

Survey of NAMT Members' COVID-19-related cancellations, refunds and exchanges, as of August 2020

# of Survey Responses	44
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Number of theatres in season when shutdown started	37
Number of theatres with subscriptions/sales open for an upcoming season when shutdown started	33

Percentage of patrons who requested...	Average	Median	High	Low
Credit or tickets automatically rolled over into the next or postponed season	40%	30%	99%	0%
Refund	17%	15%	71%	0%
Ticket/subscription cost converted to a donation	22%	14%	90%	0%
Haven't answered yet	16%	3%	98%	0%
Other	6%	0%	100%	0%

"Other" responses and comments

17% kept their tickets to a virtual performance.
Credit for a future production (but not automatically applied)
In our correspondence to patrons, we stated that they are free to not respond and just leave the ticket funds as a donation. And that if we haven't heard from them at all that we will begin processing these donations for tax receipts on 9/1/2020.
Of the 51% On Account balances we turned 10% in Gift Certificates
Of those 73% that donated, only 13% did so "actively" - the remainder chose the option we gave them of "no response by June 30 equals a donation, thank you!"
Our patrons were given three options: 1. To donate this year's season tickets to ensure and help us get to our next season. They will receive a renewal form for the exact same seats and price they paid for 2020. 2. Convert the money they paid this year to a membership. Where they will have access to all the online content and special events we are creating for online platforms. When in person events are permitted they will have access to discounts and/or free tickets. They will also receive a renewal form in the fall for the 2021 season for the exact same seats and price they paid this year. 3. Transfer your seats/payment over to the 2021 season.
The above percentages are just for the postponement of our 20/21 season, which was announced 7/27/20. See notes at the end of the survey for responses to cancellations from the 19/20 season that began in March 2020. We made clear that a lack of response from patrons means that we will retain their funds as credit toward future programming, so some of the non-respondents are likely happy with that and so don't feel the need to give us specific directions.
Those who did not respond automatically opted into a rollover for next season.
Tickets were not yet on sale for our next production. We don't do subscriptions since we change venues between shows and are not in the same building each time.
We offered Gift Certificate for the full value of their ticket purchase. We also issued Gift Certificates to any other patrons who we were not able to reach.

# of theatres that cancelled performances beginning in...		
March 2020	0	
April	7	
May	0	
June	5	
July	1	
August	1	
September	0	
October	0	
November	0	
December	0	

# of theatres that cancelled performances ending in...		
April 2020	1	
May	1	
June	6	
July	2	
August	8	
September	4	
October	1	
November	4	
December	8	
January 2021	1	
February	1	
March	2	
April	0	
May	1	
June	2	

# of theatres that offered rescheduled performances starting in...		
August 2020	1	
September	1	
October	2	
November	1	
December	2	
January 2021	2	
February	3	
March	3	
April	1	
May	0	
June	4	
July	0	
August	2	
didn't specify time	10	
didn't give option to rebook	10	

# of theatres that offered rescheduled performances ending in...		
November 2020	1	
December	0	
January 2021	0	
February	0	
March	0	
April	0	
May	0	
June	2	
July	0	
August	6	
September	1	
October	2	
November	0	
December	8	
January 2022	0	
February	0	
March	1	
April	0	
May	0	
June	2	
don't know	2	

Is there anything else you'd like to share about how you communicated with your patrons about closure and refund/donation/credit requests?

Communicated via e-blasts, individual e-mails, and individual phone calls.

Direct mail informed our subscribers that the remainder of the season was postponed for one year. They will be reticketed with new dates.

emails, robocalls, first class direct mail and personal phone calls.

For postponing our 20/21 season (with the % responses above), our default behavior for non-respondents will be to retain their money as credit for future events. In March 2020 when we had to cancel the remainder of our 19/20 season (through June 2020), our lost ticket revenue was ultimately split between 3% refunds, 31% credits, and 65% donations. For those 19/20 season shows, our default for non-responders was to convert their tickets to donations at the end of the fiscal year, though we still saw a higher donation rate in the spring and lower refund requests even taking that into account.

I did receive about 100 letters from people who did not let us keep their money explaining fixed income ...disability...lost job etc etc as a reason for not donating and that made us feel better about each of those individual rejections of our plea...

Most of our patrons are waiting for dates on when the postponed shows will be rescheduled and if any will be cancelled. Based on a general survey we did, it looks like the majority will keep the tickets and use them for the new dates.

We took the programming we were going to do live and converted it to virtual platforms. The first is a podcast of the workshop process of our new musical. The second will be a concert of original music about women from past and present. We had just finished a large production when the shutdown hit. So we were fortunate in that we had time and resources to switch things around without having to deal with patron refunds.

Of the patrons who have actually responded: the percentages are 24% Donate, 22% Refund, & 54% Credit. Because of our correspondence to patrons about not having to respond if they're leaving the funds as a donation, these numbers will shift dramatically after that. However, we have made committed to full flexibility after the 8/31 deadline and will honor any refund/credit requests after that date.

The same basic language and CTAs can be found here:
zachtheatre.org/healthandsafety

Options were not provided to our patrons. They could only have their tickets rolled into the postponed season. only .2% have been refunded at this time.

our communication with patrons was primarily through e-mail and personal letters. We asked patrons to either donate the value of their tickets or exchange them for a voucher to be used at a later date. We did add extra value to their voucher. Most patrons were happy with the voucher and plan to attend our festival in the future.

Personal video message from Artistic Director to patrons via e-blast and social media. Phone messages and mail. Many personal calls from staff.

This data is only for our musical which was running in March. We have postponed our season, but haven't canceled anything other than the March run.

We are a summer theatre so we have to cancel the whole season till next June when our space is available again. Fingers crossed, that we are back in operation next summer

we asked forgiveness for 3 plays out of our 5 play 19-20 season

We automatically returned an entire show to donation if they didn't reply by a certain time, and automatically turned 2 other shows into gift certificates for subscribers

We called each ticket holder to give them the options.

We changed both of the shows we were planning to do to online events in August and November. We had one small show we were going to do in August and we cancelled that. Tickets weren't on sale yet.

We communicated by email, phone and mail. We also gave people the option to use their credits for digital or live shows in the future or to make a donation at a future time. I am attaching the document we sent by mail. By email, we broke this up into a number of different emails over a few weeks.

We emailed an announcement (attached) of the postponement in April 2020 to Subscribers and advance single ticket buyers. The message was tweaked for each group. Followed by a postal letter to anyone without an email address on file. The letter simply stated that the season and shows were postponed to similar dates in the 2021 season. No refund was mentioned, and that their purchase would simply roll over. Out of appx. \$871K in revenue, only \$12K in refunds have been requested and issued.

We had two add on show for purchase as part of the season. We are fully refunding these tickets.

We have a no refund policy although we do offer refunds when subscribers move or pass away. It's not a hard rule we follow strictly. Everyone was emailed the information and asked to fill out the online form of what to do with their tickets. Those that didn't respond or have an email on file we sent a hard copy. We set a deadline date and sent reminder emails, robo calls, and texts. Those we didn't hear from by the deadline we automatically rolled their tickets over to 2021.

When I received questions/demands regarding refunds I made sure the patron understood that the majority of patrons chose option 3 where they could simply transfer their tickets to 2021 with what they paid this year. Most were happy with that option once explained.

We have converted our 20/21 ST holders from tickets to flexible vouchers for the season until we can produce again. They will be able to use these vouchers for the digital content we produce this season. Of our 20/21 ST holders, only 3% have requested a refund at this time.