

Every Little Thing You Do (Revisited)

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For Mobile Beat

I'm sure you were all at Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2015 and saw my seminar "Every Little Thing You Do Is Magic". You know, the one where everyone gave me a standing ovation at the end. Oh wait, never mind, that part didn't happen, that was Mark Ferrell. But anyway, if you missed it, you missed some great info on all the small things that you should be doing as a DJ company owner to improve your business. Lucky for you, in this article, I am going to review some of the points I made in Las Vegas, elaborate on some others, and add a few more. Consider this your summer refresher course.

I think the easiest way to tackle such a broad subject is to break it down into segments.

1. Things you should be doing at the office
2. Things you should be doing at the event
3. And finally, things you should be doing after the event

When I'm at the office, one of the main things that I'm working on is marketing. It's one of the things that I am most passionate about. An element of marketing is branding. Great branding is one of the reasons that we became so popular in our area. Years ago, when we re-branded and adopted our "play button" logo, business literally exploded. We spent a lot of money for that symbol, new cards, and the slogan that we used for a long time "I Know Joe". Why couldn't I have come up with that? The main point that I want to make about branding is consistency. If you go look at my site you'll see that it matches my cards which match my pop up banners and so on. Trust me, this is crucial for clients that are seeking a DJ. If they keep seeing your brand around at trade shows, in wedding magazines, etc., they are going to know that you are a legitimate company and will trust you to DJ their event.

Another thing that takes up a lot of my time in the office is keeping up with my fellow vendors, most importantly the ones at the venues that recommend and refer us. As you've noticed, turnaround in the hospitality industry is high. So and so leaves to have a baby, So and so leaves to go to another hotel in another state, etc. It's very frustrating to build a relationship with someone for years, get in good with them, get tons of leads from them and then have them leave you in the dust right? Well dust yourself off and start over. Find out who the next person is going to be, make it a point to meet them at the next NACE or ISES meeting, ask if you can take them to lunch or coffee, send them a gift basket congratulating them on their new job. Do whatever it takes to remain on that holy grail preferred vendors list!

A few other things that I do when I'm in the office and have some free time (just kidding, there is no such things as free time).

- Write a blog-Take a few minutes every Monday to write a blog and include some photos from your past weekend's event. You'll be shocked at how much people love to read about other folks' weddings.
- Shoot a video-I'm a big fan of shooting informational videos and posting them to YouTube. Why? YouTube is the second leading search engine next to Google. In other words, it drives more traffic to your site, which leads to bookings, which leads to money.
- Get ready for your next show-Contact your client a few days before the show and "advance" the gig. In other words, make sure you are saying the names in the introductions correctly, make sure their first dance is still "Wonderful Tonight", etc. Also, take the time to put all of their requests and special dances into a playlist, it will help tremendously once you get to the open dancing.
- Write-Yes, I know nobody writes letters, thank you cards, and birthday cards anymore, but I do. Nothing screams "old school cool" like sending someone a hand-written note. I do it not only my couples, but also vendors that I adore.

Let's move on and talk about some tips you should be doing while at your events. Appearance is everything to me. Yes, it's cliché, but the statement "you only get one chance to make a first impression" is so true. Assess what you are wearing to the event. Is it appropriate? Is it in line with what the guests are going to be wearing? Maybe it's time for a new suit with more narrow lapels and a skinnier tie? Maybe it's time to ditch the all black Reeboks for some proper Cole Haan dress shoes? Another thing you need to do is set up your gear (at home), and then step back and take a look. Are your speaker cables Velcro strapped to the back of the tripod stands? Are the cables coming out of your controller tucked under or around the side? They should be!

There are a few more tips that I want to share with you about things you should be doing at the event.

- Not only is it important that you get an agenda from the client or the planner, but make sure you review it, know it, learn it, love it. Better yet, make copies to hand out to the other vendors working with you!
- I don't care how awesome the wedding planner that you are working with is, by no means do you let them line up the bridal party! Grab your clipboard and your list and walk out in that hallway and do it yourself. Say everyone's name directly to their face to make sure you are nailing the pronunciation.
- You should be arriving at least an hour early to set up for your gig. If you are like me, then it's usually two hours early. It takes me about 20-30 minutes to set up for a wedding. In that extra time, how nice would it be for you to offer the staff help with tying chair covers or lighting candles? Even if they don't take you up on it, it's the sentiment that counts!

The last part of this article is going to focus on the things you should be doing post-event. In case you haven't noticed, you are being stalked. Clients that are thinking

about booking your services don't just stumble across your site and book you. They are coming to you many times via sites like Wedding Wire and The Knot. Therefore, you need to work on getting more reviews on those sites. There are many ways to ask your past clients for them-hand written notes, an automated email, or a personalized email. The bottom line is that if you know you rocked a show, then you need to get that review. To me, it's more valuable than a tip!

Try and work on these things after the event as well.

- Pay-Make sure that if you are multi-op you pay your guys immediately following a gig. NEVER bounce their checks and pay them well. The success of your company is reliant upon your awesome DJs!
- Get social-Work on your social media game. Whenever I talk about social media, I tell folks you don't have to be great at all of the different channels, but at least pick one and be really good at it. Think about all of the amazing events and things we see as pro DJs. That stuff is Instagram (or Facebook or Twitter) gold! Post it! Let people know where it was and brag about how you crushed it!

I know this is a lot to take in, but let's face it, running your own business is tough. If it was easy, everyone would be doing it. Work hard this summer and I can assure you, it will pay off by the end of 2015!