



IS TAYLOR SWIFT TOO BIG TO TOUR?

HOW "THE ERAS TOUR" TICKETMASTER FIASCO SPEAKS TO HER UNMATCHED LEVEL OF POP STARDOM

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Taylor Swift needs no introduction. She is arguably the biggest pop star of this generation, with over 82 million monthly listeners on Spotify. After releasing *Midnights*, her 10th studio album that shattered records and held every spot on the Billboard Top 10, Swift announced she was embarking on "The Eras Tour."

"The Eras Tour" is Swift's first tour in five years — in that period of time, she's kept herself quite busy, releasing four new albums and two re-recordings of old ones. At this point in her career, Swift has made music for everyone. Delving into country, pop, and indie, she is an artist that constantly reinvents herself and enters new "eras."

With this tour, fans will have the opportunity to hear their favorite songs from 2006 to 2022, and everywhere in between. The anticipation for this tour is higher than any in recorded history.

That is why "The Eras Tour" has caused absolute and utter chaos.

Yeah, that's right. The process of buying tickets for this tour has left millions of people in shambles, even getting the attention of politicians in a public effort to end the monopoly Ticketmaster has over event sales.



Here's the timeline of events:

On November 1, Taylor Swift announced "The Eras Tour." Here, she revealed the first leg of the tour would be in the U.S., with the international leg being announced at a later date. Originally, the tour had 27 shows across 20 stadiums.

Then, she announced that she would be adding 8 more shows to the lineup on November 4.

But Swift wasn't done. The demonstrated interest in this tour was simply too large. On the 11th, she added 17 more dates to the tour. This is where the schedule stands now, with 52 shows from March to August.

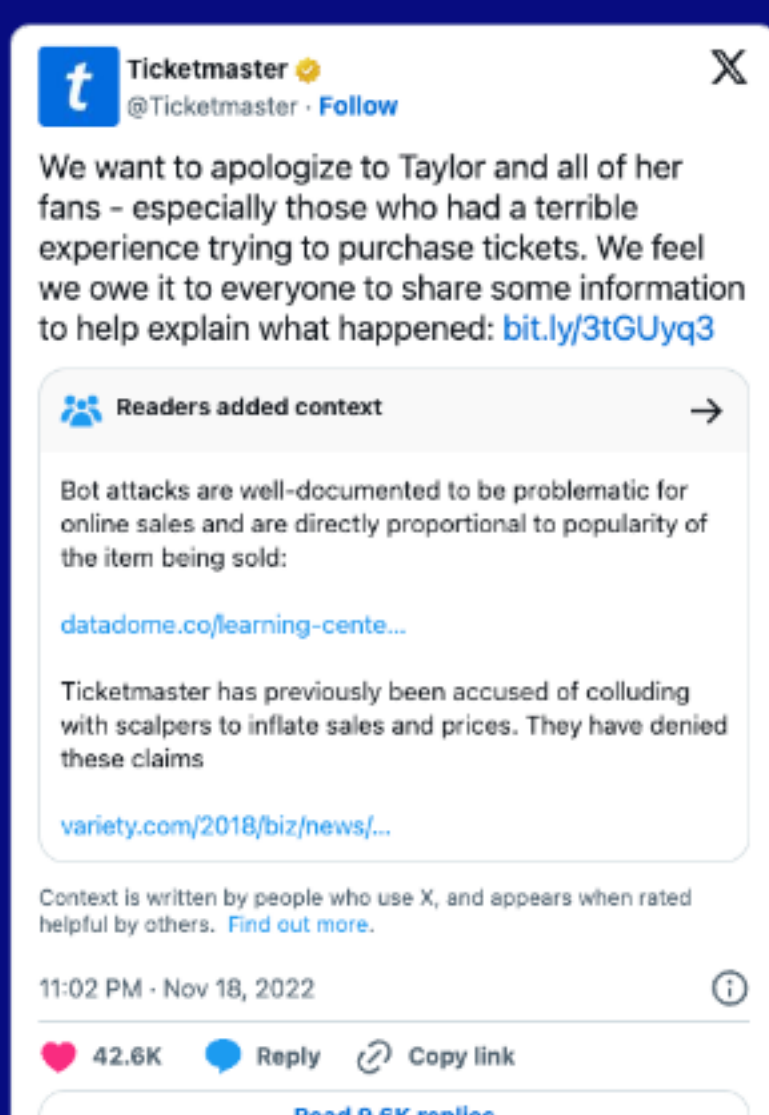
Fans had the opportunity to sign up for Verified Fan Presale through Ticketmaster. They would receive emails on November 14 alerting them if they were accepted for presale or moved to the waitlist. Ticketmaster later revealed 3.5 million fans signed up for this presale, the most in Ticketmaster history. Out of this, 2 million were sent to the waiting list while 1.5 million were given presale.

For context, the "Reputation Tour," which broke the record for gross ticket sales in North America, sold 2.8 million tickets. 700,000 more fans simply showed interest in the "Eras Tour" than those who attended her previous one.

November 15 was the big day: "The Eras Tour" presale. Fans logged on at 10am for what would become, for some, hours of attempting to score tickets. The site crashed repeatedly and spat out error messages. Some who were given presale didn't even get to buy tickets.

This all-day process ended up in over 2 million tickets bought for this tour, the most ever sold for an artist in a single day.

This fiasco had fans up in arms about their failures or successes to see Swift live. So much so, that both Ticketmaster and Swift herself responded to the controversy.



Ticketmaster released a statement where they apologized to both Swift and her fans, "especially those who had a terrible experience trying to purchase tickets."

Then, they shared some information on what happened. They explained that, historically, only 40% of invited fans show up to buy tickets, purchasing an average of 3 tickets each. This was not the case for "The Eras Tour," and Ticketmaster had 3.5 billion total system requests, which was four times as much as their previous peak.

They reiterated how unprecedented this sale was, saying that an onsale has never garnered this much traffic.

Swift's statement was a little more driven.

"It's truly amazing that 2.4 million people got tickets, but it really pisses me off that a lot of them feel like they went through several bear attacks to get them," Swift wrote.

She added that her team had asked Ticketmaster multiple times if they could handle this demand, and were assured they could. They could not.

While the Capital One presale still occurred the next day, the general presale scheduled for the 18th was canceled.

This fiasco raises the question: if the largest ticketing company was unable to handle the demand for Taylor Swift's tour, can anyone? Or is she just too big to tour?

Let's take a look at the data.

Based on information from her five headlining concert tours that took place before "The Eras Tour," Swift was named the most successful female touring act of the 2010s decade. This tour has only expanded that narrative.

In Ticketmaster's statement, they said "Taylor would need to perform over 900 stadium shows (almost 20x the number of shows she is doing)...that's a stadium show every single night for the next 2.5 years." According to this data, there would be at the very least, 54 million attendees across these 900 shows.

10 most highly attended tours of all time

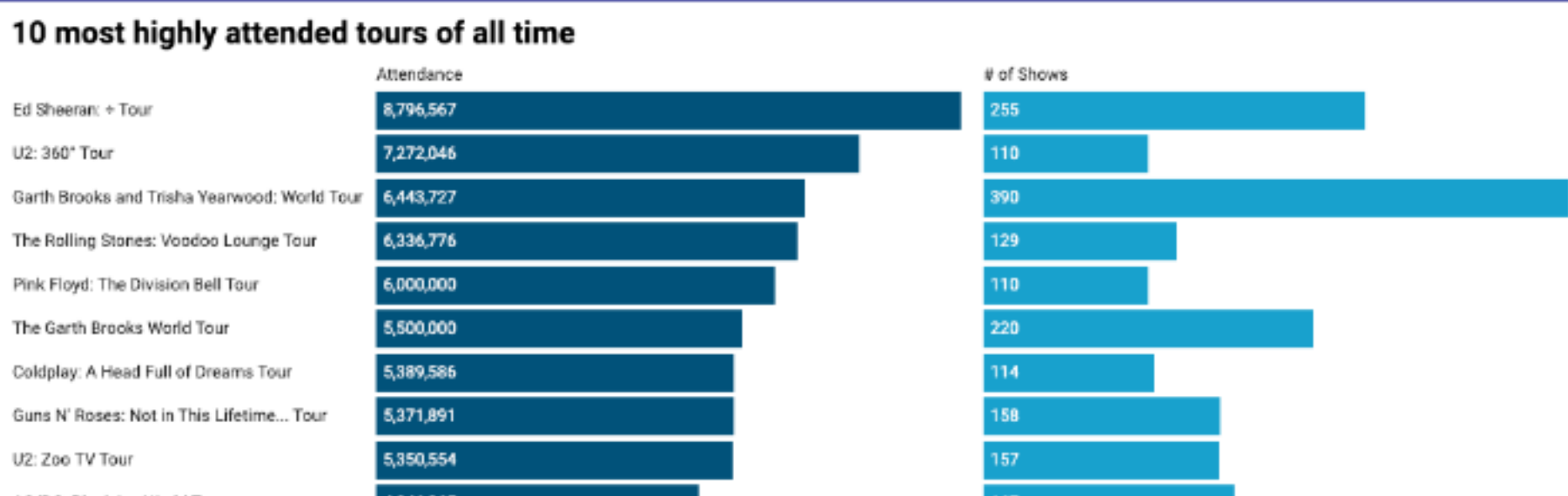


Chart: Jenna Bloom • Source: Wikipedia • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

The number of seats eligible to be sold for the U.S. leg of "The Eras Tour" is 3.7 million. As shown in the chart above, bands and artists have well exceeded that number. The U.S. leg alone would not even come close to making this chart. So, what makes Swift different?

Well, the sheer level of interest in seeing her outdoes the six months she plans to perform in America. As Ticketmaster said, she would need to perform 20 times the amount of shows she's currently doing to match her interest levels. For arguably the number one pop artist right now, 3.7 million seats is nowhere close to enough to fit her fanbase.

For context, Swift has over 81 million monthly listeners on Spotify. The seats available for "The Eras Tour" are 4.5 percent of that number. That means over 95 percent of her monthly listeners stood no chance at seeing her live.

Seat availability for Swift's "Eras Tour" in the U.S.

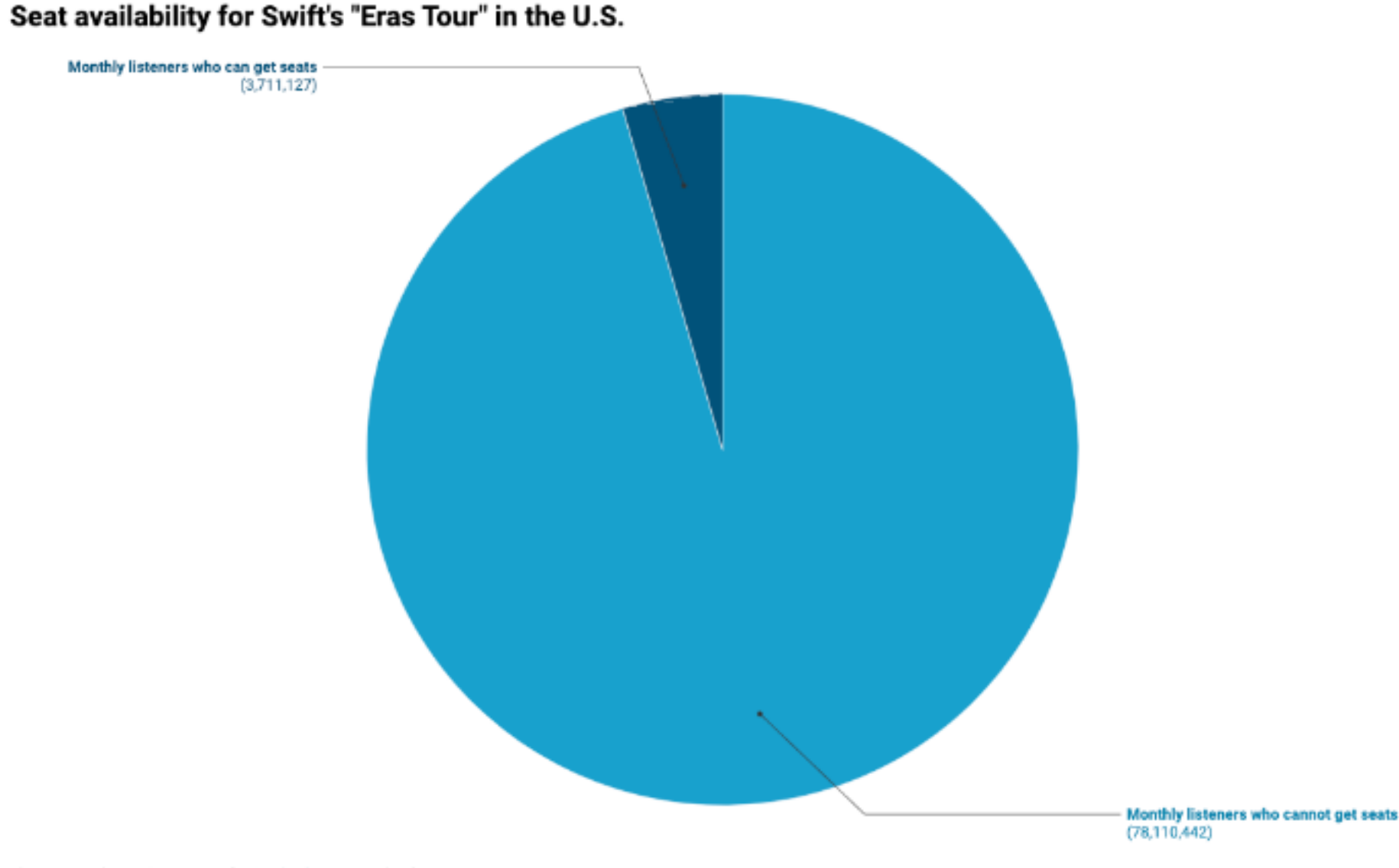


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Pollstar predicts "The Eras Tour" to reach over a billion dollars in total gross, which would outdo every tour in history.

In a time of digital ticket sales, it's hard to predict what would happen if Swift were to grow even bigger and attempt another tour. If the biggest online ticketing company couldn't handle the rush of fans trying to see her, could anyone? Even so, hundreds of thousands (if not millions) of fans are destined to be left disappointed after failing to purchase seats.

Only time will tell the fate of Swift's live performances, but one thing is certain: there is no precedent for the way she has altered today's live music scene.