



The Live Music Index

The value of 'seed music' to hospitality venues and artists in the UK

An industry-first report from GigPig and CGA by NIQ.

Welcome to the Live Music Index, an industry-first report uncovering the current and potential value of 'seed' music to Britain's pubs, bars, restaurants, and artists.

We're delighted to have worked with our partners to publish this first-of-a-kind report to shine a light on the 'seed' section of the music industry, which is the very bedrock of the UK's cultural scene. We've heard directly from thousands of artists and venues to uncover exactly what they are experiencing on a daily basis, giving them a voice.

We have found that the value of this part of the industry economically adds up to £2.4bn for venues and £1.3bn for artists. This is incredible insight and our ambition is for this pivotal research

to help all artists and venues, who form part of the "seed" music industry, to attain the recognition to the UK's cultural and economic landscape they so richly deserve.

I hope it will pave the way for a more certain future for the UK's up and coming musical talent and shape a deeper understanding of how they directly contribute to the success of a healthy hospitality industry.

Michael Forster, CEO of GigPig.

About the 'seed' music industry

When people reference the live music industry, they are typically referring to ticketed gigs, events and festivals. By 'seed' music, we're talking about DJs, bands and soloists playing music in venues such as pubs, restaurants, bars and clubs. While this sub-section of the live music industry has by far the highest number of participating artists and venues, it has previously been unreported on in the UK.

About our report

The Live Music Index is the first cross-industry report on the value of 'seed' music to Britain's licensed premises and musicians. It is based on two exclusive in-depth surveys conducted by GigPig with CGA by NIQ: of 511 pubs, bars and other hospitality venues that host live music, plus 291 that do not currently do so; and of 1,084 artists, made up of instrumentalists, vocalists and DJs and spanning multiple genres.

About our partners

The Live Music Index has been produced in conjunction with the Night Time Industries Association (NTIA), Live music Industry Venues & Entertainment (LIVE), Pirate.com and Play Music Today (PMT).

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Executive summary

Live music helps pubs, bars, restaurants and nightclubs flourish. The large majority of venues say it improves atmosphere and guest satisfaction **(87%)** and increases revenue and footfall **(79%)**. Live events can increase spend per visit by **64%**, dwell time by **61%** and footfall by **36%**.

Musicians earn good money in the seed music scene. Performers earn an average of **£140** per gig and **£24,948** per year—rising to **£177** and **£30,816** among GigPig artists. GigPig artists earn **49%** more than the average musician's earnings as reported by the Musicians Union.

There is significant untapped potential for music events. Managed venues could generate an average sales uplift of around £107,000 per year by hosting live music. If all venues with the potential to show live music did so, it could be worth up to £2.4bn to revenue in the hospitality sector.

Seed music can help more artists. Nine in ten **(90%)** musicians expect to perform more often over the next 12 months, and **65%** of part-time performers would like to work full-time. The Live Music Index estimates that if all musicians were to gig in the seed music scene, they could earn an additional £400m a year, to take total combined earnings to £1.3bn.

Booking artists should be easier and faster.

Pubs, bars and nightclubs can find it difficult and time-consuming to find and book musicians. Nearly half **(48%)** would welcome a simplified process and reduced admin, and a similar number **(47%)** want transparent pricing and standardised contracts. There is high demand for centralised booking platforms to deliver solutions to these problems.

Online platforms boost discoverability. Two in five **(40%)** venues want help to discover new artists and genres. Searchable performer databases can make this process much easier.

Musicians want to perform more often. More than a third **(36%)** of musicians say can't find enough venues to gig at, and **39%** say they need more money to support themselves. Searchable platforms can help by connecting these keen musicians with venues that would benefit from them.

Artists need support on logistics. Nearly nine in ten **(88%)** musicians say they are challenged by sound quality and other technical issues, and nearly as many **(79%)** cite disorganised or poorly managed gigs and logistics as a problem. Investment in these and other areas can help venues maximise their income from music.

The Live Music Index: headline findings

£2.4bn

Potential annual revenue for the hospitality sector, if all eligible licensed venues offered live music to customers.



£1.3bn

Estimated total earning potential of UK musicians if they gig in the seed music scene

64%

Increase in average spend per visit when venues host live music

87%

Of venues say live music improves atmosphere and guest satisfaction

56%

Of UK musicians regularly perform live gigs in the seed music scene

Focus on venues

Seed music venues: The state of play

Live music has long been a staple feature of Britain's pubs, bars, restaurants, clubs and other licensed premises. Research for CGA by NIQ for the Live Music Index shows there are currently around 41,077 pubs, bars, clubs and other licensed venues with the potential to host events—increasing to 65,233 when sports and social clubs and other large venues are included. These sites are the lifeblood of this country's music scene and make an enormous contribution to Britain's culture and economy.

GigPig and CGA's survey reveals nearly three quarters (**73%**) of the venues surveyed host live music at least once a week, while nearly a third (**31%**) offer events between three and five times weekly. These events generate a host of benefits,

improving everything from guest satisfaction to revenue to community support (see box). It is no surprise to find that nearly nine in ten (**87%**) venues plan to increase their live music offering in the next 12 months.

Operators of these venues recognise the popularity of their live music—and the dangers of neglecting it. Nearly all (**96%**) say their business would suffer as a result of removing live music, with significant numbers expecting a fall in customer satisfaction (**39%**) and revenue (**35%**), a negative impact on atmosphere (**31%**) and a need to make staff redundant (**16%**) if they were to stop hosting music. It is clear that live music is central to the commercial success of thousands of licensed premises in Britain.

The top five benefits of live music

Percentage of venues citing factor as a reason for offering more live music



87%

Improves atmosphere and guest satisfaction



79%

Increases revenue and footfall



48%

3 Supports local artists



44%

Brings local communities together



29%

Generates repeat visits

Seed music: The size of the prize

Seed music: The size of the prize

While many operators already enjoy the benefits of live music, there is potential for thousands more venues to reap rewards. The Live Music Index estimates that events can increase venues' sales by **33%**, and footfall by **36%**. When live music is on, spend per visit can rise by up to **64%** and the number of drinks ordered by **62%**. Guests stay longer too, with the average dwell time increasing **61%**. Frequency of visits to a venue rises **48%**—proof that music can increase loyalty to a pub, bar or club.

When the untapped potential of all possible venues is combined, live music could generate **£2.4bn** in revenue to the hospitality sector. On a venue-by-venue basis, this equates to an average uplift of around **£107,000** per year for the average managed bar, pub or nightclub. Broken down by channel, the figures are **£90,000** per year for the average managed pub; **£241,000** for the average managed bar; and **£279,000** for the average managed nightclub that offers additional live music.

These numbers make a powerful case for live music in Britain's licensed premises. Although two in five (**40%**) venues face budget constraints, and hosting events requires additional resources and operational changes, the extra revenue generated can very quickly repay investment.

Overcoming the barriers to live music

To unlock all the potential benefits of hosting live music, venues need to overcome some tricky challenges. Here are five barriers highlighted by GigPig and CGA by NIQ's survey—and solutions to each.

1. Profitability

The majority (**56%**) of venues say the profitability of their live music is negatively impacted by the need

to spend time sourcing and booking artists. Time devoted to researching and booking artists soaks up resources, and by streamlining processes operators can dedicate themselves to delivering commercially successful events.

2. Ease

Nearly half (**48%**) of respondents to the survey say they would welcome a simplified process and reduced admin when booking live music. Access to a centralised, one-stop bookings platform can substantially ease the frustrations of handling bookings. Nearly two in five (**38%**) venues who do not currently host live music would be more likely to do so if they could use a system to manage the bookings process.

3. Transparency

Venues' time can also be consumed by having to deal with inconsistent or opaque contracts for events. Nearly half (**47%**) say they would like to see transparent pricing and standardised contracts, which help to manage expectations for venues and artists alike.

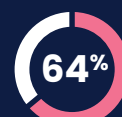
4. Discovery

It's not easy for staff to find the right artists to attract guests and increase revenue. Two in five (**40%**) say they want help to discover new artists and experiment with new music genres. A central, searchable database of performers is an ideal solution to the discoverability problem.

5. Promotion

Understandably, not all venues have the resources to publicise their live music events. More than a third (**35%**) want help with promotion, marketing and data analytics. Trusted support from live music experts and artist intermediaries can make all the difference between a profitable or loss-making event.

Live music and venues: Key numbers



Average increase in spend per visit when venues host live music



Of venues say live music increases revenue and footfall



Of venues say live music brings local communities together



Of venues plan to increase their live music offering in the next 12 months



Focus on artists

Seed music artists: The state of play

Musicians are vital to Britain's cultural life and provide entertainment for millions of consumers every year. Around 43,600 musicians are active in the UK, and more than half **(56%)** regularly perform in the seed music scene.

These artists' incomes vary widely, but many can earn good money from seed music performances. Average earnings are £2,079 per month or £24,948 per year—significantly higher than the averages for musicians in all sectors, as a recent study by the Musicians Union estimated average earnings to be £20,700. Artists registered with GigPig can attract even more (see box).

There is potential for artists to earn even more. Of the Live Music Index sample, only **6%** gig full-time, while **20%** perform part-time—generating an average of **22%** of their income from seed music scene—and **75%** do so casually or as a hobby. Around a quarter **(27%)** say they gig weekly, but the large majority say they perform monthly **(35%)** or less frequently **(38%)**. The key takeaway here is that while some musicians are making the most of their talents in financial terms, there is lots of potential for them to perform more frequently and increase their earnings.

Helping seed music artists earn more

There are positive signs that artists are getting more opportunities to perform in seed music venues. Nearly half **(46%)** of those responding to the Live Music Index survey say they are gigging more frequently than a year ago, and nine in ten **(90%)** expect to perform more often over the next 12 months. Nearly a quarter **(23%)** say they are being paid more per gig too—more than the **15%** who are being paid less.

Gigging has sometimes been seen as a temporary or precarious occupation, but it is increasingly a rewarding primary or secondary career choice. Four in five **(80%)** artists think gigging in the seed sector is a worthwhile career, and well over half **(59%)** use gigs to top up their income from another job.

Music is a calling for many musicians, with four in five **(81%)** agreeing it's their passion. However, while a fifth **(20%)** say they gig purely for fun, it is clear that the majority of musicians have a professional and proactive approach to performing. With support to connect them to venues and overcome the challenges they face, they are ready to deliver engaging and profitable events for venues. The Live Music Index estimates that if all musicians were to gig in the seed music scene, they could earn an additional £400m a year, to take total combined earnings to £1.3bn.

Meeting musicians' challenges

Musicians face various barriers to progressing their careers. However, with the right support they can be easily overcome, allowing more of the **65%** of part-time musicians who would like to work full-time to turn their passion into a career. Here are five common challenges and solutions.

1. Pay

Understandably, earnings are a chief concern for musicians. Well over nine in ten **(95%)** cite limited pay and unreliable job opportunities as a challenge. But while venues' resources are limited, investment in performers can easily be repaid by earnings over the bar. Platforms like GigPig can also help to make gigging schedules and earnings more consistent. By making payments simpler, they can also satisfy the **42%** of artists who say they face issues collecting their money after gigs.

2. Technical issues

Musicians are frustrated by sound quality and other technical issues. Nearly nine in ten **(88%)** cite these as challenges to be addressed, while half **(49%)** say they face poor or inadequate facilities to get ready for gigs. Investment in high quality equipment and infrastructure is needed to take full advantage of seed music in pubs, bars, restaurants and nightclubs.

3. Logistics

Other problematic practicalities include disorganised or poorly managed gigs and logistics—a challenge for four in five **(79%)** artists. Venues could also take action to support the **22%** of musicians who say they face a lack of security, or the **17%** who encounter rude or aggressive staff members. Staff training can be part of the solution, by giving staff the skills they need to make the work of musicians easier.

4. Gig shortages

Most artists are eager to perform more frequently, but more than two in five **(44%)** say a shortage of gigs is a barrier to making a full-time career in music. More than a third **(36%)** can't find enough venues to gig at, and a similar number **(39%)** say they need more money to support themselves. Online platforms can solve these problems—

especially for the large numbers of musicians who told the survey they would like to access venue listings **(64%)** and direct booking requests **(59%)** on platforms.

5. Unsociable hours

Unsociable hours and travel logistics are a challenge for three in five **(59%)** musicians—especially those who are combining gigs with other work. Central databases like GigPig can help by connecting artists with venues in locations that are more convenient.

GigPig artists

The Live Music Index shows artists using GigPig already earn significantly more from seed music than average. Registered musicians earn an average of £30,816 per year—**24%** more than the average among all survey respondents of £24,948, and **49%** more than the £20,700 earnings reported by the Musicians Union. Their average gig payment is £177, compared to £140 among all musicians. And figures can go much higher, with nearly one in ten **(9%)** artists on GigPig earning more than £50,000 per year.

Artists and seed music: Key numbers

£1.3bn

Average annual earnings of musicians in the seed music sector



80%

Of artists think gigging in the seed sector is a worthwhile career



66%

Of artists would like more gig opportunities



65%

Of part-time musicians would like to work full-time in music





Top takeaways

How can seed music venues maximise their earnings and optimise the experiences of guests and musicians? Here are five Live Music Index takeaways.

1. Capitalise on demand for live music.

Britain's seed music scene is flourishing, with huge demand for events among consumers and artists alike. The Live Music Index shows how events help venues increase revenue, guest satisfaction and much more—but there is significant untapped potential to reap even more benefits.

2. Support musicians.

Britain has thousands of passionate musicians who want to perform more regularly. Booking performances supports their careers and is an important investment in the country's creative industries.

3. Discover new talent.

Identifying the right musicians for live performances isn't always easy. Online platforms like GigPig make it much easier to discover new artists and genres, match them to guests' preferences and promote them more effectively.

4. Cut booking admin.

Many venues are put off hosting live music by laborious processes around booking artists and managing tasks like contracts and payments. By centralising all of this work, GigPig makes it much easier and quicker to handle bookings from start to finish—freeing up staff for more commercially valuable tasks.

5. Invest in infrastructure.

Many artists remain frustrated by logistical issues in seed music, like event management, sound quality and security. Developing a professional infrastructure can help venues attract more artists and guests and maximise their earnings.

How GigPig can help

GigPig is a live music marketplace empowering artists and venues to connect at scale, helping to create thousands of new gigging opportunities in towns and cities across the UK every month.

Venues: GigPig gives venues unparalleled access to thousands of artists, with all the tools they need to grow their live music offering and in turn increase customer satisfaction, footfall and revenue.

Artists: GigPig gives artists a free platform to find and get booked for gigs, with complete control over when, where and how much they are paid.

Cities: By transforming the way the artists and venues connect, GigPig is helping bring the joy of live music to more communities in towns and cities across the UK.

Learn more

To learn more about GigPig's services, visit www.gigpig.uk and email letstalk@gigpig.uk

For more about CGA by NIQ's research capabilities, visit www.cgastrategy.com and email hello@cgastrategy.com.