

# The Leader of the Band

## Choosing the right bandleader for your event

By Gene Press

So you think that choosing the right music for your event is as simple as sampling a music file or viewing a band at someone else's event? Not everyone knows what goes into making the right choice for music. There are many elements that come into play (no pun intended), so here are just a few questions:

- What kind of event are you planning?
- Does the band's musical concept and instrumentation meet your musical requirements?
- Last, but not least, have you given any thought as to the bandleader's level of expertise?

How about for this issue of Trends, we focus on that last question first?

As a professional musician, but more importantly, a "professional bandleader" (for more years than I'd like to admit), I'd like to help you make that important decision. Remember – **music can make or break your event!**

Not every bandleader has that level of expertise to **read the dance floor** and **cater to the musical needs** of you and your guests. That's probably the single most important factor in musically creating a successful event.

Many bands in the industry have their own set list of songs that they perform day in and day out. Rather than the bandleader going with the flow of the party, he or she will call the songs that the band does best.

An important point to remember is that the band shouldn't be **dictating to your**

**guests** what they should dance to. Rather, the dance floor should **dictate what the bandleader calls** throughout the evening.

Have you ever noticed when there's no flow to the party and the dance floor is empty? More times than not, the problem lies within the bandleader's ability to call the right music at the right time. A bandleader with blinders on calls what he knows, whereas, an accomplished bandleader approaches the party with eyes wide open. If the party is what I call shifting gears, going from first to second to third gear, the bandleader needs to musically feed the right songs and styles. If your guests need oxygen from dancing in fourth or fifth gear, he or she needs to know what to perform, such as a standard or contemporary ballad or love song. That's what is called in the industry as **pac**



Always remember when making your decision, no matter how talented the musicians and vocalists are within the band (and you certainly want them to be), the music can only be as successful as your bandleader's expertise.

There's more to come in the following issues, but I thought this was a good place to start. Should you have any thought-provoking questions, I'd love to hear from you, and if selected, we'll publish the Q & A in upcoming issues of Trends.

Never forget that when choosing music for your event, it's much more than simply music to your ears!

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