

**Playing Live - what the venue sound engineer wants to know** by Michael Gallant  
(September 2017)

Think you've told your live sound engineer everything he needs to know for your big gig? Don't forget these important details.

You're getting ready for your next big gig and dialing everything in with the venue — you've sent in your stage plot, shared your input list with the live sound engineer, and tied up all of your audio and technical loose ends. Or have you?

Before you call your tech-related pre-gig communications done, check out the list of points below, courtesy of veteran sound engineer Dave Loop. Including these often-forgotten details in the intel you share with your venue's sound team will set you up for success come time for downbeat.

**Which band members need wedges, in-ears, or other types of monitors?**

It's going to be difficult to play your best if you can't hear your bandmates the way you want to, so make sure your stage crew has the info they need to set you up for optimal listening.

**Is the drummer left- or right-handed?**

"That can change the whole stage orientation, especially if we are miking the drum kit," says Loop.

**Are there any risers needed, and where should they be placed?**

Breaking down a drum kit, moving a riser center stage, and then re-setting and re-miking everything can be a real drag fifteen minutes before curtain. Communicate ahead of time to avoid putting your sound team through such an ordeal.

**Will the drummer be using a click track, a sampling pad, or other electronics?**

These need to be plugged in, routed, mixed, and processed correctly, so give your stage team plenty of heads up to get it done right.

**Will anybody be using pedal boards?**

Combinations of stomp boxes, wah pedals, and other floor-dwelling devices can change the game for the sound crew in significant ways. Give them plenty of warning so they can dial it all in.

**Do any band members have stereo setups or use sub-mixers?**

Same as above — added audio and electrical complications require extra time to smooth into the mix.

### **Will anybody use wireless equipment?**

“There is nothing that makes me crazier than ringing out the room [eliminating problem frequencies that can cause feedback] and, ten minutes before the show, a band member brings us a wireless microphone that screws everything up,” says Loop. “It’s even worse when the mic is a piece of crap.”

### **Will somebody be missing sound check?**

“In most cases, we can get that guy’s or girl’s stage monitor or in-ear monitors pretty close to what they need to have a good show,” says Loop, “but we need to know ahead of time.”

### **Will there be guest guitarists or bassists?**

In other words, will people be plugging and unplugging instruments mid-set? “Let us know so we have mute pedals in place, in order to keep the dreaded ‘pop’ to a minimum,” says Loop.

Disc Makers’ regular contributor Michael Gallant’s debut trio album Completely received a four-star review from DownBeat magazine and a five-star review from Critical Jazz, which stated: “This, my friends, is the future of jazz. Fresh, invigorating, progressive – there are simply not enough positive adjectives to list here.” Learn more, download through iTunes, or purchase through CD Baby. Follow Michael on Twitter at @Michael\_Gallant or on Facebook.

<http://blog.discmakers.com/2017/09/details-your-live-sound-engineer-wants-to-know/>