



## The Evergrowing Complexity of Confirming Artist Offers

by Bob Galombeck

It used to be pretty simple. You want a group for your event, you call the agent and if the date was available and the price was right you got the band. Contracts issued, done deal. Groups wanted to work to support their records and generate sales and they pounded the road with a lot of single dates. Not a lot of time spent trying to figure out routing, the market, even capacities. Just go do the gig and build more fans to buy your records.

If you are a major market venue with an impressive budget, capacity, and a history of artist appearances, you can still get the acts you want in a very reasonable period of time if the date is available and there are no major conflicts. But for the average venue that doesn't fit that criteria, it is not as easy. The following are some of the reasons why offers do not get confirmed as quickly for this type of venue:

- The date of your event is not exact but is during prime time summer festival season and the artist of interest generally keeps a very full calendar. They will wait and see what all of their options are and whether the travel makes sense with other dates or potential dates on the books before they can offer you a specific date.
- Your play date is specific and isolated and there is no immediate or potential support date in place to go with it. You will wait it out to see if one comes thru before knowing if your date gets accepted.
- The group is just collecting offers and making no decisions until they sort thru everything to map out some kind of logical tour schedule. You may wait a considerable period of time just to find out if you are in the running or not.
- Another venue has a hold on the artist and the date you want but no offer has been formally made as yet. You can still submit your offer, but you may be forced to wait it out on the other venue's decision before you know where your offer stands.
- The group is getting traction on the radio, such as a real popular up and coming country act. Your offer may be in competition with a whole variety of special variables such as a radio promotional tour, a major arena tour as a support act, several private events, etc., and you will be waiting it out until all those details come together to know if you can get your offer confirmed or not.

- If your offer price is low and your date is quite a few months out, you will be put in a stack of lower priority offers and you may get little or no attention on it for several weeks. If a window opens up in the artist's routing that fits you, you may get your date. If not, you may be out of luck.

A few added notes on making offers for properties that seldom do concerts:

- Put an expiration date on your offer and then decide whether to extend it or not when it expires.
- Include photos along with your inside showroom or outside concert bowl specs so the agent is more familiar with you.
- Include what markets you will advertise in.
- Include what acts have performed there in the past.
- Include a radius clause so the agent can determine how your offer fits in to any other potential dates and venues in your region.
- Include the announcement and on sale date.
- Include your ticket scaling.

Even if your date is accepted, you may very well find yourself being asked to clear another date that is within your radius clause. There is just too much business out there today and this type of situation is happening more and more often. It is the agent's responsibility to inform you of this other potential offer and ask you to either allow or deny the other playdate. You have to decide whether the other playdate will hurt your event or not.

The business is healthy and artists are enjoying an abundance of offers year round. Agents are working hard to fill in the gaps with dates that make sense in the artist's schedule. If you see an artist you like and the budget and date work and there are no conflicts, get the offer submitted right away and with as much detail as possible. Do not wait – they will be booked elsewhere before you know it if you do. Plan to work hard and fast when the opening is there and not get caught up in the waiting game. ♣

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