BE SURE TO READ **ALL** OF THE INSTRUCTIONS

Van Halen was the first band to take huge productions into third-level markets. From Van Halen lead singer, David Lee Roth’s autobiography.

We’d pull up with nine eighteen-wheeler trucks, full of gear, where the standard was three trucks, max. And then there were many, many technical errors – whether it was the girders couldn’t support the weight, or the flooring would sink in, or the doors weren’t big enough to move the gear though.

The contract rider read like a version of the Chinese Yellow Pages because there was so much equipment, and so many human being to make it function. So just a little test, in the technical aspect of the rider, it would say “Article 148: There will be fifteen amperage voltage sockets at twenty foot spaces, evenly, providing nineteen amperes...” this kind of thing, and article number 126, in the middle of nowhere, was: “there will be no brown M&M’s in the backstage area, upon pain of forfeiture of the show, with full compensation.”

So, when I would walk backstage, if I saw a brown M&M in that bowl... well, line-check the entire production. Guaranteed you’re going to arrive at a technical error. They didn’t read the contract. Guaranteed you’d run into a problem. Sometimes it would threaten to just destroy the whole show. Something like, literally life-threatening.