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Steve Einzig

Before starting your company, BookingEntertainment.com, you worked with concert promoter Richard Nader and then became James Brown's agent. What was that like?

It was really interesting. I had to keep on my toes. I was dealing with a living legend who happens to be a very smart man, and who has been on top of his game for 50 years . . . He tries to see how far he can push the envelope, so interesting things happen to you every day. One time, an army base in Berlin wanted him to come and play for two nights. Brown didn't want to fly commercial, he wanted to fly over in an Air Force jet and make me send a fax to [then] Vice President Al Gore, requesting this. It didn't go over so well. Instead, they ended up booking the Pointer Sisters.

How far in advance does someone need to book entertainment from you?

It could be as much as a year or as little as two weeks. People call us all the time saying "I'm having a party on my estate . . ." I'm working on one now in Greenwich, Connecticut. They want Missy Elliot in two-and-a-half weeks. If it's two weeks away and the artist is not booked for that time, they may give me a favorable price because that date is dead inventory for them.

Do you book acts just in the United States?



Ever fantasize about Bette Midler singing at your next holiday bash? How about getting Bon Jovi for your daughter's Sweet Sixteen? In the past, booking these acts might have been nothing more than wishful thinking. These days, though, almost anything and almost anyone can be bought. And if you've got the cash, Steve Einzig's got the talent.

Ten years ago, Einzig, 35, founded BookingEntertainment.com, an online service that puts regular (albeit affluent) people together with some of today's hottest musical and comedy acts—among them, Eminem, B.B. King, Jon Stewart, Melissa Etheridge, Joss Stone, Snoop Dog, Outkast, David Spade and Billy Crystal—for private parties, corporate events and fundraisers. The Great Neck resident's one-stop shop handles all aspects of the booking, from arranging flights and hotel accommodations to sound, lighting and transportation. All the clients have to do is come up with the big bucks. Fork up close to a cool mil, for instance, and Bette can croon up a storm right in your living room.

We're an Internet-based company. We get people contacting us from everywhere—Dubai, Beirut, Asia, Australia, South America.

So how does this actually work? I fill out a form on your website? The client comes to the site and either

HE'S GOT THEIR NUMBERS

by Claudia Grayatz Copquin

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calls us or fills out an Entertainment Request Form. An agent contacts them immediately and discusses their specific needs. Once they figure out who they want and we check that artist's availability, the client makes the offer. If the offer is accepted, BookingEntertainment.com takes care of the rest. There is one fee that includes everything necessary for the musical portion of the event and we handle it all.


How do people hear about you?

I do a lot of marketing, and I have a public relations firm. We also do traditional advertising. And we do get a lot of referrals from people who've used our service.

What is a typical cost for someone to book an act through your service?

Artists can vary anywhere from \$20,000 to \$4,000,000. This fee is not just the price of the artist, but all of the additional items that go into a performance of this type including flights, hotel accommodations, limousine transportation, sound, lights, staging and so forth.

You booked 50 Cent for a hot mitzvah. Is just about anyone available?

Certain artists—Eric Clapton and Bruce Springsteen, for instance—won't perform for private parties or events. If U2 is on tour, they would do it. The Rolling Stones would also do it. Other than a few exceptions, almost everyone is available for a price. 

SEPTEMBER 2006 \$3.95



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