



PRESS RELEASE

CONSUMERS CAN PAY NEARLY THREE TIMES MORE FOR THEATRE TICKETS BY NOT SHOPPING AROUND

Leading theatre ticket comparison website SeatChoice.com is urging theatre goers to shop around every time they book tickets in order to avoid an expensive night out.

Research by theatre ticket comparison website SeatChoice.com has found that some theatre goers could pay nearly **three times** as much for their tickets as the person they sit next to.

Ticket searches for a variety of West End productions revealed some substantial differences between the discounts offered by ticket agents and the booking fees they charge. And what makes it even more confusing for consumers is that whilst a ticket agent may have the very best deal for seats to one show they may not have any deals for another.

Blood Brothers is one of the West End's most popular long running shows with many different ticket agents offering seats for all the performances. Comparing the availability and pricing of seats to the evening performance on Wednesday 8th of July revealed a massive potential difference in what a consumer could pay to see the show in the same part of the theatre depending on which ticket agent they bought their tickets through.

When the research was carried out one agent had seats available in the stalls with a face value of £52.50 discounted to just £20.00 each and with no additional booking fees. The same seats in the stalls offered by another agent for the same performance were offered at the full face value of £52.50 each and there was a booking fee of £4.55 per ticket on top. The total cost for the two seats from the first agent was £40 where as the total cost with the second was £114.10, nearly three times as much.

Les Miserable is another West End favourite where discounts can sometimes be found if you know where to look. A search for seats to the evening performance on the 8th of July revealed £55.00 face value seats in the stalls discounted to £38.00 each. With no booking fees to add the total cost for two tickets was £78.00. However, another agent was offering stall seats for a face value of £54.25, there's no other discount and there was also a £6.25 booking fee to add for each ticket making a total of £121.00.

Even in instances where there was no difference in the face value of the tickets being sold and there were no discounts available some ticket agents were adding up to £27.00 in booking fees for a pair of seats.

For example, seats in the Royal Circle for Sister Act, which opened at the London Palladium earlier this month, cost £60.00 per ticket. Several ticket agents had good availability for these tickets and there was no difference in the prices being asked for them. However, there was a substantial price difference when the booking fees were added.

Whilst one agent didn't charge a booking fee for these seats, another charged a booking fee of £13.50 per ticket. In this instance, buying seats through the second agent without shopping around would have increased the cost of your night out by £27.00 or over 20%.

SeatChoice.com founder Robert Iles said: "The world of theatre ticketing can be a confusing and complicated place with consumers struggling to find the seats they want. The danger is, unless you have the time to search around multiple agents to find out who has the tickets that you want, what discounts are available and what fees would be charged then you could easily end up paying much more than you need to. Consumer confusion is increased because there's no single ticket agent offering the best deals and lowest booking fees for all shows. A ticket agent offering a cracking deal for one show may be the most expensive for another so even if you found a bargain with one ticket agent the last time you went to the theatre that same agent may be the most expensive for the next show you see. It's vital consumers shop around each and every time they book seats in order to avoid paying more than they have to."

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If you would like to link to our website please use <http://www.seatchoice.com>

Notes to editors:

Individual ticket searches carried out on the 17th June 2009

Covering all genres and the whole of the UK, SeatChoice.com provides links to tickets, meal deals and theatre breaks from a wide range of reputable suppliers. In addition to providing links, SeatChoice.com conducts real-time searches of price and availability for many shows.

Over thirteen million theatre tickets are sold each year in London alone with increasing numbers of people choosing to buy online. However, using search engines often returns overwhelming and confusing results.

SeatChoice.com conducts real-time searches of theatre box offices and over 20 ticket outlets including leading ticket agents such as Encore, Ticketmaster and Keith Prowse as well as specialist theatre break agents and secondary ticket suppliers such as Seatwave and Viagogo.

SeatChoice.com displays the ticket face value, the available discount, any applicable booking fees and the total cost of the tickets for each ticket supplier as well as displaying which suppliers don't have tickets for that performance.