

Meet LONMAN

by Kurt "Swingcat" Johnson

Within the Karaoke Nation there are a few KJs whom all of us look up to. They've got years of experience, are a wealth of knowledge and problem solving and maintain the highest standards of professionalism at their shows. If you've ever spent anytime on the KaraokeScene.com website discussion forums you know exactly some of the KJs I mean, Knightshow, Timberlea and Big Mike to name a few. But when it gets right down to the nitty-gritty and you need expert technical advice and experience, you can turn to LONMAN.

That's Lonny Boyer, thirteen year KJ at the Thunderbird Trading Post in Tacoma, Washington. One of the main sources of advice, knowledge and opinions on Karaoke-related subjects on the Karaoke Scene website, Boyer is quick to offer up answers and solutions and share his hands-on experiences with running Karaoke systems and shows over the course of his thirteen years. When Lonman tells you to do something this way or that, it's not because he thinks he knows better, but because he's actually had to do that thing himself and he believes he can save the person asking a lot of time, effort and frustration by sharing his personal experience and solutions. When you read his posts you get the impression that he's no-nonsense, opinionated and demanding of excellence and professionalism.

Is he opinionated? Yes. Demanding of excellence and professionalism?

Always! But is he simply one of the best KJs you'll meet? Absolutely! When you meet him in person he's one of the most welcoming, pleasant, upbeat and personable hosts you'll ever find. He has to be or he wouldn't have kept his gig at the T-bird for thirteen years. And therein lies his big secret, treating his singers with respect, fairness and integrity. Running a tight show, with an upbeat, positive vibe and flow with an up-front rotation with no favoritism. It's that integrity that keeps the people coming back night after night. It also doesn't hurt that he has an outstanding song selection of



only the highest quality Karaoke tracks, featuring over 9000 songs with NO DUPLICATES. His sound system is only top-flight gear; Peavey 15" monitors and 18" subwoofers along with Carvin amps and a bewildering array of sound processors and equalizers...and yes HE DOES HAVE MIC STANDS!

His background in sound engineering is strong, having been in bands since he was fifteen doing sound training and assisting as a sound man at many shows. He mentions that he got his first Karaoke gig because the Karaoke company he worked for didn't know how to hook-up their gear so they asked him to do it and then offered him the KJ job. And he hasn't looked back since. As a leading KJ in the Puget Sound area Boyer keeps his car to the ground for new trends and directions in Karaoke. He always has his eye on the future, both in terms of bringing

his singers the best and for keeping current with the competition.

He talks about the "Karaoke Scene" around Seattle and Tacoma, "One of the main problems is saturation, there's Karaoke on almost every corner you see. We're getting people who have the burns and computers and don't charge what their worth. It's a lot easier to get illegal burns and have 100,000 songs and not own a single disc. I had a mobile system. It was hard enough to get it up to speed. And just trying to find a place that would pay what it's worth was impossible. So I just sold it all!"

He comments on the lack of professionalism he often finds. "You can generally tell the ones that are new. A lot of the problems I see are that people don't know how to use their gear. A skilled person can make a \$1,000 system sound a lot more expensive than it is, as opposed to someone who has the best system but doesn't know how to work it." He does mention that there are some positive trends out there, "In general, I'm seeing better equipment overall. I'm seeing a lot of Mackie mixing boards and hi-quality speaker systems."

Naturally, Boyer has a few pet peeves. One is bars that don't advertise. "I once worked a small place. They would only advertise in house. They wouldn't let me put a banner or sign out. Needless to say it wasn't very lucrative." Another thing that bugs him to no end is



bogus song books. He explains, "What bugs the hell out of me is when people count their duplicate songs. I have about 10,000 songs listed. I also have about 4000 songs I don't list. It just bothers me when I find 10 versions of the same song listed and they claim a huge amount of songs. I prefer to pick out the best QUALITY. I don't care about QUANTITY. I never buy something lesser unless it's not available any other way."

He talks about his role on the KaraokeScene.com message boards, "I got involved when I first came on. I just offer up advice from what I went through basically from band stuff. If people want to take my advice and benefit from it, that's great. I try to check the board everyday. I get people emailing me everyday. I don't try to knock their choices, but do try to persuade them that their choice might not be the best. I'm always here to offer any advice I can."

Quality and demanding professionalism are what The Lonman is all about while helping others to be the best KJs they can. If you have a question or simply need advice and help, Lonman is there and ready to offer his experience and knowledge to anyone worldwide on the KaraokeScene.com message boards who needs it. He's a tremendous resource that the Karaoke Nation is fortunate to have.

Shoot him an email, or better yet, make a trip to the T-Bird in Tacoma, Washington and ask him in person yourself! You can also check out his website at www.lonmanproductions.com.