



December 5, 2018

Submitted Electronically
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

RE: Workshop Examining Online Event Ticket Sales, Project No. P18450

The Recording Academy appreciates the opportunity to submit comments to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on issues related to the online event-ticket marketplace. The Recording Academy (“Academy”), best known for celebrating artistic excellence through the annual GRAMMY Awards, represents thousands of performers, songwriters, producers, and engineers. The Academy is the only music trade association that represents all music professionals. It represents only individuals and has no company or corporate members.

The relationship that forms when an artist connects to a fan through his or her music is at the core of what makes music special. Accordingly, many artists try to keep their concert tickets affordable for their fans. The special connection between artists and fans that is created through live music is threatened by predatory online ticket resellers. Ticket scalpers use computer hacking software (“bots”) to circumvent restrictions put in place by online ticket sellers. They purchase tickets in mass quantities and sell them at a marked up rate that makes it almost unattainable for fans to see their favorite artist perform live.

The Recording Academy was proud to support the Better Online Ticket Sales (BOTS) Act, signed into law on December 14, 2016. The BOTS Act empowers the FTC to protect consumers by making the use of ticketing bots that circumvent security measures used by ticketing websites an “unfair or deceptive” act or practice that is subject to enforcement action. The BOTS Act gives the power back to the music creators, allowing fans to see their favorite artists without paying exorbitant prices to middlemen who contribute nothing to the show-going experience.

Artists should have the ability to sell tickets to fans in the manner that they choose. Safeguarding this principle is essential to their creative freedom and their livelihoods. The Academy urges the FTC to fully utilize its new authority under the BOTS Act to pursue bad actors and restore integrity to the concert-going experience. Thank you for your consideration.

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Recording Academy