

The System Shopper's Checklist

This checklist is written for you to use in your decision making process as you investigate online systems.

1. E-Tickets

- The system should allow the patron to print e-tickets at home.
- Can you customize the e-ticket with your own text and images? Can you place ads for your sponsors on it? Can it combine an entire order on one piece of paper?
- Can you customize the text of the email which goes out with the e-tickets?
- Do e-tickets cost extra? (**Please don't be fooled** by vendors who claim that "the system is free" – they are charging the patron for e-tickets, which is irritating to the patron and makes work at the box office.)

2. Box Office

- The system should do reserved (assigned) seating. Can you have different "versions" of your venue for different shows? Can you customize the venue layout? Can you add text to it?
- Can you put seats on "hold" so they're not available for sale (for example because they're house seats, or because they have obstructed view)?
- The system should let you exchange seats for a different night. Do you want patrons to be able to make their own exchanges?
- Does the system let you put seats on reserve for a patron, and wait for payment? Does it allow the patron to complete the sale online later?
- Can the system record cash refunds?

3. Shopping Cart

- The online shopping cart should be customized to resemble your website. Take a look at some examples. Is the transition smooth? Are the examples classy? Do they reflect the individual organization, or do they all tend to look the same?
- How customizable is the online buying experience? For example, performances should be able to go off sale at a scheduled time. When this happens, can you customize the message which appears? How about the "sold out" message?
- Does the system recognize donors and subscribers to give them automatic discounts?
- Does the system allow you to ask for a donation to accompany the online purchase? Can you customize the text and appearance of the appeal?

4. Subscriptions

- Does the system offer discounts on tickets in a subscription? Can you buy a subscription online? Can you choose your seats?
- There are **many** options for subscription sales and pricing. Your organization is likely to have its own particular "style" of subscriptions. **Please don't assume that the system does them the way you do!** Check out the details. If possible, buy a test subscription online, print the tickets, talk to your salesperson about exactly how it all will work.
- How do you **exchange** subscription tickets?

4. Subscriptions (continued)

- How does the system handle repeat subscriptions? Can you conveniently offer patrons the ability to get the same seats they had last year? Can you send them a payment link for such a repeat order?

5. Patron Records

- **Duplicates** are a key issue in record-keeping. How does the system help you combine duplicate records?
- Does it record organizations separately from individuals? Can you associate individual staff members with an organization?
- How about families? Can family members have separate records and still receive **unduplicated mailings**? Can family members all be eligible for discounts due to members, subscribers, etc?

6. Marketing

- The system should be recording emails for all patrons. It should also allow them to opt out of promotional emailings.
- Similarly, it should record their address and allow them to opt out of postal mail.
- Does it incorporate a system for sending promotional mailings/emailings, or will you need an additional service?
- Does it send HTML email? Does it have a convenient template system, or do you need to do your own HTML?
- How flexible is this system? For example, can it:
 - Send targeted mailings and emailings?

Send an email to everyone who has not yet bought a ticket to your current show?

Send a mailing to last year's subscribers, who have not subscribed yet this year?

Send a mailing to current members / donors? Previous members?

Send postal mail when email is not available?

- Can you include a passcode good for a discount on one ticket in a mailing?
- Can you add your own coupon codes?

7. Comps, discounts, passes, gift certificates

- There are a variety of situations where you may want to offer special discounts or comps to an individual or a group: for promotional reasons, giving perks to donors, etc. How does the system assist with this? Can they be redeemed online?
- Can the system sell (or give away) passes which allow the patron to select a certain number of seats online? Passes can be used in a large variety of ways (subscription passes, flex passes, promotional passes, festival passes, etc.) Does it provide the kinds of passes you are most interested in?
- Can you check how many tickets are still available on a pass? Can the patron check online?
- Does the system sell gift certificates? Can patrons use gift certificates online?
- Can you give a pass to a donor organization which allows them to issue a certain number of comps to their people?

8. Other

- Can you sell non-ticket items through the system?
- Do you need a particular type of data export?

9. Customer Service

- What hours is customer service available?
- Will you have a specific CS person assigned to you?
- **Talk to other customers** about their experience with customer service.
- How much training is included? What happens if you need extra training?

10. Reports

- What kind of reports do you need – or what kinds have you dreamed about? Looking through the reports should be fun, in a candy-store kind of way (“wow, I never thought I’d get **that** kind of report!”)
- Have your financial person look through the reconciliation reports.
- Does the system include professional marketing reports?
- Does the system include development reports (by appeal, designation, donation trends, etc)?

11. Donations

- Does the system accept donations online? How much can you customize the appeals page?
- How do acknowledgments work? Many people prefer to do acknowledgments by hand. How does the system facilitate this?
- Can you include a donation appeal in the ticket buying process?
- Does it handle memberships in the way you use them? (Memberships can be seasonal, rolling, or monthly, and you may have other specific needs around membership and renewal.)
- Is there an automatic renewal process? Can memberships be renewed online?
- Does it allow the kinds of perks for members that you would like to use (automatic discounts on tickets, ability to buy during the preseason, etc)?

At Ticket Turtle, we love questions, so please contact your salesperson directly, or sales@ticketturtle.com, 866-788-7853 *150 for prompt, complete answers to your questions.

To download the Ticket Turtle agreement go to: www.ticketturtle.com/turtle/home.signup.html .