

PROMTIX.COM, The Rockland Journal News/Gannet Newspapers/USA TODAY. Revolutionizing a 3 Billion Dollar Industry



Entrepreneur Yoel Silber says he's not going to let the sluggish economy slow down his quest to revolutionize the prom industry.

Silber is President and Chief Executive Officer of Promtix Corp., the largest retailer for after-prom tickets in the world. Currently, Promtix Corp., sells after-prom tickets to New York City nightclub and dance clubs, cruises and comedy clubs and New Jersey's Great Adventure amusement park for teens to attend the day after their prom.

Silber is relying on word of mouth, direct mailings and, for the first time, the web, to market the tickets, which he arranges with the venues to sell. He also publishes a post-card-sized magazine, Prom Fantasy filled with limousine and tuxedo rental ads, that he gives away free through schools and prom related vendors.

Relying on direct-mailing lists, silber sends promotional fliers to those truly in charge of prom decisions: 17 and 18 year old girls. "Girls are in total control of everything. Guys are not organized. The guys could care less about pretty much anything." He said

As the May-June prom season draws near, Silber's sales pitch paints a nightmare scenario of what could happen if teens buy after-prom tickets from less-than reliable sources. The tickets could be fakes, leaving kids stranded in the streets, or the tickets may be valid but don't guarantee entry. Promtix business model calls for no-hassle, one-stop shopping for tickets to venues like

the Supper Club and StandUp NY, with money-back guarantees if there's a problem. Tickets cost \$25 to \$50. Silber gets a percentage of each ticket sold although he would not disclose the specific amount.

Silber, 26, has a bachelor's degree in finance and a background in special events planning, theme parties and promotions, including a stint as a promotions director for one of New York City's most recognized dance venues, The Sound Factory.

This year, with the introduction of Promtix.com, Silber hopes to send sales even higher. With music by LTJ Bukem blaring over speakers at his home office in New City, he talks fervently about his plans to dominate a slice of the \$3 Billion a-year prom industry. He predicts that Gen Y, Web-savvy teens aren't going to rely on print publications for prom information.

"I'm opening a door to an audience that is massive," he said. "Eventually the future is all about the web. If you can't tap into the way they're thinking, it's completely useless."

Promtix.com has garnered unique users

in 27 different states. Silber hopes to expand his ticket sales next year to venues in Philadelphia, Miami and Los Angeles.

"I'm very confident in what I'm doing," he said. "I chose to believe in what I'm doing. My parents, of course, don't understand what I do. They think I'm unemployed."

Promtix customer Matt Isaia said he bought tickets to the Sound Factory for his prom next month and tickets to the Supper Club for a Junior Ball he's attending with a Junior girl. The Clarkstown North High School senior confirmed that girls make critical prom-related decisions. "The girls seem very demanding in this type of situation," he said. He said Promtix offered a "foolproof plan" because the tickets are guaranteed and there's no chance of the sale being a scam.

"I have done things at my age that I can say other people have never done in their entire lives. People wake up in the morning, they are so miserable and they hate their lives. I'm happy because I love what I do," he said.

Christopher Mele