

This Magic Moment

By Thomas Regan

How a Garfield Native went from a teenager hauling equipment for a disc jockey organization to an entrepreneur who built an entertainment company that has become a "household name" in the Tri-State area.

When Sal Cosentino, 39, created Magic Moments in 1998, he was just an eager 21 year old with the ambition to rise above those who doubted him.

"I never really thought Magic Moments would become this. A lot of people looked at me like I had two heads back then," Cosentino said.

Now, Magic Moments is a bustling local business offering music with its DJs and Emcees, as well as photography and cinematography for a wide variety of events, such as weddings and mitzvahs.

Magic Moments is currently in its 18th year in business, and one of the reasons Cosentino argues the business has been so successful is that his team has not changed much since its inception.

"The cool thing about us is we really don't have any new guys," Sal says. "All of my guys have been with me since they were 16 and now they're in their mid-20s. My main guy Pete DePeri has been a huge part of this organization from day one. He was the guy that started with me."

Cosentino explained DePeri -- currently the company's most-requested MC -- started with Magic Moments carrying equipment and once he became more involved, he helped build the team by introducing people he knew and trusted.

"He started bringing in and recommending his friends," Cosentino said. "That's how we've built this organization. Now we have a core of 15 main guys. They don't work with any other companies because we are fortunate enough that we are doing 500 to 600 events a year, so they don't really have a weekend off."

Cosentino likened the bond between members of his team to a "tight family" and said his DJs and Emcees are like little brothers to him.

"Pete started with me at 16. I used to pick him up and drop him off," Cosentino said. "Now he's been with me for 10 or 11 years. All my guys have been with me since before they had licenses. I've seen them graduate high school and college. Now Pete is getting married."



It's pretty cool." Much like DePeri, Cosentino entered the industry at a young age, beginning to work for Music and Dance at just 15 years old.

I was carrying equipment for a guy and then he said, 'Why don't you DJ for me?' So, I put in a couple of records," Cosentino said. "Then he said why don't you grab the microphone to announce dinner is being served, and then I was trained in all the aspects of the business."

Though his experience with Music and Dance groomed him to eventually open his own organization, it was not always easy, especially when he was studying Criminal Justice at William Patterson University. In fact, when Sal isn't organizing his crew for the 500 plus parties, he's also a local police officer.

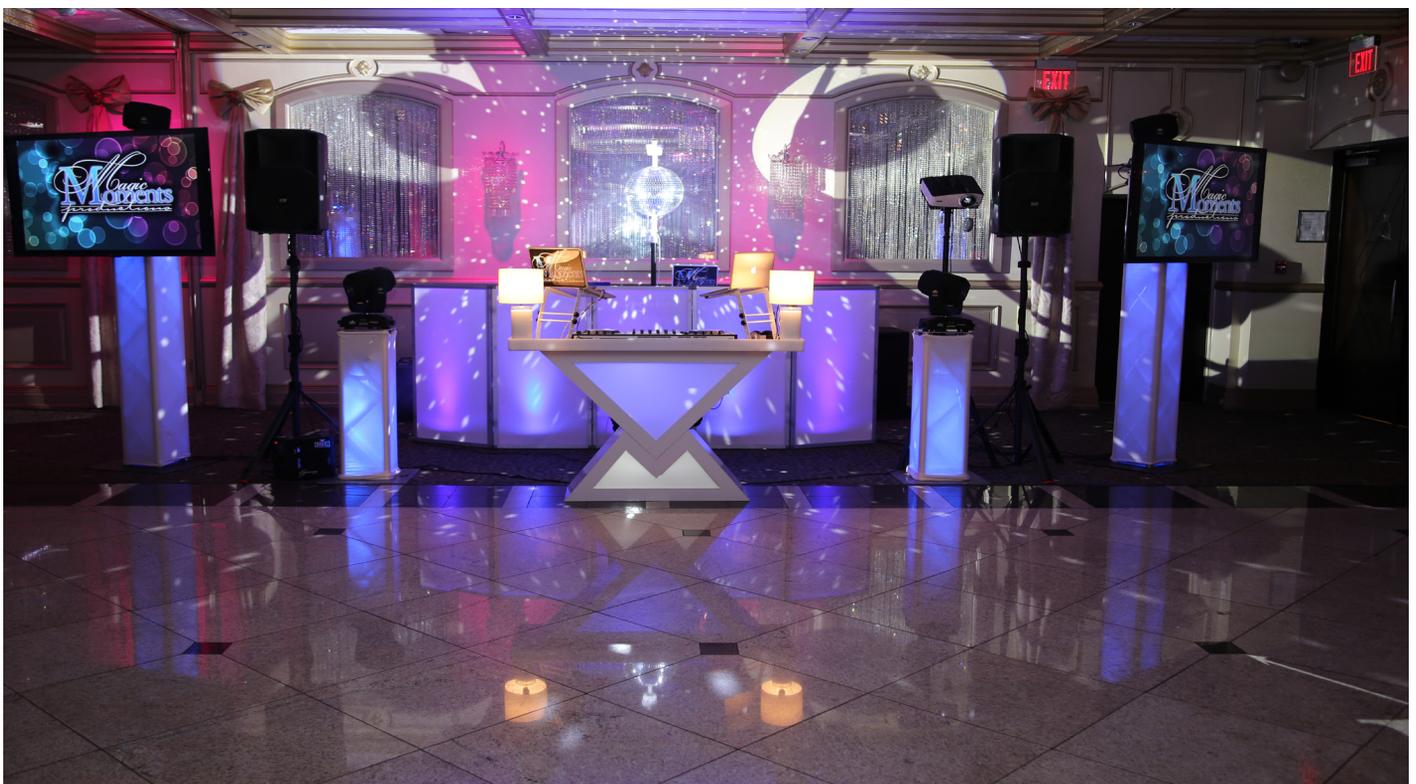
"It's a lot of hard work and dedication to our clients, but it's been gratifying," Cosentino said. "Everyone thought I was going to fail as a 21-year-old, full-time college student. I ended up getting my four-year degree and never missed a semester, but my mother said if you want to do this, you've got to stay in school."

"Cosentino said the company's success is evident when Magic Moments' Director of Sales Amber Simpson speaks with clients.

"When a bride comes in and sits down with Amber and says, 'I got your name from four people, so you must be doing something right,'" he said. "That's a great feeling. Or when a client says, 'I went to three catering halls and all three recommended you. How is that possible?' It's because we've been in this business since 1998."

Although Cosentino is the Founder and CEO of Magic Moments, he still goes out to events and works as an emcee. It's still his favorite part.

Cosentino explained that Magic Moments has been able to maintain its reputation because of his company's dedication to each and every client, no matter the type of event.



“Even if it is a first birthday, it’ll be treated like any other client, including a huge wedding. That’s the way we do it,” Sal says, the passion for his craft still clearly burning despite its 18 year history.

Cosentino envisions the company continuing to adapt in the entertainment industry; however, his eyes are set on one objective -- two decades in business.

“My biggest goal was always to hit 20 years in business, and we are about to hit that,” he said. “I’ll be 41 years old, but business is booming!”

