



The Live Music (R)evolution

Putting live music back in venues

“A hotel should be a home away from home, a place where people gather,” says Bill Healey, Director, National Affairs, Australian Hotels Association. “And that means providing a range of entertainment options that will draw a wider range of people than our typical market and also generate revenue for the hotel owner.”

We’re talking about the AHA’s vision to bring live music back into hotels and Healey is passionate about the power of music to bring people together and to build community. “Music brings people together. The hotel can be a meeting place again, and live music is part of the attraction of the hotel as a meeting place – it has the added advantage of providing an all-round experience for our customers.”

You’d be forgiven for thinking both “live music” and “community in hotels” an endangered species. In recent years, a rush of property developments and government rules and regulations have threatened the viability of both. Hotels have had to battle on a number of fronts for survival and the live music scene seemed doomed to suffer death by a thousand cuts.

The Music Council of Australia (MCA) identified government regulation as a threat to live music in 2006 and instigated a research project in 2007 to identify the key barriers that prevent venues from providing live music.

Now the MCA, APRA, the hospitality sector (Australian Hotels Association, Restaurant & Catering Australia and Clubs Australia) have united their efforts to put the “live” back in live music. Dubbed the Live Music (R)evolution, the campaign takes a two step approach:

1. identify the key barriers nationally that prevent venues from providing live music
2. implement strategies for overcoming the same and support venues in their efforts to promote and provide live music.

Identify the barriers to live music

The first part of the campaign involves a live music survey being conducted by the Music Council of Australia (MCA) and supported by APRA. The survey explores venues’ concerns and issues around live music.

Support the (R)evolution

APRA and the MCA are committed to working with the hospitality sector to simplify the compliance, regulation and strategy associated with the presentation

live music evolution

of live music. We're already actively lobbying government to reduce the regulatory red-tape that has proved overly prohibitive and onerous for venues that want to provide live music.

We're also aware that a big concern for venue operators is the difficulty of finding and booking acts. To that end, APRA has supported the development of VROOM, an online searchable database of live music venues (www.vroom.musicnsw.com). Further the MCA and APRA, are developing a 'ready reckoner' that will provide venues with real advice and support in working out what live music options might work for them and how to go about making it work.

The (R)evolution has begun

Early indications are that live music is already making a recovery - and in a myriad of styles and formats that provide venue operators with opportunities to revitalise, reinvent and revolutionise their entertainment strategy.

And we have the support of industry!

Find out more at the Live Music (R)evolution Forum to be held at the Song Summit Sydney (S3) on Saturday 5, April 2008, from 10am-12pm, at the Royal Hall of Industries, Moore Park, Sydney.

An expert panel, featuring Bill Healey, Director, National Affairs, AHA, John Hart, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Australia, will lead a discussion and information session on live music - why, how, now and the opportunities going forward.

Register now:

<https://www.infosalons.com.au/songsummitsydney/start.asp>