Disc Jockey News

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Q Corner: Where Quality Meets Quantity

By Mike Walter

If you've read this column through the years and especially my recaps after attending a DJ convention you may remember that I have three criteria I use for evaluating any show. So I came up with an acronym that will help you remember these. Since the important elements of a DJ Convention to me are the Seminars, Evening activities and the eXpo floor, my acronym is S.E.X. Pretty easy to remember right?

Having just returned from Atlantic City and DJ Times' International DJ Expo, I'm going to use my new acronym to evaluate the week that was:

Seminars: To me the lifeblood of any DJ Convention (and probably any industry gathering) is the seminars. I've often heard people say that the true learning happens in the conversations in the hallways which sounds to me like someone justifying why they slept through the seminars. Sure networking and sharing ideas one-on-one is a valuable reason to attend a convention, but never forget that most of those conversations are borne from the seeds sown in seminars.

At DJ Times this year there were a few stand out seminars. Vincent Velasquez and his partner in Hurricane Productions Strato Doumanis gave a 90 minute talk on shooting, editing and promoting demo videos. These two are part of the "New Generation" of young Multi-Op owners to whom today's newest technologies comes naturally. They spoke last year about social media announcing their arrival as two guys to know. This year's talk just further confirmed their expertise. Using real examples from their own work and demonstrating great presentation skills (and clearly hours and hours of preparation) I felt their seminar was the best of the week.

Steve Moody's All-Star Secrets Revealed panel which kicked off the week was another highlight. This is the third

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Talkin' Bride: Under The Boardwalk

By Tamara Sims

What does whistling, wood trim and youpinface have in common? They are all important "nuggets" that were shared by the wonderful speakers at the DJ Times Conference in Atlantic City. I was lucky enough to spend time on and off the Boardwalk with friends old and new in our industry and yes, I learned quite a bit!

For those of you who were unable to attend, here is a quick rundown of some of the highlights. I thoroughly enjoyed both seminars by Jake Jacobsen; each targeting 2 different audiences. Jake hit it out of the park on opening day of the conference as part of the All Star M.C. Secrets panel with his "Elegant Pep Rally" presentation (yes I am probably biased since Jake used Jay and I as his wedding couple). He explained how important it is to engage guests early on in the reception even before the introductions by sharing a personal story about the bride and groom and connecting yourself to the couple. His delivery and enthusiasm really drew me in and I cannot wait to share his tips with my staff. Jake closed the conference with his interactive games seminar. My favorite game for corporate events, mitzvahs or holiday parties involved 4 teams trying to slide a ball down multiple pieces of wood trim without dropping the ball. Believe me, as a participant in this game it is much harder than it sounds! First order of business; go

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In The Booth: Taking Care Of #1

By Brian S. Redd

Does this suck?

If you are looking for the pillar of health in the DJ industry, I'm one of the last guys you should consider. I don't always eat my vegetables, I drink lots of Coke, and I suffered a massive stroke in April 2011. Recovery from my stroke has been better than most expected. I've come a very long way, but still have a weak right leg and a dysfunctional right arm.

In May of this year, I had recovered enough to start gigging on my own again. An all-new PA and light show was built to handle both my new physical challenges and the crowd sizes I typically play for. The build process, of course was documented on YouTube.

A lot of people saw these videos and were inspired to lighten up their mobile DJ systems as well. Some of these DJs had health issues such as bad backs, MS and Cerebral Palsy. Others just wanted to avoid hurting themselves with gear that now seemed unnecessarily heavy or maybe they were just getting "up there" and would like to simplify things a bit.

All of this got me thinking about ways we could all take better care of ourselves.

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Rip Off The Rearview Mirror

By Mitch Taylor

Rip off the rearview mirror. Don't look back. Always keep improving.

I got a call from a fellow DJ out of the blue the other day and his statements somewhat surprised me. He said biz had slowed down and he was struggling a bit. He blamed it on himself first saying he hadn't been beating the pavement as much as he had in the past but then upon my suggestion of things he could do to better his situation (after all he did call me, right), the verbal posturing began and suddenly the blame is placed upon the multi-ops who send out $500 DJs, payola in our business and everything else.

Why am I sharing this with you in this space? Because I'm sure that you have been in this same place at one time or another. I know I have.

Look in the mirror. Dead in the eyes. Realize YOU have the power to control your life. We live in the land where dreams are made, during a technological revolution. Stop making excuses and take advantage of the incredible opportunity that lays before you. Seize it. TODAY. Right Now.

Where do you draw your inspiration? I write this coming back from a conference of my peers and being around them inspires me to do great things, better things. What inspires you?

For me, it's my kids. It's the look on a brides face, that genuine smile of knowing from a mother when you put your heart and soul into an event and everything turned out better than they could have imagined. It's the knowledge that I continually need to improve and step up my game because some young buck is coming up behind me somewhere hungry to take over my business and get his cut.

Rip off the rear view mirror. Don't look back. Always keep improving.

If you need help with motivation and things you can do to be better, check out fellow Disc Jockey News columnist and a person that inspires me Mike Walter's latest book "10 Things You Can Do To Have A Better Day." A great read.

I'll let you in on another little secret. You know someone else that inspires me? Go look in the mirror. It's you. You, your passion, desire and drive for this business. Now go out and make someone's day better!

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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year that Mr Moody has organized this seminar. Bringing a half dozen or so veterans together to share some performance tips. Despite one presenters repeated vulgarity (I'm no prude but in my opinion there is no place for that in an public talk and I was embarrassed by the fact that that MC comes from the ranks of Elite Entertainment) this was still a home run of a seminar. If Steve returns with Part Four next year, you should make it a point to be there.

Sonny Ganguly from Wedding Wire (who was brought in as part of the NJDJN sponsored seminar) gave a great talk as well. Social media and mobilizing your sites was his topic but I loved the fact that after making all these points about how the world is changing Mr. Ganguly finished by sharing his sincere hope the we as a society don't lose our ability to have face-to-face conversations. Not long after this I found myself in a face-to-face conversation with Sonny which only brought this point home even clearer. I love social media (some would say to the point of obsession) but I agree that nothing will (or should) ever replace real live human contact.

Joe Bunn's seminar on generating referrals from vendors, Jake Jacobsen's Games seminar and The Mitzvah Massive panel were other standouts of the week. Truly with the exception of one or maybe two seminars, every educational opportunity was worth attending and nuggets were in abundance.

The evening activities are hard for me to evaluate in Atlantic City. I produce the Monday Mobile party and for 11 straight years now the DJ of the Year competition on the final night of the show. So to offer you, dear reader, the most unbiased and honest feedback, I solicited comments from some of my best friends in the business. Steve Moody (a former winner of DJ of the Year and one of the seven judges this year) said, "What amazing energy in the room. The dance floor was packed the entire night ...there was truly a handful of entertainers that pulled out all of the stops and honestly could have placed in the competition. Judging gets harder and harder each year." Jake Jacobsen added, "attendees were treated to spectacular new audience participation dances and a great time. Education and fun mixed to perfection." Marcello commented: "It was a great year to be a judge, I got to sing along to Lee Greenwood, dance to Pitbull, rock out to some dubstep courtesy of Crystal Vargas, watch a masked-Alex bring Michael Jackson back to life then literally light up the stage, send a few text messages to Derek, see Vinnie crowd-surf like a rock star, and best of all... I didn't have to compete against Jack." Marcello means Jack Bermeo who went on to win DJ of the Year for the second consecutive year. No one has ever won three in a row so it'll be interesting to see if Jack comes back in 2013.

As far as the showroom floor, this is the area that DJ Times excels in the most. It's probably because they are the originally publication for our industry (and thus have the best relationships with the manufacturers) or because they get the most DJs to walk the floor (thus pleasing those same manufacturers) but you really can't compare the Expo floor in Atlantic City to any other DJ Show. I've never attended NAMM but it's probably closer to that than any other DJ show is to it. Manufacturers like Denon and Pioneer pull out all the stops, setting up exhibits that are more like mini-night clubs. I walked by the Denon DJs booth at one point and Biz Markie was spinning a set. Actually calling it a booth is wrong too - it was a 20" x 20" open space with about 7 or 8 stations where attendees could play with the latest gear. This year, besides the usual array of lighting and sound reinforcement manufacturers, photo booths were all the rage. To say this add-on has reached the saturation point of our industry is an understatement. There were probably 4 or 5 photo booths on display - of which Kingdom's really stands out.

DJ Times reports that attendance was up 20%, bringing their total to about 6,000 DJs. It's a wonderful thing to see our industry at such a strong level that 6,000 people will make the trek to Atlantic City to learn, network and have a good time. If you don't have concrete plans to attend at least one DJ show in 2013 do yourself a favor right now and book it. Whether it's Las Vegas in February, Atlantic City in August or any of the other high quality shows that dot the calendar throughout the year, you owe it to yourself and your business to be there. And when you do, remember to use S.E.X. to evaluate your experience.

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

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to Home Depot and purchase wood trim!

After hearing Sonny Ganguli from Wedding Wire speak on Social Media, I quickly realized that YouTube gets more traffic than Facebook and Pinterest is not just for "crafters" and "foodies." It is the fastest growing social network and brides are obsessed with it! So, my second order of business upon returning home is to set up a Pinterest account.

As many of you know, running a successful Multi-Op is not easy, so I always look forward to hearing Mike Walter speak and share so much on this topic. Do not be afraid to hire someone new to the industry. Take the time to train your DJs in your style. This creates loyalty and exclusivity and your DJs will see you as "the expert." It also gives you as a business owner the opportunity to inform and inspire your staff. But keep in mind, in order to be the best you can be as a business owner, it is important to take care of yourself physically, mentally and spiritually. Mike covers this topic wonderfully well in his mini book "Ten things You Can Do to have a better day." Whistle while you work…why not? Plan a date night with your significant other…yes please! Sing at the top of your lungs while driving or in the shower…are Broadway showtunes ok Mike? Those are just a few topics covered; Jay and I could not put this book down. It is a MUST for any business owner…so go and buy it right now! Third order of business, re-read Mike Walter's incredible mini-book.

I want to thank all of you who came up to me at the conference and told me how much you enjoyed my monthly column. I love sharing my experiences in this crazy wedding industry with all of you and I was very humbled by your comments. But I was even more excited when my fellow writer and friend Mike Walter's Mom told me that SHE looks forward to reading my articles. I shared this information with Mike and he lovingly said, "it's only because your article is next to mine." Thanks for bringing me back down to earth Mike and for putting yet another smile on my face!

As I finish this article exactly one week after I started writing, I am happy to report that I have accomplished two of the three tasks on my list. I think I will leave it to Jay to go to Home Depot in search of wood trim as I have spent way too much time "pinning," smiling, and planning our next date together!

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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Great By Choice

By Dean C. Carlson

A lot of the top talent in the DJ world would agree with the following statement; readers are leaders. In fact I have preached it here in my column for the last 3 years. I feel that there should be some required reading when it comes to owning and running a DJ company. The truth is that we have to look outside of our industry most of the time for books that can help us achieve stellar success mostly because there are so few books written from inside our industry.

Book I would recommend would be; "Book Yourself Solid" by Michael Port, "Selling the Invisible" by Harry Beckwith, "Leading on Empty" by Wayne Cordeiro, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen Covey, "Guerrilla Marketing" by Jay Levinson, "Top Performer" by Stephan Lundin and Carr Hagerman, "Mastery" by George Leonard, "The Advantage" by Patrick Lencioni, "Purple Cow" by Seth Godin (in fact most of Seth 's books), "Little Gold book of Yes Attitude" by Jeffrey Gitomer (again almost all Gitomer's books)

One book helped me more than any others when managed a multi op and raised the bar higher than it had ever been before at that company, and that was "Good to Great" by Jim Collins. I was introduced to Mr Collins at the Global Leadership Summit conducted at Willow Brook. This is an annual non DJ conference held every August that I would highly recommend to anyone interested in taking the leadership skills to another level. Yes it is church that puts this on, but they draw the biggest and best leaders in the country to speak, this year Condoleezza Rice was one of the many speakers to present.

Also presenting again this year was Jim Collins. In his book "Good to Great" he talked about 11 companies that averaged 4 to 18 times the average market gain for a sustained period of time. Meaning it couldn't just be a fluke. From there he broke down exactly what each of those companies shared that allowed them to achieve that success. Believe me when I say that those steps that work for the big companies work just as well for us smaller companies. Things like why good is the enemy of great or 'who' first then 'what?' Buy the book and read it.

Lucky for us he introduced his new book called "Great by Choice". Needless to say I devoured this book in 5 days and it did not disappoint. "Good to Great" was written in 2001 and as we all know 2009 happened. The good news is that we survived that. But great companies not just survived, they thrived and it was no fluke here either. These 2 books build on each other, along with another book he wrote called "Built to Last"

"Great by Choice" starts with the story of Roald Amundsen and Robert Scott who both wanted to be the first person to make it to the South Pole in 1911. They were very comparable in skill and experience, in fact they left within days of each other. Yet Amundsen made it there and back again while Scott died less than 25 miles away from the finish line.

What does this have to do with business in general or DJing for that matter? Well it turns out that companies that have performed 10x or more better than the market average have a lot of similarities with the skill sets shown by Amundsen and those that are up and down do things common to Scott which can lead to the death of a company.

One such skill set described in the book is called Fanatic Discipline, or the ability of the 20 mile march. Scott would march as far as he could when the weather was great, a lot of times pushing his men to near exhaustion and then he would stop for days at a time when weather was bad. Whereas Amundsen would only go about 20 miles every day, in good and bad weather, in fact he had clear weather when he hit 20-30 miles out of the south pole, also having no idea where Scott was. He decided to stop after 12 because he knew he needed to not only reach his goal, but also make it back.

Collins takes this to the business world with Southwest Airlines. Every year they stick to their guns by expanding just slightly. Even in bad years. As DJs, maybe you're a multi op who is adding systems. Rather than add 5 make it a goal to add 2 each year. Probably the best example of this is equipment. It can be so easy to want all the flashy new stuff, instead of making a game plan for buying gear each year and sticking to it. You could also take this into education, by attending X amount of seminars each year. I have often said never try to fix everything in your performance every year, but pick one or two and work just on those, that is marching 20 miles.

You must gain the Fanatic Disciple to do this in the good year as well as the bad. In "Good to Great" Collins takes about what he calls the hedgehog effect. It takes far more energy to restart a flywheel than it does to keep the wheel moving and gradually picking up speed. These applications probably are far more necessary for a single op than a multi op. One false step can be catastrophic for a single op.

Obviously 1000 words can't completely do justice for a book this good. What is Empirical Creativity and how do you apply Productive Paranoia on top of Level 5 Ambition. Then finally does luck have anything to do with companies that continue to make it big year in and out? The long and short of it is being Great is a Choice, one that anyone can make happen. I would suggest starting with "Good to Great" and then move on to "Great by Choice" I choose to be great. Good Luck and GREAT Shows.

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The Way I See It: Dark Clouds Have A Silver Lining

By Michael J. Lenstra

At the end of this month I will serve as emcee and provide entertainment for a wedding reception. I booked this reception (along with several others) from guests of an earlier reception I had done. That's not all that unusual, getting new business after being seen at an earlier gig. However, the circumstances of the original wedding reception were quite unusual.

That day started like most other days when I have a wedding reception scheduled. I set up earlier in the day, arrived back at the hall 30 minutes before my scheduled time, and ran through my checklist. As the guests started to arrive, I began to play some toe-tapping background music to build some energy in the room. About 30 minutes into the reception, someone popped in to tell me that the wedding party had arrived. So, I announced their arrival to the guests, put on a nice long song to buy some time, and went out to greet the couple and get prepped for their introductions. Once out in the hallway, however, I saw a couple of wedding party members, but no bride and groom. They told me the newlyweds were checking into their hotel room and would be arriving shortly. When I stepped back into the banquet room, I found several guests with their cameras ready, eagerly awaiting the couple's arrival. I announced that Tanya and Wayne were still taking care of some business and would be joining us shortly. From time to time in the next few minutes I'd check the hall, hoping for the bride and groom to appear, but they failed to show. By this time, the guests with cameras had returned to their seats. Finally, I checked the hallway again and noticed a commotion taking place by the men's restroom. I made my way there to see what was going on and discovered a few of the groomsmen, the bride, and her mother all gathered in the men's restroom with the groom sprawled out on the floor. Apparently, he had had a bit too much to drink and had gotten sick. I returned to the banquet room and let the guests know that the groom was feeling ill and we were getting him some attention. By this time, though, word about what was happening was spreading through the reception crowd. Moments later, someone summoned the groom's uncle, a paramedic, for help.

"Get this guy to a hospital," I was told he said. "He has alcohol poisoning."

I learned later that the wedding party, in their quest to celebrate the moment, hopped from bar to bar before making their way from the ceremony to the reception and the groomsmen kept buying the groom shots—even though he was obviously not a seasoned drinker. One of the last times we saw Wayne on his wedding day he was being carted away on a stretcher.

At this point, the story took an unexpected turn. The families decided to go ahead with dinner, and I think we all anticipated that the reception would come to a quiet close after that. Even so, I continued my usual routine and began ramping up the music a bit as people finished their dessert. To my surprise, two young ladies came to the floor and began to dance. A song or two later, a few others joined them. I caught up with the first two dancers and asked them if they had any suggestions of what types of music might work, given the circumstances. They told me that Tanya and a large group of her friends went country line dancing every Wednesday night (funny that never came up at the consultation), so I had something to start with. After just a song or two, the dance floor was packed! Then someone received a phone call: The groom was going to be OK, and the bride, not wanting to disappoint her guests, was on her way back. When she arrived, we were ready for her. As she came through the door I announced, "Ladies and gentlemen, the bride is in the house!" and went right into "I Knew the Bride When She Used to Rock and Roll" and my two lovely assistants from earlier pulled her onto the dance floor, and the party was on.

We did the father/daughter dance and the dollar dance. At one point, a pair of her bridesmaids stepped in for her missing groom by pulling her onto the floor, placing her into a chair, ripping off her garter, and throwing it. We followed that with the bouquet toss. With only an hour or so left in the reception, the groom reappeared. He came just inside the door and waved to everyone, just to let them know that he was okay. He then disappeared down the hall and the bride followed him. Things began to wind down after that, but the minister who had performed the ceremony and several others approached me to tell me what an unbelievable job I had done and that they could not believe how well things had turned out.

But I knew the reception's success was not only because of me. I searched out the first two women who started dancing and asked them to step out into the hallway.

"You two," I told them, "are as responsible as anyone to turn what could have been a tragic day into a terrific one. Go to sleep tonight knowing you are good people!"

With tears in their eyes, they said they had to do it for Tanya. Within days, the phone started ringing from other guests at their wedding who were planning an event and wanted to meet with me. One of those is the wedding I'm doing later this month.

I learned (or was reminded of) a few lessons that day. One was that Yogi Berra must have been right: It ain't over til it's over. Never quit looking for that spark that will ignite a fire. Another is that success often comes with the help of others. Don't be afraid to depend on that.

And I guess there is a third, and that is I guess it's true, a wedding day is the brides day. Who needs a groom to make it fun and memorable?

Mike Lenstra is the owner of Alexxus Entertainment and a full time DJ/Entertainer in Dubuque, IA. He can be reached at mikelenstra@discjockeynews.com

Brian Redd continued from page 1

There are those who may tell some of us about drastic life changes we should make, but I'm not here to preach. These are just some simple tips that could help make life on the road a little easier for us.

For me, doing anything I can to reduce fatigue is a must. Simple things like loading up gear in my truck the night before a show really helps. On days I gig, I won't run errands or anything else pre-show besides rest up until it's time to get cleaned up and hit the road.

Standing behind that booth for hours on end can be very hard on our bodies. Good quality shoes can make a huge difference. My pal Jay Brannan swears by Doc Martians. I've had great luck with Clarks myself, although these days, for safety reasons, I'm sporting some smart black-on-black leather New Balance.

Everyone loves a good buffet, and some of us may get invited to feast at the events we play. What we should be mindful of is overeating. If you are like me, too much feasting can put you in a "food coma" and get you ready for a nice long nap. This is great on Christmas or Thanksgiving, but not ideal when we're behind the decks. Personally, I'm much more alert when I have a smaller reasonable meal either before or at the event.

Most DJs don't have the liberty to call in sick, so anything we can do to avoid getting ill benefits not only us, but our clients as well. Some of us will end up gigging no matter what's wrong with us. Sure, we can pull it off, but not as well as we could have without the flu.

My personal mic is a vintage Sennheiser MD-431 and is off limits to guests. I would really hate to see it get all jacked-up if someone were to drop it and dent the windscreen or pop the capsule. However, the main reason I don't share a mic is because it can be a very real health threat. Who knows what cold or flu the wedding party may have. With all the hand and mouth exposure they get, microphones can spread germs like a community toothbrush. My clients use a "Guest Mic" which I try to clean weekly.

If you have some helpful tips you would like to share, shoot me an email and I'll post them on my Facebook page to share with the community. In the mean time, don't overdo it, get plenty of rest, and stay healthy!

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

From The Other Side: Work Smarter, Not Harder

By Jake Palmer

We all want to make the most out of our business, whether you DJ on the side or this is your full time profession. The question is (and always has been) how do we get the most out of everything we do? Sure we want to book as many shows as possible, staying busy is a sure way to improve your income, but at some point we need to find a way to make more from each show, not just do more of them, "work smarter, not harder."

How? That has been the question since the beginning of time. I am pretty sure cave men used to sit around a fire trying to come up with ideas to get more woolly mammoths. I always think of this as two separate areas. The business side and the performance side, I don't care how good you are, if no one sees you, and if you do get the business, you need to bring the goods.

When it comes to prioritizing your business and staying on top of your game, I think discipline is important. Discipline is what keeps you focused on your goals and on task. We all have passion, that's why we love this business and want to be better. I think its safe to say that if you didn't have passion you wouldn't be reading DJN. You also need to be dedicated to making yourself better; it's not something that happens automatically or even easily. Start my prioritizing your tasks and efforts so you are doing the important things first. It goes without saying, but you should always be on top of your marketing and promotion. People need to know you exist and how to book your services.

Another great organization tool is to measure and manage, if you have ever heard Rick Brewer talk, this is one of his essential business strategies to being successful. You can't manage what you can't measure. More importantly, by implementing these things into your business day, you will be taking a more serious and professional approach to your business and be able to get more business just by "tweaking" and improving a few of these things. Pick one or two at a time and implement them into your daily business routine.

Now, you're booking more shows, it's important to find the happy medium between enough work and too much work. It's great to stay busy, but not so busy that you start to sacrifice other parts of your business or personal life. This is why I like the idea of optimizing the shows you are booking. Try to get more out of each show you do, rather than just blindly book more of them. You might consider some add-ons to your business, maybe simple performance things that allow you to offer more "entertainment value" therefore you will be able to justify charging a better rate, things like the Love Story, personalized introductions, or dinner time activities that set you apart from other DJs in your area, and add value. There are other products/add-ons you can do as well, a couple I have added in the last 2 years that have been very successful, are a memory book and officiant services. This allows me to make more from shows I have already booked, with a small amount of extra effort on my part, most of the extra effort comes before or after the event, writing the ceremony or putting together the memory book album.

I also added karaoke a couple years ago, while I do NOT recommend this at a wedding, it does allow me to stay busy with off-night business, I am currently play two regular weekly karaoke shows, every Tuesday and Thursday night, this is bonus work that requires minimal effort, yet help in other areas such as marketing, promotion, ect.

Other great ideas would be things like up-lighting, photo booth, or even decorating, planning, or photo packages are all ways to increase your revenue. I am finding more and more brides like the ideas of working with fewer people, one contact person for the ceremony, the MC, and the dance makes everyone's life easier. These are just some ideas of mine; I'm sure you have some of your own, most importantly, do what works for you and have an identity, and ha

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

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Proof That Perception Is Reality

By Ron Ruth

On an evening late in July, 2012, Brett Cohen, a 21 year old college student in New York City, pulled off one of the most incredible pranks ever, fooling hundreds, if not thousands, of people in the middle of Times Square.

As a part of a social experiment, Brett always wondered how it would feel to be a celebrity for just one day. So, he dressed as a celebrity might dress, gave his personal appearance a makeover and shopped Craig's List for an entourage that included assistants, body guards, individuals with cameras to act as paparazzi and a video camera crew to follow him around the busy streets of the Big Apple. According to a description of event on The World Talk Live, YouTube page, "While the assistants and photographers waited for Brett to exit the 49th street marquee at NBC Studios, they started a buzz that a "big star" was about to walk out, thus making it worth their (onlookers) while to wait and get a picture. Many asked the crew who Brett was, and no answer was given. They were forced to either make something up, or just take a picture with him in hopes that their Facebook friends or Twitter followers might have a better idea."

While watching the video you'll see that the crowds around Brett start out small, but as he continues to walk about, they grow far larger as does the level of excitement. Many of the so-called "fans" of Brett's push to have their photo taken with him or to get his autograph. Some enthusiastically rave about the roles he's played in the movies while others can't wait to share how much they enjoyed listening to his latest hit single. Although, when asked, most could not pinpoint exactly which movie they saw him in or what song they remembered him performing. How could they? His entire persona had been faked.

In the end, Brett had his photo taken an estimated 300 times with strangers. In a quote to the New York Daily News, Cohen said "The idea was, 'I bet if we walked through with bodyguards and photographers, people would go nuts.' And that's exactly what happened."

"I got a taste of fame, and it was good, but it's not something I would want as part of my everyday life," he told the Daily News. Although, updates to this story indicate that his prank may pay off for him, personally, in a big way. In August, Brett Cohen's YouTube video on The World Talk Live channel has received over 3 million views. And, in an interview with Patch.com, Cohen says that the daytime shows that start during the week of September 10th are competing to have him for their season premiers.

"As much as I'd love to do all of the shows, it has to be exclusive to one," Cohen said. "I have to make a decision and tell these other shows that I can't do them." Some producers have also contacted him with an interest for possible projects.

So what did this prank prove? That people just love a celebrity even if they don't know why he's famous. And, at least some people are extremely gullible and overly trusting. Brett Cohen's experiment could be considered deceitful, but was it fraudulent? According to the Webster Dictionary, the answer is "no." Why? Because he wasn't out to use "intentional perversion of truth in order to induce another to part with something of value or to surrender a legal right." In other words, he wasn't asking his hordes of "fans" to give him money to help finance his next big bogus movie or album. At most, his night on the town in NYC may have cost someone their dignity and, perhaps, caused a little embarrassment when it was discovered that he wasn't famous at all.

But, above all, Brett Cohen's' prank also unmistakably proves that perception is reality.

With that in mind, last week I was included in an email blast promoting a sponsored contest. The contest invites DJs to enter to win videos that can be used on their website and Facebook page as a form of marketing to brides and grooms. The company offers two different categories of videos for DJ use.

The first category is video clips aimed at a social media market for DJs with a tag line of "Quick, affordable commercials for websites and Facebook." For a mere $125, DJs can purchase video footage of a rockin' wedding reception, complete with a full dance floor and a bride and groom having the time of their lives with family and friends. And, here's the best part, the footage implies that the DJ company named in the floating caption throughout the video and in the end title was responsible for all the fun, even though that DJ company wasn't there at all. But, who's to know? The camera never captures the DJ in action. There are no less than nine videos available, each 75-100 seconds long. At least one of the videos includes the voice of a "bride" at the end saying "It was so perfect." Perfect is right! Now, even the least experienced and incompetent DJ can be perceived as the most awesome DJ ever.

But wait! There's more! For a small investment of $425, DJs can buy into the second video category which are more commercials. These videos also run about 75-100 seconds long but what makes them so appealing and unique is that the commercials are actually fake testimonials. That's right. I said "FAKE TESTIMONIALS." How cool is that?

The email I received offered four examples. Three videos show brides talking about how wonderful their DJ was, without using his or her name, of course. That would have been difficult for them to do, especially since the video testimonials are FAKE, PHONY & A SHAM! But DJs need not fear anyone finding out. All videos are territory protected. Imagine the embarrassment of two or more DJ companies proudly displaying the same testimonial from the same bride in the same market! As it is with the clips aimed toward social media, the DJ company who buys into these videos is also perceived as the company that delivered the service. Their company name floats over the video and is included in the end title with contact information. The fourth example is of a mother and daughter talking about the merits of the DJ they contracted. But, again, no actual verbal mention of a company or DJ name.

The selling points for these videos are:

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Ron Ruth Continued from page 6

"Convert more bridal prospects. Book more weddings. Increase sales! A bride-to-be decides to visit your website. The clock is ticking. You've got to grab her attention fast and not let go. The booking depends on it. You need to stop her in her tracks right away..."

And what really caught my attention was this statement, "Brides will be impressed with your company because they tap into her dreams. They build confidence in you." This company gets it! Perception is reality. DJs who display these videos can and will be perceived by naïve and overly trusting brides and grooms as being something other than what they really are…deceitful.

As you might detect, I find these videos offensive. We as an industry have come a very long way in changing public perception as to what we do and the value of our services. Unlike Brett Cohen walking around the streets of NYC pretending to be a celebrity, when a DJ purchases and displays these videos on his or her website, they aren't "pranking" anyone. They're falsely representing themselves in an effort to get someone to part with their money in exchange for services. That's fraudulent. I guess they could get around the fraud charge by displaying a disclaimer next to the video that reads, "The individual portrayed in this video is a paid spokesperson and not a former client of ABC DJ Company." More likely, however, you can bet that the verbiage next to these videos will read "See What Our Brides Say!"

This form of marketing has no place in our industry. The company claims that these videos will "build confidence in you." How confident will a couple be when they've invested in a DJ service to discover that they've been lied to?

These videos are not a part of some crazy social experiment to find out just how gullible people can be. They convey a trust that has not been earned. They prey on individuals who are far too trusting and who look at these testimonial and party videos as FACT. And, why not? Do we not tell clients to research testimonials as a part of the selection process? What do we suggest they do when they discover that testimonials can no longer be trusted? Where do we point them next to get credible information? Craig's list?

Getting caught in this type of deception is not just bad news for the DJ Company involved, it affects us all. It perpetuates the myth that DJs and wedding professionals over promise and under deliver. And, that perception will produce a lack of confidence vote that will resonate throughout our industry. Just think how long it has taken for us as an industry to change the perception that all we do is play music. How long do you think it would take to crush the added perception that DJs can't be trusted? Unlike it was at the end of Brett Cohen's prank, no one will be laughing about being duped. No one will be rewarded for pulling off a clever ruse. There is no happy ending to malicious deception.

Here's a thought. If you want video of a fun wedding reception, take a video camera with you to your next event. The quality of the recording may not be the best, but at least it will be authentic footage. If you want video testimonials to put on your website and Facebook page, do something that will "Wow!" a bride and groom and then ask them if you can record them raving about how great you really are. Your videos may not be Academy Award material but at least the visual information will be HONEST!

Perception is reality as Brett Cohen proved with his celebrity for a day experiment. When I posted the videos described above on Facebook last week, I was astounded at how little criticism and outrage DJs had for this deceitful form of marketing. The silence was deafening. I'm hugely disappointed in the muted response from an industry that I respect. I'm now of the belief that DJs only care about an industry related issue if it affects them personally. There's no need to stand collectively and denounce this marketing practice. We can wear blinders and let others dictate our destiny as an industry. It's OK to perceive that everything is fine in our little world. After all, PERCEPTION IS REALITY!

Ron Ruth is the owner of Ron Ruth Wedding Entertainment in Kansas City, a WED Guild™ member and a self-professed "Disney Geek." Ron can be reached at 816-224-4487 or via email at ronruth@discjockeynews.com.

Behind The Mic: The Sword!

By Dave Winsor

So, what makes you want to be "Behind the Mic"? Actually, there's so much more to that than just a place to stand, right? You're behind the mic because you want attention and I assume the attention you want is positive?!

So, what made you make the decision to be an "entertainer"?

en·ter·tain·er/ˌentərˈtānər/

Noun: A person, such as a singer, dancer, or comedian, whose job is to entertain others. Synonyms: host

Actually, there's so much more to that than talking into the mic and trying to be witty. Isn't there?

Well then, what made you want to become a DJ? Is it simply because you have the spotlight on you? That light is great because it bathes our egos. It can also "burn" the ego too. There is nothing like being up in front of a group of people and they are all looking at you because you say something like: "Hi, my name is Dave and I'm here today with all of you to help Eric and Denise celebrate their decision to get married!" No response. Hear the crickets chirping? Ugh. At this very moment, you will establish your rapport with that audience. You will define your participation. Squirming yet?

Ooh, ooh, pick me! (I'm raising my own hand here!!!) We need the positive feedback and it's so amazing when we get it. Isn't it? There is nothing like the hug from a client for a job well done. Right? What?! You're not getting any? I wonder why? Maybe we can figure it out.

This business demands that we have a strong spine and an iron will. It also demands that we be flexible and understanding. It's a conundrum. If a client is happy with your performance, you'll get glowing feedback. While that's nice, it's not the best teaching moment. The real teaching moments are those where you feel REALLY uncomfortable with what the client is telling you. You may feel so uncomfortable that you strike out at them verbally and build a brick wall of defense around you. You know what? That's the worst thing you can do.

I'm not saying that when a client is not happy with your performance that it's all your fault, but you do own some of it. The question is "How much?" We are given plenty of rope. The only question is how much to you need to really do a good job hanging yourself. Does the mic give you permission to be anything other than a good businessman? Does the mic give you the power to abuse people because they don't agree with you? What power does the mic give you?

Think back to the very first time you used this awesome power. Chances are you were just ok with your first attempt at getting the message out. One of the things that still gives me butterflies to this day, my initial contact with an audience in a intimate setting. Saying hello to 50-thousand people at a concert is easy compared to talking with 80 people. Agree? So, you are a DJ and you have a microphone. How cool is that?

It's an awesome responsibility. Not everyone can use it. Most people will run away from you when you ask them a question with a mic in your hand. Ask that same question without the mic, they most likely will spend some time talking with you. That is a pretty big difference.

What do you think the audience is thinking about you as they watch you speak to them? There may be a THOUSAND different thoughts flying around: "Oh no, a wedding DJ", "His shirt is wrinkled", "He's slouching", "Wow, he's fat!" Well the good news is you'll never hear any of those thoughts. They may never have been created, but you most likely did think of a few. The best advice I've ever heard about speaking in public?

"Never mind what people think about you, because they DON'T"

That doesn't mean don't care about what they think, just don't try to think for them. I don't know about you, but I have enough trouble thinking for myself.

The microphone, it wields a lot of power. A verbal sword if you will. Don't abuse it.

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

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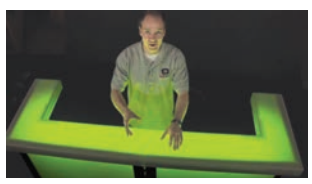

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Connections: With Your Music Library

By Steve Moody

As we started to expand our company, one of my favorite roles has become training new entertainers. Thank you Mike Walter. In training our newest recruits, I've found that there are many scenarios that I am able to share with them from my own personal experiences. I can give them direction on vocal inflection as they practice on the microphone, help them with their beat mixing and matching skills and so much more. I LOVE it! Just like a Proud Pappa, I am 100% over the moon when their "Five Star Reviews" come in from WeddingWire. This being said, one of my biggest challenges is completely educating them on their music.

Familiarity with music that they generally listen to (on their own free time) just doesn't cut it. It's like practicing something that you are already good at. Covering those other bases is the challenge. Heck, it's a challenge for me. Since the kids have been born, it seems that all I listen to in the car is Barney and DoodleBops! In all honesty, I have to schedule time in my day (well in advance) to sit down and listen to new music. The reality is that, if I didn't schedule time to do it, I would not be able to tell you the difference between Carly Rae Jepsen and Billy Ray Cyrus.

For fresh DJs coming in, learning new (unfamiliar) music is certainly one of their toughest challenges. Yes, I give them an orientation of music history… explaining the progression while delving into different genres. That being said, in order for them to really "get it" they'll have to spend more time on their own. It requires them to listen to the songs over and over on their iPods. These guys really have to have a passion for music in order to make it further in our company. Who wants to listen to stuff you can't stand…on your personal time?

As we mostly perform at wedding receptions, there are certain songs that the team just has to know. In addition to all of today's hits, they need to be familiar with those classic requests as well. I've found that a great introduction to the majority of those songs can be found right out of DJ Intelligence's list of the top 200 songs of the year. This is such a great starting point for our newbies. You see, I always just took it for granted that folks knew all of these names and artists of popular songs. I was totally in shock to find that I was wrong.

My first goal music-wise has been to get our team members to learn these top 200 songs inside and out. How they start, how they end, what the rhythm and percussion sounds like… so that they know where to fit them into the night if they are requested. And this is just the start. It's like my son just learning the letters of the alphabet. It is fundamental. I am hoping that by the first of the year it will be easy to give them all a quiz and have them pass with flying colors. In fact, we are currently in the process of putting tons of play lists together for the team with dozens of songs in each category. It's my hope that they will begin to know them inside and out as well.

When I first started my company back in 1989, I created so many lists for myself. It was more help for this kid than you can ever imagine. The time has come to do it up right and stick it in our training manual. Shame on me for waiting two years into this expansion process.

Most younger members of our crew are pretty good with music from the year 2000 and on …but here's what their quiz is going to look like:

Without looking….name 10 "up-beat danceable songs" in each of the following categories: Big Band Swing, 1950's Doo Wop and Rock N Roll, 1960s Rock & Motown, 1970s Classic Rock, Southern Rock, Disco and R&B, 1980s Rock & Pop, 1990's Rock, Pop, and Hip Hop / Rap, Current Country, Classic Country

I know that there are many other categories to choose from but this should be a great start for them. Were you able to name 10 in each category (slow songs don't count…ha ha ha)?

Once this portion of our training is complete I would like to get a little deeper into things. Due to the popularity of "Dancing With The Stars" over the past few years, more and more couples are asking us to play ballroom type dances at their receptions. In fact, many of our brides have choreographed something either to their first dance or a parents dance. As we are seeing so much of this, I really feel like the rest of the team needs to be educated on these styles of dances as well.

Years ago when I did my first "gig" for a local ballroom dancing group I spent hours and hours on-line gathering playlists for Foxtrot, Cha Cha, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing, Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Rhumba, Quick Step, Mambo, Polka and so many others. How far do we go? We never want to stop learning right?

Wouldn't it be wonderful for newbies to understand what Pop Pop is talking about when he comes up and asks for a "medium tempo Rhumba". You know we'd surprise the heck out of him if we threw one on the very next song. LOL Some of us would know exactly what to play while others would have to pull out their smart phones and hit Google. Regardless, most all of us have room for improvement in this area.

Okay, I'm not sure if it was a national experience or not…. but regionally we went through a period of the "same old same old" for such a long time. From the mid 90s until just a few years ago, it seemed like every wedding would ask for the same old songs over and over. You know exactly which songs I am talking about. However, in these past few years, I have played a bigger variety of music than I have ever played in my whole career. Old Time Rock & Roll, Love Shack and the Twist just don't cut it at most parties anymore. I'm not saying that they don't get played, just that we can't depend on them the way we did before.

The music industry is always evolving and we are finally coming back to songs that are accessible to multiple generations of party guests. When we

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Promotions: FOOTBALL SEASON

By Jason Jones

After working all summer, isn't it great that we can get back to school? And back to school only means one thing and that's fall. And fall only means one thing and that's football.

There are a lot of fun ways to tie into football even if your venue isn't a sports bar.

A really fun game to start a night of music and dancing is Table top football just like you played in the lunch room. This is something you can either improv with a couple of tables and a few table tents or you can go so far as to make your own green complete with goal posts for guests to launch their paper triangles.

With a few fun prizes this simple game can run the whole season. You can either have people sign up and bracket the contest or let everyone play and do a drawing for a prize from everyone who made it between the goal posts. It depends on how competitive your crowd is as to what they will respond to the best.

If they are competitive you can spice it up by having the football be odd objects like a Doritos corn chip. With the chip they not only have to make the goal but also keep the chip in tact.

Involving everyone is the bar has a lot to do with staging. If you can place your football action in the center of the room and light it up that will help to draw in spectators. And you can do your best Madden impression on the mic with those who are playing. Be sure all your jokes are about sports teams, players etc and not about the person playing. If you have a relationship with the crowd at your venue you will know far you can go with teasing different people.

As a performer, a game like this to start off your night can do a lot of great things. First you attract the interest of the audience and bring their focus to something fun you have going on. Second it gets them playing along with you so if you want to do an activity later in the night they will likely be game since you created a safe environment early and they've probably enjoyed a little liquid courage.

Jason Jones will be presenting the Entertainment Experience Power to Create and Art of the Audio Edit with Bill Hermann at the ADJA Las Vegas DJ show on September 12 and 13, 2012. Reserve your seats at www.billcreates.com.

Jason Jones is a producer, speaker, author and DJ who lives in Saint Paul, MN with his wife Kelly, son Max and a couple of cats and dogs.

You can reach jason at: jasonjones@discjockeynews.com.

Moody Continued From Page 9

play songs like Party Rock Anthem, there are so many different age groups out on the dance floor. Older adults are hearing the songs in other forms of media if they aren't hearing them on the radio. Popular songs of today are hitting tv commercials, referenced in movies, television shows and on and on more so than ever before. You will see ages 3 to 95 dancing to "I Gotta Feeling". The song is great tempo 128 – 132 beats per minute for all generations to be able to jump around to. The lyrics are relatable and best yet, older people can understand what is being sung. Being more pop sounding than rap or hip hop… even Grandma and Grandpa will stand around the dance floor clapping their hands with a smile. There are so many more current songs that have this type of feel to it. Again, more so than years in recent memory.

True Story - I can remember a time when I swore up and down that I didn't care for country music, and now it's really hard to know "what is what" in some cases. Artists cross over like crazy. Love songs from Rascal Flatts, Taylor Swift and so many other are now played on many different radio formats. Because of artists and songs crossing formats, these artists have been introduced to a greater listening audience than ever before. I can't tell you how many times a bride will write on her planning form "We Hate Country…Please Don't Play Country"… But then you look at the rest of the form and they are doing their first dance to "Bless the Broken Road" by Rascal Flatts or a Parent's Dance to "I Hope You Dance" by Lee Ann Womack, or even their cake cutting to Blake Shelton's "Honey Bee".

I really believe that truly "knowing our music" is now more important than ever… and certainly more challenging. Though familiarizing ourselves with so many different genres of music is challenging, I think that our team is totally headed in the right direction with our training. Nothing makes me happier than performing at an event with one of the new guys and hearing them 'get it right". When someone has only ever listened to R&B and Hip Hop…. and I ask them what we should play next during the cocktail hour, I have every right to cross my fingers. However when they come back with "How's about that song Summer Wind from that Frank guy" I know that we are on the path to success. Sinatra Dude, Sinatra.

A quick plug before I go: Many of you know that due to a scheduling conflict with the DJ Expo in Atlantic City, I was asked to step down from presenting one of my seminars entitled "Soaring To The Top Of The Preferred Vendors List"…well thanks to the folks at the New Jersey Disc Jockey Network I am going to have an opportunity to share it during their monthly meeting held on September 11th at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Edison, NJ , 7pm.. If you are within driving distance I would love for you to come out. I promise to deliver on this one! I have nothing to tease you with in order to sell merchandise. You are just gonna get all of the meat. No Fluff!

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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Is Your Experience Entertaining?

By Jeremy Brech

Now by reading the title you might be thinking about your experience. You might be thinking that the amount of events that you have done is building your experience. In a way yes that is true but there is one recommendation that I would make to you to give your events the ultimate experience.

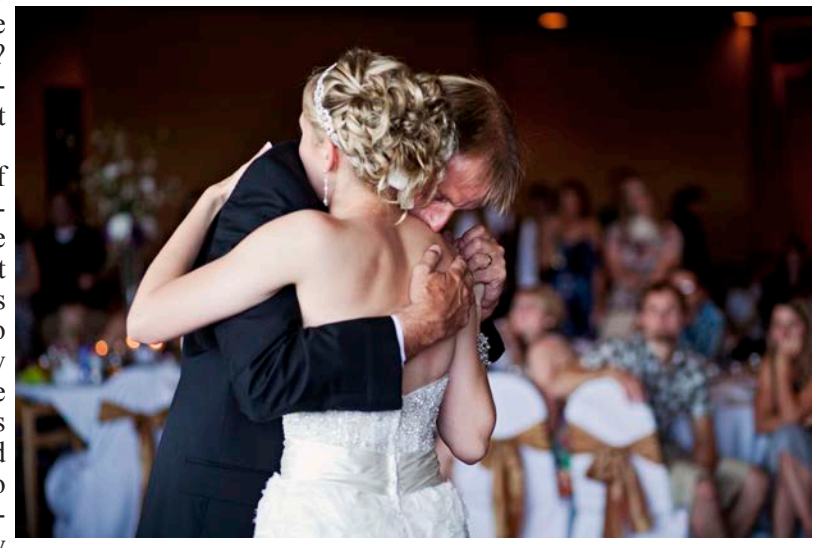
Workshops. Yes believe it or not you probably wouldn't know how to do math is someone never taught you how to do it. There are many great workshops available provided by some of the best in the industry. One of the workshops that was well worth my investment and the one that I have taken twice is the Entertainment Experience. I will explain how this workshop transformed my company along with performances.

If you are unfamiliar with the Entertainment Experience, I would recommend getting to know the content and the presenters of this workshop. Bill Hermann and Jason Jones started this workshop over a year and a half ago and any alumni can tell you it is an amazing workshop. Every single event we do is different and that is why the Entertainment Experience is the perfect workshop for any entertainer at any level. There are 5 steps that you learn in the main course of this workshop. These steps include transition, staging, story, performance and set up to ensure success. The other elements that they have added have been extremely valuable in what I do for my clients as well. I want to touch base on a couple of these things just to give you a little teaser of this workshop.

1. Transitions have allowed me as a Master of Ceremonies to keep the attention of my guests. Great transitions show you're the expert and that you truly put effort into the success of their event. This allows you to gain the respect of the guests so that way you don't have to yell over them when trying to make an announcement. The control you have over the room is a huge part of the overall success of your event. Whenever I open up the mic, the guests know that I have something important for them to know. So how do you create great transitions? Take the Entertainment Experience.

2. Staging has been one of the most important aspects for me not just as an entertainer but as a lighting designer. Staging is all about placement which allows you to have successful transitions. There are many aspects to keep in mind on when it comes to staging. One thing you might want to do is sit down with your local photographers and ask to see some pictures of a cake cutting or maybe a head table. Did you create good staging for that moment that YOU created? The workshop will help you catch some of these things before they happen. Making those pictures look amazing, and making you look like a rock star to the photographer.

As a lighting designer we use staging all the time to make sure the placement has a purpose. If the lighting doesn't have a purpose then why are you putting it there? Is it because they purchased 20 up-lights and you have to use them up somehow or somewhere? Staging is truly important when it comes to your events. How do you create great staging? Take the Entertainment Experience.



3. One of the newer sections of the Entertainment Experience is Art of Audio Edit. This new addition to the workshops has created tools for me to provide something for my clients that have truly been remarkable. I can't explain the value of section of the workshop but the story in the conclusion from one of my brides will help draw the picture for you. Again, this workshop is so powerful that your guests will be talking about your events for a long time.

The Entertainment Experience was the workshop that brought me to reality. The workshop showed me the reality that I don't know everything. So how do you take these tools and create a successful event every week. That is exactly what this workshop is about. It is about understanding the elements you have to work with and create a new event each week. Here is the email that I received from one of my brides a couple of days after her wedding.

Jeremy --

I cannot thank you enough for all your (and Matts) help. You both made my wedding day the day of my dreams!! It was everything I ever wanted and more! I am still hearing comments from people on my reception and my beautiful columns and monograms and patterns..... just everything! So hopefully you are prepared, because I have referred about five people your way already that are getting married next year :)

Also, words cannot express my gratitude for all your hard work with the voiceover. My dad said he kept it together until that started :) it meant the world to him and to me!!! Everyone said it made them cry.. so it was PERFECT :) I was wondering if I would get a cou-

Brech continued on page 15

The Referral Coach

By Matt Anderson

Putting Your Time Where Your Strengths Are

How much time have you spent getting really clear about what you do best? And what have you done to free up more time so you can focus on doing these things? These are fairly meaty questions but ones that are going to help you enjoy your life more and get better results.

In the past I could see the value intellectually in knowing what I was best at. I think I made the mistake of assuming it was pretty obvious. I've taken a couple of strengths 'assessments' which shed a bit more light for me although never as much as I'd hoped (because that requires effort!).

But (until recently) I've never really thought HARD about it. I've never asked other people for their feedback on what they thought I was particularly good at. I've never written down a list of my best habits. I've never thought it through to the point where I could say: 'This is the thing I do best, I've always gravitated to doing this and it's almost so obvious, I didn't realize how fundamental it is to what I love most.'

We've just enjoyed the Olympics where almost everyone specialises on what they do best. We didn't see Usain Bolt boxing or jumping off a diving board. We didn't see gymnast Gabby Douglas horse riding or kayaking. So why do most of us multi-task and jack-of-all-trades ourselves through the day and expect great results?

I urge you to identify what you do best before autumn comes along, before you get crazy busy again, and before you blink and it's Christmas. The book that's guided me this time around is Catherine Nomura's Unique Ability. The other books I've read on this topic fall short in at least one area. Most fail to help you practically apply what you're good at and few walk you through how to spend less time on the things that are not a good use of your time!

What excites me is knowing that my next mission is to delegate out even more of what consumes my time. The goal is to spend ever less time on things I'm not especially good at and don't particularly like and continue to increase my time on what I currently think is my greatest strength: learning and growing and then sharing this information in an engaging way so I can help others fulfill their potential.

My wife and I have been having quite a bit of fun with this. She hired someone to start running many of our errands that – especially living in a big city – can easily suck up half a day. It's not that expensive and it really helps us think more carefully about what matters.

The old fashioned way to do things was to hire staff. Now you can outsource only what you need done. You can do it in baby steps to make it more affordable. If you hire a virtual assistant, it's like hiring a web designer, printer or an accountant. You only ask them to do the tasks you want. They are not dependent on you providing the same number of hours week in and week out.

Time is all you have. What are you waiting for?

Matt Anderson is the author of 'Fearless Referrals' at www.fearless-referrals.com. Matt can be reached at: http://www.thereferralauthority.com

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The Zilla Myth

By Bill Hermann

The other day my truck broke down. It was towed to the local mechanic and I waited for over 3 hours while "The Best Mechanic in Town" looked it over. Afterwards he came out to tell me that the grafticnical srootnifl had broken off the housing of the heckin snagglefrot and if I didn't want it to damage the noopel quafnet hentatsmod I should leave it with him over night so he could run a fritzencrackle test. I stood there … aghast … not knowing what to say or worse yet how much it was going to cost. I knew nothing about cars and he could have been speaking 17th century Mandarin for all I knew.

"Well, can't you just replace the grafticnical srootnifl?" I asked trying to sound informed?

"What!? Are you nuts? He said. That's just stupid … what kind of mechanic do you think I am?"

"Well, are you sure it costs that much? I said. Maybe I should look around? Would a used part be cheaper??

"Come on. He rolled his eyes. This is simple. Do you want me to do this or are you just gonna let it get worse?"

So I began to ask more questions to try to wrap my head around it but, the more I asked the more irritated he got, making me feel dumber and smaller. Making me feel that I was wasting his time with all these stupid questions when all I had to do was to trust that he knew his business better than I did and I should just shut up so he could just do his job. It made me angry and I felt helpless … I did as I was directed and paid him to feel this way and ever since I have told everyone I have come across about Bob's Auto Repair (not the real name).

Was I wrong to question this person … this service provider that I was trusting my only form of transportation to … this Bully in overalls? NO!? Should I have to be as versed in the language of auto mechanics and his costs of doing business before I dare question the way he does his job? NO!? Should I not be bothering him with what he might see as minor details that his peers would never question him about? NO!?

Then why do WE regularly treat brides like this. Brides who have never planned a party, never DJ'd an event, never gotten married. Why do we treat them like they are insulting our profession, intelligence or business by asking questions or trying to get discounts? Why would we make them feel small for worrying about their once in a lifetime event. An event that they only get one shot at with no do-over while they are bombarded by hundreds of people (including their family) that tell them they are doing it wrong without taking into consideration that they have never done this before and just want to better understand where there money is going while they fret about this very emotional day?

Should that mechanic have treated me like a dumb customer? NO!?

Then why would we ever treat a woman planning her wedding like a "Bridezilla?"

You know what I think? There is no such thing as a "Bridezilla." There are only vendors that give bad, mean, bullying service to nervous customers who are just trying to better understand something they have never had to do before they spend their life savings on it. I have never met a Bridezilla.

I HAVE however met plenty of nervous brides and grooms who are really just trying to find someone that understands them and cares enough about them to take on their event and take the time to ease their worries.

I completely understand those people … and I can relate … because I am still looking for a mechanic.

Bill Hermann owns Bill Hermann Entertainment in Minneapolis/St Paul and is the creator of "The Entertainment Experience" Seminars and Workshops. Tickets are now available for upcoming workshops in Las Vegas September 12th and 13th during the Las Vegas DJ Show brought to by the ADJA Seats are extremely limited. Go to www.billcreates.com for your tickets.

Bill Hermann can be reached at: billhermann@discjockeynews.com

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The State Of The DJ Nation: No, Not The Wedding Planner!

By DJ Avestan Kerenaoiti

A recent post online was discussing a piece of correspondence sent to a DJ from a wedding planner. It said:

"Please send all correspondence to me between now and the wedding. (brides name) is really trying to remove herself from the planning."

As usual, I watched with wild abandon the sudden onslaught of comments from the peanut gallery slamming the planner and the requisite posturing and chest thumping found on most boards. Every time I think that this world might be a halfway decent place I pop into a DJ forum and BAM! I'm reminded of the lunacy that is our industry....

If you're wondering about what I'm referring to... Here's some food for thought - quoted directly from the forum itself...."sorry but my contract is with the bride and although I will keep things to a minimum she needs to play an active role for the success of her event"

"From now on, you may want to have that in your contract that you won't work with (in other words have them be a middle person to discuss details with) a wedding planner. "

"(defecation)'s a deal breaker for me too... Planner can be there during the discussions but I wont be removed from the process."

"I would reply....and who is this exactly??? sorry don't see your name on the contract"

…(coordinators) are awesome in dressing a room, and they are crucial to the flow of the wedding ceremony. However--after introductions---get out of the way and let the other professionals do what they do."

"The clients I work with trust that their vendors know what they are doing....hence no need for a "coordinator". Every "coordinator" I've ever dealt with has accomplished only to get in the way of the 'flow of the event'"

Here on this DJ board was a string of so-called 'DJ's' insisting they know better than a planner, and that they can't or won't work with the planner. REALLY? Last time I checked there were actual schools you could go to and become a wedding planner. Last time I checked the organizations for planners required continuing education. And DJs require.... uh, none of this?

Actually, a DJ's approach to training is easy to explain. It's an OX being a MORON. Most DJs think they learned everything they need to know to be a DJ by watching DJ Pauly D on the Jersey Shore and the sucky performance they provide while their clients feed them a never ending line of smoke up their posteriors in the form of 'You're the best DJ ever' without adding the qualifying, ' at least until I'm at another drunken party and tell the next sucky DJ the exact same thing.' Coming up next month I saw there there's a seminar at the Las Vegas DJ Show on training. That's going to be the shortest seminar ever - 'Get it dumbasses' - and then the presenter drops the microphone and walks out.

Getting back on topic, while I'll be the first in line to say that some planners aren't really planners and are instead wedding decorators or sometimes even less, the true wedding planner is active in the role of ensuring the flow of the event and making sure that you have what you need as you make your way through the night. They work with ALL the vendors to insure they ALL do their best work. In other words, maybe, just maybe the problem isn't planners, but the idiot DJs they work with on a regular basis. You know - the DJs who beat their chest, posture and talk about how 'bad' planners are without giving thought to the fact that the idiots that have gone before them have created the perception that DJs ALL suck. Don't know who I'm talking about? I'm talking about the DJs who show up, announce things before anyone is ready, don't check to find out if the parents are in the room before the first dance, play booby slapping in front of everyone, and far, far, worse...

So, let's step back a minute, put the ego in check and try not being that stereotypical chest thumping, nothing is more important than me DJ and try sitting down with the planner and having a conversation about your mutual client. All in your mutual client's best interest.

I've heard said before that anyone can be outstanding in a field. For most DJs that will either be a corn field or a field of raw sewage that is made from the excrement they issue forth from their own pie hole. But just this once, how about being DIFFERENT? How about proving to that planner that maybe, just maybe, there is a DJ out there that doesn't have his ego swollen head so far up his own keyster that it's now become physically impossible to remove without killing themselves. Maybe, just maybe if you talk with them in a professional manner you can work together and collaborate on the event and create something greater than either could have done on their own.

In short, the DJ industry is filled with idiots and treating other vendors badly only seeks to reinforce the stereotype that ALL DJs are idiots. Despite the rancid responses, the shining moment in all of this was the post by one DJ who said:

"I must say that the perception of planners is only rivaled by the perception of DJs. Planners have a very important role in weddings, as does the DJ. But just like a DJ, the perception that a wedding is impossible to do without one is not true...."

Thank you Chad... I couldn't have said it better myself.

And THAT, is the state of the DJ Nation.

You can reach Avestand Kerenaoiti at: avestan@discjockeynews.com

Brech continued from page 12

ple copies of it, one for me and one for my dad. I would love it for a keepsake :)

Thanks again Jeremy for everything -- you are truly the BEST!! I'm so blessed you were available for our special day!

Kimber

None of this would have been available without the guidance from Bill Hermann and Jason Jones. I encourage everyone to take this workshop. Visit BillCreates.com to find more information about the upcoming events. The Entertainment Experience will be going on after the American Disc Jockey Association event in Las Vegas on the 12th and 13th of September. This is a workshop that you will not regret! If you have further questions or need insight on the workshop please contact Bill or Jason.

Jeremy can be reached at: jeremybrech@discjockeynews.com.

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DJ VERIFICATION ORGANIZATION
DJVO
www.DJVO.org

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DJ VERIFICATION ORGANIZATION (DJVO)

In January 2012 DJ Verification Organization (DJVO) was formed for the purpose of providing verification and certification that a Disc Jockey[1] is obtaining all formats[2] of their music audio and music video from legal sources[3]

[1] Disc Jockey: Name variations – Disc Jockey (DJ), Music Video Jockey (VJ), Karaoke Jockey (KJ)
[2] Formats: Music audio and music video: (MP3, MP4, CD, DVD & Vinyl)
[3] Legal sources: DJ music subscription services, record pools, music pools, video pools, karaoke pools, DJ pools, retail stores, online music stores, promotional music delivery services & record label direct servicing.

The DJVO is a verification database tracking system to show proof the DJ has obtained their music audio and music video legally for the business of disc jockeying. The DJVO is standing up for what is right for the DJs that do everything the right way for them to get the disc jockey jobs instead of the DJs that obtain their music illegally getting the disc jockey jobs.

The verification fee will be waived and will remain free for the first year for all DJs (Offer Expires: NOV/2012)

Top 30 Music Charts

By www.PrimeCutsMusic.com

Pop

1	Katy Perry	Wide Awake
2	Ellie Goulding	Lights
3	Demi Lovato	Give Your Heart A Break
4	David Guetta	Titanium
5	Flo Rida	Whistle
6	Calvin Harris	Let's Go
7	Pink	Blow Me (One Last Kiss)
8	Maroon 5	Payphone
9	Neon Trees	Everybody Talks
10	Cher Lloyd	Want U Back
11	Rihanna	Where Have You Been
12	Owl City & Carly Rae Jepsen	Good Time
13	Justin Bieber	As Long As You Love Me
14	Maroon 5	One More Night
15	Taylor Swift	We Are Never Ever GettingÉ
16	Usher	Scream
17	Fun.	Some Nights
18	Nicki Minaj	Pound The Alarm
19	No Doubt	Settle Down
20	Wanted	Chasing The Sun
21	Alex Care	Too Close
22	Jason Mraz	I Won't Give Up
23	Kelly Clarkson	Dark Side
24	Chris Brown	Don't Wake Me Up
25	Karmin	Hello
26	Olly Murs	Heart Skips A Beat
27	Grouplove	Tongue Tied
28	Train	50 Ways To Say Goodbye
29	David Guetta	I Can Only Imagine
30	Ne-Yo	Let Me Love You

Country

1	Blake Shelton	Over
2	Little Big Town	Pontoon
3	Josh Turner	Time Is Love
4	Love And Theft	Angel Eyes
5	Hunter Hayes	Wanted
6	Jana Kramer	Why Ya Wanna
7	Keith Urban	For You
8	Band Perry	Postcard From Paris
9	Jason Aldean	Take A Little Ride
10	Gloriana	(Kissed You) Good Night
11	Dustin Lynch	Cowboys And Angels
12	Zac Brown Band	The Wind
13	Tim McGraw	Truck Yeah
14	Easton Corbin	Lovin'You Is Fun
15	Carrie Underwood	Blown Away
16	Miranda Lambert	Fastest Girl In Town
17	Big & Rich	That's Why I Pray
18	Rascal Flatts	Come Wake Me Up
19	Lee Brice	Hard To Love
20	Jerrod Niemann	Shinin'On Me
21	Taylor Swift	We Are Never Ever Getting
22	Jake Owen	The One That Got Away
23	Lady Antebellum	Wanted You More
24	Greg Bates	Did It For The Girl
25	Eric Church	Creepin'
26	Justin Moore	'Til My Last Day
27	Luke Bryan	Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye
28	Toby Keith	I Like Girls That Drink Beer
29	Casey James	Crying On A Suitcase
30	Kip Moore	Beer Money

Adult Contempory

1	Gotye	Somebody That I Used To Know
2	Train	Drive By
3	Kelly Clarkson	Stronger (What Doesn't Kill You)
4	Adele	Rumour Has It
5	Carly Rae Jepsen	Call Me Maybe
6	Maroon 5	Payphone
7	Adele	Set Fire To The Rain
8	One Direction	What Makes You Beautiful
9	Katy Perry	The One That Got Away
10	Katy Perry	Wide Awake
11	Fun.	We Are Young
12	Jason Mraz	I Won't Give Up
13	Jessie J	Domino
14	Norah Jones	Happy Pills
15	Taylor Swift	We Are Never Ever Getting
16	Neon Trees	Everybody Talks
17	Katy Perry	Part Of Me
18	Pink	Blow Me (One Last Kiss)
19	Karmin	Broken Hearted
20	Matchbox Twenty	She's So Mean
21	Ellie Goulding	Lights
22	Wanted	Glad You Came
23	Smash Mouth	Magic
24	Kelly Clarkson	Dark Side
25	Margo Rey	Between Us
26	Casey Abrams	Get Out
27	Train	50 Ways To Say Goodbye
28	Demi Lovato	Give Your Heart A Break
29	Katrina	So Eden
30	Heart	Walkin'Good

Urban

1	Wale	Bag Of Money
2	2 Chainz	No Lie
3	Meek Mill	Amen
4	Usher	Lemme See
5	Miguel	Adorn
6	Big Sean, Kanye WestÉ	Mercy
7	Future	Turn On The Lights
8	Keyshia Cole	Enough Of No Love
9	Trey Songz	2 Reasons
10	Trey Songz	Heart Attack
11	Brandy	Put It Down
12	Wiz Khalifa	Work Hard, Play Hard
13	French Montana	Pop That
14	Ne-Yo	Lazy Love
15	Beyonce	Dance For You
16	Chief Keef	I Don't Like
17	Lil Wayne	My Homies Still
18	Trey Songz	Dive In
19	Omarion	Let's Talk
20	Rick Ross	Touch 'N You
21	Chris Brown	Till I Die
22	Frank Ocean	Thinkin''Bout You
23	DJ Khaled	I Wish You Would
24	2 Chainz	Birthday Song
25	Bobby V	Mirror
26	Chris Brown	Sweet Love
27	Nicki Minaj	Beez In The Trap
28	Drake	Crew Love
29	The-Dream	Dope Chick
30	Mykko Montana	Do It

Rock

1	Adelitas Way	Criticize
2	Five Finger Death Punch	Coming Down
3	Shinedown	Unity
4	P.O.D.	Lost In Forever
5	Offspring	Days Go By
6	Green Day	Oh Love
7	Halestorm	I Miss The Misery
8	Seether	Here And Now
9	Volbeat	Still Counting
10	Papa Roach	Still Swingin'
11	Three Days Grace	Chalk Outline
12	Staind	Now
13	Linkin Park	Burn It Down
14	Saving Abel	Bringing Down The Giant
15	Aranda	Satisfied
16	Linkin Park	Lost In The Echo
17	Rise Against	Wait For Me
18	Redlight King	Comeback
19	Slash	Standing In The Sun
20	Black Stone Cherry	Like I Roll
21	In This Moment	Blood
22	10 Years	Backlash
23	Godsmack	Rocky Mountain Way
24	Gaslight Anthem	45
25	Pop Evil	Purple
26	Nonpoint	Left For You
27	Black Keys	Little Black Submarine
28	Hoobastank	This Is Gonna Hurt
29	Mark Tremonti	You Waste Your Time
30	Stone Sour	Absolute Zero

Alternative

1	Alex Care	Too Close
2	Fun.	Some Nights
3	Lumineers	Ho Hey
4	Imagine Dragons	It's Time
5	Green Day	Oh Love
6	Killers	Runaways
7	Mumford & Sons	I Will Wait
8	Linkin Park	Burn It Down
9	Of Monsters And Men	Little Talks
10	Grouplove	Tongue Tied
11	Awolnation	Kill Your Heroes
12	Muse	Madness
13	Gaslight Anthem	45
14	Black Keys	Little Black Submarines
15	Passion Pit	Take A Walk
16	Offspring	Days Go By
17	Atlas Genius	Trojans
18	Alabama Shakes	Hold On
19	Rise Against	Wait For Me
20	Morning Parade	Headlights
21	Wombats	Jump Into The Fog
22	Three Days Grace	Chalk Outline
23	Shinedown	Unity
24	No Doubt	Settle Down
25	Grouplove	Itchin'On A Photograph
26	Two Door Cinema Club	Sleep Alone
27	Youngblood Hawke	We Come Running
28	M83	Reunion
29	Metric	Youth Without Youth
30	Slightly Stoopid	Top Of The World

A Different Spin by Jason Nocera www.nichecartoons.com

What I Learned The Summer!

By Rob Peters

As the summer of 2012 comes to a close, I decided to have a little fun with this month's article. When we were younger, I am sure we all can remember coming back to school in September and having the teacher moderate a discussion about the adventures we had during the summer. So as a tribute to the kids who have been entertained in the summer of 2012, and those of you who provide entertainment services for kids, this month's article will contain the things I learned about being a kid's entertainer this summer!

NEVER think that the weather forecast is accurate: So you are probably saying "duh" to that one, but in an age where we can have access to weather radar on our cellular smart phones, you would think that the information they give you would be somewhat accurate. Because the type of kids entertainment I do involves performing outdoors, the weather can become tricky. In June, I was performing at a show, and had to shut down halfway through because the skies had darkened and lightning and thunder were closing in fast, even though the weather forecast I looked at earlier that day said there was a ZERO percent change of rain. I guess it just goes to show you that Mother Nature still can have an upper hand when it comes to the weather.

Kids entertainment CAN BE booked for some of the most unusual clients, places and events: This summer was my busiest summer in almost 10 years. And this year brought out some new clientele for my children's entertainment program, including public libraries, kid's festivals, local municipality concert programs, radio station remote broadcasts and even three grand openings of new businesses. It seems that this program, which I have been performing for over 8 years, is growing by leaps and bounds.

I also learned that with new types of events coming in that the audiences may be bigger in number. Some of our "open to the public" shows had over 200 KIDS in attendance. Needless to say, I am developing specific shows that cater to those larger audiences.

Patience when it comes to those who procrastinate: This summer, I saw a very high number of clients who waited until the last minute to call to book our kid's services. A few weeks ago, I received a phone call on Thursday, requesting our services for a party that took place two days later. As a mobile DJ, I have seen this trend with other events we do, such as weddings and private parties, but found it very rare (in my market anyhow) to receive "week of" calls, except with our kid's entertainment services. However, this year, there were many calls received during the week for a show that took place on the upcoming weekend.

Social media and kid's entertainment CAN work: Let me explain this one… most of the children I perform for as a kid's entertainer have minimal access to the internet, and most of them do not know how to tweet or use Facebook. However, this summer, I learned how to use social media to promote my kid's entertainment brands to the people who write the checks…their parents. Posting on Facebook and "tweets" on Twitter helped promote some of the shows we performed at that were open to the public, as well as helped spread the word when the weather did not cooperate.

"Call Me Maybe" is the BEST KID'S SONG of Summer 2012!: Take this one lightly, but ALL kid's know and like this song. In fact, during my shows this summer, kids were singing this song so loud because they knew and liked it. Personally, I can't wait for a few weeks of not hearing or playing that song!

The summer of 2012 was quite a summer! Between going through 10 bottles of sunscreen, one case of bottled water each week and a few thousand miles logged, we not only generated some pretty good WEEKDAY revenue, we also brought smiles to thousands of children this summer! I guess that's a pretty good reward!

I can't wait for next summer!

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

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Top 30 Clean High School Songs

SchoolDanceNetwork.com

LM	TM	Artist	Title	Featuring	PC Disc	BPM
14	1	Rihanna	Where have you been		201216	128
10	2	Maroon 5	Payphone	Wiz Kjalifa	201217	111
27	3	Katy Perry	Wide Awake		201223	80
*	4	Ellie Goulding	Lights		201109	120
*	5	Calvin Harris	Lets Go	w/Neyo	201212	128
13	6	Carly Jepsen	Call Me Maybe		201210	120
*	7	Pink	Blow Me One Last Kiss		201228	114
	8	Cher Lloyd	Want U Back		201206	98
28	9	Havana Brown-Pitbull	We Run The Night		201216	128
21	10	David Guetta	Titanium		201230	125
*	11	Justin Bieber	As Long As You Love Me		201227	71
*	12	Nicki Minaj	Pound the Alarm	Edit out the B	201227	126
*	13	David Guetta/ Chris Brown	I Can Only Imagine		201230	127
6	14	Kelly Clarkson	Stronger		201201	116
29	15	Trey Songz	Heart Attack		201214	75
11	16	David Guetta/Nicki Minaj	Turn Me on		201231	128
*	17	Pitbull/Shakira	Get it Started		201234	128
1	18	Justin Bieber	Boyfriend		201214	97
*	19	Trey Songz	Heart Attack		201227	75
*	20	Ne-Yo	Let me Love You		201229	124
*	21	Taylor Swft-B.O.B	Both Of Us		201220	63
8	22	Pitbull	Back In Time		201214	127
*	23	Flo Rida	Good Feelin		201137	128
*	24	Maroon 5	One More Night		201229	93
5	25	Gym Class Heroes	Self Back Home		201203	130
*	26	Katy Perry	Part of Me		201210	130
2	27	Nicki Minaj	Starships		201209	125
*	28	Chris Brown	Turn Up The Music		201206	130
*	29	Karmin	Hello		201230	128
*	30	Goyte	Somebody that I used to Know		201205	129

Recurrents- (Still popular)

Rihanna	We Found Love	201140	128
The Wanted	Glad You Came	201134	128
One Direction	What Makes You Beautiful	201213	129
Drake /Rihanna	Take Care	201150	122
Calvin Harris	Feel So Close	201131	64
Rihanna	You Da One	201147	127
Young Jeezy	Leave you alone	201208	95
B.O.B	So Good r	201209	86

J. Jessie	Domino		201135	127
Karmin	Broken Hearted		201207	120
Pitbull/w C Brown	International Love		201140	120
Jennifer Lopez	Dance Again		201215	128
Chris Rene	Young Homie		201209	80
LMFAO	Sorry for Party Rockin		201201	134
Hot Chelle Rae	I Like it Like That	FT-New Boyz	201139	101
Bruno Mars	It Will Rain		201140	75
David Guetta	Without You	Usher	201136	128
J Cole	Workout	Edit N**ga, S**t	201126	93
Selena Gomez	Love you Like a Love Song		201131	119
Dev	Naked	Enrique Iglesias	201201	125
Outasight	Tonight is the Night		201142	120
Foster the People	Don't Stop		201146	133
Gym Class Heros	Stereo Hearts	Adam Levine	201125	91
Drake	Headlines		201132	76
Jason Derulo	It Girl		201133	92
LMFAO	Sexy and I know it		201133	130
Lady Gaga	Marry the Night		201145	131
Nicki Minaj-Rihanna	Fly		201132	120
Maroon 5/Aguilera	Moves Like Jagger		201132	128
Britney Spears	I Wanna Go		201124	131
Enrique Iglesias	I Like How it Feels	FT Pitbull	201139	128
LMFAO	Party Rock Anthem	Lauren Bennett	201102	131
Cobra Starship	You Make Me Feel		201120	132
Alexandra Stan	Mr. Saxobeat		201119	127
New Boyz	Better with the Lights on		201120	112
Bad Meets Evil	Lighters (squeaky clean)	Bruno Mars	201125	90
Kanye West	All of the lights	Kid Cudi, Rihanna	201050	71
Nicki Minaj	Super Bass		201115	127
Karmin	Crash Your Party		201144	96
Sean Paul	Got 2 Luv		201129	92
David Guetta	Where them Girls at	FloRida-Nicki Minaj	201119	130
T-Pain	Best Love Song	Chris Brown	201108	81
Lady Gaga	The Edge of Glory		201120	128
Chris Brown	She Ain't You		201114	91
Bruno Mars	Lazy Song		201108	87
Beyonce	Best Thing I Never Had		201124	100
Lupe Fiasco	The Show Goes on		201045	72
Black Eyed Peas	Just Can't Get Enough		201106	94
Jennifer Lopez	I'm Into You	Lil Wayne	201115	84

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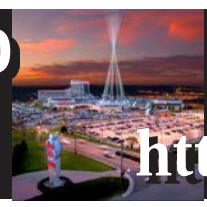

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