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# VT PULSE

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FROM VENUES TODAY

December 1, 2010 • VOL. IX, Number 37 • ISSN 1547-4143

## Quote of the Week

*“Why are we planning an event knowing that the likelihood of somebody getting hurt or dying is very, very high?”*

— L.A. Coliseum Commissioner Rick Caruso during a meeting on whether to allow raves at the iconic stadium.

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Greetings,

Welcome to VT Pulse, your weekly guide to the “News Behind the Headlines.” We extended the deadline for Box Office Stars nominations to Friday. Nominate your ticketing hero and send us a line or two about why he or she is so great. Send nominations to [dave@venuestoday.com](mailto:dave@venuestoday.com)



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## THE BEAT

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## SHORT TAKES

>> **SWITCHING TO TICKETMASTER** –The McAllen (Texas) Convention Center has switched to Ticketmaster effective Dec. 2, for both the McAllen Convention Center and McAllen Civic Auditorium.  
*Contact: Omar Rodriguez, (956) 681-3888*

>> **AUDIENCEVIEW SIGNS THE VOGUE** –The historic Vogue Theatre, Toronto, has selected Audienceview Ticketing, including ticketing for exclusive bar and pub events across the city that are currently managed by the theatre's box office.  
*Contact: Matt Gibbons, (604) 688-1975*

>> **TOP POT DOUGHNUTS** –Comcast Arena at Everett (Wash.) has named Top Pot Doughnuts the official doughnut partner of the arena. Mini doughnuts will be served by the dozen and a half; individual doughnuts will be full size.  
*Contact: Tammi Bryan Olson, (425) 322-2606*

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## VT NEWS

### MUSIC

#### RAVES KEPT ALIVE BY COLISEUM BOARD

*Fans show love during a crowded dance party at Electric Daisy Carnival at the L.A. Coliseum in June. Today, the coliseum's commission changed the rules about promoting raves. (VT Photos)*



REPORTING FROM LOS ANGELES – Any electronic dance concert promoters who organize a rave at the L.A. Coliseum in 2011 will now have to first get the seal of approval from the venue's commission, following a decision today by that group.

Commissioner Rick Caruso asked the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum Commission to revisit the issue after it had voted to lift a moratorium on the planning of future raves in November. Caruso, who called the events "immoral," and was not present at the November meeting due to other meetings, missed the vote lifting the moratorium.

During the moratorium, the commission, along with a county task force, came up with a series of guidelines and safety precautions that were to be in place if future electronic music festivals were booked, following the drug-related death of a 15-year-old girl during the Electric Daisy Carnival in June.

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John Benett

The new guidelines included having medical staff on site, limiting tickets sales to 18-and-over, earlier ending times and restricting alcohol sales. But Caruso argued that the raves, which he said promote drug use, especially ecstasy, still are too dangerous and disruptive.

“Why are we planning an event knowing that the likelihood of somebody getting hurt or dying is very, very high?” Caruso asked. “Particularly at a venue that was built and dedicated to the memory of people who died saving this country. It’s public property, a public asset.”

After the girl’s death, planning of future 2011 events was halted, but two festivals went on in August and October due to contractual obligations. Coliseum General Manager Pat Lynch reported that these concerts were far less eventful than the Electric Daisy Carnival in June. Law enforcement present at the meeting said that the subsequent, though smaller concerts had far fewer reports of emergency room visits than the June concert.

President Barry Sanders said this was an opportunity for Los Angeles to be a role model for other cities and venues that may host these events.

“The new set of recommendations and regulations enhance our desire to be the leader in this and provide an example to the country and other countries how this can be done safely,” Sanders said.

Despite Caruso’s concerns, and that of Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, that further review is needed, the decision to lift the moratorium went unchanged.

General Manager Pat Lynch said that due to the bookings of big international music acts, he’d probably have “any pre-planning information to the commission well before that 60-day mark, if the raves were to return to the Coliseum. None are currently scheduled for 2011.”

The commission also ruled that further review was needed for each potential rave that the Coliseum or Sports Arena might host in the future. Sanders maintained that hundreds of thousands of people flocked to Los Angeles for the concerts. A reported 185,000 people attended Electric Daisy Carnival in 2010. — Amanda Pennington

*Interviewed for this article: Rick Caruso and Barry Sanders, (213) 765-6387; Pat Lynch, (213) 765-6317*



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-Commissioning



#### **BEHIND THE HEADLINES**

#### **EVENT ACCIDENTS HIGHLIGHT SAFETY ISSUES FOR GENERAL MANAGERS**

A string of tragedies at arenas and stadiums has pushed venue safety concerns into the news.

On Nov. 21, a two-year-old child died after falling 28 feet from the third deck of a luxury seat section at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, a few minutes after the Lakers game finished. The boy, Lucas Tang of Garden Grove, Calif., apparently wandered out of his parents' sight while they were taking pictures and somehow fell over the glass partition. The boy was treated at the scene by paramedics and according to AEG spokesperson Michael Roth, was seen leaving the building moving his arms and his legs when placed on a stretcher. He later died at the hospital.

The Staples Center staff has made little public comment on the matter, although GM Lee Zeidman did tell Venues Today that the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety visited the arena immediately after the accident and determined that the 26-inch guard rails protecting the suite "are in compliance with the code effective at the time of its construction and installation, and they meet current code."

The death of the toddler was followed a week later by the death of a 23-year-old man at Soldier Field in Chicago, who apparently jumped over a three foot clearing and landed 35 feet below on the roof of a storage building, confirmed stadium spokesperson Luca Serra. On Friday, a small boy survived a 10-foot fall over the railings during a college football game at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Ariz.

All the incidents were purely coincidental, but have caught the attention of

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**Rose Quarter, Portland,  
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**Peabody Opera House,  
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Marketing

**Georgia World Congress  
Center Authority,  
Atlanta** - Three Senior  
Level Positions

**Tacoma (Wash.) Dome**  
-Box Office Manager

**Superfly Productions,  
New York** - Project  
Manager Director of  
Marketing

[VIEW THE FULL LISTINGS](#)

venue managers in the U.S. who spend vast amounts of time preparing and protecting venues and patrons.

“You have to expect the unexpected,” said Scott Dickson, director of Operations for the Schottenstein Center in Columbus, Ohio. “You can’t rely on people to use common sense, and you have to expect that people won’t.”

Dickson is an instructor for the International Association of Venue Manager’s Academy for Venue Safety and Security and said one of the top rules he imparts to his students is to expect the unexpected.

“As a building manager, life safety is our number one priority,” he said. “You hope you can plan for everything, but it’s hard to plan so the most important thing is to be ready.”

From a liability standpoint, any time there’s a death or an accident, venue managers are generally protected if they’ve exceeded a reasonable standard of care, said Harold Hansen, the director of Life Safety for IAVM.

“There are safety codes and national, state and local fire ordinances. They require rails and safety barriers so people can’t easily stumble over the top,” he said. “If a building makes an effort to follow all the rules, then their liability is generally protected.”

Of course, sometimes it’s easier to reach a quick monetary settlement when someone gets injured instead of fighting a claim in court, and many venue managers find themselves weighing the legal issues in the immediate 48 hours after an accident.

Typically, right after an accident, venue managers are “looking to investigate to find out exactly what happened so you can document the facts and understand the circumstances,” Hansen said. There are also political pressures and constant calls from the media.

“In the end, anyone that works as a building manager needs to be aware of what’s needed to create a safe environment,” Hansen said, including having a responsive and trained staff and taking all possible precautions to prevent an accident in the first place. — Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Lee Zeidman, (213) 742-7255; Luca Serra, (312) 235-7149; Scott Dickson, (213) 742-7255; Harold Hansen, (773) 973-2049*





#### **TRAVELOG**

#### **BUILDING NEW GROUNDS AMONG MANY TOPICS AT IAFE ANNUAL CONFAB**

*Building a new fairgrounds was the topic for Curry Roberts, State Fair of Virginia, Doswell; Tam Allan, Nebraska State Fair, Grand Island; and John Endsley, moderator, Bullock Smith & Partners. (VT Photo)*



REPORTING FROM LAS VEGAS – The mood was generally upbeat and business was getting done at the International Association of Fairs & Expositions convention still going on here. The group convened Nov. 29 and meets through tomorrow, Dec. 2.

Jim Tucker, IAFE president and CEO, said attendance is on par with last year, when 1,500 delegates and 1,000 exhibitors registered. Mid-show they had 17 fewer attendees and sponsorships were up, Tucker said.

“Yesterday (Nov. 30), the walk-up at the trade show was double last year’s number.” If one adds the number who book hospitality suites, attend the Showmen’s League of America trade show and generally hang on, the number of people in town because of fairs and expositions is probably closer to 5,000.

Greg Stewart, Central Washington State Fair, Yakima, was honored with the IAFE Hall of Fame Award. And Jim Sinclair, Minnesota State Fair, Saint Paul, succeeded Cynthia Hoye, Indiana State Fair, Indianapolis, as IAFE chair.

One of the upbeat sessions dealt with building a new fairgrounds, an issue becoming more and more prominent as fairs abandon what have become downtown locations or face political and financial issues that evict them from their current grounds.

Two major fairs moved this year – the State Fair of Virginia, which moved from Richmond to Doswell, and the Nebraska State Fair, which moved from Lincoln to Grand Island. Both thus abandoned the state capital.

Curry Roberts, president, SFVA, advised any fair making such a move to remain focused on the fair’s mission, history and reason for existing. It’s easy to get lost in the financials and logistics and forget the true purpose.

The State Fair of Virginia has actually moved five times, though it was at the Strawberry Hill site in Richmond the longest - since 1954. At that site, the average attendance over five years was 250,000. Attendance was down 10 percent at the new site, but Roberts attributed that to rain.

“Know who your customer is,” he said. The state fair is family- and agriculture-centric. The demographics around Doswell were a great fit.

The move actually took place over 10 years. In 1990, NASCAR bought the racetrack/fairgrounds from the state fair for \$34 million. Prior to that, they had leased it from the fair. That meant the fair needed a new home and one that would be viable without a major tenant like racing.

The fair already owned the Meadows, the birthplace of racing great Secretariat. They bought the 360-acre farm in 1973. It is a historic site and the population within a 100-mile radius totals 2.3 million, 600,000 more than they enjoyed in Richmond.

The challenges included a two-lane access road from the interstate, no public utilities, no zoning classification, and the fact the site was divided by two roads and is on the county line. It cost \$50 million to develop the land before the first new construction project. Roberts recommended that when it’s time to build, make sure all buildings are multi-purpose.

Tam Allan, vice chairman of the all-volunteer board at the Nebraska State Fair, also had similar advice about new construction. With a background in retail, he has never understood why agriculture buildings never seem to have a main entrance. He made sure the new barns at Grand Island were not only multi-purpose but also inviting. The new cattle barn there is 109,076 sq. ft. with huge entrances and huge welcoming banners. At the front entrance, to help draw people in, the fair hosted a barn bar, a milking parlor and a birthing pavilion. “That’s prime real estate,” Allan noted. For non-fair events, that space is front door parking.

Another innovation that is paying off for the new Nebraska State Fair is major video screens in every exhibit building. The goal was to have every kid exhibiting at the fair up on the screen some time during the event. The video screens are great for selling sponsorships, educating fairgoers and preparing for “the virtual fair for the rest of Nebraska.”

The Nebraska State Fair had been in Lincoln for 104 years, until the University of Nebraska wanted to develop the land as an Innovation Park, comparable to the Golden Triangle in Raleigh, N.C. The state owned the land. The fair board was responsible for managing it. “Our first near-death experience was in early 2000. We were out of money,” Allan recalled. A portion of lottery profits saved the day, so they paid off bills, put aside money to renovate and planned improvements.

Then one member of the board, a chancellor at the university, stopped the renovation, knowing the university wanted those 250 acres. “The land is not really suitable for tech. It’s a flood plain and next to a sewage plant, but it was clear we had to move.”

The Nebraska mantra was “no more debt. One near-death experience was enough,” Allan said. Fonner Park in Grand Island came up with the best deal financially. The \$42 million investment came from the university (\$21.5 million), Grand Island, \$8.5 million; the state fair, \$7 million and the state, \$5 million. Six months later, the deal could not have been done, Allan recalled, because the economy tanked. “We insisted on cash up front; we were okay.”

And operating costs went down. For instance, payroll in Lincoln was \$2.5 million, compared to \$850,000 in Grand Island. The fair leases the land and therefore has no rental income, but, on the good side, “we are not all things to all people. Owning things means keeping a lot of things and a lot of employees.”

The move was quick and the fair was way late with advertising the new Nebraska State Fair, themed a Truly Grand Affair, but the people did come. The fair averaged 300,000 attendance in Lincoln. In Grand Island, it did better than 300,000 the first year. It was a different group but they had money in their pockets and they were very hungry, Allan said.

Both Roberts and Allan shared one other major piece of advice. When moving a fair, reorganize the board so that you have the proper skill sets to make deals and develop property. – Linda Deckard

*Interviewed for this story: Curry Roberts, (804) 994-2859; Tam Allan, (402) 476-1909; Jim Tucker, (417) 862-5771*

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## **SPORTS**

### **PLAYOFF EXPANSION PONDERED AT BASEBALL MEETINGS**

Major League Baseball commissioner Bud Selig is shopping the idea of allowing two extra teams to play in the playoffs, increasing the number of eligible teams in the series from eight to 10.

Selig went public with the idea during November’s Baseball Business meetings, and the proposal will be hashed out before a 14-person advisory committee during the Winter Meeting in Orlando, which begins Dec. 6. The league’s owners will then meet in mid-January, where they might vote to approve the playoff expansion.

With MLB’s collective bargaining agreement set to expire in December 2011, the players’ union and owners can work out logistics such as the players’ postseason share and how the extra playoff games will be formatted. If all goes Selig’s way, the expanded playoffs will be implemented in 2012.

Under the new scenario, an additional team in the American League and in the National League would be invited to play against the Wild Card team in an instant run-off, which could be one or three games long.

“Now you’re adding a couple of teams that would otherwise be out of contention in the current scenario,” said Russ Stanley, head of ticketing for the 2010 World Series Champion San Francisco Giants. More teams in close races could mean higher ticket sales toward the end of the season, especially for teams consistently ranked sixth, seventh and even eighth.

Stanley said expanding the season doesn’t present challenges for the box offices, which often sell the entire post-season ticket strip as soon as the team qualifies for the playoffs.

“That might be difficult to sell for a team in a run-off game for the Wild Card spot,” said Stanley, noting that baseball might have to incorporate two

playoff-selling cycles, or even use an auto-debit system.

NBC Sports' Bob Harkins said the broadcast format will be established after the length of the series is determined. "A one-game playoff would be exciting," Harkins said. "But, after playing 162 games it seems a little unfair to the Wild Card teams to leave it all up to a single game, because we know that anything can happen in one game."

Harkins said that the three-game series would force teams to play harder in September. "It would give an edge to the teams that win their division," he said. "As we saw this season, the Yankees and Rays played some pretty mediocre ball the final month of the season, as both teams realized they would make the playoffs and saw no extra advantage to winning the AL East. But if the wild card teams are forced to play a best-of-three series and then immediately go play the best team in the league, there would definitely be more of an incentive to win the division."

The format isn't the only "how" that will have to be answered. Brown said the league and players will have to keep the 162 game regular season format without pushing the playoffs late into November. The solution will likely come in the form of double-headers. — Matthew Coller and Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Russ Stanley, (415) 972-2050; Bob Harkins, (425) 703-9847*

## HOT Tickets

HOT TICKETS is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to VT PULSE. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since Nov. 3.

### FURTHUR BRINGS 30,000 DEADHEADS CLOSER TOGETHER

15,001 or More Seats	10,001-15,000 Seats	5,001-10,000 Seats	5,000 or Less Seats
<p><b>1) Roger Waters</b> Gross Sales: \$1,784,297; Venue: <b>St. Pete Times Forum, Tampa, Fla.</b>; Attendance: 14,630; Ticket Range: \$187-\$47; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: Nov. 16; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p><b>1) Robin Williams</b> Gross Sales: \$4,040,281; Venue: <b>Sydney Entertainment Centre</b>; Attendance: 29,765; Ticket Range: \$193.36-\$115.97; Promoter: Dainty Consolidated Entertainment; Dates: Nov. 11-12, 14, 16; No. of Shows: 4</p>	<p><b>1) Leonard Cohen</b> Gross Sales: \$909,164; Venue: <b>CBS Canterbury Arena, Christchurch, New Zealand</b>; Attendance: 7,315; Ticket Range: \$148.56-\$105.68; Promoter: Frontier Touring Company; Dates: Nov. 3; No. of Shows: 1</p>	<p><b>1) Billy Elliot: The Musical</b> Gross Sales: \$2,356,086; Venue: <b>Durham (N.C.) Performing Arts Center</b>; Attendance: 37,132; Ticket Range: \$127-\$22; Promoter: Nederlander, PFM; Dates: Oct. 30-Nov. 14; No. of Shows: 19</p>
<p><b>2) Furthur</b> Gross Sales: \$1,534,820; Venue: <b>Madison Square Garden Arena, New York</b>; Attendance: 30,876; Ticket Range: \$59.50-\$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Nov. 20-21; No. of Shows: 2</p>	<p><b>2) Robin Williams</b> Gross Sales: \$2,113,316; Venue: <b>Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre</b>; Attendance: 14,746; Ticket Range: \$194.73-\$63.34; Promoter: Dainty Consolidated Entertainment; Dates: Nov. 4-5; No. of Shows: 2</p>	<p><b>2) Furthur</b> Gross Sales: \$714,596; Venue: <b>UIC Pavilion, Chicago</b>; Attendance: 13,602; Ticket Range: \$59.50-\$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Nov. 12-13; No. of Shows: 2</p>	<p><b>2) Irving Berlin's White Christmas</b> Gross Sales: \$761,876; Venue: <b>Fox Theatre, Atlanta</b>; Attendance: 14,565; Ticket Range: \$70-\$20; Promoter: Theatre of the Stars; Dates: Nov. 2-7; No. of Shows: 8</p>
<p><b>3) Usher</b> Gross Sales: \$1,181,485; Venue: <b>Staples Center, Los</b></p>	<p><b>3) Leonard Cohen</b> Gross Sales: \$1,649,626;</p>	<p><b>3) Robin Williams</b> Gross Sales: \$428,415; Venue: <b>CBS Canterbury Arena, Christchurch, New Zealand</b>;</p>	<p><b>3) Hansel &amp; Gretel</b> Gross Sales: \$466,158; Venue: <b>Keller Auditorium, Portland,</b></p>

**Angeles**; Attendance: 14,607; Ticket Range: \$125-\$29.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Nov. 18; No. of Shows: 1

**4) Trans-Siberian Orchestra**  
Gross Sales: \$1,085,674; Venue: **CONSOL Energy Center, Pittsburgh**; Attendance: 22,900; Ticket Range: \$59-\$26.25; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: Nov. 21; No. of Shows: 2

**5) Cirque du Soleil "Alegria"**  
Gross Sales: \$959,108; Venue: **U.S. Airways Center, Phoenix**; Attendance: 14,107; Ticket Range: \$99-\$40; Promoter: Cirque du Soleil; Dates: Nov. 17-21; No. of Shows: 8

Venue: **Brisbane (Australia) Entertainment Centre**; Attendance: 9,207; Ticket Range: \$277.12-\$137.24; Promoter: Frontier Touring Company; Dates: Nov. 6; No. of Shows: 1

**4) Justin Bieber**  
Gross Sales: \$803,831; Venue: **Atlantic City (N.J.) Boardwalk Hall**; Attendance: 13,481; Ticket Range: \$66-\$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Nov. 20; No. of Shows: 1

**5) Justin Bieber**  
Gross Sales: \$529,266; Venue: **Wolstein Center at Cleveland State University**; Attendance: 10,431; Ticket Range: \$56-\$36; Promoter: AEG Live; Dates: Nov. 11; No. of Shows: 1

Attendance: 4,443; Ticket Range: \$155.90-\$93.48; Promoter: Dainty Consolidated Entertainment; Dates: Nov. 19; No. of Shows: 1

**4) Robin Gibb**  
Gross Sales: \$403,643; Venue: **CBS Canterbury Arena, Christchurch, New Zealand**; Attendance: 4,607; Ticket Range: \$152.08-\$74.09; Promoter: In Concert Ltd.; Dates: Nov. 12; No. of Shows: 1

**5) Johnny Reid**  
Gross Sales: \$275,694; Venue: **Moncton (New Brunswick) Coliseum Arena**; Attendance: 5,188; Ticket Range: \$59.07-\$19.69; Promoter: evenko; Dates: Nov. 18; No. of Shows: 1

**Ore.**; Attendance: 6,584; Ticket Range: \$25.50; Promoter: Portland Opera; Dates: Nov. 5-13; No. of Shows: 4

**4) Celtic Thunder**  
Gross Sales: \$239,992; Venue: **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; Attendance: 4,537; Ticket Range: \$54.50-\$44.50; Promoter: Pacific Arts Entertainment; Dates: Nov. 20; No. of Shows: 2

**5) Massive Attack, Thievery Corporation**  
Gross Sales: \$211,506; Venue: **Santa Barbara (Calif.) Bowl**; Attendance: 4,326; Ticket Range: \$61-\$39; Promoter: Nederlander; Dates: Nov. 5; No. of Shows: 1

Compiled by Rob Ocampo and Josh Huckabee. To submit reports, e-mail [HotTickets@venuestoday.com](mailto:HotTickets@venuestoday.com) or fax to (714) 378-0040.

## THE BEAT

### TRAVELOG

#### SEVT CLOSING PANEL TACKLES ETHICAL ISSUES OF DYNAMIC PRICING

Students and panelists gather together for the final panel at this year's Sport, Entertainment and Venues Tomorrow conference in Columbia, S.C. Panelists said they would give priority to resumes from students who stayed the course. (VT Photo).



REPORTING FROM COLUMBIA, S.C. — The advent of dynamic ticketing has created new opportunities for teams, promoters and venues to maximize revenues. Emerging technologies from companies like qcue and Digonex are providing teams with complex programs that raise prices for hot games and drop prices when demand cools off. But with this new powerful technology comes important ethical questions — is it fair to charge season ticketholders full price when offering discounts on single game sales? How much should

consumers know about how demand affects the price of tickets?

These topics were tackled during an important ethics panel at the Sport, Entertainment and Venues Tomorrow Conference in Columbia, S.C. – a collaboration between Venues Today and the University of South Carolina’s Department of Sport and Entertainment Management.

“When it comes to the opinions that count in the marketplace, it’s the consumer who is in control because they have the ability to vote on whether or not to embrace the offer with their buying dollar,” said Jane Kleinberger from Paciolan.

Kleinberger said that when she first started in ticketing, the resale of tickets – called scalping – was a hot button issue that drove many venue managers up a wall.

“We’re talking heartburn stress,” Kleinberger recalled, and with some good reason. Many brokers are still viewed as middlemen who drive up prices and contribute little to the industry.

“But if I wanted to sell my house at any price the market will bear, why should it be any different than a ticket?” she pondered, noting that it’s the buyer’s right to sell an item any way he or she pleases.

“The buy or not-buy decision has nothing to do with how you actually got there,” said Derek Palmer with Tickets.com, adding that ultimately it’s the consumer who uses his buying power to decide if the item is ethically priced.

But if consumers understood how tickets were priced and how unexpected fluctuations change prices, would they change their buying habits?

“I am a big believer in transparency and I think that it’s important people know all of the means through which ticket prices are adjusted and how they can be acquired,” said Kleinberger. “It’s about the business of figuring out how they want to communicate and offer value to their fans. If they’re clear about what they’re selling, and it’s profitable for the company and competitive for the consumer,” then many will buy as they please.

But there’s also an element of proprietary information, “and with any company, there are fundamental elements of business that are not disclosed in every walk of life,” Palmer said.

And what about the consumer? Moderator Tom Paquette from the Colonial Life Arena in Columbia noted that changes in technology have allowed for music fans to easily download free music, sometimes against the wishes of the band or even in violation of the law.

“Are ethics one-sided, or do the consumers have a responsibility to act ethically?”

Dennis Scanlon from eTix said he’s dealt with ethical issues during the entire course of his long career in ticketing – especially with scalping.

“Today there are so many barriers to buying tickets,” he said. “If you’re a fan of Toby Keith, you have to join his fan club, then you have to have the right type of Visa card, live in the correct zip code, check off that you’re a student and then finally settle on price. We shouldn’t talk about adding more barriers – we should figure out how to knock them down.”

And ultimately, dynamic pricing can be used to combat scalping by pricing high demand tickets closer to market value and eliminating the ability of scalpers to purchase tickets using bots and sell them at a marked up price.

In the end, anyone wanting to work in the entertainment space should “always look for changes. You don’t want to be ahead of your time, and you sure don’t want to be late to the game, but see what’s happening in the industry because there’s always a need for change,” Kleinberger said. “If you’re entrepreneurial, seize that moment.” – Dave Brooks

*Interviewed for this article: Jane Kleinberger, (866) 722-4652; Derek Palmer, (714) 327-5560; Tom Paquette, (803) 576-9200; Dennis Scanlon, (919) 780-8086*

## DARIN LASHINSKY FORMS OWN FIRM



*Darin Lashinsky*

National Shows 2 (NS2), Nashville, is the newest independent concert promoter on the scene - new but old. It was founded by Darin Lashinsky, who learned the business from his late father, Phil, who owned the original National Shows. Lashinsky worked for the last 12 years at Outback Concerts.

Lashinsky opened his doors a month ago and through the website is under construction, he already has some business on the books, including select dates by Avenged Sevenfold and some dates for Music as a Weapon with Disurbed and Korn, both in conjunction with fellow independent promoters Frank Productions and the Knitting Factory. NS2 is also promoting some Keith Urban dates, including a June 29 date at Scottrade Center, St. Louis, Mo.

Lashinsky has staffed his new firm with Brian Penix, production manager and talent buyer, and Kendall Maffett, marketing director, both also Outback alumni; and Craig Varian, new media manager.

His financial backers include Larry and Fred Frank of Frank Productions. Lashinsky said he expects NS2 to promote 70-120 shows a year, which is what he had typically done prior to launching his own firm.

“Consolidation in our business has allowed small companies to thrive,” Lashinsky said. “The timing was right. I started working in this business for my father and he worked for his father. It’s in my blood.” – Linda Deckard

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