

CHICAGO
THE FIRST ECONOMIC
RESEARCH STUDY
OF THE INDEPENDENT LIVE SECTOR



OVERVIEW IN CHICAGO

Chicago's independent live entertainment industry drives \$1.8 billion in state GDP, \$2.8 billion in economic output, and \$184.9 million in tax revenue, supporting 16,990 jobs and \$1.1 billion in wages and benefits. With \$383.7 million in off-site tourism spending, the sector is both a cultural anchor and a major economic force.

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.



ECONOMIC IMPACT



\$2.8 BILLION
TOTAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT



\$1.8 BILLION
CONTRIBUTION TO STATE GDP



\$184.9 MILLION
STATE AND LOCAL TAXES



7,352,339 MILLION
FANS SERVED



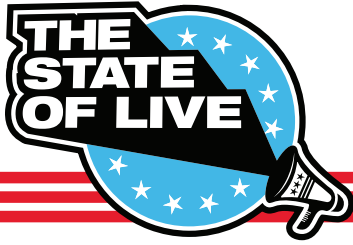
6,678
TOTAL EMPLOYEES



16,990
JOBS SUPPORTED



\$1.1 BILLION
WAGES AND BENEFITS PAID



PROFITABILITY



22%
OF STAGES WERE
PROFITABLE

In Chicago, despite the sector’s clear economic impact, **only 22%** of independent stages identified themselves as profitable in 2024, underscoring the urgent need for solutions to ensure their survival and sustainability.

TOURISM BREAKDOWN



**\$383.7
MILLION**
OFF-SITE TOURISM SPENDING

In 2024 alone, fans attending independent shows in Chicago generated \$383.7 million in off-site spending — filling hotel rooms, crowding local restaurants, supporting shops, and tipping drivers. The total impact of this spending was \$579 million back into Chicago’s economy.



**\$329
MILLION**
SPENT ON LODGING



**\$29.2
MILLION**
SPENT AT RESTAURANTS
AND BARS



**\$14.5
MILLION**
SPENT ON SHOPPING



**\$8
MILLION**
SPENT ON GAS, PARKING
AND TRANSPORT



**\$3
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	6,678	\$382.2	\$564.6	\$987.5	\$21.9	\$23.6	\$75.8
Indirect Effect	7,360	\$503.2	\$863.1	\$1,317.3	\$55.4	\$45.4	\$105.6
Induced Effect	2,952	\$213.6	\$383.5	\$579.9	\$20.4	\$18.1	\$46.0
Total Effect	16,990	\$1,099.0	\$1,811.2	\$2,884.7	\$97.8	\$87.1	\$227.4
Multiplier	2.54	2.88	3.21	2.92			

This table shows the full economic ripple effect of Chicago’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