

The Friend Zone
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How many times has someone come up to you and said, "Man, I would love to do what you do! You're killing it! You're a baller! You must be making bank!?" It happens to me all the time (okay so I exaggerated a little bit), but I do get this a lot...even from friends. So, the question is, can you hire a friend as one of your DJs in a multi-op company and still remain friends? Let's explore.

I asked John Young if he had a topic that he wanted me to touch on this month, and he is the one that actually came up with this idea. As I thought back on my last 20 years of running a multi-op, I couldn't recall ever hiring one of my friends. But let's think about the pros and cons in this article.

PROS

- Friends are trustworthy. You are going to be able to rely on this person to show up, be on time, dress properly, not book overtime hours and keep the cash that the client gives them for it, etc.
- Friends are loyal. How many times have you trained a DJ only for him/her to burn you six months later and leave to "start their own thing"? It has happened to me a lot and as a side note, I make it my mission to destroy them. We never hear from them again once they leave Bunn DJ Company. I'm not kidding.
- Friends are fans. If you are like me, and have been doing this since you were a kid, then your friends have seen your rise and growth. They love seeing your success and love seeing you get to do something that you enjoy. They support your company and only want to see you do even better. They are not only friends, but fans. That is a good employee to have.
- Friends for a reason. There's a reason that you are friends with someone. You share common interests, grew up together, went to school together, like the same football team or bands. Again, this could be the start of a good partnership.

CONS

- Friends have a tendency to take advantage of you. If you tell one of your friends that they need to be at a gig two hours early because it's a difficult load-in, there is a good chance that they'll go, "Come on Joe, an hour is cool right?"
- Friends aren't DJs. In other words, the friends that approach you and want to "do what you do" usually have zero experience. You are going to have to train them from the ground up! Are you ready for that task? Don't get me wrong, some of my best friends now are the DJs that I hired blindly many years ago. That's a bonus.

- What kind of friend are they? Do you have some friends that are kind of like lost souls? They aren't sure what they want to do. One day they want to be an actor, the next day they want to be on Wall Street, and then the next they want to be a pro DJ. I have some friends like that. They are pretty random and transient. You could be in the middle of wedding season and Danny Random (or whatever his name is) could decide that he wants to be a circus clown and tour with Ringling Bros. Be careful who you take on!

So there are the pros and cons. I don't think I can give a definitive answer as to whether you should hire a friend or not for your thriving multi-op DJ company, but I can leave you with a thought. If this friend didn't cut it, as in they just weren't good as a DJ or didn't meet/exceed your expectations, could you fire them? And if you fired them, could you remain friends? Deep, but that's what you have to ask yourself. Good luck hiring and let me know if "the friend zone" has worked out for your company!