

Questions you should ask your entertainer before you hire them and why it is important.

Before you ask what they charge you should take the following information into consideration.

*AFTER THE VOWS...

- 72% of all brides say they would have spent more time choosing their reception entertainment.
- Almost 100% say they would have spent more of their budget on the entertainment.
- During wedding planning, Brides say their highest priority is their attire, followed by the reception site and caterer - reception entertainment is among the least of their priorities. Within one week after their reception, 78% of Brides say they would have made the entertainment their highest priority!
- When asked 81% of guests say the thing they remember most about a wedding is the entertainment.
- 65% of all couples that chose a band to entertain at their wedding, said, if they had it to do over again, they would have chosen a disc jockey.

*these statistics were posted on the American Disc Jockey Association web site as published in St. Louis Bride & Groom Magazine in 2003. Sources include: Simmons, 2001; USA Today, 2002; National Bridal Service, 2001; The Knot, 2002; Brides Magazine, 2001.

Questions:

Is your date and time available? This should be the first question you should ask.

How long have you been in the DJ business? If a DJ company is relatively new do you want to chance your once in a lifetime event to a DJ who is just learning the business. Granted every one has to start somewhere but do you want it to be your event. If hiring from a multi system company check how long your DJ has been in the business. Most multi-system companies have employees that have been with them for years. You should have no problem requesting an experienced DJ.

When do you meet your DJ? Three months before your event? One month? Week of? Your DJ is interregnal to the success of your event. Your DJ should be involved in all of you planning meetings

Do you use professional equipment? A really nice Home Stereo System or a friend with an ipod and big speakers is not appropriate. (American DJ, American Audio, Bose, Gemini, Crown, Peavey are just a few)

Do you have Back-up Equipment? Most professional companies have back-up equipment available. *Check to see if it will be on site at your event.*

What type of music do you carry? They should carry music to your event that covers all era's of music. They may say they have Thousands upon thousand of songs, but what are they and will they be acceptable to you and your guests.

Is your music library legal? A truly professional Mobile Entertainer subscribes to a music service for all of their current music (TM Century, Rotations, Promo Only are just a few) for *each* system they have. Older music should also be "unique" to each system. **Why is this important?** Not only to comply with the law but it's also a matter of integrity.

What will your DJ wear? Confirm with your DJ what they will be wearing before your event. Formal attire is the popular choice. If you are having a specific theme you can request you DJ dress appropriately. Fees may apply is costume rental is required.

Do you have Planning Meetings? Planning meetings are very important. This is your chance to tell your DJ exactly how you want your event to run, and the music you want to hear. **How Many?** One planning meeting may not be enough. Are they willing to meet you more than once?

If I were to hire your company how many hours does your DJ personally invest in your event? Your DJ is an integral part of how your evening runs and he/ she should personally invest around a minimum of 15 hours to your event. This includes, but should not be limited to:

Initial Face to Face Consultation: 1-1.5 hours

Final Face to Face Preparation meeting: 1- 2 hours

Music and Information Preparation work: 4 to 6 hours

Your Event Day: 9 hours, including actual event

Do they belong to any Professional Associations? Many of these associations have professional standards they require you to fulfill before being accepted into their organization ([American Disc Jockey Association](#), [National Association of Mobile Entertainers](#) are a few)

Do they provide a written contract? All professional entertainers should provide a written contract. Both parties should sign the document. It should include date, time and location of event. Always have a written contract for any vendor you hire.

How often do they keep you up to date? They should check in several times before your event.

Do they allow your requests? The answer should always be YES.

Are they willing to purchase music not in their collection? Yes, obviously within reason.

Can we provide our own Music? This should not be a problem for most DJ's, but chances are they might just have the music you are looking for in their collection.

Do they provide on-line event planning? On-line event planning allows you to work on your event at your convenience. Why drag paperwork around with you. Work on your reception, on-line, when you have a spare minute.

Do they have insurance? Many Venues require Entertainment to have insurance before they are allowed to perform.

How much is your deposit/ retainer fee? All companies require a fee to hold the date for you it could be anywhere from \$100 to half of the cost for their service. Almost all are non-refundable.

Do you have a wireless microphone? Most professional companies do. These are great for making toasts at the head table. **Does it cost extra?** It really shouldn't cost you more. If they charge more ask why.

Is Lighting provided in you package? Most if not all professional entertainers provide lighting with their packages. If they don't you should ask why. **Is there any additional extra cost?** Basic lighting should be included in their packages. Additional lighting or a lighting upgrade should be the only extra cost.

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