

Getting The Best From Your Artists

Before you start your negotiations it is essential you have an idea of what you want from your artist and what you are prepared to give back in return

Booking an artist and getting a successful performance is a two way process and requires both partners to play their part.

1 What are you looking for in an artist

2 What do you want from them

Performance format - eg Concert/ Dance

Performance style – Trad / Contemporary/ Song / Instrumental etc

Duration of performance

What age group for eg not suitable / great for young children

Anything else you specifically require / don't want

3 What sort of budget do you have

4 What are you prepared / able to offer in return for the performance

- Fee
- Accommodation
 - o Hotel / B & B / Camping
 - o Room numbers / types – singles/ twins etc
- Meals / Riders
- PA (plus Backline?)
- Lights

Having established these facts - and having made contact with an artist, you then need to start a 2 way conversation – giving the details above as where you stand.

It is difficult for an artist if they don't know where you are coming from.

ALSO – if you are both clear from the start what both sides are required / have agreed to supply in the partnership, the chances are things will run more smoothly.

Having agreed details produce a contract which spells out **clearly** all the information you have agreed to.

Remember – the artist may need to know things well in advance if they are fitting your event in with a tour or other travel arrangements.

Important things to them will be:

- Arrival time required on site / at the event
- Access and parking arrangements
- Sound / line check time
- Performance time
- Performance duration
- Directions to the venue and site

Is there a limit to the time they have to set up and take down their gear?

Accommodation details:

They may want to get to their accommodation (if it is to be provided) before their performance, and possibly even before they check in on site – if this takes a while, therefore, give them clear details of where they are staying plus contact details, and a website if possible where they can get a map and find out more about the accommodation.

Tell them who else is performing around the time they are – they may be interested in doing some collaborations that you had not thought of.

Also give them in advance:

- Contact details of the Production Crew so they can liaise about the PA
- Your Marketing person's details

Ask them if they will put your details on their Website, Facebook and Twitter – and you do the same for them. You can help them to promote themselves and they will do the same for you.

Your artist has arrived – then what?

Ensure that you have helpful, cheerful and friendly staff to meet and greet them. Make them feel welcome – especially if they have travelled a long way and are tired.

Give them all their documentation, and explain anything that they may be unclear about.

Give them details (again – as they may have lost them or forgotten them) of:

Performance times

Accommodation

Map of the town / locality

A Programme

If you have somewhere for them to relax when not performing eg: a Green Room where they can get tea and coffee etc and sit quietly away from the festival goers – that is always welcome.

If you have the staff – it is always good for the artist if they have someone allocated to them that they can refer to if they need help. This is not always possible, so at least have a team, always on hand, and contact numbers for them, where they can go if required.

DON' T spring things on them that they were not expecting – eg: change of programme for them ; additional shows.... Most artists have worked out in advance what they are going to do, so a change in the schedule can be difficult for them.

Above all – make the artist feel welcome, wanted, and at ease. BUT make sure they know who is in charge!

That way things should work out for the best – for both parties.

Good luck!

Chris Wade
Aadastra / Beverley Folk Festival
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