

INTRODUCTION

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CELEBRITY BOOKING



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The Ultimate Guide To Celebrity Booking

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How to Book a Celebrity: The Entire Process



Booking a celebrity can raise the public profile of your event and increase the demand for attendance; as an added bonus, you can also use the photos from the event itself as marketing material after the event is over.

That said, booking a celebrity for your event isn't as straightforward

as you might think. After all, celebrities have a lot of time commitments on their schedules, so the event has to be worth their while for them to be interested in attending. Plus, you have to make sure you're booking the *right* celebrity for your event; ensuring that the celebrity and the event are a good fit is almost as important as getting a celebrity in the first place.

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There are also quite a few nuances to booking a celebrity that tend to get overlooked. Unfortunately, these little details can often mean the difference between pulling off a successful, well-attended event that everyone talks about for a long time and a dull, forgettable event that has no star power. So in this chapter, we'll take a look at the most important building block of a successful event: how to book a celebrity.

Know Their Representative

When trying to book a celebrity for your event, you likely won't be making your pitch directly to the celebrity. Instead, you'll



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be reaching out to their agent, and in some rare cases (if they don't have an agent) their manager. For your purposes, let's assume that the celebrity has an agent; but what does an agent do?

Simply put, an agent is responsible for finding work for their clients. Whether that's film or TV roles, live gigs or endorsement deals, whatever their client's specialty, agents make sure the people they represent continue to find work. Agents are also responsible for the business end of any jobs their clients get; specifically, negotiating the contract. Finally, agents also get a percentage of every deal their clients make.

There are many types of agents, and some celebrities have a different agent depending on the industry; for example, an actor/musician like Jack Black will have one agent for his film and TV career and another for his musical career. Even if a celebrity doesn't have multiple agents, their agent does have to get

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approval for any deals from the celebrity's manager and publicist. So while an agent's role is ultimately to keep their clients in business and making money, you do have to keep everyone else on the celebrity's team in mind when making your pitch to an agent.

You can get the contact information for the official agents of artists and celebrities at [Booking Agent Info](https://bookingagentinfo.com/).

Know Your Event



This might seem obvious, but you'd be surprised how many celebrity bookings fall apart before they get started because the details of the event haven't been set in stone. Before reaching out to an agent,

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you need to have a crystal-clear picture of the event: when and where is it taking place? What kind of event will it be? What would you like the celebrity to do at this event?

The fact is, agents are constantly receiving requests from people hoping to book celebrities. Unfortunately, a lot of the requests they receive come from people who either don't have enough information to solidify a booking or who don't understand the booking process. In order to avoid wasting time, agents require that you have certain information readily available beforehand. This helps agents accurately communicate to their clients what the opportunity is; more importantly, it demonstrates



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to agents that you're both serious about booking their client and a legitimate business.

The general rule of thumb is to provide as much information as you can, but at the bare minimum, you *must* know and provide the following details when reaching out to an agent:

The venue where the event is taking place

The venue should also be reserved before you reach out to an agent- they and their client will not be happy if they agree to an event in Location A, only to find out after the contract has been signed that it's in a completely different venue. In addition to the name and address of the venue, you should also know and communicate the capacity of the venue to the agent.

The date of the event and timeframe for the celebrity's appearance

These are logistical details, but it's your attention (or inattention) to them that can mean the difference between coming across to an agent as a professional who's done this before and someone who's not worthy of the agent's time.

It's also important that you outline exactly how much time you're requesting for the celebrity to make an appearance. Their agent knows their client's schedule, and they need to know up front how much of a time commitment you're expecting.

What you want the celebrity to do

The cost of hiring a celebrity also depends on what you expect the celebrity to do during the event. There are a few options here, so let's take a look at the most common:

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Make an Appearance

Making an appearance depends on the specific celebrity, but in most cases, an appearance fee at a minimum requires that the celebrity hangs out at the event and takes pictures with guests. In other cases, celebrities will stay at the party and hang out for a while.

Walkthrough

A walkthrough is a much shorter version of an appearance. Essentially, a walkthrough requires the celebrity just to make a quick appearance at the event; sometimes, they may take pictures with fans, but there have been cases in the past where the celebrity comes to the event, literally walks through the event to show their face, then leaves. If you do request a walkthrough, it would be wise to outline exactly how long the celebrity is expected to stay at the event ahead of time.

Hosting

A hosting engagement requires the celebrity to spend a significant amount of time at the event. In addition, the celebrity will be expected to deliver some quick remarks at the event and engage with guests. Hosting does not require the celebrity to deliver a long speech or a performance.

Speaking

On the other hand, a speaking engagement means the celebrity is required to deliver a speech of some sort to guests; the topic will depend on what the event is all about. And while hosting requires the celebrity to spend time interacting with guests, a speaking engagement can simply entail the celebrity showing up to deliver the speech, then leaving if they choose to do so.

Performance

As the name implies, a performance engagement is just that: the celebrity is expected to deliver a performance of some kind. In the case of musicians, this could be a short show; in the case of someone like Louis C.K., this might involve a stand-up set. The specifics of the performance depend on the kind of celebrity you're asking to attend the event.

What arrangements (if any) you'll be covering

Celebrities often have very specific requirements when it comes to their travel- in some cases, the celebrity will require first-class or business-class tickets. It's also important to remember that they don't travel alone; if you are covering the arrangements and booking a flight, keep in mind that the celebrity may be traveling with up to eight or more people.

The celebrity's requirements also extend to their hotel accommodations. Much like the requirements for first-class tickets, some celebrities require a 5-star hotel for their stay. A good rule of thumb is: The bigger the celebrity, the bigger the expectations. And while you may be able to negotiate with lower-tier celebrities about their airfare and accommodations, you won't have much wiggle room when it comes to bigger celebrities.

Who is paying for the event

To further put the agent at ease, you need to be crystal clear about who the purchaser is for the event, whether it's you or someone else. More importantly, the money should already be secure before reaching out to an agent; if you don't have the money when you reach out, you're wasting both your time and the agent's.

You also want to let the agent know whether or not there are any sponsors for the event, and if so, who the sponsors are. After all, a celebrity environmentalist like Leonardo DiCaprio probably won't want to attend an event sponsored by a large corporation that contributes heavily to global warming, and his agent won't be happy if you don't disclose that information ahead of time.

Whether the event is public or private

Celebrities charge more money for private events than they do for public events.



However, if you're targeting a celebrity who doesn't normally agree to do

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performances or appearances, a private event is a better bet at getting them to agree. It's a fairly common practice for wealthy families and companies to book celebrities for private, intimate events; though they cost more money, you'll have a better chance at convincing an exclusive celebrity to make an exception.

Public events, on the other hand, usually have a higher success rate, since celebrities can use those to boost their public profile and promote their own work. But no matter what kind of event you're hosting, top-tier celebrities like Rihanna or Taylor Swift will cost at least \$750,000; even more if the party is hosted internationally. You should be aware that if the event is public and you don't have much experience, the agent may decline to work with you; after all, the agent has no way of knowing if the event will go smoothly or be a disaster, and they may not want to risk a disaster occurring in a public event setting. You'll also want to inform the agent whether there is any media involvement in the event.

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Finally, you must also confirm with the agent whether the event is for charity or a fundraiser; philanthropic celebrities who tend to avoid making appearances might be more likely to sign on if it's for a good cause.

[Your deadline for confirming the celebrity](#)

[Your budget for the event](#)

When trying to figure out what you can spend on having a celebrity at your event, you may be tempted to research their fees online. However, this may be doing more harm than good- celebrity booking prices are not public, and the prices you find online are likely completely inaccurate.

While celebrity booking fees are usually negotiable, there are some exceptions; specifically, with big celebrities. For example, booking Drake for a performance or Matt Damon for a speaking

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engagement could cost you hundreds of thousands of dollars for a public event (and even more for a private event like a birthday party). But before you get to the negotiation stage, you first need to understand what your budget is and exactly how much you are willing to spend on talent.



When figuring out your talent budget, you need to keep in mind that there are additional fees associated with booking a celebrity, such as specific equipment and food and drinks; many celebrities also have contract riders, which will increase the cost of booking them. If you're not sure of your budget, you can ask the agent for a range of what the celebrity might cost; more

often than not, though, the agent will give you an inflated price.

Therefore, it's much smarter to have your budget set ahead of

time- that way, if the celebrity you're hoping to book is out of your price range, their agent can at least point you in the direction of some of their other clients who are more in line with what you're willing to spend.

Once you have all that information, the next step is to identify the celebrity (or celebrities) you think would be a great fit for the event. You wouldn't want "The Situation" as the celebrity attraction at an art gallery opening, just like you wouldn't ask John Malkovich to attend the opening of a new nightclub.

When all of this is in place, then you're ready to [contact a celebrity's agent](#). And here's what you need to know about the next steps.

The Process

The standard process for reaching out to an agent follows a pretty basic format. Before we get into the specific steps, here are a couple best practices you should keep in mind when reaching out to an agent.

Be Concise



Celebrity representatives are flooded with requests on a daily basis. And because they only have a limited amount of time to read each request and decide whether or not it's worthy of a response, the smart thing to do is be as brief as possible in your initial request. However, you want to provide as many specifics as you can in a limited amount of space; if the request is too vague, celebrity representatives aren't going to waste time going back

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and forth with you to get the full details, and you'll lose your opportunity. By the same token, any email that takes more than a minute to read will be pushed aside.

Follow Up (Correctly!)

One of the trickiest parts about reaching out to celebrity representatives is knowing when and how to follow up. Because their schedules are so busy, you shouldn't expect a response right away; if you get one, great, but by no means should you send follow-up emails every day until you get a response- that's a guaranteed one-way ticket to that representative's spam folder. If you believe in the value of the service you're providing, then it should feel like less of a request and more of an opportunity- if they're not interested, then it's their loss.

So what are the steps in the process?

Step One

The first step is to reach out to the agent and provide key details about your event. The first email should just cover the basics and not get too specific; as a general rule of thumb, you want to keep it to a “Who/What/When/Where/Why” format:

- Who are you interested in?
- What do you want them to do?
- What is the event?
- When is the event? (either an exact date or a couple of available dates)
- Where is the event?
- Why is this event taking place? (Is it for charity, for a university, for a corporate meeting, etc.)

The initial reach-out should be in the form of an email, and aside from communicating the basics of your request, the email should

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simply be to check availability for your desired celebrity. Here's a basic format you can follow:

Hi [agent name],

I am with [your company], and we are having an event for [describe the event]. We are interested in booking [celebrity] to [describe what you want them to do]. The event will be taking place at [event location] on [event date], and I wanted to check availability before sending a formal offer. Is [celebrity] available for this date?

Thank you,

[your full name]

[your phone number]



Step Two

Once you've sent the email, the agent should get back to you to let you know if the celebrity is available or not. If you don't hear back from the agent within 3 days, you can follow up by phone to confirm they received the email. Remember that agents get a *lot* of emails, so give them a couple of days to get to yours before you follow up by phone.

Step Three

If the celebrity isn't available, the agent may suggest some of their other clients to you. However, if the celebrity you're targeting is available, the agent will then ask some more questions about your event; from there, you'll need to put together a formal offer that includes all the information I discussed above.

The agent may require varying levels of detail in the offer depending on the size and scale of the event. And to ensure that

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you're capable of putting together and pulling off the kind of event you want their client to attend, they may also ask if you have prior experience in booking celebrities. On the more basic side, the agent will need to know the venue information, what exactly you're expecting their client to do, and who the purchaser is. But some agents will want a lot more detail than that; in some cases, you might be asked to provide your budget for specific items like lighting, sound, etc.

Step Four

Assuming the celebrity you want is available and their agent has agreed to review an offer, the next step is to put the offer together. Again, the offer should include all the information listed above. And if the event is for a university or a corporation, you will sometimes need to put the offer on official letterhead, sign it and send it over to the agent.

Step Five

Once you send over the offer, the agent will review it. If the offer isn't in line with what their client will accept, the agent will let you know pretty quickly. In those cases, agents will either a) tell you to raise your offer and give you a chance to resubmit it, or b) suggest some other clients of theirs who can fit your budget. And in some rare cases, if the offer is entirely too low (for example, if you offer Drake \$50,000 for a performance), the agent may not even respond at all.



This is where knowing your budget limits and how to negotiate comes in. This process tends to be a back-and-forth: you submit your offer, the agent tells you it's too low, you come back with

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a higher offer, and so on. Just because a celebrity quotes a particular fee doesn't necessarily mean you should pay it, nor does it mean that they expect to receive it. Being willing to negotiate on their fee can save you a lot of up-front costs. As with any negotiation, though, you have to know when to push and when to ease off. If you don't, you run the risk of ensuring the celebrity will never consider working with you again.

There are a few easy ways to give yourself a leg up on the negotiation process. First, make sure never to make your first offer your best offer- set a limit for yourself, then take 10% off of that number as an initial offer. If the celebrity's representatives don't go for it, you can work from there, but at least you've given yourself some wiggle room. Second, you can put a deadline on the offer to try to expedite the negotiation process- sometimes agents will be more willing to make a deal if they know it's going to go away on a certain date. And finally, always be willing to walk away. In order to effectively do that, you'll need to have some

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backup options in mind if your first choice doesn't go through. But showing a willingness to walk away from a negotiation gives you significant bargaining power.

Handle the Contract and Deposit ASAP

Once you've finalized all the event details, reached out to the celebrity's representatives, negotiated the celebrity's fees, and have gotten the celebrity to agree to your offer, there's one more part: the contract and the deposit. As soon as you have verbal sign-off from the celebrity's representatives, you should send over the contract for the event. As we mentioned above, celebrities have a *lot* of time commitments, and if you delay in getting the contract over, you run the risk of the celebrity booking something else on the day of your event.

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Last but not least, once you've gotten sign-off on the contract, you'll want to make the deposit as soon as possible. Typically, celebrities' representatives require a 50% up-front deposit to secure the date, with another 50% due on the date of the event. Of course, the agent may ask for more up-front as a deposit depending on the celebrity and the type of event; they may also ask for a larger up-front deposit if you have never worked with them before in order to lower their risk. The deposit amount can be negotiated in some cases, but if you're new to the business, you won't have as much room to negotiate as a more established booker would.

If the celebrity is covering their own travel and accommodations, you may also need to cover those costs up front as well; if you are taking



care of their travel, you won't need to include that in the deposit cost. In order to ensure that you keep everything on good terms with the celebrity's representatives, make sure you take care of the deposit as quickly as you can. The deposit is usually handled via wire transfer.

So there you have it: how to book a celebrity. Of course, this is just one piece of a larger puzzle, but it's the most important piece to ensure your event is as successful as possible.

Next, we'll take a look at how to calculate the cost of booking a celebrity.

2

Calculating Celebrity Booking Costs

In the last chapter, we covered the steps involved in the celebrity booking process. As you may have noticed, there are a lot of things to consider when booking a celebrity, but one of the biggest considerations is the cost. After all, what good is it to know how to book a celebrity for an event if you don't know whether or not you can afford them? And how can you expect to make a pitch that won't get you laughed out of the room by their agent if you don't know how much to offer?

In this section, we're going to take a closer look at the factors you need to consider when calculating the cost of booking a celebrity. As you'll find, it's a lot more complicated than you might think, but don't worry: it's not so complicated that you won't be able to figure it out. Let's get started.

When trying to figure out the cost of booking a celebrity, you might be tempted to just do a quick Google search to see what they normally charge. This is a mistake- celebrity booking prices

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are not transparent, and celebrities and their representatives don't advertise their booking prices online. A Google search might show you a price, but 99% of the time, it won't be an accurate one.



As we mentioned in the last chapter, the best way to figure out a celebrity's cost is by making an offer to their agent; as long as the offer isn't ridiculously low, the agent will usually respond to the offer and give you a good indication

of how much more you need to offer in order to secure their client for an event. In some rare cases, you might get lucky and have an agent accept an offer right off the bat, but any good agent is going to try to negotiate more for their client no matter what the initial offer is. This is why understanding the negotiation process is so important, and it's also why you don't lead with your best

offer- you need to leave yourself some room to move up on the price without overextending yourself.

Unfortunately, this information is only useful if you already have a set amount in mind that you can afford to spend on a celebrity booking. But if you

don't know how much a celebrity costs, how can you set an offer price? Simple: first, you calculate exactly how much money you can afford to



spend on the entire event. Then, you calculate the costs associated with the rest of your event first (that is, everything except the celebrity portion, like the venue, the food/drinks, setup, staff, etc.). From there, you just subtract the costs you know from

your overall budget, and voila: that number is how much you can afford to spend on the celebrity booking.

Let's say you have an overall budget of \$500,000 for an event. And let's say you have \$250,000 in costs you need to cover for everything else associated with the event; therefore, you can afford to pay \$250,000 all-in for a celebrity to attend the event. So you would reach out to the celebrity's agent and offer their client \$200,000 including travel, accommodations, equipment, and transportation to and from the venue to attend (which leaves you with \$50,000 to spare if their agent wants to negotiate- and they will).

It might sound simple; unfortunately, if it were that easy, this chapter wouldn't exist. Let's take a look at some of the things you have to consider before making your offer.

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What Do You Want the Celebrity to Do?

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, celebrities charge different rates depending on what is expected of them at the event. A simple walkthrough arrangement will cost you the least money, but maybe your event calls for something more. If that's the case, then you can expect the celebrity booking cost to increase. For example, if you want the celebrity to hang out with guests (an appearance), that will be more expensive; if you want them to host the event, give a speech, or perform, the price will go up accordingly.

What Kind of Event Is It?

Another factor to consider is the type of event: is it public, private, university or corporate? A public event can be less expensive (if the celebrity uses the public profile of the event to self-promote),

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as can a university event. But if it's a private or corporate event, you can expect to pay more for the celebrity to attend, especially if it's a celebrity who doesn't normally make appearances at events.



These might seem like unimportant details, but the celebrity's agent will definitely adjust their client's price depending on the kind of event, so you need to be prepared to adjust your offer according to the type of

event you're holding.

What Other Things Does the Celebrity Need?

The cost of a celebrity booking usually doesn't come down to just one flat number. For example, a celebrity might charge \$100,000 for an appearance fee, but that doesn't mean \$100,000 is all you'll spend on them. You also have to consider all the extras that come with booking a celebrity; for example, the costs associated with the requirements specified in their rider, the celebrity's travel, any equipment they might need, their hotel costs, the cost of transportation to and from the venue, and any food or drinks they and the people they're traveling with (celebrities don't travel by themselves to events) will need.

You need to keep these potential additional costs in mind; if you don't, they can add up pretty quickly. In some cases, you'll be able to negotiate some of those costs as part of their fee, but don't count on it.

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When Is the Event?

Again, this might seem like an unimportant detail, but make no mistake: a celebrity booking cost can be impacted by when the event is held. Celebrities often charge more to attend events held on weekends as opposed to weekdays, and even more than that if the event is held on a holiday.

You might be a little overwhelmed by all these additional costs that you may not have considered before now. So now, let's take a look at how you can potentially save money on some of these extra expenses.

Know How to Negotiate

We covered this in the last chapter, but it's so important that it's worth discussing again. Knowing how to negotiate can save you a lot of money in the long run—especially if you do it effectively. The negotiation process



can sometimes feel like a slog; it takes a lot of additional effort to negotiate a price that works for both you and the celebrity. But if you do it effectively, you can seriously positively impact your bottom line.

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Consider Moving the Event Date

If the celebrity you're targeting charges more for a weekend appearance, changing the day of the event can be an easy way to save money. Of course, this depends on whether or not the venue you've booked has flexibility, but if they do and you're able to shift dates around without causing a ton of headaches on your end, it's definitely worth considering to save yourself some money on the celebrity booking cost.

Try to Route Their Tour (If You Can)

As mentioned above, there are plenty of additional costs associated with booking a celebrity, and the ones that can add up very quickly are the costs associated with their travel. And unfortunately, unless they're starving for publicity, celebrities aren't going to be happy if you put them up in a rinky-dink motel

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for the night and pay for bus fare to and from the venue, so you'll have to spend a fair amount of money to keep them satisfied.

Most celebrities will expect a 4- or 5-star hotel with certain amenities in their riders, so contractually, you'll have to pay for the level of accommodations they expect as a condition of their appearance.

One way to lower these costs is to do a little research. If the celebrity is currently on tour or about to begin a tour, take a look at the dates when they'll be in



your area and see if you can get them to add an appearance at your event on an off night. If they're already touring, you will still be responsible for hotel and other travel costs, but since touring

celebrities work their way through a particular area at a time, you'll spend less on their travel costs.

Calculating a celebrity's booking costs can be a time-consuming project, but if you want to get the most bang for your buck, it's definitely worth the effort. But if you're too busy or unwilling to do all the extra legwork that comes with booking a celebrity, there are other options available. In the next chapter, we'll take a look at services that can lower your stress while still delivering the goods: middle agencies and talent buyers.



3

Using Middle Agencies and Talent Buyers: Pros and Cons

As the last two chapters have shown, the process of booking a celebrity for your event requires a lot of time and effort. Even if you know all the steps, there are no guarantees that you'll be successful in booking your celebrity of choice. Plus, with all the other things to manage with an event, you might find that you just don't have time to handle the booking process on your own.

There is an option if you want to make things easier on yourself: farming the work out to a middle agency or a talent buyer. For those who aren't familiar, middle agencies and talent buyers specialize in booking celebrities for events. Reputable middle agents have good relationships with celebrities and their representatives, and they're able to leverage those relationships to get celebrities to sign on for events that you might not be able to book on your own. But before you rush out to find the nearest middle agent or talent buyer, there are a few things you should know.

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Hiring a middle agent or a talent buyer to handle the celebrity booking aspect of your event can save you a lot of time and effort; assuming, of course, that the person you hire is



reputable and has a good relationship with the celebrity you're targeting and their representatives. In a perfect world, all you would have to do is plan your event and let someone else do the heavy lifting of finding a celebrity to attend it. Unfortunately, as a lot of event planners and bookers have found, that process is easier said than done.

Let's take a look at some of the potential downsides of using a middle agent or talent buyer.

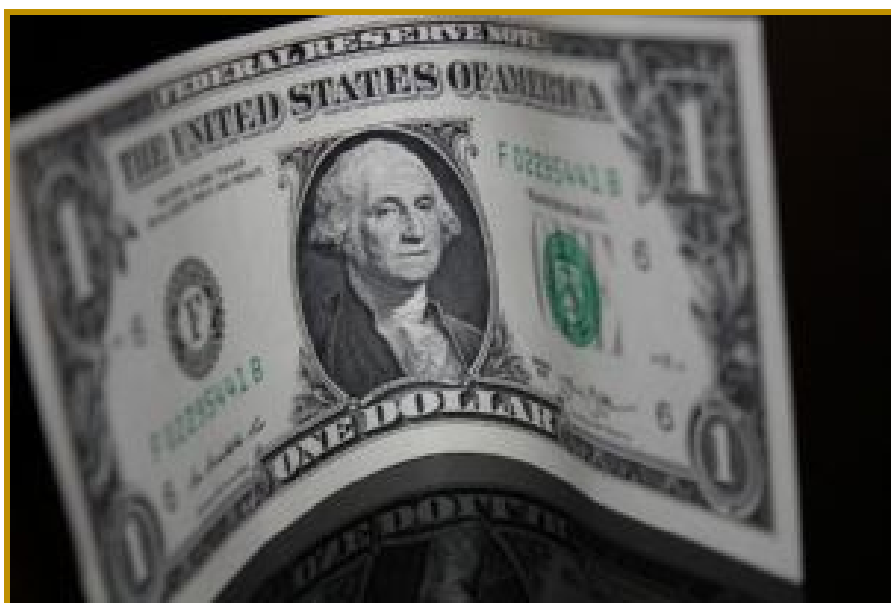
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High Cost, Low Transparency

When you're planning an event where every dollar in your budget is extremely important, the biggest thing to remember about middle agents and talent buyers is that they come with a cost. And in the



case of some unscrupulous middle agents, they'll hide their fee in the overall cost of booking the celebrity, making it impossible for you to know how much the celebrity actually charged for attending. This can impact your budgeting for future events; after all, if you want to book the same celebrity the next time out but

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you're not exactly sure of how much you paid, you're going to find yourself in a tricky spot when it comes time to make the offer.

Not Getting Your Money's Worth

Unfortunately, in a lot of cases, the work middle agents and talent buyers do isn't necessarily worth the amount of money they'll charge for doing it. From your perspective, all a middle agent does is add an extra layer of communication between you and the celebrity. Worst of all, middle agents can't influence the celebrity or their agent to agree to attend your event; all they're doing is passing along your message to the right person. You can use a [contact celebrity agents database](https://bookingagentinfo.com/) to contact them yourself and reach out to them directly.



Conflicts of Interest



There's another problem with hiring a middle agent to book a celebrity: it's not their money, so they're not going to fight as hard to get the best rate possible on the booking. In fact, many middle agents charge a percentage of the overall fee rather than a flat rate, which means that they'll actually make more money if they *don't* negotiate the rate. As a result, a lot of middle agents will offer the highest price you can afford to pay (even if the celebrity would have accepted much less) in order to maximize their commission for brokering the deal.

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Misrepresentation

There are a lot of people who have gone into business as middle agents, claiming that they can get you a great deal and that they know all the right people to help you book the celebrity you're targeting for your event. Unfortunately, because of the high earning potential, that means the industry is also flooded with so-called "talent buyers" who don't have nearly as many contacts as they claim.

There are also examples of the person representing themselves as a middle agent only having a loose connection to the celebrity in question (for example, they know someone who knows someone who gets their hair cut at the same place as the celebrity's agent). Hiring someone who overstates their ability to deliver can leave you scrambling to find a celebrity the week before an event; even worse, if the middle agent (or the person they claim to know) isn't honest, you can also waste money on

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Convenience

If you have a large budget for an event and don't mind paying a little extra, middle agents can help cut down on a lot of the legwork you'd need to do to book a celebrity. Good middle agents also tend to take the "long view" on the deals they broker; that is, they know that if they overcharge you once, you're unlikely to use them again, so instead they work more in your interests to increase the likelihood you'll work with them on future deals. When you have a good middle agent acting as a broker between you and an agent, you don't have to worry about all the little stresses that come with putting together an offer or negotiating the price and extra costs- they'll take care of it all for you. And that will free you up to focus on the rest of the event and ensure that you make a good impression on the celebrity for future bookings.

Access

Another key quality that good middle agents have is access. Because of their existing relationships with celebrities and their representatives, middle agents know who to reach out to and how to position your offer in a way that gives you the highest odds of success. If you're just starting out in planning events, it can be difficult to know who to contact to try to book a celebrity- good middle agents and talent buyers can be really helpful in putting you in touch with the right people. And access to the decision-makers is crucial if you want to have a long and successful career in this arena.

So while you do have to be wary of people who claim to be middle agents but don't have the contacts to back it up, there are plenty reputable middle agents who can actually deliver what they promise. It's a high-risk/high-reward situation: if you get the wrong middle agent, you'll end up adding more stress and expenses to

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your venture. But if you get the right one, you'll wonder how you ever got along without them.

As you can see, there are benefits and drawbacks to using middle agents. In most cases,



handling the booking process yourself will save you money on fees and give yourself greater room to negotiate the celebrity's asking price, but you'll be able to establish contacts with celebrity representatives that you can use to your benefit down the line. After all, this business runs on relationships, and if you don't take the time to build some on your own, you'll find yourself constantly scrambling to find people willing to work with you. But in some situations, a reputable middle agent can be the difference between booking a celebrity who's a perfect fit for your event and

having to settle for one who isn't (or, worst-case scenario, not having a celebrity attend your event at all).

Now that we've outlined the benefits and drawbacks of using middle agencies and talent buyers, let's take a closer look at a specific kind of event: celebrity booking for private parties.

4

Booking Celebrities for Private Parties and Weddings



So far, we've mostly covered the ins and outs of booking celebrities for public events. And as the last few chapters have demonstrated, there are some instances where a public event isn't going to land you the celebrity you're looking for.

And while these are important considerations for public events, that doesn't mean the celebrities who won't do them are completely off-limits; in fact, many celebrities who refuse to do public events don't have a problem with attending private events. Specific types of private events can vary; some examples are corporate parties, birthday parties, or weddings. One notable exception are fraternity or sorority events, where the celebrity shows up at a party, performs (in some cases), and hangs out with the guests- although they're technically private parties, they're usually priced differently and the expectations are different as well. In this section, we're going to take a closer look at private events.

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The process of booking a celebrity for a private party is pretty much the same as that of booking a celebrity for a public one. You'll need to know your budget for the event and how much you can spend on a celebrity booking, reach out to their representation (either directly or through a middle agent or talent buyer), make an offer, and handle all the logistics along the way.



One major difference between booking celebrities for public vs. private events is that when it comes to a private party, you can't use the potential for exposure and free publicity as leverage in a

negotiation. For example, let's say a celebrity has a new business venture they want to promote, and they're offered a booking at a public event and a private party. In a lot of cases, assuming they're getting paid roughly the same amount, they'll pick the public event. Why? Because the public event means there will be press, photographs, and a greater opportunity for them to promote their latest project. At a private event, they won't have that chance.

Of course, this doesn't mean that any celebrity who wants publicity is automatically off-limits. But it does mean that you'll have to sweeten the deal in other ways if you want to book them. With that in mind, here are a few of the things you need to remember when trying to book a celebrity for a private event.

The Cost Will Be Higher

It's an inescapable fact that you're going to have to pay more to book a celebrity for a private event. There are a couple reasons why: first, as mentioned above, the lack of free publicity at a private party means they'll want to make sure it's worth their time to attend your event.

Second, if you're targeting a celebrity who doesn't feel the publicity is necessary, it probably means that they're usually not interested in attending events. This, of course, means that you'll have to make a higher offer to get them to agree; even if they normally aren't willing to attend events, there are very few celebrities who will turn away huge sums of money. For example, even though she doesn't normally do public events, Jennifer Lopez has performed at private parties in the past (she reportedly accepted \$1 million to perform at the birthday party of Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow in 2013).

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In some cases, the cost for booking a celebrity for a private event can be as much as twice what you might pay for a



public party. So if you've got your heart set on a particular celebrity to attend your private party, be prepared to shell out a lot of money in order to get them to agree.

One other note: even though you'll be paying more for a private event, you'll still have to make sure that you cover all their normal expenses (travel for the celebrity and their group, accommodations, food/drinks, and transportation). Unfortunately, that increased cost of booking the celebrity doesn't mean you get to save money elsewhere.

The Celebrity is (Usually) Willing to Do More

Even though it typically costs more to book a celebrity for a private event, one big difference between private and public events is that the celebrity is willing to do more for the extra money. Because it's a private event (which means there's no press), the celebrity doesn't have to worry as much about their image and brand, and you'll often find that they're more willing to do things they wouldn't normally do at a public event.

A great example of this is Weird Al Yankovic, who agreed to walk a bride down the aisle at a wedding. While this level of interaction between the celebrity and the guests is almost nonexistent at a public event, it's much more common at a private party. Of course, this also depends on the celebrity and the event; after all, Rihanna likely wouldn't do the same at a wedding (but then again,

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Rihanna likely wouldn't agree to attend a private wedding unless she was offered an obscene amount of money). In a lot of cases, though, you'll find the celebrities are much more willing to play a more active role in a private event than they might at a public one.

You'll Have More Options

Finally, even though the price is typically higher for private events, one positive is that you'll have a lot more options when it comes to booking celebrities for your event. As mentioned above, there are a lot of celebrities who have no interest in public events but are happy to attend private parties. So if you have the budget for it and are willing to spend extra for that one perfect celebrity to attend, you have a much better shot at landing them for a private party.

If you're looking for a musician or band to perform at your event, you'll also find a lot of options available to you. Plenty of artists

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who aren't as popular as they were in their prime are still willing to do performances at private events; in fact, a lot of them make the bulk of their money from private events. And in some cases, they're cheaper than newer, more popular artists.



Nostalgia also plays a big role when it comes to booking artists. For example, you can book Stevie Nicks for \$300,000 for a private event performance, and while that price tag may seem

steep, remember that Jennifer Lopez reportedly charged \$5 *million* for a similar arrangement at the wedding of Said Gutseriyev and Khadija Uzhakhovs (the groom's father is a prominent Russian oil magnate). Of course, this depends on how nostalgic your audience is – if they aren't, booking an old-school

artist might not be a great way to spend your money, but if they are, it's a much more cost-effective option.

As we've shown, although they may seem similar, there is a big difference between public and private events. The main difference is cost, but factors like who you're able to book and what the celebrity is willing to do can change wildly depending on whether the event is public or private.

Now that we've covered these major differences, let's take a look at some of the details that can make or break an event, whether it's public or private. Specifically, we'll address understanding celebrity booking agreements.



5

Understanding Celebrity Booking Agreements

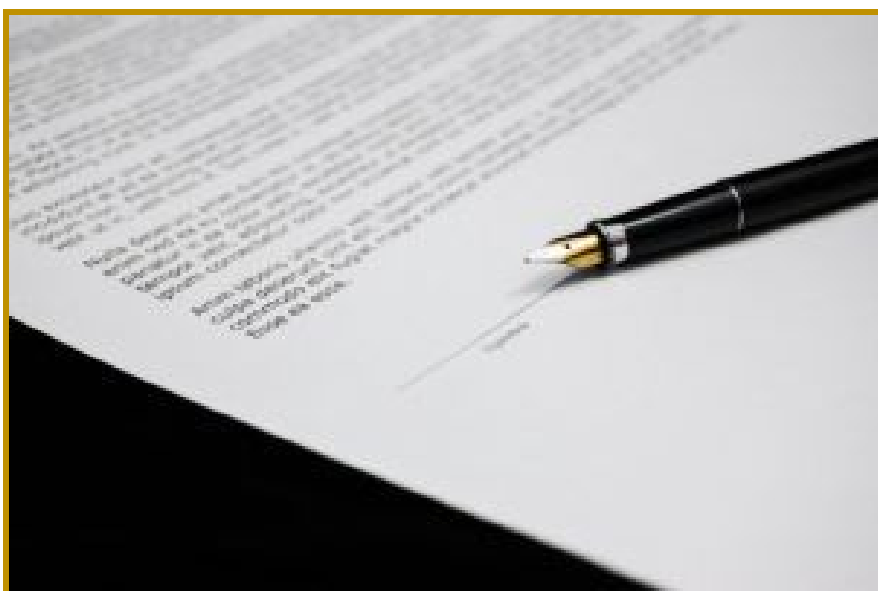
In the past few chapters, we've covered a lot of what you need to know about identifying the celebrity you want for your event (and their agent), the negotiation process, budgeting for the celebrity to attend your event, and the different types of agreements you can establish with celebrities. And hopefully with the help of this guide, you're better-prepared than ever to find and book the celebrity of your choice for your next event.

But while having all this information is vital to the success of your event, there's also one component that can be a huge source of confusion if you're not prepared for it: the celebrity booking agreement. So in this section, we're going to break down the common components of a celebrity booking agreement, what they mean, and why they're important. We'll also take a look at another common document: the contract rider. The rider is essentially a supplement to the main contract that outlines

everything the celebrity wants (but doesn't fit in the main contract).

First, let's take a high-level view of the booking agreement.

At its most basic level, the booking agreement is a document that puts in writing all the things you've discussed with the celebrity and their agent prior to



this point. In some cases, it also puts in writing things you *haven't* discussed with the agent, but we'll get to that in a little bit.)

The purpose of the celebrity booking agreement is to outline the terms of the event and create an agreed-upon set of rules about the event. As you'll see in the next sections, some of the rules are

for the benefit and protection of the celebrity, while others are to protect you. Usually with these kinds of agreements, however, it's not uncommon for the contract to be more favorable to the celebrity; after all, you need them for the event, not the other way around.

So what are the common sections and clauses of a celebrity booking agreement?

Reproduction of Performance/Controlling Authority

In a lot of cases, celebrity booking agreements contain clauses that are called “boilerplate”; that is, they don't vary from contract to contract, and unless you've specifically discussed changes to them with the celebrity's agent prior to the contract stage, there's usually not much flexibility.

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The Reproduction of Performance clause is one such example; essentially, it forbids anybody (either you or a third party) from recording the celebrity's appearance for the purposes of selling the video later. And it makes sense from a celebrity's perspective: in order to protect their brand and maximize their earning potential, they need to be able to control any materials that use their image (which is where the Controlling Authority clause usually comes in).



As with any boilerplate language in a contract, it is possible to negotiate on this point, but it would typically involve the celebrity getting a percentage of the money you make from selling the recording of their appearance

(and would still require their approval before you release the recording).

Merchandise

This section does two things: first, it authorizes the celebrity to sell their merchandise at the event. And second, this clause also prohibits you or any third party from selling merchandise. As with the Reproduction of Performance clause, the Merchandise clause is centered around the idea that you shouldn't be profiting off of the celebrity's brand; at least, not without giving them a cut.

If you're holding a private event and or just don't want anyone (either you or the celebrity) to sell merchandise, it's usually not an issue to have this section removed. But if that's the case, you'll want to note that during the negotiation phase; if the celebrity can't make extra money from merchandise during the event, their agent might want to increase the appearance fee to compensate.



Right to Likeness

This is another example of boilerplate language. Essentially, this clause prohibits you as the promoter from using the celebrity's likeness in any promos, advertisements, or commercial tie-ins prior to the event. And just like any other boilerplate language, if you discuss this with the celebrity's agent ahead of time, you'll probably find some wiggle room here.

Independent Contractor/Indemnification

This is a largely minor clause, but it's still important that we discuss it. In a nutshell, this clause just means you and the celebrity both agree that neither of you works for the other as an employee for this event- the celebrity is an independent contractor for the event, and so are you. It's largely done for insurance purposes; that way, if either party is injured, for

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example, the other party can't be held responsible for paying their hospital bills.

Similar to the Independent Contractor clause, the Indemnification clause states that you won't sue the celebrity for things like personal injury (either yours or one of the event's



guests) or damages (if guests at the event trash the venue). More than anything, these clauses exist to protect the celebrity.

Security and Insurance/Limitation of Liability

Like the Independent Contractor and Indemnification clauses, the Security and Insurance and Limitation of Liability clauses exist to protect the celebrity; however, they also protect you. The Security and Insurance clause essentially states that you have to have adequate security at the event to protect the celebrity, and that you also have liability insurance (usually a minimum of \$1 million) so that if anything happens to the celebrity, they'll be able to collect from your insurance company.

The Limitation of Liability clause is more for the celebrity's benefit; in most contracts, the clause basically limits the amount they can owe you to whatever you'd already paid them. So let's say you have an event and guests trash the venue. If you can't prove the celebrity had anything to do with it, they would be covered by the Indemnification clause we discussed before. But if you *can* prove

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that the guests trashed the venue because the celebrity told them to do it, you can hold the celebrity liable. Again, however, you would only be able to get back whatever you paid for the celebrity to attend the event in the first place.

Dispute Resolution/Conflict of Laws

These clauses are put in place to outline how any disputes regarding the contract

after it's been signed

will be handled. So,

for example, if the

Dispute Resolution

clause says that the

courts in the state of

the event will have

the final say in any

disputes, by signing you're agreeing to those terms. What's more,



if the court in your state rules against you, you're forfeiting any alternatives (like mediation).

By the same token, the Conflict of Laws clause basically means that if anything in the contract is unenforceable by law (in whatever city, state or country the clause specifies), neither you or the celebrity are expected to break the law in order to fulfill the terms of the contract. For example, if the celebrity has a huge teen following and wants you to serve alcohol to people under 21 (their fans) at the event, you don't have to do it.

Assignment

This one is pretty simple- basically, it says that you can't transfer the agreement to someone else. So if you had a signed contract with Celebrity A and they dropped out the day before, you couldn't bring in Celebrity B under the same terms. By the same token, Promoter A can't suddenly tell the artist, "Promoter B is going to handle this booking instead" and expect the contract to

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hold up. In either case, if the people playing the roles of promoter (known as the “Purchaser”) or celebrity change, a new contract *must* be signed.

Termination/Cancellation/Force Majeure

In most booking agreements, Termination, Cancellation and Force Majeure are three separate clauses, but for your purposes, they all mean the same thing.

The Termination clause gives the celebrity the right to terminate the agreement if you (the promoter) fail to uphold your end of the bargain. So, for example, if you agreed not to use the celebrity’s likeness in any promotional materials, and their agent finds flyers advertising the event with their client’s face on them, they have the right to terminate the contract. And again, since the boilerplate language is usually in favor of the celebrity, not only

could they terminate the contract, but you would still have to pay them- even if they don't attend the event.

While the Termination clause usually only covers the celebrity, the Cancellation clause typically covers both parties- it sets out specific dates prior to the event where you or the celebrity can cancel without any penalty. Again, it should be noted that the terms will favor the celebrity. For example, you might have to give the celebrity 90 days' notice if you want to cancel their appearance at your event; if you don't, this clause gives them the right to request the full amount you were going to pay them. And even if you do, most Cancellation clauses will allow the celebrity to keep the deposit you gave them.

But while you might have to give 90 days' notice to the celebrity, they might only have to give 30 days' notice to you. And the penalty for the celebrity breaking this clause is usually less severe

than it is for the promoter- while the promoter might be on the hook for the full cost of the celebrity's appearance, even if the event is cancelled, the celebrity is usually only responsible for paying



back whatever money was already paid to them (this is where the Limitation of Liability clause comes in).

Finally, the Force Majeure clause covers everything that the Termination and Cancellation clauses don't. "Force Majeure" is basically a catch-all term for any event that couldn't reasonably be anticipated; for example, if the celebrity is injured in a car crash on the way to the venue, the Force Majeure clause would prohibit you from suing the celebrity for not honoring the contract.

The Force Majeure clause also works in the other direction. Let's say the celebrity is ready to attend the event, but an earthquake hits and the event has to be cancelled. The celebrity wouldn't be allowed to sue you for their full fee, because you couldn't have reasonably anticipated that was going to happen.



As you've probably noticed, a lot of the boilerplate language in the contract favors the celebrity. The reason for this is simple: the boilerplate language was put in by the celebrity's

agent or legal team, and they're going to be more interested in protecting their client than protecting you. By the same token, there is boilerplate language that protects the promoter rather than the celebrity, because it was usually drawn up by the promoter's legal team. These contracts are less likely to be used,

since the celebrity's agent will prefer to use their standard contract.

But what if the contract is *too* heavily weighted in favor of the celebrity? That's where a crucial part of the contract process comes into play: redlining.

Redlining basically means going through the clauses one by one and, if there are any changes you want to make, you note them on the contract. Think of it like a mini-negotiation process: the celebrity's agent wants a clause that overwhelmingly favors their client, you want a clause that overwhelmingly favors you. In the redlining process, both parties propose changes to the language; the contract usually goes back and forth a few times before each side is happy that they're not getting the short end of the stick.

So if you book a celebrity for an event and their agent sends you a contract that seems unfair, try not to worry too much- the agent

expects you to want to make some changes, so feel free to suggest edits that make the agreement more evenhanded.



While specific contracts will vary depending on the celebrity, what you're asking them to do, and what kind of event it is, these main points are definitely ones you need to know beforehand.

We also covered riders a little bit before, but as a warning, you

usually won't have as much freedom to redline a rider as you would a standard agreement. This is because while the main agreement is standard boilerplate language, the rider is specific to the celebrity, which means the things outlined in the rider aren't as up for negotiation- they're in the rider for a reason.

Now that we've covered the contract phase, you have all the information you need to successfully run your own event. Best of

all, because this process is pretty standard across the industry, you'll be able to apply this information time and again. And with that in mind, in our final chapter, we're going to take a look at a longer-term goal: how to start a celebrity booking agency.