



AUDIENCE

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY LIVE MUSIC INDUSTRY

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SPECIAL FEATURES

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EXCERPTS FROM THIS MONTH'S AUDIENCE

Ticket to the future

Rampant technology is driving the ticketing sector forward at an astonishing pace. No sooner has print-your-own been rolled out, than mobile phones become barcoded tickets. Secondary ticketing is also going public in a big way and some wonder who really holds the power — ticket agency or promoter. Mike Gartside reports.

Not so long ago, a promoter printed and sold the tickets, with distribution extending to the venue box office, if one existed, a few record shops and the postal system.

Whatever the outlets, the promoter tended to collect and hold the money, using it to bankroll the event.

But a whirlwind of change is affecting the way tickets are being sold and major promoters only receive advance money these days if the ticket agency believes it will get the cash back in the event of cancellation.

It's no exaggeration to say that ticketing has been revolutionised by the advent of online sales, with mobile phones fronting the next dramatic leap forward.

While the US giant Ticketmaster invests \$40 million a year on its systems and remains the global market leader, many smaller companies have adapted quickly to technological breakthroughs and look poised to carve chunks out of its existing market share.



Furthermore, a similar overhaul of the secondary ticketing market (see page 29), with the arrival of companies like StubHub in the US and Viagogo in Europe, is seeing promoters and primary ticket agencies react by launching their own ticket auction systems (Audience, issue 80) to bring a slice of the secondary market's profits back into the live sector.

Ticketing companies internationally have seen an enormous uptake in the use of the internet.

"Seventy-five to 80 per cent of our music business is now sold online," says Fred Maglione, president of American firm New Era Tickets, a subsidiary of Philadelphia's Comcast-Spectacor. "In the last three years, we've seen the traditional methods - phone and ticketing outlets - drop to about 50 per cent and that is definitely a result of the internet."

This is echoed all over the globe. Germany's leading ticketing operation CTS Eventim saw a 50 per cent increase in internet sales in 2005, and now shifts 35 per cent of its tickets online.

iTicket in New Zealand sells between 50 and 70 per cent online, while Ticketmaster sells 60 per cent of its UK tickets via the web.

Some commentators believe that the centralisation of marketing data and the ability to sell out a concert with nothing more than a bulk email shot, puts so much power in the hands of the ticketing agency that the role of the promoter is diminished.

Could it be long before an artist, ticket agency and a venue with top-of-the-range production facilities team up and cut out the promoter altogether?

See the current issue of Audience for the full story, including:

- Mutual dependence
- Technology driven
- European growth
- Last frontier
- Rewarding customers
- Mobile markets

MARKET FOCUS

Norway

But demand for live music among the nation's inhabitants has rarely been stronger and with one of the world's wealthiest economies, those artistes prepared to make the trip to Norway

