



## Concert Entertainment Rider Basics

by Bob Galombeck

Every National Artist has an accompaniment to their contract called a rider. It covers their 'Wish List' of items they'd like provided for your show as well as their basic 'laws'. It's a very important part of your legal agreement with the artist and needs to be fully addressed. Many venues with regular entertainment programs and experienced personnel know what to expect and what they will and will not adhere to. Venues just beginning or considering an entertainment program who are not familiar with rider content will find some of these basics handy. And for your first show you should request the artist rider in advance before making a formal offer. Riders are extensive with a lot of requests. Here are a few non-technical points you can expect to see in just about all cases.

- **Legal Warranty** – Artist riders usually state they want any disputes resolved in their home state. Many venues will change that to reflect the home state of their property as being the location for resolving disputes.
- **Cancellation by the artist** – In the event an artist wants to cancel (or reschedule) your engagement due to a motion picture opportunity or a variety of other scheduling issues, a 60 day notice is better for you over the standard 30 day notice you'll see.
- **Day of show payments** – Casino checks with the ability to cash them at your cage should be very acceptable. Extra effort to get a cashier's check should not be necessary.
- **Ticketing** – If you are paying a flat guarantee for the show and do not have any percentage or bonus deal attached based on sales, they do not need to inspect your box office records or ask for a list of expenses associated with the show.
- **Complimentary tickets** – Artists can ask for as many as 50-100 tickets in top 1 or 2 tier seating. Set a figure that is more reasonable for the capacity of your venue. Maybe 10-20 depending on the size of your show-room. Whatever you end up agreeing to, make sure to get back all unused tickets well enough in advance on the day of your show so they are available for sale especially if you expect a large turnout.
- **Insurance** – Everyone wants everyone to list them as an additional insured these days. You have insurance and so does the artist and if a problem arises it is probably

going to be a negotiation who's policy will cover the claim anyhow. It is not a standard requirement to list the artist, or vice versa, so you'll want to determine your property's policy on this and address it accordingly with each artist.

- **Meals** – Food vouchers for your onsite restaurant(s) is usually perfectly fine with artists. If the show includes a well established star artist, the tour manager may want to order off your menu and have it delivered to the artist's bus, backstage, or hotel room, and that is also appropriate. After show food, such as pizza or deli sandwiches, can also be an appropriate offering. Special catering should not be necessary in most cases.
- **Alcohol** – More and more venues are not supplying alcohol to artists as part of their hospitality requests, and especially the hard to find alcohol brands. Many artists are used to this being stricken from their riders. Some will ask to buy alcohol from the venue if that is an option.
- **Bus Stock** – Other than ice and non-alcoholic beverages, stocking an artist's bus for their trip to their next show isn't a mandatory requirement. You will have to decide what is reasonable for your property.
- **Backstage hospitality** – Ice, non-alcoholic beverages, deli and fruit trays, some snacks, are all very appropriate. Cigarettes, Advil, candy bars, golf balls, and so on are all items that are above and beyond what is reasonable. Feel free to cross them out.
- **Runner** – If you have an attached hotel, a runner won't be needed other than perhaps an emergency need. If your hotel is detached or offsite you should have a runner available throughout the day. Don't expect your day of show schedule to go according to plan. It is best to have someone ready at all times. Artists don't like waiting.

These are just a few of the points to consider. Again, as a property that may be getting ready to do its first big show, you should get the artist rider in advance of making a formal offer and make a thorough review of it. ♣

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