TICKETING

October 2026

MELBOURNE
INTERNATIONAL
COMEDY
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SELLING TICKETS AT THE MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL COMEDY FESTIVAL

This handy and detailed guide contains everything you need to consider when it comes to ticketing at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

The Festival's in-house ticketing system, powered by Red61, manages all tickets sold through our website, box offices and call centre. Our dedicated team supports artists and venues. In line with other arts festivals, we will be moving towards a more centralised ticketing model in the near future.

The first thing to check is what options are available to you.

☐ Does my venue allow me to choose my own ticketing platform?

Some venues have an exclusive ticketing agreement with a ticketing platform, some may have a preferred platform, and some are happy for you to choose the platform that works best for you.

NB: Inside fees (often paid by you) can vary, so make sure you are clear on costs and what you get in return before committing.

☐ I can choose the ticketing platform that works best for me!

That's great news – we would strongly recommend Red61, the Festival's ticketing service! Built specifically for festivals, Red61 was designed to handle the size and complexity of the *Edinburgh Festival Fringe*. It is now an industry standard and the official ticketing platform for *Adelaide/Perth/Melbourne Fringe* and more.

Red61 is an affordable, flexible and reliable system run by a dedicated team of ticketing professionals who know the Festival inside out. By connecting venues, artists and audiences, Red61 keeps you part of the Festival community and helps to ensure you get the most out of your Festival experience.

Choosing Festival Ticketing with Red61 means:

- Expert setup and support for your ticketing build.
- Access to an online producer portal for real-time reporting and complimentary ticket distribution.
- Invitations to exclusive promotions and marketing opportunities.
- An integrated website experience where customers can plan their Festival, discover your show, and buy tickets all in the one place.
- A dedicated in-house call centre for ticket enquiries, sales, and exchanges.
- Customer service from staff trained in accessibility practices and processes.
- A short settlement period.

☐ My venue has a preferred ticketing platform

This means you have the opportunity to consider what is going to work best for you, your team, and your audience. Festival ticketing (Red61) is an easy way to reduce your admin so you can focus on your show, while providing you with extra support and promotional opportunities.

If you use another ticketing provider, you'll need to:

- Make sure they comply with the Live Performance Australia (LPA) Ticketing Code of Practice (required for Festival participation).
- Understand the fees – check if there's a written agreement that describes the ticketing charges, deductions, and obligations – what do you get for your money?
- Check settlement timelines – when will you get your money?
- Ask how you can access regular sales reporting – can you access reports with real-time numbers?
- Be realistic about the administration burden – you may have cheaper fees but spend more time setting up and managing your show.
- Be available for customer questions, complaints and access requests.

☐ My venue has an exclusive ticketing provider arrangement

If your venue has rules, you'll need to follow them. To avoid a delay in your show being ready to go live on our website, please ensure you include your External Ticketing Link at the time of submitting your registration. Your registration will not be proofed or show listing built until your External Ticketing Link is received by the Festival.

Unfortunately, your show will also miss out on Red61-only ticket promotions inc. Laugh Pack and Happy Hours.

SELLING TICKETS AT THE MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL COMEDY FESTIVAL

Some of the Festival's previous artists have feedback about Red61 too!

> *I really like Red61 and lots of festivals use it now, which makes it easier overall.*
> **Hollie James** as part of **Impromptunes**, performed at fortyfivedownstairs, 2025

> *Everything is just taken care of for me. The team is always a delight, willing to help and always understanding of those last-minute stresses.*
> **Nick Robertson**, performed at the Chinese Museum, 2025

> *Red61 is so user friendly! I've used ticketing services for other festivals that are just so slow and confusing. Red61 makes sense and is quick and easy to use. No critiques!*
> **Han Arbuthnott**, performed at Storyville, 2025

PLAN AHEAD: While you can use external ticketing platforms, 2027 is a great time to choose Festival ticketing with Red61, become familiar with the system, and work with the Festival team to make the most of the support and opportunities it offers.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you are in the process of registering an event and would like advice or information about ticketing, ticket pricing, or ticketing providers, contact: registration@comedyfestival.com.au.

If you have selected the Festival's ticketing service (Red61) or have specific questions about the service, you can call us on 03 9245 3700 or email ticketing@comedyfestival.com.au.

SELLING WITH FESTIVAL TICKETING

Before you choose a ticketing system, it's important to compare your options. We've included some of the points you should consider, with further information about what we can offer to help you get the most out of being a part of Festival managed ticketing.

SETUP TIME & EFFICIENCY

Event setup takes time and maintenance. If you don't have a team of people to help, admin can quickly shift your focus away from your biggest priority – your show!

With Red61, you'll benefit from:

- **Fast Event Builds** – we'll build, launch and maintain your event for you.
- **Quick On-Sales** – if your registration is complete and approved, your show can be live in two weeks.
- **Rapid Show Changes** – updates, cancellations, and extra shows are actioned within two business days.
- **Responsive Support** – our team is available seven days a week during the Festival, with most queries answered the same day.
- **Short Settlement Period** – for those in independent venues, your box office earnings are paid just two weeks after the Festival closes.

With other providers, you'll need to check how much of the admin you'll need to manage. Some providers take longer to process changes, and customer communication may be your responsibility. Our team will also need to manually proof your registration against your external ticketing link, which slows the process and can delay your show going live on our website.

> *"I loved that it was all automatically set up for me, one less thing to worry about as a self-produced show. I loved how the ticket sales were updated instantly."*
> Anonymous performer from Club Voltaire, 2025

SELLING WITH FESTIVAL TICKETING

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

We're as passionate about our punters as we are about the artists who bring the Festival to life. For the many customers who rely on the Melbourne Comedy Festival website and box offices to navigate their entire Festival experience, providing a seamless booking process is a top priority.

By ticketing through Red61, your audience benefits from:

- **Booking Multiple Shows at Once** – customers have a one-stop shop to buy tickets to multiple shows in a single transaction, saving on booking fees and boosting impulse buys.
- **Festival Gift Vouchers** – worth tens of thousands of dollars annually and only redeemable through Red61.
- **Marketing Opt-ins** – you can run reports on customers who want to hear from you, helping build your audience base while staying compliant with privacy laws.
- **Automated Email Reminders** – sent 24-hours before the show, these emails can include important information about your event.
- **Box Office Recommendations** - our staff love to chat about all Comedy Festival shows and recommend "what to see tonight." Being able to see ticket availability and sell them on the spot creates a much smoother experience than having to redirect customers to another website.

If your tickets are sold through an external website, we can link through to it in your show listing. However, customers will lose out on voucher bookings, multi-show discounts and a fully integrated Festival experience.

If you are ticketing through an external provider, we may reach out to you or your venue to ensure that the platform meets our minimum customer service requirements. This includes having a method of contact for customers, as well as being regularly available to respond to customer queries.

ACCESSIBILITY

Melbourne International Comedy Festival strives to provide access and inclusion for everyone. When deciding on a ticketing system, we recommend looking into what options and support there is for disabled audiences.

Accessibility is built into Red61:

- **Access notes** – customers can share their requirements at checkout, over the phone, and in person. You can then run a report to see exactly what your audience needs before they've even arrived.
- **Companion Card tickets** – these are complimentary tickets booked alongside a paid ticket and are only eligible to Companion Card holders. As of this year, verified customers will be able to book these tickets online, as well as through our existing phone, email, and in-person channels.
- **Trained box office staff** – all Festival staff receive dedicated access and inclusion training, so audiences are well supported.

If using another provider, you'll need to confirm what accessibility features are available and how you can receive and support any access requirements customers want to share with you.

If you'd like to hear more about our audience feedback, email to ask us about our 2026 Access Survey results at registration@comedyfestival.com.au.

SELLING WITH FESTIVAL TICKETING

WHERE DO MY TICKETING FEES GO?

It's a fair question! Ticketing fees are a reality no matter which system you use, but how they're charged and what you get in return can vary a lot.

Fees Through Festival Ticketing

You pay:

- $2.50 per ticket for those sold online, through our call centre and our physical venue box office (e.g. Melbourne Town Hall Box Office)
- $0.30 per ticket for complimentary tickets

Credit card charges are included in the above.

The ticket-purchaser pays:

- $2.50 per ticket booking fee up to a maximum of $7.50 per transaction online and over the phone
- Zero booking fee in person

As a non-for-profit organisation, the inside fees you pay aren't profit. Instead, every cent is reinvested straight back into running the Festival and supporting you and your audience which, in turn, reduces your workload and creates more promotional opportunities.

Your fees cover:

- **Ticketing System Costs** – licensing and maintaining Red61.
- **Dedicated Ticketing Staff** – we're available to assist you every day of the Festival, and our team of casual staff can assist your customers by email, phone and in person at our box offices.
- **Admin Absorption** – we'll look after the admin for any changes (or cancellations) to your show, including updating web listings, contacting audiences, and managing ticket exchanges and any necessary refunds.
- **Collaborative Marketing** – with a clear view of which shows need some love, it's much easier for our Festival team to keep you in mind for potential promotional opportunities.
- **Promotion Tracking** – we can set up a variety of flexible promo code options and give you access to reports for easy sales tracking.
- **Accessibility Services** – trained staff, integrated features and follow-through support are there to make sure your customers' journey is positive from beginning to end.
- **Sharing Customer Data** – you'll receive all opt-in customer data to build into your marketing campaigns. The Festival also analyses anonymous, aggregated data (like audience trends) to secure funding and guide programming, which in turn grows the Festival and brings more audiences to your shows.

If using another ticketing system, we recommend investigating what your fees cover. At a minimum, they should cover the cost of the system and any credit card charges. Look into what customer service there is and how frequently it's available to you and your audience.

You might also want to consider:

- Will your provider communicate show updates, manage refund requests, and accommodate access requirements, or is it expected that you look after this?
- Are there additional fees added on later? All fees should be transparent and written into your agreement.
- Where do your fees go? Are they being reinvested in the arts or does the provider operate for profit?

SELLING WITH FESTIVAL TICKETING

FEATURES & PROMOTIONS

Different ticketing systems offer different features that benefit you, which may range from reporting dashboards to on-the-go ticket distribution. With Red61, you'll have access to a suite of features designed for festivals:

- **Live Reporting** – hundreds of report types with the option to download copies or export live data feeds for sales tracking.
- **Comps Processing** – issue your own complimentary e-tickets via the Producer Portal.
- **Multiple Logins** – separate access for producers, artists, and venues if needed.
- **Festival Promotions** – exclusive campaigns like Laugh Packs, Happy Hours, and sponsor offers that can give you show an extra sales boost.
- **Front of House App** – scan tickets on the door, view digital door lists, and even process door sales.
- **Box Office Sales & Visibility** – your show can be sold at Festival managed box offices and displayed on live show listing screens.
- **Apple/Google Wallet Options** – whether your customers prefer printed tickets, email notifications, or tickets stored in their Apple/Google Wallet, we can do it all!
- **Email Content** – we can include important information about your show and your venue in our automated email notifications.
- **Optional Stop-sales** – choose whether to cut off online sales a little before showtime (if you're running your own box office) or keep them open right up until you get on stage, saving you time and staffing costs.

With other providers, you may get basic reporting tools, but you'll need to check what marketing opportunities they provide. Investigate how easy it is to share data with stakeholders, distribute comps, and manage last-minute sales.

> *"It was great to be included in Red61's various ticketing promotions – the 2-4-1 deal really gave things a nice boost."*
> Anonymous performer at Club Voltaire, 2025

> *"It's good to be included in the discounts, and I like that the whole ticketing system is built for us. It's also good that the ticket purchase experience is integrated into the website for patrons."*
> **Esther Luk**, performed at Speakeasy Theatre, 2025

SELLING WITH FESTIVAL TICKETING

PROMOTIONS AVAILABLE THROUGH FESTIVAL TICKETING

We run a number of targeted ticket promotions in the lead up to the Festival that you may opt into, some of these include:

Laugh Pack

Exclusive to Red61 and available all the way through the Festival, you can offer a 10% discount to customers who purchase three or more eligible shows at the same time.

25/25

Our largest day of sales outside Festival dates, this promotion offers a limited number of $25 tickets for sale in a 25-hour window. To be eligible, all full priced tickets for your show must be $26 or more (not including Previews and Tightarse Tuesdays). If you're not using Red61, you'll be responsible for the setup, management and timing of the offer.

Happy Hour

Running multiple times across the season, this promotion is exclusive to those using the Festival's ticketing service (Red61). With the aim of getting some extra bums on seats, it offers 2-for-1 tickets and gives you direct access to update how much you'd like to allocate.

Other Promotions

From time to time, the Festival offers ticketing promotions made possible through collaborations with Festival partners. These may include financial or promotional contributions and those using Red61 may be prioritised.

TICKET PRICES

The simplest ticket pricing structure is to set all your tickets at the one price for all performances. This is perfectly acceptable but might not be the best structure to help sell your show while maximising income, so we'd advise having some varied pricing. Common ticket price types are:

All Tickets

All tickets, all days are the same price.

Full

Full price adult ticket. If you're planning on offering varied price types, this would be your standard ticket price with no discounts.

Concession

Concession tickets are available to full-time students (26 years and under), full pensioners, Senior's Card holders, the unemployed and children under 16 years. Concessions should be your cheapest ticket with the exception perhaps of Previews. Concession price tickets are aimed at making shows accessible to comedy fans on low incomes.

Group

Nominate how many people you will consider a Group (e.g. six or more) when you enter the ticket prices as part of your online registration. The group price generally sits between Full and Concession and encourages people who would normally pay full price to get a group together.

Tightarse Tuesdays

The Tuesday night ticket price is usually similarly priced to a concession. There should be no need to offer further concession on a concession ticket but Tightarse Tuesday means everyone can enjoy a concession price. Previously, quiet Tuesdays have become very popular as a result of these promotions.

Preview

Offer a discount price for your first few performances to allow for a few last-minute tweaks to your show material and technical elements. Preview pricing generally sits at a similar price to Tightarse Tuesdays, offering a couple of dollars off the Full price experience. The Festival widely promotes Preview pricing around opening weekend.

Mob Tix

Mob Tix are available specifically to First Nations audience members, offered at a discounted price to support access for First Nations fans. Mob Tix should be priced below Full Price tickets and can (as a guide) sit at a similar price point to Preview/ Tightarse Tuesday.

SELLING WITH FESTIVAL TICKETING

DOOR SALES

If you are performing in a Festival Managed Venue (FMV), sales will remain online and through Festival staff right up until your show starts. If you're in an independent venue and ticketing through Red61, you can choose to keep tickets available online right up until showtime or stop sales 30 minutes beforehand so you know how many tickets you can sell on the door. Either way, you'll receive a door list via email so you know who's coming.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Choosing Festival Ticketing for your event is easy! When completing your registration, in the 'Booking details' section, select Festival's ticketing service (Red61) from the retailers list. Our team will then be in contact with you to set up your event!

If you have any enquiries about ticket prices or ticketing providers, please contact the Participant Services Manager at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival office via email on registration@comedyfestival.com.au.

Other reasons to get in touch

- Curious about selling partially through Red61? Ask us about allocation control.
- Ticketing shows throughout the year? Get in touch about our year-round services and support.
- Want some training on the Front of House app or building live reports? We can arrange some one-on-one training.

OTHER AGENCIES

If you decide not to use Festival Ticketing, and your venue does not have an exclusive ticketing provider, you can use another third-party agency this year. Please note that this will not be a long-term option, as the Festival moves towards a more centralised ticketing model, and Festival ticketing becomes the standard for the future.

In the meantime, you'll need to manage your ticketing directly with your chosen provider and provide the Festival with all relevant ticketing information through the registration portal.

SELLING TICKETS 'AT THE DOOR' ONLY

It's important to keep in mind that many patrons prefer to book in advance and may be unwilling to take a chance on tickets only being available at the door on the night.

It may be a good idea to put a least a small allocation of tickets through the Festival's ticketing service so that really keen punters can book in advance.

Whoever you are ticketing with, it's important to consider:

- Does your supplier comply with the LPA Ticketing Code of Conduct (required for Festival participation)?
- Is there a clear written agreement that describes all ticketing charges, deductions and obligations?
- What fees will you pay and what will be paid by the ticket-purchaser?
- How soon will your event be settled (i.e. when do you get your money) and is money held by the ticketing provider until after each performance in case you need to cancel a performance and refund customers?
- Can you access timely and regular reports to check how sales are going?
- Have you allocated appropiate time to spend on ticketing-related administration?
- Is the provider easily contactable for both customers who have questions about their booking and for me about my sales?

CASH FLOW

Can you pay your bills while you wait for funds to come through? Some ticketing agencies make available box office income ahead of the actual performance that income was collected for. We strongly recommend against this practice. It is contrary to the LPA Ticketing Code of Practice and could expose you to financial and legal difficulties if for some reason you spend the money and then the performance is cancelled, leaving you without the box office income to be refunded to patrons as is required by law.

TICKETING

TICKETING CODE OF PRACTICE

No matter who you ticket with, all shows must comply with the Live Performance Australia (LPA) Ticketing Code of Practice.

The Code consists of two companion documents:

- the Industry Code, which provides guidelines for industry participants including complaint handling procedures, ticket proceeds handling protocols, advertising, ticket pricing and other industry practices; and
- the Consumer Code, which provides information for Consumers regarding their rights, as well as the process by which the Code is monitored and reviewed.

This Industry Code also sets out practical guidance for meeting the obligations and procedures set out in the Consumer Code.

The Consumer Code and Industry Code may be accessed at the Live Performance Australia website.

Any questions regarding the Code may be directed to Live Performance Australia.

MAJOR EVENT ACT DECLARATION

Melbourne International Comedy Festival is subject to a major event ticket declaration under Part 9A of the Major Events Act 2009. This means it is an offence to sell, advertise or offer to resell a ticket for more than 10% above its face value purchase price. Offenders could face fines for multiple offences of up to $96,700 for individuals and $483,500 for a company.

It is a requirement for the Producer to ensure that the ticket purchase price is displayed on the face of every ticket, to ensure that the primary cost of the ticket is clearly identified to consumers should the ticket be resold on the secondary market.

If you think your event has fallen victim to scalping, please contact the Festival team at ticketing@comedyfestival.com.au.

For enquiries regarding the Major Events Act, contact fairgo.forfans@ecodev.vic.gov.au.