

More than Noise

**How Entertainment-Led
Hospitality is
Reshaping the Industry**



Hospitality is at a turning point.

Rising costs, changing consumer behaviour, and increased competition mean that venues must work harder than ever to attract and retain customers. At the same time, there has been a clear shift towards experience-led outings: consumers are no longer satisfied with simply going out - they expect memorable and valuable experiences that justify their spending.

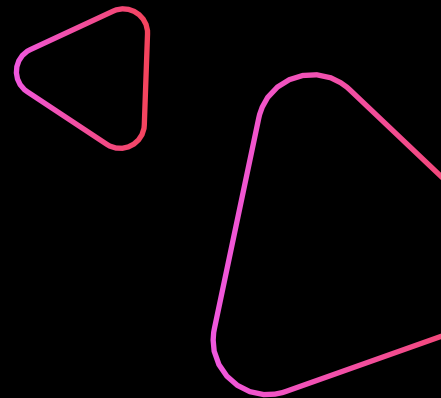
Live music has always been part of the social experience when going out, often viewed as a way to enhance the atmosphere. Although for many venue operators it can feel like a gamble to invest in artists, equipment, and production - all without a guaranteed return on investment. However, in today's ever changing environment, entertainment

programming is becoming one of the most effective and underutilised commercial drivers available to operators. In fact, it does more than create an exciting atmosphere, it drives footfall, increases dwell time, boosts consumer spending habits, and provides an experience that cannot be replicated at home. In other words, music-led experiences are no longer simply entertainment - they are increasingly becoming measurable drivers of business performance.

In this report, we will delve into national research, proprietary GigPig data and industry insights to quantify the real impact of live music in hospitality and highlight the scale of the opportunity ahead.

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Executive Summary

Hospitality plays a vital role in social life. On average, Brits spend 20 minutes travelling to a venue with live music. People are 31% less likely to visit venues without programmed entertainment, while 38% say they are more likely to go to venues that host live performances. 13% have gone out locally to see live music in the past year, showing an upward trend compared to previous years.

Entertainment-led hospitality environments are driving measurable increases in spend, dwell time, loyalty, and repeat visitation. When live music is present, venues see a 64% increase in spend-per-visit, including a 24% increase in spend among guests aged 18 to 25, alongside a 30% trade-up in alcoholic drinks among younger visitors.

Encouragingly, 68% of 18- to 25-year-olds return to a venue after discovering an artist they enjoy, with 70% engaging with the business beyond the venue. Three in five (59%) agree that discovering new musicians live feels more authentic than discovering them online, reinforcing the growing value of real-world shared experiences.

Hospitality venues and emerging artists play a pivotal role in British cultural traditions. 57% of participants agree that live music is a fundamental part of British culture, and 42% feel more authentically connected to their community when live music is present.

Despite strong demand, opportunities for emerging artists are limited: 36% of seed artists struggle to find venues, and 54% of 18- to 25-year-olds want to perform.



64%

Increase in
spend-per-visit
with live music present



68%
of 18 to 25-year-olds return
to a venue after discovering
an artist they enjoy



£2.4bn
potential revenue
for hospitality



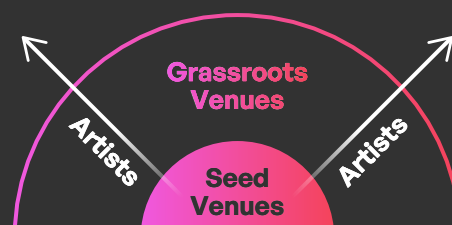
£107k

annual revenue
opportunity per venue

Seed Venues and Seed Artists

Seed music describes the earliest and most active stage of live performance in the UK. It takes place across pubs, bars and hospitality venues nationwide, where live music is programmed as part of the customer experience, creating regular opportunities for artists to perform in front of live audiences. This is where most artists first access consistent opportunities to play live. It is also where thousands of working musicians perform regularly, building experience, refining their craft, and earning income.

While it has historically been difficult to measure, it accounts for a substantial share of live music activity in the UK, both in terms of the number of performances and the number of artists involved. Seed music is not separate from the wider industry. It underpins it. It is where artists develop the confidence, capability and consistency that allows them to progress into grassroots venues and beyond.



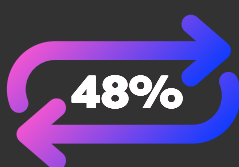
Why Experience-Led Venues Are Winning

With the growing economic crisis, pressure on consumers has begun to rise. The cost of living continues to increase, which is resulting in an ongoing reduction in disposable income and a heightened awareness of value. Consumers are becoming more conscious of where they spend their time and money, increasingly expecting experiences that deliver more than just basic hospitality. Data from GigPig's One Poll study found that on average, Brits spend 20 minutes travelling to their nearest venue offering live music, demonstrating that people are actively seeking these experiences.

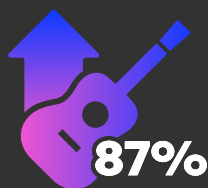
Hospitality has always played a crucial role in people's everyday social life. Venues are more than just places to eat or drink; they are spaces where people come together to connect, celebrate, and build a sense of community. Over one in ten (13%) have gone out locally to see live music in the past year compared to recent previous years, further highlighting this shift.

Programmed entertainment has long shaped the social hospitality experience, adding atmosphere, energy, and emotional engagement that turn ordinary visits into memorable experiences. 31% said pubs and bars without live music are less appealing, while 38% said they are more likely to visit venues that regularly host live performances. Guests increasingly expect environments that feel vibrant, engaging, and worth the investment of both their time and money. Live music is no longer just an added bonus - it is increasingly becoming a central driver of consumer choice. Music-led experiences now play a huge role in attracting visitors, influencing where people go, and shaping their overall hospitality experience.

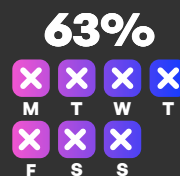
Similarly, 63% of 18 to 25-year-olds said they go out when live music is present, emphasising its importance in creating memorable social engagement, specifically for a highly desirable audience. This is not only beneficial for guests - venues themselves are feeling increasingly confident about investing in live music. Nine out of ten venues plan to increase their live music offerings in 2026.



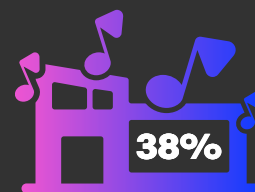
increase in
repeat visits



of venues plan to
increase live music



of 18 to 25-year-olds
go out more often
when live music is
present



said they are more
likely to visit venues
that regularly host live
performances

The Commercial Value of Live Music in Hospitality

Live music is delivering measurable commercial value across hospitality, acting as a key driver of consumer spending. Venues with consistent entertainment programming see an increase of 24% in spend by guests aged 18 to 25 and an overall 33% increase in sales when live music is present.

Alongside this, premiumisation in cocktails and spirits as a 30% trade up amongst 18 to 25-year-olds. This further demonstrates the direct financial impact of alcohol consumption when incorporating music into the hospitality experience. The Live Music Index also reported a 36% increase in footfall transforming venues into experience driven destinations that attract new

audiences while encouraging repeat visits, further building customer loyalty. Venue atmosphere and guest satisfaction increases by 87%.

Emerging artists often bring their own loyal fanbases, further introducing new audiences to venues and creating additional opportunities for repeat visits. This exclusivity strengthens customer loyalty and drives revenue growth. Over time, consistently hosting live music can elevate a venue's commercial value, helping it build a reputation as a destination for high-quality, engaging experiences, enhancing the overall customer lifetime value.

By leveraging the appeal of live music, venues can boost profitability, differentiate themselves in a competitive market, and secure long-term sustainability, positioning themselves as essential cultural and social hubs within their communities.



24%

increase in spend by guests aged 18 to 25



30%

trade up in cocktails and spirits by guests aged 18 to 25



64%

overall increase in spend-per-visit



36%

increase of footfall



87%

increase in atmosphere and guest satisfaction



£107k

annual revenue opportunity per venue

Guest Retention and Engagement with Live Music

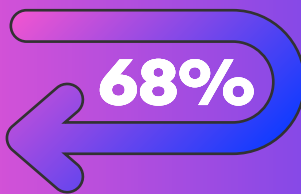
Live music plays a crucial role in driving guest retention and engagement. The GigPig One Poll found that 68% of 18- to 25-year-olds return to a venue after discovering an artist they enjoy, often engaging with the business beyond the live performance. Live music not only benefits venues but also has a positive impact on artists, with 70% of guests interacting with the artist after their visit. This highlights the growing relationship between live music, customer loyalty, and repeat visitation.

Hospitality provides a platform for emerging artists to connect with their audience in meaningful ways. This interaction benefits both the venue and the artist, promoting long-term viability while fostering the growth and recognition of new talent.

Furthermore, live music helps maintain a lively, positive atmosphere and encourages guests to linger longer. The Live Music Index found that dwell time increases by 61%, and repeat visits increase by 48%.

By consistently showcasing live music and building strong relationships with performers, venues set themselves apart from others, creating a distinct identity and reputation that encourages repeat visits. Over time, this not only strengthens customer loyalty but also positions venues as cultural destinations, drawing a dedicated community of visitors.

A welcoming environment, shared experiences that connect people, and opportunities for guests to discover new artists all contribute to making each visit memorable and meaningful. This approach fosters a loyal audience who associate the venue with quality experiences and the discovery of new music.



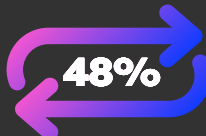
of 18 to 25-year-olds
return to a venue
after discovering a
new artist



of 18 to 25-year-olds
continue to interact with
the artist post-visit



increase in
dwell time



increase in
repeat visits



Making Space for Culture and Community

Community building in hospitality through live music promotes connection and inclusivity, transforming listeners into active, engaged members of a broader social network. GigPig's One Poll survey found that 42% of Brits feel more connected to their community when live music is present, highlighting that people are increasingly seeking real-life experiences that allow them to form meaningful connections with like minded individuals.

The cultural significance of live music in Britain further reinforces its role in community building. GigPig's One Poll revealed that 57% of participants view live music as an integral part of British culture. This historic tradition continues to shape hospitality experiences, linking

venues to a wider cultural narrative and reinforcing their role as "third spaces" - places outside of home and work where people can gather, socialise, and build lasting connections.

In today's digital-first world, it is becoming increasingly popular to source third spaces, turning to live music. 59% of respondents agreed that discovering new music live provides a more authentic experience than online. Guests are more likely to return to a venue when they associate it with unique and memorable experiences, demonstrating the direct link between live music and customer retention.

Through live music, venues can cultivate environments that are not just entertaining but socially meaningful, becoming destinations where connections are forged, communities are strengthened, and cultural heritage is celebrated.



42%

of Brits feel more **connected to their community** when **live music is present**



57%

of participants view live music as a **part of British culture**



59%

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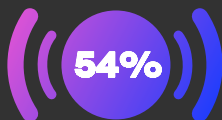
Challenges in Live Music

While demand for live music continues to grow, access to consistent performance opportunities remains limited for many emerging artists. GigPig's One Poll survey found that 54% of 18 to 25-year olds want to perform live, with 33% more than likely to perform in the next 5 years. A lack of accessible performance opportunities is already impacting participation, with 28% of young emerging artists reporting they have stepped away from performing, while 14% cite a shortage of local venues.

At the same time, hospitality faces its own obstacles. Many venues recognise the value of live music but struggle to consistently book quality acts that match their space, audience, and budget.

The lack of streamlined connections between artists and venues results in missed opportunities: empty slots, underutilised nights, and challenges in cultivating loyal audiences.

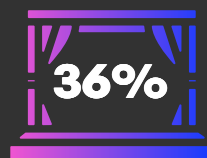
This creates significant opportunities for hospitality venues to participate in high-profile events such as GigPig's Seed Sounds Weekender, offering a nationwide platform to host live music. This weekend-long festival celebrates seed venues and the emerging artists that encompass those, enabling venues to showcase talent while attracting audiences from across the country. By participating, venues can drive footfall, increase exposure, and create cultural moments that resonate with both existing and new customers.



of 18 to 25-year-olds
want to perform live



of young
emerging artists
have dropped out
**due to the lack
of venues**



of emerging
artists **struggle
to find** enough
venues to
perform



of artists think
gigging in the seed
sector **is a
worthwhile career**

SEED SOUNDS WEEKENDER

Seed Sounds Weekender by GigPig, is a nationwide multi-venue festival celebrating the early-stage live music ecosystem. The event takes place across pubs, bars, restaurants, and hotels - seed venues where live music is part of the offering rather than the primary focus. By providing emerging artists with performance opportunities in these spaces, the festival supports talent development, helps artists gain exposure, and strengthens the foundation of the UK live music pipeline.



The Operational Gap

Hospitality has evolved rapidly over the last decade. Operators now use sophisticated systems across reservations, staffing, payments, marketing and customer analytics to improve efficiency and enhance the guest experience. Yet entertainment programming often remains one of the least integrated parts of venue operations.

Despite the growing commercial importance of live music, many venues still rely on fragmented and manual processes to manage bookings, artist communication, payments and scheduling. In many cases, this still involves spreadsheets, WhatsApp groups, manual invoicing and inconsistent booking processes across sites. As operators scale entertainment across multiple venues and regions, these

challenges become increasingly difficult to manage.

At the same time, guest expectations continue to rise. Consumers increasingly expect curated, high-quality experiences that feel intentional, consistent and professionally delivered. As entertainment becomes a more valuable commercial driver for hospitality businesses, operators increasingly require systems that allow entertainment programming to be managed with the same visibility, consistency and efficiency as the rest of the business.

This creates a significant opportunity for hospitality operators to move beyond viewing live music as an isolated activity, and instead manage it as a measurable commercial function capable of driving revenue, retention and long-term guest loyalty.

Where Opportunity Meets Hospitality

Integrating live music strategically allows venues to systemise and optimise their operations, ensuring smooth programming and consistently high-quality experiences.

Technology-driven systems are helping operators manage live entertainment more efficiently and consistently at scale. Instead of relying on manual processes, venues can adopt specialised software like GigPig, allowing operators to manage finances, bookings, and scheduling efficiently. Tools such as pre-built templates, event calendars, and automated workflows help prevent conflicts like double bookings, ensuring a smooth and reliable operation.

This operational shift reduces time spent on administrative tasks while creating a more streamlined experience for venues and artists alike. With automated onboarding, payments, and access to artist music and bios all in one place, key information is centralised and easily accessible. Data-driven booking systems not only improve efficiency but also create a more seamless working

environment. This helps create stronger relationships between venues and artists, supported by a dependable and professional process. Overall, this can lead to new collaboration opportunities, an enhanced reputation for the venues, and repeat booking.

There remains significant untapped commercial potential within live music for both hospitality venues and artists. The Live Music Index reported that on average featuring live music could generate up to £2.4 billion in yearly revenue for licensed venues, equating to around £107,000 per venue per year. For artists, this estimates a potential £1.3 billion in total annual earnings, highlighting the mutually beneficial opportunity of a thriving live music ecosystem.

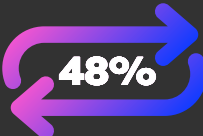
Not only are there valuable benefits to live music for venues, investing in this ecosystem is advantageous to emerging musicians too. GigPig's musicians also earn 49% more than the average musician reported by the Musicians Union. Artists can earn an average of £140 per gig, and this could potentially rise up to £177 per gig, with an average of £30,816.



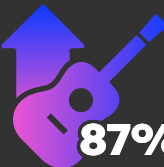
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87%
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£2.4bn
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How GigPig Solves This

GigPig is the operating system for live music in hospitality, providing the infrastructure layer that enables scalable live music across hospitality.

This allows operators to manage live entertainment more strategically while unlocking its commercial potential. Discovering the right talent is one of the biggest challenges for operators - our research shows that 40% of venues need help with this. GigPig simplifies the process, taking care of the time consuming and often complicated task of finding and booking performers.

With a network of 20,000+ artists, the platform gives venues access to a huge variety of talent. Beyond just connecting venues and performers, GigPig also provides insights to help operators make smarter programming decisions, like when to host gigs, which artists to book, and how to optimise schedules to attract the most visitors.

Platforms like GigPig are helping to bridge this gap, connecting artists and venues in a single, easy-to-use space. By leveraging such tools, hospitality venues can unlock access to a pipeline of emerging talent, book performances more efficiently, and maximise both commercial returns and guest satisfaction. For artists, these platforms provide reliable opportunities to perform, earn income, and grow their careers, making gigging a sustainable

primary or secondary pathway in the music industry. This alignment represents a significant opportunity for hospitality: venues can enhance their offerings, attract new audiences, and support the next generation of musicians, all while driving long-term business performance.



Conclusion

Live music is increasingly becoming a core component of the modern hospitality model. Operators who systemise it will win. Those who do not will fall behind.

Key takeaways include:

Maximise revenue with live music - Entertainment-led experiences increase footfall, dwell time, guest spend and repeat visitation, while helping venues differentiate themselves in an increasingly competitive market.

Hospitality plays a critical role in talent development - Seed venues provide emerging artists with essential opportunities to perform, grow audiences and build sustainable careers, while simultaneously attracting new customers and strengthening venue identity.

Venues are becoming modern cultural destinations. Entertainment programming is transforming hospitality spaces into community-driven environments that foster social connection, cultural participation and memorable shared experiences.

Invest in the future of hospitality - Live music can help attract and retain loyal customers and increase revenue streams. It also provides opportunities for local employment, operational innovation, and the creation of memorable experiences that keep venues relevant in an increasingly competitive market.

Sources: The Live Music Index 2023 (GigPig x CGA by NIQ), OnePoll Gen Z Music Venues Study (2026), and OnePoll National Live Music Study (2026).

