

THE SYRACUSE ORCHESTRA

Group Sales Representative (Seasonal)

Onboarding & Work Plan · FY2026–27 Season

Overview & Engagement Purpose

The Syracuse Orchestra is engaging a Group Sales Representative to generate incremental group ticket revenue for the 2026–27 concert season. The goal is to sell an average of 50 paid group tickets for each of the 6 Masterworks and 6 Pops concerts through proactive outreach to businesses, community organizations, nonprofits, schools, and social groups across the greater Syracuse area. The goal is to sell 600 tickets to groups for the season. It is understood that Casual, Kids, and Candlelight concerts may also be attractive to groups, but Masterworks and Pops should be the priority for group sales.

This document outlines the representative's onboarding experience, ongoing work structure, key responsibilities, success metrics, and tools. It is designed to be a living reference throughout the engagement.

Season Goal

~50 group tickets per concert · Minimum group size: 8 tickets · \$4,000 base pay + 15% commission on paid tickets from the 601st ticket onward (stretch goal, campaign-wide)

Engagement Structure

Representative Status & Compensation

The Group Sales Representative is engaged as a temporary, seasonal employee. Compensation consists of a flat base pay amount plus a performance commission on paid tickets above a campaign threshold, both paid through standard payroll.

- Base pay: \$4,000 flat, paid for the full 12-week campaign regardless of ticket volume. Paid bi-weekly for the 12 weeks of the engagement through standard payroll according to The Syracuse Orchestra's payroll schedule.
- Performance commission: this is a stretch-goal bonus, not part of the base 600-ticket season target. The representative earns 15% of the per-ticket price paid for every paid group ticket sold from the 601st ticket onward across the campaign — that is, only once the 600-ticket season goal has been fully met and exceeded. The commission applies to

the ticket face value actually paid including any fees paid (net of any group discounts); complimentary tickets do not count toward the threshold or the commission base.

- Commission payments: calculated monthly based on confirmed paid ticket counts reported from PatronManager; payment made on the next possible payroll cycle.
- Representative is responsible for their own computer and scheduling.

Primary TSO Contact

The representative reports to Brian Pope, Patron Services Manager, as their primary organizational contact. The Development Director (Riley Farnham) is a secondary resource for donor-adjacent prospect conversations and organizational context. For ticketing logistics and patron services support, the representative can rely on Brian Pope. The representative does not report to or coordinate through other front-of-house or box office staff.

Tools & Access

- PatronManager (CRM/ticketing): access to relevant account and group history records
- Shared Google Drive folder: prospect tracking sheet, concert info packets, sales collateral
- TSO group sales email alias (e.g., groups@syracuseorchestra.org) for outreach
- Complimentary tickets: up to 4 per concert for hosting or stewardship purposes (pre-approved)

Candidate Qualifications & Attributes

Given the self-directed, revenue-driven nature of this role, TSO should prioritize candidates who combine sales discipline with genuine comfort representing the organization in the community.

Required Qualifications

- Ability to speak to non-musicians about symphonic music, live concerts, and the specifics of concert programming
- Ability to learn to work in a CRM/ticketing systems and basic pipeline tracking or experience with project management software (PatronManager/Salesforce experience a plus)
- Demonstrated track record of meeting or exceeding outreach and revenue targets while working independently
- Strong written and verbal communication skills; comfortable pitching to corporate, nonprofit, education, and community decision-makers
- Ability to work independently with minimal day-to-day supervision, while maintaining a consistent reporting cadence
- Experience of sales, business development, membership, or fundraising experience preferred, ideally involving ticketed events, hospitality, or arts/nonprofit organizations
- Own computer and reliable internet access, per the terms of this engagement

Preferred Attributes

- Existing relationships or familiarity with the Syracuse-area business, nonprofit, education, or civic community

- Resilience and comfort with rejection; a persistent, positive approach to cold outreach
- Organized and detail-oriented, able to manage 25–35 concurrent prospect relationships across multiple concerts
- Collaborative mindset; comfortable coordinating logistics with box office and patron services staff
- Entrepreneurial, results-driven mentality suited to a commission-eligible, seasonal role

Onboarding: Weeks 1–4

Onboarding is structured across four weeks and designed to give the representative the organizational, artistic, and market context needed to sell confidently and authentically. Active selling begins in Week 5 and runs through Week 12.

WEEK 1	Orientation & Organizational Context
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Weeks 1–2

Day 1–2: TSO Foundations

- Orientation meeting with Brian Pope (Patron Services Manager) and Executive Director: mission, co-op ownership model, FY26–27 strategic priorities
- Overview of the season calendar, programming highlights, and target audience profiles
- Review of past group sales history in PatronManager — which concert types, organizations, and price points have performed
- Familiarization with Crouse Hinds Concert Theater, Inspiration Hall, St. Paul's Church, Most Holy Rosary layout, group seating blocks, and ticketing logistics

Day 3–4: The Product

- Review of FY26–27 concert descriptions, conductor and guest artist materials
- Walkthrough of existing group sales collateral and identification of gaps
- Discussion of "saleability" by program — which concerts have the strongest group appeal (mainstream cultural exposure, family-friendly format, blockbuster events)

Day 5: Ticketing & Logistics

- PatronManager orientation: how to look up accounts, pull group history, flag prospects
- Walkthrough of the group reservation and invoicing process with Brian Pope (Patron Services Manager)
- Review of group pricing tiers, discount thresholds, and any comp or flex-ticket policies
- Confirm email alias setup and shared Drive access

WEEK 2**Market Mapping & Prospect Development**

Weeks 3–4

Prospect Categories to Map

The representative will review a list of initial prospects generated by current staff, and add to the list as needed in consultation with current staff:

- Motor Coach & Day Trip Operators: companies running one-day excursions to Syracuse — see Appendix for starter prospect list
- Corporate & Professional: law firms, healthcare systems (Upstate, Crouse, St. Joseph's), financial services, tech employers, regional chambers of commerce, not to conflict with current development or community engagement prospects or relationships
- Nonprofits & Community Organizations: United Way affiliates, civic clubs (Rotary, Junior League), cultural affinity groups, faith communities
- Education: SUNY ESF, Syracuse University departments, Le Moyne, OCC — staff/faculty groups, alumni associations
- Social & Recreation: neighborhood associations, garden clubs, book clubs, established friend groups
- Reactivation Targets: lapsed group buyers from PatronManager (2–4 seasons absent) — warm list provided by TSO

Week 3 Deliverable**Due EOW3**

Prospect tracking sheet with 60+ organizations, segmented by category, with assigned concert match and initial outreach priority ranking

WEEK 4**First Outreach & Ramp**Week 4 (Active
Selling Begins
Week 5)

Week 4 is focused on launching initial outreach, testing messaging, and establishing a sustainable rhythm before full active selling begins in Week 5.

- Review scripts generated with assistance from Sarah Longley, reviewed by Lara Mosby
- First round of outreach (calls + emails) to 15–20 high-priority prospects
- Debrief with Brian: messaging resonance, objections encountered, adjustments
- Establish weekly check-in cadence (30 min, standing) and reporting format
- Identify any collateral gaps (e.g., group-specific one-pager, customized concert packet)

Ongoing Work Plan

Weekly Rhythm

The representative manages their own schedule but is expected to maintain the following weekly activity benchmarks:

Metric	Target	Notes
Outreach contacts (calls + emails)	15–20 / week	Mix of new prospects and follow-ups
New prospect meetings/calls	2–3 / week	Phone, Zoom, or in-person
Active group conversations	8–12 ongoing	Tracked in shared prospect sheet
Confirmed reservations	1–2 / week (peak)	Higher frequency near concert dates
Check-in with Brian	Weekly, 30 min	Standing virtual meeting

Concert Cycle Workflow

For each concert, the representative follows a standard sales cycle keyed to the performance date:

Note: The representative's engagement is a fixed 12-week assignment, while the season runs across all 12 Masterworks and Pops concerts. The representative will not be present for the full cycle of every concert — for concerts falling after Week 12, the Patron Services Manager and box office staff take over all remaining stages (final push outreach, confirmation, invoicing, and post-concert stewardship) using the prospect lists and priority rankings the representative has already built.

8 Weeks Out Launch Outreach

Per Concert

- Send initial outreach wave to matched prospect list for this program
- Customize pitch to concert's unique appeal (theme, guest artist, crossover angle)
- Target corporate/HR contacts for event tickets as employee benefit or client entertainment

5 Weeks Out Follow-Up & Convert

Per Concert

- Second-touch follow-up on all non-responses from initial wave
- First reservation deadline communicated to interested groups
- Coordinate with box office on seating block availability

3 Weeks Out Confirm & Close

Per Concert

- All pending reservations confirmed.
- Further tasks are handed over to the Patron Services Manager, including:
 - invoices issued
 - Stewardship touchpoint for confirmed groups (confirmation letter, logistics info, parking)
- Final push outreach to last-minute or walk-up group prospects

Post-Concert

Stewardship & Reactivation – handled by box office staff

Following Week

Because the representative's 12-week engagement will be complete before many of the season's concerts take place, all post-concert stewardship and reactivation work is owned by box office staff, not the representative, for every concert:

- Thank-you outreach to all confirmed group buyers within 5 business days
- Gather brief feedback (did they enjoy it? would they return?)
- Flag warm contacts in prospect sheet for early-bird outreach on next season

FY26–27 Concert Priority Matrix

Not all concerts are equal for group sales. The following framework guides prospecting priority, with suggestions regarding the best prospect type. The representative may find a different reality in speaking with organizations:

Concert Type	Group Sales Priority	Best Prospect Type
Blockbuster / Pops-adjacent	★★★★★ HIGH	Corporates, social groups, newcomers
Film-to-Live / Multimedia	★★★★★ HIGH	Families, fan communities, young professionals
Guest soloist with name recognition	★★★★★ HIGH	Arts patrons, alumni associations
Holiday Programming	★★★★★ HIGH	All categories — prioritize early outreach
Standard Masterworks	★★★★★ HIGH	Corporate clients, civic clubs, nonprofits

Success Metrics & Review Cadence

Performance will be reviewed monthly and at mid-season (January). The primary goal is 50 group tickets per concert. Secondary metrics track pipeline health and sales efficiency.

Metric	Target	Notes
Group tickets sold per concert	50 tickets	Primary KPI
Average group size	12–15 tickets	Signals depth of relationship
Conversion rate (prospect → sale)	15–25%	Benchmark for outreach quality
Active prospects per concert cycle	25–35	Pipeline health indicator
Repeat group buyers	≥30% of buyers	Signals stewardship effectiveness
New-to-TSO group buyers	≥50% of groups	Audience development signal

Monthly Reporting

The representative submits a brief monthly report to Brian (Patron Services Manager) covering:

- Confirmed group reservations (count, tickets, revenue) by concert
- Prospect pipeline status (active conversations, stage, projected close)
- Outreach activity summary (contacts made, meetings held)
- Wins, challenges, and any collateral or support needs

Mid-Contract Review (September)

A formal 60-minute review with Brian and the Executive Director will assess:

- Overall performance against 50-ticket goal, by concert
- Prospect list quality and category mix — any gaps to address
- Messaging refinements based on what has and hasn't resonated
- Whether contract scope, compensation, or concert prioritization should be adjusted

Appendix: Key Resources & Logistics

Group Ticketing Logistics

- Minimum group size: 8 tickets for group rate eligibility
- Group rate: 20% discount off single-ticket price (confirm with box office)
- Seating: groups held in dedicated sections; representative coordinates block with box office
- Payment: invoice issued at reservation; payment due within 30 days of invoice issuance
- **Non-payment:** if payment is not received within 30 days of invoice issuance, the reservation is automatically cancelled and the held seats are released back to general inventory. No further action is needed to release the hold — it lapses automatically.
- **Cancellation after payment:** once an order has been paid, all sales are final and no refunds will be issued, regardless of the reason for cancellation. The initial group sale may be exchanged for another available concert date scheduled during the 2026-27 season.

Soft Hold Policy

A soft hold reserves a block of seats for an interested prospect before an invoice is issued, protecting inventory while the representative finalizes the deal. Soft holds are for active, named prospects only — not speculative blocking of inventory.

- **Standard hold window:** 10 business days from the date the hold is placed. If no payment or extension request is received by the deadline, the hold releases automatically back to general inventory.
- **Extended hold window for motor coach & day trip operators:** up to 30 days, given their longer internal planning and budget-approval cycles (see Appendix: Motor Coach & Day Trip Prospect List).
- **Shortened window near performance date:** once a concert enters the 3-weeks-out stage of the Concert Cycle Workflow, hold windows shorten to 3 business days, to protect remaining inventory for closing deals and last-minute prospects.
- **Single source of truth:** all holds must be logged in PatronManager, not tracked only in the prospect spreadsheet, so box office always has one accurate view of committed vs. available inventory.
- **Follow-up ownership:** the representative is responsible for following up with the prospect before a hold expires. Brian Pope (Patron Services Manager) can approve an extension beyond the standard windows above on a case-by-case basis.

Key Contacts

Name	Role	For
Brian Pope	Patron Services Manager	Day-to-day supervisor, reporting, approvals, ticketing, seating, invoicing
Lara Mosby	Community Engagement Director	Best contact for guidance and information regarding community groups, schools

Laura Kendrick	Marketing Contractor	Maintains oversight of all marketing activities
Pamela Murchison	Executive Director	Strategic escalation, mid-season review

FY26–27 Season at a Glance

Placeholder — replace with confirmed concert dates, titles, and venue once finalized. Group sales outreach timelines will be built backward from each performance date.

TIP

Program the highest-priority concerts into the representative's prospect outreach calendar during Weeks 3–4 onboarding, so they enter active selling in Week 5 with a concert-matched list already in hand.

Appendix: Motor Coach & Day Trip Prospect List

The following companies operate motor coach day trips and regional excursions to Syracuse and surrounding areas. These operators book cultural and entertainment outings for their passengers — often seniors, travel clubs, and organized social groups — making them strong candidates for group ticket packages. Outreach should be directed to the trip planning or programming coordinator at each company.

Central New York & Regional Operators

- **Birnie Bus Service** — Rome, NY. Long-established CNY operator serving group charters and excursions throughout the region.
- **Haylor, Freyer & Coon / Community Travel** — Syracuse-based travel and group programming affiliate. Warm contact to pursue early.
- **Laker Transit / Laker Coach** — Oswego County. Serves Lake Ontario communities; runs cultural day trips for senior and community groups.
- **Chenango Valley Bus Lines** — Norwich / Chenango County. Regional charter operator with day trip programming for senior and civic groups.
- **Trailways of New York** — Albany-based with statewide reach. Books cultural excursions to Central NY for organized travel groups; contact their group/charter sales division.

Upstate NY Day Trip Operators (Within 2–3 Hour Drive)

- **Adirondack Trailways** — Serves North Country, Capital Region, and Mohawk Valley communities; operates charter and group travel programs.
- **First Class Tours (Rochester)** — Rochester-based operator specializing in group day trips and cultural programming for senior and social clubs. Strong fit for TSO evening performances.
- **Rochester Personalized Coach** — Serves Monroe County senior and civic groups; known for arts and entertainment day trip packages.

- **Utica Transit / Rome Trailways Affiliate** — Mohawk Valley market; short drive to Syracuse, strong senior group travel culture in this corridor.
- **Cazenovia Coach** — Cazenovia / Madison County. Smaller boutique operator that serves local senior and civic organizations.

Outreach Notes for Coach Operators

- Lead time matters: coach operators typically plan their excursion calendars 3–6 months out. Prioritize early-season outreach to these companies in Weeks 3–4.
- Package the pitch: offer a “complete evening” package including tickets, pre-concert notes, and parking information. Coach groups respond well to turnkey packages.
- Target the right programs: blockbuster, pops-adjacent, and holiday concerts are the strongest fits for coach day-trip audiences. Lead with these when pitching.
- Confirm contacts: job titles vary by company — look for “Trip Coordinator,” “Group Sales Manager,” “Excursion Director,” or the owner in smaller operations.

Prepared by: The Syracuse Orchestra Executive Director · For Internal Use