



EMCEE GUIDELINES

The emcee is viewed by audience members (especially new ones) as being the main representative of Acoustic Brew. Besides emceeing the show, the emcee interacts with the performer, helps decide when sets should begin, and is available to talk to audience members who have suggestions or want to get involved as volunteers.

Objectives

1. Establish a professional feel for the ABC. Help show the audience and the performers that we're a well-run, professional organization.
2. Make sure that the performers get an introduction that does them justice.
3. Get audience members excited about future shows.
4. *Spend a minimum amount of time onstage*; say what you need to say quickly and efficiently

The emcee should know where the performers are and that they're ready to go on before getting up to introduce them. The emcee should coordinate directly with lights person (generally one of the CD sellers does this) when they're about to start each set. You need to give the lights person enough time to get up to the lights box. Make sure the lights person understand not to turn on the lights before the encore.

Things to cover (in no particular order)

1. introduce the opening act
2. introduce the main performer
3. point out that we're entirely volunteer-run
4. thank the evening's volunteers
5. encourage people to sign the mailing list
6. encourage people to be generous at the snack table donation basket
7. encourage people to purchase performer's recordings
8. at the CWB, remind people to be quiet outside
9. mention upcoming shows



10. thank the audience for coming

Divide the announcements among the available breaks, so that they're sprinkled throughout the evening. Try not to talk too long during any one break. There are four available opportunities to speak. Feel free to rearrange what's said when.

1. The opening break. Make a few welcoming announcements and then introduce the opening act.
2. Immediately after the opening act has finished performing, before people stand up to take an intermission. Encourage people to visit the snack table and be generous at the donation basket; encourage them to sign our mailing list.
3. At the end of that intermission. This break includes introducing the main performer.
4. Before introducing the main performer's second set. Thank the evening's volunteers; mention upcoming shows; reintroduce the main performer.

Note:

There could be two other breaks, but it is suggested that you not speak at those points: One is after the main performer's first set, and the other is at the end of the evening. ***Out of respect for the performer and the mood they're trying to create, try to avoid getting up on stage at those two points.***

Introducing the main act:

This is the time to establish the performer's credentials and set the stage for how special it is to have them. Try to be brief, about four sentences or so. A good technique is to describe them as "tonight's performer" and don't mention their name until you end the introduction with "Please welcome...". Prepare your comments in advance by browsing their website and any promotional materials they've sent. Introduce yourself to the performers in advance and ask if there's anything in particular they want you to mention, but not "What should I say about you?" That only makes us look unprofessional. Before you go out to introduce the performers, make sure they're ready to go on.



Mention upcoming shows

This represents an important promotional opportunity for us, a chance to get people excited about those shows. Besides giving names and dates, try to say a word or two about each show. And if someone oohs or aahs or applauds at the mention of some upcoming performer, that's perfect — it's good publicity for us. In addition, the current show's performers, who are waiting to begin their second set at that point, hear the list too; often they know some of the upcoming performers and will put in a plug for those shows.

Thanks to Tina Hay who wrote the bulk of this guideline.