

Unauthorised Ticket Agents and Ticket Touting

All event tickets are checked by our staff at entry to the event and again at the wristband exchange for camping shows - any forgeries or dubious tickets will be confiscated from you, you will not be permitted to the event and you may face questioning from the police.

To be as safe as you can and to avoid obtaining a suspect ticket, follow these simple guidelines

- Do **not** buy from an unofficial ticket agent - see our list of authorised agents below
- Do **not** buy from internet auction sites.
- Do **not** buy a ticket online without seeing it's face value.
- Do **not** pay more than a £7 booking fee per ticket and £5 for the tickets being sent registered post.
- If you live in the UK do **not** buy from a website with an overseas office address, or with no registered address shown.
- Do **not** buy from another individual or tout, either in advance in your home town, or outside the event

If you ignore these pointers you are likely to pay a lot of money for something worthless as your ticket will be invalid.

Festival Republic will always provide confirmation of valid agents:

(http://media.livenation.co.uk/fido/publishing/content/z/x/l/AuthorisedTicketAgents_2009.pdf).

NON TRANSFERABLE

If you see tickets advertised anywhere other than official outlets you stand a good chance of getting ripped off. This is because tickets are **non-transferable**, which means that once purchased you can't sell them on to others, and so if you do buy from an unauthorised source you stand the good chance of being refused entry as the seller must have obtained them elsewhere. Festival Republic will be unable to assist you if you have bought from an unauthorised source, as we will have no purchase history available for the ticket.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Authorised agents will always make available the ticket Terms and Conditions applicable to the sale and make the transaction as transparent as possible. This protects both the buyer and the agent and offers the customer legal protection. You will not be afforded the same protection if you buy from an unauthorised site.

AUCTION SITES

Each year we receive feedback about people buying from auction sites, unauthorised on line agencies and elsewhere with tales of tickets that never materialised, fake tickets and customers being told to 'meet our rep outside the venue on the day'

Despite our best efforts to protect customers there is very little we can do as a company to help if you buy from anywhere other than an authorised agency.

TOUTS

We are often asked why we allow touts to buy tickets. The simple answer is that **we do not knowingly sell to touts**. We take great time and effort to prevent multiple purchases and work hard to prevent tickets being touted, unfortunately the law is not on our side and it is a difficult and time consuming exercise trying to police purchases, however we do try our best. Many touts buy tickets from a number of sources using numbers of people to buy for them. They will buy from auction sites and also advertise on websites that they buy up unwanted tickets.

TRADING STANDARDS

Part of the problem is that as it is the customer, not Festival Republic, who has had their money taken, it *has* to be the customer who reports the problem to Trading Standards, the Police etc. We have no power to do this. Time and time again we have reported websites, illegally posted ads and a host of other problems but despite the concerted efforts of the whole industry the problem persists. At this time the law stands in favour of the secondary market as confirmed by the recent government report in to ticket touting. The government has indicated that the market should self regulate but have not unfortunately addressed the issues of disreputable traders and their negative effect on the innocent consumer.

IF IN DOUBT, DO A LITTLE RESEARCH FIRST.

Would you give you card details out and permission to debit your account to an anonymous person in the street? No. So don't do it to an untraceable person on the internet or phone.

Certain things should immediately ring alarm bells such as:

1. Websites/agents with an address overseas (e.g. Hungary) for a supposed London based company.

2. No address details at all on the website just a contact phone number (especially a mobile number). Try ringing the number and asking a few questions before attempting to book on line.
3. Companies are required by law to show the face value. If it does not or shows the sale value well above the original value then it is not a valid agent.
4. Festival Republic agents are committed to keeping a set booking fee. The maximum booking fee on the most expensive tickets is £7 per ticket regardless of which official agent is selling. Anyone charging above this is not a valid agent (postage around £5 - registered - may be added). Don't take the agents word for the face value. Find out from the event promoter or venue before you buy.

Researching the agent / website

If you are suspicious then research the company. Try Google and other search engines and also web forums are an excellent source of feedback.

Most tout websites use a drop address. There will be no staff to talk to just an office with someone collecting mail for 20 or 30 different companies. Google the postcode/address and see how many separate companies are registered to the same address. The Companies House website is useful for obtaining addresses and company details but remember anyone can register a company. The fact that Companies House has the company registered does not indicate how it has treated its customers.

Use web service such as WHOIS to find the domain details and who they are registered to. See if there is any connection with sites previously closed down by Trading Standards and the DTI. Three companies recently closed down were all connected by the same personnel.

Check out consumer sites like **Blogger.com** <http://www.blogger.com> and **BBC's Watchdog**. Blogger.com gives feedback from genuine customers who've experienced first hand the type of stressful and expensive disappointment that disreputable ticket agents provide. Watch out for positive comments thrown in randomly - you will occasionally get touts posting positive comments about their own websites however the sheer number of bad posts will give a good indication of the real picture.

Festival Republic cannot be held responsible for any purchases made through unauthorised sources.

Click below for a list of unauthorised agents: These outlets have **NOT been supplied with tickets** by Festival Republic and most are here as a result of being reported by customers who have experienced problem with them. Do not buy from them.

http://media.livenation.co.uk/fido/publishing/content/z/x/l/UNAuthorised_TicketAgents_2009.pdf

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CAUGHT OUT

If you do encounter problems contact your credit card issuer as soon as possible, your local Trading Standards Office, and if you believe a criminal offence has taken place, then Police. If you are not sure that a criminal offence has taken place then ask advice first from your card issuer and local Trading Standards Office.

www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

Complain to the web domain supplier. They have a legal obligation to ensure companies they are hosting are operating legally and have the power to close down the site.

SEARCH ENGINES

As a search engine Google is very effective, however typing in Reading Festival will not automatically display the official Reading website first. Please check you are buying from the valid site and not an unauthorised site set up to look like the official one. Examples of these are readingfestival.org & readingfestival2009.com which have **no official connection** to Reading Festival. Some sites will carry ads/links from unauthorised ticket agents. Only use the official site for ticket links.

FESTIVAL REPUBLIC INFORMATION LINE

If in doubt call the festival information line on **020 7009 3001**

SOLD OUT EVENTS

The number of tickets available for any event is limited by the venue capacity. Once the tickets have all sold the safest thing to do is accept the fact it's sold out.

We all understand the disappointment of missing out - but is it really worth risking your hard earned cash buying from an authorised source when the no guarantee you will get in?

There are people who currently buy extra tickets to sell on to cover their own ticket costs. In doing this you deprive genuine fans (the ones you party with at the festivals) from buying at the proper price. Please be considerate and think of others and only buy for personal use.

PHONE LINES

When the events go on sale the phones can get very busy. One reason you may not be able to get through was highlighted by an email complaint sent to us recently which said that even though this person was dialling in simultaneously on 4 mobiles, two landlines to the booking line, they still didn't get through. One person using up 6 phones line - no surprise the phone lines get jammed.

SPARE TICKETS

Occasionally due to genuine circumstances you may find yourself with a spare ticket.

Please do not be tempted to sell it on an auction site or to sell to a ticket tout or on line agency. This just perpetuates the problem. You are risking the purchaser not be able to enter the event (under the Terms and Conditions). You are liable should this happen and you may end up on the wrong end of legal action if something occurs to prevent the buyer from entering or you fail to supply information relating to the event entry Terms and Conditions.

If you have a spare ticket and your point of purchase are unable to offer a refund why not use a trading service such as Scarlet Mist who will provide platform for you to sell your tickets for the price you paid to genuine fans.

www.scarletmist.com .

Please note Scarlet Mist is not associated in any way with Festival Republic.

If you have a genuine reason for not being able to use your ticket such as a bereavement or accident please call our Information line for advice. We will do what we can to assist you.

If we work together to buy fairly there's a good chance that genuine fans will get tickets and less people will find themselves out of pocket.

Remember - The safest way to buy is from the advertised list of authorised agents.

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