



# COLORADO

THE FIRST ECONOMIC  
RESEARCH STUDY  
OF THE INDEPENDENT LIVE SECTOR

## WHAT IS

# INDEPENDENT LIVE?

Independent live entertainment stages are independently owned and operated, meaning they are not controlled by a multinational corporation or a publicly traded company, and their primary mission is to present live performances to the public. This includes venues, promoters, festivals and more.

## OVERVIEW IN

# COLORADO

Colorado's independent live entertainment industry is both a cultural cornerstone and a major economic force, generating \$1.2 billion in state GDP, \$2.3 billion in economic output, \$108.5 million in tax revenue, supporting 16,029 jobs, and contributing \$745.5 million in wages. With an additional \$287.6 million in off-site tourism spending, the sector significantly boosts Colorado's broader economy. The state's vibrant music scene is rooted in the traditional songs of the Ute tribe and shaped by early jazz, folk, and the national folk revival. From numerous festivals and venues to the legendary Red Rocks Amphitheatre - employing 7,000 and generating \$717 million - music plays a vital role in Colorado's identity and prosperity.

# ECONOMIC IMPACT



**\$2.3  
BILLION**  
TOTAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT



**\$1.2  
BILLION**  
CONTRIBUTION TO STATE GDP



STATE AND LOCAL  
**\$108.5  
MILLION**



**6,674**  
TOTAL EMPLOYEES



**5,675,534  
MILLION**  
FANS SERVED



**\$745.5  
MILLION**  
WAGES AND BENEFITS PAID



**16,029**  
JOBS SUPPORTED

# PROFITABILITY



**41%**  
OF STAGES WERE  
PROFITABLE

In Colorado, despite the sector's clear economic impact, **only 41%** of independent stages identified themselves as profitable in 2024, underscoring the urgent need for solutions to ensure their survival and sustainability.



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## TOURISM BREAKDOWN



**\$287.6  
MILLION**  
OFF-SITE TOURISM SPENDING

In 2024 alone, fans attending independent shows generated \$287.6 million in off-site spending — filling hotel rooms, crowding local restaurants, supporting shops, and tipping drivers.



**\$246.2  
MILLION**  
SPENT ON LODGING



**\$22  
MILLION**  
SPENT AT  
RESTAURANTS  
AND BARS



**\$10.9  
MILLION**  
SPENT ON SHOPPING



**\$6  
MILLION**  
SPENT ON GAS,  
PARKING AND  
TRANSPORT



**\$2.2  
MILLION**  
SPENT ON OTHER  
ENTERTAINMENT AND REC

## IMPACT TABLE

Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output	Local/County Tax Revenue	State Tax Revenue	Federal Tax Revenue
Direct Effect	6,674	\$211.40	\$360.00	\$816.50	\$10.40	\$10.90	\$49.00
Indirect Effect	6,881	\$373.10	\$628.60	\$1,086.60	\$32.30	\$24.60	\$86.70
Induced Effect	2,430	\$158.60	\$300.60	\$480.20	\$17.20	\$12.30	\$38.80
Total Effect	15,986	\$743.00	\$1,289.30	\$2,383.40	\$59.90	\$47.90	\$174.40
Multiplier	2.4	3.52	3.58	2.92			

This table shows the full economic ripple effect of Colorado's independent live entertainment sector, including the jobs, income, business activity, and tax revenues (in millions of dollars) generated directly by venues and festivals, through their in-state suppliers, and from the additional local spending of workers in those jobs. For the full methodology, see the national report at [stateoflive.org](https://stateoflive.org)

## NATIONAL OVERVIEW

### INDUSTRY OPERATIONS SNAPSHOT

**41%**

OF STAGES HAVE  
SHOWS AT LEAST  
4 NIGHTS PER WEEK

**94%**

OF STAGES SELL TICKETS  
OR CHARGE A COVER  
TO SHOWS

**91%**

OF VENUES OPERATE  
YEAR-ROUND

THE AVERAGE  
VENUE HAS SHOWS

**143**  
DAYS A YEAR

### ACROSS ALL STAGES, THE TOP OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES RANKED BY FREQUENCY INCLUDE

1. MARKETING & BRINGING IN AN AUDIENCE
2. ARTIST COSTS RISING DRIVING HIGHER ARTIST FEES
3. STAFFING COSTS
4. INFLATION
5. MONOPOLIES
6. RISING INSURANCE COSTS
7. SCALPERS & PREDATORY RESALE PLATFORMS
8. COST OF RENT AND MORTGAGE
9. UNCAPPED, UNLIMITED PERFORMING RIGHTS ORGANIZATION FEES
10. DECREASING ALCOHOL SALES