
The Small Venue Concert Experience

Recommendations to improve the music lovers' concert experience.

IIT Institute of Design

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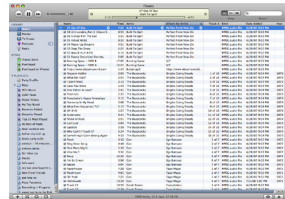
A Fleeting Moment:

The concert experience is much like watching the Kentucky Derby.

The experience of going to a local music venue to watch your favorite band, is much like the experience of watching the Kentucky Derby. A great deal of preparation, planning, and personal history with the bands and their music is required to participate in a relatively fleeting and difficult to preserve moment.

ENTICEMENT

PRIOR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE



Years listening to the music.

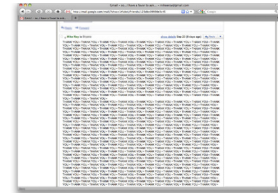
SOUNDING THE TRUMPETS



They're on tour!



Where are they playing?



How can I get in?

Currently lies outside of the control of the venue, relying solely on personal history and experiences.

ENTRY

PLACE YOUR BETS



What will it be like?



First sight.

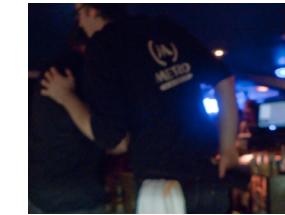


Getting past the door.

THE HAT SHOW



Orientation.



Drinks.



Opening acts

ENGAGEMENT

WIN, PLACE, SHOW



The set.



The encore.



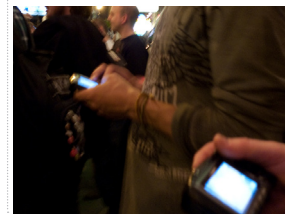
Getting the shirt!



You can't stay here

COLLECT YOUR WINNINGS

THE VICTORY LAP



That was awesome!



What now?

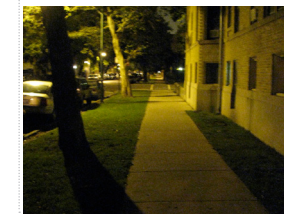


Goodbye.

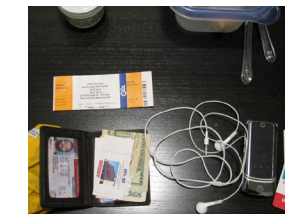
A moment of extension during the exit phase of the experience.

EXTENSION

OUT TO PASTURE

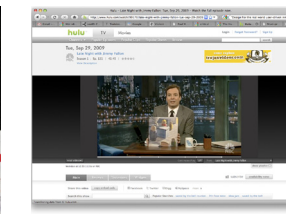


It's really over.



Getting home.

HISTORY BOOKS



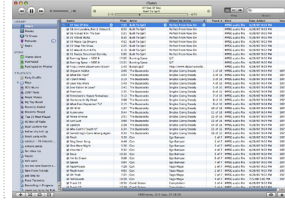
Remember when?

A Cherished Tradition: Reframing concerts by understanding the love of American Baseball.

The Major League Baseball season provides fans access to rich and compelling experiences through a variety of venues and media. Fans have the ability to experience their favorite teams from a stadium seat, ancillary sports bar, or the privacy and comfort of their home. Through a multitude of channels and touch points MLB fans rarely find themselves missing a game. The concert experience could benefit a great deal by understanding what makes someone love the game.

ENTICEMENT

THE SEASON OPENER



Years listening to the music.



Always know if they're on tour!



Where are they playing?

The transformed model extends the reach of enticement, to include the experiences that lead to the show.

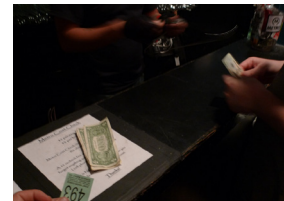
ON THE ROAD



It's going to be amazing!



First sight.



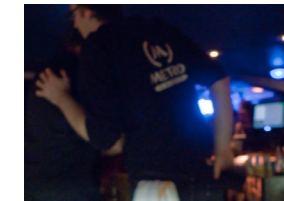
Getting past the door.

ENTRY

SEASON TICKETS



Perfectly timed arrival.



Drinks.

ENGAGEMENT



Scout opening acts.

CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES



The Game.



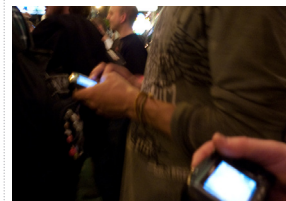
Extra Innings.



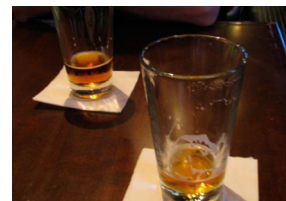
Signing the ball

EXIT

POST-GAME COMMENTARY



That was awesome!



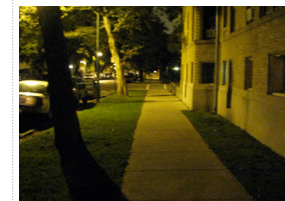
Lets Celebrate!



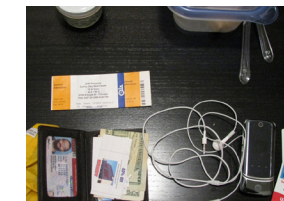
Until next time.

EXTENSION

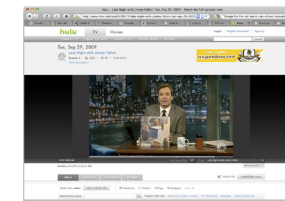
AFTER GLOW



It's really over.



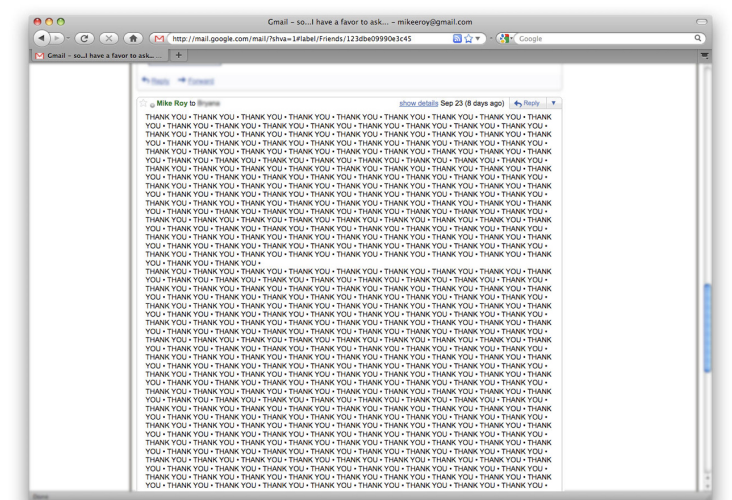
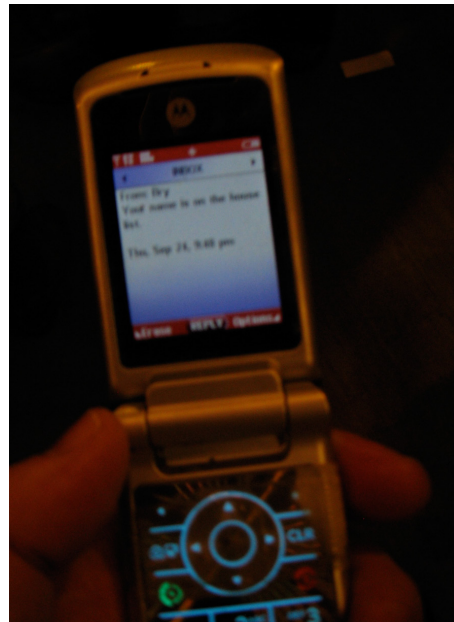
Getting home.



Highlight Reels.

The Season Opener: Planning for the Season

People discover bands in many ways, but friends recommendations are a crucial channel. Similarly, fans discover that bands are touring through word of mouth, seeing a poster, or an ad in a local entertainment guide. Unless fans are lucky and stumble upon the right information, they must lookup the tour schedule to see if the band is coming to their city.

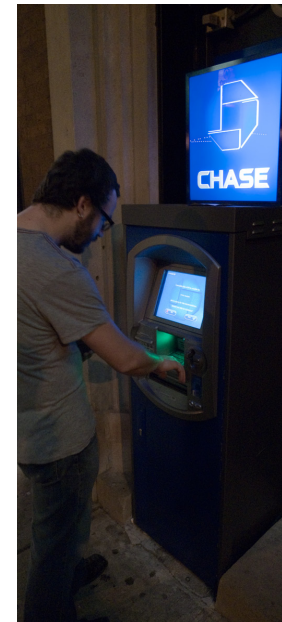


RANDOM DISCOVERY: Fans find out about shows from friends describing their experiences, or from random fliers and ads. Not knowing a band's tour information, until it is too late can cause problems for fans in many ways. Shows sell out, work schedules conflict with concert times, and travel to shows that are not occurring in the fan's cite may not be an option.

GAME SCHEDULE: By making the band's tour dates more widely available, and synced to what people are listening to, fans are more likely to find out about shows for the bands they like, and buy tickets.

On the Road: Anticipating

With the band is coming to town, fans must decide if they can go and want to go to the concert. Even if they can and want to go, they must still get tickets, which can be very difficult for popular shows. Sometimes this means going online to buy tickets, other times it means talking to friends and calling upon connections with the venue to get in. The only remaining step is deciding what time to arrive at the venue, and getting there.



ANXIETY: With any live show, there is a question about what the band will be like. This is especially true of unknown opening bands. In almost all cases the band has been playing shows in the days and weeks leading up to the big night, but there is no way to glimpse these shows unless friends in those cities send word.

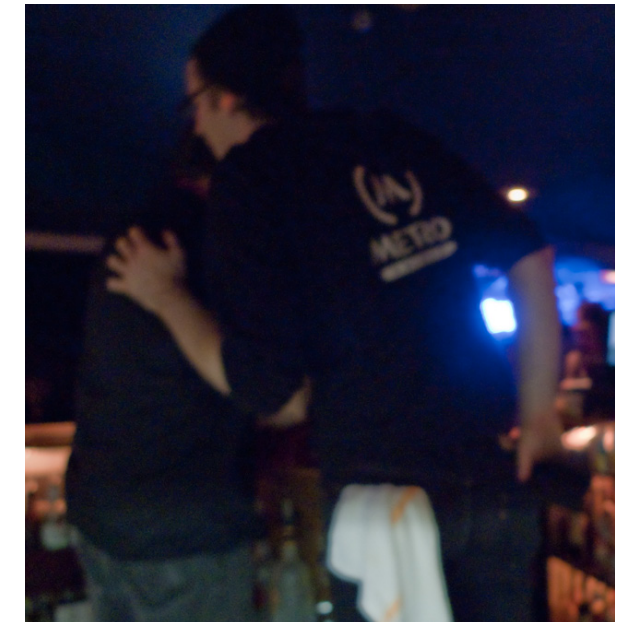
PREVIOUS GAMES/HIGHLIGHTS: *Previews of the main act and opening bands can build excitement and entice fans to come to the show. These teasers may even entice fans to arrive earlier to see the opening acts. No one wants to miss a great new band, but no one wants to risk a bad show either. Previews are great at dissipating this anxiety.*

Season Tickets: Arrival and Orientation

Once through the door, each kind of concert goer has different priorities. Some fans want to be close to the band, and rush the stage. Other fans are there with friends and get some drinks before staking out a spot near the wall. A third group, usually arriving late, take up spots in the middle of the floor. While waiting for the band to start, fans check out who else is there, and may or may not pay attention to the opening acts. Some fans plan to arrive late, specifically so they miss the opening acts. Importantly, no one wears the band's shirt, they instead dress like the band.



STAGGERED ARRIVAL: It can be very difficult to plan when to arrive to the venue, as it is not always clear as to when the show really begins and what the sequence of events will actually be. Some fans intentionally try and miss the opening acts, but risk missing the main act too.



CLEAR SCHEDULE: Rather than playing cat and mouse with fans, the venue should provide a clear schedule for the evening, helping fans optimize arrival and have a great experience.

Championship Series: A Short Fleeting Moment

When the main act hits the stage, the crowd swells and pushes toward the stage, rather than standing in the even rows from the opening acts. The band delivers their much anticipated performance. If all goes well, the band also plays an encore, amplifying the emotions of the performance.



Opening bands performing alongside headliners is a classic means of framing the experience as special and something that can only be achieved within the live performance, and improvisational setting.



At one point fans of a band above arrived to the end of their show expecting that the schedule would be similar to the last time they saw them perform, as the schedule was very different, they missed the majority of the show.

It is important to note, that beyond technical malfunctions related to the physical space itself, the short fleeting moment of the performance is the sole responsibility of the artist. The venue provides the space but the artist is responsible for engaging the audience.

Championship Series: Signing the Ball and Mementos

After seeing a really great concert, fans try and get a memento to mark the event. Some try and get a set-list, others will buy albums, posters, or shirts. Sometimes the band is present to sign records, other times they disappear into their bus. Eventually, everyone must leave the venue.



MERCHANDISE MOB: Merchandise is frequently not available until after the show. This creates a problem where the mob of fans trying to buy the record may cause other fans to forgo the purchase.



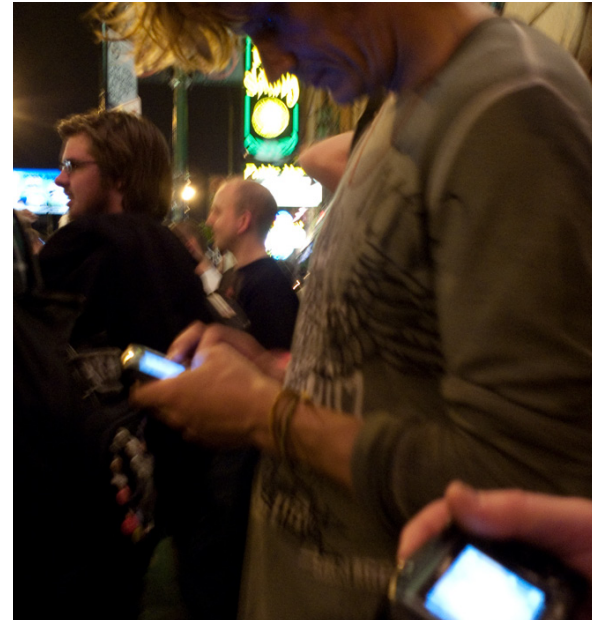
PRESERVE HAPPENSTANCE: The set-list, drum sticks and guitar picks may be offered by the band, or the road crew, these offerings are rare and highly coveted. They are also an opportunity for fans to meet each other. It is important that the spontaneity of these moments is preserved.

Post-Game Commentary: Departure and Next Steps

Fans use their cell phones to text friends and spread the word about how great their experience was. This can often become enticement for friends in other cities. Concert goers proceed to bars and other venues where they can keep the spirit alive, or they say good by and head their separate ways.



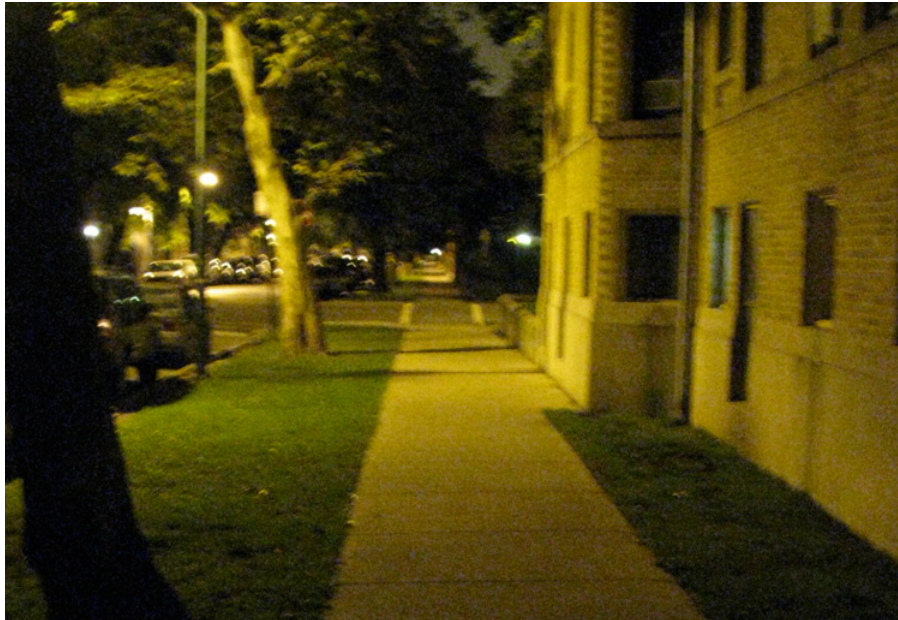
KICKED OUT: There is a clear sense that you are no longer wanted within the space, as they rush you out of the building. Where this might serve a logistical crowd control purpose, it works against the formation of a bond between the venue and the fans.



SUPPORT CELEBRATION: Since the venue is already equipped to handle large crowds and serve drinks, there is an opportunity to keep the revelry alive and get more use out of the venue, by allowing fans to stay and party.

Highlight Reels: Validating the Experience

With the concert over, the band gone, and only a faint ringing remaining, fans wear the shirt as a symbol of their experience. Sometime, the concert becomes a classic, referred to by those who weren't there, and then the shirt becomes a real status symbol. Other times, the opening act might become a hit band, also rarefying the experience. In all cases fans who went are able to say, "I saw them live".



CONSTRAINED MEMORIES: Leaving the venue with only a set-list or t-shirt and memories can make it difficult to share and relive the whole experience of seeing a live band. Even the album has a limited ability to capture the spontaneity of the event.

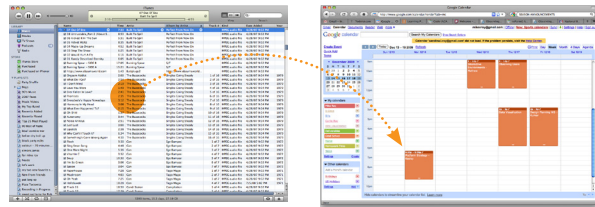


PROVIDE ACCESS TO HIGHLIGHTS: The rare, and surprising chance to see the band shortly after the actual in person experience provides a rich and timeless way of capturing and preserving the experience.

Building the Future out of the Past: Integrating new stages into the concert experience.

The highlighted stages within the experience model below indicate areas of opportunity to transform the current concert experience into something that is more compelling, engaging, and supports a clearer point of differentiation from other competitors in the space.

THE SEASON OPENER



Let your listening keep you in the loop.

Always know they're on tour!

Where are they playing?

GAME SCHEDULE

Fans should get automatic reminders about when their favorite bands are coming to play, and what the evenings play schedule is like.

ON THE ROAD



Know what will it be like?

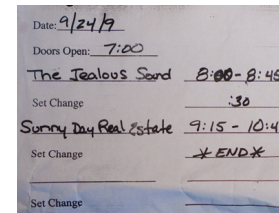
First sight.

Getting past the door.

PREVIOUS GAMES / HIGHLIGHTS

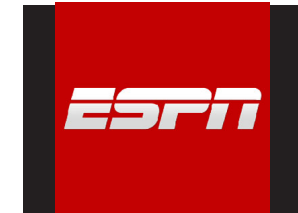
As part of liking a band, fans will follow the bands tour progress, watching shows from earlier cities.

SEASON TICKETS



Perfectly timed arrival.

Drinks.



Scout opening acts.

CLEAR SCHEDULE

Who is playing when should be made as clear as possible to improve the overall concert going experience.

ROOKIES TO FOLLOW

Fans check out the opening acts, and decide if they want to see them too. No one wants to miss the underdog band that is making waves.

CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES



The Game.

Extra Innings.

Getting the set-list.

That was awesome!

What now?

Until next time.

It's really over.

Getting home.

Highlight Reels.

PRESERVE HAPPENSTANCE

Only a rare few get a set list, catch the sticks, or find a guitar pick on the ground. These moments should be left unchanged.

POST-GAME COMMENTARY



SUPPORT POST GAME CELEBRATIONS

Just because the show is over doesn't mean the night is over. Provide access to post show activities.

AFTER GLOW



PROVIDE ACCESS TO HIGHLIGHTS

With the shows recorded, it is easy to relive the highlights from the concert, or discover a new act.