

Booking Shows

Objective

Learn how to approach venues professionally and improve your chances of getting booked.

Why It Matters

Professional communication builds trust. Venues and bookers are more likely to work with artists who respect their time and provide information clearly.

Good practices

Target the right person: Always contact the specific programmer or artistic director for your genre.

Use professional channels: Stick to email instead of social media DMs.

Keep it concise: Keep booking emails short, personalized, and to the point.

Follow up politely: Give them time to respond and avoid spamming.

Network strategically: Follow venues and look for opportunities to support larger artists that match your style.

Common mistakes

Mass emails: Sending generic BCC'd emails to dozens of venues at once.

Huge attachments: Never attach heavy files; use download links (Dropbox/Drive) for tech riders and promo pictures.

Unsuitable venues: Reaching out to jazz clubs when you play heavy metal.

Aggressive follow-ups: Demanding an answer or emailing multiple times a week.

Ghost updates: Continually contacting a venue when you have no new music, shows, or updates to share.



- ☐ Correct venue & person
- ☐ All links are working
- ☐ Availability clearly mentioned
- ☐ No large files attached

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Booking shows

1. Outreach e-mail

- Introduce yourself and be specific and efficient on what you're looking for.
- Create a clear and short e-mail object:

“booking [time frame] ARTIST ([country]) – [genre] @ [venue]?”
- Golden rule: personalize your e-mail:
 - Address with first name
 - Show interest in the venue (programmation, recommendation from someone, ...)
- Be brief, but remain polite and specific:
 - Who are you and why are you reaching out (tour, new album, opening for a specific artist)?
 - Why are you a good match with the venue?
 - Tell more about yourself in 2 sentences (artist refs, genres, important venues you played, news, press...).
 - Share 1 to 2 important links (live video, new EP, ...)
 - State in what time frame you're looking for a concert
 - Ask if they are interested and open the discussion to feedback
- Give links and provide context/materials:
 - Promo pic (not mandatory)
 - Short bio
 - Live video
 - Smartlink (soundcloud, bandcamp, bridge, ...)
 - Links to social media/EPK (electronic press kit)/Linktree
 - Forthcoming and selected shows
- Do not:
 - add attachments (use a drive or links)
 - share broken links
 - send e-mails with a lot of images (1-3 max.!))

2. Organize your e-mail inbox

- Use tags according to:
 - time frame (season, month)
 - territories/countries
 - advancement (1st call, 2nd call, interest, option, memodeal, confirmation)
- Use a calendar to:
 - check availabilities
 - add options and confirmations
 - have a visual set-up of the tour
 - add roadmaps and useful information

3. Contact research

Golden rule: check the venue makes sense to your music before reaching out

- Use Bandsintown, Soundcharters, IG (tour posters) to get a list of venues
- Look up the right contact on the venue websites
- Use your existing network (promoters, artists, ...)

4. Show negotiation

- Make a budget of your costs + add 5% of unforeseen expenses.
- If a venue shows interest, ask the promoter his budget and what it includes (catering, accommodation, ...).
 - If the offer is good: no negotiation
 - If the offer is lower than your budget: ask for max. 25% more
- Track your expenses to see if you can sometimes accept a lower offer.
- Write a memodeal (= a “pre-contract”):