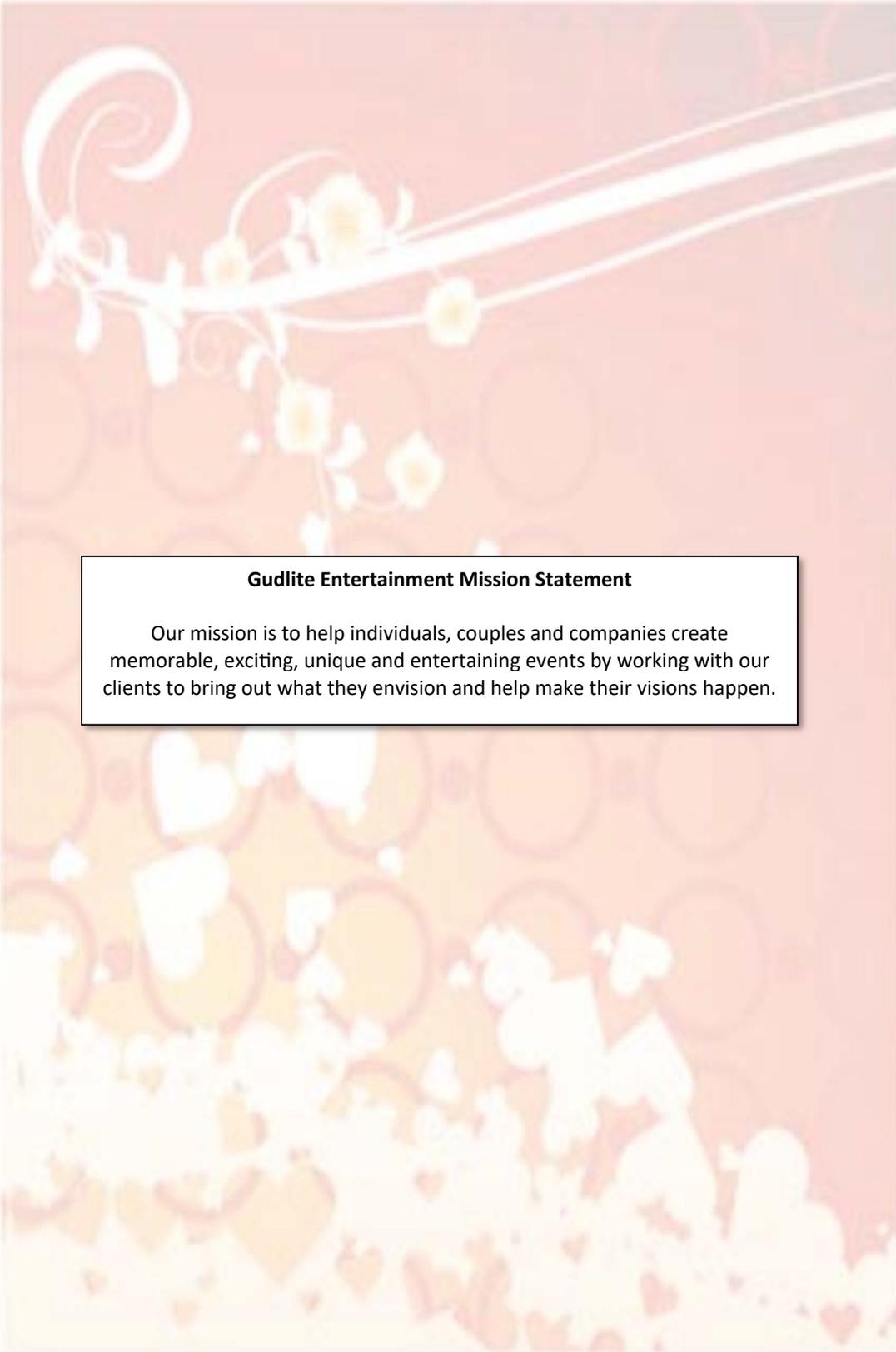


How to Find Your DJ



The background of the slide is a soft, warm-toned gradient. It features a delicate, white, swirling floral vine with several small, five-petaled flowers in the upper left quadrant. The lower half of the slide is filled with a pattern of overlapping, semi-transparent hearts in various shades of white and light pink, creating a romantic and celebratory atmosphere.

Gudlite Entertainment Mission Statement

Our mission is to help individuals, couples and companies create memorable, exciting, unique and entertaining events by working with our clients to bring out what they envision and help make their visions happen.

Congratulations!

Your wedding day will be one of the most memorable and amazing days of your life. This day is about you and your special someone, and everything about this day should represent the two of you. It is a big day and it is a huge undertaking when planning.

Everything will be planned out, thought over, re-thought, re-planned, prioritized and put in motion.

However, one of the things that couples often overlook is the entertainment. While there are many choices out there, you must choose wisely and make sure your DJ will represent you.

So how do you choose a DJ?

With so many options out there, it can be very difficult to find the right DJ. Every DJ has a different style, personality and offers different services. The price is also different with every DJ. In Manitoba DJ prices range from \$300 for a basic "show up and play" DJ to over \$3,000 for a fully interactive DJ that not only DJ's your event but helps direct the flow of the reception and even performs the *Master of Ceremonies* duties.

Will the show be unique?

Every DJ is unique, but not every DJ does a unique show.

A common issue that couples have when hiring a DJ is that the DJ they hire does the same thing over and over again.

There is no uniqueness to their performance and no personalization.

One of the worst things to hear at a wedding is "*Please welcome the happy couple*" or "*Please welcome the bride and groom*".

The DJ should at least know your names!

Before you start looking

Before you start looking for a DJ, you must be prepared. There are some key things you must consider.



Budget – Consider this one carefully. In the DJ industry, “*You get what you pay for*” is very true. Low cost DJ’s are everywhere. You may find a DJ for \$500 or less, but they may not be truly invested in your wedding. For a DJ who takes the time to prepare and plan for your day, and who is completely invested in you, be prepared to spend over \$1,000.

PRIORITY BUDGET:	
Item	
Wedding Dress	1 = \$1000
Flowers	2
Cake	3
Ceremony/Reception Music	3 = \$1000
Limousine	4
Photography	5 = \$2000
Invitations	6
Music	7
Reception	8

Priority – This one is interesting. The DJ is usually low on the priority scale. Catering, decorations, novelty items and such seem to rank higher in priority. Yet your entertainment can make or break a wedding reception. A DJ can really enhance your reception with his/her choice of music, ability to entertain and keep your guests happy. Alternately, if your DJ performs poorly, it directly relates to how much fun your guests are having.

Ceremony – Do you require sound equipment for your ceremony? Do you need assistance with the ceremony? Many DJ’s are able to assist you with ceremonies as well.



Date of your wedding – The date you choose for your wedding plays an important role in price, availability and services offered. In Manitoba, Prime wedding dates are generally May to September. These months will usually fill up fast for most vendors, so booking early is important. Also, the rules of supply and demand do tend to apply during these months as well. Since DJ’s will usually book up, some may charge a premium fee.

Other dates considered premium:

It is not just these months that are considered “premium”. Holidays such as Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, Canada Day, Halloween and New Year’s Eve

Where to find a DJ

Finding a DJ is not all that hard. A simple internet search will most likely give numerous results.

Websites such as *weddingwire.ca* are great tools in searching for a DJ. Many websites even have unbiased reviews (although you do have to read them with a grain of salt... competitors are known for leaving bad reviews on their competition's pages... bad practice)

These sites are often full of tips for planning your wedding and may even include some great planning tools. They usually contain great articles that are written by industry experts as well.

Wedding shows can be another great place to meet DJ's. With wedding shows, you will have the opportunity to meet with several DJ's, but the conversations may feel a bit rushed as other people try to gather their own information and get the attention of the person you are speaking with. Thus, it is best to set up an appointment with a DJ you are considering hiring instead of booking at the show.

Another excellent source to find a DJ is through a reputable DJ association. In Canada there are two such associations. The **Canadian DJ Association** (www.cdja.ca) and the **Canadian Professional DJ Association** (www.cpdja.ca)

Probably the best place to find a DJ, is through the recommendations of family, friends, co-workers and other wedding vendors. They will likely have seen the DJ in action and/or have worked with him/her in the past.

IMPORTANCE OF THE DJ

When looking for a DJ, many couples put a high importance on the DJ's price... how cheap he/she can be.

But price should not be the main factor when searching for a DJ.

A wedding DJ today is more than someone who stands behind a mixer and plays music. The DJ is a representation of you. He/she will guide you and your guests through the reception.

Remember the last wedding you attended? Think about what made that wedding fun for you. Did you have fun?

If the food is just OK, or the flowers are not exactly what you wanted, how would that affect your reception?

But what happens if the DJ plays heavy metal music to a country crowd? Or if he/she is inappropriate on the microphone? Guests notice... and leave.

There are many videos online of wedding reception fails and most of them are directly related to the DJ. Don't let a video of your wedding be one of them.

We have a list of DJ's. Now what?

After you have obtained your list of DJ's, it's time to make the phone calls.

This will be your introduction to the DJ or DJ Company. This call is important for both you and the DJ to "feel" each other out. Your conversation should be both informative and courteous. Be wary of DJ's who do not let you get a word in edgewise, do not ask questions, are too pushy or put down and/or speak negatively of other DJ's and vendors.

Keep notes on the DJ's you speak with. You will have to narrow down the list and decide on the three or four you will want to meet with. The phone call is an important step in searching for a DJ, or any other vendor for that matter. You can't meet with everyone, but you **MUST** meet the DJ.

If a DJ does not want to meet, or wants to book you right away on the phone, move on to the next one on your list.

What to look for in a DJ

Experience

The more experienced the DJ, the better he/she will generally be. Less experienced DJ's will often be unprepared, lack a variety of music and may run into difficulties if problems such as equipment failure arise. However, DJ's must start somewhere, and if you are comfortable with the DJ and are OK with less experience, then you may find a good DJ at a good value.

Training

A good DJ will often try to better themselves thru various forms of training. There are many courses, workshops and resources a DJ has at his/her disposal to improve their skills and thus improve their clients events.

Association Membership

While this is not mandatory, a DJ who is a member of either the **Canadian DJ Association** or the **Canadian Professional DJ Association** usually have to be insured and must adhere to a code of conduct.



Licensing

A DJ must either have a **CONNECT** music license or be using licensed music from a company that supplies music to DJ's (ERG, MultiMusic Services, Promo Only etc.).

Insurance

A DJ **MUST** be properly insured. This is more to protect you than him/herself.

Most DJ's will have insurance against their gear in case of theft, but you must also ensure that the DJ holds some form of liability insurance. If he does not, and damage that is caused by the DJ to property or persons may end up on your shoulders.

Personality

This one is very important. The DJ you choose should have a personality that complements yours. DJ's are people. Every person has a different personality and a different view on things. Not every DJ you meet with will be the one for you, and that is OK.

Equipment

No, you do not need to know the power rating of the speakers or amplifier. You do not need to know the type of mixer a DJ uses.

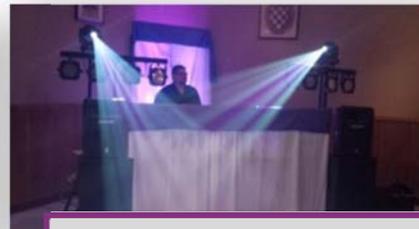
Be weary of DJ's who only market by telling you the wattage their system has or lists out all of the equipment they use. There is more to being a DJ than just the gear.

What you really need to know is that he is using quality equipment that will be sufficient for your needs and will be set up in a professional, clean manner.

There is nothing worse than being at a wedding where everyone is dressed to the nines and the DJ has wires everywhere and is dressed in a white t-shirt!



This is not very clean nor professional



Clean setup with cables all hidden

Meeting your Potential DJ

Now that you have searched and spoken with some DJ's, your list should be narrowed down.

Now is the time for a face to face meeting.

Your personalities must work well with each other. Let's face it, you will be spending some time with this person and he/she will be representing you in front of the most important people in your lives.

You have to **want** to work with this person in order for your day to be a success. Your DJ should recognize this, and if you both feel that you are not compatible, then he/she should be able to make recommendations on DJ's who may work well with you.

The initial meeting is where you are going to decide if you want to hire the DJ, and the DJ will decide if he/she wants to work with you.

What should I ask the DJ?

You are preparing to meet with the DJ, but you are unsure what to ask him/her. The main thing here is to ensure that the DJ will do everything reasonably possible to ensure you have the wedding you want.

The DJ should be spending a fair amount of time listening to you and asking questions about you. How you envision your day, what you have seen at other weddings you liked or did not like. The focus should be on *you* and not the DJ.

After enough information has been gathered, then the DJ should focus the conversation on what they can offer to help make your vision a reality.

There are, however, some important questions you may want to have the DJ clarify before you sign any contract



THE MEETING

Meeting the DJ can be intimidating, for both you and the DJ.

That is why you should meet him/her somewhere you feel comfortable.

Not all DJ's have offices, so many will meet at a location of your choice, such as a coffee shop or in your home.

If possible, the best place to meet with the DJ is at the venue. This way he/she can see where they will be setting up and be able to get a good idea of the room layout.

Is our date open? To be honest, this is on every list, but it should have been answered long before you even meet the DJ. If they don't have the date open, then why are you meeting?



What is your experience? This one is important. A DJ may have 20 years' experience, but only the last three weeks of those 20 years have been a DJ at weddings. Just because they have been a DJ for a long time, doesn't mean they have the experience needed to bring out your vision.

Do you help with planning and timelines? I guess a better question might be *would you like a stress free reception?* Having a DJ help with the timeline will ensure a smooth flowing evening.

Will you be meeting with us before the wedding? IMPORTANT! Your DJ should always have a meeting with you prior to the wedding so you can pass on any relevant information, such as the planned schedule of events for the day. If the DJ is helping out with the planning and timeline, there will most likely be a few meetings.

Do you do a Grand Entrance? A Grand Entrance will help make your day that much more special. A Grand Entrance can bring out laughter, love and a wide range of other emotions.

Do you belong to an association? If a DJ belongs to the Canadian DJ Association or the Canadian Professional DJ Association, they will have followed certain guidelines set out by the association to become members.

Do you have liability insurance? If the DJ does not answer yes to this, move on. Remember, you are responsible for what happens at your event. If the DJ does not have insurance, you may be on the hook for any injuries or damages incurred by the DJ.

Will you be the DJ performing? You want to make sure you have met the actual DJ who will be performing at your wedding. If they are not the DJ, then make sure you will have the opportunity to meet him/her.

Do you take song requests and do you play them? The answer to this question should be *“Yes, I love to take requests, and will do my very best to accommodate them providing they are a fit to the crowd and there is time for it”*.

Basically, yes, they will take requests but they will filter them accordingly.... Punk Metal may not be suitable if 99% of the guests are country fans... this is where the DJ's skills at reading the crowd become really important.

What other services do you offer? - If you are looking at having things like video projection or up lighting, why not let the DJ handle it? For example, many venues will have up lighting but they will stay one color all night. When a DJ does up lighting, they can usually make the lights dance!

Do you have a contract? This is important. If the DJ does not offer a contract, then do not book. Without a contract, you will have no recourse if he/she does not provide the services promised or even worse, does not show up!

Bottom Line

When searching for a DJ, you want to ensure that you are comfortable with the DJ, services he/she provides and their fees. Remember, if the DJ charges too little, there is a good chance that they will not be invested in your wedding.

If, for any reason, you feel that the DJ will not represent you well then do not book them. This is your day and it should be done your way. Our jobs as DJ's is to play music, help guide you through your special day and help make it special, memorable and amazing.

Thank you for taking the time to look over this booklet and I hope that you find this tips helpful in creating your one of a kind wedding!

Cheers!

Kent Gudmundson





About Kent

Kent Gudmundson began working with weddings and other events at a young age when he was first a bartender, then banquet manager at a large sporting complex that catered to events from 50 to 3000 people.

In 1997, he began his DJ career at one of the hottest nightspots in Winnipeg at the time. From there, he moved into weddings, socials and other events.

Having performed at numerous weddings and socials, not to mention corporate events, holiday parties and several other events, he has honed his skills and gained vast knowledge in not only the DJ industry, but the wedding industry. He brings his past experiences to light with every show he puts on and every couple he works with.

In 2015, Kent was elected as the Secretary of the Manitoba Chapter of the *Canadian Disc Jockey Association* and later that year he became the Vice President of the Chapter.

For more information, please visit www.gudlite.com.



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