



**HOW TO:**  
**TALENT**  
**BUYING**  
**FOR YOUR**  
**FESTIVAL OR FAIR**





# 1

## CREATING A LINEUP

Compiling a buzzworthy lineup for your festival or fair requires extensive research and strategy. An effective lineup has the unique ability to bring large groups of strangers together to bond over their love of music and even build new friendships as a result.

Any successful event has a plan, and live music is no exception. When planning your lineup, consider what you want to achieve with these shows!

What is the overall atmosphere an artist can create? Is this your goal? And have you properly prepared your event space for this atmosphere?

Figure out the target demographics you want to attract. Do you want to add value for your strongest demographic or do you want to try and get a new audience to visit that otherwise wouldn't?

Who is popular in the area? Have you talked to your local radio stations to find out well-liked artists? Have you discussed ticket sales with venues in the area regarding artists you are interested in? Is your goal to host acts that will attract people from the surrounding area or do you want to create a destination experience that will be enticing to attendees from across the region or country?

Don't be afraid to seek outside input when building a lineup, either. Your personal network can provide valuable insight into what people want to see from a live music event, which can help you fulfill those desires. Talent bookers will also be able to help you seek out artists who have momentum behind them, put on an unforgettable show and consistently attract a crowd.

# 2

## UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS

The people on the stage may be who audiences see, but there's a team of people behind them who make sure each show is a success. Those who don't have a great deal of experience with talent buying can often forget that an artist has a touring party, which means booking them for your fair or festival isn't as easy as finding a gap in their tour schedule. Booking a date means it has to work for everyone involved, including the artist's touring party. Keep this in mind when coordinating your lineups, and be understanding if an artist is unable to participate this time; schedules can be very complex.

*That said, make sure you have some Plan B, C, D, E, F artists in mind if/when your first choice doesn't work out!*

# 3

## CHEAP VS. FAST VS. GREAT

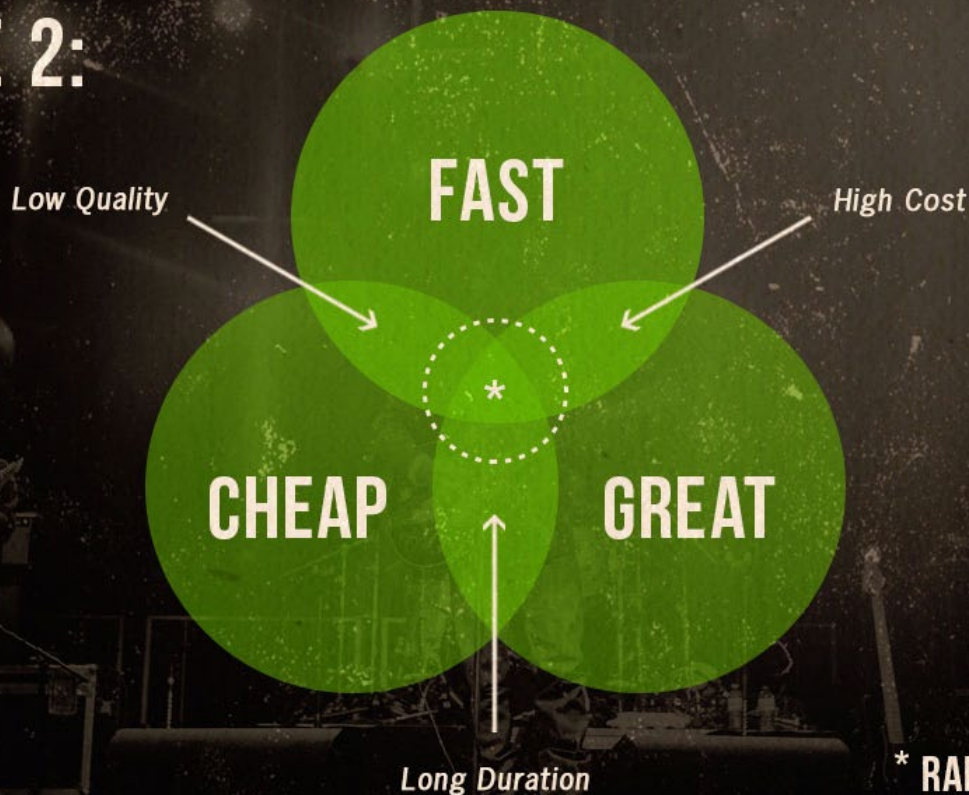
When booking talent, rarely can you have cheap, fast and great simultaneously. For example, fast and great sounds easy, but the downside is that it comes at a price.

Your festival and fair lineup will come together and achieve your goal if you choose great and cheap, but it won't happen quickly. By eliminating the "fast" component from the equation, you may be waiting for surrounding dates to come together or end up lower on the priority list than high-paying clients.

And, of course, there's fast and cheap. Think about what's missing here, which is "great." It's always beneficial to save money whenever possible and have things done quickly, but you get what you pay for. Booking talent for a cheap price or pulling together a festival and fair lineup quickly can come at the expense of overall quality.

When planning your festival and fair lineup, keep your expectations in check and decide what's most important from the outset. Once you've determined which two factors you need, you and your team can move forward with more realistic expectations and make your event a success.

### CHOOSE 2:



# 4

## FILL THE GAPS

Beyond booking top-tier artists that will wow your crowd, festivals and fairs can benefit from securing other entertainers to keep crowds interested between acts. These entertainers - which can include anything from magicians to street performers to dancers, depending on the atmosphere of your fair and the type of crowd it will attract - can also be placed throughout the venue to create a more interactive overall experience for attendees. Schedule these shows around the venue in accordance with your main stage in order to maximize the flow of your attendees to all areas of the fair.

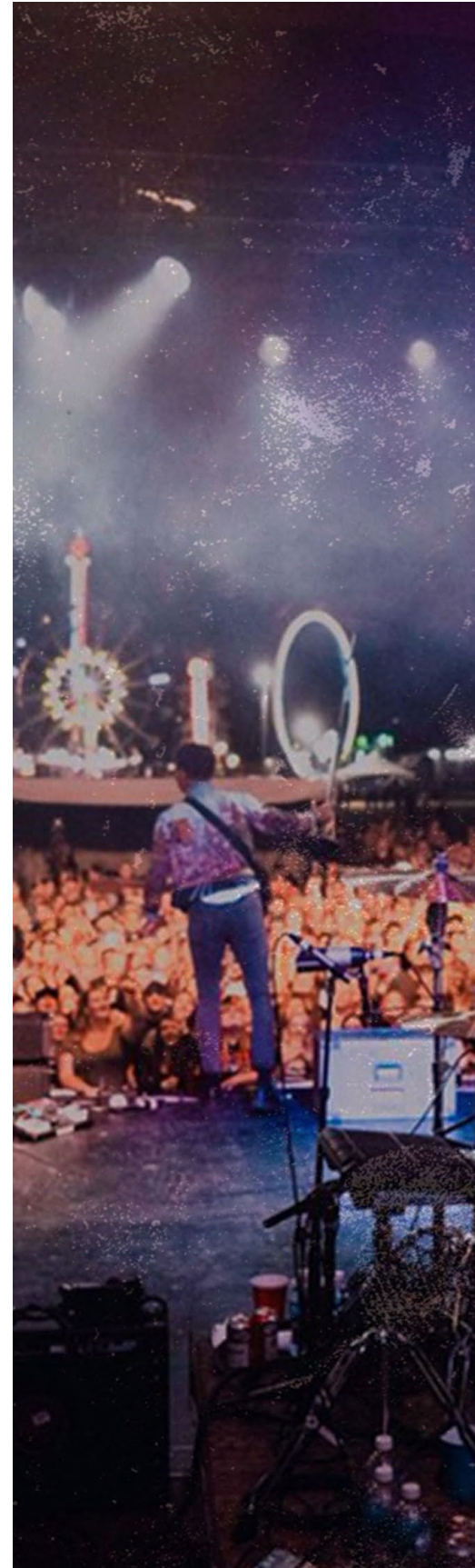
*When planning out your lineup and sending offers, make sure you start with your headliner and work backwards. You could find yourself in some sticky situations if you try to make decisions before the headliner has approved or you don't have the brand equity and trust to make the right decisions.*

# 5

## POSITIVE ARTIST RELATIONS

As you gain more experience booking talent, you'll come to realize that the entertainment community is a tight-knit one. The nature of the industry can provide abundant opportunities for collaboration and building a strong personal network, but it also means that word travels quickly if an event, venue, booker, etc isn't good to work with.

Ensuring positive artist relations means that your property has a team dedicated to covering basic logistics and hospitality for artists and their crew members - transportation, accommodation and venue necessities. Coordinating these elements begins far in advance of the actual event, which requires consistent and timely communication between the artist's crew and fair staff to ensure everyone is taken care of and has a great experience. Treat each performer, headliner or otherwise, with equal respect and care. Artists maintain gruelling travel schedules throughout the year - many are on the road 150 to 250 days per year - so making them feel comfortable and going the extra mile at your event will go a long way towards building positive rapport. Establishing mutual respect with an artist and their crew will also be beneficial when you need to book that exclusive meet-and-greet for a VIP or negotiating fees to fit within your budget.







# 6

## BUILD A STRONG BRAND

There are certainly financial obligations when it comes to talent booking, but money isn't everything. Artists, much like event attendees, are attracted to brands that resonate with them and are respected within their market. If your property is highly reputable in the industry, it will be much easier to get fans to attend - which means more ticket and merchandise sales and a higher financial return for the artist.

Building and maintaining a strong brand and reputation within the industry ties back into artist relations outlined above. This industry is built on relationships and networking, and artists are more likely to recommend your brand to their peers if it has a sound reputation and is known for respecting talent.

# 7

## ENLIST HELP

If you are new to the world of talent buying, enlisting the help of a professional with years of industry experience will ensure you build a successful lineup, deal with the unexpected and minimize your risk. As stated earlier, talent buyers have worked hard to build a network of industry contacts who can be imperative to booking top-tier talent. For example, they can work with their peers in various markets to route a tour for an artist. Booking a performer for a one-off show or fair can cost 20 to 40 percent more in order to cover getting the artist, their crew and their gear to your event. If you can spread a performer's run over three or more dates, it will help everyone's budgets.

The entertainment industry is also one that's often filled with smoke and mirrors, not to mention agents who are simply looking to sell their roster at the highest price. A reputable talent buyer can help you determine the costs of putting together a successful lineup at your fair or festival, and they will be able to negotiate prices with an agent - remember, you don't have to pay the initial quote. Working with a third party will also make sure you have your bases covered in terms of managing artist relations, hospitality, accommodations, transportation, security, contract negotiations and so on.

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 PLANNING**  
Discuss the goals your lineup will achieve. Overall atmosphere, target demographics, and ticket sales or gate admissions are a few things to consider!
- 2 PATIENCE**  
Start from the top of your lineup and have backup plans in place if your first choice isn't available. Generally speaking, the bigger the artist the longer it may take to confirm.
- 3 RESEARCH**  
Seek outside input when compiling your lineup to determine who will draw the best crowd and has strong momentum behind them to sell tickets. Knowledge is power!
- 4 RESPECT**  
Maintain strong artist relations and treat each performer with equal respect.
- 5 REPUTATION**  
Build a strong brand for your festival or fair that will be reputable among both attendees and artists.

Enlisting the help of an experienced talent buyer to help you navigate the lineup building process and negotiating the best price often saves you much more money in the long run than trying to do it yourself! We offer unique pricing models that allow you to save money on fees, if you need any guidance on your entertainment lineup or would like to learn more with a free consultation, please reach out!



Brennan McFaul  
Vice President - Trixstar Entertainment  
[brennan@trixstar.com](mailto:brennan@trixstar.com)



A Publication of Trixstar Entertainment | © All Rights Reserved