

The MUST KNOW of hiring a DJ IN NJ/NYC/CT/PA

This article is for anyone looking to hire a DJ and for professionals who need to explain their pricing. Often people who look to hire a DJ think that the DJ is “just coming over to play some music” and cannot see why a professional DJ would charge what they charge for the task. Professional DJ’s often find themselves having to defend their expertise against someone who holds the same *title* of “DJ” but advertises (often falsely) to do the same job for a much lower price. All of these reasons are justified until the proper level of understanding is achieved. The purpose of this article is to assist in your understanding of some very important information.

First of all let’s divide DJs into two groups. The Professional DJ and the Novice DJ. The Professional (by definition) is a person who earns a living in an occupation *frequently* engaged in by amateurs: A professional DJ. The Novice (by definition) is a person who is “new to or inexperienced in a certain task, situation and so forth”. A part-timer.

Professional mobile DJ

The professional Mobile DJ has the responsibility for purchasing and providing every piece of sound equipment needed to play music and often create the ambiance at your event. The type, quality, and dependability of the sound equipment can vary greatly from the **Novice DJ** to the **Professional full-time DJ** and this difference **WILL** make or break your event *very easily*. The professional full-time mobile DJ invests many more hours of work for an event than what the person hiring the DJ usually understands. Here is an example of the time spent by a professional mobile DJ that needs to be understood by both the client and the DJ.

Lets break down the time a **professional** will take for reception of just 4 hours in the NJ Tri-state area.

- Pre-party music playlist creation and sorting for event. 1 hour.
- Loading vehicle with equipment – 45min – 1hour

- Driving to venue, coordinating the unloading in loading dock (usually at back pass the kitchen. 1 hour – 1.5 hours.
- Setting up depending on the package. Single dj set-up with the basics – 1 hour. Intelligent lighting, up lighting added – 1.5 hour. TV screen set-up added – 2 – 2.5 hours.
- Breakdown and reload – 45 minutes -1.25 hours.
- Drive back and unload at storage – 1 – 1.5 hours

THE TOTAL AVERAGE TIME IS 7 HOURS OFF SITE (NOT INCLUDING THE RECEIPTION ITSELF). Wow.

As you can see, what the Client sees as only a four-hour gig can actually be **a full 11-hour day for the DJ.**

THE BIG QUESTION. Why does one DJ say they charge only \$600-\$800 for a 4 hour reception and others \$1300-\$1500 or more “TO JUST DJ?”. Why should I pay the higher rate? Good question!

IT’S AN INVESTMENT. A very smart one too. Lets break it down using this 2015 pricing researched at the Guitar Center and what I (TWK) pay for the extra **must have.**

Novice Mobile DJ Equipment

Professional Mobile DJ Equipment

Laptop –	\$500. No back-up	Laptop -	\$3000 (includes back up.
Speaker system -	\$900 (poor sound)	Speaker system -	\$4000 (Bose System)
DJ Controller/Mixer-	\$400	DJ Controller/Mixer-	\$2000 (Pioneer) \$500 (pioneer back-up)
Microphone -	\$150 (poor audio)	Microphones -	\$600. \$200 (Back-up)
Cables and power strips-	\$100 (poor audio)	Cables and power strips-	\$500
Music library -	\$400 (un-edited)	Music library (clean versions) -	\$2000 (plus monthly record pool cost)

Vehicle type -	Personal mini van (may not be able to use loading dock)	Vehicle type	Commercial Plates - Econo cargo van
Bags -	\$150	Equipment cases	\$1500
		Professional TV displays, stands, special effects and intelligent lighting	\$6000 - \$8000
		Liability insurance	\$500 yearly for \$2,000,000 coverage and \$100,000 property damage
		Product liability	\$300 yearly for package total cost.
		Office monthly cost	\$1500-\$2000.
TOTAL EST COST	\$2600 - \$3000	<u>TOTAL COST -</u>	\$23,000. (NOT INCLUDING COMMERCIAL VAN/PLATES AND OFFICE RENT/COST).

Quick outline of a Professional DJ:

- WORKS UNDER CONTRACT! To protect you, the DJ, your guest, and your Event.

- Can easily provide a clean music selection if required
- Has experience playing to diverse groups of people (**tastes, culture, and age**)
- Understands that the “look” of their equipment effects the look of your event.
- Has invested considerable time and money in their equipment.
- Can adjust the music by the moment to fit your event (referred to as “reading the crowd”).
- **Covers you the client for incidentals and general liability.**

The Finally

This all said there is a huge difference in the Novice DJ (Beginner or part-timer) and the professional DJ company (full-timer with experience). So here, this term comes to life now. *“You get what you pay for”.* If a DJ has an incredibly low price, there is probably a reason for it. Can you reception afford this high risk? I’d hope not. Nothing like a DJ getting to a location late or they’re in sloppy clothing or worse, a cap and jeans. How about the usual mistake, playing inappropriate music in front of your parents and guest all while acting like an irresponsible party crasher as oppose to a hired professional. The Professional mobile DJ that quotes a price is not quoting for the average 4 hours of your event; they are quoting for the job at hand and the responsibility of making your most special day just that. Special, awesome, great and fun.

Credits: Blogger Wedding king. DJ Truth. DJ Judge Mental. DJ Prophet. Wedding-wire. Wedding-Bee. Guitar Center. Sam-Ash.