



August 28, 2024

Mr. Jeremy Stoppelman
Chief Executive Officer
Yelp, Inc.
140 New Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. Stoppelman:

On behalf of the nation's independent venues, festivals, and promoters, I urge you to stop empowering predatory ticket resellers from deceiving Yelp users. Your site redirects users from purchasing legitimate tickets at face value from small businesses and nonprofits, instead sending them to a Yelp-branded TicketNetwork website that is price gouging and selling fake tickets. These deceptive practices are to consumers', artists' and concert venues' detriment, but we know you can stop these practices. While our outreach has gone unanswered, we stand ready to dialogue to fix it.

NIVA is part of a national [coalition](#) working to end this type of wide-spread consumer abuse.

Hundreds of venues, festivals, and promoters nationwide have recently discovered that Yelp is placing buttons on their Yelp profiles that deceive consumers into believing they are buying tickets directly from the venue or promoter producing the show. However, those links actually redirect consumers to a Yelp-branded ticketing platform operated by a company with a long history of anti-competitive and predatory practices. They are selling resale "tickets" on Yelp that, in many cases, do not actually exist or are marked up two to four times the price of face value tickets that are often still available from the venue.

National, widespread instances on Yelp of predatory and fraudulent practices include:

- the sale of "tickets" for shows that do not exist or are being sold for the wrong date and/or wrong time; [Exhibits 1 & 2]
- the sale of "tickets" for seated shows that do not specify the section or exact seat the ticket grants them access to; [Exhibit 3]
- the sale of "tickets" that are speculative, not in the possession of the reseller, or fake; [Exhibit 4]
- the sale of tickets for shows that are regularly 2-15 times the face value of tickets still available directly from the venue/promoter ticketing platform organizing the show. [Exhibit 5]

Furthermore, the lack of accurate listings - or any listings at all - on a number of Yelp's predatory resale ticketing pages for venues is likely causing fans to miss out on shows. Yelp and TicketNetwork are deceiving fans into believing that the "tickets" they are selling include a comprehensive listing of all shows the venue or promoter is hosting. The widespread price gouging is misleading the public into thinking ticket prices are much higher than what independent stages actually charge, potentially discouraging them from buying tickets and harming our sales.

It is also troubling that Yelp is partnering with a company, TicketNetwork, to profit off fake tickets and price gouging when that company has been:

- sued and/or investigated by the Attorneys General of Arkansas¹, Connecticut², New Jersey³, and New York⁴;
- forced to reach a settlement with the Federal Trade Commission due to their fraudulent practices⁵;
- fined \$825,000 by Competition Bureau Canada for fraudulent practices and deceptive search engine advertising and required to enter a consent decree with the Canadian government to continue operating⁶⁷; and
- sued for firing executives that legally cooperate with state and local investigations.⁸

In light of the deeply concerning practices detailed above, we implore Yelp to take immediate corrective action to protect consumers, uphold the integrity of independent stages, and maintain the trust of the millions of users who rely on Yelp for accurate and honest information. Every day these deceptive practices continue, the fabric of our communities is eroded, and the unique cultural experiences that independent stages provide are jeopardized.

We call on your company to immediately remove all “ticket” links to Yelp’s and TicketNetwork’s predatory resale sites from the Yelp profiles of independent venues, festivals, and promoters. By doing so, you will not only restore the confidence of your users and shareholders, but also demonstrate Yelp’s commitment to ethical business practices and the well-being of the communities you serve. We also encourage you to urge Congress to pass the [Fans First Act](#) to ensure the deceptive ticket resale practices that are currently rampant across the country are made illegal.

We trust that Yelp will take this opportunity to do what is right and necessary.

Sincerely,



Stephen Parker
Executive Director
National Independent Venue Association

¹ <https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2008/nov/20/ticket-broker-subject-state-law-judge-say-20081120/>
²

https://portal.ct.gov/dcp/news-releases-from-the-department-of-consumer-protection/2014-news-releases/ticketnetwork-complaint-and-consent-orders?language=en_US

³ https://www.nj.com/news/2009/05/nj_attorney_general_files_comp.html

⁴ <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2019/attorney-general-james-announces-settlement-ticket-resale-companies-selling>
⁵

<https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/news/press-releases/2014/07/ticketnetwork-marketing-partners-ryadd-secure-box-office-settle-charges-deceptively-marketing-resale>
⁶

<https://www.billhartzer.com/pay-per-click/ticketnetworks-fine-exposes-dark-secrets-of-ticket-prices-unveils-deceptive-tactics-and-the-scandal-search-engine-ads/>

⁷ <https://www.lexpert.ca/legal-insights/two-misleading-online-advertising-consent-agreements-to-finish-2023/384394>

⁸ <https://news.pollstar.com/2014/04/28/former-exec-sues-ticketnetwork/>

Exhibit 1: Kishi Bashi “Tickets” for A Show at The Fox Theatre (Boulder) That Does Not Exist


Fox Theatre > Make your selection

Fox Theatre - Boulder

1135 13th Street

Boulder, CO 80302

powered by

 ticketnetwork


Fox Theatre - Boulder Upcoming Events

Below is a list of upcoming events at Fox Theatre - Boulder. TicketNetwork offers a great worry-free guarantee so you can purchase with confidence.

Sort by

Date

Date	Event	Price
Saturday September 28th 8:00 PM	<div>Odie Leigh</div> <div>Fox Theatre - Boulder - Boulder, CO</div>	<div>View Tickets</div>
Saturday October 4th 8:00 PM	<div>Kishi Bashi</div> <div>Fox Theatre - Boulder - Boulder, CO</div>	<div>View Tickets</div>



The Fox Theatre Presents: The NO HANDS Tour

Joey Valence & Brae

SOLD OUT

Date

Oct 4, 2024

Event Starts

8:00 PM

Doors Open

7:00 PM

Venue

Fox Theatre

Ticket Prices

\$27.50 - \$29.50

On Sale

[On Sale Now](#)

Exhibit 2: "Tickets" Listed for Shows That Do Not Exist

Pittsburgh, PA 15236

Crafthouse Stage & Grill Upcoming Events
Below is a list of upcoming events at Crafthouse Stage & Grill. TicketNetwork offers a great [worry-free guarantee](#) so you can purchase with confidence.

Sort by [Date](#)

Date	Event	Price
Wednesday August 21st 8:00 PM	The Collection Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Thursday August 22nd 8:00 PM	Chandler Leighton Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Friday August 23rd 8:30 PM	Right Now - Van Halen Tribute Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Saturday August 24th 8:30 PM	Broadway Rave Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Tuesday September 24th 7:00 PM	Vended Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Thursday October 24th 6:00 PM	Atlas Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Thursday November 7th 7:30 PM	eaJ Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Monday May 26th TBD	Uli Jon Roth Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Saturday October 11th 6:30 PM	Beasto Blanco Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Tuesday October 21st 7:30 PM	Hinder, Wayland & Blacktop Mojo Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets
Sunday November 9th 7:30 PM	Lynch Mob Crafthouse Stage & Grill - Pittsburgh, PA	View Tickets

EVENTS ARE NOT HAPPENING

Exhibit 3: "Ticket" Being Sold for A Section That Does Not Exist In the Venue and With A Policy That is Not The Venue Policy

The Collection
Wednesday August 21st 2024
8:00 PM

powered by ticketnetwork

Order Summary

You have selected 3 tickets. You can change the quantity below. If ordering more than one ticket, all of your seats will be together.
Children must be 3 years of age or older to attend this event. House seats are full price seats that are not available for sale to the general public. These seats are placed anywhere in a theater that the management reserves. If two (2) or more tickets are purchased from this group your tickets may be adjacent to each other in two consecutive rows. Tickets will be ready for delivery by Aug 20, 2024.

ASSUMES VENUE POLICY HERE

Section	Quantity	Delivery	Price
Floor Hs Row GA17	3 Tickets NO IDEA WHAT THIS EVEN IS TICKET WISE Your tickets will be together.	Email	\$184 each

Subtotal 3 x \$184 **\$552**

Disclaimer: Prices are set by third-party sellers and may be above or below face value. All sales are final. Your seats are together unless otherwise noted.

☐ I understand and agree to TicketNetwork's [terms & conditions](#).

[Continue to checkout](#)

Exhibit 4: “Zone Tickets” That Promise Seats in a Particular Row or Section, But They Are Not In the Possession of the Predatory Reseller and Fans May Never Receive Them or Be Able to Sit in The Section Indicated

Yelp for Business

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Restaurants

Home Services

Auto Services

More

Merriweather Post Pavilion

Make your selection

Back to Events

Merriweather Post Pavilion

Merriweather Post Pavilion, Columbia, MD

Cigarettes After Sex

Tuesday September 10th 2024

8:00PM

powered by

ticketnetwork

Tickets

Packages

Parking Passes

Filters (1)

Ticket Price \$250 + Service Fee \$63.75 + Taxes if applicable

General Admission Floor

Row GA

1-4 Tickets

Important: Zone Seating

\$345 each

Ticket Price \$276 + Service Fee \$69 + Taxes if applicable

General Admission Lawn

Row GA

1-4 or 6 Tickets

Important: Zone Seating

\$367.50 each

Ticket Price \$294 + Service Fee \$73.50 + Taxes if applicable

Lower 200

Row D

2 or 4 Tickets

Important: Zone Seating

\$398.75 each

Ticket Price \$319 + Service Fee \$79.75 + Taxes if applicable

+

Seatics map

New Orleans, LA



Write a Review

More ▾

① This ticket will be held for 4:44

Full Name

Email Address

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 Credit Card

Edit

1 Service Fee	\$174.84
1 Delivery	\$7.50

Total	\$746.34
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Fulfilled by
TicketNetwork



**SIGN UP FOR THE
HOWLIN WOLF
NEWSLETTER!**



Comedy Gumbeaux

Ages 18+

907 South Peters, New Orleans, LA, 70130

4 GA Seating **\$40.00**

SUBTOTAL	\$40.00
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SERVICE FEE	\$10.08
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TICKETFAST	\$0.00
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TOTAL	\$50.08
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By clicking the "Place Order" button on the Payment page, you are agreeing to the TicketWeb [Purchase Policy](#) and [Privacy Notice](#).

I also understand and agree that all sales are final. There are no refunds unless the event is cancelled or postponed.

Your payment will be processed