



THE *OTHER GUYS* **DID NOT** APPROVE THIS MESSAGE

Lil' Johnny (the one who's smiling)

“He got FREE SPACE ... not at one show, or two – but THREE SHOWS outta four.”

It's Lil' Johnny's favorite story of the year (2008). One producer who's having an undistinguished series of home shows created a 'Pay If You Like Them' trial offer: *“If the shows work out, send me a check.”*

I love it – simply, LOVE IT!

Aside from the extraordinary differences in presentation between one exhibitor and another; happy and friendly staff; display attractiveness; positioning on the floor; and, a host of other factors that could produce a lack of leads - - - this is the best damn deal that any exhibitor could negotiate.

For the rest of you *schmucks*, well, YOU PAID FOR THAT DEAL – assuming you paid full price . . . or, in comparison, more than 25% of the cost of exhibiting in the *Other Guys'* home shows. In effect, that's what this exhibitor did: paying for 1 of 4 shows. How decent of the producer to make such a magnanimous offer – on your dime (or, should I say, your dollar). That producer's a hero.

SO IT GOES . . . SO IT BLOWS

After the shows are over, the producer calls this guy and says,

“Hey! Howz 'bout paying for the shows you exhibited in?!”

And the exhibitor responds,

“You're kiddin', right?”

You dumped those 3 shows . . . and now you want me to pay for them? The shows sucked !”

[I'm literally rolling on the floor laughing right now.]

Okay (wiping tears from my eyes), this is not a fun time for many people in the home show industry. And I have this karma thing that tells me, “There but for the grace of God, go I.” Intuitively, I know that it's never good to laugh at someone else's misery, or ridicule the feeble, but I'll take that liberty now and find humor at the expense of the *Other Guy*.

Why? Because it's over-due, just like an unpaid invoice. The *Other Guys'* exhibitor(s) is/are smart enough to read the writing on the wall. Before the pipe and drape is set up, exhibitors suspected this producer's shows might take a dump. Why? Because all of his shows have been tanking for a lack of advertising.

It's not just this producer either. There's others as well (i.e., the other, *Other Guys*). It seems, in their effort to compete in the arena of 'low-ball pricing' is their only tool to distract the exhibitor while stealing the difference from the show ad budgets. Yes, each of the producers has been rumored to have done the dirty by offering their space on the assurance of traffic. It hasn't worked too well.

WE'RE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE OUR

"DON'T EVEN ASK" PRICING POLICY

We have a different theory. It's based upon responsibility; a fiduciary concept. At The Home ShowS, we believe everybody should pay the same price – no, not like some policy rooted in a communism – but 'fair and equitable' based upon "cooperative advertising." It's the "logic of collective action" at work.

That's a lot to impart. I recognize these platitudes don't convey much while our staff is dialing you up on the phone and pitching how good The Home ShowS are. Selling and marketing shouldn't be this hard. But that's the system we're faced with . . . and we have to work with it.

Getting back to 'pricing' . . .

We don't do "deals." We don't "negotiate" prices. We don't give away "free trials." And, we don't like being asked. (So, don't ask.)

If you've been in The Home ShowS, you know they produce results – especially when compared to others.

If you haven't exhibited in The Home ShowS, consider yourself forewarned about the "Don't Even Ask pricing policy."

Now, here's our reasoning:

If you get a deal (defined as a better price than the rest of the exhibitors on the floor), then they're carrying the cost of show advertising. You're not. I don't know what you expect – what you get from other ad mediums – and, frankly, I don't care. The difference between The Home ShowS and the newsprint, flyers (or, whatever ad medium) is that we see our relationship with exhibitors as a 'partnership.' It's a matter of loyalty – building trust. They trust us to do the job and we do it! – better than anyone!

They also trust us to keep the deal-makers out of The Home ShowS. Deal-makers are non-contributors toward that 'cooperative advertising' idea, and a burden on the ad budget. They're parasites.

If 'cooperation' is the key word here, and you asked half-a-dozen or so of The Home ShowS' exhibitors if you can pay for your booth *after* you decided whether the expo was a success or failure, you can guess that might result in some chuckles. (It'd be like walking on to a job and asking to borrow the owner's tools.)

FROM HERO TO ZERO

The way I figure it, it's not kosher to be deal-making with those who can't afford the price. That's just "double-dealing."

I gotta ask the guy who exhibits in four shows and pays for one,

"How fat do you think we all are? – the other exhibitors? – us, as the producer?"

Think about the numbers. Can anybody really offer all their booths for a quarter of the going rate? Can the producer negotiate every facility rental down to two-bits on the dollar? – Or 75% OFF the cost of pipe and drape for a whole season? – cut back salaries of staff that makes the calls, answers your questions, and walks the floor?

**Every dollar discounted, or waived for 'Free Trial Offers,'
is a buck other exhibitors in the show
will never see in the shows' advertising budget.**

That's what turns a producer from a 'hero' to a 'zero.' The deal-maker acts like the producer's a hero, until the bill comes due. Then, the shows he/she/it just produced were "no good" and the *Other Guy's* an instant zero.

But he's always been a zero to the dozens of exhibitors who didn't get the "deal." Just ask them.

Every time I hear a story like this, I smile.

That's the way . . . *chuckle - chuckle* . . . I see it

Lil' Johnny

Send comments to John@ChicagoHomeShow.Net

SOURCE: www.ChicagoHomeShow.Net/LilJ



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. . . With a no 'special' deals philosophy.

