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*A VALUABLE
RESOURCE*

***“The 7 Biggest Mistakes Event Planners
Make When Hiring Professional
Entertainers... and How to Avoid Them!”***

It is very rare for a professional entertainer to write this kind of report. Many other entertainers, magicians, comedians, and entertainment agencies do NOT want you know this information. Please take the time to read it carefully. The fact that you are taking the time to read this report emphasizes a desire on your behalf to make your upcoming event the absolute best it can be.

I urge you to get comfortable and focus, so you can really take in the information listed in this report. It IS that important! It reveals vital information that you NEED to know to make the most out of your next event!

Dear Friend,

It's shocking but true.

Every day, businesses hire entertainers that they should not be hiring. Entertainers and entertainment agencies often lie about their qualifications, charge you a LOT more than they should, end up turning your important event into an embarrassment and put your reputation on the line by presenting sub-par performances or by presenting inappropriate content.

Organizing a corporate event or a large function is a DIFFICULT and STRESSFUL job. There are so many

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details that must be attended to. But here is the undeniable truth:

**THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF YOUR EVENT HINGES ON YOU
HIRING THE RIGHT ENTERTAINER OR ENTERTAINMENT**

I realize that you might not believe that right now but think about it for a minute. When was the last time you remembered the dinner you had at a corporate event? Did the centerpieces alone make the event memorable and successful? When was the last time you attended a corporate event when the DJ alone made it successful?

Probably never.

The entertainer or entertainment "is" the key to a successful event, but here's the problem...

Hire the wrong person and your event will suffer. Hire someone who offends members of your audience and it is your reputation on the line. Overpay for an entertainer who delivers a sub-par performance, or skimp on getting a good entertainer, and all eyes will be looking at you.

This report is going to give you the inside-scoop on what some entertainers and agencies do to unsuspecting event planners. You'll be armed with the knowledge you need so you won't be "taken advantage" by these people.

In just a minute, I'm going to reveal what the 7 Biggest Mistakes are and how you can avoid them, but first let me answer a couple of questions that are probably on your mind:

**Who Are You And Why Are You Revealing This
Information?**

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My name is Alex deTessieres performing as the High Energy Magic of Speed and I'm a professional magician, illusionist and entertainer. For the past 23 years, I have been performing a high energy, fun and highly interactive magic and illusion show which have helped event planners at companies including Lexus, the McDonald's Corporation, NBC, Department of Navy, Westfield, Holiday Inn, NASA and many, many others make their events exciting, successful, fun, and most importantly... MEMORABLE!

I'm revealing information that the corporate entertainment industry doesn't want you to know for two main reasons:

REASON #1: If you end up hiring a lousy entertainer or magician, this closes the field not only to me but other competent professionals. Odds are, if the person you hire is sub-par, you'll be very reluctant to hire a similar type of performer in the future.

I have heard this many times before...*"We hired a magician a couple years ago, and it did not go over well."* The truth is... you hired a bad magician! A good entertainer will be able to make every event, in any environment, with any crowd a great success!

REASON #2: It really bothers me to see bad or unethical entertainers take advantage of people, and in turn make their event planners look bad. To me, this hurts my industry, profession and is simply just wrong.

Okay, now that you know who I am and why I'm doing this, let's talk about the *7 Biggest Mistakes Event Planners Make When Hiring Entertainers... and How to Avoid Them!*

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BIG MISTAKE #1:

Assuming That Going Through An Entertainment Agency Will Insure Good Entertainment

Many event planners feel that they are better off hiring performers from an agency instead of hiring performers on their own. First, let me say that there are many good and reputable agencies that I work with on a regular basis. In fact, if you want to hire entertainers through an agency, give me a call and I'll give you the names and phone numbers of some superb ones. The following information is intended to help you avoid disreputable agencies.

While it is true that making one phone call to an agency and letting them do the work is a lot easier than doing it yourself, there is no assurance that you are going to get the performer or entertainer that is perfect for your event.

Dirty little secret #1 some agencies don't want you to know:

Agencies have a list of entertainers in different price ranges. Their first concern is booking the highest priced performer so they'll get a bigger commission. It's for this reason that they always ask you what your budget is.

If you tell them that you have a \$5,000 budget they will look to book an entertainer in that price range. This may not be the best person for your event, but because they can gobble up every dollar you have to spend, the agency books them.

Dirty little secret #2 some agencies don't want you to know:

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If you have a very substantial budget, an agency will almost always book way more performers than are necessary.

For example, I performed for a corporate event a few years ago, where an agency had booked multiple roving entertainers, a comedian, 2 bands, a DJ, a photo booth, a stilt walker, a caricature artist, and me. This was way OVERBOARD. The agency didn't care about what was best for the client; they only cared about spending every dime that company had available and sending out every act they could find to max out the clients budget.

Dirty little secret #3 some agencies don't want you to know:

This is going to blow you away and maybe even make you mad. Did you know that some agencies mark up their talent by 100% to 300% or more?

That's right! If a performer normally charges \$1,000 for a show, an agency will charge you up to \$2,000 for the same performer!!! Are you getting a \$2,000 performer or performance? No! You're getting a \$1,000 performer but paying twice what you should! I have seen this happen many, many times.

The agency practice of charging you DOUBLE what you would have paid if you hired the performer on your own is quite common. In fact, in a key training manual for entertainment agencies, the author boasts about this practice and has charts to show agents the "obscene" amount of money they can make by doing this.

Again, there are some agencies that do NOT do this. There are some very reputable agencies that really

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care about their clients and believe in a strong relationship between customer, agency and artists. Instead, they require that their talent discount their fees to them so that they can charge their clients the same amount they would have paid if they hired the performer directly. Or they charge a nominal service fee on top of the talents fee. These are the types of agencies you want to deal with. In essence, the artist offers a wholesale rate to agencies that book them on a regular basis, and they in turn book at the same rate you would hire the entertainer for directly.

Bottom Line: Remember that a disreputable agency's first concern is about the amount of money they can make, your needs come in a distant second. Take charge and be in control!

BIG MISTAKE #2

BASING YOUR DECISION PRIMARILY ON PRICE

Wow! This is a big topic.

Of course, price *is* a factor when hiring a performer. If you only have a \$1,000 budget, you're not going to be able to hire David Copperfield to come and perform for your group! However, many event planners place too much emphasis on price and not enough emphasis on the overall impact the entertainer will have on their event.

Is the highest priced performer always the best? Absolutely not! In fact, in a marketing course put out for entertainers, the author tells his readers to dramatically raise their fees because a lot of event planners equate the value of a performer by how much they charge. He says that it is all

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“perception”.

Well, it certainly won't be just “perception” if you hire someone who charges you thousands of dollars for a show that is, in reality, only worth a few hundred dollars and they “bomb”!

On the other hand, hiring the least expensive entertainer is not always the best way to go either.

Magicians, comedians and other performers are often perceived as a dime a dozen, a commodity, or all the same. So, the event planner tries to find the lowest priced performer.

The fact is, that each performer is **unique!** Like in any other professions, there are entertainers who are great, some who are good, some mediocre, and some who should never be allowed on stage! Fees for entertainers are usually based on reputation, popularity, scale of presentation and over all talent and skill. But overall, it is important to note, as with anything in life, “You often, get what you pay for!”

You need to base your decision on the performer who will best fulfill your needs and help you to achieve your desired outcomes.

One way you can know whether an entertainer is going to meet your needs is by whether or not he or she asks you what your needs are and what outcomes you want to achieve with your event. When you call them, do they just tell you how great their show is without finding out what you want and need?

How would you feel if you went to a doctor because you weren't feeling well and the doctor instantly prescribed some medicine without first finding out

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what was wrong with you? It's the same with entertainers. They should find out what you want and need first and see if they have a program that can fulfill those needs.

Many performers and entertainers are so desperate for work that they will say anything to get hired. They will tell you that they do things that they don't, won't, or can't do. We'll be talking about how to spot out these phonies and avoid them like the plague in just a few minutes.

Bottom line: Decide what your budget *range* is, check out a number of performers in that budget range. Choose several that catch your eye or seem to fit your event the best. And finally, choose the best person regardless of price. If your budget is so small that you cannot find an excellent performer, DO NOT HIRE ANYONE. It is far, far better to have no entertainer or speaker than it is to hire someone who is not going to give a good performance. Save your money and wait until you can afford someone who is outstanding and going to make your event outstanding.

BIG MISTAKE #3

BELIEVING TESTIMONIAL CLAIMS

Testimonials are an important factor and tool when hiring any entertainer. However, it is not necessarily the volume of the reviews, as much as the content of the reviews and whether the reviews are genuine. If an entertainer or magician has tons of reviews, it usually means one of two things.

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Either the magician is writing his own reviews to make himself seem better than they he/she are and/or to improve their Google or Online Agencies ranking (This is so common it is scary!) Or, the entertainer is primarily performing for birthday parties. Birthday party moms love to help the local magicians and kids entertainers by writing a review. However, in the corporate or professional world, most reviews come via an email, follow up text message or in a written letter.

The sad fact is that many entertainers make up their testimonials and totally lie about their credentials. In fact, in a best-selling videotape program for magicians a budding entertainer asks the "expert" what to do if you don't have any testimonials. The answer was, "Oh, just make them up. Do what ever it takes." As disgusting as this sounds, it is unfortunately common practice. This has been a serious problem with the advent of the Internet where all it takes is to create a new email account a write a review about yourself. Restaurants and small companies have been doing this for years and it is a big problem on the Internet. And worst of all, Google and major search engines rank entertainers higher based on having lots of reviews. So, the rewards for cheating are great!

So yes, testimonials are important. In fact, I have a stack that I use in my marketing. What people say about a performer is infinitely more important than what a performer says about him/ herself. This is a good check to see if the reviews seem genuine. Are the reviews saying the same thing written on their website? Are the reviews over the top? Are they really long? Do many of the reviews sound similar and/ or raving about professionalism. These are

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things to watch out for. Also, look for bad reviews. Often, an entertainer with a few bad reviews will try to average up their rating by writing a bunch of positive reviews.

Another scam that entertainers pull on unsuspecting event planners is to claim that they have performed for people and at places they never really have. For example, one unethical entertainer, who will remain anonymous, claims on his website that he has performed on the Tonight Show and The Late Show With David Letterman. He then shows a picture of himself *outside* the Tonight Show Studio and one of him inside the Letterman studio. Please note that David Letterman and Jay Leno are nowhere to be seen!

Discovering the truth is very easy. Ask the performer to give you copies of some of the actual testimonial letters they received and not just the quotes from these letters. (I have a whole stack of them that I send to my prospects upon request.) If the entertainer/performer can't produce at least some of the actual letters, you have your answer. If a performer claims to have performed on a well-known television program, simply ask to see a video clip. If they don't have it... well, you know.

Bottom Line: You should definitely take the time to read your entertainers reviews and testimonials to help make your decision. Just make sure you are dealing with someone who is honest and ethical. If you suspect the reviews are bogus, do NOT deal with this entertainer at any costs. They are often so desperate for bookings, they will say and promise anything to get the gig. Unfortunately, they will almost definitely let you down and keep you from getting quality entertainment for your important

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event.

BIG MISTAKE #4

RELYING SOLELY ON A DEMO VIDEO

A demo video is another important tool is choosing an entertainer, but it is not the most important thing. What a demo video is good for is getting a sense of the entertainer's style and personality. And, whether the entertainer will be a good fit for your event or audience. The problem with basing your decision solely on someone's demo video is the fact that anyone can make themselves look good on video through editing and retake after retake.

Three quick, true stories that will graphically illustrate this point:

HORROR STORY # 1

I recently did a show for a major German automobile company. The event planner told me the year before she had hired a comedy juggler. She said his demo video was great and that he did some amazing things on the video. But when he did his show live he, "Couldn't do anything... Dropped everything on the floor... Was totally embarrassing."

HORROR STORY # 2

A Fortune 500 company paid a fairly famous magician to perform strolling magic at the tune of \$50,000 for the evening. The president of the company saw this magician make himself float on television in front of a crowd of people on the street and asked him to make himself float for his group. "I can't do that here," the magician informed the very disgruntled client.

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HORROR STORY #3:

A local teachers association hired a hypnotist based on the great demo video he sent them. In the words of the event planner, "It was a disaster. He literally couldn't hypnotize anyone. People started leaving the event. Other's starting talking amongst themselves. And the hypnotist started yelling at all of us." Yikes!

So what should you look out for in a demo video? If the video is over-produced and too slick, beware. The performer may be trying to hide behind special effects. The video should give you a feel for what the performer does, how he interacts with the audience, and what the audience response is. (The audience's response to the performer is in reality more important than what the performer actually does.) Ideally, the video should consist of clips from more than one show. Also, be sure while you are watching the video to look for a real audience. You would be surprised to find how many promotional videos are taken in their backyard, basement or to any empty stage. If you see this... be wary!

Bottom line: A demo video can be a useful tool in helping you decide whether a performer is right for you but it should only be one the factors that contributes to your decision.

BIG MISTAKE #5

Booking Too Long of a Presentation

Scheduling too long of a program is a mistake many event planners make. It's important to remember that it is not like people are going to a theatre or to the movies and want to see a two-hour program. In

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many cases, attendees will have been in meetings all day and will be tired.

Even if your event is "dinner only", your guests will have been sitting for at least 45 minutes before the show starts. If you add a cocktail hour, an awards presentation, and/or a speech from the company president, the length of the event increases dramatically.

Bottom line: The ideal length for the entertainment portion of your program is 40-50 minutes with a maximum of 1 hour. This will keep your event moving along at a nice pace and keep everyone energized.

BIG MISTAKE #6

Not Getting 100% Reassurance That The Presentation Is Squeaky Clean

This is sooooo important especially in today's day and age when people are offended by the least little thing. It is vital that you make sure that the performers material is absolutely clean or trouble brews for you on the horizon.

I recently did a stage show for a Fortune 500 company who had also hired a comedian. The comedian was hilarious and the audience loved him but then he let a few *very minor* swear words slip out. In fact, I didn't even catch them... but the wife of one of the company's bigwig dealers did. She stormed out of the program and dragged her husband with her. The executive shot an extremely upset look at the poor event planner.

The event planner came up to me and said, "Oh great, now I have to spend tomorrow smoothing this all out. That's just what I need." He had asked the comedian

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if his material was clean and the comedian told him that it was. It wasn't.

Bottom line: You need to not only ask whether the performer's material is clean, you have to *insist* and *emphasize* that it **MUST** be clean. If possible, get some type of proof, in the form of a testimonial letter that the material is clean.

BIG MISTAKE #7

Not Getting A Money Back Guarantee

In most cases, you can avoid falling prey to a bad entertainer, or entertainment agency by insisting that they give you a 100% money back guarantee if you are not satisfied with their presentation.

This is the ultimate test as to whether someone really believes in what they are offering or if they are just full of hot air. If a performer really believes in the quality of their program, they shouldn't hesitate to guarantee it.

Bottom line: Some performers may argue that people will take advantage of them if they offer a guarantee. This is simply not true. In the 15 years that I have offered a 100% Money Back Guarantee with thousands of performances, no one has **EVER** requested their money back. In fact many companies have me back year after year. I am very proud of my reputation to have one of the highest repeat customer rates in the industry.

If the performer you're considering for your event won't back up their presentation with a guarantee...
WATCH OUT!

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Overall Wrap-up

Well, there you have it. Obviously, if you're a seasoned event planner you may have already known some of the secrets revealed in this report. But I hope you found a few gems that you can use to ensure that your next event turns out exactly as you want it so you get the applause, accolades, and acknowledgement that you so richly deserve.

If I can help you or you want to contact me, please call **1.800.998.4090**

Magically,

Alex de Terrieres

High Energy Magic of Speed

Magician, Illusionist, and Entertainer

4302 Longleaf Court

Bowie, MD 20716

1.800.998.4090 office

For more info about the High Energy Magic of Speed, please go to www.speedthro.com or call my office at **1.800.998.4090**

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