

TICKETMASTER's STATEMENTS TO CBC NEWS

Ticketmaster initially expressed interest in providing an on-camera interview, but after months declined. It has refused to answer detailed questions about its business practices.

On Friday September 14th the company issued the following statement. (Further below is the correspondence with Ticketmaster).

“Ticketmaster is a technology platform that helps artists and teams connect with their fans. We do not own the tickets sold on our platform nor do we have any control over ticket pricing – either in the initial sale or the resale. In both cases, prices are set by the seller. We also do not determine when tickets are available for purchase or how they are allocated – those decisions are communicated to us by our client, the venue, after consultation with the event presenter.

“As long as there is an imbalance between supply and demand in live event tickets, there will inevitably be a secondary market. As the world’s leading ticketing platform, representing thousands of teams, artists and venues, we believe it is our job to offer a marketplace that provides a safe and fair place for fans to shop, buy and sell tickets in both the primary and secondary markets. That is why we operate our marketplace more transparently and securely than any other. We clearly delineate between standard tickets sold by the venue and tickets sold by third parties, with clear disclosure that resale prices may exceed (or be lower than) face value. In addition to our work fighting the use of automated bots, we have also taken the most restrictive stance on speculative ticketing, not allowing any seller, professional or otherwise, to post tickets we have not validated to our TM+ pages.”

Via email, Catherine Martin, Senior VP Communications

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AUGUST 8

9:37 AM CBC/Toronto Star email to Ticketmaster:

Catherine Martin, Senior VP Communications (Los Angeles, CA)
Patti-Anne Tarlton, COO Canada

Cat,

I'm following up after our various attempts on behalf of CBC/Toronto Star to request an on camera interview with Jared Smith, CEO Ticketmaster North America.

We really enjoyed our background meeting with him in May and would like to do an on the record chat on a number of the themes and ideas he raised :

- the future role of Ticketmaster in global Ticketing (his famous whiteboard drawing!)
- the merging of primary and secondary markets
- anti-fraud / anti-bot efforts by Ticketmaster

If Jared agrees in principle, we are hoping to do this interview in the coming month or so to include in a series of stories we are preparing for mid-September.

Can you please confirm you receive this and let me know what you think? I'm happy to chat further about our focus and potential logistics.

Best,

DS

1:20 PM Ticketmaster email to CBC News / Toronto Star:
Dave Seglins, Rachel Houlihan, CBC News
Robert Cribb, Marco Oved, Toronto Star

Hi Dave,
Thanks for reaching out. I hope your summer is going well. I'm happy to hear you enjoyed the background meeting.

August is a challenging month for scheduling because of travel but I'll get back to you. Is there a specific ticketing or live event series you are working on? We'd like to understand some more about the story series.

Thanks so much,
Cat

3:12 PM CBC/Toronto Star email to Ticketmaster:

Cat,

Sure. No probs.
In fact... August is similarly tough for us. What about the first week or two of September?

We're not 100% sure yes where our stories will land.

But as you know we've been examining the scale of the secondary resale market globally. We've been looking at numerous ticket companies and are keenly interested in Ticketmaster's move into this space - from the acquisition of sites like TicketsNow to the more recent integration of primary and secondary ticket sales posted on Ticketmaster's main web page. We'd like to hear more about the thinking on this, and how Ticketmaster envisions the future of ticketing, the advent of dynamic pricing, and what it all might mean for fan prices and the share of profits potentially retained by artists and sports teams (the profits currently being siphoned off by scalpers.)

We're also interested in knowing what - if anything - is actually being done about bots to stop ticket buyers from circumventing controls intended to prevent speculators from scooping up mass quantities of primary tickets at the expenses of regular fans' access.

What do you think?
Is this doable?
Depending on where in the world Jared will be in early September, we'd come to you ... unless he misses Toronto so much he just happens to have plans to be here?!

Let us know.

Thanks,
DS

AUGUST 13

9:31 AM

CBC/Toronto Star foll-up email to Ticketmaster

Cat -

Any thoughts on Jared's availability for an interview first or second week of September?

Best,

DS

12:44 PM

Ticketmaster reply email to CBC/Toronto Star:

Hi Dave,

I'll need to get back to you at the beginning of next week on status.

Thank you

Cat

AUGUST 22

11:29 AM

CBC/Toronto Star follow-up email to Ticketmaster

Cat,

Any word on Jared's availability in the first two weeks of September for an interview?

Need to know.

Best,

DS

AUGUST 24

8:58 AM CBC/Toronto Star follow-up email to Ticketmaster

Cat and Patti-Ann,

Appreciating its summer ... but looking for some sense of whether you guys are working to make an interview with Jared Smith possible during the first two weeks of September?

Please RSVP.

Thanks,

DS

3:19 PM

Ticketmaster reply email to CBC/Toronto Star

Hi Dave, we want to make this happen and are looking at the dates to see if it's possible. Thanks so much!

Cat

AUGUST 28

6:18 AM CBC/Toronto Star email to Ticketmaster

Cat,

I'm on the east coast - Atlantic time (4 hours ahead of you).

Any chance we could chat today about plans for this interview (tentative dates, locations, subject areas)?

We're now only a few days away from Labour Day and we'd really appreciate nailing down a date.

When's good to speak?

Thanks,

DS

4:47 PM Ticketmaster email to CBC/Toronto Star

Hi Dave, I think I may have missed you today but can you speak tomorrow morning at 11am PT?

Thank you,
Cat

AUGUST 29

2:01 PM Ticketmaster phone call with CBC News.

Cat Martin suggests CEO Jared Smith may have interview availability during the week of September 10th either in LA or New York.

SEPTEMBER 4

9:22 AM CBC/Toronto Star email to Ticketmaster

Cat -

Good to chat last week.
You mentioned Jared could have some availability - Sept 12-14 in LA, or East Coast / NYC area?

Can we please nail down a date. East coast is better for us... end of this week, early next? Or....

Perhaps we can chat again this AM once you're in? 10 AM PST?

Best,

DS

9:24 AM Ticketmaster reply email to CBC/Toronto Star

Hi Dave, Can I call you at the same number?

Thanks,
Cat

11:16 AM Ticketmaster call to CBC News

Cat Martin says Ticketmaster will decline on camera interview but will provide another background discussion and briefing.

11:42 CBC/Toronto Star email to Ticketmaster

Cat -

Rachel and I just chatted.
The prospect of another backgrounder is simply of no use.

We've been asking you guys for many months for an on-camera interview.
We got a very strong sense of things already from Jared during our backgrounder in May.
It was a great discussion - which we'd like to now put on the record.

We thought that's what you guys are hoping for too - to tell Ticketmaster's story?
You have plenty of detractors. Here is a gift of an opportunity for you to respond - to tell your story.

So please - in your conversations with your team - consider this a request for an on-camera interview.

Need to know within the next day.
Thanks,

DS

SEPTEMBER 10th

9:05 AM

Jared, Patti-Anne and Cat,

Despite CBC and Toronto Star's months of requests for an interview (and statements from you that you "want to make this happen") you've to date declined the opportunity. You've not replied to us since early last week.

Attached is a letter with our request that you please reconsider, as well as a list of specific questions.
We respectfully ask for a reply ASAP and no later than Friday September 14th at 5 PM (Eastern).

If you'd like an clarification or want to arrange logistics for an on camera interview, don't hesitate

to call me directly at M 416-949-4083.

Please confirm receipt.

Best,

DS

ATTACHED LETTER:

Jared Smith, President
Patti-Anne, COO Canada
Catherine Martin, Senior VP Communications

Ticketmaster Inc

September 10, 2018 (via email)

Jared, Patti-Anne and Cat,

As you know, CBC News and the Toronto Star for several months have been requesting an on-camera interview with Ticketmaster. You've expressed a number of times a willingness and desire to grant an interview, but to date have failed to do so.

We are interested in discussing a range of issues in the ticketing industry - from Ontario's new anti-scalping legislation to the growth of the global online scalping industry.

We again are asking you for an on-camera interview no later than Friday September 14th.

We really hope you will take us up on this opportunity to share you views as the issues we'd like to discuss are complex, deserve thoughtful examination, and would assist you Jared in your expressed hope of doing a better job of 'telling Ticketmaster's story.'

In the absence of an interview, we are sending you a list of questions. We want to ensure you and Ticketmaster have every opportunity to comment on our joint CBC News/Toronto Star investigation.

We ask for an interview - or a written reply - no later than 5 PM Friday September 14th.

Our investigation has two distinct parts.

First, CBC and Toronto Star have conducted a comprehensive review of Ticketmaster's primary online ticket sales for the Bruno Mars concert at Toronto's Scotiabank Arena on Saturday September 22nd 2018.

Our data collection and analysis have allowed us to track various aspects of Ticketmaster's ticketing for this event including:

- the pace and patterns of primary sales
- release of additional primary tickets for sale
- fees Ticketmaster stands to collect (both on primary and also Ticketmaster Resale)
- manipulation of prices for "Platinum" tickets (aka 'dynamic pricing').

1. How many tickets for the 17,308 seats in the Toronto Scotiabank was Ticketmaster responsible for selling for the September 22nd Bruno Mars concert?
2. How many tickets in total did Ticketmaster "holdback" from the initial on-sale at 12:00pm on February 16, 2018?
3. Why were entire blocks of tickets not for sale initially, only to appear later (including Sections 318, 319, 116, 117, 312, 311, 111, 110, and large portions of sections 111,101,102,103,104,105) for sale on either primary or secondary?
4. What do you say to the criticism that these holdbacks, and subsequent slow release of

additional tickets onto the primary market is “manufactured scarcity” and “artificially created supply/ demand?”

5. How many of the Bruno Mars tickets for the 17,308 seats in Scotiabank Arena were purchased by season ticket or personal seat licence holders ?
6. Why does Ticketmaster manipulate the prices of its Platinum Tickets?
7. How is the re-pricing determined? And by whom (Ticketmaster? The venue? The artist?)
8. Our analysis found many examples of price manipulation, including Section 118 seats 1-4 which were listed initially at \$799 each for the first 90 minutes of the sale, jumping to \$895. How do you account for this price change during the general 'on-sale'?
9. Where and how does Ticketmaster tell customers the initial face value of tickets which have had their prices changed through 'dynamic pricing'?
10. What percent of the fees does Bruno Mars collect on tickets sold through Ticketmaster primary (for the Saturday September 22nd Bruno show in Toronto)?
11. What percentage of the fees does Bruno Mars collect on tickets resold through Ticketmaster's secondary sites (for the Saturday September 22nd Bruno show in Toronto)?
12. Our analysis of the Bruno Mars ticket sales found examples where tickets in the same section and row were priced dramatically differently. (For example, Section 118, Row, 2 Seat 24 listed on primary for \$191, whereas just a few seats down in the same row seats 1-8 listed at \$546.)

How do you account for this price difference?

The second focus of the CBC/Toronto Star investigation is Ticketmaster's "Professional Reseller" program, including TradeDesk.

[QUESTIONS WITHHELD: STAY TUNED UNTIL WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 19th AS CBC/TORONTO STAR REVEAL MORE FINDINGS]

We are grateful for your attention to this and look forward to hearing from you shortly about an on-camera interview or written responses. Please confirm receipt of this letter. If you have any questions or would like any clarifications we are available anytime.

Sincerely,

David Seglins, Rachel Houlihan, Laura Clementson
CBC News

11:04 AM

Ticketmaster reply email to CBC/Toronto Star

Dave, I am reviewing and will share internally. Based on these questions, there continues to be a clear misunderstanding of Ticketmaster's role in the industry and it seems like another backgrounder would have been helpful for your team.

I will get back to you shortly.

Best,
Cat

SEPTEMBER 14

4:08 PM Ticketmaster email to CBC/Toronto Star

Dave, Thank you again for reaching out to Ticketmaster about the story you're working on.

We will be providing an on the record statement.

We will be answering the questions on background only. Please confirm you agree to receive the answers on background only. Also on background I will share media stories that may be relevant and of interest.

All the best,
Cat

5:26 PM CBC/Toronto Star email reply to Ticketmaster

Cat,

No. We do not agree.

After more than six months of requests for an interview, two educational background discussions, and several unfulfilled offers by Ticketmaster for on the record comments - it is time Ticketmaster publicly address these issues.

You have our questions and our standing request for an on the record interview.

Any replies to our recent questions will be considered on the record and publishable.

Our deadline remains today so we expect your response is imminent.

Please confirm.

Dave Seglins

6:54 PM Ticketmaster emailed statement to CBC/Toronto Star

Dave, Please find below on the record statements.

All the best,
Cat

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CATHERINE MARTIN
SVP, Communications

Ticketmaster is a technology platform that helps artists and teams connect with their fans. We do not own the tickets sold on our platform nor do we have any control over ticket pricing – either in the initial sale or the resale. In both cases, prices are set by the seller. We also do not determine when tickets are available for purchase or how they are allocated – those decisions are communicated to us by our client, the venue, after consultation with the event presenter.

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7:01 PM CBC/Toronto Star reply email to Ticketmaster

Cat,

Thanks.
Received.

Is this it? You're not answering any of the specific questions we sent you?

DS

7:26 PM Ticketmaster email to CBC/Toronto Star

Hi Dave, We can submit those questions on background.

Thank you,
Cat

7:31 PM CBC/Toronto Star reply email to Ticketmaster

Cat,

If this is Ticketmaster's position, we will be reporting that "Ticketmaster declined to answer our specific questions."

DS

7:39 PM Ticketmaster reply email to CBC/Toronto Star

Dave, I don't know how you can do that when we are perfectly willing to answer all of them. Just not on camera or on the record. Your unwillingness to listen on background suggests you are not earnest in getting it right and accurate.

Thank you,
Cat

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CATHERINE MARTIN
SVP, Communications

7:45 PM

CBC/Toronto Star email to Ticketmaster

Cat,

One last time, we ARE asking you for these answers.

But like any news organization seeking comment or accountability on an issue, we seek it on the record for publishing.

These issues are serious and important to the public and deserve answers, which to date your are not "perfectly willing" to address on the record.

Let me know if this changes.

Thanks,

DS