

Planting Summer Seeds
By Joe Bunn
For Disc Jockey News

I know that most of the readers of Disc Jockey News are finally heading into the (hopefully) very busy wedding season. I know that we are here at Bunn DJ Company! Every weekend is packed with couples wanting us to rock their receptions, and we are glad to have that business. Hands down, weddings are our primary source of income. We look at any other types of events (birthdays, mitzvahs, school/college dances, or corporate events) as gravy...a bonus. That's not to say that we don't market to these folks, we do, and with summer rapidly approaching, why not start to plant some summer "seeds" that will hopefully grow into year end shows?! Let's talk about growing that corporate business in this article.

Research. One of the first things you should do is to do a little research in your area. Who are the key companies? Who hires the most people each year? I'm not saying that you can't make money doing shows for the "little guy" companies, but might as well aim for the big dogs that have the budget to pay you, and hire you multiple times a year. It only takes one foot in the door, and one great performance to where you'll become that company's DJ of choice for every single event they have, whether it be background music at a conference between speakers, or the entertainer for their huge holiday party this December.

Networking. If you are not a member of your local Chamber of Commerce, I highly suggest you join. Or even better, do you have a Shop Local group in your area? We do, and it's awesome for networking! But just like I say with joining NACE and ISES, if you simply pay the membership fee and then don't go to the meetings, you just wasted your hundreds of dollars! You must get out there and go. Often, Chamber meetings are early in the morning. I know, not a great time for a professional DJ, but you have to get up, get some coffee in you, and GO! I'm betting there won't be another DJ in the room. You'll be the coolest kid there in a room full of bankers, lawyers, and what I like to call "cubicle monkeys" aka 9 to 5ers. People will genuinely be interested in your story and your company and I can assure you that everyone there, at some point during the year, is going to need a DJ for something. It may be a company family day with bounce houses and music, or it could be a 500 person holiday party at the nicest hotel in town. Regardless of what it is, you want that gig. Take a positive attitude and a stack of cards and you can succeed in a room full of jobbers.

Mailing. There are two ways to approach the term "mail" these days. If you've watched my new marketing DVD "Marketing the Music" (man, that was so shameless), then you'll see how we not only do old school direct mailing pieces, but also digital e-newsletters as well. Remember how I said to join the Chamber in the paragraph above, well do that! A few years ago we were able to score from them a huge list of members and another year we were able to order actual mailing labels

of the members. Around summer time, we did a postcard mailing that said something corny like “Christmas in July? It’s not too early to start planning your holiday party!” As you all know, booking a ton of December corporate holiday parties, is a great way to close out the year and to make sure your kids get the freshest toys for Christmas! As always, our e-newsletter goes out at the first of each month (email me if you want to be added to it by the way). As the summer lingers on, we add in subtle hints to call us for upcoming events, but don’t ever go to heavy on what Gary V. calls “punches”. If you aren’t familiar with this concept, pick up his book “Jab Jab Jab Punch”. You’ll dig it.

Summer Shows. Another thing that you can do to get more business this summer is actually do more shows. Well Duh Joe. Put it this way, in May, there are going to be a ton of pools opening, there are going to be a ton of companies having cookouts on Fridays, and there will be huge events to celebrate the summer holidays (Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day). Those events need DJs! Are they going to be as lucrative as a wedding? Probably not, BUT they can lead to some amazing corporate work down the line. We always make sure that every year we are the preferred DJ at a very nice country club near my office. Do my guys particularly like standing out there in 100 degree NC heat and playing kid pop? Not really, but every time they do, they end up handing out tons of cards to these kids’ parents, and that gets the phone ringing for the larger paying gigs! No brainer.

So remember, just because summer is coming, that doesn’t mean you get to hit the pool and beach on your days off (what are days off?). It means to start planting those seeds that will grow into shows by year’s end. Good luck!