

2014 Revised Entertainment Best Practices for Venue Owners

- 1) **Promoter research.** If you are working with a promoter, **get to know the promoter.** Ask for references from previous shows. Check the references and ask if the venue encountered any issues with the event. Ask the promoter if they have general liability insurance to protect you, your venue, and your patrons. If you are not familiar with booking acts, then consult other establishments that have experience successfully hosting a wide variety of events and/or those familiar with the entertainment scene.
- 2) **Research the acts.** All headline acts should have a press kit which includes music samples, photos, previous show listings, and a bio. Again, talk to venues that have hosted the act to check for any previous concerns.
- 3) **Offer a diverse music set.** Offer different types of shows and aim for diverse demographic. Also, aim for diversity within the same bill for the evening. If you do the same genre over and over again, you may attract the same crowd which may result in future issues.
- 4) **Market to a wide audience.** The more diverse the crowd, the less likely you are to have problems. If you are distributing flyers, don't focus exclusively on certain areas or certain populations. Ask the promoter how they are advertising, how many people they are targeting, and what media they are using for the ads. Review the promotional material and engage the promoter in a conversation if you have any concerns.
- 5) **Create your own set of rules.** Your "house rules" will help set perimeters for the promoters and acts. For example, decide if there will be a dress code, and if so, make sure it is *enforced consistently across ALL populations*. Avoid policies that target specific populations, such as, discounts for students or ladies' nights. If applicable, consider placing your rules into a contract.
- 6) **Security.** Hire your own licensed and bonded security personnel. If working with a promoter, you may ask the promoter to contribute to the security costs. Do not rely solely on the promoter to provide security. Work closely with the promoter on a security plan. We recommend a ratio of at least 75 to 1; capacity to security.
- 7) **Anticipate your crowd.** Based on your research of the acts and advertising, you should have a good idea of your crowd size. If you anticipate large crowds, staff accordingly and consider implementing policies that may prevent problems. Remember, issues can arise at any performance for all genres of music!
- 8) **Alert police** if you are anticipating larger than usual crowds and encourage them to do a quick walk through.