

# venues **NOW**

**FAB  
REFURBS**  
LA MEMORIAL  
COLISEUM  
& MOVISTAR  
ARENA

**LOVIN'  
SPOONFULS**  
OUR ANNUAL  
EXCELLENCE IN  
CONCESSIONS  
AWARDS

CHASE  CENTER

# Beauty by the Bay

**Inside San  
Francisco's  
\$1.6B Jewel**



# WFO BLAST!



## AT ETIX'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE, TICKETER AND CLIENTS SHARE INTEL ON THE MARKET

**R**ALEIGH, N.C. — Hurricane Dorian's arrival on the North Carolina coast didn't dampen the enthusiasm in Raleigh as Etix opened its Etix Blast! annual conference Sept. 5.

Sure, the Hopscotch Music Festival, originally scheduled to have opening-night headliners Sleater Kinney and Kurt Vile just outside the conference hotel on City Plaza, had to move indoors to The Ritz a few miles away, but inside the ideas were flying as hard as the afternoon raindrops.

Etix, a ticketing and technology company based in nearby Morrisville, boasts a diverse group of clients — venues and events that were represented included music clubs, fairs and festivals, historic theaters and performing arts centers — and the two days of panels reflected the multiple viewpoints.

The 150 to 200 clients and prospective clients heard from speakers on topics ranging from technology to marketing and improving security to fighting ticket fraud, which was addressed in back-to-back sessions Friday.

The conference's opening session, "Etix: Past, Present and Future," allowed the company's CEO, Travis Janovich to offer

his view of the company and the industry plus a few laugh lines through an unrehearsed lightning-round-style Q&A that Etix senior product manager Chris Battagliano jokingly called "Travis Says the Darndest Things." Some excerpts:

### **Six years of Etix Blast is significant because ...**

We're still here (laughter). No ... it's very significant to all of us just because of having you here, seeing the client base grow, seeing the product grow. It's very

**"We're all still growing and thriving."**

— TRAVIS JANOVICH

exciting to share this time with you and talk about Etix and learn about you guys, so it's significant in many ways, but like I said the most is because in this crazy mar-



Etix CEO Travis Janovich (center) with (from left) Nick Zafiroopoulos, Kevin Brosseau and Katie Mullins.

ket and this crazy business we're all still growing and thriving, so, thrilled to be here.

### **Consolidation in the ticketing industry means ...**

This is a tough one. I think overall I believe it's a good thing. Many of you guys are here from companies that we (might) have acquired or products we've acquired. I think for the client it means a bigger suite of products, a bigger platform, hopefully a better experience, more technology, more support. On our side of it, it's a great opportunity to acquire smaller companies and gain some great employees and great resources. So we look at it as a positive on both sides.

### **Etix's growth and acquisition strategy is ...**

We just want to buy everything. If any of you guys have something for sale, let us know. We're here all day (laughter). No, we're trying to buy and acquire companies that have (similar) technologies. We have a really strong one-platform strategy ... So for us, it's about finding quality companies



that either have their own niches, and we're able to grow that, or companies that have a great regional base that we could come in and hopefully add some technology to our platform and continue to grow their client base.

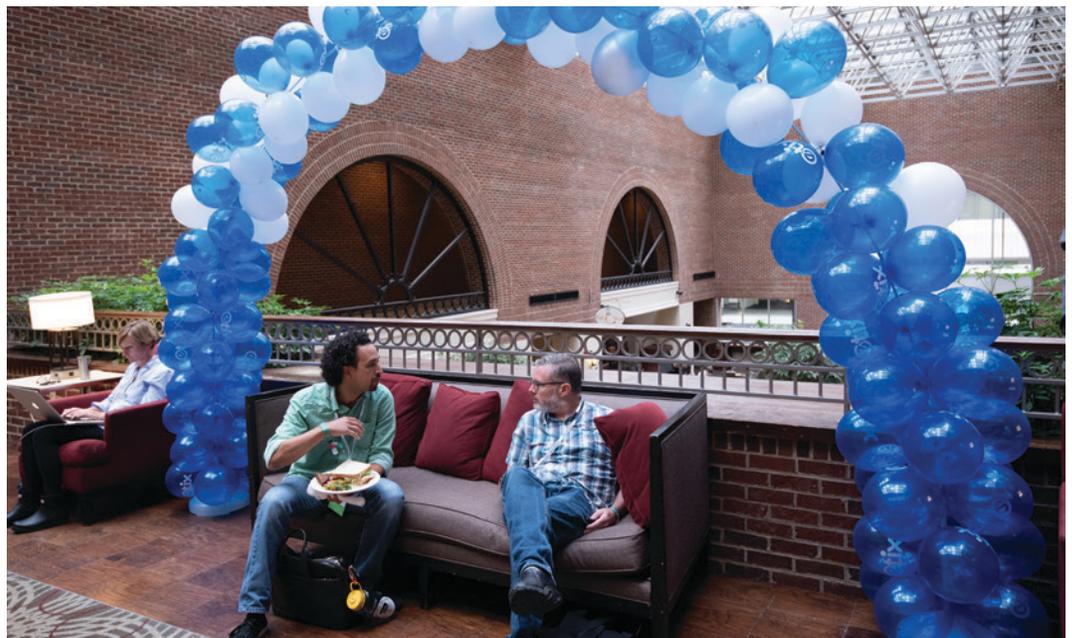
**The average Etix client's tenure is about 11 years because ...**

The auto-renew in their contracts (laughter). No, truly, this is what I'm most proud of, actually. Early on, I always used to say that anyone can sell a ticket and write a check, and I really believe the difference with Etix is the incredible staff we have, all of you guys. It's amazing to me, I've been doing this for 20 years, and it's amazing that our average tenure at Etix is probably 15 (or) 16 years for our employees.

**The next big leap in ticketing technology is ...**

I don't know if there's a leap coming. Obviously, the continued user experience, the focus on that. Obviously mobile, other delivery methods. I think going more and more to mobile-only ticketing is a big push in the business. As you know, we're completely mobile-first. Everything we develop starts with development on a mobile device. 📱

**Clockwise from top: Rev. Moose, Mikey Valdez and Ric Leichtung; Cindy Godwin of Eastern Tennessee State University; Juan Torres and Sean Lynch take time to talk; taking notes in a conference session.**



# Independents' day

## WHEN CHICAGO CLUBS DECIDED TO ORGANIZE AND PUSH BACK

BY ROB KNAPP

**R**ALEIGH, N.C. — Venues often fight for bands, but in Chicago venues banded together for a fight. The Chicago Independent Venue League formed last year in response to the proposed Lincoln Yards, a \$6 billion mixed-use project led by developer Sterling Bay and targeted for the city's North Side.

Representatives from some of CIVL's 17 listed clubs sat on Friday's lead-off panel at Etix Blast! to talk about the group's start, the fight and the future.

"All of us in past years were saying, 'Oh, we should get together (and) form some sort of an association,'" said Katie Tuten, co-chair of CIVL and an owner of The Hideout, which sits across the street from the Lincoln Yards site. "And there was something

Competition is part of the business, everyone on the panel said, but the Lincoln Yards plan, with its Live Nation component, was different.

"This was a unique thing when the proposal came up because this was a corporate interest coming in in a previously unestablished way," said Chadd Kline of Metro Chicago. That's why the wakeup call was there because this would dramatically change the land-

teresting because we always had a fairly large independent promoter named Jam Productions that had probably the ownership of the most midsized venues, up to about a 3,000 cap. None of us up here on the stage are that large."

"Chicago was able to grow a very diverse crowd in terms of ownership because it was not consolidated right from the beginning," he said. "That still happened, of course, at the arena and the shed level, but the only Live Nation thing in Chicago that actually had stuck until this point was when they bought House of Blues."

Other differences: The Lincoln Yards project involved a subsidy of more than a \$1 billion through tax increment financing money, and Live Nation's size meant it could afford to lose money to a



From left: Rev. Moose, Katie Tuten, Brett Crawford, Chadd Kline and Robert Gomez.

Early plans included a United Soccer League stadium that could have hosted concerts, as well as three to five venues to be built and operated by Live Nation as part of an entertainment district, but those ideas were removed from the project after 2nd Ward Alderman Brian Hopkins said there was not enough public support.

**"We thought, 'This is really good,' because when you have a united voice, it's far more powerful." — KATIE TUTEN**

that happened that brought us together, and then once we were together, we thought, "This is really good," because when you have a united voice, it's far more powerful."

scape and the ownership of what Chicago previously had."

Unlike many other major cities, Kline said, Chicago has not seen a high level of consolidation in the live business. "Chicago's very in-

degree that the smaller players couldn't.

Tuten, with husband and fellow Hideout co-owner Tim Tuten, began reaching out to their fellow club owners in an effort to organize. That included a visit to the home of Robert Gomez, owner of Subterranean and Beat Kitchen.

Gomez, who became co-chair of the group, described the relationship among club owners as 'frenemies' "We're always friendly to each other (but) we compete fiercely behind the scenes. That's the reality of Chicago," he said.

One thing that binds them together is dealing with the local government. "We all have to deal with the city of Chicago. We all have

had to deal with the headaches, the same types of headaches, whether it be unruly customers, but our biggest headache is the city," he said. "Dealing with the politicians and the various

departments. I didn't realize how many departments this city had until I got into this business."

Once the core group was in place, it was time to get others involved. "I have a day job. I'm a social worker," Tuten said. "And so I knew kind of how to organize people, sort of. I knew that we had to get a petition, and then once we got the petition signed, we had collected everyone's emails, so we were able then to activate people very quickly."

As moderator Rev. Moose of music marketing firm Marauder and Independent Venue Week noted, the skills for marketing a concert can translate into those for marketing a cause. In the end, they had 5,000 people actively supporting their movement, Tuten said.

Gomez paid tribute to Tuten's skill at getting people to turn out, particularly for one City Council meeting. "Katie got 300 people there and she's like, 'How did you do?'" I think I got my cousin and my niece to show up," he said. "Just to put in perspective her ability to rally people in 24 hours. It's like, 'Damn, is this part of owning a rock club?'"

Though the soccer stadium and Live Nation's involvement are no longer part of Lincoln Yards, the overall plan is moving forward and CIVL continues to monitor developments. It doesn't mean CIVL sees itself as anti-competition or even anti-corporation.

"We're focused just on Live Nation, but there's also AEG, there's other organizations that are going to surface, there are going to be more of them. It's not an anti-Live Nation movement," he said. "We have to keep this as positive. Let's make sure that the landscape is fair for ourselves."

Club owners from dozens of cities have reached out to CIVL for advice on their own situations, which Tuten is happy to provide. Speaking of her fellow Chicago club owners, she said, "I can honestly say that all of them are in this business because of two things: their love of music, and their love of community."

And if any of them got in to get rich, "they were completely wrong," she said. ❏



**A little work, a little play:** In addition to taking in panel discussions, attendees could go one-on-one with Etix employees at the Learning Lab (top left) or enjoy networking opportunities at events built around the Hopscotch Music Festival schedule such as Afters Hours Lounges, the Etix After Party into the late evening Thursday, Marketing and Margaritas at the end of Friday's sessions, and the Saturday Recovery Brunch.

