

Holiday Party Marketing **By Joe Bunn for Mobile Beat Magazine**

Ok DJs, the year is half over and you know what that means right? It's time to get moving on booking holiday parties! If you are like us, the majority of those are events for companies. As someone that loves marketing my DJ company, I want to share with you some ideas for rounding up that holiday party money.

Some of you may have seen me speak before at Mobile Beat Las Vegas (and if you haven't, you can catch me in February 2015...shameless plug). I usually speak about marketing or things that you can do to better yourself as a DJ and improve your business. Normally, I am speaking in terms of weddings because that is how we make the majority of our money. In writing this article, however, I am going to focus more on the corporate sector and this game plan is entirely different than the wedding one.

So, I am a big fan of joining organizations such as NACE (National Association of Catering & Events) and ISES (International Special Events Society). Joining them isn't enough, you have to go to the meetings, be on a committee or even join the board. I can't tell you how much those organizations have helped my wedding business. They have helped my corporate business a little, but not nearly as much as joining my local Chamber of Commerce and Shop Local Raleigh. These groups are where corporations send their folks to network. As a DJ, the negative is that a lot of the networking things are early in the morning, ugh. But, if you get up, pound some coffee and get out there with your stack of cards and your amazing personality, you will tap into a huge network of companies that will eventually need your services. These companies allot money for employee entertainment; things such as company picnics, team building, bring the kids to work day, weekend outings, and of course holiday parties. Go get that budgeted money!

I am not personally a member of BNI (Business Network International), but I have several friends in other jobs such as insurance sales, chiropractors, etc. that thrive there. This is taken directly from their website www.bni.com: "Last year alone, members of BNI passed 5.4 million referrals...which generated over \$6.5 billion dollars' worth of business for its members! BNI is a business and professional networking organization that allows only one person per professional classification or specialty to join a chapter." I would suggest you seek out a chapter in your area if you are looking to book more corporate/holiday business!

If you follow me on any of the social media channels, you know I'm very active on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Did you know that you can expand your reach and use these tools to book more shows? Of course you can! It doesn't matter if you have 200 friends or 2,000, not all of them have a job as cool as yours, they work for someone and if that company has the money, they are going to throw a holiday blowout for their employees, and they're going to need a great DJ, and you're going to book it! The process is really simple. Don't flood their news feed with requests,

but just toss out something like “Hey friends, can you believe the year is half over? Well you know what that means...the holidays are right around the corner! If the company you are working for is having a party, please tell them to call or email us (add phone number and email address). We would love to rock it! Thanks” See! That’s so easy right? Do it again a few weeks later. You’ll be surprised at how many bookings could come from doing that on Facebook or Twitter. Now, since Instagram is photo based, you have to get a little more creative, that’s where picmonkey.com comes in. If you aren’t using it, you’re welcome, I just gave you a great tip for cranking out easy little graphics. Go to Google images and grab a shot of some holiday lights, add some text to it, and post that little gem on Instagram and add text similar to what’s above and wait for the phone to ring!

Around this time of year another good idea is to look back at last December and check out all of the shows that you did. Hopefully, the contact person has already contacted you to lock down this December, but if they haven’t, get proactive! Get on the phone or email and tell them that you’re booking up fast and if they want a party like last year’s, then they need to go ahead and sign a contract and send in a deposit! That may or may not be true, but a little white lie never hurt anyone. Sometimes you have to create a sense of urgency to get the folks in the corporate sector moving.

The last tip that I can suggest, especially when dealing with large Fortune 500 corporations is to watch your mouth. I’m not talking about cursing, I’m talking about what you say on the phone or at the consultation when talking to the person in charge of the event. The majority of them have employees that practice different types of religion. I never answer the phone and say, “Let’s talk about your Christmas party!” That in itself is a foul. The term is always going to be holiday party unless they correct you otherwise.

I hope this helps folks, now go out there and get those holiday parties booked! Good luck!

Joe Bunn & Mike Walter are hosting The PhDJ Workshop in Raleigh, NC November 4th & 5th, 2014. Visit www.phdjworkshop.com for more information.