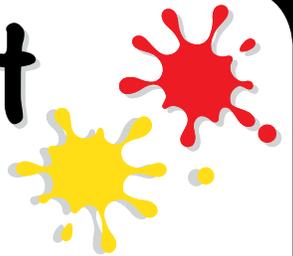


Paintertainment



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Giving out **AGENTS' Cards** When clients love **YOUR Work**

If you've ever worked for an agent, chances are you've been instructed to only give out the agent's cards to guests who inquire about your services at the event. But why? Let's take a closer look at this situation, from both sides of the brush.

Don't bite the hand that feeds you!

Having worked extensively as both an agent and contractor for decades, I feel qualified to chime in on the subject. First, let me just say, that if you find it unfair to be asked to only give out an agent's cards while working for them, you have not spent much time acting as an agent yourself. I don't mean bringing along one friend and passing through payment to them to help you out...I mean spending all of your time selling, booking, filling, managing, billing, contract wrangling, and paycheck processing for large gigs that utilize multiple artists which may or may not even include yourself as a painter. Just trust me on this one, a few gigs like this and you will develop an immense appreciation for agents and the grunt work they endure to enable you to just show up, paint, and get paid! I for one LOVE it when I have the opportunity to get paid a little less than my own going rate to work for an agent and let them handle all the stuff that is NOT fun!

But it was MY talent that made them ask for a card!

This is an understandable argument at first glance... yes, when I create a masterpiece on a child's face and that masterpiece prompts the parent to ask for my card for their upcoming birthday party, I feel that I should be able to get the credit for my work and reap the benefits of that potential future gig.

Yes, my talent may have made them ask for the card, but I wouldn't even have been there if not for my agent's talent that landed the gig in the first place. Don't forget this! While my talent may play a big part, it is not the only thing that has prompted them to ask for my card. It is the fact that I was there in the right place at the right time, which was all orchestrated behind the scenes without any involvement, time or expense from me. (Thank God...that part is way more boring and draining than the painting!)

I sell face paint online and out of my basement. Say I

were to go get a job at a local costume shop, and every time someone came in and showed interest in face paint, I would give them my own card and say "call me instead, I can get you the same quality product for cheaper!" After all, it was my salesmanship that got them to ask about paint, right? I would be fired! *Immediately!* Using someone else's storefront, marketing, blood sweat and tears to market my own business, while even being paid by them to do so, is completely unethical. It takes an immense amount of trust for an agent to invite you to represent their baby, their business, that they've poured their life into for years. Take this as the honor it is, and you'll be given gigs for years to come.

But I want credit for my work!

Some artists feel that they are somehow stripped of their "credit" for the work they are performing when asked to give out the agent's cards. I have never seen an agent personally claim that one of their artist's work was their own on Facebook or anywhere else. When you work for an agency, you are a part of a team. Nobody else is claiming that they are the creator of your paintings...that is illegal. As an artist you own the rights to the painting you created...not the rights to the gig you are working or future gigs as the client.

I personally have cards specially made for my contractors. On the front it says "Ask for me by name!" and has a blank line for each artist to write their own name on it. This way if a future client calls, they can specifically request that artist, and that artist still gets future gigs. As your agent if they are okay with you putting your name on their cards...chances are they will be totally fine with it, and grateful that you're asking! The credit you get for doing a good job? It's your paycheck!

But they are making money off of ME!

First of all, the amount of money an agent is charging the client on top of what they are paying you is completely irrelevant. If they are offering you an hourly wage that you are happy with, great! Take the gig! If they are not, then don't! I have a personal goal to never take

a gig that I will later resent getting. I want to show up to each and every gig happy, thankful and grateful for the work. This attitude really shows with the client, whether you are grateful or not, and can have a huge affect on whether they call you back next year!

Second, if you've worked as an agent you know that for every 1 hour gig, it can take multiple hours of back-and-forth drudgery with the client, and that's with a client who isn't particularly difficult to deal with. And let's not forget the amount of time and money they put into advertising in order to get these gigs in the first place. They may even be sub-sub contracting, or owe someone else a finder's fee on top of it. Personally, I think the ability to let someone else deal with billing and office work while I just paint is priceless! When you take a gig through an agent, you have no idea what work and expense they have gone through to get it, or will go through to follow it through and maintain the relationship so you can work it again next year. So rather than worrying about whether they are getting paid too much for an amount of work you are unaware of, focus on what you can control: whether you take a gig for a certain rate, and your attitude about that gig. If the fact that an agent is making sure they too are getting paid for their time upsets you, please, please just don't take the gig!

I admit, when I started out I was a little resentful of agents who would make money when I was the one painting. But after just a few gigs taking on the agent role, my perspective changed completely and I developed a huge amount of respect for the work agents do. If you have an agent who doesn't treat you well, don't work for them anymore. But if you have an agent who pays you well & has your back, hold onto that! Respect their policies, and you'll be reaping the benefits of their grunt work for years to come!



What's New



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