



June 30, 2009

MADIGAN: TICKETMASTER AGREES TO SHUT DOWN DECEPTIVE TICKET BROKER WEB SITES

New Guidelines Result from Attorney General's Investigation of Exorbitant Hannah Montana Ticket Prices

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan today reached an agreement with a Ticketmaster subsidiary, TicketsNow, to curb deceptive tactics used by TicketsNow. The agreement is the result of Madigan's investigation into TicketsNow's marketing practices after receiving dozens of complaints about the high prices ticket brokers charged for Hannah Montana and Bruce Springsteen concerts and other popular events. Madigan's investigation revealed that TicketsNow's brokers were in the practice of creating customized Web sites where they resold tickets they had pre-purchased for high-profile events at prices significantly higher than face value while consumers believed they were buying face value tickets from the actual event operators.

As part of the agreement, TicketsNow will cease operating any Web sites that have misleading domain names and will refrain from affiliating with any Web sites that use similarly deceptive tactics. As a result of Madigan's investigation, TicketsNow has already disabled more than 100 suspect Web sites.

"Our investigation revealed that consumers who purchased concert tickets at TicketsNow Web sites often believed they were purchasing tickets from the actual event operators for their original value," Madigan said. "This agreement will substantially impact how the TicketsNow online brokers market popular event tickets so that consumers clearly understand that they are making purchases from a ticket reseller at marked-up rates."

In the course of the investigation, Madigan's office determined that TicketsNow, which is based in Rolling Meadows, Ill., was operating hundreds of affiliated ticket resale Web sites with misleading domain names that incorporated into the Web site URLs unique names of local venues, sports teams or performers. The TicketsNow-affiliated Web sites failed to clearly state that they were ticket resellers and had obtained tickets from secondary sources, such as season ticket holders, event promoters and venue operators, in advance of the public sale. As a result, consumers did not realize that they were ordering marked-up tickets from a TicketsNow-affiliated reseller.

The agreement with Madigan's office also requires TicketsNow resellers to clearly and conspicuously identify themselves as ticket brokers and to expressly state that they are not affiliated with the venue and may sell tickets at above-face value. In addition, TicketsNow will no longer sell tickets to non-sporting events on any of its Web sites until after Ticketmaster makes the tickets available at face value to the general public, which will help curtail speculative ticket sales prior to the actual sale date set by Ticketmaster.

Finally, TicketsNow will pay \$50,000 to the Illinois Attorney General's office for consumer fraud enforcement and education. Ticketmaster acquired TicketsNow in February 2008, in the course of the Attorney General's investigation.

Assistant Attorney General Adam Sokol handled the case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

For more information about the agreement or to file a complaint about online ticket brokers with the Attorney General's Consumer Fraud Bureau, consumers can call the Consumer Fraud Hotline at:

Chicago: 1-800-386-5438

Springfield: 1-800-243-0618

Carbondale: 1-800-243-0607

Spanish: 1-866-310-8398.

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