

Opinion

Ticketmaster's monopoly will be the end of live music

By **COOPER WOODWARD**
Associate Sports Editor

In the music industry, the first two months of the year means the beginning of ticket-buying season. Fans all across the planet log on to ticket-buying sites in hopes of securing seats for shows of performers playing everywhere.

On Feb. 18, I was in that spot, trying to secure tickets to one of my new favorite artist, Tame Impala. I was fresh out of class, ready to see where my spot in the queue would fall. Noon hit, and I got my number. 62,000.

Was I shocked that my spot was three times the arena capacity? No. Was I angry? Absolutely. It's the latest edition of a problem that seemingly has no solution.

If you've bought tickets to any concert or live event within the last five years, you've interacted with Ticketmaster. Even if you bought them off a secondary market like SeatGeek or StubHub, you've interacted with Ticketmaster. And odds are, if you've interacted with Ticketmaster, you know its reputation for failing to do its job.

But if the site proves to be bad at its only job, why do people keep coming back? I have a sad but simple answer: they don't have a choice.

If you decide against Ticketmaster, you're sent to secondary markets. While their prices

are much lower, the validity of the listing is more often a question than a certainty. Platforms such as StubHub have reportedly sold customers fake tickets, locking them out of the show as they arrive at the venue. So most end up sticking with the platform that has fewer questions of reliability.

Ticketmaster serves as the primary ticketing market for around 80% of all major venues across the U.S. It's practically unavoidable in the current age of live music. No matter where you go or who you want to see, Ticketmaster will rear its ugly head almost every single time.

Ticketmaster uses a variety of different ways to price out the casual fan. The most famous being the egregiously large service fees that are added to the total. They advertise a \$50 ticket and make the consumer pay \$70.

I myself fell victim to this when I bought tickets to my favorite band of all time, Coldplay. When I finally found the seats that I wanted on the site, I saw the price was over \$350 per ticket. Extreme? Sure, but it was the only time I could see the band before their sabbatical, so I had to take the chance.

As I was about to check out, I saw that the service fees had raised the price to \$823. I was lucky enough to have that within my spending. But so many other people



ILLUSTRATION BY KATERINA PARIZKOVA

aren't as lucky as I was.

Then, there's the worst tactic of them all, which is dynamic pricing. Introduced in 2022, dynamic pricing allows the platform to raise ticket prices based on demand.

This tactic allows the prices of wildly popular artists such as Bruno Mars or Sabrina Carpenter to hit four digits before fees, effectively pricing out dedicated fans who are willing to sign up for artists' respective pre-sales.

Despite some artists, such as Olivia Dean and RAYE, fighting the site to make their shows more accessible, it isn't enough. I understand that Ticketmaster and its parent company, LiveNation, need to make money to survive. It's the simple rules of business. But in their greed, they have made us, the fans, a casualty.

Live music is one of the most special things this world has to offer. Every attendee gathers in the theater, arena or stadium for the same purpose of enjoying the music together. How often does that happen?

Ticketmaster's sickening greed and predatory tactics are killing the average music fan. Nobody should have to pay the same price as an iPhone to see their favorite artists perform. It's an unreasonable ask that is unfortunately becoming reality.

I am tired. Fans across the planet are tired. Something needs to be done.

Social media is fire if you have whimsy

By **AMANDA DRONZEK**
Copy Editor

The first thing I do when I wake up is turn to my right, reposition my blue weighted triceratops named Mabel and grab my phone from the charger.

The second thing I do is go on TikTok. I make my rounds on the "For You" page, let out some giggles and then move on to X to find 30 GIFs of actor Hudson Williams's ass dimples that I know won't get taken down because this app is Pornhub Jr. (not complaining by the way).

Social media is a tough subject. It's absolutely detrimental to society. It's toxic, disturbing and we are all unhealthily desensitized. But God, it is so funny.

You know when teachers would have cyber-bullying seminars in middle school and say something to the effect of, "People hide behind a screen because they can't say the things they say online in person?"

They're right.

Because how would I ever be able to insert a diabolical, nonsensical ship edit of San Jose Sharks forwards Will Smith Hockey — the "Hockey" is part of his surname — and Macklin Celebrini into a conversation?

I couldn't. And that's beautiful. And deeply parasocial even for me. Hope the cupcake baking went well.

At my big age, there aren't many social media apps that appeal to me. Snapchat makes me want to throw myself off a cliff. I don't even know why I still have that stupid ass ghost on my phone. And I'm sorry, but Instagram Reels aren't funny. They're so late to the party it's embarrassing.

Also, what the fuck is

Threads? Exactly, nobody knows.

But my X son and TikTok daughter, you are worthy of my attention. I do not condone your makers, but I will adopt you into my phone until the end of time.

The ooey-goey feeling of climbing into bed and knowing I get an hour of doomscrolling time as soon as my head hits the pillow is religious to say the least.

I remember when TikTok got banned. My dear roommate was distraught. There were tears. And honestly, she was so valid for that reaction. It was that serious.

TikTok is literally a Leo's playground. Like, yes, let me rewatch everything I've ever reposted over and over because I am literally God.

I mean, the edits, are we joking? This is proof that the communications industry is alive and well. Every time I finish watching some form of media, without fail, I type the title into my TikTok search bar and am welcomed by a sea of horny, devastating (mutually exclusive by the way) little videos for me to dive into.

Did God make the edit of actor Timothee Chalamet in "Call Me by Your Name" to

"Playdate?" No, that was man-made. Just like the Pyramids.

One might even call them the ancient texts.

X is definitely more crude. I absolutely adore being interrupted by conservative propaganda while I'm trying to live, laugh and love. But I just can't bring myself to find a replacement to Elon Musk's little monster because there isn't one.

You can't outdo the do-er. Yes, people are chronically online and need to be put down because some of their takes are so egregious I have to get up and take a lap.

Then I see actor Shawn Hatosy, Dr. Jack Abbott from "The Pitt" on my feed, posing in a sexy selfie captioned: "unc peepaw people's princess oomf average everyday icon returns. stay mad. stay mystified."

Immediately, I know I am a girl who is going to be OK.

America lowkey sucks right now. Social media is a massive issue that inflates our country's problems because we're just playing ping pong with everyone's most extremist political views when we could be finding something called nuance.

But if the Democrats' TikTok admin is posting Hobama edits in the great 2026, what's the harm in finding these apps hilarious? That used to be their purpose.

It might really be that damn phone, but I'll drink that Kool-Aid until my teeth are stained red.

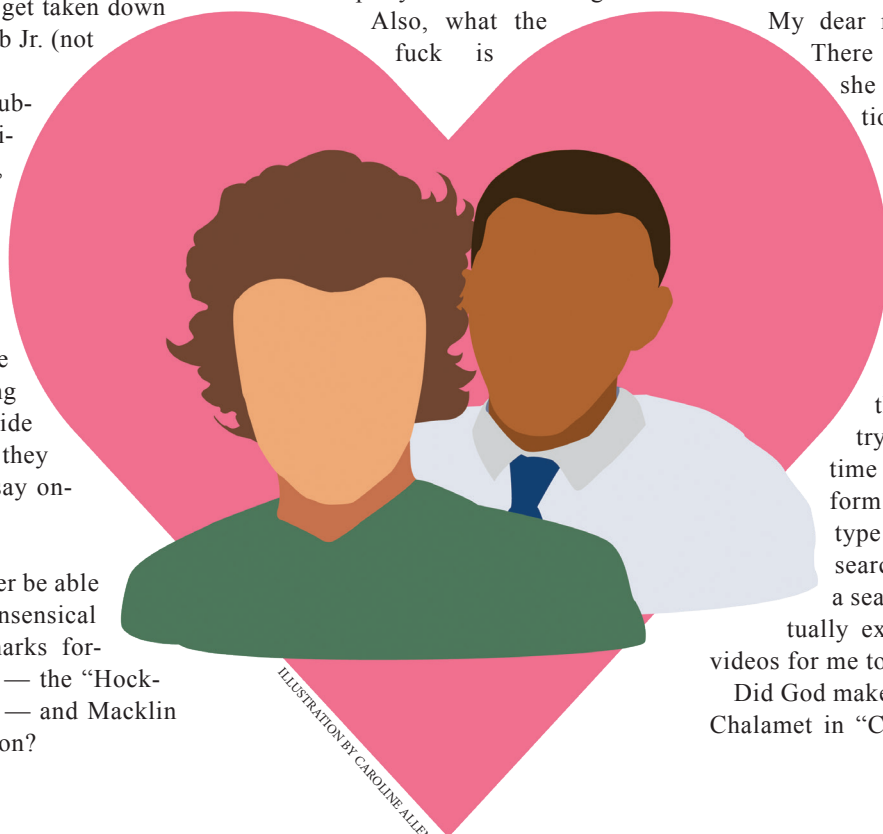


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