

Pricing transparency

Practical guidance for STAR members (July 2026 v1)

This guidance is intended to help members review how prices are displayed to consumers across advertising, event pages, ticket selection pages, baskets, consumer journeys and payment pages.

In one sentence

Consumers should be shown clear, accurate and timely information about the total price they will have to pay, including all unavoidable charges, before they make a purchasing decision.

Purpose and status of this guidance

STAR has been engaging with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) on specific practical questions about how the price transparency requirements apply to ticketing, including the presentation of “from” prices, mandatory per-ticket and per-transaction charges, ticket selection pages, and the use of baskets or rolling totals.

This guidance reflects STAR’s current understanding of the requirements under the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024, the CMA’s published pricing transparency guidance, and STAR’s discussions with the CMA.

This guidance is intended to support members in applying the CMA’s published pricing transparency guidance to ticketing scenarios. It does not replace, override or qualify the CMA’s guidance, and members should read it alongside the CMA’s published materials and the relevant legal requirements.

It is intended to help members review their own pricing displays and consumer journeys. It does not constitute legal advice, and it should not be read as approval of any particular pricing model, website design or wording. Members remain responsible for satisfying themselves that their own practices comply with the law and should take independent legal advice where necessary.

Important

The CMA does not approve individual pricing models, consumer journeys or wording, and does not provide legal advice on specific scenarios. Whether a particular price display complies with the law will depend on the specific wording, design, prominence, timing and context. Members should therefore review the whole consumer journey, not just the checkout page.

I. The basic principle

Where a price is shown to a consumer, the price should include all unavoidable charges that the consumer will have to pay in order to buy the ticket. This includes, where applicable:

- booking fees
- service charges
- facility fees
- fulfilment charges

- delivery charges
- transaction fees
- any other mandatory charge

Mandatory per-transaction fees should be treated as unavoidable charges. The fact that a fee is charged once per order, rather than once per ticket, does not of itself mean that the total price cannot reasonably be calculated. Members should therefore ensure that any mandatory per-transaction fee is shown clearly and reflected in the total price information given to the consumer.

The key question is whether the consumer is being given a clear, complete and accurate picture of the amount they will have to pay before they make a purchasing decision.

2. Where members need to check

Price transparency rules will apply wherever consumers are given information about tickets and prices. A consumer does not necessarily need to be at the final payment stage for the rules to apply.

Stage	What members should check
Advertising and "from" prices	Are unavoidable charges included in the price displayed?
Event pages	Are consumers able to buy tickets, add-ons or other products at the prices advertised?
Ticket selection	Does the total update clearly, prominently and promptly on the ticket selection page or interface, before the consumer proceeds to the next stage?
Basket	Are all mandatory fees included in the total payable as displayed in the basket?
Checkout	Is the final amount consistent with the total price information the consumer has already been shown?
Mobile journey	Is the total still clear, prominent and visible on smaller screens?

Members who sell add-ons or upsells should also be aware that the same principles apply to pricing information displayed for those products.

3. "From" prices

Where a "from" price is used, it should be a genuine fully inclusive price for the lowest-priced ticket available, including all unavoidable charges that can reasonably be calculated at that stage.

Members should also ensure that "from" prices comply with applicable advertising rules. In particular, "from" prices should not exaggerate the availability of tickets at the stated price, and members should make sure that a significant proportion of tickets are available at the advertised "from" price. Members should also hold appropriate evidence that the stated price is genuinely available and ensure that their marketing is up to date to avoid misleading consumers as to price and availability.

Where a mandatory per-transaction fee applies, members should take particular care with "from" prices. The "from" price should not be a ticket-only figure if the consumer cannot buy the ticket at that price. Members should start from the position that unavoidable per-transaction fees must

be reflected in the price information shown to consumers, including early-stage price displays, unless there is a genuine and specific reason why the total price cannot reasonably be calculated. For example, if the lowest ticket price is £40 and a mandatory £2.50 **per-ticket** fee applies, the price should not simply be presented as:

Tickets from £40

A clearer approach would be:

Tickets from £42.50 including mandatory fees

Similarly, if the lowest ticket price is £40 and the consumer must also pay a mandatory £2.50 **per-transaction** fee to complete the purchase, the price should not simply be presented as:

Tickets from £40

A clearer approach would be:

Tickets from £42.50 including mandatory fees

Members may provide a breakdown of the ticket price and any mandatory fees where this helps consumers understand the charge, but the headline “from” price should not be a lower ticket-only figure where the consumer cannot buy the ticket for that amount.

4. Per-transaction fees

Where a per-transaction fee is mandatory, it is an unavoidable charge and must be reflected in the total price information given to the consumer. The fact that the fee is charged per transaction does not, of itself, mean that the total price cannot reasonably be calculated in advance.

Where the consumer has not yet selected tickets, members should make the amount of any mandatory per-transaction fee clear from the outset. Once the consumer selects tickets, the fee should be included immediately in the total amount payable.

For example, a ticket selection page might show:

Tickets:	£100.00
Transaction fee:	£2.50
Total payable:	£102.50

The consumer should not have to reach the next step in the consumer journey or payment pages before the mandatory per-transaction fee is included in the total payable.

5. Website event pages, promotional pages and advertising

On website event pages, promotional pages and advertising, including off-line advertising, prices should normally be shown on an all-inclusive basis. This means that unavoidable per-ticket charges should be included in the ticket price displayed to consumers.

This applies to mandatory per-transaction fees as well as per-ticket fees. Members should not treat a mandatory per-transaction fee as something that can simply be introduced later in the journey. If the fee is known and unavoidable, consumers should be told clearly about it and the price information should not suggest that tickets can be bought for a lower amount than the consumer will in fact have to pay.

There may be limited circumstances where the total price genuinely cannot reasonably be calculated because it depends on information the consumer has not yet provided. Members should apply this carefully. The CMA has confirmed that a mandatory per-transaction fee will usually be a known unavoidable charge and should not, of itself, be treated as a reason why the total price cannot be calculated. Where the final total depends on ticket selection, members should still give

clear information about the per-transaction fee and include it in the total payable as soon as the consumer's selection is known.

Members cannot rely on system limitations as a reason for withholding unavoidable charges until later in the journey.

6. Ticket selection pages in consumer journeys

Ticket selection pages may raise particular issues because the final amount payable can depend on the number and type of tickets selected by the consumer.

STAR has discussed with the CMA how the rules may apply in this specific context. STAR's understanding is that, where the consumer's requirements are not yet known, members may be able to use a basket, rolling total or similar functionality, provided that the total amount payable is shown clearly, prominently and promptly on the ticket selection page which displays the price (rather than the next step in the consumer journey) once the consumer makes their selection.

The use of a rolling total should not be treated as an exception for mandatory per-transaction fees. It is a way of presenting the total price clearly once the consumer's ticket selection is known. Where a mandatory per-transaction fee is fixed and known, members should make the amount clear from the outset and include it in the total payable as soon as tickets are selected.

This approach is most likely to be relevant at the point where the consumer is actively selecting tickets and the trader does not yet know the consumer's ticket requirements. It should not be treated as a general exception to inclusive pricing on advertising, event pages, "from" price displays or other early-stage price information.

A ticket selection page should normally ensure that:

- mandatory per-ticket charges are included in the ticket prices shown
- any mandatory per-transaction fee is clearly identified from the outset
- the total price on the ticket selection page itself updates automatically and promptly when tickets are selected
- the total includes all unavoidable charges, including any mandatory per-transaction fee
- the consumer sees the total price before proceeding
- any price breakdown is secondary to the total payable in terms of prominence and does not obscure, undermine or replace it.

The consumer should not have to reach the next step in the consumer journey to discover the full amount payable.

7. Illustrative examples

The following examples are illustrative only. They are intended to help members think about the clarity, timing and prominence of price information. They should not be treated as approved templates or as legal advice. Whether a particular journey complies will depend on its full context, including wording, layout, prominence, device format and the point at which the consumer sees the total price.

Example A: ticket selection page using a rolling total

STAR Band Tickets

STAR Music Venue, A Road, York, YO1 6TT - Friday 27 March 2026



Ticket type	Cost	Quantity
STANDING	£50.00	0 ▼
SEATS PREMIUM	£70.00	0 ▼
SEATS STANDARD	£40.00	0 ▼

Continue →

Basket

Tickets	£0.00
Transaction fee	£1.50

0 tickets

No tickets selected yet.

STAR Music Venue
A Road, York YO1 6TT

Figure 1A: Before tickets are selected

At the point before the consumer has selected tickets, the page may show available ticket types and any mandatory per-transaction fee clearly in the basket. The total payable will depend on the consumer's selection.

STAR Band Tickets

STAR Music Venue, A Road, York, YO1 6TT - Friday 27 March 2026



Ticket type	Cost	Quantity
STANDING	£50.00	2 ▼
SEATS PREMIUM	£70.00	0 ▼
SEATS STANDARD	£40.00	0 ▼

Continue → £101.50

Basket

Tickets	£100.00
Transaction fee	£1.50

2 tickets

2 x STANDING - £100.00

STAR Music Venue
A Road, York YO1 6TT

Figure 1B: After tickets are selected

Once the consumer selects tickets, the total payable should update clearly and promptly to include all unavoidable charges, including any mandatory per-transaction fee, before the consumer proceeds.

Points to note

- In this type of journey: mandatory per-ticket charges should be included in the ticket prices displayed; any mandatory per-transaction fee should be clearly identified; the total payable on the same page should update as soon as tickets are selected; the consumer should see the total before proceeding; the total payable should be at least as prominent as any subtotal; and the same clarity is needed on mobile as on desktop.

- In this example, the mandatory per-transaction fee is shown from the outset and is included in the total payable on the same page as soon as the consumer selects their tickets. The purpose of the rolling total is not to delay disclosure of the per-transaction fee, but to ensure that the total payable updates clearly as soon as the consumer's ticket selection is known.
- Where a fixed mandatory per-transaction fee applies, it should be shown clearly from the outset. Displaying it in the basket or pricing area from the outset may make the journey clearer, particularly where the basket remains visible as the consumer selects tickets.

Example B: basket-based total

Members may also want to consider whether the total payable should appear in the basket area (per the below), particularly where the basket remains visible as the consumer selects tickets. This may make the total easier for consumers to see and understand, especially where the page contains several price elements.

STAR Band Tickets

STAR Music Venue, A Road, York, YO1 6TT - Friday 27 March 2026



Ticket type	Cost	Quantity
STANDING	£50.00	2
SEATS PREMIUM	£70.00	0
SEATS STANDARD	£40.00	0

[Continue → £101.50](#)

Basket

Tickets	£100.00
Transaction fee	£1.50
Basket total	£101.50
2 tickets	
2 x STANDING - £100.00	

STAR Music Venue
A Road, York YO1 6TT

Figure 2: Alternative basket-based presentation

A basket-based total can help make the total payable more visible where it remains on screen as the consumer selects tickets. Where a mandatory transaction fee applies, members should consider whether showing the per-transaction fee in the basket from the outset would make the journey clearer.

These images are presented as STAR illustrative examples only. They are not examples approved by the CMA. Members must assess their own consumer journeys in context.

8. Avoid misleading subtotals

Members should be careful about the use of words such as "total". A figure described as a "total" should be the full amount payable by the consumer, including all unavoidable charges.

Avoid wording such as "ticket total" where the consumer will also have to pay a mandatory transaction fee or other unavoidable charge.

Clearer alternatives include "Tickets", "Ticket subtotal" or "Subtotal", followed by a prominent "Total payable". The total payable should be at least as prominent as any subtotal and the headline ticket price advertised.

Examples of clearer presentation

Less clear	Clearer
Tickets from £40	Tickets from £42.50 including mandatory fees
Ticket total: £80 + £2.50 transaction fee shown elsewhere	Tickets: £80 Transaction fee: £2.50 Total payable: £82.50
Fee added at checkout	Fee shown clearly, and wherever the ticket price appears before proceeding and included in the total payable
Total shown only after clicking checkout	Total shown wherever the ticket price appears before the consumer proceeds to the next stage
Optional charge presented as part of the normal flow without clear opt-out	Optional charge clearly labelled as optional and no automatic opt-in

9. Optional charges

Optional charges do not need to be included in the total price, provided they are genuinely optional. This may include, for example:

- optional postage where a free digital delivery option is available
- optional ticket protection
- optional charity donations
- optional merchandise or add-ons

Optional charges should be presented clearly and should not be pre-selected unless this is legally permitted. Members should avoid designs that make optional charges appear compulsory or make it difficult for consumers to decline them.

The price of the option itself should also adhere to the same pricing principles set out above (i.e. the price of the option should include all unavoidable charges that the consumer will have to pay in order to buy the option).

10. Delivery and fulfilment

Where a delivery or fulfilment charge is mandatory, it should be included in the total price.

Where the consumer has a choice of delivery methods, members should make clear which charges apply and when. If a free delivery option is available, that should be clear. If the consumer must pay at least one delivery or fulfilment charge, that charge should not be hidden until later in the journey.

Digital delivery, mobile ticket delivery or fulfilment fees should not be presented as optional if the consumer cannot avoid them.

11. Mobile and desktop journeys

Members should test pricing displays on both desktop and mobile. A journey that appears clear on a desktop screen may be less clear on a mobile device if the basket, total price or fee information is collapsed, hidden, only visible after scrolling, or placed below the main call-to-action button.

Members should check that:

- the total price is visible before the consumer proceeds
- the total price is not obscured by buttons or pop-ups
- expandable fee information is not the only place where mandatory charges are displayed and made known to the consumer
- the consumer does not need to scroll past the "continue" or "checkout" button to understand the full price

12. Practical compliance checklist

Members should review each consumer journey and ask:

1. Where do we first show a price to the consumer?
2. Are consumers able to buy at the “from” prices and are they inclusive of unavoidable charges that can reasonably be calculated?
3. Does the price shown include all mandatory per-ticket charges?
4. Do we apply any mandatory per-order or per-transaction fee? If so, is the amount of that fee made clear early in the journey?
5. Have we avoided treating a mandatory per-transaction fee as a reason why the total price cannot be calculated?
6. When does the consumer first see the full total payable?
7. Once tickets are selected, is any mandatory per-transaction fee included immediately in the total payable?
8. Does any basket or rolling total include all unavoidable charges before the consumer proceeds?
9. Is the total price clear, prominent and timely?
10. Are any subtotals less prominent than the total payable and headline price?
11. Do we use the word “total” only for the full amount payable?
12. Are optional charges clearly optional?
13. Are delivery and fulfilment charges explained clearly and included where mandatory?
14. Does the journey work clearly on mobile as well as desktop?
15. Have we kept a record of our pricing review, including any decisions about how mandatory charges are included or presented?

13. Higher-risk practices

Members should avoid:

- advertising prices that exclude unavoidable fees
- using "from" prices that are not genuinely available to consumers or that exclude any mandatory transaction fees
- adding mandatory charges only at checkout, including disclosing a mandatory per-transaction fee only at checkout
- using “total”, including “ticket total”, for a figure that is not the full amount payable making a

subtotal more prominent than the full total

- relying on small print or expandable sections to explain mandatory fees
- requiring consumers to proceed before seeing the full total
- treating system limitations as a reason not to show inclusive pricing
- treating a mandatory per-transaction fee as a reason for delaying total price information
- showing a rolling total that excludes a known mandatory per-transaction fee

14. STAR's recommended standard

Advertising and event information pages: Prices should be inclusive of all unavoidable charges that can reasonably be calculated.

Ticket selection pages: Where the final price depends on the consumer's ticket selection, a clear basket or rolling total may be used, provided it updates promptly and includes all unavoidable charges on the ticket selection page itself before the consumer proceeds.

Checkout pages: The total amount payable should be clear, prominent and consistent with what the consumer has already been shown.

Terminology: The word "total" should be reserved for the full amount payable by the consumer.

Record keeping: Members should document their review of pricing displays, including any decisions about how mandatory fees are included or presented.

15. Final reminder

STAR has raised several practical ticketing-specific issues with the CMA and will continue to engage with the CMA if further clarification would be useful. However, responsibility for compliance rests with each member.

Members should review their full consumer journey, from advertising and event pages through to ticket selection, basket, checkout and payment, and ensure that consumers are given clear, accurate and timely information about the total price they will pay.