

Disc Jockey News

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The Q Corner, Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

Last year at DJ Times International DJ Expo, Steve Moody (of Steve Moody's Entertainment Connection on Maryland's eastern shore) put together a seminar called "All-Star MC Secrets Revealed." I was very proud to be asked to contribute to this panel and I was happy that the seminar went over well.

This year, at DJ Times DJ Expo 2011, which ran from August 8-11th in Atlantic City, NJ, Mr. Moody returned with a whole new panel of "All-Star MCs." DJ Times was smart to kick off the week with this seminar and here's hoping that this becomes an annual tradition. I felt it was one of the highlights of the week and provided as many takeaways as any attendee could expect in a 90 minute seminar. With a panel consisting of Marz (from Charizma in Chicago), Shani Barnett (from Mobile Music In-

teractive Entertainers in Chicago), Mike Weider (from Ultimate Sounds DJs in New Jersey), John Rozz (from Sound Spectrum Entertainment in Connecticut) and Jay Thomson (from Elite Entertainment in New Jersey, you've heard of them right?) and a theme of "Opening the Dance Floor" this was a jam packed "learn-a-palooza." Moody later recapped the experience by saying, "one of the most frequent comments from the previous year was that folks wanted more ideas on how to fill the dance floor and I think we totally delivered. I can't tell you how many DJs said that they felt it was an educational yet high energy way to kick off this year's Expo and get them in the right mindset". Then, as if to add a teaser for 2012, he added, "I can't wait until next year. . . all new cast and all new secrets to success."

Other seminars that really stood out for me included the double shot of Randy Bartlett on Wednesday. Randy spoke first as the featured speaker at the annual NJDJN meeting and then again later in the day. His message has always been consistent, that there are small things we can all do that will make major differences in our events. That's the concept behind Mr. Bartlett's "1% Theory" and once again he delivered informative and entertaining seminars to drive his message home. Randy offers DVDs to

support his message so whether or not you've ever seen him speak, you should add them to your educational library (<http://www.dj1percentsolution.com>).

Vincent Anthony Velasquez and his partner in Manalapan NJ's Hurricane Productions, Strato Doumanis, hosted



(left to right) Dominic Sestito CoHost, Jack Bermeo DJOTY, Mike Walter Host and Producer. Photo by Elite Digital Images

one of the most informative, and certainly the most pertinent, seminars of the week. "New Media Marketing: Control Your Media Message" focused on how best to utilize the ever more popular and ubiquitous social media that is changing the way all of us communicate. This was no "101" level seminar. Velasquez and Doumanis proved their expertise in the field by sharing real life

examples of how they have furthered the Hurricane Productions brand by using Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms. "Our seminar served two

purposes," Velasquez said afterwards, "to educate our peers about the power of original content and social media but to

also show them through our path into the industry that these strategies really work. We accomplished so much during our week at the Expo but we're most proud of our seminar."

It's rare at a national convention that a "sponsored seminar" is a highlight (they are usually just 60 minute infomercials)

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Loving Your Work

By Tamara Sims

While browsing through the business section of our soon to be shuttered Border's Book Store I came across a series of books titled "Lessons Learned." I was quite intrigued as these books were pocket size (or in my case purse size) and perfect for those times when you are waiting around for an appointment or a friend to show up and you only have a few

minutes. So I opened up the first book in the series that caught my attention titled "Loving Your Work" and after browsing through a few pages I was in love! This series of books are filled with pearls of wisdom from top business owners and professionals. For you sports fans out there, Jerry Rice is featured and to my surprise his claim to fame had nothing to do with performing on "Dancing with the Stars." So, I thought this would be a great time to share with you some "nuggets" that I have taken away from this little gem of a book.

Make it Fun! How perfect is this chapter for our industry? Maxine Clark, the CEO (or Chief Executive Bear as she calls herself) of Build-A-Bear, does whatever she can in her business to create a fun experience for her customers. In our industry we too should be do-

ing this on every phone call and every sales meeting...and of course at every performance. At your sales meetings do you greet your clients with upbeat music or fun video clips of your work? Are your office walls covered with wedding photos of clients smiling, dancing and having fun? If not, why not? Creating an inviting atmosphere in your office can make all the difference in your sales meetings. Remember, when your clients are having fun they will spend more money!

Strive for Perfection! Olympic Figure Skating Gold Medalist Peggy Fleming has a wonderful chapter that really speaks to our industry and your performance. She simply states, "practice perfection." Sounds easy, right? Think of the crowd when practicing your introductions, love story, etc. Imagine how the crowd will feel with every word you speak. Practicing perfection every day will pay off in your performance.

Be on the lookout for new ideas! For most of us, we spend a large part of our time learning from others by attending workshops and seminars so we can improve our business. But time and time again I continue to hear DJ's say "that idea won't work in my market." How do you know if you haven't tried? By keeping an open mind you may find a really big idea that could change the course of your direction in life.

Step out of your comfort zone! It is easy to go through life doing the same thing day after day, but if you want your business to grow and develop you must push yourself and take risks. Don't be

afraid to get on the dance floor with your guests during the cha cha slide even if you think you have 2 left feet. As Randy Bartlett says, always try to improve your performance by 1%. And don't forget, feeling discomfort at times is ok. Being complacent is not.

Work Life Balance is Key! We have all heard the humorous saying "happy wife equals a happy life," but making

time for your spouse and family is key to your business success. There may be times when the balance is "out of whack" (June-October in our case), but that doesn't mean that you should forget to schedule time with family. Whether it's meeting your spouse for a quick dinner at 9:00 PM when he has a short break from his lighting job, or running a 5K

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Connections

By Steve Moody

I LOVE this business. Just like you, I still get a rush from a packed dance floor. Sound and lighting gear gets my blood pumping and of course all of the "praise" at the end of an event puts me over the moon! Yes, I am passionate about what I do. That being said, there is one area where I do struggle.

Every once in a while we all get a call from a prospective client that is just difficult to make that initial connection with, right? For me it would have to be the "Thinker". Thinkers can drive me CRAZY!

The Thinker is the 4th and final personality type that I will share with you from the book *The Platinum Rule* by Tony Allesandra and Michael O'Connor. Learning the concepts presented in this book has been such a huge help in selling my business. Just as a refresher, according to the book, there are 4 "Key Personality Types" that we come into contact with. Several months ago we began our journey with the scoop on the "Director" (the no-nonsense Donald Trump personality type). From there, we went onto the "Socializer" (the "it's all about me" Michael Scott personality type). Last month I shared information with you on the "Relator" who in essence is a real life incarnation of a "CareBear". This final month is a far cry from all of the others, as the "Thinker" is like no other.

Have you ever had a client that just sucks the life out of you because they are so detail oriented? You know who I mean. They can't even fill out your normal paperwork for their wedding as it just seems to be too simple for them. They feel the need to provide you with 20 pages of their own spread sheets of requests and line up. Then, when we do our consultations, they are more interested about the timing and details than anything. It almost seems like they could care less about everyone having a great time as long as they know exactly minute by minute how their event will be played out. This is the "Thinker".

Here's one for the record books. I had a young couple call me about performing at their wedding. Before we even spoke, they had memorized just about every page of my website, read each and every testimonial on WeddingWire, viewed every single video log I had ever

done, and basically had done a background check on me and my company. Talk about thorough. Wheeeew! Many of the couples that contact us don't have the time to sit down and look at a few video logs much less do all of this other research. The Thinker can truly go overboard. That being said, to a Thinker, all of that research is just natural.

My personal experiences have been right in-line with the book *The Platinum Rule*. I have found that most Thinkers tend to work in professional fields that allow this part of their personality to shine. Accountants, lawyers, bankers, real estate agents and such usually have this personality type. In order to be totally successful in these fields, a person must be detail oriented so it just makes sense. Not to mention, folks that are involved with computers, I.T., teachers, scientists and other types of researchers. People that have a passion for these types of careers are generally a bit more difficult for me to connect with, as my own personality seems to fall on the opposite end of the spectrum. Thinkers usually carry a conversation differently than I do, as their thought process seems to work totally different than mine.

According to *The Platinum Rule*, the "Thinker" is extremely calculated. Their ideas are always well thought out and they are usually very interested in the timing and logistics when they plan an event.

Where I fall short is that, in most cases, Thinkers have a total lack of tolerance for people that can't keep up with their thought process. In fact, the books says that it is "almost like playing a game of chess with someone who is always 10 moves ahead of you". The problem seems to be that I am generally a Socializer (the fun loving Michael Scott type character) that we spoke of several months ago...and the Thinker is more like Star Trek's Mr. Spock. I don't think that the two would have much common ground if they ever met to do business.

Yes sir, Mr. Spock is a great comparison. The Thinker seem seems to be totally logical all the time.. If I begin to envision Mr. Spock when I am speaking to someone, I know that I have a Thinker on my hands! Now you see why making this connection is always difficult for me. The *Platinum Rule* has come in extremely handy for me with this personality type. Making the connection with the Thinker has been much easier since I have applied the books principals to my dj service.

My sales approach is totally unique with Thinkers. As much as I like to chit chat, I have really had to alter my approach by quickly sticking to the facts when speaking to this Mr. Spock personality type. In general, these people

do not care for small talk. Furthermore, as their thought process is completely driven by logic it is great to have references to back up your statements. They love seeing charts, graphs, results from studies etc...

Though some clients could care less about my rating on WeddingWire and the charts and graphs showing the studies from the ADJA regarding hiring DJs, the Thinker needs that kind of reinforcement in order to feel comfortable. These are the clients that truly care about seeing our collected data as this is how they live their daily lives. Finally, as they usually feel a need to micromanage, I always let them know how easy planning their wedding is and that I will totally follow their lead and stick to their agenda. They do not like surprises!

In my personal sales presentation for "Thinkers", I started hitting several key phrases and ideas as well. Keeping in mind that they are probably our least outwardly emotional clients, I am sure to speak about "how well we keep everything on track", "how easy it is to plan their event with us", "how everything will be totally organized" and on and on. Unlike the other personality types, the Thinker initially could care less about looking like a superstar at their event. It is all about the details, so

I let them know just how detail oriented our service can be.

Again, after reading *The Platinum Rule* and learning about all of these key personality types, I took the time to write down some notes and key talking points for the (Mr. Spock) Thinkers and have kept them right next to my office phone. It has helped more than you can ever imagine. The Thinker can be one of the most difficult personalities to sell to if you do not make that initial connection!

If you would like to learn more about the different personality types that I have shared with you over the past few months, I will be presenting a more in depth seminar on September 26th, at DJ RETREAT in Nashville, TN. More info can be found at www.DJRETREAT.com. In the words of the poster boy for the Thinkers..."Live Long & Prosper".

Steve has been the owner of the Maryland based Steve Moody's Entertainment Connection since 1989. After his 2009 DJ Of The Year win in Atlantic City, Steve began travelling the East Coast sharing marketing and sales techniques with Disc Jockey and other Wedding Professional Organizations. He can be reached by calling 800-410-3013 or at stevemoody@discjockeynews.com.

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Starting From Scratch

By Jeff Richards

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

"I want a new drug" was a whimsical love song by Huey Lewis & the News back in the 80s. It wasn't actually about taking drugs, it was about a feeling he wanted to get, like from a drug, that reminds him of a love he desired.

Over the summer I got involved in an online debate about DJs drinking and doing drugs while working. I understand that everyone is entitled to their own opinions and that's great, but when so called professional DJs are bickering about simple, common sense and professional courtesy ideals; it just angers me to a point of complete disappointment in the entire industry.

In July and August I was involved in a thread where DJs were arguing and fighting FOR drinking alcohol while performing events like weddings. They couldn't see any harm in consuming alcohol while working and a few actually said it helps them perform better. One DJ said that he likes to get free alcohol from guests as a tip to play a song request. A select

few also admitted at weddings to hitting the open bar for as many drinks for free as they could chug before the show started. I heard from DJs who perform in bars and clubs that the establishment and/or a server who liked them will also furnish them with any amount of alcohol they desired and this is a norm in the club scene. They thought it would be rude to not drink alcohol while on the job.

In another thread DJs were arguing the idea that doing illegal drugs before/during their events was their constitutional right and no one can tell them differently. Okay, if you want to argue about eating/not eating, standing/sitting, cheesy/not cheesy that's understandable, but fighting for your right to drink and/or do drugs while performing and calling yourself a professional DJ/entertainer, that's where I draw the line. SPOILER ALERT: These drugs are called illegal for a reason, thus does not give you the constitutional right to take them.

These arguments have been going on for several months and still get hits today in favor of drugs and alcohol while on the job. There shouldn't be any argument as to what is right or wrong or professional or not professional while performing at an event.

It's very basic black and white, with no gray area to argue about. What you do in your spare time in your own home is one thing, but when people are paying you to entertain at one of the most important event of their lives, that's something different. Myself and a few other DJs gave great reasoning for not drinking or doing drugs while working including the possibility of

losing their car, license, insurance, business and even the love of family members, but these people just wanted to call us explicit names and have the "freedom" to express their ignorance to everyone. It was obvious that they truly were not a "professional" anything.

My last complaint (rant) of this article came to me as I was finishing and needed a strong ending. I was on Facebook and got a "status report" from a fellow DJ (whom I do not personally know but friended on FB to network with others in the industry) His status was asking any DJ on FB to e-mail him two songs that he needed. This was a Friday afternoon so I assumed he needed it that night or the next day. One of the songs was by Stevie Wonder and one by Trey. Both were common songs that any DJ should already have in their collection. I immediately replied that both songs were available on iTunes: Wonder's for 99 cents, Trey's for \$1.29 so that he could get them a.s.a.p. Within moments another DJ replied that he had sent the files. I then asked why he didn't just get them from iTunes and his answered was

"What's it to you" to which I replied that file sharing is illegal. He then responded with "I'm a DJ who networks with other DJs and I don't have to buy songs." Then he asked me "who the 'F' - R-U.?" He and the DJ who sent the files then proceeded to call names and curse me out. Before I could write back who I am, I found that he and the other DJ unfriended me and locked me out from replying. I was just attempting to help out a fellow DJ when I get this kind of feedback.

Just another reason as to why I retired after 30 years as a DJ. There's no respect for others in the industry and many have no respect for themselves. Forrest, now you know who the "F" - I - M.

"I want a new drug..." that could make all of these types of DJs just disappear and let the rest of the intelligent, hardworking, professional entertainers shine like the stars they really are.

The October issue will be my last article for the Disc Jockey News. To respond to Jeff's column send an e-mail to jeffrichards@discjockeynews.com

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together at 8:00 am on a Sunday morning, it is not the quantity of time, but the quality of time spent together that your partner/family will truly cherish.

Even though I really did read the entire book from cover to cover, the best "takeaway" came within the first 6 pages of the book and it is something that really struck me as a business owner: "If you don't love what you do, how can you give meaning to it or to others you're working with?"

What is the best "pearl of wisdom" you have received that has helped your business?

Please feel free to share your comments with Tamara by visiting her Blog: <http://www.something2dance2.com/blog/> or by e-mail tamara@something2dance2.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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Mighty Mouse DJ

By Dean C. Carlson

Remember Andy Kaufman? He was the comedian who did an entire bit without saying a word. He just sat there and listened to a record play the theme from Mighty Mouse. But when the part came that went “Here I come to save the day!”



he would lip sync it and throw his arm out to the music... Classic!

I was chatting with a DJ last week who was underselling himself like mad. The reason he gave me astounded

me and I quote “Because then I can just go there and have a good time, with none of the responsibility” Believe me whether we like it or not, whether we get paid \$300 or \$5000 we have responsibility thrust upon us.

The question is do you embrace it or not. Are you a responsible business owner? How about with your performances? If something happens that you aren’t “in charge of” how would you handle it? Characters with moral fortitude alongside of humility are the keys to being a great

DJ. It’s not what you charge, because I have seen some very good DJs who charge less, and I have seen the opposite.

Let me share and example with you, something that happened to me just a couple of weeks ago at a show. 3:30 the Ceremony starts after being moved indoors because of rain. Dinner is scheduled to start at 5:30. In our planning we discussed meeting at 5:10 to line up for the Grand March. At 5:10 I make an announcement letting people know to freshen their cocktails, and find their seats because the Grand March is going to start in 15 minutes along with dinner to follow.

Up to this point things are going well. 5:15 passes and no wedding party to be found, at 5:20 still no bride and groom and the servers are placing the food on the buffet line. At 5:25 a bride’s maid shows up and says the bride and groom left the reception site to get more photos taken in a location 30 minutes away and they won’t be back for another hour.

What would you do?

Seeing the food on the buffet line I inform the hall manager (who is also the room captain) of the situation. She promptly finds the mother of the bride and informs her of the situation. Neither of them knew. Panic sets in. Mom is now concerned about all her hungry family and begins to see things that actually weren’t happening. IE: thinking guests would just up and leave. Mom says open the buffet line and serve without the bride and groom. Both the hall manager and I looked at each other and thought this isn’t

a good idea.

What would you do?

My guess is their are many DJs who would have just gone with the flow. Mom is in charge or the hall manager is in charge so it’s their problem now. After all you were just contracted to supply background music during dinner, and perform during the dance, right?

This exact situation is why we need to not only charge our worth, but also be none stop education hounds. A situation like this can mean more money in your pocket depending on how you handle it. Are you ready for a situation like this?

When I used to manage a large multi op, when we did training we would play a game called “What If”. Even if you’re a single op I highly suggest you do this. Take a piece of paper out right now and write down 20 bad situations that can happen during an event. Now here is the money part there are almost always more than one way to handle each of those situations, so now write down 5 solutions to those problems.

Next make sure you are equipped with everything you need to handle those situations. Think about this one. You’re out of town doing a gig and while setting up your bride calls and asks if you can help with ceremony sound. Do you have equipment with you at all time to handle that? Do you know where in that city you could rent gear and how late are they open? If you did how would that affect your future word of mouth business?

So let’s go back to my first scenario. The hall manager had no idea what to do she just knew it didn’t feel right to eat without the bride and groom, mom was emotionally concerned for her guests and

wasn’t thinking about every aspect. This situation needed a Mighty Mouse, and it needed it now.

I took responsibility for that moment by the horns and ran with it. I asked the hall manager how long we had before food was ruined. She said 30 minute, and I said I can stall the guests for that long. And secretly I hoped the bride and groom would be back before that. Without mentioning why I started doing interactions with the guests that involved the whole room. I started with the bridal party and worked my way from there. And after 20 minutes and still no bride and groom, we had no choice but to let the guests through the buffet line. So I went into creative table releases.

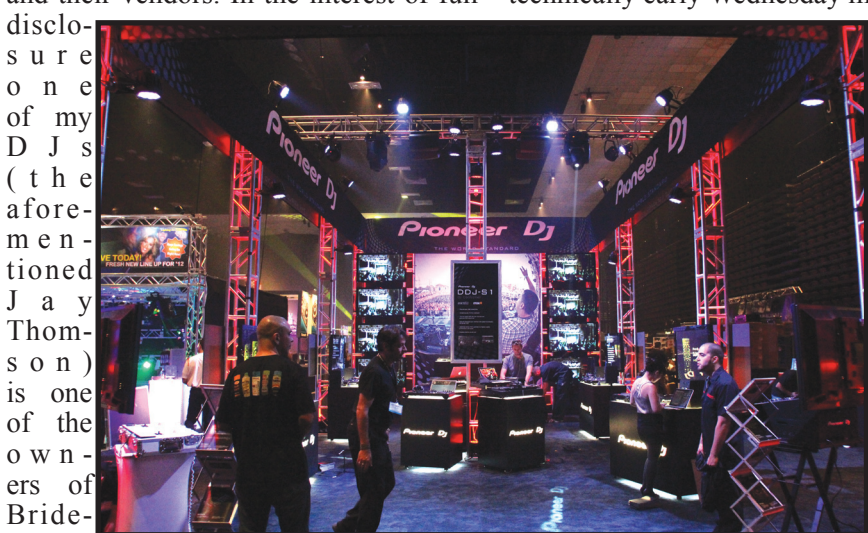
As we were closing in on the last table the bride and groom showed up. Obviously none of this was planned. It was after dinner was done and the cake being served when the bride and groom came up to me and thanked me. It wasn’t there intention to be later, they just got caught up in the moment of the day. The hall manager was elated with what I had done, she had never seen anyone handle a situation like that before, and I left here with a stack of my brochures. But the biggest thank you came from the mother of the bride, with tears of joy.

I have already sold a show for next year for a guest that was at that wedding. Not to mention all the word of mouth I am going to get from the hall manager. There are Mighty Mouse moments all around us in the DJ world. What will you do with them? Good Luck and Great Shows!

Dean Carlson can be reached at dean-carlson@discjockeynews.com.

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but this year a new product has come along that is generating so much buzz and their two sponsored seminars were jam packed with curious attendees. The product is called BrideLive. It’s video teleconferencing specifically for brides and their vendors. In the interest of full



The Pioneer Booth at DJ Times Expo. Photo by: Samuel Laurie - The Beantown Sound

disclosure of my DJ’s (the aforementioned Jay Thomson) is one of the owners of BrideLive but I don’t think that has influenced my enthusiasm for this product one bit. Today’s brides, or at least an ever-growing percentage of them, value the luxury of “shopping from home”. BrideLive enables this while giving the vendor far more advantages than Skype or GoToMeeting or any other generic online service. If you are attending the ADJA conference in Las Vegas or the Wedding MBA (both this month) you’ll have a chance to hear more about BrideLive. If not, look for them online at www.BrideLive.tv

Educational content is certainly one reason to attend an industry expo. But when your industry is DJing, the best conferences also have to offer plenty of evening activities. In this regard I’ve always felt DJ Times is head and shoulders above any other industry gathering. If you’ve been a regular to their annual

Atlantic City Expos you’ve seen such luminaries as Lady Gaga and Pitbull. This year if you stayed up late enough at The Promo Only Party (your humble reporter did not) you were entertained by 50 Cent and Crystal Waters (to name just a few). And that was just Tuesday night (well, technically early Wednesday morning).

On Monday and Wednesday night attendees are treated to nights of interactive dances and games that are meant to teach and entertain

at the same time. I happen to be the producer of these two events for DJ Times so it’s hard for me to objectively report on them (talk about full disclosure!) Suffice to say that I got great feedback from many attendees and by all indications DJ Times is planning on having me back for a record eleventh straight year so I can only assume they are happy with the results of my efforts. This year’s DJ of the Year was awarded to Jack Bermeo of LJ Productions in Bellville, NJ. Jack’s performance at Wednesday night’s DJ of the Year competition barely beat out Vincent Anthony Velazquez who took home the Runner Up award as well as Best Dance. The evening’s other winners were Mark Brenneisen (from Total Entertainment in Hudson Falls NY) who won for Best Game and George Kramedas (from Master G Entertainment in Wilmington DE)

who took home the Best Use of Choreography award. “Winning DJ of the Year,” Bermeo would say later, “had to be the most surreal moment of my life. It was an incredible honor to be on stage with such fantastic talent and performing in front of my peers. We had been working on the routine since before we decided to enter the competition. Having perfected and been able to demonstrate to the Mobile Entertainment world our personal project was an opportunity I won’t ever forget.”

The moment my name was called, I felt like all the hard work, dedication, and passion I have for this

business all paid off at once.”

The final piece of the puzzle when it comes to critiquing a DJ Expo is the showroom floor. While this might not be the main draw for some, other attendees come only for a lap or two around the maze of vendors. This year, a single lap could take the better part of an afternoon. DJ Times packed more vendors into the Mark Etness Arena at the Taj Mahal than I had ever seen. It’s comforting in these times of economic uncertainty to know that the major manufacturers are so optimistic about our industry that they come out in such a show of support every year in Atlantic City. The showroom floor at DJ Times is a cacophonous attack of the

senses. Between the thumping music coming from every direction, the pulsating light shows swirling ‘round your head and the beautiful models enticing you into their booths (I swear I saw a sexy pirate one day, a full three months before Halloween) you can’t blame any DJing for thinking he’d died and gone to DJ Heaven. By the last day of the show you see many attendees walking Zombie-like around the aisles with a “where am I?” glaze over their eyes. Of the vendors

I spoke to many professionals that it was the best show they’d been a part of.

One of the exciting new features of social media is the increasing popularity of hashtags on Twitter. Throughout the week, many of us used “#DJExpo2011”. If you’d like a sort of replay of this year’s DJ Times DJ Expo, search on that hashtag and see what the scores of Twittering attendees had to say about the week. I think you’ll see we’re all in agreement. DJ Times did it again, producing a week of education, entertainment and incredible networking.

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



Ian Eagle Ashanti Performs at the DJ of the Year Competition at DJ Expo 2011. Photo by: Elite Digital Images

Steps To End Planning Frustration!

By Ron Ruth

I've had a number of conversations with DJs in various parts of the country who have told me that they've had a problem with getting brides and grooms to return their planning materials in a timely manner. One DJ shared the story of a couple who, even after countless emails, phone calls and prodding, did not get their materials turned in until the day before their event.

Obviously, when a couple waits until the last minute to turn in their planning



materials, they're taking a chance that the DJ will still be prepared to deliver a quality presentation and produce a memorable celebration. And, as much talk

as there is about the stress a bride experiences leading up to her special day, such neglect does nothing to settle a DJ's nerves, either.

Not to take anything away from the DJs I've spoken to or to suggest that they've not been giving their clients their best efforts, I have to wonder why they're having such a hard time in this regard. Have they been contracting couples without really knowing who they are? During the sales process, have they not been explaining the importance of planning and it's positive impact on creating a reception that will be remembered for years to come? And if they have, what steps have they taken after the Bride & Groom have contracted them to reinforce this notion?

Personally, I have yet to meet a bride that isn't a planner. I see it in the size of the planning notebooks they haul around

with them everyday. Those books are filled with swatches, color wheels, magazine cut-outs of wedding dresses and tuxedos, articles filled with "expert advice" on how to have the perfect wedding, photos of flowers and centerpieces and more.

Knowing that most brides are that detail oriented should cause you to make planning and preparation a focal point of the service you provide. If you display little concern about the planning process or don't explain its importance to creating an extraordinary wedding celebration, a Bride might take that to mean that she shouldn't worry about it, either.

If you consider yourself to be an entertainment expert and believe detailed preparation benefits the client, their guests, the celebration and you, is it not in the best interest of the everyone involved to set the proper tone for how the planning process will proceed?

Having said that, here are nine steps that may benefit DJs who want nothing more than to deliver on a promise of an unforgettably fun wedding reception but wish to get around the issue of waiting on procrastinating clients.

1. Provide your clients with a reception planning checklist that details the planning process, when each consultation will occur, how much time they need to set aside for those meetings and what materials are due at those meetings.

2. Don't wait until 30 days (or less) from the reception to begin the planning process. Arrange the first consultation 90 days in advance. I'm not suggesting that you begin work on a timeline, yet. Use this opportunity to get to know your client and to review their idea of the ideal wedding reception. The more you know about them, the easier it will be to offer ideas that are specific to them. It's also the beginning of relationship and trust building, vital elements of the planning process.

3. At the conclusion of that first con-

sult, schedule your next meeting to take place about 60 days out from the reception. Make certain that the couple has your planning materials in hand. Ask them to have them completed by the time you meet again and let them know that developing a timeline and flow will be the focus of conversation. Again, you are the entertainment expert. Display decisiveness in how the process needs to proceed.

4. During that second meeting, work up a timeline. There is a strong possibility that the client may not have selected all of their music for their formalities. There's also a possibility that you may have suggested items to be included in their reception that they'd like to consider, first, before committing. In either case, help them stay on track by asking them to provide you with a reasonable deadline date to make those decisions, typically within another 2 weeks. But, remember that they'll be more inclined to deliver on time if THEY pick the date!

5. Don't delay in getting your client a rough draft of the timeline you discussed in your meeting. Send it within a day or 2. Along with those items they've agreed to include, highlight those decisions yet to be made and include the deadline date they chose.

6. When the deadline date rolls around, send them a gentle reminder if they've not already sent you their decisions. Once you have those, immediately send them an updated itinerary and arrange your next appointment to go to the venue for a walk-through, about 30 days in advance of their reception. If there are any loose ends to the itinerary, they can be addressed in person at that time.

7. If additional updates need to be made to the reception itinerary after the walk-through, send them immediately.

8. By now, the couple has most likely agreed to the timeline. After you've received their consent, forward the itinerary to their entire reception team and make certain that there are no conflicts with what anyone else needs to accomplish. It is better to know that the last scheduled

formality extends beyond the photographer's contract in advance of the event than to find out at the reception.

9. If you want to elevate your service even further, arrange to meet with the Bride & Groom's wedding party for about 5-10 minutes before their rehearsal to review the timeline. Bridal parties are the supporting cast to every wedding reception. They want the event to be just as much fun as the newlyweds. It's easier for them to make that happen if they know the importance of their role in the reception. And, you'll spend little to no time tracking them down when needed at the event itself.

There is no doubt that the above planning process may exceed the amount of time you are accustomed to providing. But, by being so pro-active, you'll rarely (if ever) have to wait on planning materials, again. Plus clients will refer you, not just for your incredible talent, but for your outstanding organizational skills, as well.

Author's Note: I will be speaking in September at the ADJA National Conference and attending the Wedding MBA, both in Vegas. After I get home, my wife and I will be heading to the Happiest Place On Earth for a much needed 10 day vacation. With such a tight schedule, I will not be writing for the October issue of Disc Jockey News. I'm thrilled and grateful, however, that my friend, Peter Merkle, has agreed to submit an article in my absence. Thanks, Peter!

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

What Happens In Vegas...

By Jake Palmer

Are there too many conventions, seminars, and DJ networking functions lately?

This is one of those questions that I am not sure has a right or wrong answer. I mean it really depends on you and your ability and willingness to travel and participate in these types of event.

It just seems like there is a lot of them in the DJ world right now. They range in all sizes, shapes, and colors, from small local presentations put on by your local ADJA or MAPDJ chapter, to international events. From Vegas to Atlantic City, to London, to the Outback Steakhouse in Bloomington. These events cover everything from sales, to gear, to performance. Some are about the party, some are about networking and meeting new friends and colleges, while some are just a waste of time.

Now remember, this is just a question, I am not saying that these seminars and conventions are a bad thing, but how much is too much? When is enough enough? When it comes to continued learning, and expanding your abilities, I don't think there is enough. Most every convention or seminar I have been to, (DJ related or otherwise), has been great. I have learned new things, I have refreshed old things, I have met new people, I have grown. I think part of going to conventions and seminars is a lot like algebra in

high school, *it's not so much what you learn, but that you learn how to learn.*

Seminars are a lot like that, they help us to keep an open mind, to be able to learn, to stay open to new ideas. In any business, the kiss of death is failure to change and adapt. Soldiers and military experts will tell you, that the best thing you can do in a combat situation is the right thing, the 2nd best thing you can do is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing. I realize a soldier reference to the DJ world is kind of a stretch, but the point is activity, continue moving forward, continue to improve. It's easy to fail with the attitude of "this is how we've always done it." So, this must mean that the conventions and seminars are a good thing? It just seems like every time I log onto facebook this past year there is another seminar or convention. I am starting to think that I could stop working and just go to different seminars all over the country, alas I cannot do that, as with many of you who are "working" DJs I have two weekly shows on Tuesdays and Thursdays... booo, no convention travel for me. Maybe, I ask the question, "is it too much?" because I am just jealous and feel left out. Let's face it, they are fun, whether you go for the party or the learning, it's just plain fun to hang out with other like-minded freaks... Learn new things, share ideas, and go to fun places. I guess it all depends on how many conventions you can attend, and why you are going. I would suggest picking one or two that are "do-able" for you to attend, and then decide WHY you are going. Always have a plan and agenda.

Plan to attend classes or seminars that appeal to you, plan to party like a rock star, and plan to learn. You must be willing to learn and apply what you have learned in order for the seminars to be successfully to you. If you are not willing to learn and change, then go to party and network, you will still have fun. Are there too many? Maybe there is just

more variety and options available to you now, and that just makes it easier to choose the best fitting seminar and convention for your and your style. With that said, hope to see you in Bloomington, MN this November for the DJN Conclave.

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



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Hey, Maybe They ARE Correct!

By Steve Beck

men-tor [men-tawr, -ter] noun 1. A wise and trusted counselor or teacher. 2. An influential senior sponsor or supporter.

Do you have a mentor? More to the point, do you need a mentor? I'm going to go out on a limb here and say not only do you need a mentor, you probably need several. And if you have one (or more) you should still be



looking to add to your mentoring team!

Operating a DJ business can be a very complex thing. That may seem obvious for large multi-ops but it's true

for almost any single operator as well. Just as we'd like our clients to understand that we do much more than "just push play" we sometimes need to remind ourselves of that same fact.

Why do you need a mentor? As the old saying goes, two heads are better than one. A good mentor can provide invaluable feedback by taking an unbiased look at an idea you're considering, a process you're thinking of incorporating, a product you're considering purchasing, and so on. Often times we as business owners are too close to a situation or too invested in an idea to make a well-reasoned rational decision about it. A mentor can help greatly with that thought process, simply by asking questions to get you to explain the rationale behind the action you want to take.

Discussing issues with your mentor can solidify your thinking. Having someone whose opinions you trust gives you a wonderful sounding board off which to bounce ideas. The process of having to explain and justify your thinking to your mentor will help you see things more clearly and lead to your making more good decisions for your business and for your clients.

Mentors are great for brainstorming too. Do you have a business situation that you just aren't sure how to handle? Brainstorm it with your mentor. Just write everything down that occurs to you, then you and your mentor can analyze what you've come up with and find a solution to your problem.

Some of you are thinking, "OK, great. I already HAVE a mentor. He's smart and experienced and I value his opinions. I guess I'm good to go." Well... maybe not. I believe you need several mentors, not just one.

Why? Because there are many facets to a DJ business and it's very rare to find someone who excels in all of them. A great performer might be a lousy marketer. The world's best marketer might not have a clue about accounting and taxes. Neither one is probably a good source for legal advice on your contract or any contract you might be thinking of signing, like a lease.

You can always contract out the aspects of your business that you don't have an aptitude for. I happen to have an accounting background so I do my own accounting and prepare my own tax returns, but I have a tax accountant review it before it goes to the IRS. I retain an attorney to handle contracts and other legal matters. I use a marketing consultant to help me devise a marketing plan. I don't happen to have a lot of skill in the area of website design so I happily pay a website designer. Are these contractors also mentors? Sure they are... I'm constantly

bouncing ideas off all of them and asking for their feedback.

On the performance side of the business I have another set of mentors. Several of them, coincidentally, write for this publication. If I'm in a sales slump and my closing percentage isn't what it should be, I'd probably want to talk with Mitch Taylor about my consultations, knowing he'd spot any bad habits I may have fallen into. If I'm having trouble figuring out how to present something at an event or I'm struggling with an issue that involves the configuration of a room, Bill Hermann is the first person I'd think to call. I have a mentor for equipment issues, another one for karaoke shows. If I'm considering adding another service to my offerings, there are people with whom I'd discuss it so I'd know the potential benefits and pitfalls before deciding on a course of action. The idea is to assemble a team of mentors, each with their own areas of expertise, so you have a "go-to" person who can help with each area of your business.

Where do you find these mentors? There are several options. While some people swear by one DJ chat board or another or some group on Facebook, I've had very little success in those places. For me, the issue is how to evaluate the advice you receive in these media. One Facebook group I'm in has over a thousand members. How am I supposed to know whose ideas are valid and whose aren't when the vast majority of the group's members are nothing more than a name and a profile photo to me? I can't possibly know! And in my experience, it takes far too much time to separate the wheat from the chaff in those places, so I don't frequent them any longer. I can't say I've found a single mentor on a chat board.

A great place to start looking for mentors is in any industry associations you belong to. If you don't belong to one, I really urge you to consider joining one for the networking and support they can provide. Attend local chapter meetings and get to know the other members.

Conferences are a good source for finding mentors as well, both national conferences like Mobile Beat Las Vegas or the new ADJA national conference, or some of the many regional conferences held around the country throughout the year. At these events you should network, network and then network some more. You'll find you're seeing many of the same people at every conference you attend and you can begin building last relationships with them.

If you've purchased training, whether books, CDs, DVDs or live workshops, keep in touch with the people who are providing this training. They do it because they want to advance our industry. Yes, they may make some money in the process, but trust me... none of these people are getting rich by providing training to DJs! Show an interest, ask thoughtful questions and engage them in conversations and you'll probably find some mentors in the process.

Finally, the very best way to FIND mentors is to BE a mentor! Each of us has abilities that we can use to help others who are interested in growth and development. Find people who are looking to improve in an area where YOU have some expertise, and help them! People are naturally attracted to like-minded people. When you're seen as someone who wants to give help to others as much as you'd like to receive it from others, you'll suddenly find you've built relationships with all the mentors you need.

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All The Referrals You Could Hope For

By Jeffrey Gitomer

Everyone in management will tell every salesperson to "ask for referrals" or "don't forget to ask for referrals" or "as soon as you make the sale, ask for a referral."

These strategies are not only wrong, they also jeopardize the future of the relationship.

First of all, why are you "asking" (begging) for a referral?

Second of all, why are you asking when you haven't earned anything?

REALITY: Asking for referrals makes EVERYONE feel awkward. And usually results in a turn-down, or a delay. A delay that goes on for months.

A referral is the second strongest lead in sales. The first is an unsolicited one.

MAJOR CLUE: Referrals are not asked for – referrals are EARNED.

SCENARIO: You get a referral from a customer without asking for it. You make a sale. Your boss asks you, "How'd you get that referral?" And you respond, "I earned it." Your boss will NOT know what to say next.

Give to get.

There are all kinds of names applied to the process of "giving" a referral to a customer. Pay it forward. Netweaving. BUT the salesperson will forever live in darkness if he or she expects something in return.

Which brings me to this PRIME example of what not to do. I got this email "request for an answer" today:

Hey Jeff, I can't seem to ever get any referrals! I go back to the customer after the sale, I give them an appreciation gift and ask them for some people and they say they don't know anybody or don't think anybody else can afford it?! What to do?

The guy didn't even sign the email. That's a good start to not getting referrals.

This guy thinks by bringing candy that he deserves a referral. And his email proves my point. He will NEVER get referrals this way – AND NEITHER WILL YOU.

What is this guy's business logic behind his actions? And what's yours? Asking for referrals is not only a poor practice, it's also rude and embarrassing.

NOTE WELL: There are those who claim expertise in the referral process that will differ in opinion. Take their advice and end up like the anonymous emailer above – empty.

I will admit my strategy is harder to perform. GOOD. That way the lazy salespeople will not be in competition. And you may actually get some referrals this way. Five referrals out of a hundred tries. BUT the other 95 people will avoid you forever. Not good.

Ask yourself:

- What have I earned so far?
- Have I done anything besides make a sale?

- On a scale of 1-10, how strong is this relationship?

- If I asked for a referral right now would it be or feel awkward?

- Why would this customer give me a referral?

NOTE: If you can't think of a reason, neither can your customer.

Then ask yourself:

- What can I do that will get me from where I am to where I want to be?

- Do I have a real referral game plan?

- What are the value actions I need to be (consistently) taking to begin earning referrals?

The questions above are the ones that need to be asked BEFORE YOU TAKE ANY REFERRAL ACTIONS.

Here are the TOP 6.5 referral EARNING strategies:

1. Deliver memorable service. It's simple. Be friendly and helpful, and give positive response.

2. Be available. Make it easy to do business with you and anyone else in your company 24/7/365.

3. Be a consistent value provider. Create an email magazine and blog with content that helps customers, and a business Facebook page where you post positive and helpful information and good news, and allow for customer interactions.

4. Give a referral to the customer. This requires work, but it's a great way to prove

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The Kids Are All Right

By Rob Peters

Wow...where has the summer gone? Between the busy summer schedule, and managing to take a well deserved week off, I can not believe how fast the summer has flown by. However, I did find time during that week I took off to challenge myself. As many of you know, Mike



Walter, my colleague here at Disc Jockey News, has introduced his latest book "Running your Multi-Op" to the industry a few months ago. I not only read it once...I read it twice

because as a Multi-Op business owner, I wanted to seek out the "nuggets" of information that Mike shared in this book that I could apply to my own company. Also, this book was written almost as if you were having a one on one conversation with Mike, and is very easy to read and follow, complete with common sense anecdotes.

As the owner of New Jersey's Elite Entertainment, Mike shares his practical experience in this book and provides an almost "step by step" guide of information to help anyone who is a multi-op, or anyone thinking of expanding into a multi-op. He shares REAL information from his experiences, from the beginning of his career at Star DJs to more recent events dealing with personnel retention. Recently, I had the opportunity to ask Mike a few questions in an effort to share some more of his useful insight and information about himself and to give you all a sense that he really "knows his stuff" when it comes to running a Multi-Op DJ Company.

RP: What drove you to writing such a great book? I know you have spoken for a while about this topic, but what was the "I should do this because" moment?

MW: All of the articles I have written in the Disc Jockey News. People have

always made comments such as "I love reading what you write." Or "You should write a book." So I finally decided to sit down a do it.

RP: What audience were you targeting? Was it strictly Multi System Operators?

MW: I hoped anyone who is either running a multi-op or thinking of running one and wants to know what's ahead would be interested.

RP: As a multi op owner, when you decided to let go and started booking your DJs first (before booking yourself) were there challenges? Mixed emotions? A feeling of "I REALLY hope this works"? Or were there no doubts whatsoever?

MW: I talk about this extensively in the book too. You have to have confidence in your training program and just let someone go. Of course you're nervous and anxious, but at some point they have to be set free. I guess doing it so often for so long has given me more confidence.

RP: Mike, you have been speaking about this topic for many years now, and I know you are actively involved with the New Jersey Disc Jockey Network. When and where did you first start speaking nationally?

MW: DJ Times brought me out to San Francisco when they were doing shows out there, 1999 I think was the year. Then they let me speak in AC for the first time.

RP: Speaking of DJ Times, let's talk about the role you have with the "DJ Of The Year" Awards. How did it come about that you became the producer of this exciting show at the DJ Times Conventions?

MW: Right around the time I started speaking for DJ Times they were unhappy with the previous producer who was running it. In August of 2000 they didn't even have a competition. That year, on Monday they had a "West Coast party" and someone from California hosted it. Then on Wednesday they had an "East Coast party" and they asked me to host that. Then the next year they said they were looking to bring back the DJ of the Year and did I

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Point Of Purchase

By Dave Winsor

How do you handle inquiries? How are you perceived when someone visits your site to gather information? That moment of contact is the ONLY chance you'll get at making a good impression.

Competition is stiff and the pressure is downward on costs. So, how can you



become "The Expert" in your market? Try something different. Control the point of contact in a way that allows you to stay in contact with the prospective

bride. I've recently signed up for such a system and suggest you at least check it out. The videos on this site are full of useful information about controlling the flow of information to your prospective clients. I'm also employing a strategy that I learned from this site and I have to tell you, it's so different than other inquiry responses, that it's almost

not fair. Here is the qr code for the site:



Get a scanner for your smartphone and visit the site. Imagine this: A bride visits your site and before YOU even are aware, she's signed up for your services before she checks your availability! Now you've got her attention, you're the expert and YOU control the flow of information. It's really quite simple.

So this is all about communication and how you can be perceived as the expert in your market. Let me know your thoughts.

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your worth.

5. Get them one LinkedIn contact they can benefit from. See if any of your connections could be of value to your customers, and make connections.

6. Develop the relationship slowly over time. Create your long-term value plan, and execute it consistently. Always post a "thank you" for referred business.

6.5 DON'T ASK FOR A REFERRAL IF YOU HAVEN'T EARNED ONE.

There's an underlying powerful message in what I'm saying here. It's about having a philosophy of giving, without the expecta-

tion of getting anything in return. This philosophy, if adopted, will give you a lifetime of fulfillment without an ounce of regret, remorse, or resentment.

Give to give. Don't give to get.

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

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Reduce Your Rate?

By Kelly Suit

Sometimes certain ideas get hammered into you by life. That was the case for me recently. If you have been reading my articles over the past 2 years, you might remember that I had hired a contractor to do some work at my home. Originally I used it as an example of how important in sales having your client like you can be. I connected with my contractor and it resulted in him being hired over other options available to us.

Fast forward to a few months ago. After all the work that was completed from last year, our contractor contacted us about some other work that we wanted done when we could afford it. With our tax money we decided that if he could meet our budget needs we'd go forward with the project. His estimate was @ \$1000.00 more than what we had budgeted so we told him we'd need to hold off on the work. As luck would have it, he desperately needed work and was countered with a proposal that would meet our budget. We were very clear that our budget was firm (as the 1st time around the cost of the work went well over the proposal) and we agreed to how payment was to happen.

It wasn't too long into the project that our contractor shared with us that he had miscalculated with his estimate and realized that he wasn't making as much money as he'd hoped. He then made several comments to the fact that he felt that he was losing money on the project. I guess he was hoping that since we had been very understanding in the past with him, that we'd agree to giving him more money than what he'd agreed to. He was mistaken as we were very clear in the beginning what we were willing to spend and that was it.

Needless to say, he started showing up more and more infrequently to work on our project. We told him that it wasn't a

problem since if he had other jobs to work, we weren't in a rush for the work to be completed. He came across several issues with our building that needed to be addressed (roof and structural issues with our porch) so as much as we didn't want to go over budget, we agreed to additional services with the understanding that the original work was still to be completed at the agreed upon fee.

Because we had developed a relationship with our contractor that was more of a friend than that of a work relationship he needed to receive his draws early to make ends meet. While we kept track of what was paid, we felt that because we were "friends" that he would honor his end of the agreement. He told us that he needed to take a job since work with his business was slow, but that it was only part time and that he would come on his days off to finish the work. Well, for 2 weeks we didn't see our contractor and we was very reluctant to reply to our texts and voice mails.

Finally we received a text from him saying that he would be coming by to finish up the project. I saw him (it was my day off), but I was off to run some errands. My wife was home, but wasn't feeling well so when he came to the door to speak with her, my daughter told him that she wasn't available, but that I'd be back soon. When I got back, he had cleaned up all his tools and supplies, but he was gone. I sent him multiple texts and voice messages, but nothing. Finally we received an email stating that he wasn't coming back and that we both know that we got more than what we paid for. Needless to say, that exchange of emails didn't go as pleasantly as I would have liked from there forward.

I could attempt to take him to court, but have decided to chalk it up as a life lesson. It's only a couple hundred shy of what was agreed and to be honest I'd rather not deal with this person any longer. So why have I shared this with you? I want to point out a couple things that will make me a better business person going forward.

For starters, you should never take any work for less than what you feel is fair compensation. Ultimately it will effect your performance and your attitude. I un-

derstand sometimes that it's necessary to negotiate with a client, but there needs to be a line in the sand that you won't cross no matter how desperate. It's better to pass on a job then to take one and deliver a sub-standard service.

Almost all bad customer service begins and ultimately ends with communication. The longer you make a client wait to hear back from you them more likely that your good will that you established when they hired you will be diminished. Every step in the communication process with your client is either creating better report or it's creating less confidence in your services. Look for ways to strengthen your bonds with your clients.

When you have a client that you've built a relationship with, make every effort to keep that client happy. It's so much easier to get more business from someone that already likes and trusts you. This contractor (assuming he stays in business) has lost many thousands of dollars over the life time of our relationship. My wife is always looking for ways to update and improve

our home and we have an older home that we use as our office that we want to renovate. In his short sightedness of this situation, he has lost all that future money that we wouldn't have ever even shopped to another contractor. Also, we know many people that either need work done on their properties or will at some point down the road, how much referral business did he lose because of his actions? If you lose a client because of a fractured relationship, how much does that business cost you over time?

Finally, I believe that trust is something that you build over time. It takes consistent actions over a period of time to create it, but it only takes one momentary lack of judgment on your part to ruin it. Treat your clients like gold and they'll return the investment ten fold, treat them like just another event, they'll probably not even remember who you were down the road. The choice is yours, choose wisely!

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have any ideas. I spelled out a pretty clear proposal to them as to how I would handle it and they went with me. We just did our 10th one last week so I guess they are happy with everything.

RP: For those DJs who are interested, what criteria do you look for when reviewing the entries for the "DJ Of The Year"?

MW: Just get up there and be entertaining and educational. That's always been our criteria - have fun and give the crowd something they can take home with them.

RP: Are there any other upcoming projects you are working on? What's next for you?

MW: Right now, I am speaking as much as I can to promote the book. And, of course, keeping Elite thriving. If my own Multi-Op went down the tubes I think I'd be seen as less of an authority!

Well, Mike has definitely made a name for himself as an authority on running a Multi-System DJ Company. His book and audio book is an easy to read guide for those DJs who are looking to expand and add DJs, as well as for those Multi-System owners who are looking to tighten up their operations and possibly make

changes that can and have worked. Mike discusses a variety of topics that are not only common sense, but he hits on some of the legalities that affect our industry and provides insights on handling them.

I found this book appealing because of the content and the information that Mike shares about growing your Multi-Op company, from adding DJs to adding salespeople. After reading this book several times and taking notes, I can say that some of the ideas Mike discusses in his book have helped make my company more efficient and has even helped me with perspective on decisions about the people who work for my business. I highly recommend that you give Mike's book a good read if you are a Multi-System operator, or if you're thinking about expanding your DJ company from a single op and adding DJs you can book for your clients.

Rob can be reached at: robpeters@discjockeynews.com.



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Will A Mistake Cost You?

By Mitch Taylor

This is a billboard outside of my new office. It has now been a reminder to me for a couple of weeks to have “attention to detail”. Our local casino is bringing in Trace Adkins but according to this billboard they aren’t bringing him in to perform but “Trace Atkins”.



Common mistake but what does this say about their business? What do simple mistakes of spelling, punctuation or worse yet communication say about your business?

Every error is not always found by using spell check, as witnessed above. The

simple answer is that everything has to be proofread but let’s dig a bit deeper. Who’s proofreading your process? Who’s ensuring that everything you do in your business follows through to completion? If the answer is you because you are chief cook and bottlewasher then it may be time to invest in some help.

Here are some tips to get you started in your BUSINESS.

1. Start by writing everything down that you do for a process, whether

it be your marketing, production, sales flow or gear maintenance.

2. Next, type this out and give it to every person that comes in contact with that process.

3. Proofread it for errors.

4. Follow your process for every system every time. This is how BIG business ensures that everything is up to code, and that the ultimate goal of happy customers is achieved.

By having a process for EVERY aspect of your company you ensure follow through and you have a plan of action for how to handle almost every situation that comes your way. Yes, it’s W*RK to do this but your future rewards will be great just for following through every time. The bottom line is to never short-cut your processes and pay attention to the details. The details can often be the difference between a sale or no sale and happy customers who refer people or ones that say “Ehh...they were just OK.”

Which type of client would you rather serve?

Mitch Taylor is an 18 year veteran of the mobile disc jockey industry, starting

ing 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.

The Referral Coach

By Matt Anderson

- 9 Ways to Help Others Feel Understood

Last week I spoke in Tampa and was delighted to see a presentation on listening skills by Mark Walters, an Associate



Professor at the University of South Florida. Here are some of my take-aways on a topic that doesn’t sound like a high-need area to address but is one where most of us could improve.

The good news is that communication skills can be learned.

1. “Authenticity is having to struggle for words”.

Most of us want to be seen as experts in our field. Sometimes that can make me feel like I have to know every answer and have a perfect sound-bite quality response every time. “A good conversation is a little messy.”

2. Reflect, don’t deflect emotion.

Make sure the other person feels understood first before communicating your point. I know this is hard sometimes; I struggle with this too. It’s easy to get emotionally involved and then retaliate with more emotion.

3. Pause before responding

This indicates you’re thinking about what was said and not just planning your response while the other person is still talking. Pausing also helps avoid becoming instantly defensive.

4. Avoid phrases that kill dialogue.

When communicating, avoid using ‘of course,’ ‘obviously’ and ‘as everyone knows’. These phrases silence possible responses. Because the point is so ‘obvious’ to the speaker, only a fool would have a question or not understand. This is a sure-fire way to come across as arrogant.

5. Become a student of conversation.

Listen more carefully to how other people converse and whether each person is being understood.

6. When writing, make the other person the subject of the sentence more often.

For example, instead of saying: “I can tell you that you’d be better off...” simply state “You’d be better off (in my opinion)...”

7. Avoid using big words and jargon.

This keeps people at a distance and can come off as aloof. I read an interview recently with best-selling UK author Lee Child (his Jack Reacher novels are quite addictive; I’ve read two in the last week!). He believes that it’s harder to write a popular best seller using language that is easily understood than it is to write high-brow intellectual work.

8. Tread more carefully when using the word ‘we’.

For example, “as financial professionals, we believe..” or “We here at ABC Company think..” because this makes the other person feel excluded.

9. Know your speaking style

When we speak, we can run a range between authoritarian and egalitarian (collaborative) and we can run a range between warm and cold. This leads to a balancing act between potentially coming across as patronizing, stiff, distant or positively receptive (friendly).

Got a listening tip to share?

Matt Anderson can be reached at: <http://www.thereferralauthority.com>



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What will you Create?

No Success Without Access

By Harvey Mackay

Over the years I’ve asked a lot of people what makes a great salesperson, and the answers are fairly predictable: passion; persistence; personality/likeability; planning; trustworthiness; strong work ethic; drive/initiative; quick learner; goal-oriented; good communications skills; sense of



humor; humility; good timing; strong at building relationships; and follow-up (or as I say, the sale begins when the customer says yes). My own answer is always the same: hungry fighter. In many ways, that is the embodiment of all of the above traits.

Further, I would argue that the second most important factor is accessibility. I seldom do business with people who are not accessible. If I can’t reach you immediately, I want to know that you’ll get back to me within minutes or hours, not days. If you’re slow to answer the call, your phone will stop ringing.

Notice I say accessible instead of

available, because accessibility includes availability, plus ease of use, user friendly, convenience and more. When you have questions, you want to talk to someone who has answers. If your sales person doesn’t, they must be able to find someone who can.

Sales people as well as those in customer service need to understand the importance of accessibility. Woody Allen said, “Eighty percent of success is showing up.” That may be true in some businesses, but it falls far short in sales and service. Would you be satisfied if a sales person was available for only four out of five customers?

Personal story: I fly tens of thousands of uneventful miles every year, but I recently had a frustrating experience with a major airline that sent my blood pressure skyrocketing. Bad weather where my connecting flight was originating caused my flight to be delayed five times before it was cancelled. Instead of putting me on the next available flight, the airline just assigned me on the same flight -- 24 hours later! But no official announcements came. A fellow traveler got an email on his iPhone and shared the news.

We were told an agent would be at the gate to help us, but after 30 minutes no one had shown up. The phone lines at the rebooking center were jammed. The computer screens were

down. I tried the toll-free number, and was told I’d be on hold for 30 minutes. After just a few minutes, the hold message turned into a busy signal. I couldn’t reach a human being.

In desperation I called my travel agent, who found a flight on another carrier leaving within an hour. He also found several other available flights that evening that could have accommodated most of the delayed travelers, but the airline didn’t offer any of those options. Note to self: Never fly that airline again. Ever.

We want to be able to count on people in an emergency. That airline doesn’t realize that the more accessible you are, the more accessible your entire organization becomes.

I think what makes people the most frustrated is when they can’t reach anyone. As necessary and popular as they are, I have never been a fan of voice mail or automated systems. That’s why we still have a receptionist -- a live person -- answering calls from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at MackayMitchell Envelope Company. Our sales people share after-hours emergency contact information as well. We will never get rid of the personal touch.

Can you be accessible 24/7? Technically, yes. But should you be accessible all the time? Of course not.

But you have to get back to people promptly, even if just to tell them you

got their message and you are working on their request. If you want to depend on your customers’ business, you must remember that your customers depend on you.

Perhaps you’ve seen a variation of the parable of the ignored customer. Its message should resonate to every kind of business that needs customers.

“I’m the person who goes into a restaurant, sits down patiently and waits while the servers do everything but take my order. I’m the person who goes into a store and stands quietly while the sales people finish their little chitchat. I’m the person who goes into a reception room on time for business appointment, and stands by the desk while the receptionist finishes her personal phone call.

“You might say I’m a patient person. But do you know who else I am? I’m the person who never comes back!”

Mackay’s Moral: You can’t reach the top if your customers can’t reach you.

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

Top 30 Clean High School Songs

SchoolDanceNetwork.com

#	Artist	Title	Featuring	PC #	BPM	Notes							
1	LMFAO	Party Rock Anthem	Lauren Bennett	201102	131	Edit	Pitbull	Hey Baby	201037	128			
2	Nicki Minaj	Super Bass		201115	127	Edit	Black Eyed Peas	The Time (Dirty Bit)	201045	128			
3	Pitbull	Give Me Everything	Ne-Yo & Nayer -	201114	129	Sug content	Mann	Buzzin	201050	104	Edit		
4	Kanye West	All of the lights	K Cudi, Rihanna	201050	71	Use clean edit	Will.I.am	Check it Out	Nicki Minaj	201037	130	edit	
5	Chris Brown	She Ain't You		201114	91		Kesha	Take It Off		201028	125		
6	T-Pain	Best Love Song	Chris Brown	201108	81	Edit	Katy Perry	Teenage Dream		201031	120		
7	Lady Gaga	The Edge of Glory		201120	128		KE\$HA	We R Who We R		201043	120	Edit	
8	Bruno Mars	Lazy Song		201108	87		Mike Posner	Please Don't Go		201034	121		
9	Bad Meets Evil	Lighters (squeaky clean)	Bruno Mars	201125	90	Super edit	Usher	DJ Got Us Fallin In Love	Pitbull	201029	120	Edit	
10	Adele	Rolling in the Deep		201048	105		Bruno Mars	Just the way you are		201030	109		
11	Gym Class Heros	Stereo Hearts	Adam Levine	201125	91		David Guetta	Memories	F/Kid Cudi	201012	130	Edit	
12	Lupe Fiasco	The Show Goes on		201045	72		Ditty-Dirty Money	Coming Home		201047	84	Edit	
13	Maroon 5/Aguilera	Moves Like Jagger		201132	128		Nicki Minaj	Right Thru You		201040	81		
14	Black Eyed Peas	Just Can't Get Enough		201106	94		Jay Sean	2012 (It ain't the end)		201032	127		
15	Beyonce	Best Thing I Never Had		201124	100		Eminem	Love The Way You Lie	Rihanna	201027	87	Edit	
16	New Boyz	Better with the Lights on		201120	112	Edit	Taio Cruz	Dynamite		201020	120		
17	David Guetta	Where them Girls at	FRida-Nicki Minaj	201119	130		3OH!3	Double Vision- Dance Edit		201035	120		
18	Iyaz	Pretty Girls	Travie McCoy	201120	78		Sean Kingston	Letting Go (Dutty Love)		201025	92		
19	Lil Wayne	How to Love		201123	77		Travie McCoy	Need You		201037	74		
20	Jason Derulo	It Girl		201133	92		Flo Rida	Club can't Handle Me	D Guetta	201024	128		
21	Britney Spears	Til The World Ends		201111	133	Small edit	Taio Cruz	Dirty Pictures	Ke\$ha	201038	120	EDIT	
22	Wiz Khalifa	Roll Up		201106	94	Edit	New Boyz	Break My Bank	Iyaz	201028	91	Edit	
23	Jennifer Lopez	I'm Into You	Lil Wayne	201115	84		Katy Perry	California Gurls	Snoop Dog	201020	125		
24	David Guetta	Without You	Usher	201136	128		B.O.B	Airplanes	Hayley Williams	201016	94	Edit	
25	Katy Perry	ET			105		Travie McCoy	Billionaire	Bruno Mars	201011	88		
26	LMFAO	Sexy and I know it		201133	130	HS Only	Usher	OMG	Will I am	201012	130		
27	Afrojack	Take over Control	Eva Simons	201048	130		Mike Posner	Cooler Than Me		201014	130		
28	Tinie Tempah	Written in the Stars	Eric Turner	201104	93		Tao Cruz	Break Your Heart		201004	122		
29	Britney Spears	Hold it against Me		201103	134		Black Eyed Peas	Rock That Body		201013	125		
30	Lady Gaga	Born This Way		201102	120		Ready Set	Love Like Woe		201020	90		
							3OH!3	My First Kiss	Ke\$ha	201019	138		
							Nicki Minaj	Your Love		201013	95		
Recurrents- (Still popular)													
	Jason Derulo	Don't Wanna Go Home		201120	122	Edit	DO NOT PLAYLIST ADDS						
	Usher	More		201047	125		Bad Meets Evil	Lighters	Bruno Mars	Impossible to edit			
	Enrique Iglesias	Tonight	Ludacris	201047	126	Edit Sh*t	DJ Khaled	I'm on One	Drake-Rick Ross				
	Ke\$ha	Blow		201102	120		Frank Ocean	Novacane					
	Pitbull	Rain on Me	Marc Anthony	201125	128		Black Eyed Peas	Don't Stop The Party		Okay w/o Genitals-Edit?			
	Far East Movement	Rocketeer	Ryan Tedder	201047	96		Rihanna	California KING bed					
	Chris Brown	Yeah 3X		201044	129		Britney Spears	I Wanna Go					
	Katy Perry	Firework		201041	124		Katy Perry	Last Friday Night					
	Keri Hilson	Pretty Girl Rock		201042	80		Enrique Iglesias	Dirty Dancer					
	Mike Posner	Bow Chicka Wow Wow		201107	74	edit sh*t	Rihanna	Man Down					
	Taio Cruise	Higher	Travie MacCoy	201102	128	Radio Edit	Nicole Scherzinger	Right There					
	Nelly	Gone	Kelly Rowland	201101	73		Kelly Rowland	Motivation	Lil Wayne	clearly sexual			
	Bruno Mars	Grenade		201044	111		Waka Flocka Flame	Grove St. Party	Kebo Gotti				
	Chris Brown	Deuces		201031	74	EDIT	Travis Porter	Bring it Back					
	Rihanna	What's My Name		201043	100	H.S Only	Chris Brown	Look at me Now					
	Edward Maya	Stereo Love	Mia Martina	201013	127		Nicki Minaj	Did it on em		Nasty			
	Pink	Raise Your Glass		201041	122	EDIT	Big Sean	My Last	Chris Brown	Glorifies Alcohol			
	Flo Rida	Who Dat Girl		201046	125		Snoop Dog	Wet/Sweat					
	Nelly	Just a Dream		201032	90		Kanye West	H*A*M	Jay-Z				
	Enrique Iglesias	I Like It	Pitbull	201019	129		Rihanna	S&M					
	Rihanna	Only Girl (In the world)		201037	126	EDIT	Pink	Fr**kin Perfect					

Monthly Music Charts

By *TMStudios.com*

Pop

1	Katy Perry	Last Friday Night
2	Britney Spears	I Wanna Go
3	LMFAO	Party Rock Anthem
4	Nicki Minaj	Super Bass
5	Bad Meets Evil	Lighters
6	Hot Chelle Rae	Tonight Tonight
7	OneRepublic	Good Life
8	Pitbull	Give Me Everything
9	Maroon 5 & C.Aguilera	Moves Like Jagger
10	Lil Wayne	How To Love
11	Foster The People	Pumped Up Kicks
12	Cobra Starship	You Make Me Feel
13	Rihanna	Cheers (Drink To That)
14	The Band Perry	If I Die Young
15	Lady Gaga	The Edge Of Glory
16	Gym Class Heroes	Stereo Hearts
17	Lady Gaga	You And I
18	David Guetta	Where Them Girls At
19	Iyaz	Pretty Girls
20	Pitbull	Rain Over Me

Urban

1	Lil Wayne	How To Love
2	DJ Khaled	I'm On One
3	Jay-Z & Kanye West	Otis
4	Miguel	Quickie
5	Beyonce	Best Thing I Never Had
6	Kelly Rowland	Motivation
7	Nicki Minaj	Super Bass
8	Big Sean	Marvin & Chardonnay
9	Lupe Fiasco	Out Of My Head
10	Miguel	Sure Thing
11	Drake	Marvin's Room
12	Chris Brown	She Ain't You
13	Wale	That Way
14	Big Sean	My Last
15	Lil Wayne	She Will
16	Drake	Headlines
17	Chris Brown	Wet The Bed
18	Trey Songz	Unusual
19	Rihanna	Man Down
20	Mindless Behavior	Mrs. Right

Country

1	Brad Paisley/C.Underwood	Remind Me
2	Jake Owen	Barefoot Blue Jean Night
3	Dierks Bentley	Am I The Only One
4	Kenny Chesney	You And Tequila
5	Rodney Atkins	Take A Back Road
6	Toby Keith	Made In America
7	Keith Urban	Long Hot Summer
8	Lady Antebellum	Just A Kiss
9	Trace Adkins	Just Fishin'
10	Luke Bryan	Country Girl (Shake It For Me)
11	George Strait	Here For A Good Time
12	Blake Shelton	God Gave Me You
13	Eli Young Band	Crazy Girl
14	Billy Currington	Love Done Gone
15	Scotty McCreery	I Love You This Big
16	Taylor Swift	Sparks Fly
17	Thompson Square	I Got You
18	Brantley Gilbert	Country Must Be Country Wide
19	Miranda Lambert	Baggage Claim
20	Jerrod Niemann	One More Drinkin' Song

Rock

1	Sixx A.M.	Lies Of The Beautiful People
2	Theory Of A Deadman	Lowlife
3	Red Hot Chili Peppers	Adventures Of Rain Dance
4	Alter Bridge	Ghost Of Days Gone By
5	Seether	Country Song
6	Kenny Wayne Shepherd	Never Lookin' Back
7	Foo Fighters	Rope
8	Foo Fighters	Walk
9	Staind	Not Again
10	Sick Puppies	Riptide
11	Chickenfoot	Big Foot
12	Avenged Sevenfold	So Far Away
13	3 Doors Down	Every Time You Go
14	Adelitas Way	Sick
15	Seether	Tonight
16	Black Stone Cherry	White Trash Millionaire
17	Puddle Of Mudd	Gimme Shelter
18	Volbeat	Fallen
19	Pop Evil	Monster You Made
20	Crossfade	Killing Me Inside

Adult Contemporary

1	Adele	Rolling In The Deep
2	Bruno Mars	Just The Way You Are
3	Pink	F**kin' Perfect (Perfect)
4	Katy Perry	Firework
5	Jason Aldean	Don't You Wanna Stay
6	Script	For The First Time
7	Band Perry	If I Die Young
8	Train	Marry Me
9	Lady Gaga	The Edge Of Glory
10	Michael Buble	Hold On
11	Onerepublic	Good Life
12	Bruno Mars	Grenade
13	Andy Grammer	Keep Your Head Up
14	Kenny Chesney	Somewhere With You
15	Cee Lo Green	Forget You
16	Train	Save Me, San Francisco
17	Lady Antebellum	Just A Kiss
18	Katy Perry	Last Friday Night
19	Richard Marx	When You Loved Me
20	Bruno Mars	Lazy Song

Alternative

1	Red Hot Chili Peppers	Adventures Of Rain Dance
2	Foo Fighters	Walk
3	Foster The People	Pumped Up Kicks
4	Blink-182	Up All Night
5	Awolnation	Sail
6	Bush	The Sound Of Winter
7	Rise Against	Make It Stop
8	Coldplay	Every Teardrop Is A Waterfall
9	311	Sunset In July
10	Joy Formidable	Whirring
11	Airborne Toxic Event	Changing
12	Sublime With Rome	Panic
13	Death Cab For Cutie	You Are A Tourist
14	Jane's Addiction	Irresistible Force
15	Mumford & Sons	Roll Away Your Stone
16	Cake	Long Time
17	Incubus	Promises, Promises
18	Staind	Not Again
19	Paramore	Monster
20	Young The Giant	Cough Syrup

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