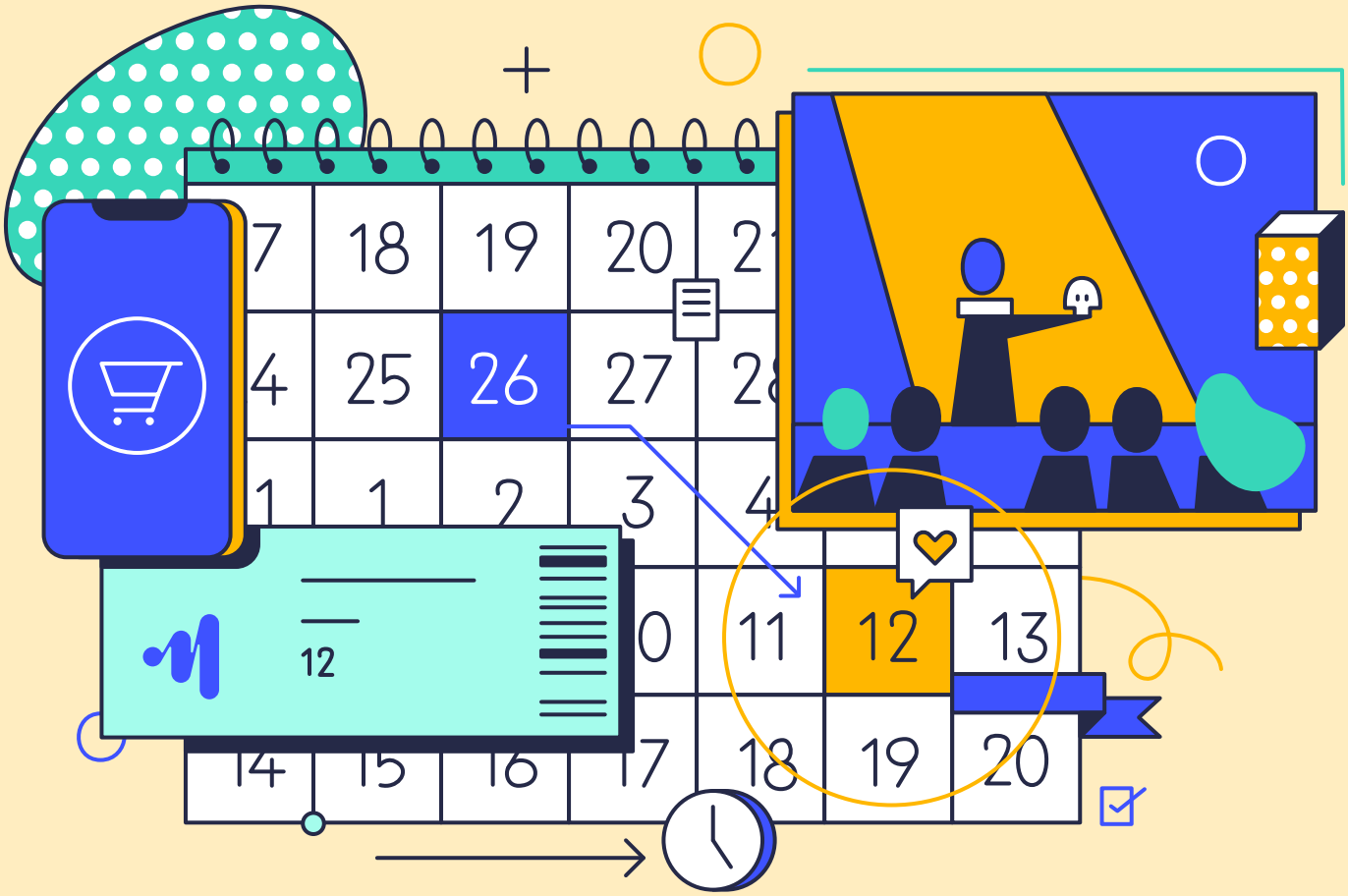
THE MARKETHYPE REPORT

Pickup time in the event industry

Ticket purchasing patterns across 10 different segments in the Nordic event industry.



MarketHype

MarketHype

This report was created in September 2025,
by MarketHype Sweden AB.

MarketHype is your Audience Development Platform, tailored for marketers in the event and hospitality industries. With our platform you use effective communication to define, expand and maintain engaged audiences.

Thanks to seamless integrations with various ticket and booking systems, ticket purchases, bookings, orders and contacts are collected daily by the platform. Additionally, everything is kept accurate and up-to-date at all times.

MarketHype offers many tools within a single platform: customer data and sales metrics for analysis, segmentation, email service, SMS service, automations, Meta connection for advertising on Instagram and Facebook, and signup forms.

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PREFACE

”Reflect, adapt, act – timing is everything”



Erik Lindholm
CEO, MarketHype

At MarketHype, we believe that better insights lead to better decisions – and ultimately, better audience experiences. This is the second edition of the MarketHype Report, and part of our continued effort to provide the industry with data-driven knowledge that is both relevant and actionable.

“Pickup time” – the number of days between a customer’s ticket purchase and the event itself – is a well-established concept in the hospitality sector. Yet within the event industry, it has received far less attention. We saw an opportunity to change that.
By shining a light on pickup time, we aim to help organizers better plan their campaigns, optimize pricing, and communicate with audiences at just the right moment.

For the first time, this report also compares pickup patterns across different sectors of the event industry – revealing variations that point to different customer behaviors, planning horizons, and business models.

I would like to thank Matilda Törnquist for her sharp pen and hard work in bringing this report together, and extend my gratitude to everyone who took the time to share their knowledge and perspectives in articles. Your insights add depth and real-world context to the numbers.

We hope the findings in this report inspire you to reflect, adapt, and act. Because timing is everything.



ABOUT

About the report

How many orders have been analyzed in this report?
What event industry segments have we focused on?
Learn more in the following chapter.

ABOUT THE REPORT

6.9 million orders & 10 industry segments

This report presents statistics related to ticket orders and their pickup time, based on data from the years **2023** and **2024**.

The data has been drawn from a selection of event organizations operating in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland. All participating organizations have been active users of MarketHype, our Audience Development Platform, and have been selected based on consistent usage during the analyzed period to ensure data quality and comparability. To further ensure statistical relevance, certain outlier values have been excluded from the analysis – particularly in cases where the data volume was too low to draw meaningful conclusions.

The report includes insights from ten different industry segments, representing a wide range of formats and sectors within the live events industry. A full overview of these organizer types can be found in the report's glossary.

The analysis covers 6 895 787 orders and 18 803 971 order items (primarily event tickets; season passes and annual memberships have been excluded). A total of 4 229 273 unique contacts have been analyzed, and the total order value amounts to €1 045 937 196.

All figures in the report are presented in percentages, numbers, and euros. Currency values have been converted to euros from local currencies to enable cross-market comparison.

No personal data has been analyzed. All data used in the report is fully anonymized and non-identifiable, in compliance with applicable data protection regulations.

Glossary

In this report, you will come across a number of segments within the event industry, and also some recurring terms. Below you can find them along with an explanation.

Industry segment classifications

Comedy & dinner shows, & entertainment clubs	Venues specializing in comedy, cabaret, themed entertainment, and nightlife.
Cultural & multi-purpose event centers	Spaces hosting a variety of cultural, civic, and entertainment events.
Dance & contemporary performance	Venues and companies specializing in modern and contemporary dance.
Festivals & large-scale events	Organizers of music festivals, cultural festivals, and multi-day experiences.
Museums & cultural heritage institutions	Museums, historical institutions, and spaces for cultural exhibitions.
Musical institutions & classical orchestras	Organizations dedicated to classical music, symphonies, and choral performances
Music venues & concert halls	Dedicated spaces for live music, concerts, and music-focused performances.
Promoters & booking agencies	Companies focused on event promotion, artist booking, and live production.
Sports & arena events	Stadiums, arenas, and sports organizations that also host public events.
Theaters & performing arts	Venues focused on drama, musicals, opera, and dance performances.

Recurring terms

Early bird	A ticket purchaser who buys their ticket early for an event, in order to secure a spot before it sells out and sometimes to benefit from a discounted price. In this report, an early bird is defined as someone who purchases their ticket 31 days or more before the event.
Last month	Ticket purchases made 8–30 days before an event.
Last week	Ticket purchases made 0–7 days before an event.
Order	An order consisting of one or various tickets. The order can include both single event tickets and other items.
Pickup time	A period that refers to the number of days between purchase and event.
Unknown	Data where gender information is missing.



PART 1:

Introduction

Why is pickup time an important metric to examine? This question is explored in more detail in the following chapter, along with some key figures related to pickup time.

What's so special about pickup time?

Before we dive into various data points and insights related to pickup time, let's clarify what pickup time actually is – and why it matters.

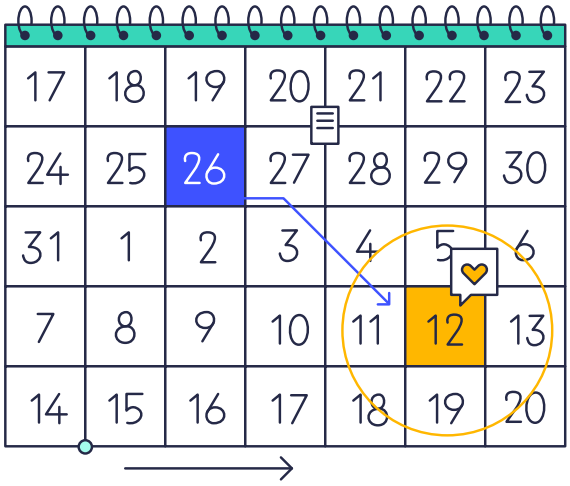
First things first. **When we talk about pickup time, we're referring to the period between when a ticket is purchased or booked and when the event takes place.** If you're asking yourself how early or how close to the event the audience tends to buy their tickets, then you're essentially asking about pickup time.

So, why is pickup time important? The most obvious answer is: because you want to sell out your tickets. You want to ensure that every seat is filled and maximize your ticket revenue. That's why it's crucial to be able to forecast how ticket sales are likely to unfold ahead of your next concert, football match, or theater performance – and that's where pickup time becomes highly relevant.

By selling tickets early, you also improve your cash flow. The earlier your audience buys their tickets, the more paydays they've had – and the more willing they are to spend money on-site. A longer pickup time also reduces the risk of them changing their minds – due to things like bad weather, a birthday party, or a surprise visit from grandma.

To sum it up, pickup time is useful because the numbers can help you with:

- Communication planning
- Campaign strategies
- Pricing strategies
- Maximizing revenue
- Avoiding empty seats



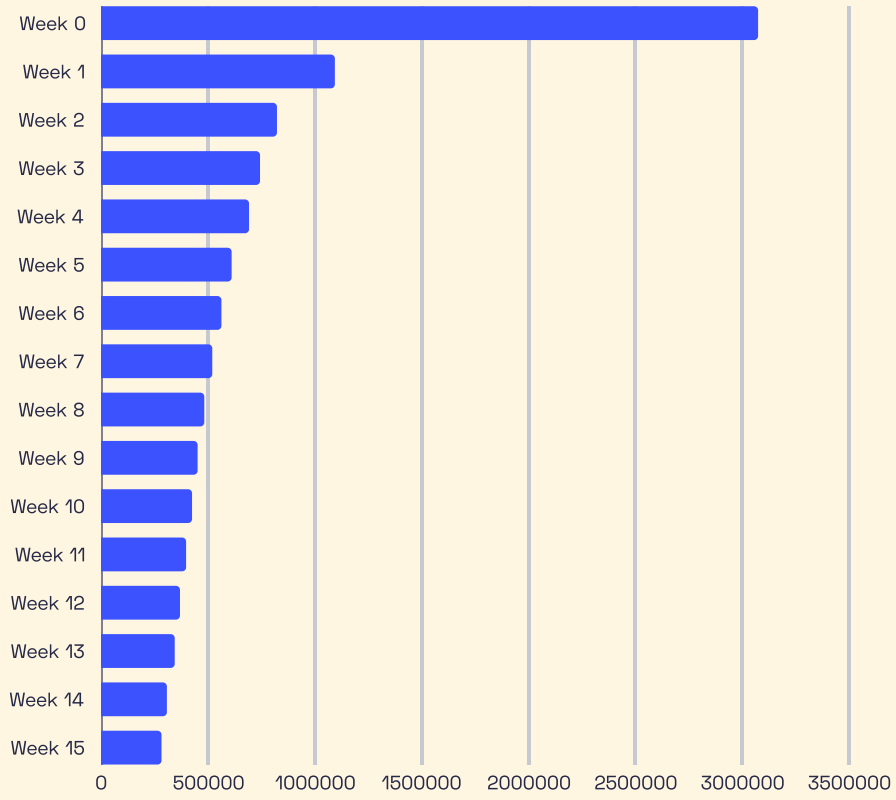
So, how long before the events did customers buy their tickets? Let's dig into that now.

This is what the data looks like

When did the audience buy their tickets? Looking at pickup time across all organizations, the numbers are clear – the majority were spontaneous buyers.

Weekly order volume leading up to the event – all organizations

The chart below shows the number of orders placed per week leading up to an event, during 2023 and 2024. The data includes all ten types of industry segments analyzed in the report, with orders aggregated across them. As shown, most orders (3 074 676) were placed during the final week before the event, with fewer orders the further in advance the purchase was made.



Do the numbers vary by segment?

As shown on the previous page, most orders were placed in the same week as the event. But on average, how many days in advance did audiences purchase their tickets across the different industry segments?

Average pickup time in days by segment

The boxes show the average pickup time in days by industry segment, listed alphabetically. The figures are based on data from 2023 and 2024. The shortest average pickup time was found among museums & cultural heritage institutions (8 days), while the longest was among promoters & booking agencies (146 days).

110
Comedy & dinner shows, & entertainment clubs

66
Cultural & multi-purpose event centers

40
Dance & contemporary performance

90
Festivals & large-scale events

8
Museums & cultural heritage institutions

100
Music venues & concert halls

63
Musical institutions & classical orchestras

146
Promoters & booking agencies

88
Sports & arena events

79
Theaters & performing arts

PART 2:

Demographics

In this chapter, you'll learn more about pickup time in relation to gender and age. You'll also find an interview with Martin Hovland, who explains how you can turn data into actionable insights.

Who's first in line – men or women?

Did men and women buy their tickets at different times leading up to an event? And did this vary across industry segments? Take a look at the table below!

Gender pickup stats

Industry segment	Female	Male	Unknown
Comedy & dinner shows, & entertainment clubs	112 days (60.8%)	107 days (25.1%)	105 days (14.1%)
Cultural & multi-purpose event centers	76 days (47.6%)	74 days (25.1%)	41 days (27.3%)
Dance & contemporary performance	41 days (66.8%)	38 days (21.2%)	35 days (12%)
Festivals & large-scale events	83 days (34.6%)	91 days (32.3%)	94 days (33%)
Museums & cultural heritage institutions	24 days (5.1%)	20 days (2.3%)	7 days (92.6%)
Musical institutions & classical orchestras	64 days (60.2%)	64 days (34.6%)	40 days (5.2%)
Music venues & concert halls	118 days (37.1%)	118 days (30.3%)	62 days (32.5%)
Promoters & booking agencies	159 days (41.3%)	152 days (29.8%)	121 days (28.9%)
Sports & arena events	106 days (34.9%)	73 days (35.9%)	84 days (29.2%)
Theaters & performing arts	81 days (58.3%)	81 days (22.8%)	67 days (18.9%)

Only segment where men bought earlier than women.

Biggest difference in number of days between men and women.

Explanation of table

Percentage in parentheses	The percentages shown in parentheses below the pickup time data indicate the proportion of women, men, and unknown gender within the analyzed dataset.
Unknown	Data where gender information is missing. There can be several reasons for this – for example, purchases made at a box office where gender is not collected, or where gender was not required to complete the ticket purchase. These types of purchases often occur closer to the event date, which can result in a lower average pickup time for the “Unknown” category.

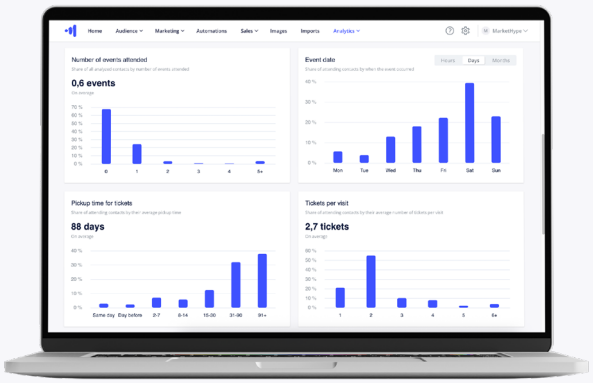
MARKETHYPE

Do you know your pickup time?

Find out in MarketHype!

MarketHype is your Audience Development Platform, tailored for marketers in the event and hospitality industries.

Our platform gives you access to key audience insights, sales data, and powerful marketing tools in one place, where **pickup time** is just one of many data points you can explore.



PART 2: DEMOGRAPHICS

Do age groups buy at different times?

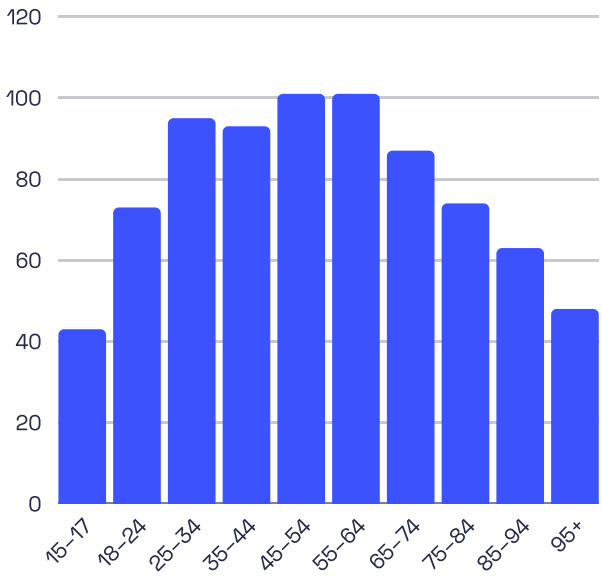
They say age is just a number – but did it play a role in how early or late audiences bought their tickets? Let's find out.

Pickup time in days by age groups across all organizations

The X-axis in the chart to the right shows different age groups, and the Y-axis displays the average number of days in terms of pickup time. The data covers the years 2023 and 2024 and includes all organizations analyzed in the report.

The age group with the highest average pickup time was 45–54 (100.9 days), just above the 55–64 group (100.7 days). The lowest average pickup time was recorded in the 15–17 age group (43 days).

Notably, ticket purchases totaled 13 990 in the 15–17 age group and 2 669 320 in the 45–54 age group.



What does the data show across different industry segments?

When we took a closer look at pickup time across different age groups within each industry segment, we saw that the overall curve is more or less the same. The number of days varied, but the trend remained consistent.

The segment and age group that purchased their tickets the earliest were promoters & booking agencies and the 45–54 age group. They bought their tickets 170 days before the event.

The segment and age group with the latest purchases were museums & cultural heritage institutions and the 25–34 age group, with tickets bought 18 days before the visit.

170 days

Highest average pickup time:
45–54 years old
Promoters & booking agencies

18 days

Lowest average pickup time:
25–34 years old
Museums & cultural heritage institutions

PART 2: DEMOGRAPHICS

How is pickup time data actually used?

Read the interview with **Martin Hovland**, Marketing Analyst, who explains the role that pickup time plays at the **Norwegian National Opera & Ballet**.

INTERVIEW

Pickup time in practice – from data to decisions



Which parameters do you focus on when analyzing pickup time? Why those particular parameters?
– At the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet, we analyze how pickup time varies between different genres and productions, as well as among customer age segments and genders. We also report on the percentage of tickets sold within specific time windows – for example, the share of tickets purchased during the last four weeks before a performance.

– We're constantly looking for differences and then trying to understand them. Are tickets for one genre typically purchased much closer to the event date than for another? We've observed that commercial concerts tend to have longer pickup times among our youngest audiences, whereas opera performances show the opposite pattern: older attendees buy tickets further in advance, while younger ones purchase closer to the event.

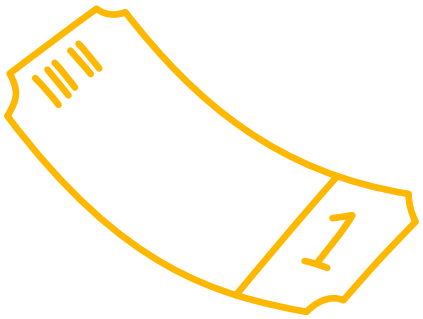
Why is pickup time an interesting metric to analyze?
– We want to understand our audience and aim to fill our venues as early as possible. By analyzing pickup time, our marketing can become more targeted, and we can allocate our resources more effectively. Maintaining an active focus on pickup time and the audience's key purchasing windows gives us important feedback on how well our strategies are working – and allows us to adapt our marketing efforts accordingly.

How can pickup time insights support marketing and communication strategies?
– It has changed the way we use our marketing budgets. For example, we now concentrate our marketing efforts around the time periods when most people buy their tickets, and we've adjusted the duration of our campaigns. Going forward, we plan to make even greater use of pickup time insights to further sharpen our marketing and communication strategies.

PART 3:

Orders & transactions

In the following chapter, you'll find statistics on pickup time in relation to orders and transactions. For example, does ticket price influence when a purchase is made? In addition, Josefine van Ginhoven shares three tips for driving early ticket sales.

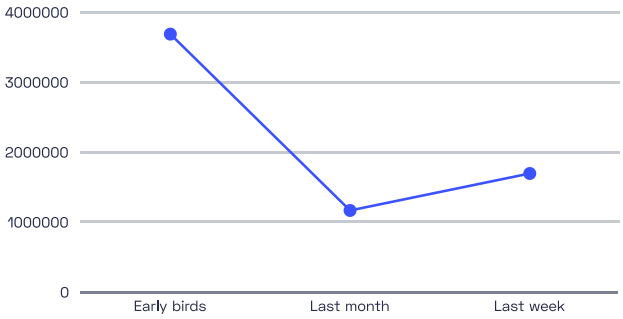


When are most orders placed?

When we take a closer look at when ticket purchases were made in relation to an event, we observe three distinct patterns: one general trend, another among museums, and a third within the performing arts sector.

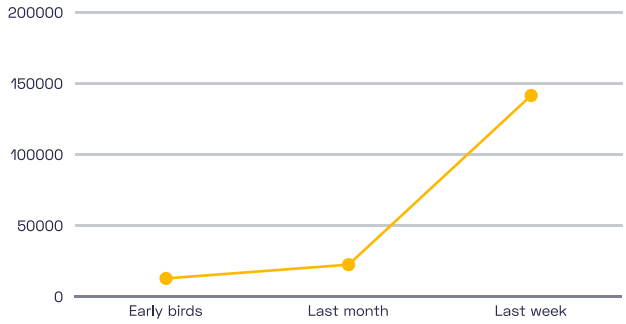
Orders by early and late buyers across all organizations

The chart below shows when ticket purchases were made prior to events in 2023 and 2024. All event organizers are included in the statistics. The data indicates that the majority of ticket buyers were early birds, meaning they purchased their tickets more than one month before the event took place.



Orders by early and late buyers in museums

For museums and cultural heritage institutions, the curve looks slightly different. In 2023 and 2024, it was most common for tickets to be purchased during the same week as the visit.



Orders by early and late buyers in performing arts

In this chart, data from the segment classifications "Theaters & performing arts" and "Musical institutions & classical orchestras" have been combined. Here we observe a slightly different pattern – the curve declines, indicating that fewer ticket purchases were made during the final week leading up to the event.



"If I don't act now, I might miss out"

Josefine van Ginhoven is an Audience Development Consultant at **Rättighetsbyrån,** with several years of experience in ticket sales. Here, she shares her top three tips for boosting early sales.

3 TIPS

Josefine on how to drive early ticket sales



1. Prioritize loyal groups – create a sense of exclusivity
Provide loyal audiences – such as past attendees, members, or followers – with early access to tickets before the general public. This fosters a sense of belonging and rewards engagement. Priority access also generates social pressure: "If I don't act now, I might miss out."

2. Limited ticket windows or quantities – clear deadline
Set clear timeframes or quotas for early purchases. For example: "Pre-sale ends Friday at 12:00 PM" or "Only 300 tickets available in the first release". This creates urgency, encouraging people to act immediately or risk missing out.

3. Tell the story – sell the experience, not just the ticket
Develop campaigns and messaging that build emotional engagement well before the event. Use formats such as short video series, retrospectives, interviews, or exclusive behind-the-scenes content. When the audience becomes invested in the story early on, their motivation to secure a spot increases significantly.



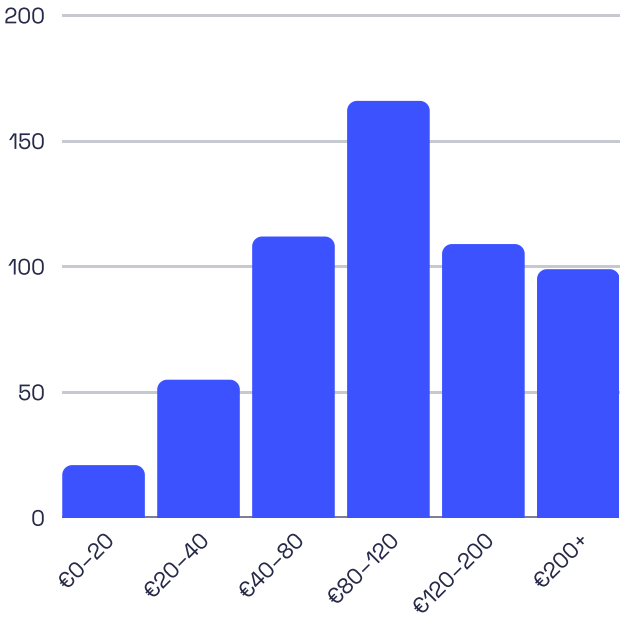
How much do ticket prices matter?

Did people tend to buy tickets earlier when prices were higher? Or did ticket price perhaps have no effect at all? That's what we'll explore in the section below.

Average pickup time in days by ticket price buckets

The X-axis in the chart below shows different ticket price buckets, and the Y-axis displays the average number of days in terms of pickup time. The data covers the years 2023 and 2024 and includes all organizations analyzed in the report.

The pattern suggests a correlation between ticket price and pickup time, though not a strictly linear one. On average, tickets priced between €80 and €120 were purchased the earliest (166 days before the event), while tickets priced between €0 and €20 had the shortest pickup time (21 days).



339 days

Highest average pickup time:
Theaters & performing arts
Price bucket: €200+

6 days

Lowest average pickup time:
Museums & cultural heritage institutions
Price bucket: €0–20

Please note that the number of orders differed between the highest and lowest average pickup times. For theaters & performing arts (339 days, €200+), there were 1 941 orders. For museums & cultural heritage institutions (6 days, €0–20), there were 172 858 orders.

Psst! Take a look at the next page for the highest and lowest pickup times by segment and price bucket.

PART 3: ORDERS & TRANSACTIONS

Highs and lows by segment

How did ticket prices actually vary at high and low pickup times across the ten industry segments? See the full list here.

Pickup times by segment & price bucket

Industry segment	Highest average pickup time	Lowest average pickup time
Comedy & dinner shows, & entertainment clubs	126 days (€80-120)	36 days (€0-20)
Cultural & multi-purpose event centers	134 days (€80-120)	14 days (€0-20)
Dance & contemporary performance	49 days (€40-80)	24 days (€0-20)
Festivals & large-scale events	158 days (€200+)	24 days (€0-20)
Museums & cultural heritage institutions	91 days (€200+)	6 days (€0-20)
Musical institutions & classical orchestras	148 days (€80-120)	33 days (€0-20)
Music venues & concert halls	335 days (€80-120)	17 days (€0-20)
Promoters & booking agencies	190 days (€80-120)	41 days (€0-20)
Sports & arena events	136 days (€80-120)	16 days (€0-20)
Theaters & performing arts	339 days (€200+)	35 days (€0-20)

What do the numbers show? That cheaper tickets tend to sell last, while pricier ones sell earlier.

SUMMARY

Conclusions & findings

The final chapter summarizes the report, with Håkan Durmér sharing his findings and key takeaways.

SUMMARY

Time to dig where you stand!

Håkan Durmér, Head of Marketing at **FKP Scorpio Sweden**, takes the report's findings on pickup time and adds his perspective. From Excel sheets in the 2000s to real-time insights today, he explores what the data shows – and what's next for you.

ARTICLE

You've made it this far – now it's time to dig where you stand!



Back in the late 2000s, I was working with the Hultsfred Festival. It was a completely different era. Print was still king, social media was more of a vague buzzword, and web traffic was measured in something as fuzzy as "hits". And yet, buried somewhere in the slow-moving folder structure of one of our office PCs, lived one of our most important marketing assets: The BIG Excel file. It held ten years of weekly ticket sales, manually typed in, visualised in the ugliest possible line graph – and still, it gave us ruthless clarity on where we stood, when the sales spike was coming, and (by the standards of the time) fairly solid forecasts of where we'd end up sales wise.

As we all know: Nothing was better in the past. What took a festival director half a day of swearing at Excel now runs in real time through MarketHype. And with less manual data crunching, we actually get to focus on the point of it all – understanding what the data really is telling us.

This report shows there's no single, unified event industry. Every sector plays by its own rules. What we really have is a patchwork of business models, audience behaviours and psychological triggers. As Head of Marketing at one of Sweden's largest concert promoters, I actually broke into a stress rash reading in the report about how short the pickup times are for museums & cultural heritage institutions. If our audiences bought their tickets that late, I wouldn't fall to sleep as easily as I usually do.

At the same time, those 146 days of average pickup time that promoters & booking agencies supposedly have – well, that's only half the truth. The number is →

SUMMARY

absolutely correct, but behind it hides another patchwork of patterns and exceptions. Stadium shows sell most of their tickets in the first few hours after going on sale. An up-and-coming electronic act in a small club? They might sell the bulk of their tickets in the last 24 hours before doors open. And just as the report points out, we too see older fans buying earlier, younger fans holding out longer, and VIP packages almost never being a last-minute purchase.

So what should we do with this report? Should we, like me, glance nervously at other sectors' pickup times and stress on their behalf? Of course not. We should use it as inspiration: To reflect, to dig deeper, to connect more of the dots, and to ask ourselves even smarter questions.

For some players, short pickup times might actually be ideal. Spur-of-the-moment decisions become a form of segmentation, and when combined with demographic data, they can guide exactly where and how to market their events. For others, long pickup times and season tickets are essential – making them less vulnerable to things beyond their control (hello Swedish summer, rained-out outdoor shows, or sport clubs with too many fair-weather fans).

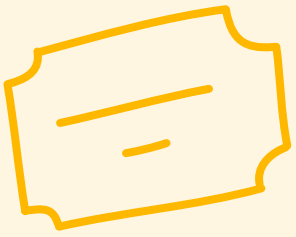
Instead of just skimming the tables and moving on with your to-do list, this report should be the spark that gets you to dive into your own data. Somewhere between MarketHype Analytics, exported Excel sheets, and your new buddy ChatGPT, the insights are waiting.

In my own work (we do 200–300 concerts per year, from smallest clubs to massive stadiums) there are endless variables. Some genres have hyper-spontaneous fans, while some venues have loyal regulars who always buy on day one. And once you start mapping those variables, you can start asking questions like: How come the same artist sell the tickets earlier in Örebro than in Gävle? Is it the weekday, the venue, the ticket price – or do Gävle residents just have more planning anxiety than people in Örebro?

One of my own summer experiments has been cross-checking pickup time with the distance ticket buyers travel to the venue. Unsurprisingly, there's a clear correlation: The further people have to travel (especially if an overnight stay is required), the earlier they buy. That single graph determines when we shift from national campaigns to regional, and when it's time to go fully local with the marketing push.

Compared to the hours our poor festival director once spent patching together that unwieldy Excel file with Hultsfred's historical pickup times, today's analysis is infinitely easier – and a lot more fun.

You've got the data, you've got the tools, and with this report, hopefully you've also got the inspiration. Now it's time to dig where you stand, and figure out how pickup time as a KPI can make your marketing just that much sharper.



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