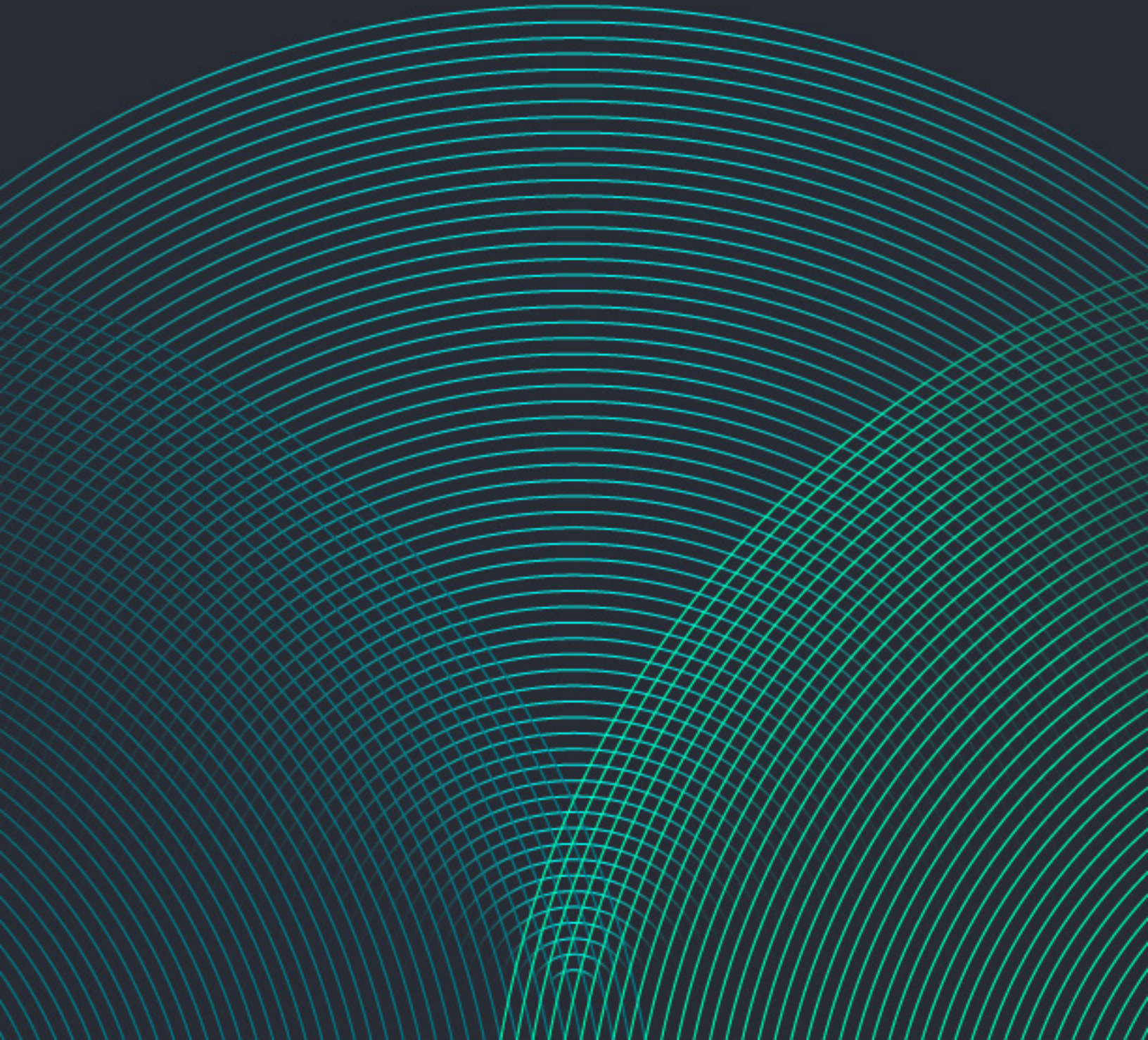# Eventbrite

How to Get Started With RFID at Your Music Festival

The future of the on-site music festival experience

You've heard the buzz about RFID. Music festivals have used the tech to turn long lines into fast entry points, cut customer service contacts in half, and made it easy for attendees to spend onsite. Chances are, you've wondered if RFID could be the tech that brings your music festival in to the future.

But if you're cautious, you have good reason. RFID can be costly — especially if it's not implemented flawlessly. The last things you want are faulty wristbands or poor fulfillment, leaving fans more frustrated than ever.

Don't let fear hold you back. Once you understand exactly which problems RFID can help you could solve, and the tough questions that will help you choose the right provider, you can be confident that your tech upgrade will pay off. Faster lines, better data, and more ways to delight your fans are in your future.

Here's what you need to know before investing in RFID.

RFID 101

RFID (radio-frequency identification) wristbands work by using a chip to communicate with an RFID scanner via radio signals. Fans can use their wristbands to speed through entrance, get into a VIP area, engage with a sponsorship activation, and buy food and drinks onsite. Learn more about the technology behind the wristband in The Event Organizer's Comprehensive Guide to RFID Technology.

Challenges RFID can help you solve

01 — ## Fans waiting in line

No one enjoys waiting in lines. One of the best things about RFID is that it can seriously speed up event entrance. When SnowGlobe music festival switched to RFID, they were able to scan in more than 20 people per minute at each gate. That's upwards of 1,200 people per hour for each scanner.

With RFID, attendees simply wave their wristband or badge over a sensor to get in. No more digging in purses to find tickets, or struggling to make scanners process wet or wrinkled barcodes. The tech can seamlessly handle re-entry for multi-day events, and makes the entire process easy for your security team.

02 — ## Chaotic access control

When your event requires different people to have certain levels of access, the word "chaos" doesn't begin to describe the situation. Different colored wristbands or badges can help you differentiate VIPs from general admission fans, or people on the guest list from sponsors. But they don't offer as much flexibility and security as RFID.

RFID tags are each unique, with access levels that can be controlled remotely. That means they're impossible to duplicate — making counterfeit a thing of the past.

And if attendees lose their ticket, you can help them without worrying about copies. Since they're associated with individual IDs, you can instantly deactivate the lost wristband and issue them a new one.

> **"** "RFID was such a tremendous relief for customer service. For the first time ever, we didn't get any complaints about the box office. I usually anticipate spending the first night responding to complaints. But this year I didn't have to deal with any, which freed me to respond to other issues."
>
> Jeffrey Lesan, CMO, SnowGlobe

03 — A lack of real-time data

RFID gives you immediate insight into how foot traffic flows through your event. For multi-day events, this means you can use RFID data from the first day to change your gate layout or add extra lanes.

A With RFID that integrates with your ticketing platform, you can monitor the flow of check-ins in real time in the same place you view ticketing data. Working with a single platform makes it easy to get the insights you need to make decisions on the fly.

04 — Trouble proving the ROI of sponsorship activations

RFID makes it easier and faster for sponsors to collect more robust attendee data. For example, instead of asking fans to manually enter their information on an iPad, sponsors can collect that data and more with the swipe of a wristband.

"[Brands] need to justify their budget spend," says Jason Scoggins, head of sponsorships at BottleRock. Scoggins credits RFID data capture at the entry to their Silent Disco activation for landing them a sponsor (Libratone). "We probably wouldn't have gotten a sponsor for our Silent Disco activation this year if we didn't have RFID, because they need to justify their budget spend," says Scoggins. "RFID enables that ROI story."

You can charge sponsors extra for this opportunity to capture fans' information, creating more revenue for your festival. And the best news for your sponsors? It's now easier for them to track traffic to their booth and measure return on investment.

05 — Frustrating lines at food booths and ATMs

Forget long lines at ATMs, or fans taking out their wallets time and time again slowing down food lines. Now they can pay for food, drinks, or merchandise with a simple tap of their wrist. Attendees can add their payment information to their RFID tag before the event, making it easier than ever to buy. And because guests don't have to carry cash or drink tickets in their pockets, they can stop worrying about loss or theft, and focus on enjoying your event.

Once you've decided to use RFID at your music festival, it's time to choose a provider. This step could be the difference between fans being thrilled — or furious. As you evaluate solutions and look for the right one for your event, be sure to ask potential providers the following questions.

01 — What happens when power or internet goes down?

One of the biggest risks of implementing RFID is that the technology itself could fail. When this happens, either poor network or power connectivity is usually to blame

To address connectivity concerns, find out how your RFID provider handles connectivity loss — both to the outside world and across the event site. Choose an RFID solution that will continue to operate regardless of power or internet, so each attendee's wristband responds securely and accurately.

If your provider can't put devices in "offline" mode without a manual process, your staff might get overwhelmed during a failure. To create a seamless attendee experience, switching modes should be automatic and shouldn't increase ticket validation time. The bottom line is: your RFID solution should properly manage access even if the local network, internet, or power goes down.

With 100% uptime, scanning is always running with Eventbrite's RFID solution. The solution is fully operational offline, so when the power or network goes down, your event doesn't.

02 — How do you handle fulfillment and customer service?

One of the most common problems related to RFID is fulfillment. Shipping wristbands to attendees is a massive undertaking, and can have serious customer service implications should anything go wrong. Once your first fan gets their wristband and posts about it online, other fans will want to know when theirs will arrive.

To reduce the drain on your customer service resources, make sure your RFID fulfillment solution gives fans access to track the real-time status of each order, or report their wristband missing. If the provider only routes fans through your customer service team, be prepared for a surge in call volume.

Next, ask about on-site fulfillment for attendees who purchase after the fulfillment date. How many steps will it take for fans to get their wristband on-site at the box office? This process should be as quick and easy as possible to save your staff time — and your fans a serious headache. With thousands of transactions, even a few extra steps can create long lines and a need for more staff.

03 — Are the RFID scanners and portable easy to install?

Some RFID solutions need two days to install gates and portals — and even longer if portals are being shipped in slow container trucks. But when weather isn't under your control, or the tent vendor is running late, you can't risk a delay on setup.

Choose an RFID solution that can be installed in hours, with handheld scanners you can distribute as needed. Not only will it prevent delays before the festival, it will allow flexibility during entry to add or subtract lanes as needed.

After the event, striking portals should be equally speedy. This will streamline logistics, especially in the case of an emergency exit.

04 — Do you provide real-time entry data?

Some RFID providers don't give you access to your own entry data in real-time — meaning you have to email your provider for basic reporting. The problem is, you don't have time to wait for an email response when crowds are gathering at the gate and fans are getting angry.

Choose a platform with real-time reporting you can access on your phone so you can understand the entry trends into your event. By gathering better data on the flow of your attendees, you can fix problems before fans notice them.

Get started with RFID at your concerts or music festival

Convinced RFID is the tech for your festival? Learn how you can unify your RFID provider and your ticketing platform to get the best tech for you — and the easiest experience for your fans. Learn how by getting in touch here or calling an RFID expert at 1-866-902-2531.

> "If you're thinking about using RFID, do it. Particularly with a partner like Eventbrite. Everything that we wanted, we got. Logistically, internally, and from an outside fan perception. It makes you look more professional, and work more professionally and efficiently. It just improves every aspect of your festival exponentially."
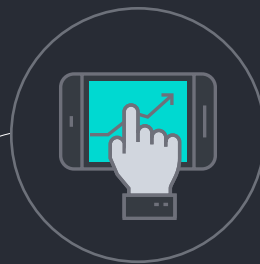>
> Jeffrey Lesan, CMO, SnowGlobe

Eventbrite

Powering more than two million events each year.

Eventbrite is the world's leading event technology platform. Hundreds of thousands of organizers use Eventbrite to boost ticket sales, promote and manage events, handle on-site operations, and analyze results across multiple sales channels.

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Promote, manage, and analyze your event from any device.
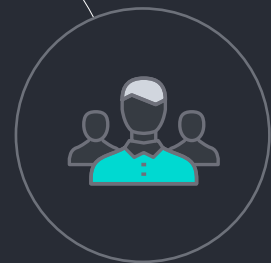
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