

# Psychology of queuing: Six simple rules to improve customer experience

## **Moderator:**

Rebecca Herberson, Tessitura

## **Presenters:**

**Christian Schoning**

Queue-it



## **Distraction Free Zone**

Please keep keyboard and other distractions to a minimum



## **No Recording**

No recording or broadcasts of concurrent sessions

**Queue.it**

# Psychology of Queuing

6 simple rules to improve  
customer experience

**Scan the QR code to  
discover your  
queuing preferences  
while you wait**



**Queue.it**

# **Christian Schoning**

Head of Content &  
Product Marketing

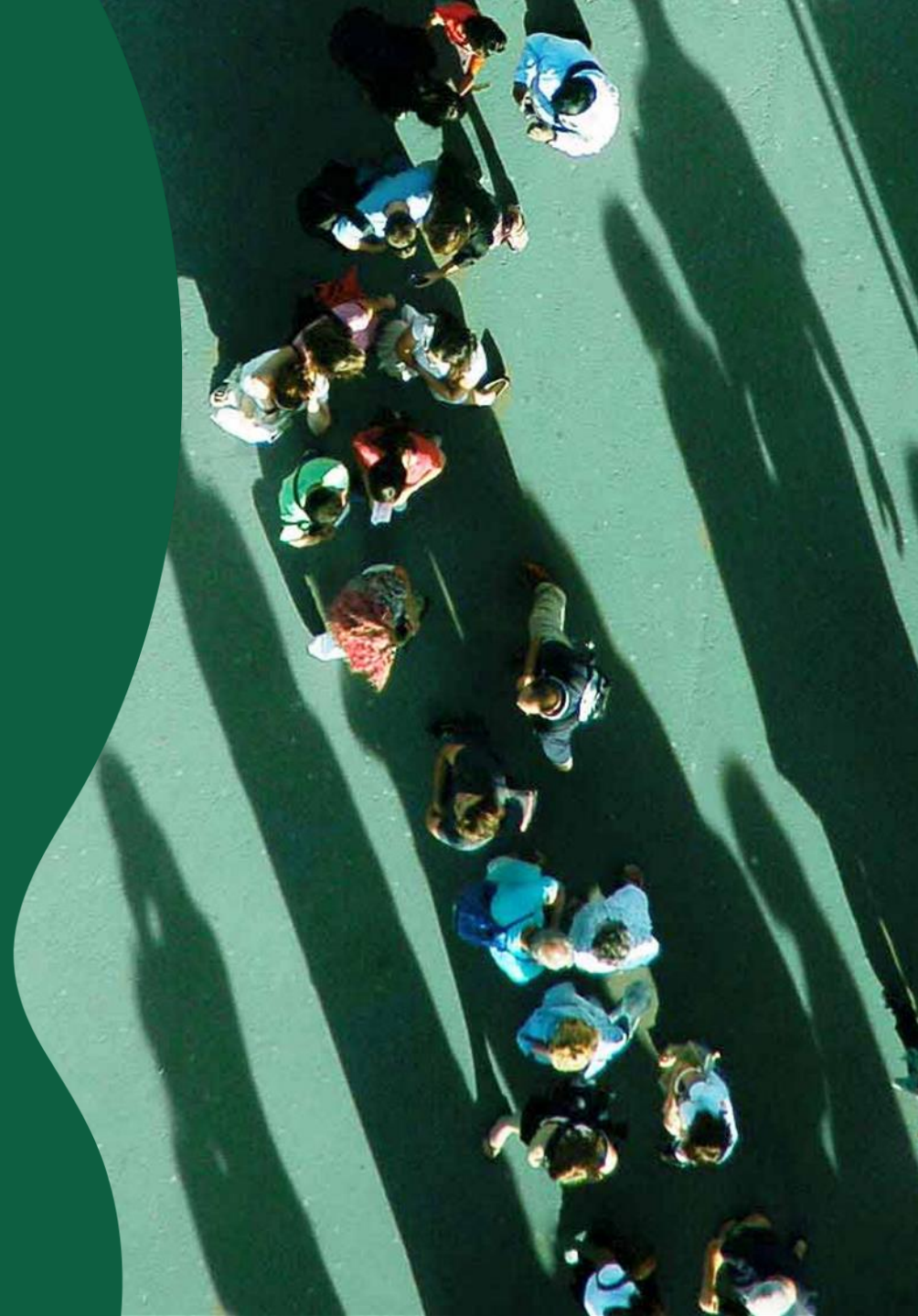




# Queues aren't just a necessity—they're an opportunity

Traditional approaches to queuing are defensive in nature.

We think that's a shame.



# How do you feel in these scenarios?

## You call a phone number and...

### Scenario A

Get a busy  
dial tone

### Scenario B

Connect & get  
put on hold

### Scenario C

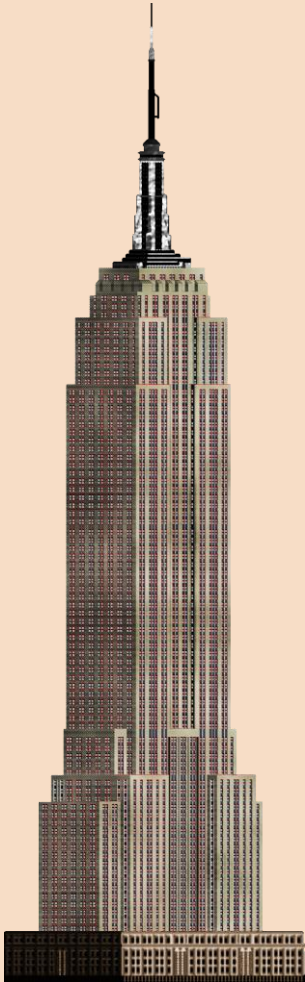
Connect, get a  
message, ETA,  
queue number, &  
callback option

## **Queue psychology**

It's not the length of  
the line or the wait  
that matters most.

**It's how people feel  
while waiting.**

# From engineering to psychology in New York City skyscrapers



New high-rises frustrate  
workers due to long waits  
for elevators



Building managers add a  
“progress” display to show  
the elevator is coming



Building managers add  
mirrors to elevators, letting  
people distract themselves



# Queue psychology is all around us



**Queue-it helps 500+  
ticketing orgs & 120+  
Tessitura members  
control their online  
traffic**

DAILY  
VISITORS

**75M**

ANNUAL  
VISITORS

**31B**

FOUNDED  
IN

**2010**

**THE  
OLD  
VIC**

**Glasgow**life



**National  
Theatre**



**Mayflower  
Theatre**

The Met  
ropolitan  
Opera

THE  
NATIONAL  
GALLERY

**Starlight**

**SYDNEY  
THEATRE  
CO**

**SOMERSET  
HOUSE**

# Queue-it helps you build trust when the stakes are highest



## Reliable

Keep your site online,  
fast & error-free 24/7  
no matter the demand



## Fair

Ensure fair access with  
first-in-first-out waits,  
randomization & bot  
mitigation



## Transparent

Keep customers  
informed with clear wait  
info & real-time  
communication

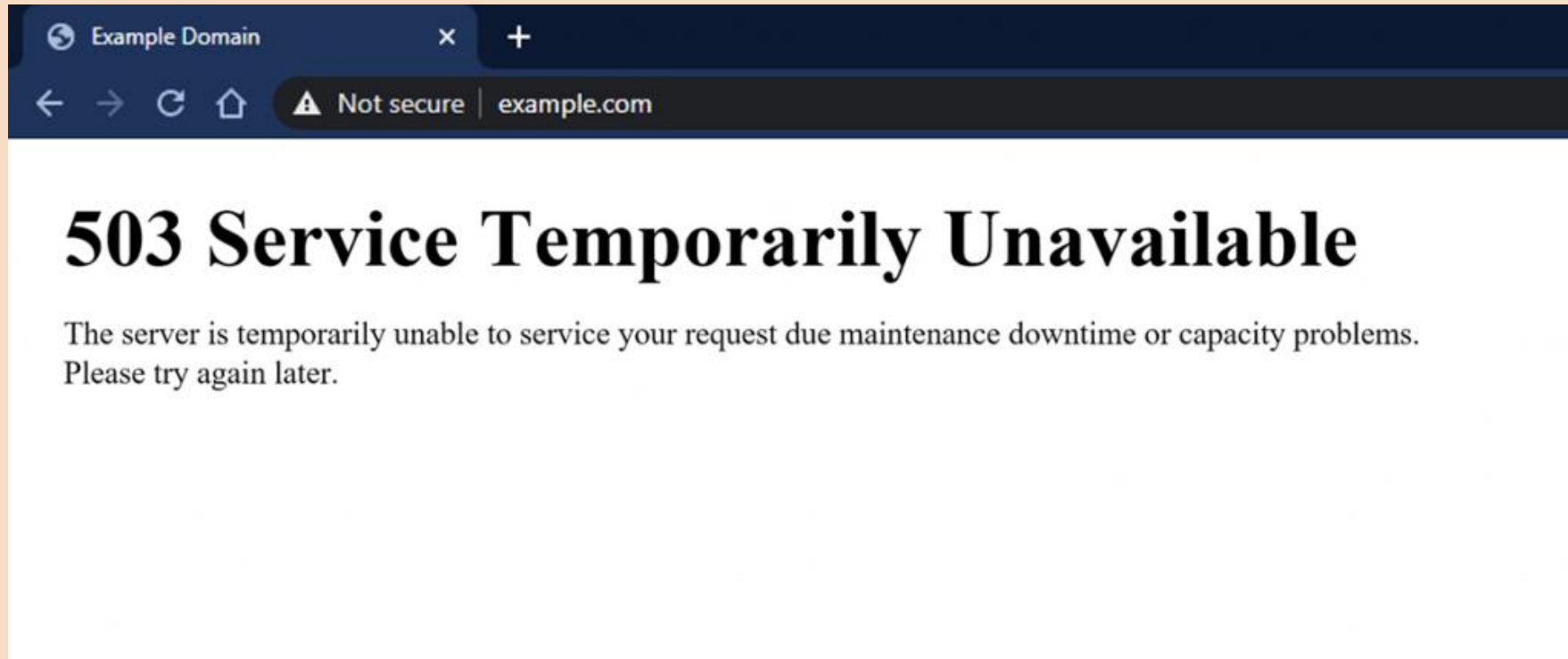


## Personal

Provide exclusive access  
to loyal customers & a  
custom waiting room for  
every sale



# Queue psychology is just as relevant online



# Queue psychology is just as relevant online

## Please Wait

Due to high demand, you may have to wait longer than usual to access this site. We appreciate your patience.



**What to expect:** Please wait here. This page will refresh automatically to let you in.

If you'd like to try again later instead, you can exit and look for more information at [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

# Queue psychology is just as relevant online

**50+ LANGUAGES**

**YOUR WEBSITE/LOGO**

**EXPECTED WAIT TIME**

**PROGRESS BAR**

**REAL-TIME COMMUNICATION**

**EMAIL NOTIFICATION**

**BRANDED BACKGROUND**

**Queue-it**

**You are now in line**

Your turn is almost here. When it is your turn, you will have 10 minutes to enter the website.

What is this?

44%

Expected Arrival Time On The Website:

**9:23 PM**

Your Estimated Wait Time Is:

**4 minutes**

Your Number in Line

**8445**

Status Last Updated

**12:33:09 PM**

Message last updated: 1:57 PM

Updates will be shown here.

I would like to receive an email when it is my turn

Enter email  
email@email.com

Notify me by email

Queue ID: 7cc7d96c-e7db-4943-9881-76588b6824ff

**Queue-it**

**FESTIVAL**

1 Wait

2 Hold on

3 Lines

4 I'm so excited

**FESTIVAL Lineup**

# Queue psychology:

6 rules for building trust  
with better waits





# Occupy people's time



## **What you can do**

- Warmup acts & music
- Event information & trivia
- Apps for food & drink orders
- Call-back options for customer service

## **What Queue-it customers do**

- Allow visitors to do what they want while they wait
- Embed content on waiting room
- Answer common questions & ensure customers are prepared





# Big Band Christmas

An Exciting Concert Featuring The Vancouver Groove Orchestra  
Opening Act: Award Winning Semiahmoo Grade 12 Jazz Band



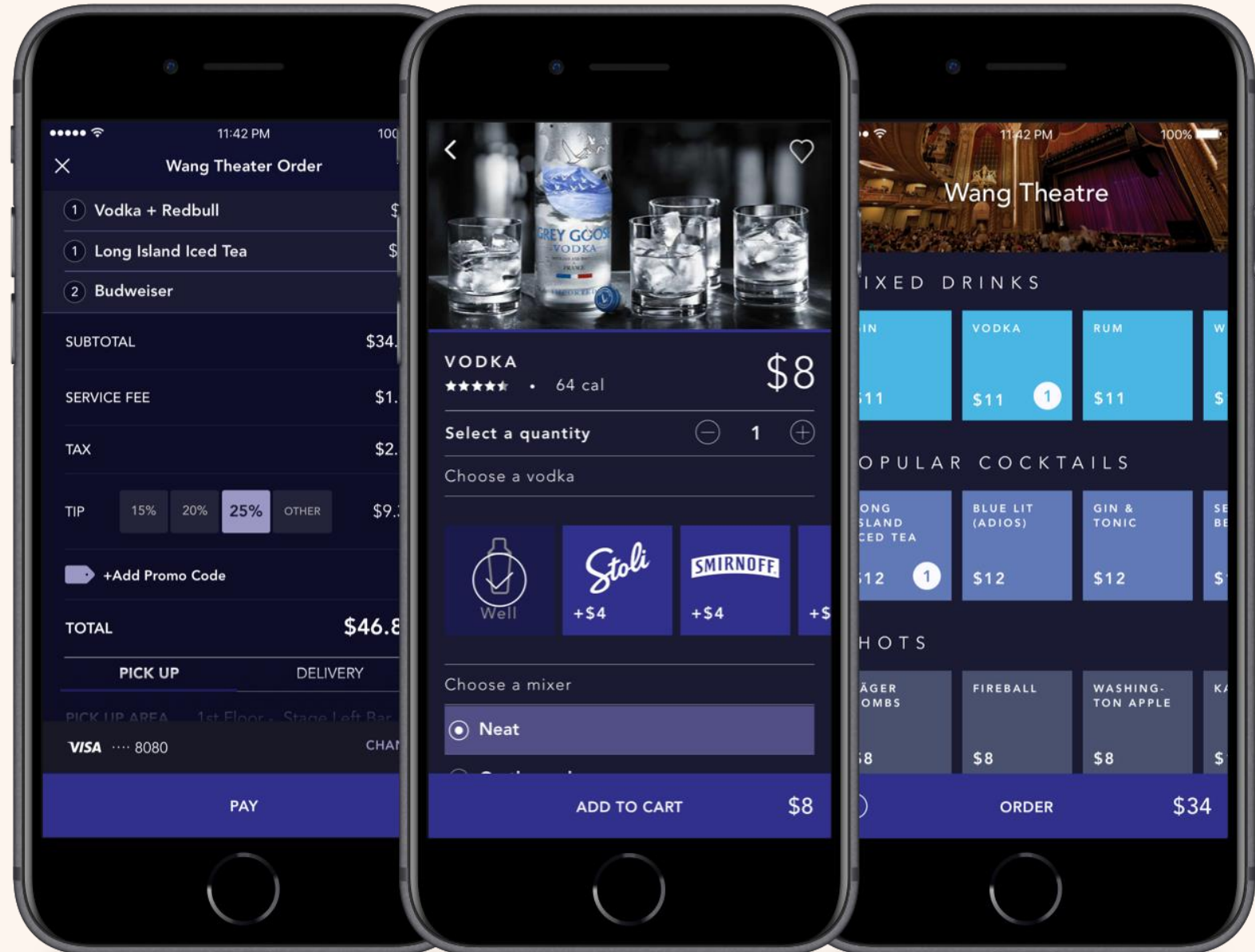
Friday, December 18th at 7:30pm  
Mount Olive Lutheran Church  
2350 - 148th Street, Surrey

**TICKETS: \$20** AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR  
or in advance at: [vancouvergroove.com](http://vancouvergroove.com) (Seniors/Students \$15)

SPONSORED BY







# Young Vic

You can close this page without losing your place in the queue.

## Changing Destiny and Best of Enemies - Booking Now Open

You're queuing to purchase tickets for *Changing Destiny* and *Best of Enemies*. If you are a wheelchair user and wish to book tickets for *Best of Enemies*, please contact the Box Office on 020 7922 2922.

Whilst demand is extremely high for tickets, our website operates an automatic queuing system.

Once you have tickets in your basket you'll have 10 minutes to complete your transaction.


Tickets for *Klippies*, *AI*, broadcast performances of *Changing Destiny*, or Taking Part productions will go on sale later in the year. Currently, there are no more tickets available for our rescheduled production of *Hamlet*. Please join our [mailing list](#) to be the first to hear about ticket releases.

[What is this?](#)



Number of users in queue ahead of you: **1758**

Your estimated wait time is: **4 minutes**

 Status last updated: 00:33:50

Message last updated: 00:33

This is a test message.

### Twitter

Check out our Young Vic twitter feed and be the first to read new

#### Tweets from @youngvictheatre



### Watch while you wait

Learn about Taking Part: the department that is "buried deep in the DNA of this organisation" in this conversation between YV Artistic Director Kwame Kwei-Armah and Director of Taking Part Shereen Jasmin Phillips. For more from videos from the Young Vic, head to our [YouTube channel](#) and subscribe.



Entertaining wait  
with embedded X  
feed & YouTube  
video





## You're in a queue for tickets

Tickets for Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirror Rooms are now available.

In the meantime, enjoy browsing our selection of art prints, books, fashion and more on [shop.tate.org.uk](https://shop.tate.org.uk).

Enter the code KUSAMA10 in the basket when you checkout with anything from our [online gift shop](#) and get 10% off. Limited time offer only until midnight Sunday. Shop now!

Number of users in queue ahead of you: **1758** Your estimated wait time is: **4 minutes**

Please notify me when it is my turn:

Notify me by e-mail

[What is this?](#)

Queue ID: 74a0e6c2-352f-4b59-9885-a803669e6afb

Queue-it

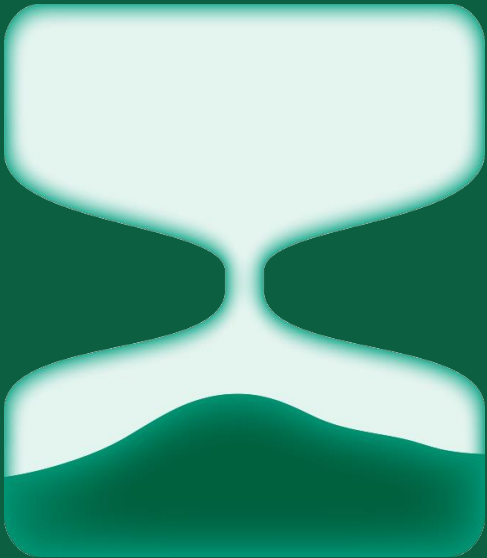
"The feedback on Queue-it has been kind of overwhelmingly positive. It's anecdotal, but I've seen tweets and emails from people that said 'Thanks, it was a really great experience.' Or, you know, 'I got the ticket I wanted and I loved the give us your email feature.'"

**JON HAWORTH, SR. COMMERCIAL  
SYSTEMS MANAGER**





# Get people started & show the wait is finite



## What you can do

- Sign-ups for event notifications
- Pre-sales
- Countdown timers
- “Almost there” signs
- Communicate before the event
- Provide estimated wait times

## What Queue-it customers do

- Use countdown timers
- Use progress bars
- Provide estimated wait times
- Provide event materials

14:29 London St Pancras      Exp 14:44  
Calling at: od Junction, East Croydon, Purli  
3rd 14:51 Moorgate      On time  
**14:36:00**



STAND BY

WAIT TIME

45

MINUTES

ENTRANCE



**BIG CITY MUSEUM**

---

**WAIT TIME  
30 MINUTES  
FROM THIS  
POINT**



**Tickets**

**Lineup**

**Info**



# **FESTiVal**

FESTiVal  
FESTiVal  
FESTiVal

Let customers  
"get started"  
before the  
onsale with a  
pre-queue &  
countdown timer

**Ticket sale for FESTiVal  
2023 starts in 47:01**



# FESTival

Show progress  
& estimated  
wait time



**You're 7 minutes away  
from the biggest live  
music event of the year**

Let fans prepare for  
the event with FAQs

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why am I in a queue?

Tickets for this event are extremely popular, so we've used Queue-it's virtual waiting room to ensure fair access, block bots & keep our site running smoothly. You'll experience a short wait, then be flowed to the sale page for purchase.

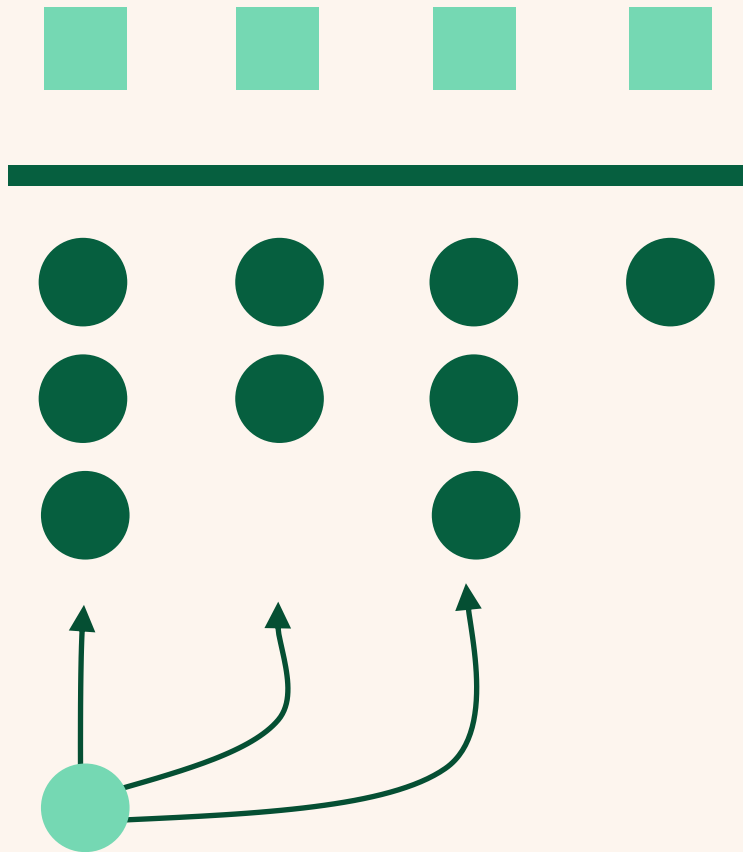
### How is my position in queue determined?

### What do I need to purchase a ticket?

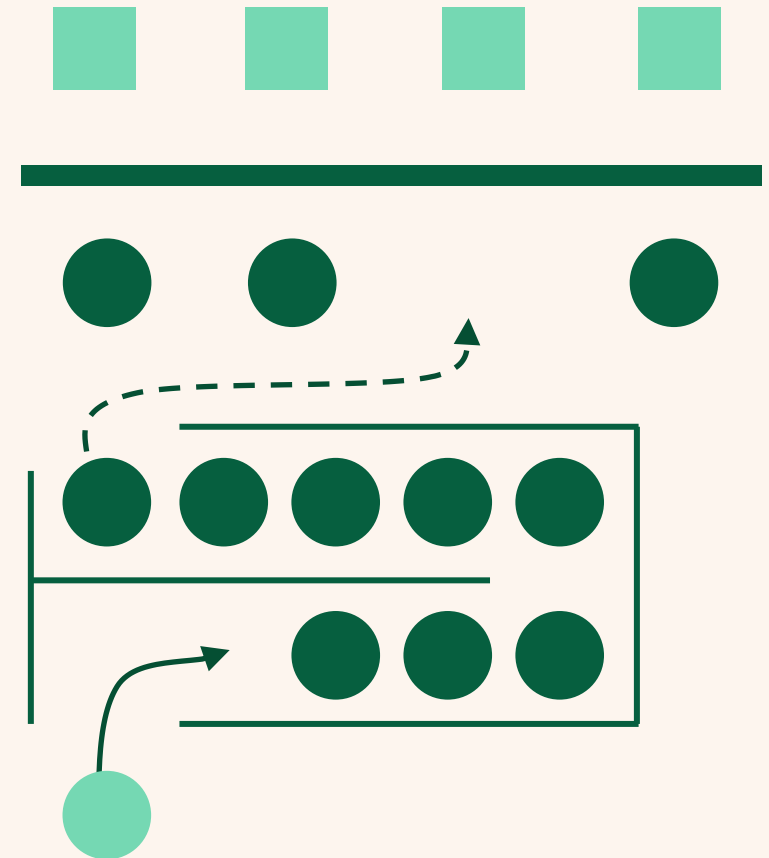


# Which style of queue do you prefer?

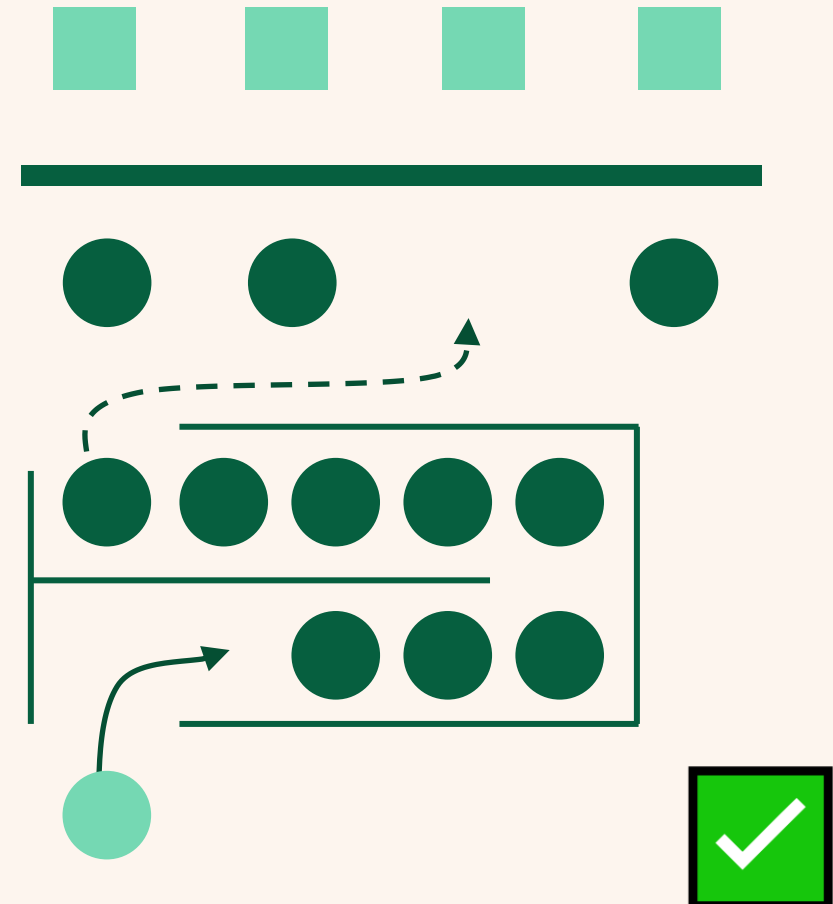
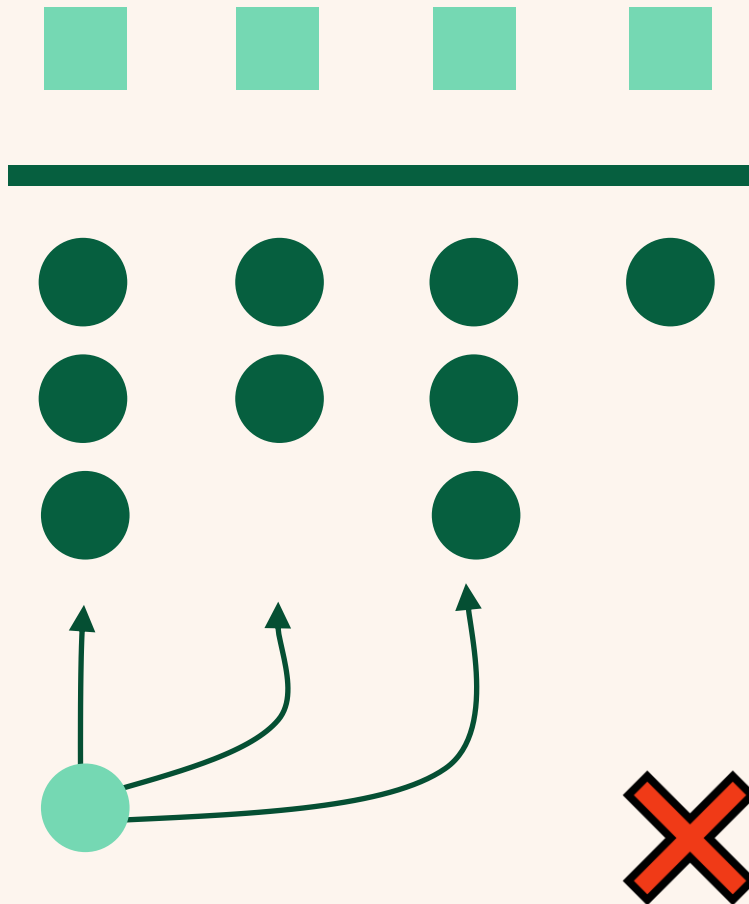
Servers



Servers



# Research shows single, snaking lines are better than multiple queues





# Reduce stressors & explain the wait

## What you can do

- Explain the reason for the wait & any delays
- Communicate how the process works
- Avoid multiple queues
- Address anxieties

## What Queue-it customers do

- Explain the reason for the wait
- Provide real-time updates
- Allow room for error
- Give customers ample time





# BAG POLICY



Only one small bag per person permitted, no bigger than **29x21x15cm (A4 size)**



Cloakroom service available for coats, and bags (within the permitted size).  
**Charged per item**



There are no facilities to leave bags larger than **29x21x15cm (A4 size)** in the venue

**Searches and bag checks on arrival**

**UTILITAARENA**CARDIFF.CO.UK







Oh my, it's a little bit busy here!

Number of users in queue ahead of you: **1758**



Status last updated: 03:32:09

A lot of Human Folk are trying to access their My Lapland account at the moment, so we've put you into a virtual queue.

You will be automatically taken through to your account when you get to the front.

Message last updated: 03:32

This is a test message.

example@email.com

Notify me by e-mail

**Explain the wait**

**Let people get notified when it's their turn**



Keep real-time  
communication  
flowing to your  
customers

## You're in the queue!

Thank you for your patience during today's record-high demand.



Live update: All ticket types currently remain available.

Once it's your turn, you'll have 20 minutes to select tickets and begin to purchase. Entering/exiting the queue does not guarantee the ability to purchase.

Queue ID: 6e3b6209-1fc7-4419-8b0d-8a2fb97a169a



Answer  
common  
questions

## Frequently-asked questions:

### How will the queue work?

The queue for tickets will open at 10 AM ET. Once it opens, visitors already on this page will be randomly assigned a place in line. Any visitors who join after 10 AM ET will be placed at the current end of the line. Once in the queue, please do not hit refresh or back.

When it is your turn, you will automatically be redirected to our Orlando Informer Meetup website. **Please note, as tickets are very limited, entering the queue does not guarantee the ability to purchase.**

### What tickets go on sale today?

#### Orlando Informer Meetup

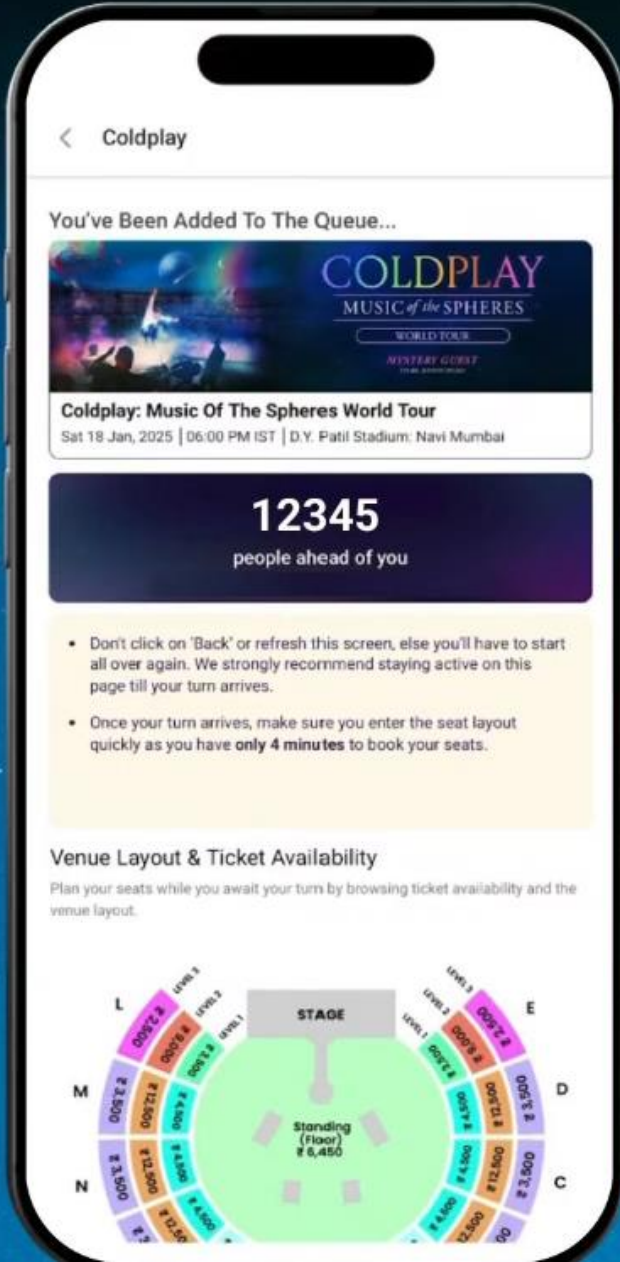
Friday and Saturday, February 28 and March 1, 2025

Friday or Saturday — one night: \$250.35 (includes processing) + tax

Friday and Saturday — two night Early-Bird: \$399.96 (includes processing) + tax



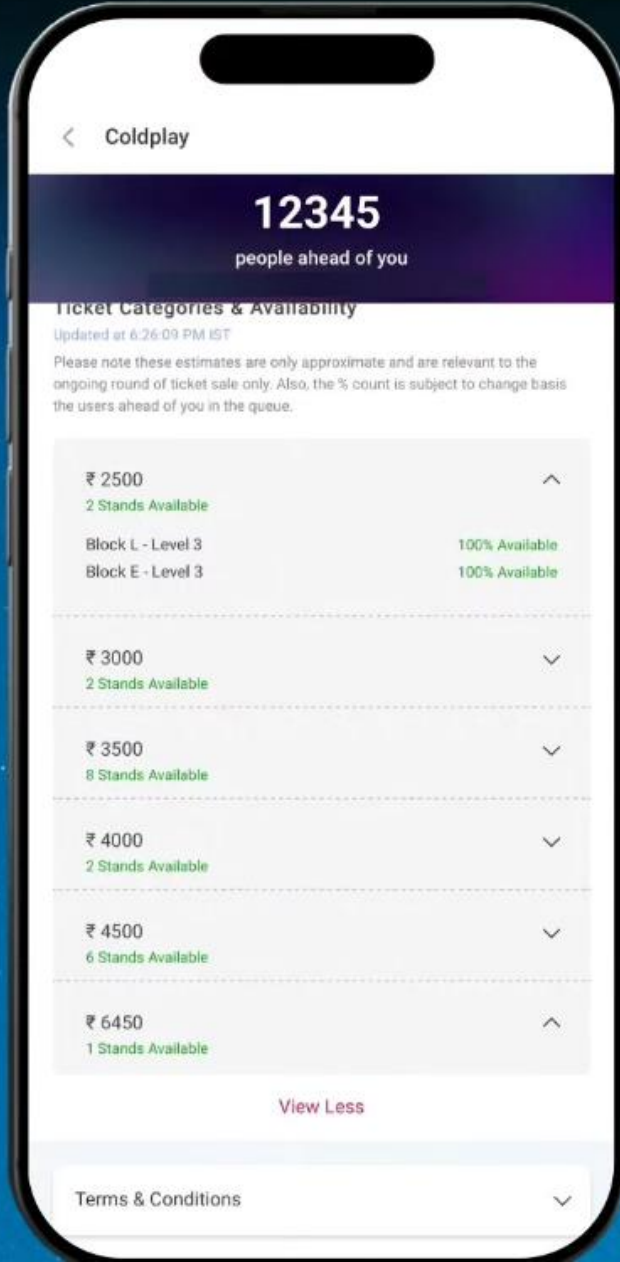
While you're in the queue, you will see the number of people ahead of you.



While you await your turn, you can explore the seat map.



Periodic updates on the % of tickets available per category will also be visible.





# Ensure fair access & no cutting in line

## What you can do

- Block bots & scalpers
- Ensure first-in-first-out (FIFO) queues
- Use staff, barriers, etc. to ensure fair use of queues
- Explain differences in treatment

## What Queue-it customers do

- Fair & secure queue
- FIFO queues & randomization
- Bot & Abuse Protection

# Ticket bots in the U.K.

**£145M**

Additional cost for fans due to ticket touts

**20%**

Of tickets sold end up on secondary markets

**4<sup>th</sup>**

The United Kingdom is the fourth  
biggest global target for bots







# B8

## Boarding Sequence

Boarding now

PRIORITY

**GROUP 1**

EUROBONUS DIAMOND  
EUROBONUS GOLD  
STAR ALLIANCE GOLD

Please prepare

PRIORITY

**GROUP 2**

SAS PLUS

Please stay seated

**GROUP 3 4**

Please stay seated

**GROUP 5**

PAY FOR CARRY-ON

**B8**

NEXT FLIGHT

SK793

NICE

SK2864

BERGEN

11:05

Boarding

12:40

**SAS**

# Boa

Boarding n

PRIORITY

**GROU**

EUROBON  
EUROBON  
STAR ALL

**B8**

NEXT FLIGH



UNITED  

Thursday, March 28 1:23 pm | Gate: **B31**

**Omaha, NE**  **529**

Departs: **1:50pm** (On Schedule)

**Pre-boarding**

## Pre-boarding order:



Customers  
with  
disabilities



Active  
military  
personnel




United  
Global  
Services®



Families  
with children  
age 2 and  
under



Premier  
1K®

Next departure at this gate: Washington, DC | 5:30 pm |  2135

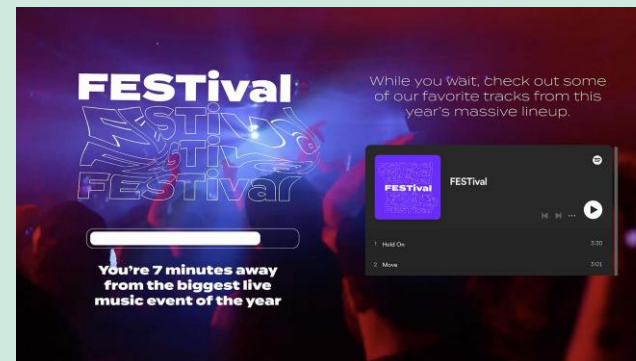
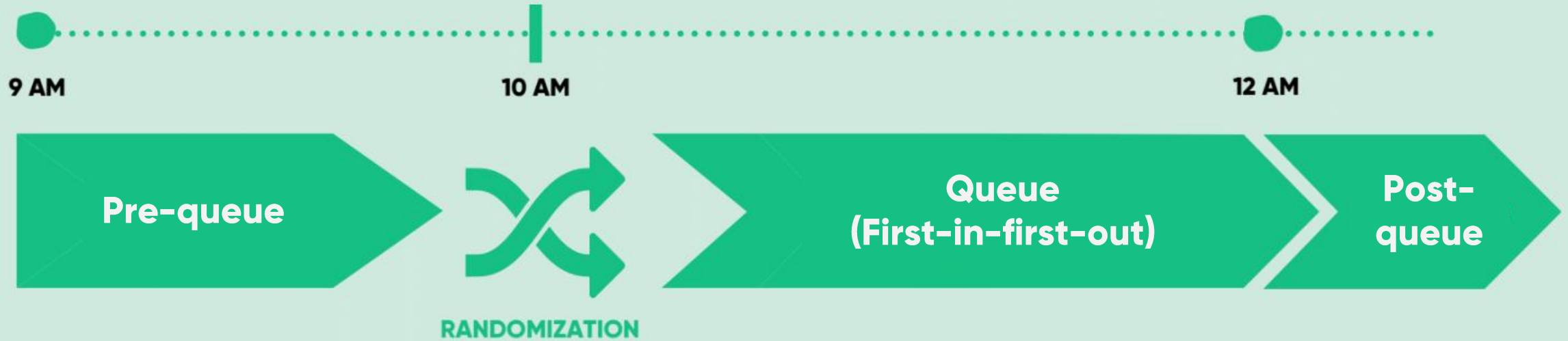


# Queue-it's fair mechanism for onsale access

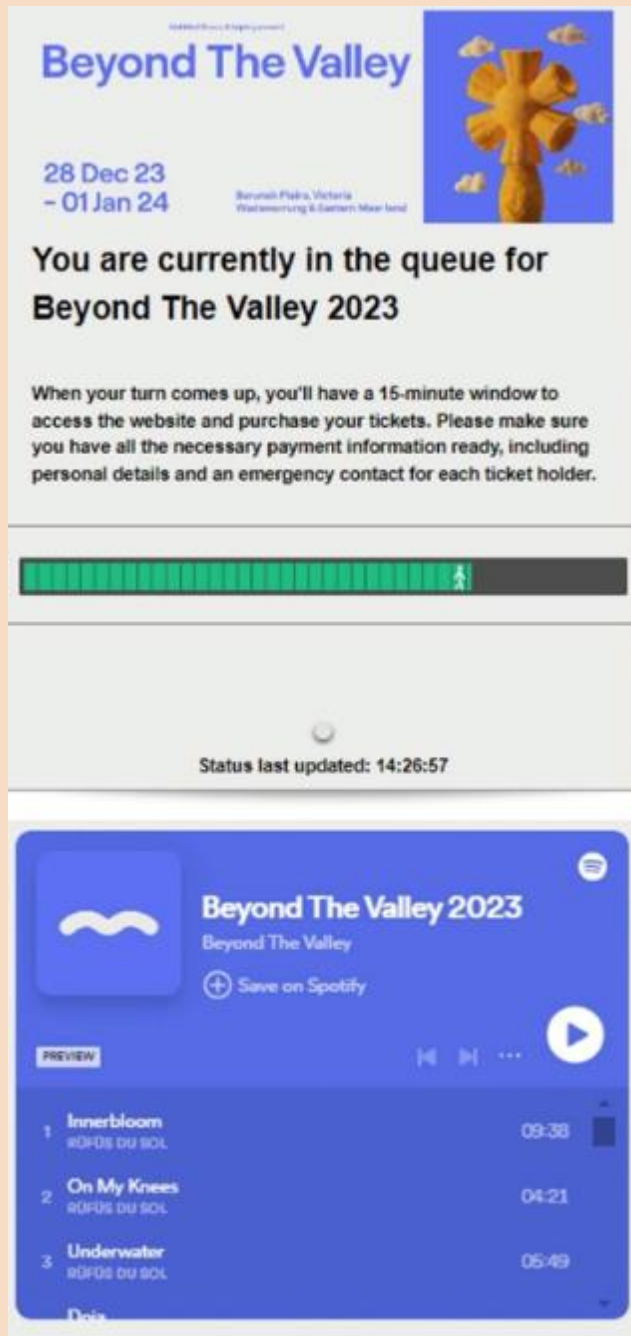
Before sale starts  
(e.g. 9:00 AM – 9:59:59 AM)

Sale starts  
(e.g. 10:00:00 AM)

Sale ends  
(e.g. 12:00:00 PM)







# Running fairer onsales with Megatix

"It always bothered us seeing ticketing companies using 'queuing solutions' that are just holding pages, which aren't real queues."

"The Queue-it approach of randomizing visitors, then running a first-in, first-out queue is a fairer and more predictable process, which is crucial to us, our clients, and their customers."



**ROSHAN ODHAVJI, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO**



Royal  
Botanical  
Gardens

## The Enchanted Garden Member Pre-Sale

The Enchanted Garden Member Pre-Sale has not yet begun. When The Enchanted Garden Member Pre-Sale begins, you will be assigned a random place in line (alongside everyone else who also arrives before The Enchanted Garden Member Pre-Sale begins).

[What is this?](#)

The event will begin at: 11:00 AM

**22 Minutes 04 Seconds**

Status last updated: 10:37:46 AM

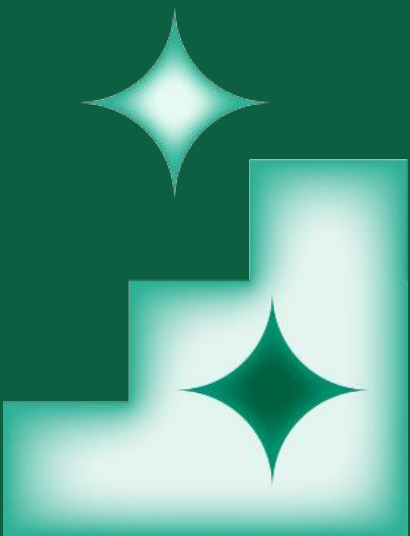
Queue ID: 50803014-8dbb-4852-b6a3-6be5d5db7a25

Queue-it

Explain that the  
sale is randomized  
and fair



# Build anticipation & hype



## What you can do

- Give fans teasers
- Communicate before the event
- Share the excitement

## What Queue-it customers do

- Use the language of hype
- Show the product/event
- Engage fans while they wait







# The OFFICIAL ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION GUIDE







# Guys and Dolls

2025







Use the  
language of  
hype &  
anticipation

hunkemöller

A PARTY WITHOUT A  
QUEUE IS NOT WORTH  
GOING TO!

Thank you for your patience!

Due to popular demand, we've had to place you in a digital waiting line. Below you can see when it is your time to shop!



Just wait for: 5 MINUTES

You can close this page without losing your place in line.

Notify me when it's my time to shop:

Email address

NOTIFY ME VIA EMAIL

Queue ID: 29cdfc04-2bfc-4118-9b1a-15ab80561b65 What is this?

Queue.it



Remind fans  
what they're  
queuing for



You are now in line

You are in line for the sale. When it is your turn, you will have 10 minutes to enter the website.



Number of users in line ahead of you: **1758**

Status last updated: 1:56:53AM

Message last updated: 1:56AM

This is a test message.

Queue ID: 83e71cf5-4125-4613-83c2-1150a9ff0313

Queue-it

Engage customers  
by embedding  
quizzes on your  
queue page



## You are now in line to discover the psychology behind queuing

Scroll down & click "play along" to test your own queuing preferences while you wait

The line is paused.



Queue ID: a66b2892-d4e3-490c-b1f0-cc446bb76f18

Queue-it

Queue-it

### While you wait...

Explore your preferred way to wait & discover just how different queues can be



Play along

The content above is part of your waiting experience. Engaging with it will not impact your position in line.



# Personalize the wait experience



## What you can do

- Run a membership or loyalty program
- Personalize recommendations
- Tailor messaging & access

## What Queue-it customers do

- VIP queues for members & true fans
- Exclusive queues for accessibility
- Match their brand's look & feel



# SKIP THE QUEUE

GET THE BEST SEATS IN THE HOUSE  
WITH PRIORITY BOOKING

TICKETS



**Picture  
house**  
MEMBERSHIP

[PICTUREHOUSES.COM/MEMBERSHIP](http://picturehouses.com/membership) OR ASK AT THE BOX OFFICE

## EXECUTIVE MEMBERSHIP

£65 PER YEAR

ADVANCE EMAIL NOTICE OF SHOWS COMING

NO QUIBBLE REFUND - IF YOU CANNOT MAKE IT, RECEIVE  
A REFUND UP TO 7 DAYS BEFORE A PERFORMANCE (MAX  
6 TICKETS)

MEMBERS BOOKING LINE - A DEDICATED LINE

PRIORITY BOOKING - BEFORE ANYONE ELSE!

TICKET DISCOUNT - GET £6 OFF YOUR TICKET ON TOP TWO  
PRICE BANDS FOR SOME SHOWS

BAR DISCOUNT - GET 10% OFF YOUR DRINKS

20% DISCOUNT ON A PAIR OF TICKETS AT SELECTED  
PRESS NIGHTS





# TAP INTO LUXURY

Order your favourite menu items  
directly to your seat

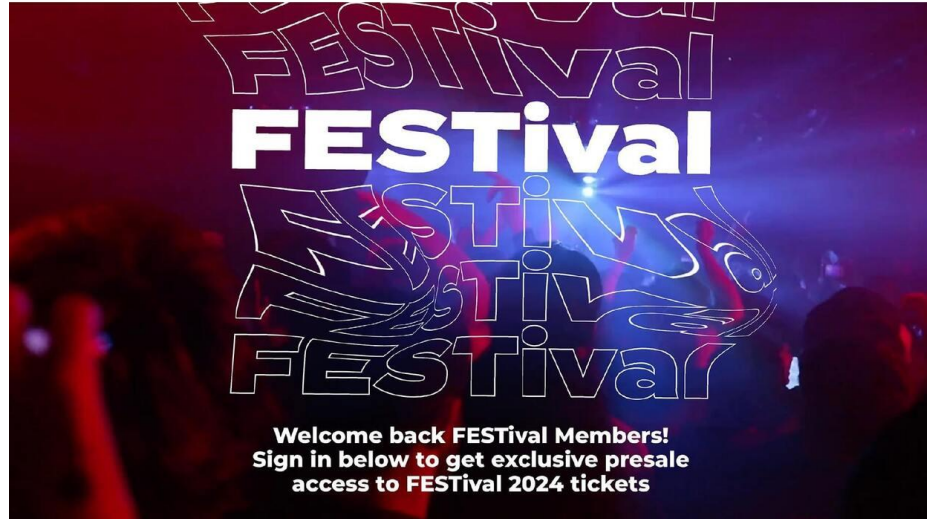
ORDER NOW  
ONLINE

**EVENT** | GOLD CLASS

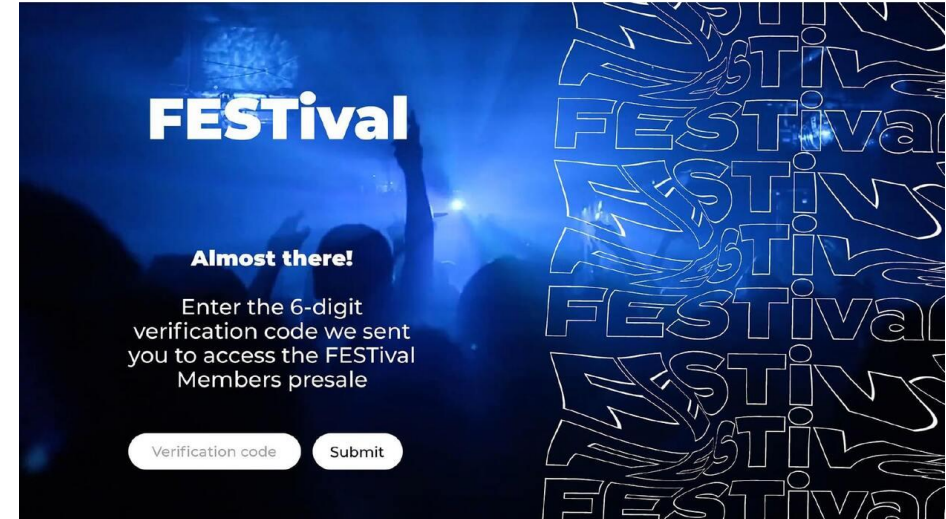


# Personalize the wait with early & exclusive access

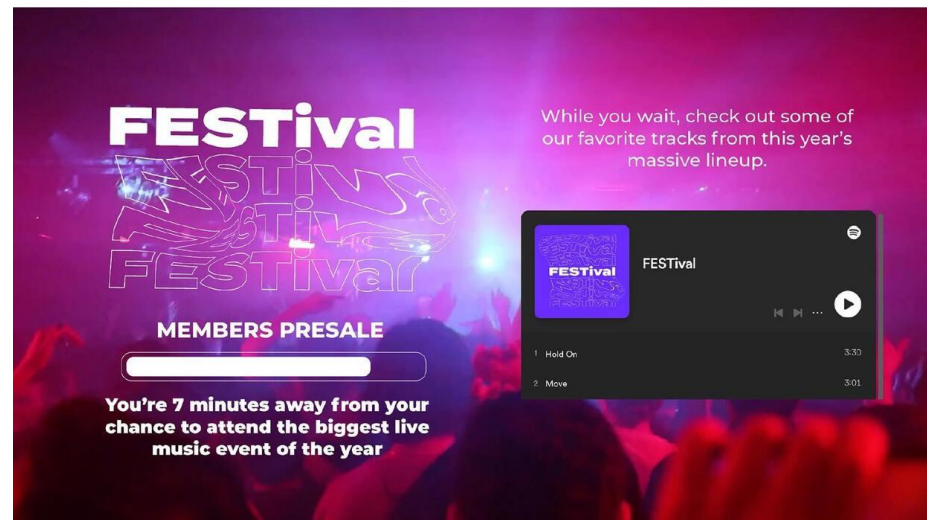
Fans open their invite & enter their email



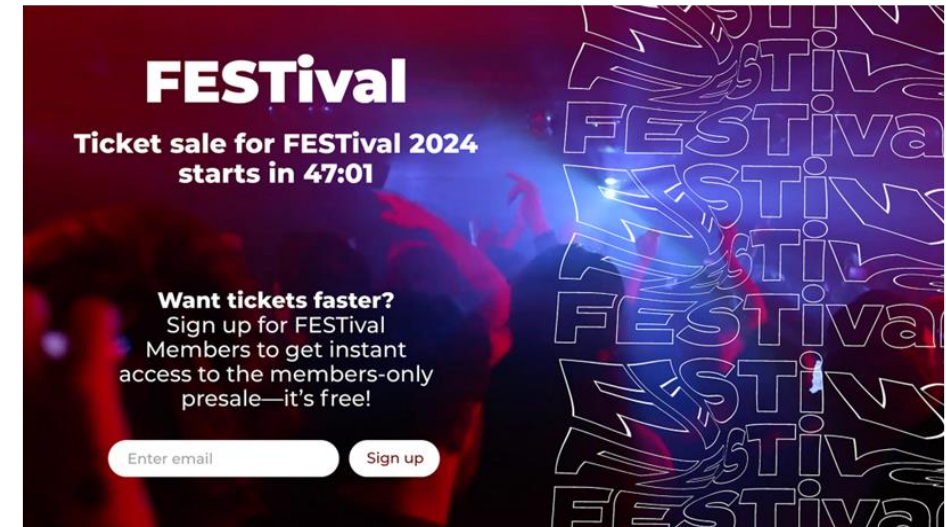
Queue—it verifies they're on the invite list



Fans enter the queue & access the onsale



OR drive sign-ups with a "queue fast pass"





Give your  
best  
customers  
the best  
experience

# WELCOME VIPS

Rejoice, because things are about to get started.

Number of people in line in front of you

1758

You will be let in about

4 minutes

[What is this?](#)



Once you get through the queue, you have 90 minutes to place your order. We look forward to seeing you there.

bedre natter

**BLACK FRIDAY**  
**TYVSTART**

Queue ID: 99b987b8-0c0d-4200-971e-63ede663dccb

Queue.it



# Tiered access for members & disabled fans

## Who

Premier League club selling season tickets to home games

## Challenge

Giving disabled members & loyal members first access when resale potential is high



# Four onsales, four groups of members

## Onsale 1

Disabled members  
who attended  
10+ games  
previous season

2k invitations sent

## Onsale 2

All disabled  
members

1.2k invitations sent

## Onsale 3

Members  
who attended 10+  
games previous  
season

25k invitations sent

## Onsale 4

All Members

75k invitations sent



## Summary:

Design  
waits that  
build trust  
with queue  
psychology





**Personalize  
the wait**

**Queue.it**

**Welcome VIP**

Welcome to the VIP fast-track queue. This event is hot, but you've got one of the best spots. We'll get you through to our site soon!

44%



Expected Arrival Time On The Website:

**9:23 PM**

Your Estimated Wait Time Is:

**4 minutes**

Message last updated: 1:57 PM

We've sold through 20% of tickets

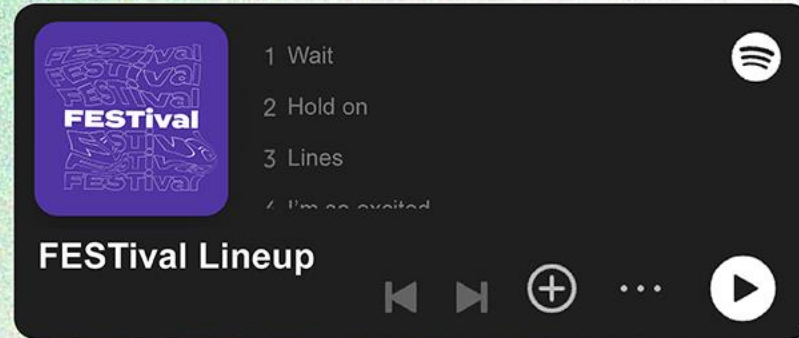
I would like to receive an email when it is my turn

Enter email  
email@email.com

**Notify me by email**

**Let people get  
started & show  
the wait is finite**

**Explore this year's lineup while you wait**



**Build  
anticipation**

**Occupy  
people's time**

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why am I in a queue? ▾

How is my position in queue determined? ▾

What do I need to purchase a ticket? ▾

**Reduce stressors  
& explain the wait**

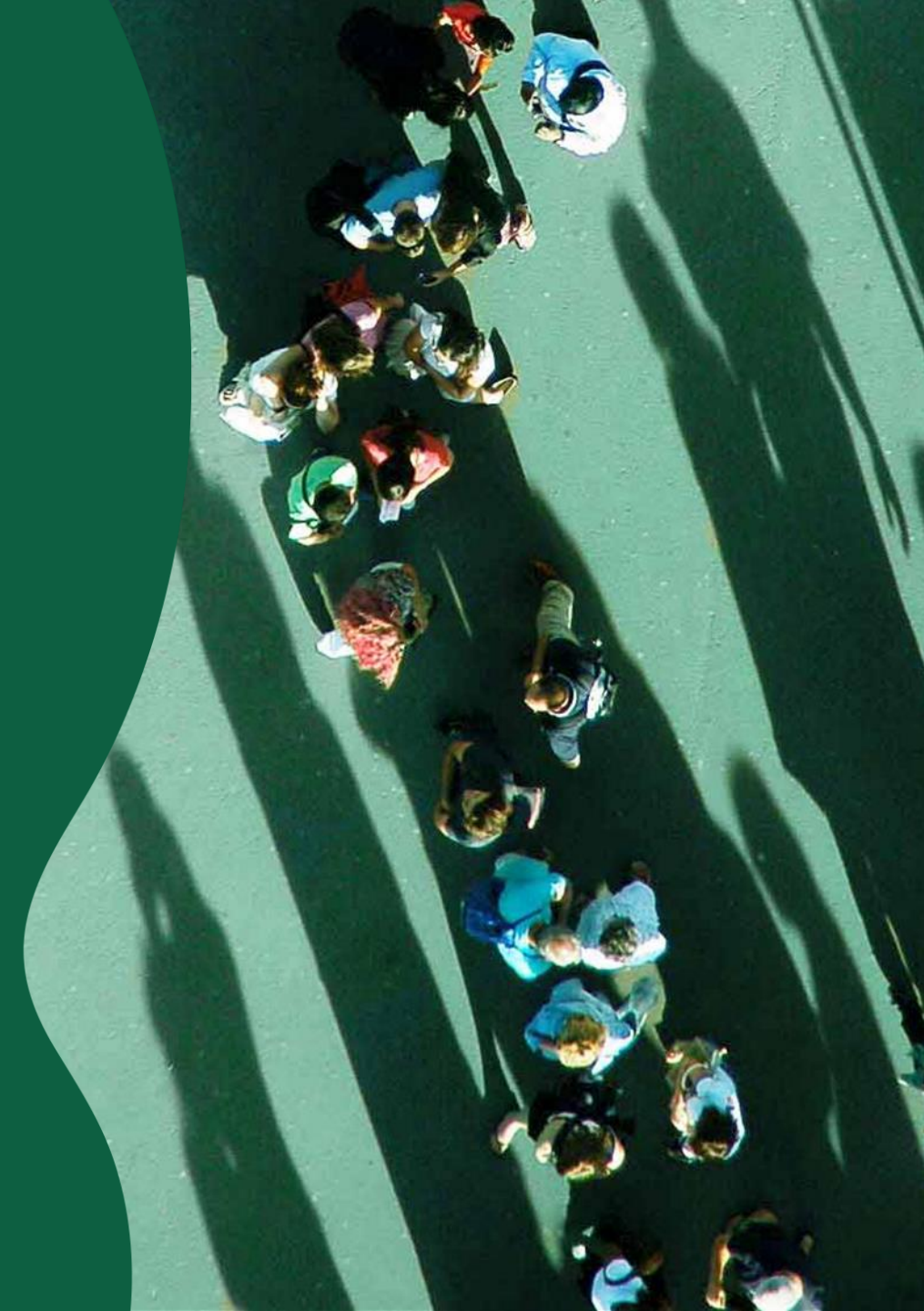
**Show the  
wait is fair**



# Queues aren't just a necessity—they're an opportunity

By following the rules of queue psychology, you can engage, entertain & educate customers.

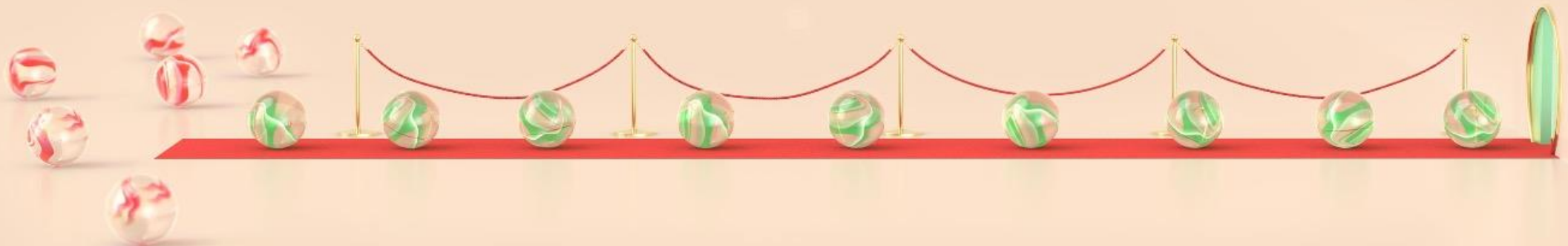
You can capitalize on peak demand.





# Q&A

Scan the QR code to test your  
queuing preferences or visit  
[queue-it.com](https://queue-it.com)





# Q&A

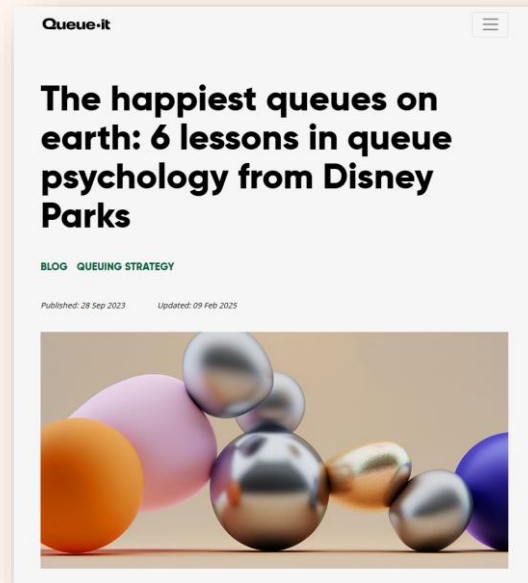
Please use a microphone so that everyone in the room can be part of the conversation



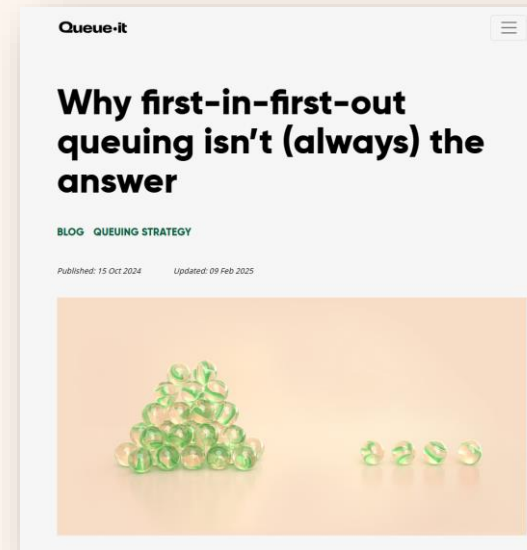
# Additional resources on Queue-it's blog



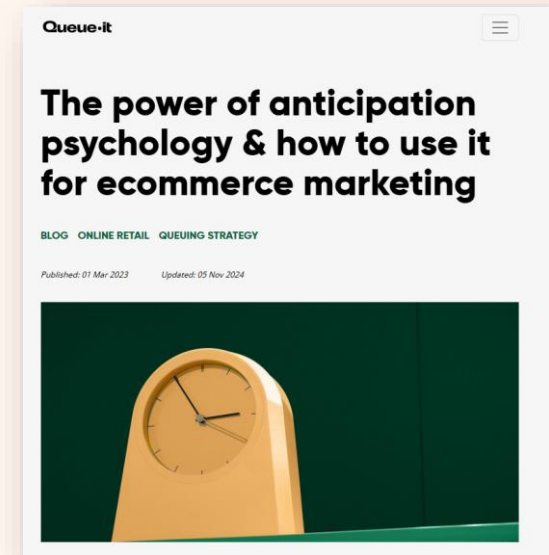
<https://queue-it.com/blog/psychology-of-queuing/>



<https://queue-it.com/blog/disney-queue-psychology/>



<https://queue-it.com/blog/first-in-first-out-randomization/>



<https://queue-it.com/blog/anticipation-psychology-ecommerce/>