

Staying Relevant
By Joe Bunn for DJN

Let's face it, none of us are getting any younger. Getting older is a part of life and I've accepted it. What I will never accept is becoming irrelevant in the eyes of my clients and vendors that refer our company. This article is going to take you through some of the ways that you and your company can remain relevant to not only couples, but also to college and school aged kids that are using your services.

Music. The worst thing you can do as a DJ is stop looking for music. To me, it's the kiss of death. The love of music is probably what brought you to this occupation in the first place. If you have to mark down an hour or two every week to shut off emails and just scour the net for music or listen to the U.S. Top 50 on Spotify, then do that! Never forget how much you love music! Trust me, if you are having a phone call or consultation with someone that is a big music fan, and they sniff out that you aren't, you can kiss that show goodbye.

Attire. Believe this. The way you look is extremely important in staying relevant. I'm not suggesting that you go out and buy the latest Jordans or Yeezy sneakers, or start shopping at Forever 21, but you should pick up a traditional fashion magazine (like GQ) every once in a while and see what looks good. Should you go out and buy the \$8,000 Gucci blazer the model has on? No! But you would be surprised at how you can find something very similar at Jos. A Bank, H&M or Nordstrom. I'm in those stores all the time looking at clothes. The last thing you want to do is show up to a show or consultation looking like an old man/woman (even if you are). Sure, you can dress your age, but have a sense of style. If you need help, places like Nordstrom will fall all over you to help pick you out a new wardrobe.

Marketing. Have you looked over your website and printed materials lately? Is it still relevant? In other words, do the brides have on puffy shouldered dresses or the more modern cuts? Does the groom in your header photo have a mullet? It's probably time for some new pictures. And while you're at it, check your diversity. What do I mean by that? This world is filled with all kinds of beautiful people-different races, religions, sexes. Include them all!

Office Space. Where are you meeting the people that pay you? In Starbucks? Ben & Jerry's? Listen, we have been over this before. I feel like it's hard to ask people for \$2,000-\$3,000 while a barista is grinding beans at 200 decibels right next to you, but some people do it. I've always pushed for at least trying to get a shared space. When you do reach that level, make sure it's relevant. Décor is crucial. A blank space indicates that you have no vision, no personality, no creativity. Take those four walls and throw up some amazing photos from your events! Head to IKEA or somewhere similar and get some cool (but inexpensive) furniture. Get a mini refrigerator and stock it with all types of beverages (maybe even some beers or tiny champagne bottles). Basically, make it relaxing and chill. You don't want folks coming straight from work into another place that looks, well, like work.

Consultations. In consultations, give a little bit of your background. For example, I haven't played in a club in almost ten years, but I surely let my potential clients know that's where I come from. It will give them a sense of your mixing style right off the bat. Also, talk about music! Again, I can't stress this enough. If they are meeting with you at all, it's because they care a lot about this part of the planning, which means they care about good music.

Gear. Staying relevant in the gear department doesn't necessarily mean going out and buying the hottest and newest gadget every time something new comes out. You'd go broke in six months. However, before wedding season, do an assessment. Set up your stuff, take pictures, get input from people you trust. How does it look? How long have you had those speakers? How beat up are they? Maybe that carpeted façade needs to be replaced by a Vision DJ Designs booth (www.visiondjdesigns.com)...see what I did there? There is nothing worse than folks showing up to a gig, giving your gear a look, and thinking "This guy is going to stink, his gear is ancient".

I hope that you'll read this article before wedding season starts and will implement these things to make yourself more relevant. As we all get older, I feel like the couples keep getting younger! You got this!