

Disc Jockey News

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Q Corner: Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

Just wrapped up a vacation in Riviera Maya, Mexico. My wife, Kelly, and I came down here for our friends Jay and Marissa's destination wedding. As so often happens I find myself on a plane coming home and thinking, "Oh, this experience would be a good thing to write about in Disc Jockey News!" And off I go. So here are some of my take-aways from a week in Mexico.

Kelly and I took a tour of the facility and listened to their sales pitch about becoming a member of their travel club (they avoid the words "time share" like it's Ebola). We knew going in that we weren't going to sign up but when we checked in they offered us so many free upgrades to do the tour we figured "what

the heck?" I've heard so many stories about the "high pressured sales tactics" they use to strong arm people into signing up I figured I might as well experience it once in my life.

There was no high pressure. I was actually kind of disappointed. Nikki, the woman we met with, was charming and really took some time to get to know Kelly and me and how we like to travel. And she remembered facts, too. We mentioned how we have no kids but how Kelly's mom wishes we did. Later when she was showing us a room with an incredibly big and luxurious shower she said, "Kelly, your mom would like this, it's nicknamed 'the baby maker'."

But then the tour was over and it was time to start looking at packages. Nikki showed us different ways to sign up for their travel club, meaning different prices and what they offered in each. I said, "I imagine you have a contract for this?" and she said "of course." I asked, "could you email that to me? I never like to sign a contract without my lawyer looking it over." Nikki's reply really surprised me. She said "no we can't do that. The contract can't leave this office unsigned." I told her that was a deal-breaker for us and

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Talkin' Bride: My Virtual PhDJ Experience

By Tamara Sims

The only thing you can count on in life is change. Sometimes in life you just need to adapt and roll with the punches when life throws you a curve ball, and that's exactly what happened this past month with the death of my friend's father. For those who read my article, you know that one of my mentors in the DJ industry is Mike Walter. If you don't know who he is, just look to the left and you will see his handsome face on the front page

next to me! So you can imagine how excited I was to attend the PhDJ conference in Raleigh where Mike was presenting. Sadly, the memorial service was being held that week and I had to cancel last minute. Though disappointed, I knew Jay would take great notes and submit questions on my behalf. He took it a step further by recording the seminars for me so I could still feel as though I was there with him.

I wanted to share with you a few of the "nuggets" I took away from my "long distance" experience with PhDJ. I meet with every bride and groom in the initial sales meeting; it is what I love to do and I must say, it is one of the things I am very good at (in addition to Broadway musical trivia and baking.) With the expansion of our business and additional services being offered by our company, I often struggle on the best way to sell without overwhelming the couple. Mike had a simple an-

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In The Booth: Search Result #127

By Brian S. Redd

About 6 years ago, when the DJ video and social media workload started to consume most of my time, something had to give. That something became running a single operator DJ business. I started to rely on an entertainment agency to fill the better part of my DJ wedding and event calendar. This wasn't an

easy choice to make, but once it had been made, everything became a lot more manageable.

As nice as it is knowing you are going to gig without having to put loads of time into marketing your services, the type of work an agency throws your way can get boring. Many of the clients are price shoppers, so the agency sells them on price. The problem with this is less about the money and more about motive. Ideally, you want to work with people who are excited about you and not just the price tag. If they are excited about you, they will trust you. If they trust you, you can help them plan a more successful event.

With all of this in mind, I decided it was time to start booking some of my own gigs again. I launched a fresh DJ website

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Choose Your Spot - Research Your Client

By Mitch Taylor

I hear the sounds of the waves crashing as my skin is bronzing (or is that burning) in the hot rays of the Caribbean sun. My body lays here on top of the beach towel and chair from the hotel property... tired from the 10 hour trip it took to arrive in this island paradise... exhausted from the amount of work I've put in to my year and my career up to this point. I NEED to relax and ENJOY this seaside getaway. We've spent MONTHS planning this vacation, researching on various websites, checking out TripAdvisor reviews for the various properties we were considering, pouring over flights until we found the right combination. We kept searching for information on the island, restaurants nearby, things to do, crime rate, how are the people, what kind of beach is it? What's native to the island? Any festivals going on while we are there? What's close by to go see? Where am I? I'm in the beautiful island of Anguilla, British West Indies.

What kind of vacationer are you? When you go on vacation how do you choose where to go? Do you speak with friends, search on the internet for reviews, scour the web for deals, call your local favorite travel agent? Do you put in the kind of research like we did above to find Anguilla?

How do you decide how to get there? Car, Plane, Train, Bus, Bike, Boat? What do you do once you are there? Are you more of the laid back type - chill on the beach and read a good book? Do you like to get out and explore the town and see what the place is like? Do you want to take an organized tour or venture out on your own?

Do you like to be around many people on vacation or do you want to get away from it all in your own private paradise? Do you want to take a cruise and sail around a few different islands or maybe go on a ski trip? Road tripping in the car or maybe see the United States or Europe in the observation car on a train?

NUGGET: Your client researches YOU just as much as YOU research for your next vacation spot.

There are as many different types of vacations as there are types of clients. When you go on vacation most times you research, research and research some more before you decide to spend your hard-earned dollars for a week (or more or less) away. Mother Google is here to stay and social media has evolved from 1.0 to 2.0 (think MySpace to Facebook) and 3.0 isn't that far behind. The question dear reader... how do you research your client? Don't you think it's high time you started doing a bit more research about them?

NUGGET: If you don't research your clients in advance you are missing out on sales and at bare minimum a chance to connect with the clients you do book on a deeper level.

You research your potential, current and past clients the same way that they research you. Google them - what shows up? Type their name in the search bar on Facebook - what do they use for their profile pic and their cover photo? What mutual friends do you have? Do they have a Twitter account? Are they mentioned at all when you do a search there? Do they have a YouTube channel? What are they blogging about? What are their passions? What does their website look like? Who's in their circle on LinkedIn? Do you have any mutual connections there?

When they first show up to a meeting how are they dressed? How are your surroundings? There's something called the threshold effect. Ever heard of it? The threshold effect basically states that people make 11 different assumptions about you upon your first meeting with them. Are you dateable? Likable? Trustworthy? Would they want to hang out again? How much money you make? Where you fit in soci-

ety? Sad...but true.

If you are currently struggling with your sales the first place to look is to find out if you are attracting your ideal client. How do you know who your ideal client is? Think about the past clients you have worked with.

GOLD NUGGET: Notice I stated "work with" I didn't say "work for" When you work "with" your clients it's a collaboration of you and them together...working towards the same common goal - whatever the client desires most out of your service or product. When you work "for" your clients they are the boss - they tell you what to do, when to do it, where to be and it takes on more of a boss/employee relationship with an "I told you so" attitude.

I would encourage you to position yourself as the expert in your field so that the client comes to you to hire you for what you can collaborate together and create for them - working WITH them vs. the underling mindset that comes from working FOR somebody.

Don't miss this. Working WITH is a completely different mindset shift. It's what positions you in an EXPERT advisor role in partnering with your potential client to create their outcome together. It's what shows you as the ONLY ONE who can get the job done for them if you follow the rest of the steps outlined in this book correctly. WORKING FOR is what people have done for ages and leads to a commodity mind set.

WORKING FOR becomes price competitive and the buyer thinks they can get whatever you offer somewhere else cheaper, faster and better. WORKING WITH shows you are the BEST CHOICE for the job and someone that the client can start a REALationship with (nod to mentors of mine Mark and Rebecca Ferrell). REALationships lead to REAL-ferrals. The old way of selling and asking for a referral at the point of sale is DEAD AND GONE. The new way is REALationships and problem solving working together to achieve the desired outcome the client desires.

Let's get back to attracting your ideal client. How do you know WHO that is? Go back through your past clientele list and think about which clients you ENJOYED working with the most. Which of your clients that you worked with (NOT FOR) made you especially excited in the morning to work with...the ones you couldn't WAIT to collaborate and connect with. What did they say about you and/or your company? More than likely they RAVED about you and wanted more. The key is to go where they go. Be where they are. Advertise where they are. Take them out to lunch. Offer to send them out with their spouse to their favorite restaurant if they give you an online video testimonial. This is WEB 3.0 people. If you DON'T have video on your website you are missing out... BIG TIME!

Invest MORE time into your business then what you plan to do on vacation. It's a WISE investment that will allow you to take more vacations and ultimately be where you want to be in life.

Mitch Taylor is an 18 year veteran of the mobile disc jockey industry, starting out on the cruise ships of Carnival Cruise Lines. He is a member of the American Disc Jockey Association and WED Guild™. Mitch owns and operates Taylored Entertainment in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and can be reached at 906.786.6967 or via email at mitchtaylor@discjockeynews.com.

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the meeting was soon over.

I can think of only two reasons they wouldn't allow a contract to leave the office. The first is that my response is a typical "stall" by the prospect. We all know the best chance you have to close a sale is when you have the client in front of you. As soon as they leave with an "I'll think about it" or in my case, "we want our lawyer to look over the contract," the odds of making the sale decrease dramatically. Especially with an emotional decision like buying into a time-share, er, I mean vacation club. By the way, what we sell - entertainment at a wedding - certainly is emotional as well. Still, to deny a prospect's request to take a contract home and look it over is basically closing the door on the sale (especially when the prospect says, as I did, "this is a deal-breaker."). Think about that in your sales process. Do you have any roadblocks? Are there any deal-breakers that will make a couple leave your office, look at each other and say "no way" (like Kelly and I did)?

The other reason I could think of why they wouldn't give us a contract to take home is they have something to hide. Maybe all of Nikki's promises about 'no other charges' and '30 free weeks included' were undermined by small print and legalese that my lawyer would spot. Either way, I'm glad Kelly and I declined and my takeaways, sales-wise, are two-fold.

Sure, building a relationship and rapport with a prospect is important. Kelly and I felt very comfortable with Nikki and genuinely liked her. But at the end of the day, honesty and full disclosure are important as well. Last month, in this very paper, Harvey Mackay advised every business owner, "You must be specific, informative and user-friendly." Maybe you'll close some deals with sales strategies and deceiving prices, but you'll never lock in a discerning client.

Another take away I had from this vacation had to do with my running. I brought running gear with me on this trip knowing at an all-inclusive resort I'd be eating and drinking more than usual. So burning some extra calories certainly wouldn't be a bad thing. Well, wouldn't you know when we were looking over the activities schedule for the resort, they have a 5k race every Friday morning. No way I was going to miss that!

So I got some other runs in before Friday, clocking anywhere from 3 to 4 miles at a casual pace (for me anyway) of about 8:15 to 8:30 per mile. Then on Friday I showed up at the designated spot and saw there were about 40 runners who had turned out. When the race started one guy shot out of the gate and took off at a pace I can only dream about. Two other guys pulled slightly ahead of me but I stayed with them. We were running about a 7:15 pace. That's a full minute per mile faster than I'd been doing all week. We maintained that pace throughout and even though I never caught either of them I was happy with my 22:28 finish time -- especially when I found out after the race I'm at least a decade older than all 3 of the guys who beat me.

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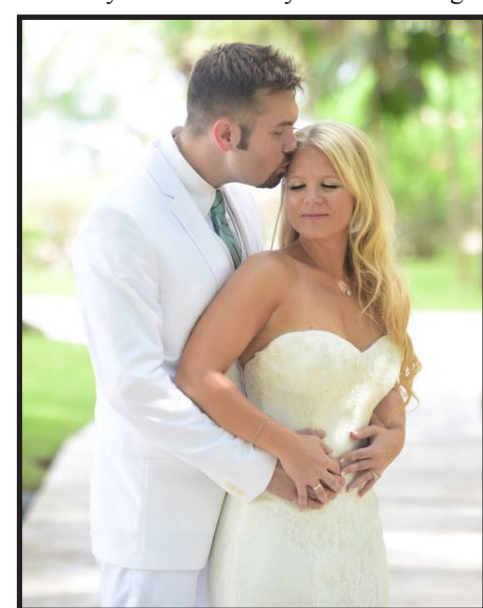
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So why did I run so much faster on Friday then I had all week? Simple. Competition.

Just like having a faster runner in front of me to push me on, competition in a traditional capitalist system is the greatest thing for any company. It drives you harder, makes you work more diligently and forces you to be as creative as possible. If you have no competition you can get soft. You lose your edge. You go out for runs and you are content with your 8:15 pace. But when you've got someone running right in front of you who you are trying to catch, or someone on your heels who you want to prevent from catching you, that's when you push yourself past that "comfortable pace." That's when you dig deep and discover just how much you have to give.

Whoever your closest competitor is in your market, you should thank them for how much they push you. Be grateful they are there.

The final takeaway I have to share from this vacation is simply a reminder to all of my DJ peers who entertain at weddings: A wedding is an amazing event. I know we all know that but it also doesn't hurt to be reminded of that fact every once in a while. 41 people made the trip to Riviera Maya to witness Jay and Marissa get



married. Some family, some friends. All loved ones. They came because when two people decide to take their relationship to the next level and get married, it's a big deal. It's a cause for celebration. And Kelly and I were flattered to be included in this one. To Jay and Marissa I send my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes as they begin their married life together. And to all of us who entertain, remember how special this day is for the couple and their family and friends. It might be your third or fourth of the weekend but it's their one and only special day. Treat it that way.

Have a great Holiday Season dear reader. We will meet again as 2015 unveils itself.

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 mikelw@discjockeynews.com.

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Problems And Complaints...

By Jake Palmer

For the first time since the mid 1990's, I received a complaint from a client recently. Boom! There you go; I said it, out loud and everything. If it seems like I am joking about this, it's for the simple reason that most of us don't like to get complaints, and if we do we certainly don't want to admit to every-



one that we did... these things can be hard on our precious egos. So if we never admit to them and we never talk openly about these complaints, how will we ever get better at avoiding them in the future?

So...let's talk about them openly.

I have always believed almost all problems and/or complaints stem from one place...

DJ Fail. It's true. Almost every time a client is not completely happy with us it's because we let them down. Problems and complaints arise because of unexpected stuff; I mean if we were expecting the things that brought the complaint and we still screwed it up, then that's on us, so it's probably safe to say that it's the unexpected things that catch us off guard and cause the problem.

Again, I say, "our fault"... if we had done our job better we would have asked more or better questions, we would have covered all the details, we would have made sure that the client (bride & groom) and us were on the same page and we would know exactly what the expectations for each other were. Then there would be no unexpected stuff... (I know - a bit of a dream world). It's probably safe to assume that I am NOT breaking any new ground with these statements. Most of us know this or are at least smart enough to figure it out. So why does it still happen? Why do we get complaints? Why does a guy like me who's been doing this since 1986 still find a way to miss all the signs and force a client into a situation where she feels compelled to sit down and type an e-mail after the fact, explaining why

she is unhappy?

It happens when I let it happen, when I let my guard down or skip a part of the process. What I mean is most of us have a system, a way of choosing the brides and grooms we work with. In my case I always look for couples that are on the same page as me, someone who will give me direction, then let me "take over" or "do my thing". I look for couples that appreciate and understand the "value" of what I do, couples that want a professional who will do the best for not just them, but ALL of their guests. I also have a process I typically go through to find and weed out any potential problems or clients that might not work with me as well as others. This "system" is pretty rock solid...dare I say almost "fool proof"... unless of course the fool (me) gets in the way. See, if I follow my own guidelines and rules I never have a problem, when there is a issue or sticky spot that I wasn't expecting, I can always trace it back to a place where I didn't follow my own rules.

Disclaimer time... I am very lucky and fortunate enough to have been doing this long enough and well enough that I can make a comfortable living at it. I know who I work well with and who I don't, and I am in a situation where I can afford to be a little "choosy" about what clients I will and won't work with. I understand not everyone is in this same situation, and some of you may be multi-op owners or employees. So for my use I like to work with clients that give me the best opportunity to be at my best, and filter out or pass on the people who don't give me the best chance to be my best. I have a couple of hard rules I never break... well, ok, try not to break.

1) It's your big day but no one like a bride-zilla.

2) Beware minute by minute time lines with no room to spare.

3) Unwilling to work together or compromise. (this goes well with #1 & 2, and is true for all aspects of the planning process, if a bride or groom can't work well with their fiancé, caterer, florist, ect.. why will they work well with you?)

4) Micro-Manager... again, see #2, and don't worry about guest requests because they won't be allowed.

5) Pleasers... sometimes these people will try so hard to please everyone, that they never really please anyone. (Making the 2 metal head guests happy by demanding I play "5 Finger Death Punch" only makes everyone else unhappy.

6) Discount Demands.

This is the one that got me last month. She wanted a "deal", it's a Friday wedding in November, so I think well, ok, when all the haggling was done she only got a \$100 discount, but it's not about the amount, it's about the value. Even \$100 is significant because it represents the respect (or lack of respect in this case) that the client has for you, for your craft, your abilities, and for your professionalism. When a client wants that discount it's because they don't

understand the value of what you do. They don't take it seriously, therefore they won't be as likely to listen to you, to hear your guidance and advice, and they won't acknowledge your expertise and professionalism. This all leads to communication problems and the possibility of a complaint or issue because they didn't trust that you ultimately had the best interest of them and their guests in mind every step of the way.

Remember to always go above and beyond to meet and exceed expectations, listen, compromise, and work together... just do it with the right clientele and you'll improve your odds of success. If you do get a complaint, tackle it directly, in a level-headed, problem solving, professional manner... you just might learn something.

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

Tamara Sims Continued from Page 1

swer to my dilemma: Always focus on the bread and butter of your business initially, but have subtle reminders throughout your office showing them what else you do. Today's bride and groom love the idea of "one stop shopping," and when clients are sold on the idea of hiring you they will often ask "What other services do you offer?" Photographs, video and wedding albums in your office work well along with marketing pieces you can hand your client after they book. When they are ready to look at photography, video, photo booths and lighting, your name will be top of mind.

What Mike Walter seminar would be complete without discussing one of his favorite topics: The Millennials! Mike introduced me to this generation many years ago in Atlantic City and I have learned to embrace them since they are the largest population we deal with in the wedding industry. This generation loves on-line reviews...and being my old fashioned, paper to pen self, I have had a difficult time transitioning to a "paperless review system." Mike has opened my eyes and has shared some great ideas on how to "ditch the paper" and better connect with my millennials so they will take the time to review us on Knot.com and WeddingWire. After implementing this new system for only a few weeks we have already seen an increase in our on-line reviews. Thanks Mike!

One of the most important issues we all face as business owners is how to deal with employees. Mike is an excellent and well-respected boss, which leads to longevity with his DJ staff, something Jay and I both admire. Many of his DJs have been with him over 10 years and continue to work hard and bring in rockin' reviews every weekend. His success stems from knowing when to wear his "friend hat" and when it is necessary to put his "boss hat" on. His DJs take ownership of each job early on, which allows them to visualize the monetary potential for the upcoming wedding season. Thanks to Mike, I am taking his approach by assigning our 2015 weddings now.

Although I couldn't see Mike up close and personal last month, I am grateful for all of his insight, guidance and friendship I will not only have a "better day," but an even better 2015! I wish the same to all of you!

Please feel free to share your comments with Tamara at: tamarasims@discjockeynews.com

Tamara is the Director of Sales and Marketing for Something 2 Dance 2 DJ Entertainment in Schaumburg, IL, which she proudly owns along with her husband Jay Sims. She has over 20 years experience in the wedding industry and loves creating wonderful wedding memories for her brides and grooms.



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Is Your Weight Loss Tied To Your Sales Gain?

By Jeffrey Gitomer

Everyone knows that as a nation we are somewhere between overweight and obese. This is not good.

I tell my audiences, “we are so overweight as a country, if we were invaded by enemies, we couldn’t even run away.”

The reason I’m writing is not to tell you what I plan on doing, rather it is to tell you what I have done, what I’m doing about it, and how I will continue this process.

For the past five years I’ve weighed somewhere between 205 and 209 pounds. That’s not good for a kid who weighed 160 in college. Granted that was some time ago, but it’s no excuse to be 50 pounds over college weight.

Much like you, I lamented it instead of doing anything about it. I wrote about, and bragged that I was on my way to losing weight. I never did. I bragged that I was sick and tired of being overweight, and I was going to go on a major weight loss program. I never did.

Loyal readers sent me messages of encouragement, diet plans, MLM pill plans, chocolate plans, coffee plans, and assorted health options. I never did any of them.

But silently and secretly, I began losing weight. Now that I’m down below 190 (almost a 20 pound loss), I can come out of the closet (or should I say come

off of the scale), and begin to talk about it.

Besides the weight loss, I firmly believe that sales and health go hand-in-hand. I believe that my physical well-being will improve my sales well-being, while enhancing my mental well-being.

I also found that losing weight is not just about watching what you eat. It’s a combination of thinking healthy, eating healthy, and exercise.

Here is what I have found to be true to lose the first 20 pounds:

Thinking: you have to have a DAILY mindset, and a mental awareness of what you’re doing at all times. Especially about what you eat. Two keywords are: eat less. Two more keywords are: eat healthy. And the final keywords are: weigh yourself. Thinking leads to shrinking.

Eating: No secret formula or diet or pills here. Here’s what I did: I’ve switched to club soda or water. No other drink. When I drink club soda, I add a squeeze of fresh lemon and lime. I eat as much raw fruits and vegetables as I can. I limit bread and all other empty carbohydrates. That’s it. I sacrifice very little. And if I occasionally feel like having some kind of pastry or candy, I eat it, or should I say, I eat half of it. I learned that moderation is the key to weight loss. If I order something at a restaurant, I eat half, and push the rest away.

Exercising: Enter CYBEX. More than an exercise machine, it’s a healthy alter-

native to being a couch potato. I have a Cybex machine in my home. Exercising for 20 to 30 minutes three or four times a



week has made me feel fit and firm. No, I don’t have a lot of muscle, but I do have a good feeling every time I finish (even though there are many days when I’m reluctant to start). For me, exercise is a bigger discipline than diet, but now that I’m actually losing weight, the desire to keep up the habit is nearing the stage of compelling.

I should also add losing weight at my age (68) is a hell of a lot harder than it is if you’re in your 20’s, 30’s, or 40’s.

Okay so I’m down almost 20 pounds. I’m a little more than halfway home. I intend to drop down to somewhere between 170 and 175 pounds. I believe that’s my healthiest weight, and also my best selling weight. And as a public speaker I believe it will increase my credibility significantly.

This will be my first in a series of articles about the importance of mental success and physical success. Every person who has ever written about anything having to do with human success and all personal development books at their core, stress the need to combine mental

health and physical health. I will be no exception.

With 20 less pounds on me, everything is a bit easier. Even the mundane things like putting on your socks and tying your shoes are noticeably easier.

But the best part about having a few less pounds is how I feel about myself when I look in the mirror in the morning. Okay, I’m not the prettiest specimen in the world, but I love my new look. I also love weighing myself.

Some mornings I can’t believe how far I’ve come, but my incentive is to keep going until I reach my desired outcome.

Yes I have a support system, and yes I have an exercise machine of my own, but the key to my success has been my own self-discipline and my own desire to keep my healthy process moving forward.

And please be aware, I’m not bragging about what I’ve done. Rather I’m sharing information about how to get and stay healthy, and hopefully inspire you to do the same. Odds are you have 10 or 20 extra pounds on you that you wish you didn’t have. And you can’t will it away.

Come on dude, wake up and smell the pop-tarts – just don’t eat them.

Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books including *The Sales Bible* and *The Little Red Book of Selling*. His forthcoming book, *21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling*, will be available September 3rd, and will feature a national public seminar tour. Get the details at www.gitomer.com. It will lead you to more information about training and seminars, or email him personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

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The Power of IF...

By Ron Ruth

As you might imagine, I received a tremendous amount of grief for my November, Disc Jockey News article where I predicted that the Kansas City Royals would win the World Series in six games. Unless you've been living under a rock, you already know that the San Francisco Giants won it in seven games. Randy Bartlett (the world's most avid Giants fan) posted on Facebook that my failed prediction lessened my credibility. Fellow Disc Jockey News writer, Mike Walter, pointed out that I jinxed the Royals with my prediction.



Both of these guys and others who contacted me could be right. Last year at the November, Disc Jockey News conclave I predicted that

the seemingly unstoppable Kansas City Chiefs (9-0 at the time) would go on to the Super Bowl. I even taught the attendees the "tomahawk chop" so they'd know the proper way to cheer on the Chiefs to victory. The team lost the next 4 out of 6 games after that presentation, finishing the season with an 11-5 record and losing a first round play-off game to Indianapolis. More recently, I predicted that there was no way the 7-3 Chiefs would lose to an AFC division rival, the pathetic 0-10 Raiders. Once again, I was wrong.

Yeah, when it comes to predicting sports outcomes, I suck. And since I'm always wrong, I can certainly see how that damages my credibility and since I'm always making those predictions about my hometown teams who go out of their way to prove me wrong, I can also see how I might be jinxing their chances of succeeding, as well. The danger of predicting is that it forces one to rely on the unpredictable "if" factor. The Royals could have maybe, possibly, perhaps tied the score of the 7th game of the World Series in the ninth inning "if" the third base coach waved on that tying run from third to home while the Giants' outfielders were

fumbling with the ball. But that third base coach was also dealing with some big "ifs." He would have been blamed for the final out of the game "if" he predicted incorrectly that the runner would make it safely to home. "If" the runner had scored, though, the Royals may have won it all. There are some fans who blame that coach for the loss because he held up the runner. Experts of the game say he did the right thing. Unfortunately, no one will ever know who is right. If only it were possible to try it both ways to determine once and for all which "if" would have been the better decision.

Predicting if our favorite sports team will win or lose is just part of being a fan. It's harmless fun if, of course, a monetary wager wasn't placed on a failed prediction. Gambling debts aside, whether a team wins or loses doesn't affect our day-to-day-lives but the "if" factor does. It's a simple, 2-letter word that wields a tremendous amount of power. Think about how many times a day you say "if" and about its varying meanings.

"If" is a conditional word with alternate realities. If you do good things, good things will come. If you don't, they won't. Sometimes "ifs" are easy. "Few if any changes are needed." Sometimes "ifs" are hard. "If you want to get this proposal approved, you'll have to completely revamp it." "If" can build consensus. "If we tweak the idea slightly, it can be successful" "If" can also tear people apart. "If you don't like it you can leave." We use "if" as a cautionary term. "If you're not careful, you'll get burned." "If" separates fact from fiction. "If it looks like a duck..." We use the word as a tit for tat negotiating tool. "If" presupposes the future and laments the past. "If we do this..." and "If only we had done that."

To me, "if" is a word of hope. It triggers the mind to imagine the impossible as possible and opens creative thought to a vast universe of promise. The hazard we all face, however, is realizing the "if" is a noun and not a verb. It simply begins a conversation and inspires us to consider the potential outcomes as we want them to be. "If" opens the door to limitless possibilities but it does not do the hard work needed to achieve the desired goal. With-

out "if" there would be no dreams to come true.

As we head into a new year, take a moment to consider all of the "ifs" you've uttered that would have, could have or maybe did change your life or business for the better over the past twelve months. "I can improve at my craft if I invest in additional training." "I can live a better life if I take care of my body, exercise and eat properly." "I can have greater success if I surround myself with positive thinking and successfully minded people." "I will be a happier person if I focus on exceeding at the things that make me happiest." If you've achieved just one of your individual "ifs," then you appreciate the feeling of accomplishment that comes with it and you find yourself ready to take on the next possibility in great anticipation of discovering even more opportunities to grow, to learn and to improve.

Yours is the only run that matters in

your personal and business life. If with every swing of the bat you hold up on third base because you don't know if you can make it to home plate safely, you'll also never know if you could have won the game. Take the chance. Even if you get tagged out, there will always be another game to play and another opportunity to become a champion.

Happy holidays everyone! See you next year!

Ron Ruth is a 20 year veteran of the wedding and DJ industry and the owner of Ron Ruth Wedding Entertainment in Kansas City. He's also a WED® Guild Member, a self-described "Disney Geek" and a nationally recognized speaker who presents seminars at conferences for DJs and wedding professionals on the topic of delivering quality service. Ron can be reached at 816-224-4487 or ronruth@discjockeynews.com

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The Referral Coach: Ideas To Increase Your Positive Intelligence

By Matt Anderson

Recently I wrote about the best book I've read this year, Shirzad Chamine's Positive Intelligence. MetLife also 2014The author argues that only 20% of people reach their potential because everyone else has low PQ (positive intelligence). He defines this as less than 75/100 on the premise that you need three of every four of your thoughts to be positive otherwise how can expect to move forward?

There are three strategies to increase your PQ:

1. Weaken your mental Saboteurs (e.g. your inner critic)
 2. Strengthen the Sage part of your brain that comes up with great ideas
 3. Strengthen your PQ brain muscles
- I've already written about 1 and 2 – ask me for my article on that or buy his book. From running my Goals Gym, I've found that people struggle much harder

WHY: you want your mind to be your friend not your enemy. If your PQ is less than 75 (and you can test it for free on www.positiveintelligence.com), it means you are criticising yourself too much; you are your own biggest obstacle.

To strengthen your PQ, you really do need to exercise the muscles just like any other muscle. You really do need to form new neural pathways, otherwise your brain is going to lapse back to its old ways. And why shouldn't it? That's what you've (unwittingly) trained it to do.

Chamine's suggestions sound odd and not wildly life-changing. But given that his work has achieved great results, is based on the latest research in neuroscience and psychology, and his impressive client list (many Fortune 500 companies and business school faculties), I'd suggest you have nothing to lose.

The overall goal is to do 100 PQ reps/day for at least 21 days by SHIFTING your attention to your body and any of your 5 senses for 10 seconds (one rep). 100 sounds enormous and it does take plenty of mental focus but that is the point. As you start to catch your inner-

activate better PQ:

1. Daily routines – focus on various senses during these times: bathroom visits, brushing teeth, taking a shower, eating attentively (taste, smell), exercise (feeling muscles work, listening to breathing), music (follow one instrument), being present with loved ones (hugs that tune into their breathing, deeper eye contact)

2. Catching your inner-critic and other mental Saboteur and then activating one of your senses, e.g. rubbing fingers together, wiggling toes. This has a two-fold benefit – slows down negative mental energy and switches to something positive.

3. PQ Gym – 3 deep breaths is one rep, so 10 minutes of meditative breath-

ing is 45 reps (assuming your mind is distracted in mental chatter half that time).

If you would like an hourly tracker to help you stay on track, ask me for what I put together for Goals Gym clients: matt.anderson.intl@gmail.com

The most important question to ask yourself is this: am I serious about reaching my potential? You already know the answer. So what are you going to do about it?

Matt Anderson is the author of 'Fearless Referrals' at: <http://www.thereferralauthority.com> or at: Matt.Anderson.intl@gmail.com

Brian S Redd Continued from page 1

late last year, which all by itself doesn't do much. In fact, it's taken me almost a year to realize where it actually fits into my marketing plan.

I feel a lot of DJs think the power of a website lies somewhere in search engines. Type in "Milwaukee DJ" and the sites that pop up first are the winners. That's kind of what I thought too. A lot of time was put into my new site by both myself and my web designer. It really stands out. The layout is simple yet contemporary. There are original images of my set ups and lighting designs, a professional photo of myself and an impressive bio written by someone much smarter than me. Even if my site doesn't pop up first in a web search, it still looks great and those who actually click on search result #127 will love it.

Well, that didn't happen and I'll admit I was a little disappointed.

Then came my summer 2014 wedding season. There were some real stand-out events, such as the Janz wedding. This was my first same sex wedding. I honestly wasn't sure how I was going to feel during the ceremony, but it was just beautiful and I was moved more than I can remember being at any other wedding. Of course the reception was an absolute blast! Then there was the Budd wedding. This was an amazing party. The room was so packed,

they opened the doors and had people dancing outside. This wasn't just for an hour or so, this energy lasted all night long.

Back to the power of the website. For the past few months, I've been getting emails from people saying things like "I work with so-and-so. You did their wedding and they loved you. Are you available on my date?" or "We saw you at so-and-so's wedding. My date is... are you available?"

All of these emails are coming from an account associated with my website, which isn't even printed on a business card yet. OK, so I'm a little behind on cards, but this little oversight has given me some insight.

My website isn't generating any new clients, and that's OK. It does, however, have a very important job: getting client referrals the contact info they were searching for, then getting them more excited about booking me than they may have already been. How excited? Enough to not even bother to ask "how much?". What's your website doing for you?

Brian S Redd is a Mobile/Club DJ in Milwaukee WI, DJ Youtuber and an official "American DJ" Artist/ You can reach Brian at: brianredd@discjockeynews.com

3 STRATEGIES TO INCREASE PQ



with how to build the PQ muscles.

If you don't want to read the rest of this, but simply get a copy of the tracker I created, email me and I'll send it to you.

critic and shift your thinking, your day slowly starts to become more positive and your mind begins to come up with better ideas.

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Extraordinary Amazing Remarkable...

By Carr Hagerman

I recently attended a conference where a keynote speaker was ranting about achieving success as a leader, "If you want to have an extraordinary company..." he said, "you must be an extraordinary leader."



He paced the stage, thinking, and breathlessly, and slowly added "If you want to create exceptional and amazing results... you have

to BE an exceptional and amazing leader!" Oh, that's all!

I found myself wondering if those words actually meant something to this speaker who choose to deploy them? Words are, after all, containers and vehicles of meaning, and if they are to mean anything at all we need to weigh them, think about them, consider what's inside. We must listen to our own speaking and writing before we engage words and ideas that seem hallow, useless or worse, untrue. If we really want to be extraordinary, and who doesn't, then what does that mean? Is it just a matter of choice, do we just have to say it for it to be so? If we are in a room of motivated sales people and brand evangelists foaming at the temples over the idea that we can achieve success greatness, does that mean we will? The truth is, no one can

really sell you a roadmap for your unique path to greatness and no one has the keys to the buried treasures in your life.

Years ago I saw Steve Martin perform a stand up comedy set in front of a couple hundred people. He was remarkably funny. Near the beginning of his show he teased us with "A little be later, I'm going to share a big secret with you on how to earn a million dollars and pay no taxes!" Later in the show he paid that off with "Now I'm going to tell you how to pay no taxes on a million dollars. First...make a million dollars!" If you want to be a millionaire, unless you were born with it or stole it, you have to do something to earn it. Before you get the benefits you have to build the good, and getting a million dollars or being extraordinary amazing remarkable requires a lot more effort than we imagine. Besides, do we actually need to be extraordinary, amazing and remarkable to be truly successful and happy? The clerics of modern motivation and self help want to sell us on the idea that wherever we are isn't where we should be, whatever we are could be so much more!

Here is a tip. If you really want to build a great and successful life, and who doesn't, consistently do things that matter to you and that make you feel great. Fuel your own exuberance, connect and engage wholeheartedly in your work and with those you live with and serve. Take away the stuff that gets in the way of the authentic commerce with others. Sometimes it's not about getting everything you want, but learning to want everything you get. Be successful at what you do and who you already are. And for crying out loud don't listen to anyone selling

you the coordinates to easy, exceptional, success. Just be cool with yourself, get a little high on the things you do and you might just see that your awesome life is already extraordinary, amazing, remarkable and that is an exceptionally good thing!

Carr Hagerman is the author of "Top Performer: A Bold Approach To Sales And Service." (Hyperion). You can contact Carr at: carrhagerman@discjockeynews.com Or visit his website at <http://www.carrhagerman.com>

PTDJ: Be Yourself

By Dan Carpenter

I've been learning a valuable lesson lately. Over the course of the past couple of weddings I've done, I've tried to institute some ideas that, well... just weren't me. I thought they would be great ideas. I thought that the crowd would



love them, and as a result love me. When it all came down to it though, it wasn't me, it wasn't my style, and so in my opinion it went over like a lead balloon.

With that being said, there is a difference between improving ourselves and changing ourselves. I'm a fan of Randy Bartlett's 1% Solution series. For those that haven't checked it out, I encourage you to do so. In a nut shell, it's about making small changes that will make big results. However, I find that because I'm only doing a handful of events each month, I don't have as many weddings to get all of these changes into. In turn I end up falling victim to the idea of doing a lot

of changes all at once. Some of them are good habits to get into, such as how I'm addressing the crowd, where I'm standing when I'm doing so, and thinking through every aspect of what I do before I do it so that it's intentional and purposeful. However, other ideas aren't as great, such as taking something Randy used and trying to do it exactly as he did (side note: better to adapt not adopt), or trying a new idea without actually taking the time to practice it.

For me being part-time, I feel as though I fall victim to the time aspect in multiple ways. Because of the smaller number of weddings I want to improve as fast as I can, so I try and do too many changes at one time. Sort of changing 10% instead of 1%. I also incorrectly feel that because I don't think I have as much time that I can skip over the time to practice and can just go into the event and pull it off. After all, it looked so easy on the video, surely I can pull this off without a hitch (I really wish there was a sarcasm font on my computer).

As a result, there are two ways I've found to combat the true issues at hand. One, don't be lazy. Any new skill or new idea takes time to practice and work through if you are going to do it well. Randy, and anyone else you may learn from, recognizes something works because they took the time and effort to

Dan Carpenter Continued on page 10



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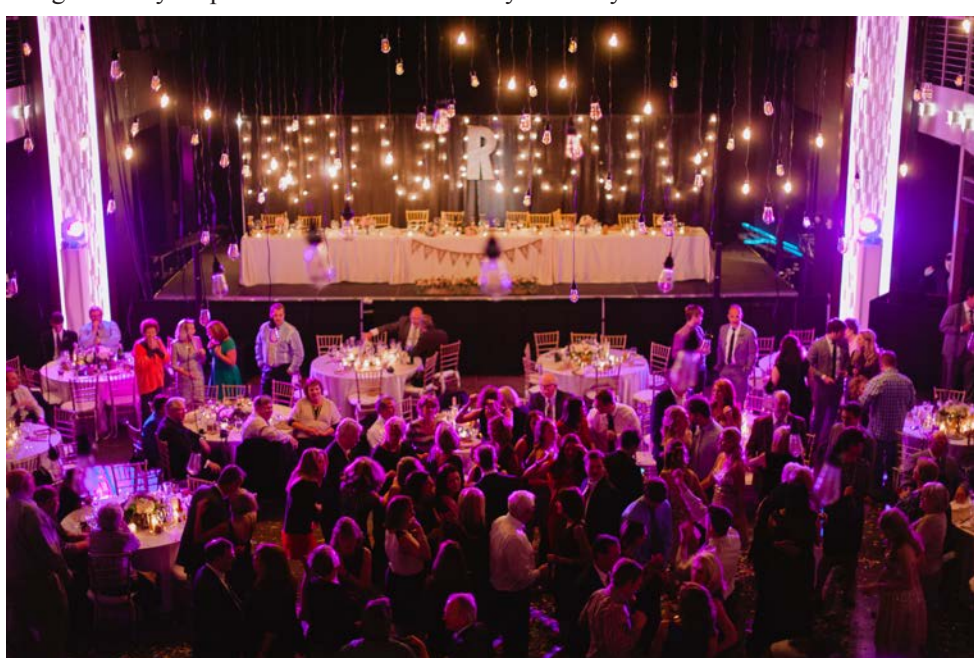
By Jeremy Brech

With all the amazing technology in LED fixtures on the market we forget to look at what we might have already and use it to make something amazing. Imagine creating something amazing with something you may already have in your inventory. Let me paint the picture for you and how I was inspired to find the right wedding to bring one of our most exciting design elements to life.

It all started three to four years ago while watching the music video of Alicia Keys "Empire State of Mind Part 2". It is a very nice piano version, but what stood out to me was the ambiance and how it created some amazing dynamics. Then recently while watching TV I noticed a Lincoln SUV commercial bringing back my inspiration and now GMC

With the huge trend in rustic or country style it is a great way to provide a lighting element beyond the normal up-lighting. Up-lighting isn't always the answer for every theme. The bulbs give an amazing look and feel to a room and we created a random hanging approach which allowed the bulbs to hang 8 to 15 feet from the ceiling. So you are thinking, "I don't have these bulbs laying around." Well as we know people like a room to have an ambiance and not overly bright. Imagine 130 of these bulbs randomly hanging throughout the room. That would create a very bright room and take away from the mood most couples or clients are trying to set. So here is the key element you probably already have.

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showcases their new trucks with the same thing. So what is it? Edison or Tungsten light bulbs! You're wondering how that incorporates with event design. Well, let's analyze that.

Jeremy Brech is Owner/Entertainer/Lighting Designer of DJ Jer Events and Lighting Design, and WED TM Member. Jeremy can be reached at: jeremybrech@discjockeynews.com.

Be The Change You Want To See

By Glenn Mackay

As 2014 comes to a close, many will start to think about what changes they want to make in their DJ business for 2015. Some will be better prepared and will already have plans in place for 2015.



Regardless of how organized you are, most evolve and modify their DJ business according to what each individual thinks is best. We

evolve to make more money. We evolve to have more free time. We evolve to get more enjoyment from our work.

We evolve mostly because we have learned a better way to do something. There will be times when a change is made that doesn't work better for you, so you change it again or revert back to your original way of doing things. That's ok. We're all still learning.

In general, these changes come along based on you taking the time to educate yourself in one way or another. Maybe you did a course in marketing and decided to change the way your marketing was set up. Maybe you did some performance training and changed the way you operated as a DJ or MC. Regardless of what form the education took, you have improved yourself and your business. You have evolved.

This constant evolution has no doubt enabled your DJ business to grow and become something quite different from where it all started. Maybe it grew to be something quite different from your initial dream.

Creating change is something that is often seen as scary, yet we all do it and we do it a lot. Change is essential and simply

a part of running a small business.

Now let's think bigger.

Now can we change our industry? What can you do to leave the mobile DJ industry better than when you joined it? We already know that change comes about by education. We know that to get better, we need to learn more in one way or another.

So how can we educate an entire industry? Will you need to write a book, speak at a convention, create a DVD or develop a workshop? Maybe you do. Maybe the best way that you can help educate our industry is by sharing with your network of DJs how you have been able to change. Share with them how they can gain the same DJ education that you have. Let them know what books to read, conventions to attend and workshops to be a part of.

Most importantly, I feel that in order to create a big change in our industry, we need to be less selfish. Most DJs are not willing to share the above information and resources with DJs in their own market. Why not? Do you think they will copy the 'shoe game' the same way you did and you will lose your point of difference in your market? It really doesn't matter if they do, because as the rest of your market improves, you'll still be evolving yourself and pushing even further ahead.

I challenge you all - yes YOU as well - to be the change you want to see in the industry. I challenge you to reach out to others in your market and share ideas. Share with them ways they can improve, books they can read, workshops they can take and any other ways you think they could improve.

Think about how you would like to be treated if you were new to this industry. Be that change. YOU have the power to make this industry a better place for all.

Glenn Mackay is a mobile DJ from Brisbane, Queensland, Australia and owner of G and M Solutions Mobile DJs. Glenn can be reached at glennmackay@discjockeynews.com



Dan Carpenter Continued from page 9

practice it until it became second nature. They wouldn't be suggesting or trying this new idea for everyone if they just thought of it 5 minutes before showing it to you. Second, be yourself. Don't try and change too much of who you are. The client is often times buying you. It's the one thing that you have over your competition. They can't be you.

So if a client hired you, most likely it's because there was something they liked about you. If you are trying to change everything about who you are, then you are not going to be that person. Here's where the practicing can help tremendously. When you are practicing a new idea or skill, you should be able to get a feel if this is something that fits you. If it doesn't, it's not that it isn't a good idea - it just might not be yours. At that

point, you have two options; adjust it so you can make it your own, or forget it and move on to something else.

My lesson took a bit to realize. Fortunately I did so before it caused a problem. Since then, I've looked for ways to improve, but in my own style. I ask myself, "Are these changes technical improvements or style changes?" Doing so has cut down on the number of "improvements" I feel I need to make. It's not that I suddenly see myself as awesome, but rather I see myself with a more focused list of tweaks I can make to how I do things.

It's necessary to always improve, but never lose sight of you. Always be yourself, just better.

Dan Carpenter can be reached at dancarpenter@discjockeynews.com.

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The Way I See It: Set The Stage

By Michael J. Lenstra

We see it all of the time, someone is getting ready to sell a car, one of the first things he or she does before placing that FOR SALE sign in the window is take the car to the car wash, get it cleaned inside and out, get a shiny wax job, and hang a fragrance banner on the mirror.

A similar routine happens when someone sells a house. "Buying a home is personal," states realtor.com,

"[and] successful staging will boost your home's appeal—and your chances of selling." The site then goes on to list over a dozen tips on how to create a positive first impression as potential buyers walk into your home. The tips have more to do with emphasizing home décor, creating space, and displaying eye candy than they do with spotlighting new appliances or square footage.

As DJs, we should take similar steps to create that "great first impression" with potential clients. While it helps to be very personable, savvy at social media, and good at closing the deal with the clients who contact us for their events, we must also remember that when the doors open and the party is ready to begin it is not only our paying clients, but also the tens or dozens or hundreds of guests at the event that we should be trying to impress as well. Many of these people may have never had any interaction with us before that moment, but the positive first impression generated by our set-up and personal appearance will help ensure they remember us when they're planning their next event. Here are some steps we can take to create a

favorable impression:

SET-UP

Nix the orange cords—Extension cords are a necessity in our business, so when we use them it's best to purchase the black ones. Even though this is our work site, there's no reason to make it look like a construction zone.

Then hide them—Again, cords are an essential part of the DJ set-up, whether they are attached to speakers or used as part of the lighting system. Do everything you can to make them invisible. Invest in plastic wire ties or Velcro to fasten them against your poles.

More on those cords—Be safety conscious as well as neat. Cords running along the floor should be taped down.

And speaking of tape—Use black theatrical or gaffer tape. It will not leave a residue or cause any damage to the banquet facility's floor, which will impress the banquet manager. This simple act could also lead to future referrals.

Skirt it—Get in the habit of carrying a large full cover tablecloth or table skirt and clips with you to every event. Not every banquet hall will supply you with one—or a table for that matter. Again,

black is a neutral color and shows less wear or stains than other colors.

More skirts – If your speakers or lights are on a tripod invest in some Tripod Speaker Stand Stretch Covers. They typically come in black or white; if you are using the white you may also want to invest in a pair of 10W RGB Waterproof LED Flood Lights. These lights, which can be purchased for less than \$15 each on Amazon.com, can be programmed in up to 16 different colors. They help hide those aforementioned cords, make the stands much more appealing and the lights will add a great accent to your set up by placing them underneath the stands

Speaking of lights – Pick up a couple more of those RGB lights or a pair of the many flat par cans or a couple of color strip lights and set them behind your system to create a backlight effect. Most often you can program these lights to match the color scheme that the client has displayed in their décor.

Façade—Whether you are using a full frontal or a table top model, a façade is a great way to hide all of those items that gather on your table, such as paper-

work, pens, microphones, soda cans, or water bottles.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress—For non-formal events, wearing a pair of khakis and a polo shirt with your company name imprinted may be the classiest way to go. Formal events require at least a pair of dress slacks, a buttoned shirt, and a jacket. Men should wear ties (there are plenty of music-themed ones available for a little extra touch), whereas women may want to accent their wardrobe with jewelry. Jeans, shorts and screen printed t-shirts (unless they are bearing your company name) should be avoided unless the event specifically calls for that attire.

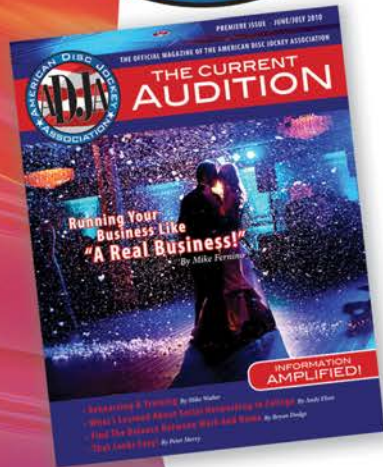
Wearing a pair of well-shined shoes is suggested; if they have shoelaces, make certain the laces are not frayed. Your hair should be combed and jelled or sprayed. A nice cologne or perfume is a must. Carrying breath mints or gum is also beneficial.

A wise elderly man once said to me that if we save our pennies we can spend our dollars, which translates to this: little things add up. The way I see it, our personal appearance and our set-up is really setting the stage for future business. By doing the little things we'll help create that positive first impression which may be as critical as our music choices and our mic skills. Sometimes the difference between a \$500 DJ and a \$1,200 DJ is no more than the addition of the little things. And the difference between a \$1200 DJ and an \$1800 on is just a few more.

Have a great holiday season. Until next month . . .

~ Mike ~

Michael J. Lenstra is a 20-plus-year veteran of the Mobile Disc Jockey Industry, a full-time entertainer, and owner of Alexis Entertainment in Dubuque, IA. He can be reached at mikelenstra@discjockeynews.com



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Time For A Makeover

By Keith 'KC' KoKoruz

Is your company name, logo, colors, etc. still serving your company?

I am a product of the 1980s. Perhaps one of the greatest times in American history at least from a pop culture point of view. MTV debuted August 1, 1981.



Michael Jackson debuted the moonwalk. Madonna burst on the scene in a way no other woman had ever done before. Later in the decade, long-haired

wild and crazy rock stars took over the world, while bikini clad models crawled over luxurious sports cars in their videos. Tom Cruise inspired feathered hair styles in 'Risky Business'. Don Johnson made every male aged 10-30 want to wear a colored t-shirt with a white blazer. Neon Pink and Teal were two of the hottest colors at the time and they were also the first company colors I chose for my first DJ Company, Spinnin' Discs.

I had the hottest colors and cutting edge technology in my company name and logo. Who could stop me? I guess Sean Parker as well as John and Shawn Fanning didn't help with Napster. The fashion and design world got extremely

sick of astro bright colors as well. I now had a company name that was quickly becoming irrelevant, and colors that were now avoided. We chose to keep the company name since it had such a great reputation, however contracted a design company to create a brand new logo.

The colors were darkened and the fonts changed. Our company name now was now mounted on a sphere as well. It was a necessary change, as the times had changed

and we had to change with them.

The hard part of changing a logo or company name is that you have a direct connection to it. You chose them for a reason and having the guts to change them is extremely difficult. On November 13, 2009 I wasn't given that choice. Due to a series of bad professional decisions on my part, I was forced to start over and was no longer a part of my original company. Throughout the course of that weekend my prior partner had sent out an email to the world announcing that she had parted company with me. My cell phone rang like crazy and the recurring thing said over and over again was that I was the name and the face of

Spinnin' Discs for 20 years. Based on that reason, I chose to name my current company The Keith Christopher Entertainment Group. Within a few weeks, we had a new logo, website, business cards and had placed my identity everywhere it had been when I was a part of Spinnin' Discs.

The results were amazing. Past clients and vendors loved the new look. Clients who had me booked at the old company switched to the new company. I had been

given a complete do over.

If you look at some of the most iconic brands in existence today, they have under gone change - some even a company name change. While the golden arches have served Mc Donald's well, if you do a google search you will find a series of variations based on the era. The same can be said of Burger King, eBay, Microsoft, Apple, etc. Holiday Inn is a perfect example of a brand that was once huge, fell into bankruptcy and has emerged with a great new look and feel.

Brands like Pepsi were originally called Brad's Drink named after the man who created the formula. eBay was

originally called Auction Web. Randy Bartlett of Premier Entertainment was once called Old Time Rock and Roll Entertainment. Jeffrey Craig of Total Entertainment was once called Hustle with Us. Three of these companies do millions of dollars in business and one of them can sell you the 1% Solution DVDs.

Certain company's names simply make sense. Volkswagen literally means "people's car." Adolf Hitler initially came up with the idea for "cars for the masses," which would be a state-sponsored Volkswagen program. Hitler wanted to create a more affordable car that was able to transport two adults and three children at speeds of 62 mph. He chose the car manufacturer Porsche to carry out the project, and the rest, as they say, is history. Coca-Cola's name comes from the coca leaves and kola nuts used as flavoring in the soft drink. Eventually Coca-Cola creator, John S. Pemberton, changed the "K" of kola to "C" to create a more fluid name. Both of these companies have gone through extensive logo changes since their inception. Coca-Cola is even credited with giving America the current version of Santa Clause that we have all come to know and love.

If you look at fashion and design, it is constantly changing and evolving to what these companies feel will be the new direction for their company. Your choice is to lead, follow, or get out of the way- because change happens whether you want it to or not.

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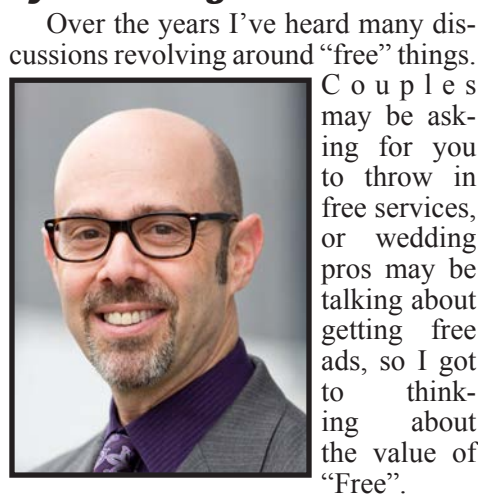
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What Is The Value of FREE?

By Alan Berg



Over the years I've heard many discussions revolving around "free" things. C o u p l e s may be asking for you to throw in free services, or wedding pros may be talking about getting free ads, so I got to thinking about the value of "Free".

On the surface free usually seems like a good idea: free parking, free samples, free speech, free advice, etc. When we're on the receiving end of free services and products, we rarely seem to mind. Everyone likes free stuff, regardless of their income bracket.

Is free really free?

In reality, free is not free. There is a cost, it just may not be yours to bear. Free parking is paid for by the merchant who owns the land, or the municipality that built the parking lot (paid for with tax dollars). Free samples are paid for by the merchant who wants to get your business. Similarly, the free advice you get on the WeddingWire Pro Forums is supported by the technology and manpower behind it, paid for by WeddingWire. You get to use the Pro Forums for free, but that doesn't mean there isn't a cost.

Do you really get what you pay for?

So, is free better than paid? I see the discussions on the Pro Forums all the time; wedding pros asking if it's worth paying for an ad, versus taking a free

one. Why would they think that a free ad, at the back of the listings, would be representative of what a paid ad at the front would get them? That's like saying that an iPod would do just as good of a job as a professional DJ, since they can have all of the same songs; or their HD consumer-grade video camera will do just as good of a job as a pro.

Find the lake with the most fish and then get the biggest net

When you go fishing, you look for the lake that has the most of the kind of fish you want to catch. T h e n get your boat and the biggest net, or the best fishing gear you can, and start fishing. Sure, you may have to buy a permit and the better gear, but you know the reward is worth it. Similarly, when you buy an ad you're really buying access to an audience. If you feel the audience is worth your while, you should want to get as much exposure to it as you can, not the least. If you don't feel it's worth your while they you shouldn't want to be there at all. Sure, having a free listing will allow couples to find you and read your reviews... if they dig deep enough, or if they already know your name.



want to put my name. I was starting a new business and I wanted it to reflect my philosophy on business and life: Are you in or are you out? Do you have a toe in the water, or are you in all the way?

If they already know your name then it wasn't the ad that brought them to you. That's the same as with a search engine result. If you look at your tracking reports for the words and phrases that are used to find your website and the most common ones are your name, then it wasn't SEO (search engine optimization) that brought them to you. They already knew your name, you just don't know how.

G o B i g ... or G o H o m e !

When I got my iPad last year they offered free engraving on the back. It's not that m a n y characters and I didn't

So I had Apple engrave "Go Big... or Go Home" on my iPad. That's what I tell my consulting clients when it comes to advertising and business. If you're going to do it, go all in. That's the only way you'll really know if it's going to work. Is the investment bigger? Sure. Is the potential reward bigger? Absolutely. Almost every wedding pro I know that has

a Spotlight or Featured Listing wouldn't give it up.

Free ideas you can use

If you want to include some free things in your marketing plan, here are a few that are free or nearly free:

- Attend networking meetings, not just in your industry, but outside (i.e. videographers and DJs can attend wedding planning and caterer's meetings)
- Use the tools in your WeddingWire dashboard to request more reviews from past clients;
- Work with the photographers on the weddings you do to get new and better photos for your website and marketing (ask them for access to the same online proofing site they give the couples)
- Create a blog post about every wedding you do. Do these in addition to advertising where you know the biggest audience of engaged couples is already going.

So, what's it going to be? You can't expect to get the big returns from small investments. That was proven to us many times over the last few years with the financial meltdown and housing crisis. There are no guarantees, but you have a lot more control over your business success than you do over the stock market or housing prices. Use that power and have your best year ever. Let me know how I can help you. Thanks for listening.

Alan Berg has been called "North America's Leading Expert and Speaker on the Business of Weddings and Events". Find out more about his speaking, website reviews, consulting, books, DVDs and audio presentations at <http://www.AlanBerg.com> - email or call Alan, 732.422.6362

ORGANIZED?

DJEventPlanner.com

Web Based Event Management Software

The image shows a man in a white shirt and black tie, looking down at a desk covered with many yellow sticky notes. The notes contain various tasks and reminders, such as:

- Send Faxes
- New Equipment List
- Pick Up Dry Cleaning
- Update To Do List
- Buy More Post Its
- Receipts
- Answer Emails
- Get Venue Info
- Update Client Contacts
- Event at 8:00pm
- Call New
- Follow Up
- Finish Contracts
- Clean Car
- Call Mom
- New Customer Quotes
- Call New Venue
- Organize!
- Return Phone Call
- Event at 9:30pm
- Call Plumber

A Lean Mean Biz Machine for 2015

By Mike Kazis

Can you believe that 2015 will soon be here? I don't know about you but 2014 went by pretty fast. Forget about 2013 - that year was just a blur. Now that, in less than a month, we'll be back at the beginning of a new year, let's think about what we're going to accomplish next year for our organizations. What is it that we intend to make better?

During this past summer and fall, I was honored to have the opportunity to participate in Disc Jockey News' Virtual Training and Virtual Expo. My mission for participating in these events is the same one I follow for my monthly articles, to help deliver real business topics that we can all apply to our own businesses. For the video series, the topic I chose to start with was Marketing. I did so partly because it was the first graduate school class that I ever took, and it allowed me to flow nicely into the other

name a few. Quite frankly, they're very detailed, often difficult to follow, and simply too big to implement into a small business. One thing I've learned in studying business is that it's OK to create your own system, as long as it makes things productive for you.

Here's how I came up with this philosophy:

Many years ago while studying Business Administration in graduate school, I discovered that a Quality Management class was available. Back then, big business buzz words such as "methodology", "Six Sigma", and others whose names escape me were flying around the work area like sea gulls at a garbage dump. Rather than use these terms loosely in conversation, I decided to learn what Quality Management was all about. One class would not teach me everything but it was a start. The class was full of information about different methodologies and it was enough to make a person's head spin. Then one day, while I was reading through the class text book entitled Managing for Quality and Performance Excellence by James Evans and William Lindsey, I discovered a statement which they made introducing the aforementioned three principles - and that's when everything made sense.

So basically, you can study all the details of Six Sigma and other quality

do to turn it up a notch. Not only does this principle apply to you as an individual but can also be extended to you as a business leader. Whether its use is personal or professional, this principle works by allowing you to ask yourself, "What can I do to make myself better at what I do?"

Because these three principles are each intricately detailed, I will devote one upcoming article to each principle. This means that next month, we will start with the topic of Continuous Improvement so that you can perform a self analysis before focusing on others. Have a Happy Holiday.

Mike can be reached at mikekazis@discjockeynews.com. Michael is the senior partner and manager of Dynamite Party Productions in Staten Island, NY. He has been a professional DJ for more than 25 years, and has been professionally trained by one of the largest DJ entertainment companies in history. Michael has been operating his own multi-op DJ business since 1990 and received a Masters in Business Administration from the Keller School of Management in December of 2008. He is also the acting Vice President of the New Jersey Disc Jockey Network.



Keeping Up With Inquiries

By Joe Bunn

I want to talk a little bit about handling communication with all of the leads you're about to be getting when brides start to get engagement rings this Christmas and New Year's Eve.

When a lead comes in, do you handle it personally or do you let an auto-responder do the work for you? I don't see anything wrong with an auto-responder that says something like "We are away from the office right now, but we will get back to you right away", but having



a system that quotes prices and such just seems impersonal to me. Do we use a form letter email when we respond to all of our inquiries? Yes, of course! I have to save time! However, that form email has several things that I can customize to give it a more personal touch.

1. Always address the lead by their first name in the email (i.e. "Dear Suzy, "). And PLEASE make sure you are spelling their name right!

2. Mention the venue where they are having their event.

3. Not only do you want to mention the venue, but mention a unique feature of the place, for example, "We love working at Prestonwood! The staircase makes for an incredible grand entrance!"

4. Also, make the overall tone of the email light and friendly and sound like you and your personality.

Ok, so now that we have what to say out of the way, we need to talk about WHEN to say it. Every single day we take shows away from our competitors simply based on how fast we respond to inquiries (and we are at least 20% higher priced than most). Think about it this way; as awesome as you and your company are, I can assure you that a potential client is emailing multiple DJs to get pricing. You get bonus points for being the first responder! I'm not saying you have to be chained to your phone or desktop all day and wait for leads to come in, but you need to be responding

to them as fast as humanly possible.

I've done an article in the past about the importance of following up, so I won't go too far in depth on this but once you respond to a lead (whether you send pricing or not), you are going to want to follow up if they don't get back to you. We are all busy- life happens, families take up your time, work is necessary. In other words, don't get upset if someone doesn't immediately get back to your new and improved super-personal email. Give them a few days and then reach back out with just something as simple as "Hey Suzy, I just wanted to make sure that you got my last email and that it's not floating around in cyberspace somewhere!" That will usually light a fire under them and get them to respond. You can always send a third and final email a week later if you still get nothing. After that, I'm pretty much done with them. Ha!

Finally, once you set the consultation, there are a couple of more "Keeping Up With The Joneses/Clients" tips I want to give you:

1. Make sure to get their mobile number once you book the appointment... and give them yours. What if they get stuck in traffic on their way to your office. How awesome is it that now they can text you or call you and simply say so?!

2. Have good notes from what little you do know about them before the meeting, i.e. the event date, their names,

and the venue. Anything else you can grab at the consultation.

3. Finally, after the meeting, follow up with a call, email or old school direct mail and let them know how much you appreciate them coming in to meet with you.

4. Booked it on the spot? Even better. Follow up with a nice "thank you" package like a His and Hers company branded t-shirt and handwritten thank you letter. BOOM!

Remember, it's all about keeping up with people, letting them know that you really do care about their event, and that you genuinely want to work for them. Good luck! Now go check your emails!

Joe Bunn is the owner of Joe Bunn DJ Company and Next Level DJ Consulting. He and Mike Walter will be hosting The PhDJ Workshop March of 2015. Go to www.phdjworkshops.com

Joe Bunn can be reached at joe-bunn@discjockeynews.com.



courses. Marketing has a way to integrate itself into other branches of business. Therefore it was a good idea to start with this subject and then refer to it as we move into other topics.

The next topic I'm going to cover for 2015 will be Quality Management because of the close relationship it has with Customer Satisfaction - a topic very important to marketing for building customer relationships.

Some readers may recall that I've mentioned Quality Management in the past, but I try to resurface it every now and then within my articles for several reasons. First, we often have new readers that haven't seen important topics in the past. Second, it serves as a reminder to most of the readers that follow my column. Third, it's always slightly different from the last time, as I often add new material or just simply make something in the topic better. In fact, making something better is my cheap lead-in toward my first principle of Quality Management, Continuous Improvement.

Before we get into the details of this principle, let me add that there are three basic principles of Quality Philosophy that I follow: Team Participation, Customer Satisfaction, and Continuous Improvement, which I've already mentioned.

You may have heard about a half dozen other quality management systems such as Six Sigma, Lean Six Sigma, Baldrige, and the Kano Model, to

management methods but if you break it down from the bottom up, anything about quality management can be tied back into the three principles.

For instance, there's one tool referred to as the Cause and Effect Diagram that allows you to analyze flaws in business processes and make improvements intended for increasing productivity or even profitability. When referring to this tool in the Six Sigma model, you'd have to follow a slightly complex hierarchy or topics to get to it. However, since this tool allows me to make improvements to my business, I immediately categorize it into my Continuous Improvement principle.

The three principles also help you divide your focus evenly within yourself and your surroundings. Here's what I mean; the first principle of customer satisfaction allows you to determine what you need to do to make your customers happy. Therefore, you have one principle that's devoted just to them. The next principle, team participation, allows you to focus on everyone else around you that are not one of your customers - your staff and your vendors for instance. This principle will help you determine what you need to do to get your staff onboard with your ideas, your rules, and your expectations of them. The third principle of continuous improvement will allow you to focus on yourself. As good as you may think you are, there's always something you can



Top 30 Music Charts

By www.PrimeCutsMusic.com

Pop			Country			Adult Contemporary		
1	Maroon 5	Animals	1	Little Big Town	Day Drinking	1	Taylor Swift	Shake It Off
2	Tove Lo	Habits (Stay High)	2	Keith Urban	Somewhere In My Car	2	Sam Smith	Stay With Me
3	Ed Sheeran	Don't	3	Maddie & Tae	Girl In A Country Song	3	Nico & Vinz	Am I Wrong
4	Calvin Harris	Blame	4	Frankie Ballard	Sunshine & Whiskey	4	Magic!	Rude
5	Mr Probz	Waves	5	Tim McGraw	Shotgun Rider	5	Maroon 5	Maps
6	Taylor Swift	Shake It Off	6	Big & Rich	Look At You	6	Rixton	Me And My Broken Heart
7	Taylor Swift	Blank Space	7	Brad Paisley	Perfect Storm	7	Colbie Caillat	Try
8	Nick Jonas	Jealous	8	Parmalee	Close Your Eyes	8	Meghan Trainor	All About That Bass
9	Jessie J, A. Grande, Nicki M.	Bang Bang	9	Blake Shelton	Neon Light	9	Coldplay	A Sky Full Of Stars
10	Meghan Trainor	All About That Bass	10	Kenny Chesney	Til It's Gone	10	Charli XCX	Boom Clap
11	Jason Derulo	Trumpets	11	Carrie Underwood	Something In The Water	11	Echosmith	Cool Kids
12	Ariana Grande	Love Me Harder	12	Eric Church	Talladega	12	Train	Angel In Blue Jeans
13	Sam Smith	I'm Not The Only One	13	Scotty McCreery	Feelin' It	13	Ariana Grande	Problem
14	Jeremih	Don't Tell 'Em	14	Florida-Georgia Line	Sun Daze	14	Idina Menzel	Baby It's Cold Outside
15	Iggy Azalea	Beg For It	15	Chase Bryant	Take It On Back	15	OneRepublic	Love Runs Out
16	Alesso	Heroes	16	Randy Houser	Like A Cowboy	16	Sia	Chandelier
17	Hozier	Take Me To Church	17	Darius Rucker	Homegrown Honey	17	Maroon 5	Animals
18	Meghan Trainor	Lips Are Movin'	18	David Nail	Kiss You Tonight	18	Ed Sheeran	Don't
19	Fergie	L.A. Love (La La)	19	Raelynn	God Made Girls	19	Script	Superheroes
20	Gwen Stefani	Baby Don't Lie	20	Brett Eldredge	Mean To Me	20	Seth MacFarlane	Baby, It's Cold Outside
21	Selena Gomez	The Heart Wants What It Wants	21	Thomas Rhett	Make Me Wanna	21	Sam Smith	I'm Not The Only One
22	Fall Out Boy	Centuries	22	Dan + Shay	Show You Off	22	Mary Lambert	Secrets
23	Nico & Vinz	In Your Arms	23	Lee Brice	Drinking Class	23	Clean Bandit	Rather Be
24	Ariana Grande	Break Free	24	Luke Bryan	I See You	24	American Authors	Believer
25	David Guetta	Dangerous	25	Chris Young	Lonely Eyes	25	Whitney Wolanin	Silver Bells
26	One Direction	Steal My Girl	26	Jake Owen	What We Ain't Got	26	Tove Lo	Habits (Stay High)
27	Mark Ronson	Uptown Funk	27	Hunter Hayes	Tattoo	27	Imagine Dragons	On Top Of The World
28	Charli XCX	Break The Rules	28	Jason Aldean	Just Getting' Started	28	Nico & Vinz	In Your Arms
29	Chris Brown	New Flame	29	Lady Antebellum	Freestyle	29	Matt Nathanson	Headphones
30	Jessie J	Burnin' Up	30	Kristian Bush	Trailer Hitch	30	U2	Every Breaking Wave
Urban			Rock			Alternative		
1	iLoveMakonnen	Tuesday	1	Foo Fighters	Something From Nothing	1	Foo Fighters	Something From Nothing
2	Bobby Shmurda	Hot Boy	2	Five Finger Death Punch	Wrong Side Of Heaven	2	Hozier	Take Me To Church
3	DJ Khaled	Hold You Down	3	Royal Blood	Figure It Out	3	Milky Chance	Stolen Dance
4	Chris Brown	New Flame	4	Slipknot	The Devil In I	4	Bastille	Flaws
5	Rae Sremmurd	No Type	5	Seether	Same Damn Life	5	Alt-J	Left Hand Free
6	Rich Gang	Lifestyle	6	Three Days Grace	I Am Machine	6	Fall Out Boy	Centuries
7	Trey Songz	Touchin', Lovin'	7	Godsmack	Something Different	7	Vance Joy	Riptide
8	T.I.	About The Money	8	AC/DC	Play Ball	8	Imagine Dragons	I Bet My Life
9	Dej Loaf	Try Me	9	Volbeat	Doc Holiday	9	Big Data	Dangerous
10	Disclosure	Latch	10	Pop Evil	Beautiful	10	Walk The Moon	Shut Up And Dance
11	Migos	Handsome And Wealthy	11	Hellyeah	Moth	11	Arctic Monkeys	R U Mine?
12	Big Sean	I Don't F*** With You	12	In This Moment	Sick Like Me	12	Cage The Elephant	Cigarette Daydreams
13	August Alsina	No Love	13	Linkin Park	Rebellion	13	Black Keys	Gotta Get Away
14	Wale	The Body	14	Bush	The Only Way Out	14	Lorde	Yellow Flicker Beat
15	Teyana Taylor	Maybe	15	Asking Alexandria	Moving On	15	Fitz And The Tantrums	Fools Gold
16	Beyonce	Flawless	16	Papa Roach	Face Everything And Rise	16	Bleachers	Rollercoaster
17	Nicki Minaj	Only	17	Nothing More	Mr. MTV	17	Banks	Beggin For Thread
18	Tamar Braxton	Let Me Know	18	Nonpoint	Breaking Skin	18	Bear Hands	Agora
19	Drake	0 to 100/The Catch Up	19	Young Guns	I Want Out	19	New Politics	Everywhere I Go
20	Snootie Wild	Made Me	20	Nickelback	Edge Of A Revolution	20	Royal Blood	Figure It Out
21	Ne-Yo	She Knows	21	Black Keys	Gotta Get Away	21	Bush	The Only Way Out
22	Kendrick Lamar	I	22	Sixx A.M.	Stars	22	Meg Myers	Desire
23	Usher	I Don't Mind	23	Chevelle	An Island	23	Weezer	Back To The Shack
24	Mary J. Blige	Whole Damn Year	24	Thousand Foot Krutch	Born This Way	24	Andrew McMahon In The...	Cecilia And The Satellites
25	B.o.B	Not For Long	25	Mastodon	The Motherload	25	George Ezra	Budapest
26	Kid Ink	Body Language	26	Starset	Carnivore	26	U2	The Miracle (Of Joey Ramone)
27	Partynextdoor	Recognize	27	Motionless In White	Reincarnate	27	U2	Every Breaking Wave
28	Shy Glizzy	Awwsome	28	Theory Of A Deadman	Savages	28	Catfish And The Bottlemen	Kathleen
29	Yo Gotti	Errrbody	29	Shaman's Harvest	Dangerous	29	Robert DeLong	Long Way Down
30	Tinashe	Pretend	30	Lenny Kravitz	Dirty White Boots	30	Glass Animals	Gooley

A Different Spin by Jason Nocera

www.nichecartoons.com

IT WAS A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE AT JOHN'S HOUSE, WHEN THE FAMILY AWOKE TO GIFTS UNDER THE TREE ONE GIFT IN PARTICULAR WAS SIGNED FROM SANTA "HEY," EXCLAIMED JOHN, "IT'S ADDRESSED TO ME ?"

"IT'S A DDJ-SZ CONTROLLER ?" HE CRIED "IT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WANTED? WHAT A SURPRISE ?" THE FAMILY ALL STARED IN AMAZEMENT HIS WIFE, IN PARTICULAR, WITH SUSPICIOUS EYES

WAS IT FROM SANTA? IS THIS THE CHRISTMAS MIRACLE ? OF COURSE NOT, JOHN HAD GOTTEN IT FOR HIMSELF THE MIRACLE WAS THAT HIS UNDERSTANDING WIFE LET HIM KEEP IT AND NOT RETURN IT TO THE STORE SHELF ?



Keep Your Staff Happy, Cross Connect Them

By Stevie Ray

Employee engagement. The newest, most elusive goal in American business. It seems every company takes an annual step back to survey their staff to find out who is “highly engaged” as opposed to “disconnected” from the company. If the scores skew in the wrong direction, someone from HR has to step in and see why Chad from accounting doesn’t believe his spreadsheets have an impact on a company with over 300,000 employees and \$11.6 billion in annual profits. There is usually a brief conversation about “how this company can’t get along with the work you do,” then Chad goes back to a cubicle that he once shared with a cubemate who was let go the previous week, after being told the company couldn’t get along without his work either. At the annual employee appreciation party the CEO shows a PowerPoint slide with an upward-slanting line graph, tells the crowd that they are the reason everything is going so well, and sits down for dinner at a table with a Reserved sign on it so none of those people can sit with him.

I am not saying that employee engagement is something that should be ignored, quite the contrary, employee engagement is the only thing that keeps a company profitable. In fact, in the very near future, Baby Boomers who decide that perhaps they might not want to work past the age of 78 will be leaving such a large hole in the workforce that employees will have so many employment options that they will choose not to remain in a workplace that leaves them less than engaged. The growing trend of people breaking up with romantic partners via a cell-phone text should be a warning that a disengaged employee can break off an engagement with a boss just as swiftly. We’re all going to be fishing out of a very sparsely populated lake very soon.

I am also not against tracking employee engagement, I just find it laughable how so many companies attempt to rectify the problem. You can’t spend 95% of your daily conversations with employees simply telling them what daily functions you want them to perform, and spend 5% telling them how their work matters. Yet that is precisely

what 95% of managers do. You can’t say, “I met with the company leaders and here is what they decided” and assume that will translate into the front line employees feeling connected to those leaders; especially if the company leaders are only visible on employee appreciation day. Even worse if the leader dresses in a suit that costs more than the cars the employees manufacture.

Engagement doesn’t come from just satisfactorily performing your duties. It comes from feeling like you truly make a difference to another human being. You can’t just tell someone they make a difference, they have to see it for themselves. Of course a manager needs to spend time talking about duties and responsibilities. How else would we know what needs to be done? However, a manager should spend a good chunk of time challenging us to think beyond duties and consider our impact on others. It cannot just be leaders who tell us we make a difference, that message must also come from fellow staff members.



We often view leaders like our parents, they have to lie and tell us good things; otherwise we might give up and throw in the towel. Of course we were the best dancer in our dance recital, no parent would say, “You were almost as good as that other kid.”

You have to create an avenue for employees to tell each other what kind of impact they have. And the messages must come from outside as well as within the department. We already know the impact we have on Cheryl in the next cubical; we need to hear from Antoine whose office is across the country. I have recently started asking staff members to challenge themselves by thinking of things they could do to remove stress from fellow employees whom they never encounter throughout their day. Someone from maintenance must ponder on what he or she could do to lighten the load of someone from the sales department and vice versa. Imagine how connected employees feel when they know that their work extends beyond the walls of their unit; that they can have a real impact on everyone with whom they decide to come in contact.

When I started challenging people to think outside their duties and to think

about how they could lighten the load of others, I was not surprised by some reactions and quite surprised by others. I was not surprised when some employees said, “I have enough on my plate already. I don’t have time to be thinking about all these people I don’t even know.” I was also not surprised when managers said, “I don’t think my staff will take to this.” Most suggestions that call for a change of thinking are resisted, especially suggestions that seem to result in more work. The truth is, these kinds of acts don’t really require more work, just a shift of focus. What did surprise me was the reaction after the fact. Those that considered the needs of fellow staff members who they never met felt a greater sense of purpose in their work. They performed the same duties, but with a different feeling about the outcome.

Another great surprise was how fast the work day went for those who reached beyond their daily duties. The human brain is wired for interaction. We need to have a certain amount of human interaction throughout the day or we get wonky. The more human interaction we engage in, the faster our sense of time, and the quicker the day goes by. If we focus solely on tasks, we may look up and realize we didn’t get everything done by quitting time, but that is not time flying by, it is the stress of never being able to catch up. Human interaction makes time fly. If you are thinking about the impact of your work on others, you will communicate more with others; which leads to a faster, happier workday. Sometimes the only way to find out how you might be able to lighten the load of someone from another department is to ask them for ideas.

There is a phenomenon in the human psyche called Reciprocity. When someone does something nice for us, we feel compelled to do something nice for them in return. This trait crosses all boundaries of culture, age, and gender (except neighbors who borrow lawn

mowers). Research has discovered that often the person receiving the gift doesn’t even have to personally know the giver in order to feel obligated to reciprocate. Our feeling of One good turn deserves another outweighs anonymity or unfamiliarity. And the size of the act has no bearing on the repayment. One study involved college students who were told to wait in a lobby by themselves before taking a test. A researcher was secretly stationed nearby, also “waiting to take a test.” At one point, the researcher would leave the room and return with two cans of soft drinks. “The guy in charge said I could buy a can of soda from the machine while I waited,” the plant would say. “I got you one, too.” The test was to see how far the subject would go to repay the favor. Some subjects went so far as to give the plant a ride across town to work just to repay a can of soda. It turns out, we humans like to pay back bigger than we receive; doing so makes us feel better about ourselves.

One staff member trying to lighten the load of a staff member causes a ripple of reciprocity that has long lasting benefits throughout the company. People I have worked with who have shifted their focus from duties to impact, from inward to outward, experience a change in their work. They smile more, they enjoy their work more, and they feel connected to the entire organization rather than just their office-mates. The only way this can happen is if leaders make impact a part of the conversation, not just a speech at the end of the year. Make it a point to have staff members interact with those whom you might never expect. When Francine from IT discovers that Aaron from Fleet Services wants to make her job easier, both feel better.

Stevie Ray is a nationally recognized corporate speaker and trainer, helping companies improve communication skills, customer service, leadership, and team management. He can be reached at www.stevierays.org or stevie@stevierays.org.

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Recurrent Hits For The Dance Floor for DECEMBER 2014

New charts weekly on <http://www.discjockeynews.com/weekly-music-charts>

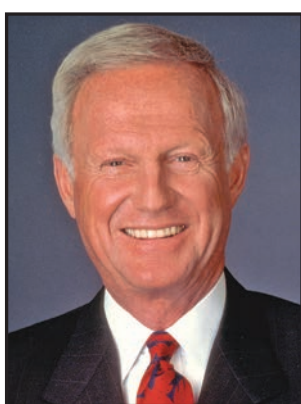
Pop Recurrents			Urban Recurrents			Adult Contemporary Recurrents		
1	IGGY AZALEA	Black Widow f/Rita Ora	1	IGGY AZALEA	Black Widow f/Rita Ora	1	NICO & VINZ	Am I Wrong
2	ARIANA GRANDE	Problem f/Iggy Azalea	2	ARIANA GRANDE	Problem f/Iggy Azalea	2	LORDE	Team
3	AVICII	Wake Me Up	3	AVICII	Wake Me Up	3	ELLIE GOULDING	Burn
4	ONEREPUBLIC	Counting Stars	4	ONEREPUBLIC	Counting Stars	4	CAPITAL CITIES	Safe And Sound
5	SIA	Chandelier	5	SIA	Chandelier	5	LUMINEERS	Ho Hey
6	BASTILLE	Pompeii	6	BASTILLE	Pompeii	6	Up this week IMAGINE DRAGONS	Radioactive
7	PITBULL	Timber f/Ke\$ha	7	PITBULL	Timber f/Ke\$ha	7	LORDE	Royals
8	EMINEM	The Monster f/Rihanna	8	EMINEM	The Monster f/Rihanna	8	BRUNO MARS	Locked Out Of Heaven
9	DJ SNAKE & LIL JON	Turn Down For What	9	DJ SNAKE & LIL JON	Turn Down For What	9	Up this week JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Mirrors
10	MKTO	Classic	10	MKTO	Classic	10	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Demons
11	MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS	Can't Hold Us f/Ray Dalton	11	MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS	Can't Hold Us f/Ray Dalton	11	INGRID MICHAELSON	Girls Chase Boys
12	JOHN LEGEND	All Of Me	12	JOHN LEGEND	All Of Me	12	AMERICAN AUTHORS	Best Day Of My Life
13	ENRIQUE IGLESIAS	Bailando f/D.Bueno/S.Paul/GDZ	13	ENRIQUE IGLESIAS	Bailando f/D.Bueno/S.Paul/GDZ	13	KATY PERRY	Roar
14	JASON DERULO	Talk Dirty f/2 Chainz	14	JASON DERULO	Talk Dirty f/2 Chainz	14	Up this week JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Not A Bad Thing
15	CLEAN BANDIT	Rather Be f/Jess Glynne	15	CLEAN BANDIT	Rather Be f/Jess Glynne	15	MAGIC!	Rude
16	CHARLI XCX	Boom Clap	16	CHARLI XCX	Boom Clap	16	SAM SMITH	Stay With Me
17	NICO & VINZ	Am I Wrong	17	NICO & VINZ	Am I Wrong	17	MAROON 5	Maps
18	ECHOSMITH	Cool Kids	18	ECHOSMITH	Cool Kids	18	BASTILLE	Pompeii
19	SAM SMITH	Stay With Me	19	SAM SMITH	Stay With Me	19	COLDPLAY	A Sky Full Of Stars
20	MAGIC!	Rude	20	MAGIC!	Rude	20	ONEREPUBLIC	Counting Stars
21	DISCLOSURE	Latch f/Sam Smith	21	DISCLOSURE	Latch f/Sam Smith	21	Up this week JOHN LEGEND	All Of Me
22	IGGY AZALEA	Fancy f/Charli XCX	22	IGGY AZALEA	Fancy f/Charli XCX	22	Up this week KATY PERRY	Dark Horse f/Juicy J
23	KATY PERRY	Dark Horse f/Juicy J	23	KATY PERRY	Dark Horse f/Juicy J	23	ONEREPUBLIC	Love Runs Out
24	MAROON 5	Maps	24	MAROON 5	Maps	24	SARA BAREILLES	Brave
25	ELLIE GOULDING	Burn	25	ELLIE GOULDING	Burn	25	ONE DIRECTION	Story Of My Life
26	CALVIN HARRIS	Summer	26	CALVIN HARRIS	Summer	26	PARAMORE	Ain't It Fun
27	SWEDISH HOUSE MAFIA	Don't You Worry Child	27	SWEDISH HOUSE MAFIA	Don't You Worry Child	27	RIXTON	Me And My Broken Heart
28	DAVID GUETTA	Titanium f/Sia	28	DAVID GUETTA	Titanium f/Sia	28	IMAGINE DRAGONS	It's Time
29	KATY PERRY	Roar	29	KATY PERRY	Roar	29	ROBIN THICKE	Blurred Lines f/Pharrell/T.I.
30	ONE DIRECTION	Story Of My Life	30	ONE DIRECTION	Story Of My Life	30	Up this week ANNA KENDRICK	Cups (Pitch Perfect's When...)
31	DAFT PUNK	Get Lucky	31	DAFT PUNK	Get Lucky	31	DAFT PUNK	Get Lucky
32	AMERICAN AUTHORS	Best Day Of My Life	32	AMERICAN AUTHORS	Best Day Of My Life	32	Up this week NEON TREES	Everybody Talks
33	JAY Z	Holy Grail f/Justin Timberlake	33	JAY Z	Holy Grail f/Justin Timberlake	33	OF MONSTERS AND MEN	Little Talks
34	LANA DEL REY	Summertime Sadness	34	LANA DEL REY	Summertime Sadness	34	ALEX CLARE	Too Close
35	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Radioactive	35	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Radioactive	35	KELLY CLARKSON	Stronger (What Doesn't Kill ..)
36	RIXTON	Me And My Broken Heart	36	RIXTON	Me And My Broken Heart	36	PINK	Try
37	BRUNO MARS	Locked Out Of Heaven	37	BRUNO MARS	Locked Out Of Heaven	37	Up this week PITBULL	Timber f/Ke\$ha
38	PHARRELL WILLIAMS	Happy	38	PHARRELL WILLIAMS	Happy	38	ARIANA GRANDE	Problem f/Iggy Azalea
39	LORDE	Royals	39	LORDE	Royals	39	PINK	Blow Me (One Last Kiss)
40	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Not A Bad Thing	40	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Not A Bad Thing	40	PHARRELL WILLIAMS	Happy
41	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Mirrors	41	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	Mirrors	41	AVICII	Wake Me Up
42	PARAMORE	Ain't It Fun	42	PARAMORE	Ain't It Fun	42	MUMFORD & SONS	I Will Wait
43	LORDE	Team	43	LORDE	Team	43	FUN.	Some Nights
44	ZEDD	Clarity f/Foxes	44	ZEDD	Clarity f/Foxes	44	PASSENGER	Let Her Go
45	DRAKE F/MAJID JORDAN	Hold On We're Going Home	45	DRAKE F/MAJID JORDAN	Hold On We're Going Home	45	PHILLIP PHILLIPS	Home
46	TINASHE	2 On f/Schoolboy Q	46	TINASHE	2 On f/Schoolboy Q	46	PHILLIP PHILLIPS	Gone, Gone, Gone
47	CAPITAL CITIES	Safe And Sound	47	CAPITAL CITIES	Safe And Sound	47	RIHANNA	Stay f/Mikky Ekko
48	PITBULL	Fireball f/John Ryan	48	PITBULL	Fireball f/John Ryan	48	GOTYE	Somebody That I Used To Know
49	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Demons	49	IMAGINE DRAGONS	Demons	49	PINK	Just Give Me A Reason
50	MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS	Thrift Shop f/Wanz	50	MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS	Thrift Shop f/Wanz	50	ADELE	Rumour Has It

Be Accountable If You Want To Count

By Harvey Mackay

The recent political silly season is over – finally – and once again, I was listening for one particular word in the endless ads that peppered the airwaves: accountability.

It seems like the only time you hear that word is in the context of blaming one's opponent for lack of it. I suspect



that the reason so many of us grow so weary during political campaign season is that the finger-pointing is more prevalent than accepting responsibility for one's actions. And the gridlock that ensues is always the other person's fault. Can someone please make it all stop?

Businesses, on the other hand, can't afford to shirk responsibility or accountability. Customers expect nothing less. Accountability must be a core value, never compromised, never up for discussion.

"Leaders must develop a lower threshold for alibis and become better communicators and enforcers of what they want done," writes Dave Anderson, author of "No-Nonsense Leadership." "If you are

more interested in being liked and popular than holding people accountable for results, you have a serious leadership weakness. It is not your job to make people happy. Your job is to get them better. Holding people accountable to high standards and results is nothing to apologize for. Failing to stretch them to their potential is."

My friend Bob Dilenschneider, founder and principal of The Dilenschneider Group in New York, counsels corporations all over the world on planning and communications. In his recent "Red Book" paper on "Why Accountability Matters," he suggests that rather than dwelling on culpability, focus instead on accountability in terms of taking responsibility for one's actions. "Accountability should be approached as a mindset – one that shapes our goals and the action you take to achieve those goals."

To me, that means accountability is a good thing, not a negative. I want to own my decisions because I try to do the right thing even when it is not the easy thing. I am willing to accept the blame when necessary as well as the credit when deserved for my actions.

"Responsibility equals accountability equals ownership. And a sense of ownership is the most powerful weapon a team or organization can have," says Pat Summitt, former Tennessee women's basketball coach. For the record, she holds the

most all-time wins for a coach in NCAA-basketball history of either a men's or women's team in any division.

Accountability starts at the top and needs to be clearly communicated in every facet of business. Employees need to share common goals with management, take ownership of projects, and work as a team to the best of their ability. Managers engender accountability with these steps:

- Establish clear deadlines. Reporting on progress must be a priority for management and employees alike. Set specific timetables, schedules and dates for reports and completion. Employees need to understand the importance of keeping everyone in the loop.

- Deal with problems immediately. Employees whose work does not meet requirements can destroy a project and ruin your relationship with customers and other employees. Find out what caused the problem: miscommunication on your part, lack of willingness or ability, unrealistic deadlines? Then do whatever you must to address the issue.

- Don't tolerate excuses. An employee who always has an excuse will never take responsibility for his or her work. Your customer expects results, not excuses.

- Remove obstacles. If managers or employees can't achieve desired results, look for the issue and correct it. There may be legitimate problems that are preventing progress. Computer glitches,

overloaded schedules or slow delivery of materials are unexpected complications that you cannot afford to ignore.

- Delegate wisely. Sharing ownership in a project lets your staff know that you trust them and that you are sharing responsibility as well. Coach those employees so they understand how their performance contributes to projects.

- Give sufficient authority. Don't think of this as having someone else to blame. Rather, consider it an opportunity for employees to demonstrate their potential and bring fresh perspectives.

USA Men's Basketball Coach Mike Krzyzewski, aka Coach K, says, "In putting together your standards, remember that it is essential to involve your entire team. Standards are not rules issued by the boss; they are a collective identity. Remember, standards are the things that you do all the time and the things for which you hold one another accountable."

Mackay's Moral: Accountability is the ability to accept responsibility.

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," "We Got Fired!... And It's the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Us," and his new book, "The Mackay MBA of Selling in the Real World."

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