

while trying to stay on schedule with the set up and the ceremony. The ballrooms air conditioning wasn't working very well so the room was also very warm and muggy.

After spending time outside setting up the equipment for the ceremony I went to change into my suit. By this time I was completely drenched in perspiration. Planning ahead, I had clean, dry clothing replacements for everything I was wearing. In the course of that day I had changed every article of clothing three times in an attempt to stay dry. (socks, underwear, pants, shirts) The outdoor ceremony was an hour long with a two hour gap while the couple had pictures taken. By the time the meal was served everyone was feeling the exhaustion and wanted to go home. People were leaving the party as soon as they were finished eating. Many didn't even wait for the cake. By the time the dance started only a quarter of people were remaining.

I started the dance and quickly ran through all the formal events instead of pacing them through out the night as I normally would. Once they were done the majority of those remaining also said goodbye. The brides mother asked if I would shut down early because everyone is so exhausted. The dance portion lasted less than an hour and a half. I really didn't need the lighting because the walls were all glass and the sun hadn't set yet. It was a awful day to say the least.

With that in mind, here are some of the signs to watch for as you work to let you know you may becoming dehydrated.

- Thirst
- Loss of appetite
- Dry skin
- Skin flushing
- Dark colored urine

- Dry mouth
- Fatigue or weakness
- Chills
- Head rushes
- Increased heart rate
- Increased respiration
- Decreased sweating
- Decreased urination
- Increased body temperature
- Extreme fatigue
- Muscle cramps
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Tingling of the limbs

When the body reaches 10% fluid loss emergency help is needed IMMEDIATELY! A loss of ten percent or more can lead to heatstroke and can be fatal.

Symptoms of severe dehydration include:

- Muscle spasms
- Vomiting
- Racing pulse
- Shriveled skin
- Dim vision
- Painful urination
- Confusion
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures
- Chest and Abdominal pain
- Unconsciousness

Please be aware that these are not the only symptoms of severe dehydration, these are simply the most common. Symptoms will differ from person to person because everyone's body is different. Age can also play a part in the kinds of symptoms you feel. Signs of dehydration in a child will not be the same as those experienced by a teenager, adult or in the elderly. Dehydration prevention is the best treatment for every age group.

How to avoid dehydration? First and easiest is to consume plenty of water, but in extreme conditions even that may not be enough. Get help carrying equipment and al-

low extra time so you can take short breaks while doing so. Stay away from alcohol because dehydration allows you to become intoxicated quicker with less consumption than you normally would. Stay away from soda drinks. The carbonation can actually cause you to become dehydrated faster. Suck on ice cubes while working or pop-sicles made from fruit juices. If you don't need to limit your sugar consumption as I do, those "sport drinks" have everything you need to beat dehydration.

Getting your body temperature back to normal is a must. Remove clothing if possible (jackets, vests, ties) and get into an area with an air conditioner or fans. Do not place ice packs or ice water directly onto the skin. This can have the opposite effect than you are needing. You want to cool done slowly. If you try to rapidly cool the skin your blood vessels will constrict which will decrease the body heat loss.

Dehydration and body cramps can be avoided with actions taken prior to an event by consuming plenty of water, foods high in potassium such as bananas and watermelon as well as eating foods higher in salt like potato chips. The salt will help you retain that water while you are working. While performing at any event, always be aware of your health situation as well as those on your dance floor. The last thing you want is for a guest to get seriously ill during the event. As for me, I recovered just fine the next day and will be even more diligent in caring for myself next time.

Medical Information for this article and to learn more about dehydration go to <http://www.symptomsofdehydration.com>

Jeff Richards is a Disc Jockey - not a medical doctor. Please consult with a doctor before trying any suggestions in this article.

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



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Five R's Of The Best Business And Marketing Planned Actions Pt 1

By Ken Day

There's an old joke: Two wrongs don't make a right, but two Wrights made an airplane. What, then, do five rights make? The answer is: a new era of marketing and business effectiveness. And that is no joke!

The five R's in this case are: Right client, Right message, Right service, Right time, and Right price. These can be viewed as a modern-day twist on the classic four P's of marketing – product, positioning, place, and price. It's an pertinent comparison,

because while the four P's orientation remains useful in certain contexts, it suffers from the fact that it represents a product-centric view of marketing management and not the service focus that we provide as DJs.

The five R's predates the advent of customer data and demographic management and the natural outgrowth of that marketing development. Which is today's large-scale migration to customer centricity and delivering what the customer wants, or at least what they think they want. In the proverbial nutshell, customer centricity involves determining each customer's perceived value of your services, as well as her/his individual wants, needs, preferences, interests, and situations, and then designing different sales, marketing, and service models to serve each customer with a winning value proposition that is specific to that one client.

The five R's places people, not products or services, at the center of the marketing universe. This heliocentric shift serves as a powerful mindset for companies to adopt as they seek to leverage new methodology

practices, organizational design, and business development processes in their continual efforts to attract, retain, and leverage profitable customers. It almost doesn't sound like anything that we as DJs should be concerned with or even consider in our daily marketing and business plan, if we have even formulated a business and marketing plan at all. All of the elements of business development and marketing of the past that have been the staples of our industry marketing concepts, those tried and true methods that brought us business and qualified clients, have very recently disappeared. And yet, the industry (most of us) continue to use these outdated methods while we scratch our heads, or other body parts, exclaiming "Why doesn't my marketing work anymore?, Why am I not booking as many clients as I used to?, Why is my phone not ringing?" And, using the economy as an excuse for laziness is no longer a valid reason to sit on our laurels while we wait for things to get better on their own. You will truly sow what your reap when you plant the seeds of success and growth, or not.

By now, of course, the slogan "Right client, Right message, Right service, Right time, and Right price" hasn't even come close to being an industry-wide rallying call of sorts (it hasn't even been thought about enough to be considered cliché). Numerous service providers in other industries of all kinds claim to enable it. Some, not many, have even taken to invoking the five R's mantra as part of their mission statements within the DJ industry. For example: "We're the interactive DJ entertainment company that uses industry derived insights to deliver the right "message" to the right "client" at the right time, for the right price." Or: "We're the entertainment company that gives our clients the power to choose the right "message" for the right "people", through the right "service" at the right "time," and for the right "price." All with subtle variation thereof.

A growing number of companies have

also come to embrace the five R's as a strategy for driving increased value to the client. This view is supported by some of the content themes at major industry forums. An upcoming mobile DJ conference, for example, promises to help you generate "increase income by developing strategies that get the right message to the right customer at the right time through the right channel." And, delicately leaving out any pricing examples.

In reality, much of the talk is purely aspirational. Industry vendors and DJs alike have generally done a poor job of articulating the concept from a practical point of view. Their descriptions of the five R's tend to be vague, with little attention given to the actual tools and methodologies required to accomplish the feat. Moreover, few companies come close to implementing it in a way that harnesses the real power of customer and industry data analytics. Primarily due to the fact that they are just winging it with their business as they go along without the predication of a structured business and marketing plan.

Retailers such as David's Bridal may boast of sending customized e-mails that assist their customers with their specific areas of interest at appropriate times of the year – for instance, dispensing regional-specific dress style selection, fashion specific designs, and bridesmaids trend information to their registered e-mail members. But that hardly qualifies as the type of analytical, data-driven approach to the five R's that can deliver true business value in terms of increased customer interest, increased customer lifetime value, increased spending per customer, and increased customer profitability. Simple or even broad sweeping e-mail newsletters don't cut it.

Thinking in terms of the Best Business and Marketing Planned Actions

To bring the five R's to life, it's helpful to think in terms of a concept called the Best Business and Marketing Planned Actions. And while the major market research

firms have yet to define a competitive arena labeled the Best Business and Marketing Planned Actions, I believe that's soon to change, based on my conversations with leading analysts. Meanwhile, we'll have to make due with related categories such as marketing optimization, customer relationship optimization, and contact optimization, the last recently introduced by Forrester Research.

Forrester defines contact optimization as "the mathematical approach to determining the best mix of messages for each customer in order to maximize marketing objectives while satisfying business constraints." Suresh Vittal, a senior analyst with Forrester, notes that the technology is best suited for "high-volume direct marketers intent on transforming themselves from a product-centric organization to one that emphasizes customer need."

According to Vittal, the best candidates for contact optimization are "high-volume direct marketing organizations that face the unenviable task of reconciling millions of combinations of customers, offers, and channels with customer analytics, business rules, and contact policies to deliver the optimal message to each customer."

As he suggests, each "R" acts in concert with the other "R's" and optimization revolves around the interconnectedness of all the elements within the context of a specific campaign strategy. For example, determining the right message to make, and the right time to make that message, heard or seen, depends on knowing some critical information about the targeted individual client.

Next month we will dig into the first R's in depth as related to the DJ industry!

Think – Creatively
Act – Responsibly
Feel - Passionately

You can reach Ken Day at kenday@discjockeynews.com. Ken Day owns Kenneth Day Weddings at: <http://www.kennethday-weddings.com>

What Should I Tweet? Post? Link?

By Jeffrey Gitomer

Most people don't know what to say on, what to do on, or what to do with social media. And it's a club with more than 700 million members.

There has gotta be an opportunity in there someplace.

Here's the thought reality: Stop thinking of it as social media, and begin thinking of it as BUSINESS social media.

Immediately some clarity begins to creep in. You're already using LinkedIn as a business proposition. You're getting contacts, finding prospects, searching by company and title for qualified people to connect with (link with). You may even be job hunting or job upgrading.

Why not use Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube the same way?

Why not create daily/weekly/monthly value messages that your customers would find so interesting and informative that they would save them, print them, put them into action, and forward them to others?

Sounds way more powerful than cold

calling and groping, grasping, begging, or manipulating your way to an appointment – that will most likely result in rejection – even if you use your fanciest, newest, "closing technique."

Cold calling is such a cruel joke in this day and age.

TODAY'S REALITY: Do everything you can to use business social media to build brand, image, reputation, and perceived value with your customers and your business community.

YOUR CHALLENGE: Send messages that your customers perceive as valuable to them. Messages so valuable that they will tell others.

BUSINESS SOCIAL MEDIA REALITY: It's not about tweeting; it's about being re-tweeted. It's not about finding someone on LinkedIn; it's about them finding you, and wanting to connect. It's not about searching out someone on Facebook; it's about someone finding your business Facebook Page and "liking" it. It's not about posting a video on YouTube; it's about someone sending your video to someone else.

"But Jeffrey," you whine, "How do I know what's most important or most valuable to MY customers?"

THINK: What will help your customers produce more, profit more, understand what's brand new in the market, improve

morale, improve attitude, and/or improve their life. Then write about it, tweet about it, and post on Facebook about it.

MAJOR CLUE: Many people tweet or post something someone else said. WRONG. It's not what somebody else says that is meaningful to your position as a person of value in business social media; it's what you say, what you think, what you have experienced, and what you believe to be true.

MAJOR CLUE: Quote yourself, not Benjamin Franklin. It's tempting to quote Benjamin Franklin, but it will not build your value in the eyes of your customer.

DO THIS: If you sell toilets, then you have to talk about plumbing. If you sell insurance, then you have to talk about protection, or peace of mind. If you sell clothing, then you have to talk about fit and fashion. If you sell automobiles, then you have to talk about vacations and auto safety. If you sell real estate, then you have to talk about building equity, home repair, and front yard safety.

BUSINESS SOCIAL MEDIA SELF TEST:

- Make a list of your last ten tweets. Are they relevant to your business success? Did they help others in any way? How many got re-tweeted?

- Make a list of your last ten Facebook postings. How many people like your business page? Do you even have a business page?

- List the last ten actions you took, or messages you sent, on LinkedIn. Any-

one join you or want to link as a result of them?

- List the last ten videos that you posted on your YouTube channel. Do you even have a YouTube channel? (It's free!) Are you posting value messages that your customers and prospects would watch, learn from, and think of you as a resource? Any video testimonials posted on your YouTube channel? (Short testimonial videos will help prospective customers buy, and reinforce your own belief system.)

FINAL NOTE: All business social media is interconnected. You have to do ALL of them consistently to gain effective results. And you have to do all of them well if you expect to monetize your efforts.

Well, I have issued the challenge. I have listed the opportunities. I have even provided some "how-to." The rest is up to you.

There are all kinds of books and seminars available on social media and business social media. I recommend reading as much as you can, and attending as many as you can. But my biggest recommendation is: START NOW.

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.

Schools: Soup To Nuts

By Kelly Suit

I'm getting prepared to do a seminar for my local ADJA on Schools – Soup to Nuts, and I figured that I would share some of that information in this month's article. I'm always interested in reading on the chat forums or industry articles concerning DJs and the school market. There are a few companies that do very well in this market and there



are many that won't do these types of events for a variety of reasons. So the first thing that you need to ask yourself is "Should you even get into the school market?" Use the rest of this article to help you make that decision.

There are several questions I believe you need to ask yourself before you decide to venture into this market or, if you're already there, you should ask if you are going to stay and prosper in the youth market. While I'm all about making a living being a DJ, no amount of money is worth doing something you don't enjoy. That is the reason why we became DJs, right? We love to entertain, we love to see the reaction from our dance floor, and we love the adulation we receive from doing a great job. So the first question you need to ask yourself is "Do I enjoy working school events?"

It's an easy question, but the answer might be a little bit hard if you haven't done these types of events. So ask yourself instead how do you enjoy dealing with teens and preteens at other events you do? Do you enjoy the energy and enthusiasm that they bring or would you prefer that they stay away from you and your equipment and stop asking for Soulja Boy? If you find that you do enjoy working with this age group you can move onto the next questions, if not congratulations, you know that this isn't

the right type of events for you (unless you are a multi-op and then the question needs to be is there anyone on your staff that enjoys working with youth and if so, move on to the next question).

Ok, so know you know that you might be the type of DJ that would enjoy working with students. The next step is deciding if the expenditures fit within your business plan. Making money in the school market requires lots of money to be invested unless your plan is to rent the equipment or outsource to a production company (I don't recommend this in most cases as you'll wind up making the same or less than other types of events). You need to invest in big sound, lighting, video, and other goodies to make big money in this market! Our company started focusing resources into this market seven years ago. During a good prom or home coming season we would be lucky to make any profit after purchases and expenses for the first 3 years. Even now I spend thousands every season to replace broken equipment or to add new equipment to stay competitive. If you aren't a risk taker or there aren't enough schools to make a good return on investment, I'd highly recommend avoiding this market. Assuming that you have done your homework and the investment fits with your business plan, you can move onto the next question, "Do I know current music well enough to play the right balance of songs the students will enjoy, but the administration and chaperones won't complain about?"

Music is without a doubt the second biggest issue we encounter as DJs in the school market (inappropriate dancing is number one if you were interested). Personally, I find most of today's current urban to be utter garbage. For every Black Eyed Peas song that I love there are a dozen Lil Wayne songs that I wish didn't exist. I believe that you can find the balance with music, but it takes knowing content and the vibe the song generates. For example, when Crank Dat Superman blew up, if you listened to the song for the first time a) you probably thought it sounded silly at best and b) you most likely didn't know there was a dance to

the song. This particular dance was a major issue for school DJs for a variety of reasons. The content (which required an urban dictionary to figure out) was absolutely reprehensible, but if the administrators didn't know what the words meant, they sure didn't like seeing a couple hundred students running into each other with their fists out in front of them. Couples that with the fact that we were getting hundreds of requests to play the song, you can imagine the tightrope that we had to walk. If that isn't something that you would feel comfortable handing then this isn't the gig for you!

Next question, "What skill set to you possess?" There are lots of different types of DJ styles that can work for this market, but the school market is much more sophisticated than it used to be. You can't bring tired and lame routines or hokey announcements and not expect to lose "street cred" with the students. If you are a segway DJ and don't beat-mix, this might be a poor choice for your skill set. School events are high energy by nature, but if you don't feel comfortable "hyped" up the crowd, again this might be a poor choice for your business.

Mike Walter continued from page 1

and danceable. This year's example for me is The Black Eyed Peas "I've Got a Feeling." What a great party song! Yet I'm already starting to feel the backlash sometimes as the song borders on cliché and played out.

But back to my point. If you have to play these songs anyway, why not just enjoy them? Smile and laugh and sing along and bask in the glory of how sick and tired you are of such a cliché song. Change the lyrics if you like (in your own head anyway.) God knows I secretly sing along to the chorus of "Play That Funky Music" using lyrics John Young wouldn't allow in print. But just enjoy the four minutes of torture that come along with these songs instead of constantly fighting against the tide.

The final thing I took away from all this great live music in Ireland is a lesson I probably don't need to repeat to DJs. But it's something that keeps me going at times when this career can border on burn out:

Music is Life. I haven't traveled the world (just yet) but of all the places I've been to, Ireland embraces music more than any other. They understand that music has the ability and power to change your mood. Even the sad Irish songs (of which there are many) have a stark beauty to them that makes the listener appreciate the melody and lyrics.

We know this too, don't we? We know that all the focus on MCing and event coordination, and the recent shift in our industry to providing décor lighting and plasma screens etc etc, all of this is window dressing for what we all really love to do. Play music. I don't know one DJ who isn't at his or her happiest when

Finally, if you aren't a multi-op already, "Are you willing to take on employees?" To do the size of events that make money, it requires lots of equipment so this is not a single person operation. Also, keeping in mind return on investment, how long will it take for you to recoup your investment if you are only able to do a couple shows here and there? When we made the decision to have this as part of our business plan, we knew that it would take being able to do many events per season to make this truly profitable.

So there you are, a couple questions to help you decide if you should begin or stay in the school market. In coming months I'll share more of my seminar content to include what you should buy, how you should market, and my take on how to make the events work performance wise. It's a great market if you are a good fit, but I highly recommend passing on this if it's not your cup of tea!

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their dance floor is packed and people are responding to whatever it is they are playing. And I don't intend at all that we should focus less on those other things (I don't want to get a scolding from Peter Merry) but my trip to Ireland this year reminded me how vital music is to my life.

After long days of sightseeing and kissing the Blarney Stone, I still found the energy to sit and listen to these Pub Singers. They made me smile and sing



and laugh and when you strip away everything else in life, if you can make someone do all that, you've done a great job as a DJ, haven't you? When the news of the day is all about oil spills and wars and the recession, we can lose sight of what brings us joy. My clients hire me to throw great parties and the way I do that is through the music. Music is Life is a mantra I tell myself often.

I'll remember a lot of things about my trip to The Emerald Isle but after most of those memories fade, it's the music I'll still hear. And it'll make me smile and sing and even laugh. Just as I hope I can do for the guests at my next event.

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

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Is Your Business At Risk?

By Rick Brewer, GetMoreBrides.com

The Top three Reasons why a wedding business will not be around in 4 years:

The wedding business is a peculiar industry. It is the easiest business to start financially and regulation wise. Where else can you go to Costco and spend \$2000 and all of a sudden you can “claim” to be a “Wedding Photographer”?

There is one industry that costs less to get into and is slightly easier- Multi Level Marketing. When a wedding business can get more brides to go through their processes and end up on their customer list, the business succeeds as was originally thought of in the beginning when they first planned to start a business.

Why is it that most wedding businesses go out of business after 2 years? There is a long list of reasons, but let me concentrate on a few first.



1. The business owner thinks they are a true entrepreneur, but most times they are merely a trained skill set. Before this upsets you, let me explain the difference. The entrepreneur knows how to take the vision and planning through to proper execution and fulfillment. They do not worry about the fulfillment step near as much as they do the process. Michael Gerber best illustrates this in his description of the “technician.” This “technician” mind set prevails in the wedding industry where the most important actions which make a business money are the least worked areas of the business. Marketing and sales make you money. Everything else is simply an expense. If the action does not bring in paying customers, then you should not pay attention to it. At least not near as much as most wedding businesses do pay attention to their “stuff” (and for the rest of this program, I will say “stuff” in place of DJ, cake maker, florist, Limo Driver, Photographer, etc...) than they do getting more business in the door.

There is a reason why this occurs- most businesses simply do not know how to sell or know how to market their business. The typical wedding business owner got into

what they do for a reason. That reason is usually because they love what they do whether it be taking pictures, spinning tunes or putting together fantastic looking flowers. It is very easy to focus on the “fun” part of their jobs rather than the business part. Selling and marketing is not sexy. It is not something that someone wakes up in the morning and says “boy I hope I get to go cold calling” or “what’s that? design another ad campaign? -sign me up!” This focus on the fun stuff and lack of focus on the business stuff leaves the typical Wedding business owner with an ironic situation-they don’t have a reason to do the “fun” stuff any more because they have no customers.

2. The Wedding Business owner has spent hundreds of dollars on expensive training/advertising only to get zero return on it. It is hard to spend good money with the hope of getting a fantastic return and not get anything. That is what makes it hard to trust the people who come further down the line to sell training/advertising. I mention advertising along with training, but make no mistake, the two are distinctly separate.

3. The Business owner runs their business the way they want to run it, not the way the customers want it run. It is ego centric and appealing to the business owner first and the customer a distant second. I once sold food for a living. In that position, I sold

to restaurant owners. Interesting fact that back then the number 1 soup was Chicken noodle soup. The number 2 soup was New England clam chowder. I actually had a ton of restaurant owners say, “not interested in clam chowder- I don’t like it.” Now, if you are having a dinner party, you can choose like this, but if you are running a business, you need to appeal to your customers senses, tastes and likes, and put your’s on the back burner. You may have seen in the past where a restaurant goes out of business and another comes in and starts in it’s place. This happens again and then again. The ego of the business owner is that they have the power to make things happen that others cannot or did not, and it is this same ego that rules the decision making process on how to market, how to sell and how to fulfill your product or service to brides.

Staying out in front of the brides and using the best business practices to A) bring in prospects B) change them to customers is the best way to stay in business and avoid burn-out for a long time to come.

Rick Brewer is the Nation’s Foremost expert at Marketing and Selling to Brides. You can sign up for Rick’s Free Weekly “Marketing To Brides Tip of the Week” on his website, www.getmorebrides.com

Setting Your Rates:

By Arnoldo Offermann

How much should an entertainer charge? What’s a fair price for us and the client? Why are these questions so hard to answer? In today’s economy, we’re so used to hearing “I’m on a budget” and seeing other DJs compete on price only, that we’re no longer phased by what many call “lowballers.”

Don’t let the “hard times” fool you; Even ten years ago, when the economy was strong, one would not hear from a client that they have an unlimited budget.

Is there a magic formula? No. Are there guidelines on a minimum? VERY MUCH SO.

When I originally wrote this a year back, it was meant for my school market. However you can change the numbers and factors for a wedding, corporate event, or even a simple bubble party and the end results would apply to your specific case.

Break out your calculator and consider this the algebraic proof of “Get What You’re Worth.” What you’re about to read is what I’ve explained to many schools...

Homecoming and proms have become a more elaborate affair ever year. Extravagant venues, Hollywood-quality décor, and even 5-star food can be seen at many of these dances. Unfortunately the cause of the dancing, the DJ, sets up a tacky 2 speaker system and a small tree with a light show that was decent back in the mid-90s. Ouch. What an eyesore. It’s not the school’s fault; after all, DJs are all the same, right?

Often, I’ve talked to too many schools that have hired a DJ who charges \$300 – 500 because he’s a former student, teacher, or does it on the “side.” But what else is out there? What if there’s a DJ company that does more than just send a random DJ with a Top40 list, pushing buttons, and telling students to wave their hands in the air like they just don’t care??

There is, and we won’t raise our hands because we DO care.

School entertainment companies are a rare gem. Many DJs specialize in weddings, schools, corporate events, and backyard parties. There is nothing wrong with this, but the school business is a completely different animal than weddings. Our companies do all these events, but we have a dedicated staff that handles nothing BUT school dances. 4

Schools Only has a different structure than our wedding sector does.

School entertainment companies deal strictly with schools. We work daily with many issues that only a school dance can bring in: Appropriate dancing, music mediating between students and administrators, making the best out of available power, but most importantly, being 100% the success of your school dance!

100% I said. Food, venue, and décor are important, and I won’t deviate from that point. These items are important to set the mood of the dance. If the right vendors are hired, then you’ve achieved success in setting the right mood. The proper entertainment will take that achieved ambience into the next level. Kelly Suit uses the following example: If the DJ didn’t show up, would the dance be successful? The mood is set thanks to the right vendors, but now what will students do? No DJ means no dancing. No dancing means no one stays. No one stays means no food is eaten, décor and venue layout are not enjoyed. On another level, If the DJ shows up but is AWFUL, or his equipment continuously trips the breakers, then what percentage of success for the dance itself did he/she achieve?

But what if the right DJ shows up? Great setup, great sound, beautiful lightshow– and the right crew to make everything work! Students dance the entire night, eat ALL the food, take lots of photos with the décor and thank the venue staff and administrators for a job well done. The next day, the dance is the talk around school and ticket sales for next year look to be bigger than this one! What percentage of success would you place on the aforementioned scenario?

Our market has a few high-end companies as well as many \$395 DJs. Schools call all the time asking for a price between \$395 to 595. When I ask them why not go with last year’s DJ, the list of complaints roll out, including lack of sound for this many kids. At \$395, they’re lucky the DJ showed up! So what is a dedicated school entertainment company worth? The truth is in the numbers. Let’s take a look:

Here’s a cost breakdown for a small DJ package that can handle around 500 kids. Your numbers may vary, but in our case we have 500-2000 kids per dance.

- Two speakers = \$800/each (there are cheaper, but you get what you pay for. \$800 is a very conservative number for a system that can handle 500+ kids.

- One Sub = \$1500
- 1 year music subscription (multiplied by the last 5 years) = \$1,200
- Trussing (to hang lights from)... At the cheapest \$2,000 for a small setup
- A small light show consisting of 4 LED floods and one centerpiece effects light = \$1000 This is a very SIMPLE light show with no special effects. Just the basics.
- Clamps & cords = \$200
- Jessica Lunsford Act = \$80 per employee (This is a Level 2 Background Check required in Florida)
- Cheap Mixer = \$300
- Cheap CD Players = \$300
- WIRED (not wireless) Microphone = \$100
- Tripods for speakers = \$100
- Console to hold everything together = \$200
- Controller for lights = \$500

The total comes to \$9,080. Keep in mind, I didn’t add in gas, \$2 million insurance policy and other business expenses, or even A COMPUTER. All rental companies charge at least 10% of cost. This means that to rent out this system at 10% it would be \$900. In the last three years this number has averaged to about 20%. We’ll stick with a low 10%.

What does this conclude of our \$395 DJ?

\$900 is \$505 more than \$395. This means the DJ either 1) values his skills at NEGATIVE \$505 or 2) He’s bringing out low-grade equipment that won’t serve justice to the students.

Not to mention it’s not possible to run a business and provide effective equipment and service at \$395. Even if they were booked 52 days of the year, that’s \$20,000.... Barely double of what it costs to purchase the equipment, not including the costs of running a business itself. Read those numbers again, because I just proved to you that several DJs value themselves at a negative dollar amount or bring equipment that will not allow them to do a proper job for the task at hand. Even more mind-numbing is that the numbers I gave you are for lower/middle-end equipment. Most school companies bring out a much more sophisticated system. We also didn’t talk about special effects, large video screens, or other add-ons.

Think back on the scenarios I gave you on the success of the dance. Is that success worth more than \$395? Talent ALONE should be worth more than that if the dance depends on it. In this market, you’ll see numbers from \$1500 for a small setup to \$20,000 for a large setup.

We’ve talked equipment, but what about service? A school company brings the following talent:

- 1) DJ / MC Hypeman who knows the music on a daily basis
- 2) CUSTOM edited music library. FCC standards are NOT school standards. A proper DJ will remove the 4 words that the radio plays that do NOT belong in a school dance.
- 3) Jessica Lunsford certified. This is a level-2 background check for the DJ that is REQUIRED by the state of Florida.
- 4) \$2 million insurance policy.
- 5) Proper knowledge of electricity. You want to maximize the use of each outlet (power drops are not cheap) while leaving headroom in case of an surge. Having everything shut off in the middle of the dance is not a good thing!
- 6) Marketing! The company should provide custom commercials / audio drops / lunch “jam” sessions to promote the dance!
- 7) A limit! Every school is different and at some point the DJ setup can be too much or not enough. The right team should be able to design a setup to fit your needs 100%.

Overkill does nothing for the dance except pull away from it!

Schools are wising up and researching DJs. Eventually they will know enough that the first question they ask should be, “Are you a dedicated school company?”

In conclusion, these dances need to be treated as a business. Whether or not they are fund raisers, schools need to be in the black, not the red, but one cannot remain cheap to turn in a profit! A “\$395 DJ” cannot bring in the excitement via service AND equipment to make students say “I WANNA COME BACK NEXT YEAR!” There are competing schools, many on the same date, that want the same business they want; keep in mind that students will attend each other’s dances. When a rival school has a dance on the same date, your schools wants students and their dates to attend their dance.

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Outrageous Advertising For Outrageous Results

By Harvey Mackay

"Outrageous" is rarely a way we'd like to be described. It implies that we are way over the top, attention-seeking, bold, wild, defying convention, and a few other descriptions that we might prefer not to be called.

Apply that term to your advertising, however, and what you have is an over-the-top, attention-grabbing, bold, wild, unconventional message that people notice -- and that gets results!

Bill Glazer, one of the most sought-after marketing strategists in the world -- clients routinely pay more than \$25,000 -- is offering his outrageously successful system in a new book, "Outrageous Advertising That's Outrageously Successful" for a tiny fraction of his usual fee. It's one of the best bargains of the year.

Bill wrote this book for the "99 percent of small business owners who are dissatisfied with the results they get from their current advertising." He summarizes his system in six points:

- Outrageous works. Why it does is irrelevant. It does.
- Outrageous works in any media for any product.
- People are bored and overwhelmed and want to be amused.
- People love outrageous advertising.
- Always be on the lookout for the next outrageous idea.
- Discover that outrageous advertising is the number one most fun thing you'll do in your career.

Building on these ideas, he has built a system that works on ads in a wide variety of media, including websites, email, newspapers and magazines, yellow pag-

es, business cards, signs, voicemail, trade shop marketing, help wanted and direct mail. He offers hundreds of examples as well as resources for even more ideas.

Bill has a very distinctive business card that I'm guessing few people file away and never look at again. It looks like a folded hundred-dollar bill on one side. The card folds out to reveal six quick selling points about what he offers. Even if the recipient never uses Bill's services, that card gets shown over and over again because it is so novel. Perhaps one of the people who see it will require Bill's services. Sure, it's outrageous, but it works!

Where do these outrageous ideas come from? It all starts with a headline, no matter what the medium, he says. Print ad headlines are obvious. In radio, the headline is the very first thing you hear. Bill warns not to jump at the first headline you think of: "When writing a marketing piece, I will never write less than ten headlines. I have written as many as 100 headlines before I have chosen one I wanted to use."

Bill says whenever he is stumped on an idea or just to get his brain working, "I look at a list of 350 of the best headlines ever written. These are great to turn into templates and create your own ideas. They serve as an Outrageous shortcut." So convinced of this inspiration, he includes 100 of his favorite headlines to get the reader started.

In addition to a killer headline, the ad also must contain an offer and a deadline. Bill's examples are clear, easy to follow and plentiful. He covers the importance of photos and illustrations, graphics and testimonials, which he says are "at least ten times more believable than what you say about yourself."

I was already pretty convinced that Bill knew what he was doing when I read his views on envelopes -- and how outrageous mail advertising starts with the outside of the envelope. The man must have been reading my mind! Everyone

gets mail, he reminds us, and unusual-looking mail gets noticed.

In addition to all the good advice and outside resources to study, there's even a list of holidays (like National Hat Day) to connect your advertising to. National Hat Day? That is pretty outrageous. But if it helps you sell your product, would you still think it outrageous?

Bill describes his system this way:

- More outrageous gets more attention.
- Know your audience; don't be offensive but never be boring.
- You can advertise really outrageously in some really outrageous places.
- You can be really outrageous with-

out spending a lot of money by identifying opportunities you already have such as an on-hold message, vehicles, signs, etc.

• You can be really outrageous by using the senses of hearing, seeing, feeling and even smelling.

Mackay's Moral: If you want outrageous results, you need to try outrageous advertising.

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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Value

By Dean Carlson

I'll say it again, readers are leaders. And although I am not the one who originated that exact phrase, I tend to live by it. So among my many resources of literature, I most days start off with some



type of daily devotional. A few weeks back I came across this gem.

How can you expect someone else to see your value when you don't value yourself?

For years the mobile DJ industry has been struggling with how to get the public to understand our value. And I think it comes down to that we don't value ourselves enough. Our potential clients can perceive that, thus they doubt our worth. So we doubt our worth and so do they. What a conundrum that is. I think that if we can fix the first part, then the latter will happen by its self.

Over the years I have read many articles about valuing our business. I have been too many seminars that talk about how to show your business value to client so you can set yourself apart from your competition. But few of them hit the target, and that is if you don't think that you personally are worth XXX amount, then you won't get it.

For many years I worked for a large mobile company, and the thing I struggled with the most was how to sell talent other than myself. When I first got there, I didn't know the talent at all, so it was relatively easy. But then I got to know the staff, and I was mortified of what I was sending out at first. And it wasn't that they didn't know how to mix music or make the lights blink correctly. It was the little things that their unspoken actions said that gnawed at my inner being.

Ask anyone who I hired after that

what my largest goal of working there was, and they should all say I wasn't interested in making great DJs, but helping form great people. Because great people make great DJs. Great character is the foundation of great worth. That one is all me.

A few months ago in an article I asked you to inventory your library of books. I specifically pointed out the books that relate to our field of work. I have tons of books that relate to our line of work somehow. But I have even more books that help me discover who I am really and how to make small changes that will add to my personal value. The only problem I have with books are that they are too easy not to follow up on, meaning yes it sounds good when reading it but you never do anything with it afterwards.

I have few suggestions on that. First of all, buy the books outright instead of using the library. The investment is worth it, and then you can highlight and dog ear pages. Which makes it easier to come back to the important stuff. Second form a book group. This year I was involved with a group of DJs who worked our way through "Book Yourself Solid" not only was it a great experience, but it help me take action on what I was reading. And finally never ever just read a book one time. Take a bit of time in between but come back and reread that book. You might be amazed at the things you have already put to use, and find other things that could work at this time verses before.

Probably the best thing that ever happened in my life was becoming addicted to meth. Yes you read that correctly. No I am not suggesting you should become addicted to drugs. Drug addiction was a key catalyst into my transformation. Without it I would never have become the person I am today. Because when I went into treatment I had to do and inventory about me. I was forced to look at myself from a different perspective. And it helped me change who I am. My wish for everyone I know that has never done an introspective examination

of one's self is to do it, and do it now. It added value to me, because it helped me understand what was at my core and then I could change it. To this day I am continually aware of my character faults and I am always looking for way to add stock to my core value.

Now since becoming clean and sober almost seven years ago, I have been on a mission of improvement. I have attended many workshops outside the DJ world that deal with such things. One of the best was a series called Personal Mastery by Klemmer and Associates. And although some of the methods are unique shall we say the end result was always the growth of my own self worth. I have a better perspective of possibilities because of it today.

My next question for you is how much do you invest into you every year? Is it more than the equipment you buy? Do you have it budgeted into you business plan. I do. And the budgeted number is

7%. For me even when the economy has been "tougher" my prices have gone up and my show numbers are steady. I have heard other DJs pass the blame of down business on the economy and to that I say hogwash. Your business is down because you haven't invested into you. If you are lowering your prices to get more business that's because the you value is too low. Maybe the catalyst for you in all this is lower business.

So I would say to those of you who are seeking a way to grow your value, find your catalyst, read until you're sick of reading and then read some more. And finally invest into yourself in ways you never thought you would. Find some personal courses and take a week off from the grind and put your whole heart into them. You may find that more than you business value will grow.

Good Luck and Great Shows!

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I'm Fat!

By Dave Winsor

Well, not fat really, but morbidly obese. Yep. I'm 5'10" and I weigh 210 lbs. Because I wear a 44 jacket and have a 36" waist, I can carry it off. So, by outward appearances I look ok, but what is happening inside? I can tell you that my blood pressure is



on the high side, but not so high that I need medication, but it is still a concern. I'll have to get my cholesterol checked soon because my eating habits aren't that great

either.

How many times have you had a gig and after you've packed up and hit the road you've come across the golden arches, or a Denny's? Stopped in dincha? I know I've made many stops like that. IT'S NOT A

GOOD THING! Did you know that you can be morbidly obese and malnourished? Many people in this country are exactly that.

Since I've mentioned it so much, here is the definition:

Adjective: morbidly obese: -Possessing a state of obesity deemed to be life-threatening. -Having excessive body fat.

I work at a radio station and hold down the morning drive shift. I get up each day at 2:30 and head into work, right past the Dunkin' Donuts. Guess where I stop each morning for a coffee and bagel with cream cheese, or a donut? Yep. Guess where I get my lunch everyday? Anywhere other than the place I need to get it: home. I bought shirts that were XL and really did a good job of hiding my ever expanding food baby. Strike that....beer baby. So, I decided to go on a journey and here it is, the most hated word in the world: DIET.

I figured that I would "DIET" before my habits cause me to "DIE". I changed my ways and here's what I did. My radio partner Michelle decided that she would accept an offer from a company in Phoenix to try

Dave Winsor continued on page 10



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Lessons From Disney: Making Your Business A Fantasy World

By Ron Ruth

In his book "Remembering Walt," Howard Green writes that "Walt Disney was our bridge from fantasy to reality, challenging our perceptions of both."

Walt Disney once said, "I don't want the public to see the world they live in while they're in the Park (Disneyland). I want them to feel they're in another world." He created the perception that, for at least a short while, his fantasyworld was a guest's reality. But, he also knew that he could not leave it up to the rides and attractions alone to create the fantasy. There were other important elements, like costuming, structures, cast member interaction, etc., which would create the perception that the adventure was "real" in the imagination of the guests. The end result allows guests to enjoy a more memorable ride experience.

If Walt Disney ran your wedding business, regardless of what part of the industry it may represent, a bride and groom's perceptions of the service they are provided would be equally important to the actual service that they received.

In other words, Walt would have elements in place within his business that would reinforce the joy of planning for a wedding so that the wedding itself would be more fun, exciting and memorable. He would also assure that the stress and difficulty that sometimes accompanies planning, remained in the "outside world," on the other side of the "walls" of his care.

As you absorb the notion of providing your bride and grooms with a "world"

where they can come to enjoy a fantasy of wedding planning, consider this simple example. At the top of the list of the most often heard, post-wedding complaints from a bride comes a story about the one wedding professional that was consistently slow in returning her emails or phone calls. Sometimes she had to send multiple correspondences or leave a number of voice mails before she was, finally, contacted.

It could very well be that the wedding professional always had a (hopefully) legitimate excuse. Although I think most of us would have a hard time imagining what it could be. There's also a truth that some business owners just don't grasp the concept of quality customer service and would have no justifiable explanation. Regardless of the situation, the damage was done once the bride perceived that slow response as a blatant lack of care (service) that caused her undue stress and worry.

Never mind that the same, slow to respond wedding professional may have pulled out all of the stops at the wedding and/or reception and delivered far more in service than was offered or even anticipated by the couple. The perception, real or imagined, that there was a lack of concern, taints the reality of the service the bride received. That negative perception could very well cost the "guilty" wedding professional a favorable review, referrals and a happy client.

The experience would be about the same as trying to feel the joy that comes from the fantasy of a Disneyland ride at a parking lot carnival. Without the added service and escape elements that are found in a Disney theme park, it's just another ho-hum novelty.

Now, how could this situation be avoided? The obvious answer would be to return the call or answer the email as quickly as possible. Or, better yet, respond faster than the client expected. Even a simple acknowledgment of the communi-

cation with a promise to respond in more detail within a reasonable period of time is better than making a bride wait. But, sometimes stuff happens and other events, or other clients take precedence. Even the best of intentions can be overlooked. It usually happens because we as wedding professionals don't understand the importance of our actions...or inactions.

We have to see every interaction with our clients from their perspective, not ours. Their perception of the service they are receiving is more important than most of us think. When we learn how to manage perceptions, customers sing our praises, and word-of-mouth kicks in.

To impact client perceptions (and thus, satisfaction), good intentions have to constantly match up to our actions to assure the client that their best interest is always our primary focus. Doing so also prevents misunderstandings. Build your "wall" that surrounds the comfort and support that only you can provide as a happy place to which a bride and groom can escape.

In the example presented, a pro-active approach to communication, sending the client an occasional and somewhat regular, "How ya doin'," "I'm here for you," "What can I do for you today," email, well in advance of the first meeting, creates the perception, "Hey, these people are looking out for me." That pro-active approach also keeps them from wondering if your focus has shifted away from them, especially if it takes you a little longer than usual to respond to their next query.

Even if you are "on top" of every email you receive from a client, being consistently pro-active makes you something of a hero in their eyes. This small gesture helps strengthen your relationship. You become someone they trust and you will be the one professional they know they can always count on. Plus, your value increases expeditiously. You are also in an excellent position to do something that has been discussed in previous articles.... EXCEED EXPECTATIONS!

The scenario I've chosen for this article regarding communication may seem trite. But the point I'm making is huge. It's easy to let the simple things we do as wedding professionals for our clients become mundane. Sometimes, "simple" can become confused with "unimportant." A question from a bride may appear redundant to our ears, even though she, personally, has never posed that question to us before. How we respond creates the perception of the service provided that she will take with her throughout the wedding process until the service is received. That perception should be a happy one!

Get a fresh perspective. If you've never sat down with the couples you've served a few weeks after their event and asked them to share the ups and downs of their wedding planning experience, you should. If they tell you a story about an unhappy experience they had with a contracted wedding professional, listen carefully and make improvements in that specific area of your business that will always set you apart.

While everyone else may talk about tearing down walls, I encourage you to build the highest, most beautiful "wall" you can and create a fantasyland where Brides and Grooms know they can come to enjoy the process of planning a wedding. You don't even need bricks and mortar. Just use a little imagination instead.

Ron Ruth is the owner of Ron Ruth Wedding Entertainment in Kansas City, a WED Guild™ member and a self-proclaimed "Disney Geek." As a frequent visitor of Walt Disney World and as a student of Disney's best practices for business excellence, Ron speaks to wedding and service industry professionals on "Disney's 3 Keys To Success," a presentation that demonstrates the steps for becoming a business leader in innovation and customer service. Ron can be reached at 816-224-4487 or via email at ronruth@discjockeynews.com.

Jukebox Jockey

By Kirk Holslin

When it comes to a DJ and his/her gear very few of us would say we are content with what we have. We are always looking for equipment to fill a need or void. If we just had the once piece of gear then I could do this type of show. We are like the Boy Scouts – "Always be prepared."

The vast majority of us are equipped to handle a wide range of shows. When I think of the range of shows that I have gear for – There is a limit. When event gets too big I don't have the gear or a convenient means to haul the extra gear.

Let's switch gears for a moment (pun intended). Let's go the other direct where the equipment you have is too big or overkill for the job. I have read stories on the online forums where DJs have stated "I didn't have enough room for my gear."

Sometimes there is a need a small portable audio system. The need may be driven by a lack of physical space to setup your gear. It may also be driven by the type of event and the number of people present.

I am going to assume that many of you attend a variety of meetings. School PTO, church functions, and business networking meetings are scattered

throughout my calendar. I am sure yours is quite similar. How many times have you wished the presenter would use a quality portable audio system? (I'm sure there have been several instances.) How many times have you been asked to "bring something" because the people present know you are a DJ? (Several times I bet.) Do you want to lug "something" around to these meetings? Not unless they pay me or offer some other benefit in trade.

It takes time a bit of time to setup a small PA system. There is load and strike time. You also need to prep the area, tape down the cords and stash your stuff. Enter the Samson XP40iw an all in one portable audio system. I've included some highlights below from Samson's online user manual.

- The XP40iw is a 2-way self-powered 40-watt speaker system.
- A deep and rich low frequency response is produced thanks to the proprietary eight-inch, heavy-duty woofer.
- Built-in iPod dock for great sounding, easy playback of just about any iPod model with 30-pin standard connector.
- A one-inch titanium tweeter is fitted on a 60 x 90 degree, one-inch throat horn, for clean and clear high frequency response with even sound dispersion.

- Built-in rear mounted four-channel mixer with Mic and Line level inputs, Aux input for connecting your Computer, CD or MP3 audio device, plus Bass and Treble tone controls.

- The XP40iw features an onboard VHF wireless receiver and wireless dynamic handheld microphone transmitter provides freedom of movement for speaker or performer.

- The internal, rechargeable, Gel-cell battery provides 4-6 hours of operation



without the need of an electrical hookup.

- Three year extended warranty.

What makes this so attractive is that it is completely self contained and weighs less than 20 pounds.

Here's why I mention the Samson XP40iw. I encounter the situations mentioned above. I dislike not being able to hear the presenter. Yet I don't want to haul my small PA system for the event.

Because I always want to find a way to help with sound support this portable PA would fill a nice niche.

There are many applications where the Samson XP40iw can be used within your business and personal life. The business realm examples could be business networking meetings, or bridal fairs. Personal applications would be grilling at my neighbors place, the Pinewood Derby for our local Cub Scouts or a booth at our PTO events.

There is one area for improvement I would like to suggest to Samson. There needs to be a microphone storage option incorporated into the chassis. If the microphone is not in use, it can be secured. This would reduce possible risk of damaging or misplacing the microphone.

The Samson XP40iw is priced around \$300. It's a fair price for the wide range of applications it can be used in. It may also open a few doors for larger events where you have an opportunity to make some money.

In closing, thank you for the comments you have submitted. I do read them. If there is equipment that you would like me to review please let me know.

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.

The Referral Coach

By Matt Anderson

A Great Solution to Getting Referrals from Your 'Gold Mines'

Want more referrals from the people who like you the most and who can open the best doors for you? Modify this to suit your needs.



I recently saw sales trainer Dan Allison speak about how he had come up with this approach. It is very similar to my 6 step fear-less referral conversation except it lasts longer and is structured a bit

differently.

Here is my summary of most of his recommendations (the ones I have seen work):

* Make a list of the top clients you have that you would like to replicate

*Request a 1:1 meeting to get feedback about their experience with YOUR BUSINESS and ideas you have about building it

*Hold a one-hour meeting, preferably at your office (where there are no distractions)

* Do one/week

Top Clients: these are the people you have the best relationships with – and, ideally, people who can also introduce you to the best opportunities. They are also the clients you most want to retain and such meetings

will help with that too.

Schedule a meeting: "I wanted to see if we could set up a different kind of meeting. I've been thinking about my business and realize that if I could have 100 clients like you, I'd be in a fantastic situation for both me and my family.

So far I've identified the best 28 relationships I have. I would like to hear about your experience working with me and solicit your feedback on ways I can improve and grow my business."

Allison's experience is that most people DO like to help us, and that they do enjoy giving back, so all you need to do is ask.

A Structured Meeting:

3-5 minutes introduction

15-20 minutes overview of your business. Most of your clients do not know what kind of people you want to help the most (your ideal client) or who benefits most from meeting you. Be very specific about this so you can 'see' them thinking.

Two things: first, they lack an understanding of all your services and products so be sure to cover these. Second, do what you can to position yourself as different from your competition. This can help others be more comfortable recommending you.

Lastly, many of your clients do not even know you want more business. I remember that before I went into business, I just assumed that if you were in business, you had these great skills that I didn't have and that

you had all the business you could handle. And you made a lot of money. Do not dismiss this idea – most people do not think like business owners AND people think about themselves 95% of the time anyway.

This is your chance to give an overview of your business and how you bring value to others. ALSO, you can explain the direction your business is going (which means you can talk about who you want to work with in the future as if it is an increasing reality. This helps avoid alienating the type of client you are leaving behind).

20 minutes – discussion and feedback. "Your clients are your best business consultants," argues Allison. Increasingly I am finding the same thing. Your clients are the experts on how things work in their family, where they work and in their network. So ask them how to open the doors.

It is also psychologically more effective to let them tell you what to do – most of the time.

Questions to ask include:

What was behind your decision to choose us?

How could we improve your experience?

What are your greatest concerns about (your specialty) ex. having a successful event?

How can we work more closely to achieve recommendations to others in a way that clients are comfortable with and that will never compromise our relationship?

This is very similar to Step 3 of my 6 Step conversation. How would this person be most comfortable opening the door for you? It is a great brainstorming conversation about what

your client would be willing to do to refer you. And you are getting their ideas.

10 minutes – written questionnaire/survey

You may want to leave the room for this.

Is there one product you wished you understood better?

How can we improve communication with you?

How would you explain your experience with us to others?

Allison is confident that doing these meetings regularly gives you ample opportunity to find out from your best clients what they like best about you and which doors they are willing to open for you.

Matt Anderson, of the Referral Authority, has grown his business exclusively by referrals, relationship building, and networking. He specializes in coaching sales professionals how to network effectively and build a referral-based business.

Recent clients include Prudential Financial, US Bank, Virginia Asset Management, State Farm Insurance, and MetLife. He is the author of the upcoming book Fearless Referrals and is regular contributing author to one of the best known resource for financial advisors: Horsemouth.com and has recorded several corporate training videos for New York Life on referrals and networking. He lives in Madison, WI but hails from Coventry, England, consistently voted home of Western Europe's Most Unfriendly and Least Intelligent People as well as the Best Place to Get Beaten Up in Broad Daylight.

From The Other Side...

By Jake Palmer

WHAT ABOUT ME????

Do you ever take some time for yourself, maybe do something you enjoy other than work? Ever just go on vacation?



Last month I embarked on the annual family vacation, I'm talking about the stereo-typical mom, dad, 2.3 kids and enough

stuff to stay at the lake for 3 weeks longer than we're booked, all crammed into, and on top of the Ford Explorer designed to carry a third of the stuff I have creatively packed into every nook and cranny, all fitting perfectly together like a giant jig-saw puzzle. Nothing wiggles, nothing moves, I have utilized every single bit of space, I even put my golf club between the kids to keep them separated.



As we are getting ready to back out of the garage, I can't help but gaze in amazement at the sheer volume of stuff, of course I can't resist the opportunity to explain to my wife and 12 year old son (I would have tried to explain to my 3 year old daughter as well, but she has already learned to ignore me), that it is 24 years of mobile DJing that allows me to be able to pack anything into anywhere. "No average man could have pulled this off," I tell them, "with some zipstrips and electrical tape I can do anything!" The multiple sets of rolling eyes tell me it's going to be a long 6 hour drive to North Star Lake, but we're on our way, and, I'm on vacation!

Why we go...

A few years ago I had the life changing

privilege of seeing Bryan Dodge speak at a Disc Jockey News Conference, one of many things I took from him that day, was the way he talked about his family time. One of the things Bryan talked about was, working hard enough at work so you don't have to when you get home. In other words, when you are home be home, have enough respect for your family to give them the best of your time, not the worst. We, as entertainers are natural "pleasers." We go out of our way every weekend, sometimes way over the top to please a client, or guest, but come home to the people who we will spend the rest of our lives with and stop trying to "please." Have you ever been short or crabby with your spouse or kids, then instantly become sweet as pie to a stranger on the phone? Why do we sell them short? Why not give the people we love and are truly committed to, our best energy and attention?

One of my favorite Bryan Dodge quotes is "Bring Energy Home! You had it for others that don't really care, so make sure you have it for your family". So it's important to make time for your self and your family, and to make time to be a family. As wedding entertainers, we are constantly aware of the importance of our clients wedding day, but in the eyes of our loved ones how does Suzie and Tom's wedding day compare to the importance of your sons t-ball game or a dance recital, or helping your 3 year old catch her first fish. I sometimes wonder if we don't take our loved ones for granted or even just simply neglect ourselves. Any successful person will tell you there needs to be a healthy balance in life from family, work, social, and just plane fun. Every summer I block off one week of my schedule, no work, dances, meetings, no cell phones, and we go on a vacation as a

family. It doesn't have to be extravagant or expensive, it just has to be us.

What about me? Take some time for you, and your family. We all know about the wedding season burnout. You work hard all week to insure you will be busy all weekend; we deal with drunk guests, obnoxious requests, and even the occasional bride-zilla. The

Dave Winsor continued from page 8

out their weight loss plan. She explained what she was doing each step of the way and MAN, did I have a great time "supporting" her in the diet. I mean, I would just come up with the worst case scenarios whenever she would mention how tough it was to get started, to fight the cravings she was having. I just would snicker and tell her hit the drive thru window on the way home and everything would be all right again. If her eye's were lazars, I'd be dead a hundred times over. But, she persisted and in the next 30 days, she lost 25 pounds. That's right....TWENTY FIVE POUNDS. I decided somewhere in that time that I should lay off the jokes about starvation and such and start supporting her. I did and then something amazing happened: I decided to lose weight also. She got paid to endorse the diet plan. I VOLUNTEERED! Ya, I know. I'm crazy like that.

Something amazing happened: I decided that I wanted to lose weight too! Actually what I really needed to do was reevaluate my relationship with food and alcohol. Now, you may not have these issues, or you may THINK you'd don't, but if you're overweight or morbidly obese, you do. So, I volunteered to go on the program.

Right about now, you may think that I'm nuts, and you'd be right. But I was so impressed by what she did that I figured: "I'm mentally stronger than her, I can do it!" But then the nagging thoughts of NO ALCOHOL, NO FAST FOODS started flooding my mind. Kinda like if food was my oasis in the desert. Could I do it. Would I be strong enough physically and emotionally? Only one way to tell and that's to start it.

The unique thing about the plan I was

chance to get away for a while, hit the "reset button" and grow as a family, parent, lover, and person will pay off in more ways than you can count... and if nothing else you can get really good at packing the car.

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

on, for three days before you actually start the weight loss program, you have to EAT NOTHING BUT FATTY FOODS! You know, the stuff that you get when you don't think about what you're getting. I ate cheeseburgers and fries, pizzas loaded with meat, bbq, pasta, potato salad (sounds good huh?) . Well I just about barfed. All the stuff I LOVED to eat was now making me sick. So, the weight loss plan began.

In 25 days I lost 24 pounds and somewhere around 35 inches of fat. Yep. All gone. During those 25 days I learned about what my body needed to live a healthy lifestyle. I learned to love a navel orange or an apple. I learned to live without fats, sugars and alcohol. I learned to drink at least a gallon of water a day. So now I weigh a little over 180. I'm happy with that. I've dropped two sizes for my pants. I'm now wearing M/L shirts instead of XL. I have an amazing amount of energy and I've been off the diet now for 3 weeks and I haven't gained more than 4 tenths of a pound. Pretty good huh?

If you're interested in learning how I did this, I'd be happy to share the details with you. It's your life. You should be healthy and happy. You should relearn about what makes your body happy when it comes to food. If you are overweight, you owe it to yourself and those who love you to get healthy. Today.

For details visit www.slimme1.com. If you decide you want to try the plan, use this code "loseitnow"

Good luck on your journey. If I can answer any questions, please email me.

Dave Winsor can be reached at davewinsor@discjockeynews.com.

Monthly Music Charts

By TMStudios.com

Pop

1	Katy Perry	California Gurls
2	B.o.B.	Airplanes
3	Travie McCoy	Billionaire
4	Mike Posner	Cooler Than Me
5	Eminem	Love The Way You Lie
6	Usher	OMG
7	La Roux	Bulletproof
8	Jason Derulo	Ridin' Solo
9	Drake	Find Your Love
10	Taio Cruz	Dynamite
11	Shontelle	Impossible
12	Ke\$ha	Your Love Is My Drug
13	Enrique Iglesias	I Like It
14	Taio Cruz	Break Your Heart
15	Lady Gaga	Alejandro
16	3OH!3	My First Kiss
17	Paramore	The Only Exception
18	Usher	DJ Got Us Fallin' In Love
19	Maroon 5	Misery
20	Eminem	Not Afraid

Urban

1	Drake	Find Your Love
2	Usher	OMG
3	Usher	There Goes My Baby
4	Ciara	Ride
5	Alicia Keys	Un-Thinkable
6	Nicki Minaj	Your Love
7	Soulja Boy Tell'em	Pretty Boy Swag
8	Ludacris	Sex Room
9	Young Jeezy	Lose My Mind
10	Cali Swag District	Teach Me How To Dougie
11	Diddy-Dirty Money	Hello Good Morning
12	Monica	Love All Over Me
13	Drake	Miss Me
14	Rick Ross	Blowin' Money Fast
15	Fantasia	Bittersweet
16	Ne-Yo	Champagne Life
17	Kanye West	Power
18	Robin Thicke	It's In The Morning
19	DJ Khaled	All I Do Is Win
20	J. Cole	Who Dat

Country

1	Carrie Underwood	Undo It
2	Jerrod Niemann	Lover, Lover
3	Zac Brown Band	Free
4	Luke Bryan	Rain Is A Good Thing
5	Keith Urban	I'm In
6	Blake Shelton	All About Tonight
7	Lee Brice	Love Like Crazy
8	Billy Currington	Pretty Good At Drinkin' Beer
9	Lady Antebellum	Our Kind Of Love
10	Uncle Kracker	Smile
11	Josh Turner	All Over Me
12	Little Big Town	Little White Church
13	Craig Morgan	This Ain't Nothin'
14	Easton Corbin	Roll With It
15	Kenny Chesney	The Boys Of Fall
16	Darius Rucker	Come Back Song
17	Alan Jackson	Hard Hat And A Hammer
18	Gary Allan	Get Off On The Pain
19	David Nail	Turning Home
20	Rodney Atkins	Farmer's Daughter

Rock

1	Ozzy Osborne	Let Me Hear You Scream
2	Shinedown	The Crow & The Butterfly
3	Godsmack	Cryin' Like A Bitch
4	Rush	Caravan
5	Disturbed	Another Way To Die
6	Alice In Chains	Your Decision
7	Breaking Benjamin	I Will Not Bow
8	Three Days Grace	The Good Life
9	Tom Petty	I Should Have Known It
10	Saving Abel	Stupid Girl (Only In Hollywood)
11	Stone Temple Pilots	Between The Lines
12	Scorpions	Raised On Rock
13	Avenged Sevenfold	Nightmare
14	Papa Roach	Kick In The Teeth
15	Buckcherry	All Night Long
16	Five Finger Death Punch	Bad Company
17	Deftones	Diamond Eyes
18	Vince Neil	Tattoos And Tequila
19	Alice In Chains	Lesson Learned
20	Puddle Of Mudd	Stoned

Adult Contemporary

1	Train	Hey, Soul Sister
2	Lady Antebellum	Need You Now
3	Uncle Kracker	Smile
4	Rob Thomas	Someday
5	Michael Buble	Haven't Met You Yet
6	Script	Breakeven
7	Daughtry	Life After You
8	Adam Lambert	Whataya Want From Me
9	Kris Allen	Live Like We're Dying
10	Colbie Caillat	I Never Told You
11	Lifeshouse	Halfway Gone
12	Lady Gaga	Alejandro
13	Katy Perry	California Gurls
14	Sarah McLachlan	Loving You Is Easy
15	John Mayer	Half Of My Heart
16	Sara Bareilles	King Of Anything
17	Melissa Etheridge	Fearless Love
18	Phil Collins	Going Back
19	Nickelback	Never Gonna Be Alone
20	Will Young	Leave Right Now

Alternative

1	Cage The Elephant	In One Ear
2	Dirty Heads	Lay Me Down
3	Thirty Seconds To Mars	This Is War
4	Neon Trees	Animal
5	Phoenix	Lisztomania
6	Shinedown	The Crow & The Butterfly
7	Rise Against	Savior
8	Civil Twilight	Letters From The Sky
9	Muse	Uprising
10	Phoenix	1901
11	Broken Bells	High Road
12	Muse	Resistance
13	Three Days Grace	The Good Life
14	Brandon Flowers	Crossfire
15	Against Me!	I Was A Teenage Anarchist
16	Avenged Sevenfold	Nightmare
17	Switchfoot	The Sound
18	New Politics	Yeah Yeah Yeah
19	Pearl Jam	Amongst The Waves
20	Black Keys	Tighten Up

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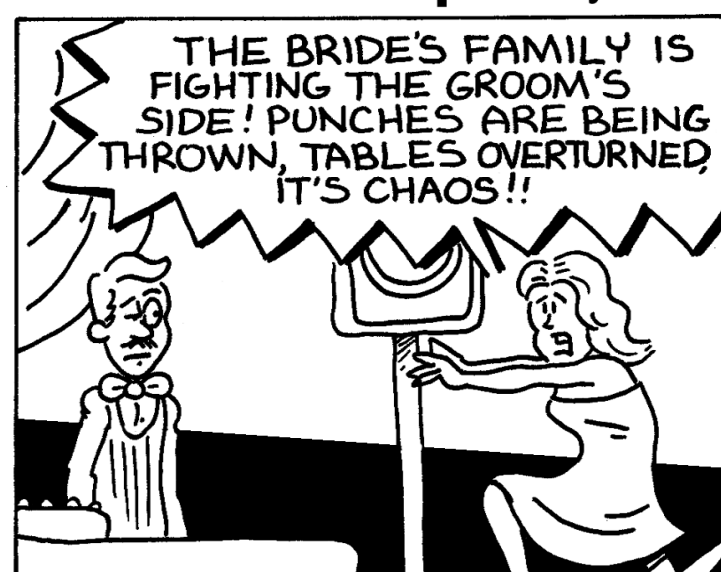
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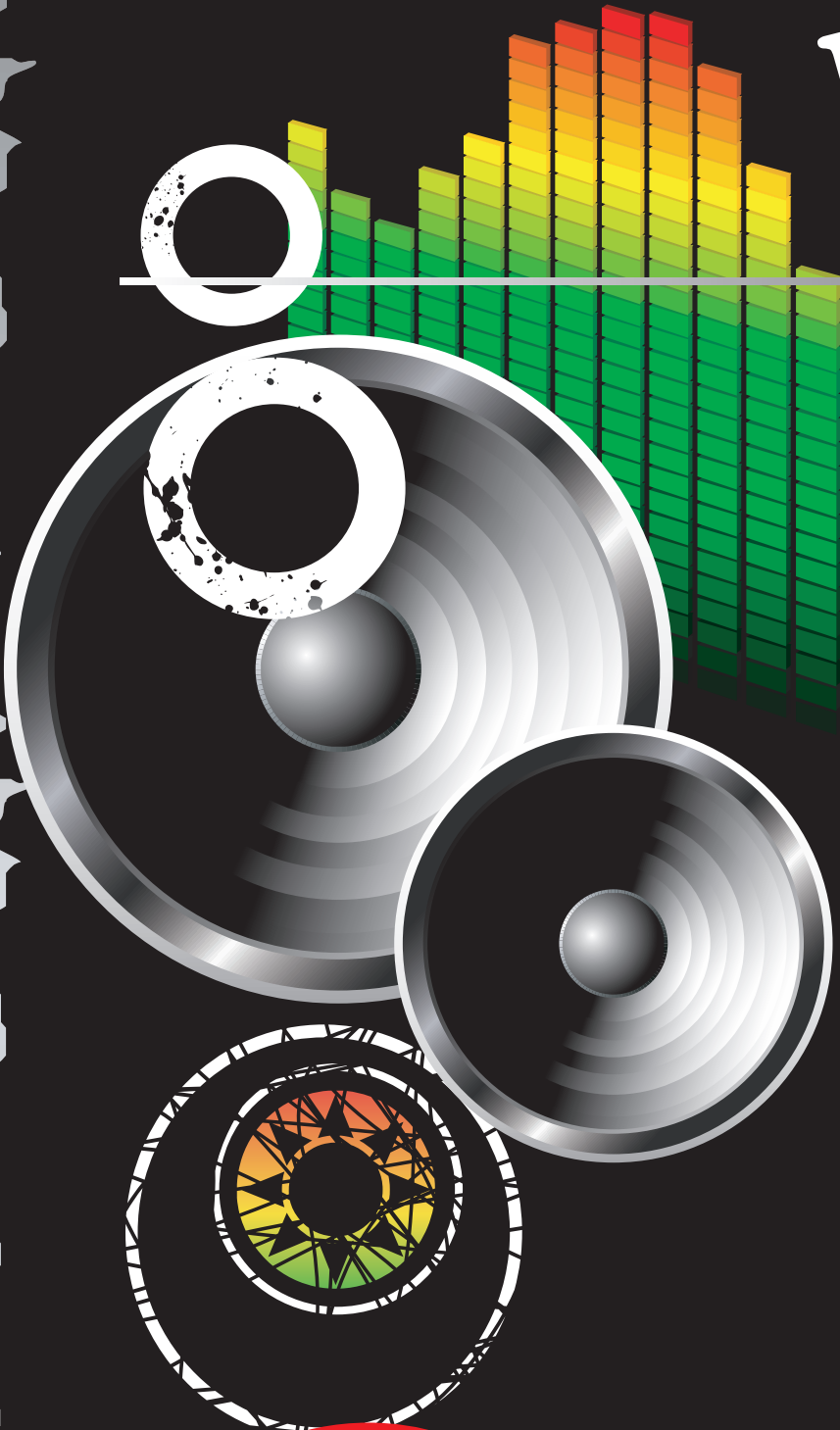


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