

More Than JUST a DJ?

IT'S TIME TO RETHINK YOUR BUSINESS "SELF IMAGE"

By Arnoldo Offermann

"Are you a DJ or not?" This sounds like an insult, doesn't it? It's sort of sad how we see "just a DJ" as a bad thing. How can we expect our clients to see us as an important vendor when every mobile DJ says "more than just a DJ."

Does Jazzy Jeff say that? What about DJ AM? Kool? No? Why not? Why isn't their tagline "more than just a DJ?"

Oh—I get it; what mobile DJs are trying to say is "more than just that crappy guy posing as a DJ. But I want to offer more than just awesome music, so here's the entire list of services I added on." But that doesn't sound as catchy.

Now, keep that in mind as you look through YouTube comments on gig logs with lines such as "a good DJ needs to have this and this light" or "that photobooth is terrible, you must be a bad DJ." (Those are actual lines.)

ARE YOU FREAKIN' KIDDING ME?!?!? Since when do DJs bring lights? Since when do DJs bring out photobooths? Pipe and drape? Let's break it down even more—since when do DJs MC their own events? In the dawn of the art that is "the DJ," there was an MC (which also stood for microphone chanter, a name which eventually developed into what a rapper is). So what am I getting at? If you even do so much as pick up a microphone, you're already "more than just a DJ."

We offer lighting, photobooths, video screens, laser effects, pipe and drape, décor, rentals, and MCs and game show hosts. I assume many, if not all of you, offer some sort of combination of the above. Good, so we've established almost every mobile DJ company is "more than just a DJ." SO WHY DO WE KEEP SAYING THAT?

Really think about what I mentioned above and look at your marketing. Our wedding website focused so much on the "more than just a DJ" part that we forgot that "Oh snap—our brides came here looking for music." Instead they're getting force-fed a bunch of extra info. If we push our website as a DJ's website and they see a million other items, it's going to overwhelm them just a bit. So what if we changed our website to be of a company that's no longer a mobile DJ? A name is just a name for us. I could call A Premier Entertainment a DJ company that offers lighting and décor or a full-service company that even offers DJs. I changed nothing as far as inner workings, but the clients see two totally different things.

Still don't understand me? It's ok, neither do I. Let's break it down to two scenarios:

Scenario 1: Bride sees our business card and thinks "Oh, A Premier Entertainment is a DJ company. Let's look at their site... Oh...Whoa! SO many options! But I was only prepared to look for a DJ. So many questions to ask now...where do I start?" This often leads to a sales process that involves trying to get them to nail down an idea of what they want.

Scenario 2: Bride sees our business card, slightly changed, and thinks: "Oh, A Premier Entertainment! They're a one-stop shop for reception décor and entertainment. Ok, I know I need lighting, a photobooth and a DJ. This vendor is going to need a bigger cut of my budget because they're going to handle three important parts of my wedding."

Now do you see what I'm getting at? For years, DJs thought that by "adding on" to their DJ services they could keep doing upsells to make more money. But an upsell should be an upgrade, not an entirely new service. Uplighting does not upgrade your DJ performance. Pipe and drape will not enhance your sound quality. Nope—those are two different services and your business plan should not be "mobile DJ who also does this and that." Instead, you scrap your entire plan and rewrite it as "we're an event production company that specializes in bringing lighting, décor, and music in one easy bundle."

If you surprise your client with "more than just a DJ" then they're going to surprise you with "I didn't budget all this with one vendor." I first realized this when doing school sales. After they told me their DJ budget can't allow them to afford uplighting, gobo projections, and video screens, I replied with "but that's not your DJ budget, that's your decorations budget." EVERY SINGLE TIME I say this I see bulbs going off. It's almost like our

clients don't realize that since we're DJs who offer other services, then we need more than just their DJ budget. However, clients don't think

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about it because they were prepared to shop for a DJ and instead they keep running into "more than just DJs."

Is this enlightening? I hope so—because you should be erasing every bit of "more than just a DJ" from your website. That's not even a unique selling point anymore—it's just fluff—marketing farts, even.

This summer, we'll be working on our new marketing now that this "revelation" has come full-circle. We've danced around this for years, but didn't know quite how to market it. After some thought we decided: Start from scratch: new logo, new selling technique, new packages, new business cards and even new vendor relationships. Heck, we even got new employees! It's not that our summers are slow, but it's the closest thing we have. It's a nice lull before homecoming season takes over everything and it's just past wedding season so we have enough time to

implement new techniques and strategies for the sales, follow-up, and even performance itself. We don't want to implement a little bit at a time, we want to completely change everything. The only thing that remotely looks similar is the website layout, only because it still fits the look we want.

We are now marketing ourselves as "A Premier Entertainment: DJs | MCs | Drapery | Lighting." It's not just "A Premier Entertainment: DJs and..." which is still some variation of "more than just a DJ." Lighting and decor now have equal place with DJs, and MCs will always be a separate option. However, the "Entertainment" part of the name could throw some people off. This is why the wedding division of our company is simple named "My Dream Reception." It's a name synonymous with what

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we do, just like 4SchoolsOnly. When a bride and groom hear the name, they won't think of just a DJ. They'll think of what their dream reception will be like and inquire about our services with that vision in mind.

While everyone else is "more than just a DJ" we'll be the "we offer more, but you can have 'just a DJ.'" Because, coming full circle, being just a DJ was never a bad thing. **MB**



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