

## Spring for Music The Virtual Line

### Premise

If tickets all cost the same, how do you get the best seat in the house rather than the worst? In the traditional house, you buy your way in to better seats. In our house, you buy your way in by increasing your engagement with S4M. Not just any engagement; we want to see if we can incentivize people by way of their engagement to help spread the word about S4M and help us sell tickets.

### Goals of the Virtual Line:

1. Create a sense of demand, urgency, value, for tickets
2. Give visibility to that demand – the Virtual Line
3. Build interaction/community on the S4M website

### Basics

- Tickets go on sale to the general public Monday morning at 9AM February 22. But people who have earned their way into the Virtual Line will get a 24-hour advance window to buy tickets (beginning Sunday 9AM February 21). Note - earning a place in line doesn't guarantee you a particular seat, only the right to buy ticket(s) in the section(s) you've earned your way into.
- Carnegie seats are divided into four(?) sections - from worst to best seats. Wannabe ticket buyers earn their way into access to better sections by their increasing engagement with us - a ladder of engagement.
- We won't make ALL the seats in each section available for the virtual line - we'll hold back 10% (20%?) for the general sale on the 22nd. We're not holding specific seats, only a percentage of seats.
- The website will have a graphic representation of the Virtual Line, showing real-time (or close to real-time) numbers of people who have earned their way into each section. I envision something like an image of a line that stretches across the page, with bar graph showing the numbers. This will show participants where they fit in the line and how fare they have to go to get to the front. (and it should build excitement and demand as sections fill up - If we had say 500 seats available in the best section, say, and 356 were already claimed, I'd have incentive to push to the front of the line.)
- When you earn your way into a section, you get a unique code that unlocks the section(s) you're eligible to buy in. The code has a one-time use. If there are four sections - four being the best, one being the worst - and you've qualified for section 3, your code will allow you to buy seats in sections 1,2 and 3.

## **Earning your way into the Virtual Line**

- Just getting into line ought to be fairly easy. We don't want to discourage people from simply being able to get into the line. This level is our version of the tradition "student tickets" - low cost and accessible. Making it easy at this level will help to push demand for the least-desirable seats in the house. But we don't want to make it too easy so that people sign up without motivation to redeem their place in line for actual tickets.
- Earning your way into subsequent sections is progressively more difficult, like video games. To get into the top section you are something of a Master - you've helped us market, you've answered some questions, maybe you've even recruited some other people to come.
- To get into line you have to register, where we capture your contact information. You choose a user name, and at each level of participation you attain higher status. At each level of participation your status is identified. This will help build community hierarchies incentivizing participation. Users get incentive points for submitting comments, answering questions, voting on content, recruiting others into the community. Status points translate into better position in the virtual line. NOTE: your place in line is not absolute - your place is determined by section, not by specific order in those sections.

**NOTE:** We're waiting on Carnegie to tell us what their ticketing system can handle in terms of codes, segmentation etc before we can figure out the technical details of what's possible. Chris and I have a meeting over there tomorrow (Thursday).

## **How to Earn your way into the Sections**

This is where we need some clear thinking from all of you. It's important to carefully calibrate the tasks to maximize participation. How difficult should the tasks be for each section?

### **Incentives**

- Register into the system and give us your contact info (email verified). You can earn two tickets by giving us a second (verified) email.
- Give us two additional email addresses of friends to invite (must be verified and confirmed)
- Submit a program in our Fantasy Programming League
- Have your Fantasy Program rated highly by five users
- Answer a quiz on pieces in this year's festival (something like: There are 26 composers represented in this year's festival. Three of them were born in the same year. Who are they?)
- Answer a more difficult quiz about programming (something like: What is the significance of the date 08/04/64?)
- In our forum, answer two (or 3 or 4) questions by users.
- Put together a group of 8 ticket-buyers
- Submit an ad for Spring 4 Music
- Submit a YouTube video ad for Spring 4 Music
- Write program notes for a piece on this year's festival
- Answer trivia question about the home towns of any of our orchestras

### **Questions**

**What are the sections and where?**

**Should the sections have names?**

**What percentage of tickets in each section do we hold back for the general sale?**

**Status levels - names?**

**Spring for Music  
Hometown Fans Section**

## **Premise**

By giving people the ability to sit next to others with whom they share something in common, we can create a new community dynamic in the hall. The hometown section allows the audience to express their support and increases the visibility of the audience in the concert experience.

## **Goals**

- We want to distinguish the experience of the live performance to make it different from the traditional concert experience.
- We want to build a sense of energy in the hall - allow people to root for their hometown orchestra and show their support to the rest of the audience.
- We want to find ways to connect up people in our audience who have something in common.
- Create a group of “super fans” who “infect” the rest of the crowd.
- Give people another reason to want to come to the concerts and participate in them.

## **Basics**

- We set aside a prominent block of seats (the choicest seats? how many and where?) and create a hometown fan section.
- This group of super-fans shows their support for that evening’s orchestra by being part of the section.
- The section is identified visibly in some way so everyone in the rest of the hall sees them.
- Section needs visible ID but super-fans also need ID. On nights that other orchestras are playing, people are encouraged to wear their hometown colors. Ideally we want to see a sea of color in the hall, with a big solid section of that night’s color in the hometown section.
- I propose the visibility is a hat (baseball cap?). Each orchestra has its own color, with a logo on the front. Hometown fans get their hats by earning their way into the section. We also sell any of the hats in the lobby.
- Size of the Hometown Section depends on how many tickets people buy there. We get the orchestras to help us sell them. They have incentive to sell more because they want their Hometown Section to be bigger (turns it into a competitive thing for the orchestras).
- Unlike the Virtual Line - these tickets are sold specifically in advance of the general sale. You can pick your seat on a “best available” basis within the Hometown Fans Section. We need to allow for advance specific sale because people traveling need to be able to make their arrangements.

## **How To Earn Your Way Into the Hometown Section**

- We let the orchestras determine their own criteria for the fans they bring from home. This will give them incentive to try to bring as many as possible because they'll have the ability to show hometown support. People from those orchestras' hometowns will have extra incentive to come because they'll be able to turn it into a show of support.
- There are plenty of people living in NY who have ties to our orchestras. To "buy" your way into this section you have to register, give us contact info, and answer a quiz of trivia about the hometown.

## **Questions**

How big should the Hometown Fans Section be?

Where should the Hometown Fans Section be?

How do we mark the section visually?

How do we let the Hometown Fans identify themselves visually?

Might we find a way to tie something of this into the pre-concert presentations?

Do we want to let each hometown section have a place in the lobby or elsewhere where they could distribute info about their city or orchestra and/or sell gang-ware?