

Tackling the DJ Trade Shows
By Joe Bunn for Disc Jockey News

So we all know it's bridal show season. You have undoubtedly been setting up bridal show booths, selling your services and doing private showcases pretty much since 2015 started. However, it's also time for DJ show season! Up first, in February, is Mobile Beat Las Vegas. It is right around the corner (shameless plug alert!), and I am speaking this year. I am hoping to see you at my seminar "Every Little Thing You Do Is Magic" where I'm going to go fast and furious for only 30 minutes to tell you all the things you should be doing for your business, but probably aren't! OK, enough of that. Let's move on to the topic at hand...What is the best way to attend these DJ shows and get your max "bang for the buck"?

Let's be honest, these trade shows are expensive! Most of us don't live in Las Vegas or Atlantic City or Nashville or wherever they take place so we have to get there. Plus you have a few nights in a hotel, the show pass, per diem for food, a little "entertainment" a couple of nights and BOOM!, you're in the hole for several grand! However, if you maximize your experience at these shows, it is worth every penny.

First, take a look at the schedule of speakers and seminar topics. Pick the ones that are most applicable to your business! If you don't do lighting or other "add ons", DON'T go to those! I know it sounds like common sense, but you would be surprised. At many of the shows and conferences there are two seminars going on at the same time (not Mobile Beat), and you want to attend both. This is when you have to use the "divide and conquer" plan. So A-send your right hand man/woman to one to take notes, while you hit the other one or B-have one of your DJ buddies you meet go to the other one and you guys swap notes after.

Speaking of meeting "DJ buddies", you will find no better place to do so than at a DJ conference. Admit it, it is hard being friendly and competitive at the same time. It's hard to reach out for advice or give advice to a rival DJ company in your market. However, at the DJ shows, there are DJs from all over the world! If you see a group of guys talking shop, go up and introduce yourself! Give them a card and get theirs! My experience is that most DJs are friendly (especially when you are not a threat). This group of friends you meet will be at most of the conventions that you go to, and they are also a great "sounding board" for when your business isn't doing well and you need a pep talk ,or maybe when you are thinking about buying that new piece of DJ gear, etc. It's just a great way to network. Period!

Finally, let's talk about the gear and the showroom floor. When they open those doors, you can literally slip and fall on the drool coming from the mouths of the DJs waiting to be let in. As DJs, most of us are gear junkies (also known as morons). I'm just as guilty as the next guy. Again, have a game plan BEFORE you even set foot in the place. Have a list of things you NEED before looking at the stuff that you WANT! There are some deals to be had, but make sure you walk around a while before jumping on the first "sale priced" super daddy XLR cable. Another vendor may have

the same one for \$10 cheaper three booths down. I love the showroom floor mainly for the fact that I can ask all the questions I want normally from the very people that helped design the product. Most times I don't even buy there, I just get the info I need to make a smart decision and then I order later. One more thing, don't forget to factor in shipping! If you can't carry it home with you on the plane, you are going to have to pay shipping, or ask them to eat it if you buy from them. Remember, NEED vs. WANT! Calm down when those doors open, breathe, then go.

Lastly, if you find yourself just completely overwhelmed by the DJ trade shows, much like many brides at bridal shows, then try something smaller. I know of an awesome workshop called The PhDJ Workshop (www.phdjworkshop.com) that this guy named Mike Walter does with some other guy with a Southern accent that takes place April 7th & 8th, 2015 in Raleigh, NC. The smaller shows are less "101" type content, and more advanced business and MC knowledge. Maybe that's more what you're seeking!

I hope this article helps you formulate a game plan for Mobile Beat Las Vegas and beyond. I'll see you at my seminar on Wednesday February 25th at 10am. I promise it's worth waking up for. Bring something to take notes on! Let's go!