

How to Stand Out

THREE OUTSIDE-THE-BOX WEDDING MARKETING STRATEGIES

By Stephanie Padovani

One of the biggest challenges we have as DJs is standing out from the competition. Then what's the first thing we do when we want to break into the wedding market? We look to the competition and do exactly what they're doing!

You've got to think outside the box to have any hope of standing out.

TWO RULES OF OUTSIDE THE BOX MARKETING

Rule #1 – Be different.

If your competition zigs, you zag. If they have a website with a black background and flashing gifs, yours should go pastel. (Hint: that's not a bad idea anyway if you're trying to attract the bridal market.)

Be different in a way that makes your DJ service stand apart from everyone else. If you're not sure what makes you different, ask your

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clients, "What made you decide to go with me?" They'll help you identify your biggest strengths.

Rule #2 – Meet the bride and groom where you can be their only focus.

It's nearly impossible to stand out at a bridal show when you're squeezed up against your closest competitors like sardines. Instead, find ways to get in front of the couple where you can be the only DJ. It's much easier to get attention and stand out.

Keeping these two rules in mind, let's explore some outside the box marketing strategies.

1) PROVIDE ENTERTAINMENT FOR AN EXCLUSIVE BRIDAL EVENT

Most venues and caterers hold a tasting or open house night. Volunteer your services and it will make the venue look good and show off what you do best. The same strategy would work for an invitation-only bridal fashion event hosted by a high-end bridal boutique.

You can even host your own educational event for brides. Partner with a photographer and makeup artist to present a night of "How to Plan the Best Wedding Ever" tips and strategies from the pros. In every case, you'll position yourself as the must-have wedding expert before a captive audience.

2) SEND THE BRIDE A "LUMPY MAILER" INSTEAD



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OF A BORING EMAIL

A bride typically gets hundreds of emails from wedding vendors immediately following a bridal show or registration on a wedding website. Your email will be lost in a sea of spam.

Almost no one sends direct mail anymore, so when you send a package, also known as a "lumpy mailer," your message instantly stands out.

Lumpy mailers can get expensive if you sent them indiscriminately to every lead. Sort through the bridal show lead list for the dates and locations you'd like to book. Target high-end venues and affluent zip codes, and skip the rest. Send the highest quality leads a package that's guaranteed to get opened.

Tie your gift into your business for extra marketing punch. For example, you might send them a flash drive containing a video demo of a popular dance, or a funky custom bobblehead. If your specialty is non-cheesy entertainment, you might mail them a cheese sampler with the note: "We guarantee this will be the only cheesy thing about your wedding."

It's much easier to stand out from the competition in the mailbox than it is in the email inbox.

3) USE THE REPORTER STRATEGY TO GET FREE PROMOTION FROM OTHER LOCAL WEDDING VENDORS.

One of the best ways to get other wedding businesses promoting you is to create a situation in which they can promote themselves at the same time. Enter the Reporter Strategy.

Call up five popular wedding businesses that work with the type of clients you want to attract. If they have an engaged audience of fans on social media, that's even better. Explain that you're writing a series of blog posts featuring the best wedding professionals in the area, and ask if they would mind sharing a few tips in return for credit and a link to their website.

Everyone loves free promotion and most pros will happily oblige. Publish their best tips on our blog and link to their website, then send the pro you've interviewed a link to their featured post. Invite them to share their brilliance with their friends and followers.

Those wedding vendors are going to share that link on social media, introducing you to a whole new audience of brides and grooms. You'll also be solidifying referral relationships for the future.

Ditch those boring, ineffective marketing strategies that make you look just like the competition. A little creative thinking will break you out of that box and place you in front of the couples who are looking for exactly the entertainment you specialize in. **MB**