

information to their members, and are familiar with traveling, or at least arriving and marshaling, as groups. It is obviously easier to manage four coaches each responsible for 25 team members than 100 individual performers. Each participating performer should receive, review, and sign a simple one-page waiver prepared by the event's attorney, protecting the organizer against liability claims in case of injury or accident, and granting permission to use the performer's images in event photography, video coverage, and broadcast (for a more detailed discussion on participant waivers, see Play 14 and Appendix 9).

Treat amateur entertainers with the same respect and consideration as you would extend to those who are being paid to perform. Ensure that plenty of water is readily available at all rehearsals, as well as in staging areas, and that restroom facilities are easily accessible. If rehearsals or call times require participants to be on the event site throughout the day, be sure to provide meals or snacks, or provide reasonably long enough meal breaks for them to be able to find food elsewhere. The feeding of cast and crew members is a perfect opportunity to involve a food or restaurant sponsor. Where possible, it is a best practice to try to provide food for cast, crew, and staff members on site when events or rehearsals are located in areas that offer few dining options. Rehearsals cannot usually restart until all cast members have returned, so it only takes a handful of late-returning participants to hold up an entire show.

Celebrity Entertainers

Organizers of major sports events are incorporating entertainment provided by well-known bands and celebrity performers with increasing regularity. Musical performers who appeal to the same target audience as the featured sport can add significant excitement to pre-event, intermission, and even postevent festivities. Their celebrity stature and amplified sound can help bridge the physical distance between the event and the audience. Some will readily agree to appear during sports events with large live and television audiences to enjoy wide exposure for a new album or soon-to-be-released song. Keep in mind that a performer's fee is not related to the length of an appearance. To professional performers, the time investment is nearly the same whether they play a single song, or a full 90-minute concert. They still have to travel to the event, set up their gear, participate in a sound check and rehearsal, perform, and then travel on to the next stop. Their fees may be negotiable to some extent, but do not expect costs to be significantly reduced because of the brevity of their appearances.

Well-known musical acts are best procured through their national booking agency. You can usually identify the agency from the act's website. For the right price, performers will appear virtually anywhere as long as they are not on hiatus or working on an album. When bands take a break from touring, its members disperse and it is very difficult for their management to reassemble them.

Artists' fees can be very expensive, but that is only the beginning of the costs that can be incurred when booking recognizable talent. After receiving notice of the initial asking price, request a copy of the act's contract and rider. The rider is a list of all of the extra requirements that must be covered by the organizer, including the number of people for whom travel must be provided and at what class of service. The list typically includes members of the act, as well as back-up singers and musicians, the manager, the road or tour manager, sound director, lighting director, and often others. Some acts additionally require such personnel as bodyguards, hairdressers, make-up artists, and wardrobe supervisors, and their rider will define whether the specific individuals to fulfill these roles must travel with the artist, or may be provided on site by the sports event organizer. The rider will also contain specific information about the act's requirements for hotel accommodations (which will likely include some number of suites at a top-quality property), meal and special dietary requirements, postevent hospitality, and complimentary event tickets.

Minimum production requirements are also provided in an accompanying technical rider, usually specifying the size of the stage, audio equipment, lighting, musical instruments (often referred to as *backline*), and other performance-specific needs.

Negotiate the fee and the rider at the same time, as it is the totality of their costs that is important. You may still be able to meet an artist's minimum fee requirements while reducing the expenses of fulfilling the rider, or partially cover the rider costs with a reduction in the fee.

There are areas of negotiation illustrated in Figure 12.3 that may be applied to the contracts for professional artists. Remember that most talent contracts and riders are generic documents. Other than including the date, location, the name of the buyer, and the length of the performance desired, they are not generally customized by the agency to the needs of a particular show or sports event. As a result, the contracts that organizers receive are generally designed to be applicable to events in which the act is performing as a solo or featured concert attraction. Sports events usually use professional artists in a much more limited way, integrated as an element of a much broader event. As such, the act's tour management may relax a significant portion of the technical requirements, such as the size of the stage, and supporting lighting, sound, and special effects. With fewer technical requirements, the organizer may be able to successfully reduce the number of technical personnel that must travel with the artist to the event.

The meal requirements that are outlined in the artist's rider are often exhaustive. They not only specify which meals must be covered and for how many individuals, but often identify the exact menu. To simplify event-day logistics, especially in temporary event facilities that are not equipped for fine catering, organizers can propose a flat fee (also known as a *buy-out*) payable to the artist that will enable the tour management to provide the meals desired on its own.

Finally, most artists will require a number of complimentary tickets to the event for their management, important business clients, and perhaps even local members of their fan club. As the event is not a typical concert, the organizer can usually negotiate a reduction in the number of tickets normally required by the artist.

Put the counteroffer to the agency in writing, but do not be surprised if it does not respond immediately. The agency will have to confer with the artist's management before accepting any reduced fee, and with the act's tour manager to discuss any alterations to the rider. Acts in high demand may also deliberately delay in responding in hope that a concert promoter or an event

- Talent fees
- Air travel
 - Reduce the number of people traveling
 - Convert a number of airfares at first and business class to coach
 - Seek to include sponsor-provided (VIK) tickets
- Hotel
 - Reduce the number of people traveling
 - Reduce the number of suites required
- Meals and snacks
 - Reduce or buy out
- Technical rider
 - Reduce technical requirements (e.g., stage size, lighting, special effects, audio) to levels appropriate to event and its host facility
- Complimentary tickets

Figure 12.3 Commonly Negotiable Talent Contract and Rider Terms

ther location will offer them more money for an appearance. It is not unusual for popular performers to refrain from accepting the terms of a counterproposal until 90 days before an event, it becomes apparent that no more lucrative offer from another party for the same date is available. Therefore, be sure that your counterproposal includes an expiration date for accepting the offer. While it may not inspire a performer's management company to act with any greater speed, it does enable the organizer to approach other alternative acts after the expiration date has passed.

Hosts and Announcers

Events frequently require a public address announcer to welcome and communicate with the audience, relaying official scores, and fulfilling marketing obligations to sponsors. A pleasant-sounding, authoritative announcer with a smooth, professional delivery will capture the attention of the audience and lend an air of importance to both the festivities and the competition. Quite often, the best sources for announcers are local radio and television stations, which can provide the announcer with greater exposure opportunity for a sports event's media partners. To save money on talent fees, the organizer can seek to incorporate the station's provision of an announcer as part of their media sponsorship deal. Make sure the announcer becomes familiar with the pronunciation of each of the participant's names to ensure they are presented with authority, sincerity, and confidence.

Some events also lend themselves to involving a host or emcee in addition to the public address announcer. Unlike the unseen announcer, a host has a visible presence and provides at least some of the focus of attention when speaking with the audience. A host can provide a more personal touch to welcoming the audience, interviewing players, coaches, and dignitaries, and delivering scripted monologue for pre-event and intermission festivities. Like a television color commentator, the host can add dimension and drama, information and insights, enthusiasm, and entertainment value to both the pre-event ceremonies and the contest itself.

If you want to add ceremonies and entertainment to your sports event, knowing what resources are available can reach out for will help inspire your planning. But before contacting potential performers or other event participants, you have to know how you will use them and what you will want them to do. It is now time to begin the production planning process.

Production Planning

Planning the presentation and production of sports events is a complex process that often requires the appointment of an event producer or presentation director. This individual is charged with the responsibility of developing the program's creative approach, working with technical specialists to arrange for sound, lighting, staging, and other presentation tools, and, ultimately, overseeing the day-to-day details of event production. Once the producer has a reasonable understanding of the needs of the sports event's presentation and how they will be achieved, the planning starts with the preparation of lists—lots of them, including contact lists, rehearsal schedules, production schedules, cast lists, wardrobe lists, prop lists, audio and music play lists, video lists, and event breakdowns. These documents help the producer to organize his or her thinking, identify required purchases, and communicate expectations to the cast, production staff, and crew. Developing and maintaining these many lists ensures that no detail goes unconsidered by the presentation director, and that every facet of the production is communicated to the entire presentation team. Figure 12.4 provides a summary of the most essential production documents, which are explored in detail in the following sections.