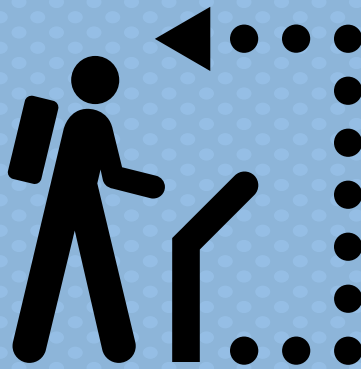


# BAM! Complete Guide to North American Touring

by Robert Baird



#26

A guide for artists,  
agents, and presenters

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# Introduction

Touring is complicated and requires a commitment of time and energy on the part of the artist and/or all of the members of an artistic group. Being on the road away from home can be difficult, especially for artists with families not travelling with them. And, too, touring can challenge anyone, as unexpected problems arise and need to be dealt with on the fly, from vehicle breakdown to lost hotel reservations, to bookings cancelled and more. But touring can also be extremely rewarding and satisfying as performances draw fans, CDs sell well, and audiences are truly appreciative of your artistry. This guide will take you through the touring process from Why Tour? to Post-Tour follow-up. Thanks to Debbie Hutchins and Marcus Lundgren for educating me in some of the intricacies of touring. See you on the road again.

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## **Why Tour?**

There are many reasons why an artist might want to leave home and tour throughout North America:

1. To create additional performing opportunities
2. To introduce and refine old and new material
3. To sell CDs
4. To meet fans and expand a fan base
5. To make new connections
6. To promote a particular cultural art form
7. To improve performance
8. To develop a career

## **What to Tour**

A tour has to be economically feasible for the artist/group and often may require a number of different offerings, depending upon the fee, venue size, location, etc. A smaller version of a show or fewer personnel in the group for touring can make all the difference. Budget considerations include travel costs, accommodation costs, per diem costs, equipment costs and for some artists, wardrobe and set transportation costs. If you can offer the same show with different sizing and costing, it can make the show more attractive to a wider variety of presenters.

## **When to Tour**

Some tours are best arranged for peak performance periods for certain venues (September to December; February to May) or for summer festivals (June to August) or for holiday shows

(December). You must take into consideration the factor of weather as well. Canada from November through April can be a difficult country to traverse, given winter conditions. Geographical features can affect your tour routing when roads cross mountain ranges or become impassable during storm conditions.

### **Where to Tour**

The tour might be restricted to a certain geographical area (province or state; region or country). Again, budget considerations may make touring closer to home at the beginning more feasible. Wherever you tour, you have to get there and back, a factor of distance and time.

### **How Long to Tour**

Some artists restrict their time away from their home base and will only tour in 2-week segments with time in between back home. Being on the road without the comforts of home and family is difficult for anyone and must be taken into consideration.

### **Types of Tours**

Run-out – This is usually a one-day or one-night tour for a performance relatively near your home base. Often, an artist will have a special run-out fee.

Residency – A Residency is a multi-day or week booking where the artist performs a variety of concerts (evening concerts, school shows, etc.) usually coupled with other activities (master classes, lectures, etc.)

Tour – A series of bookings for a specified time period over a selected geographical area. Tours are usually organized with anchor dates which supply the best fees and routing with added main and support dates.

Obviously, getting these dates is a function of the kind of promotion the artist/group does. Attendance at trade shows, showcasing, block-booking success, promotional mailings, referrals from satisfied clients of past bookings, etc. Sometimes, a tour will fall into your lap because the bookings align, and sometimes you have to work really hard to organize a tour from one initial booking. Knowing the people in the industry from attendance at trade fairs or visiting venues is a key factor and knowing who to approach for additional bookings (contacts at a variety of venues from performing arts centers to clubs, house concerts, festivals, etc.) will enable the artist/group to plan a successful tour.

## **Planning a Tour**

### **Confirming Dates**

A tour usually begins with one date and, if possible, this should be an anchor date. An anchor date is one in which the presenter pays the full fee (or close to it) and determines the geographic area of the tour. It ensures a good foundation for the tour budget and allows some flexibility in accepting lower fees where necessary for secondary or support bookings. Once the anchor date or dates are confirmed, the planning for additional main dates and support dates can be organized by considering the most feasible touring route, not only to reach the

anchor date but to tour on from it. A working knowledge of what venues are available in what cities can inform all tour routings. Once you have exhausted the possibilities for anchor and additional main dates, you can proceed to try to get bookings which will at least cover or partially cover your costs for travel, accommodation and food. These bookings would include gigs in clubs for lower fees, gigs where you negotiate a split deal or percentage agreement, house concerts, etc. In tour planning, you may run into venues which have radius clauses in their contracts. These clauses set a distance and a time frame restricting artists from performing or promoting other performances. If this creates a conflict with another booking, you will simply have to choose one over the other.

### **Preparing for a tour itinerary**

Once the broad outlines of the tour have been confirmed (venues, dates, times) then detailed planning begins. Like many complex activities, a complete plan is a necessity.

### **Scheduling**

One consideration in your planning should be the maximum number of travel hours you will do each day, whether driving or flying. Travelling is exhausting and, especially if the group is driving itself from place to place, can be counter-productive. Decide on who will drive (assign multiple drivers where possible to divide up the trip) and how long the drive will be per day. Allow time for rest and meal breaks and even, where possible, leisure or sight-seeing options. In terms of the whole tour, allow days off so that the group can rest at some point(s) on a tour. Finally, consider weather conditions when planning travel – roads in Northern climes can be treacherous and require proper tires and allowances for slower travel times.



## **Transportation**

Modes of transportation have to be considered as well. Will the group fly, travel by car or bus or go by train? How will they get to the airport? How will they get around in the tour city? Will they drive themselves or have a driver? Who will provide the vehicle – one of the group, a rental vehicle, or will a driver be hired with a vehicle suitable to the tour? You can utilize a GPS system but remember that it may not be completely accurate and must be programmed properly (it may take you out the way to avoid tolls if that option is selected, for example). There may be new subdivisions or road closures that will not be reflected in GPS data. It's a good idea to carry an up-to-date, good, old-fashioned paper road map just in case. Note that CAA/AAA membership offers road assistance programs and travel discounts.

## **Booking Flights**

A good travel agent who knows your particular requirements is an invaluable asset to tour planning. Work with the travel agent to find the best deals on flights, routing, seat sales, etc. Let the travel agent know your preferences for seating, location in the airplane, idiosyncrasies of all travelers, etc.

Know what the baggage policies are for each flight in terms of carry-on and checked baggage.

If you'd rather book your own flights, be sure you understand what you are booking, layover times, ease of connections, cost of flights (the internet provides many sites which compare flight costs) and airport layout/details. Always utilize frequent flyer programs to accumulate points for savings on future flights.

If you are flying with instruments, you need to check out the airline musical instrument policies:

And do keep an eye on weather conditions affecting ground travel and flights.

## **Accommodation**

What kind of accommodation is affordable and suitable when travelling? Some groups will enjoy Air BNBs or traditional Beds and Breakfast, while other groups will need to have hotel accommodation of a certain level. Consider what is suitable for the group and what is convenient to the venue. Some accommodation is within walking distance of a venue and may be more convenient for the group.

Investigate the possibility of obtaining a complimentary breakfast with the room at the accommodation but be sure that the group will find the breakfast choices suitable. A continental breakfast may simply not provide enough nourishment for the performing artists.

Accommodation can be booked through a travel agent or you can do it yourself, again, utilizing the internet to find suitable accommodation at the best price.

Consider university/college campuses for off-season accommodation possibilities.

Make sure that the accommodation is suitable to your requirements in terms of having an elevator, room service, amenities such as microwave, refrigerator, restaurant, etc.

Always confirm your accommodation in advance with a credit card.

If your accommodation has been arranged by the venue, be sure you know in whose name the reservations were placed so there is no delay

in checking in. All members on tour should be aware of the checkout time and when they have to be on the road again.

## **Tour Itinerary**

The tour itinerary should contain the following:

Tour Dates

Tour Cities

Names and Complete Contact Information for:

Artists

Artists' family contact in case of emergency

Support personnel – Technical/Publicity/Travel Agency

Agency/ Responsible Agent

Day by Day Breakdown of Tour including:

Day, Date

Time for each travel item

Travel Arrangements including:

Vehicle Detail – size of vehicle, seating arrangement, length of trip, planned stops, where to meet to board vehicle or get picked up, etc.

Flight Details – airline, flight number, booking reference airport terminal, boarding time, luggage restrictions, arrival time

Ground Transportation – type of transportation, contact information for company and driver, where to board, destination, time to destination, etc.

Accommodation including:

Name, address and phone number of hotel or other Accommodation

Check-in date and time; check-out date and time

Number and type of rooms booked

Booking Confirmation Number(s)

Breakfast included or recommendation for nearby  
affordable restaurants

Notes – any explanatory notes to inform tour participants

Venue Details including:

Location of venue – complete address

Venue Contacts information – administration office,  
Box office, venue manager, stage manager,  
Technical director, arrival contact, etc.

Venue capacity; venue website

Comp tickets – how many available

Presenter details (if different from venue)

Doors open time

Performance time

Specific instructions on entering venue – stage door,

Specific instructions re parking

Specific instructions re loading dock

Location of green room

Hospitality to be provided

Local points of interest (if practical)

## Sample Tour Itinerary Page:

Thursday 26 January 2017

***Pacific Time***

**COMPANY TO VENUE:**

**DOORS OPEN: 7:00 PM**

**PERFORMANCE: 7:30PM**

**RETURN HOTEL**

*Local transfers:* [Name of Artist] will walk from hotel to hall (3 minutes)

**Venue:** Capitol Theatre

19 South 3rd Street

Yakima, WA, 98901

Phone: 509-853- 8000

Fax: 509-575-6251

Box Office: 509-853-2787

Ticket Price: \$12- \$49

Venue Capacity: 1,500

Website: <https://capitoltheatre.org/>

**Merchandise Commission:** 10%, Karen Elizondo, 509-853-8000, [Karen@capitoltheatre.org](mailto:Karen@capitoltheatre.org)

**Arrival Contact:** Sara Bredwell, 509-307-5699, [Sara@capitoltheatre.org](mailto:Sara@capitoltheatre.org)

**Hospitality Contact:** Charlie Robin, 509-853-8000, [charlie@capitoltheatre.org](mailto:charlie@capitoltheatre.org)

**Technical/Backstage Contact:** Sara Bredwell (see above)

**Stage Door/Loading Dock:** Sara Bredwell (see above)

**Transport Contact:** N/A

**For Purchase Tickets Available:** 12

**Comp Tickets Available:** 12

**Presenter:** Capitol Theatre

19 South 3rd Street

Yakima, WA, 98901

Executive Contact: Charlie Robin

Phone: 509-853- 8000

Fax: 509-575-6251

Email: charlie@capitoltheatre.org

**AFTER PERFORMANCE**

*Local transfers:* [Name of Artist] will walk from hall to hotel (3 minutes)

**Hotel:**

Hilton Garden Inn

401 E. Yakima Avenue

Yakima, WA 98901

Phone: 509-454-1111

Fax: 509-248-3344

3 Nights

Check in: Jan. 24th, check out: Jan 27th

7 singles, 7 doubles

Breakfast: Not included but onsite restaurant

Booked by Presenter (paying 1 night)

# Tour Information Summary

In addition to the complete daily itinerary, you should have a complete Tour Information Summary for each venue on the tour:

	Detail	Comments
DATE OF SHOW		
VENUE		
ADDRESS		
CITY / STATE / ZIP CODE		
COUNTRY		
Nearest Major Intersection		
Capacity		
# of Balconies:		
Type of Venue / Show		
Venue Website		
VENUE PHONE #		
VENUE BACKSTAGE #		
CONTACTS:		
Promoter		
NAME		
PHONE#		
Email		
Cell		
Venue House Manager		
Name:		
PHONE#		
Email		
Cell		
Venue Hospitality Coordinator		
Name:		
PHONE#		
Email		
Cell		
Venue Hotel Coordinator		
Name:		
PHONE#		
Email		
Cell		
Venue Merch Coordinator		

Name:		
PHONE#		
Email		
Cell		
VENUE DAY OF SHOW VENUE CONTACT CELL		
VENUE DAY OF SHOW TECH CONTACT CELL		
ARTIST CONTACT:		
Monitor Tech / Tour Manager		
NAME		
Email:		
Cell:		
Number of Artist Adults		
Number of Artist Tech		
Number of Artist Children		
TOTAL # OF PEOPLE IN PARTY		
VENUE PARKING		
Tour Bus Parking:		
Shore Power:		
Van parking		
LOCATION OF PARKING		
Load in Location:		
Push		
Stairs		
Loaders		
Venue provides runner?		
Runner vehicle size required:		
TRAVEL PLANS:		
SCHEDULE		
Piano Tuning		
PA load in		
Backline Load in		
Band arrive on site		
Artist catered Lunch at Venue?		
<b>Band Load-in</b>		
Artist catered dinner at Venue?		
Artist Sound Check		
Opener Sound Check		



Piano Tuning Touch Up		
Dark		
Doors to Lobby		
Doors to Theatre (seating)		
<b>SHOW</b>		
SHOW		
Intermission Length:		
CURFEW:		
Load Out:		
After Show:		
<b>CATERING</b>		
<b>LUNCH</b>		
Catered Lunch at venue for ? people:		
Artist Band and crew: TOTAL		
Venue rep responsible for lunch		
Venue rep ok'd Lunch is Allergen-FREE?		
Location of Lunch		
Beer / Wine provided?		
LUNCH MENU		
<b>DINNER</b>		
Catered Dinner at venue for ? people		
Artist Band and crew TOTAL		
Venue Rep responsible for dinner		
Catering Company:		
Catering Company Contact:		
Venue ok's Dinner is Allergen-FREE?		
Location of Dinner		
DINNER MENU		

After Show Food:		
<b>HOTEL INFO (Venue provided)</b>		
Night(s) of Hotel stay:		
Name of Hotel		
Address		
City / State / Zip / Postal Code		
Phone#		
Website		
Number of Rooms		
Who booked rooms:		
POOL		
GYM		
LAUNDRY		
WIFI		
RESTAURANT		
Parking? Tour Bus Parking?		
Distance to Venue:		
NOTES		
<b>Recommended HOTEL INFO</b>		
Night(s) of Hotel stay:		
Name of Hotel		
Address		
City / State / Zip / Postal Code		
Phone#		
Website		
Number of Rooms		
Who booked rooms:		
POOL		
GYM		
LAUNDRY		
WIFI		

RESTAURANT		
Parking? Tour Bus Parking?		
Distance to Venue:		
NOTES		
<b>COMMUNITY INFO</b>		
Nearest Airport		
Distance to Venue		
Courtesy vehicle to hotels?		
Local Physician		
Local Hospital		
Walk-in Clinic		
Nearest Laundromat		
Drycleaner		
Which bank does venue use?		
Bank Contact Name		
PHONE#		
<b>VENUE INFO</b>		
# of dressing rooms		
Kids room required?		
Venue showers?		
Venue to provide iron and ironing board?		
Laundry facilities at venue?		
Venue to provide show towels?		
Wifi at venue		
Guest List:		
Venue rep who agreed to guest list:		
Latecomer Seating		
Artist audience photos policy:		
<b>MERCH INFO</b>		
Venue provides merch rep?		
Venue provides merch table?		
Venue rep who confirmed Merch rep:		
Merch %		
Merch Location		

Merch count in time:		
Post show signing?		
When and how will merch arrive?		
<b>VENUE TECHNICAL INFORMATION</b>		
Was venue sent artist tech rider?		
House TD:		
Email		
Cell		
House Head Audio:		
House Head LX (Lighting Operator)		
Audio is house PA or rented?		
Rental Co Info: Name		
Rental Co Email		
Day of Show Contact: Name		
Email		
Artist FOH TECH:		
Artist MONITOR TECH:		
Artist Lighting Operator:		
Name of House LD:		
Artist Follow Spot Operators:		
Type of Spots:		
Location of Spots:		
Venue provides Loaders for load in and Out?		
VIDEO in use?		
Recording in use?		
Artist microphones equipment		
Venue microphones required		
Stage Size:		
Drum Riser being provided		
Other risers being provided		
Stage covering provided		
Artist providing piano		
<b>AUDIO INFORMATION</b>		
PA		
FLOWN?		
CLUSTER		
DELAY		
BALCONY FEEDS		
FRONT FILL		

AMPS		
SUBS		
FOH Audio console		
Location of FOH Board		
Comps		
Gates		
Reverbs		
Graphic EQs		
SHOW FILE SENT?		
System Tuning		
Monitor Audio Console		
Location of Monitor Board		
Comps		
Gates		
Reverbs		
Graphic EQs		
SHOW FILE SENT?		
# of wedges provided:		
# of wireless in-ear monitor systems:		
type of combiner:		
in-ear pieces "Buds"		
# of additional wireless mic systems:		
type of combiner:		
? packs with 1/4" pick ups		
? packs with clip on lav mics:		
Batteries		
Wired mics Venue provides:		
DB Level		
Production Buy-Out		
Venue provides all stage xlr, sub snakes stage AC, mic stands etc		
<b>BACKLINE</b>		
Who is providing this?		
MAKE OF DRUM KIT		
PLEXI GLASS		
DRUM CARPET		
KICK SIZE		
double kick pedal		
2 snares (1 spare)		
TOMS		

HARDWARE		
CYMBALS #crash; size crash		
RIDE CYMBAL		
Hi Hat cymbals		
DRUM SEAT		
BASS HEAD		
BASS AMP		
ACOUSTIC PIANO:		
FX KEYBOARD w/ pedal		
FX Keyboard stand (use same seat as keys)		
ELECTRONIC KEYBOARD w/ pedal		
KEYBOARD STAND and SEAT		
All required cabling		
GUITAR STANDS		
Instruments Artists will bring:		

## Dealing with finances

The decision must be made for every tour as to how things will be paid for – gas, meals, hotels, etc. Will it be a personal credit card, a company card, etc.? How will receipts be retained and organized? How much cash will be needed on the road and who will be in charge of it? Who will accept fee payments from venues and what is the procedure for dealing with these payments? Payments may have to be deposited in a bank account and that may present problems while on tour. All of these things need to be decided in advance. A tour budget should be set up on a spreadsheet and adjusted as necessary:

## Sample Tour Budget

**[Insert Tour Budget PDF]**

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	<b>INCOME</b>					
2		Date/Venue	Date/Venue	Date/Venue	Date/Venue	Date/Venue
3	Fee					
4	Buyouts					
5	Other Income					
6	Grants					
7	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>					
8						
9	Income Allocation					
10	Name/Amount					
11						
12	<b>NET INCOME</b>					
13						
14	<b>EXPENSES</b>					
15						
16	Commission					
17	Legal Fees					
18	Visa Costs					
19	Insurance					
20	<b>TOTAL ADMIN</b>					
21						
22	Airfare					
23	Baggage Fees					
24	<b>TOTAL AIR</b>					
25						
26	Car Rental					
27	Truck Rental					
28	Taxi/Uber					
29	Gas					
30	Tolls					
31	<b>TOTAL GROUND</b>					
32						
33	Hotels					
34	<b>TOTAL ACCOMM</b>					
35						
36	Miscellaneous					
37	Item					
38	Item					
39	Item					
40	Item					
41	Item					
42	<b>TOTAL MISC.</b>					
43						
44	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>					
45						
46						
47	<b>NET PROFIT</b>					

## **The Technical Side of Touring**

Please refer to the BAM! Complete Guide to Contract Riders #25 for information on Hospitality and Technical Riders

Please refer to the BAM! Complete Guide to Contracts #7 for sample General Contract Rider, Technical Rider, Hospitality Rider and Contact Information Forms.

### **Making the most of a tour**

Artists on tour have a wonderful opportunity to make the most of the tour by inviting other presenters in the area to attend their performance with a view to obtaining future bookings. This might be a good use for the complimentary tickets which each venue normally supplies to the performing artist. Take advantage of this and promote your work for as many future booking possibilities as you can

### **Post-Tour Follow-up**

Once the tour is over, it's a good idea to review what went well and what went wrong and plan solutions for better touring in future. It's a good idea to contact the tour venues and confirm their satisfaction (or not) with how the tour went in their venue. A polite thank you in appreciation is appropriate and may help in repeat bookings. You may also need to deal with any outstanding financial details, and any tax matters connected with the tour.



Check out the other titles in the

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All Guides are or will be available for download  
from the BAM! Baird Artists Management  
Consulting website: [www.bairdartists.com](http://www.bairdartists.com)

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Robert Baird, President of Baird Artists Management, is now available for consultation and advice regarding Canadian and U.S. regulations and information for performers, agents/managers and performing arts venues. Mr. Baird has been in the performing arts for over fifty years and has had distinguished careers in education, publishing and musical theatre. He served on the Board of Directors (2008-2010) and was President (2011-2013) of the North American Performing Arts Managers and Agents (NAPAMA). He was Treasurer and Vice-President of Festivals and Events Ontario (FEO) and served on that Board on various committees (2010-2013). Mr. Baird received the Arts Northwest Coyote Award and the Performing Arts Exchange Mary Beth Treen Award in 2012. He is Chair of Team Agent Network (TAN) and APAP Showcase Coordinator.

Robert is a regular columnist in *International Musician: The Official Journal of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada* (Circulation 100,000+ Monthly) where he writes a monthly column entitled "Crossing Borders". The column focuses on what artists need to know to get into Canada or the United States. He also writes a monthly column entitled "Artist Manager's Toolkit" for *International Arts Manager*, based in London, England.

Take advantage of Robert's expertise, knowledge and guidance with:

- Visa Requirements for Canada**
- Work Permits for Canada**
- Crossing the Canadian Border**
- Bringing Merchandise into Canada or the United States**
- R-105 Withholding Waiver for Canada**
- Canadian Taxation Requirements**
- Canadian Incorporation**
- O-1 and P-1 Visa Applications for U.S. Entry**
- P-2 Visa AFM Applications for U.S. Entry**
- Canadian and American Venue Contacts**
- Canadian and American Conferences**
- Contracts and Riders**

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