

Gigs 101

# The Great Gig Glossary

Whakahiato Puoro o Aotearoa  
Music Enriches Aotearoa



NEW ZEALAND  
MUSIC COMMISSION  
TE REO REKA O AOTEAROA

**A**

**AAA (ACCESS ALL AREAS)** – A pass granting access to all of the restricted backstage areas at a concert or gig.

**AMA (ACCESS MOST AREAS)** – A pass granting access to only some of the restricted areas at a concert or gig.

**ACOUSTICS** – The behaviour of sound and its study. The acoustics of a room depend on its size and shape and the amount and position of sound-absorbing and reflecting material.

**ADVANCING SHOWS** – Ringing venues a few days before the show to check the overall details for a gig or concert.

**AFTER SHOW** – The party after a gig or concert.

**AMBIENCE** – The portion of the sound that comes from the surrounding environment rather than directly from the sound source.

**AUDIO** – Most often referring to electrical signals resulting from a sound pressure wave being converted into electrical energy.

**AUDIO PLUG IN** – Can add or enhance audio-related functionality in a computer program. Such functionality may include digital signal processing or sound synthesis.

**B**

**BACKLINE** – Used to refer to audio amplification equipment that stands behind the band on stage, including guitar, bass amps and drum kit.

**BILLSTICKER** – Someone that places your show, tour or performance flyer/poster in public places.

**BIO (BIOGRAPHY)/BAND BIO** – A written history of an artist or band, that includes the artist or band member's origins, their discography and any other important achievements, such as awards or landmark gigs.

**BOOKING AGENT** – A person that gets paid a set fee for organising a tour, gig or concert.

**BOOMSTAND** – A microphone stand equipped with a telescoping support arm to hold a microphone.

**BUMP** – When a confirmed concert or gig date gets given to someone else.

**C**

**CAPACITY (OTHERWISE KNOWN AS 'CAP' OR 'PAX')** – The number of people that will legally fit inside a venue.

**CATERING** – Hospitality for a band or artist provided by the venue, usually includes food and drinks. Can also refer to the room where food is being

served.

**CLEARANCE** – The space from either the stage to the roof or the the floor to the roof.

**COMMISSION** – A percentage of tour or show income promised as payment, i.e. for the promoter, manager etc

**COMP** – Complimentary or free ticket.

**CONTRACTOR** – The legal term for a person contracting an artist or band to play a concert or gig i.e. a venue or promoter.

**D**

**DECIBEL (dB)** – Relative measurement for the volume (loudness) of sound.

**DELAY** – A signal which comes from a source and then is delayed by a tape machine or delay device and can be mixed with the original (non-delayed) signal to make it sound fuller, create echo effects etc.

**DEPOSIT** – A portion or percentage of a fee paid in advance to secure a booking. This can be to secure a venue or to secure a band.

**DOOR SPLIT** – A deal between a band and a promoter – or venue – where the artists get a portion of the ticket sales instead of a guaranteed fee.

**DOOR LIST OR GUEST LIST** – A list of non-paying guests held at the door of a concert or gig.

**E**

**EFFECTS** – Signals added to a PA system to change and enhance the signals going through it. Examples include reverb, delay, compressor and chorus.

**F**

**FEEDBACK** – The delayed signal sent back to the input of a delay line, used in repeat-echo effects.

**FLOAT** – A small amount of cash that is used for miscellaneous purposes or to provide change for paying guests to a concert or gig.

**FOH (FRONT OF HOUSE)** – Anything that's not on the stage or backstage. The mixing desk is sometimes referred to as FOH.

**FOLDBACK** – The speaker system that allows an artist or band to hear themselves onstage. See also 'monitors'.

**FOOT SWITCH** – A switch placed on the floor and pressed by a musician to control various functions.

**G**

**GAIN** – The amount of increase in audio signal strength, often expressed in dB.

**GENERAL ADMISSION** – A ticket to a

gig or a venue without an allocated seat.

**GREEN ROOM** – Similar to a dressing room, the 'green room' is a holding area for an artist or band before and after they go onstage.

**GROSS PROFIT** – The total income generated, before costs are taken out.

**GUARANTEE** – A specified fee to be paid to a performer, agreed upon before a gig or concert.

**H**

**HOLDS** – Tickets that can't be sold i.e. holding them for someone or to reserve a specific area.

**HOUSE** – Another term for a venue.

**HOUSE SEATS** – Tickets or seats that the venue owner/manager retains to use for their own purposes.

**I**

**INPUT** – 1) The jack or physical location of where a device receives a signal. 2) The signal being received by a device. 3) The action of receiving a signal by a device.

**INPUT LIST** – A list of which effects are used for each channel of a mixing desk.

**INSIDE CHARGE** – The booking fee charged by a ticket retailer.

**J**

**JACK** – A connector mounted on the case of a device or on a panel.

**K/L**

**LAMINATE/LANYARD** – A laminated pass worn around the neck denoting the wearer as AAA, AMA, artist, worker or crewmember.

**LED** – A light that allows current to flow in one direction only and emits light, whenever a voltage of a certain level or beyond is applied to it. For example, a volume meter on a mixing desk.

**LEVEL** – The amount of signal strength; the amplitude, especially the average amplitude.

**LINE OUT (LINE OUTPUT)** – Any output that sends out a line level signal, such as the output of a console that feeds a recorder.

**LOAD IN** – Either a time or a place to move all instruments and gear into a venue.

**LOAD OUT** – Either a time, or a place to move all instruments and gear out of a venue.

**LOADERS** – People who help move gear in and out of a venue.

**LOADING BAY/DOCK** – A space to park a vehicle in order to move gear in and out of a venue.



## M

**MANAGER** – The person in charge of running the business side of an artist or band's career, so that the artist or band is free to focus on creating the music.

**MERCH (MERCHANDISE)** – Anything that is sold at a gig or concert other than a ticket, such as t-shirts, posters and CDs.

**MICROPHONE** – A transducer that converts sound pressure waves into electrical signals.

**MIC PLOT** – A list of the microphones required for a gig or concert, stating what the different microphones are to be used for. See also 'stage plot'.

**MIDI** – Short for Musical Instrument Digital Interface; a digital signal system (a system of number signals) used to communicate performance information to and from musical instruments.

**MIX** – 1) To blend audio signals together into a composite signal. 2) The signal made by blending individual signals together. 3) A control or function on a delay effects/reverberation device that controls the amount of direct signal that will be mixed into the processed signal.

**MIXER** – A console, or other device that blends audio signals into one or more composite signals, and has a small number of outputs.

**MIXING DESK** – A device which can combine several signals into one or more composite signals, in any desired proportion.

**MONITORS** – The speaker system that allows an artist or band to hear themselves onstage. See also 'foldback'.

**MONITOR ENGINEER** – The person who mixes the on-stage sound.

## N

**NET PROFIT** – The total income generated after all bills and debts are paid (also can be net loss).

## O

**OUTPUT** – 1) The jack or physical location of where a device sends out a signal. 2) The signal put out by a device.

## P

**PA (PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM/ VOCAL PA)** – An electronic amplification system with a mixer, amplifier and loudspeakers, used to reinforce a sound source, eg a person giving a speech, a DJ playing prerecorded music, and distributing the sound throughout a venue or building.

**PDs (PER DIEMS)** – Literally meaning 'per day', a nominal amount of money paid daily to a band, artist or crewmember, to offset the cost of being on the road ie. buying meals etc.

**PERFORMING RIGHT** – The right to perform or communicate a work in public.

**PICKUP** – A device on an electric guitar (or other instrument) that puts out an audio signal according to the string motion on the instrument.

**POSTER** – A paper sign posted in a public place as an advertisement for a tour, event or concert.

**POSTER DIMENSIONS** –

A4: 297 x 210mm

A3: 420 x 297mm

A2: 594 x 420mm

A1: 841 x 594mm

A0: 1189 x 841mm

OC: 1490 x 990mm

**POWER AMPLIFIER** – A device that takes a line level signal and amplifies it to drive a speaker.

**PR (PUBLIC RELATIONS OR PRESS RELEASE)** – The promotion of a new release, tour or other music related news to the media.

**PRESS KIT** – A tool used by musicians, labels, agents and managers to promote a group, a new release or tour. Usually includes recording, press photos and band bio.

**PRODUCTION MANAGER** – The person responsible for coordinating all different areas of a stage production, including sound, lights, stage equipment and crew.

**PRODUCTION SPECS** – The complete list of technical specifications needed for a production, including mic plot, stage plot etc.

**PROMOTER** – A person who is paid a percentage of income to book and promote a tour, concert or gig. Will generally underwrite the costs of the show, ie wear the financial risk.

## Q/R

**RATE CARD** – The list of standard rates charged by a supplier.

**RECON (RECONCILIATION)** – Comparing the budget and financial records of a concert or tour, to ensure all bills and debts have been paid and to determine whether a profit or loss was made.

**RESERVED SEATING** – Tickets for specific seats within a venue.

**REVERB** – An effect whereby the sound produced by an amplifier or an amplified musical instrument is made to reverberate slightly.

**RIDER** – An artist or band's specific requirements for a live performance, usually just drinks and food but can

include technical specifications.

**RIFF** – A short melody repeatedly played in a tune (sometimes with variation) often between vocal lines.

**RISERS** – A built up area on a stage that allows a musician to be more visible to the audience, generally used for drums.

## S

**SESSION MUSICIAN** – A musician that is paid a flat rate for their services, either to record or to play live.

**SETTLEMENT** – The statement showing the profit (and loss) of a show or tour.

**SOUND ENGINEER** – The person responsible for mixing the artist's sound at a live show.

**SPEAKER** – A device that changes electrical signals to sound which can be heard. A transducer changing the electrical audio signal into a sound pressure way.

**SPLIT** – The percentage of income paid to the performer and promoter and venue, ie 80/20 split. This is usually, but not always, after costs.

**STAGE** – The partially enclosed or raised area where live musicians perform.

**STAGE PLOT** – The diagram given to crew members and technicians that shows where a band or artist's equipment goes on stage.

**SUPPORT SLOT** – The opening act before the headlining artist.

## T/U

**TOUR MANAGER** – The person responsible for coordinating everything to do with an artist or band whilst on tour.

**TROUBLESHOOTING** – In audio equipment servicing, the act of locating the source of the trouble in a malfunctioning device or system.

## V

**VOLUME** – A common, non-technical term meaning Sound Pressure Level, and loosely applied to also mean audio voltage level.

## W

**WATT** – Unit of electrical power.

**WILL CALL** – A place to pick up complimentary tickets.

## X/Y/Z

**XLR CONNECTOR** – 1) A common three pin connector used in balanced audio connections. 2) A microphone cable.

