



KENTUCKY

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

KENTUCKY

Kentucky's independent live entertainment industry drives \$300 million in state GDP, \$577.3 million in economic output, and \$27.8 million in tax revenue, supporting 4,413 jobs and \$169 million in wages. With \$88 million in off-site tourism spending, the sector is both a cultural anchor and a major economic force.

ECONOMIC IMPACT



**\$577.3
MILLION**
TOTAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT



**\$300
MILLION**
CONTRIBUTION TO STATE GDP



STATE AND LOCAL
**\$27.8
MILLION**



1,757
TOTAL EMPLOYEES



2,170,906
FANS SERVED



**\$169
MILLION**
WAGES AND BENEFITS PAID



4,413
JOBS SUPPORTED

TOURISM BREAKDOWN



**\$88
MILLION**
OFF-SITE TOURISM SPENDING

In 2024 alone, fans attending independent shows generated \$88 million in off-site spending — filling hotel rooms, crowding local restaurants, supporting shops, and tipping drivers.



**\$73.4
MILLION**
SPENT ON LODGING



**\$7.7
MILLION**
SPENT AT
RESTAURANTS
AND BARS



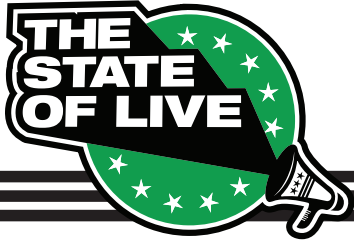
**\$3.8
MILLION**
SPENT ON SHOPPING



**\$2.1
MILLION**
SPENT ON GAS,
PARKING AND
TRANSPORT



**\$795,481
THOUSAND**
SPENT ON OTHER
ENTERTAINMENT AND REC



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IMPACT TABLE

Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income	Value Added	Output	Local/County Tax Revenue	State Tax Revenue	Federal Tax Revenue
Direct Effect	1,757	\$50.60	\$94.20	\$207.90	\$1.50	\$3.70	\$10.90
Indirect Effect	2,117	\$87.60	\$149.80	\$275.60	\$5.30	\$11.40	\$18.50
Induced Effect	539	\$30.70	\$56.00	\$93.70	\$1.90	\$4.10	\$6.70
Total Effect	4,413	\$169.00	\$300.00	\$577.30	\$8.60	\$19.10	\$36.20
Multiplier	2.51	3.34	3.18	2.78			

This table shows the full economic ripple effect of Kentucky'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

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

64%
OF STAGES WERE NOT
PROFITABLE IN 2024