

# Meet Audoo, the company that helps musicians get paid when their songs are played

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Ryan Edwards, CEO and founder of Audoo, about the need to ensure recording artists are paid fairly for their work, revolutionising the royalty reporting system, and the power of pink toe-nails!

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The concept of Audoo was born from my own personal experience. Most of us would agree that our favourite music artists deserve to be paid fairly for their work, but for many musicians, this isn't the case, and artists globally currently lose out on up to \$2.7B in unaccounted royalties.

In the early 2000's, I was a musician with a top 10 hit in the UK. A few years ago whilst shopping I heard one of our songs being played in a store, and discovered that I wasn't being paid royalties for the broadcast.

Previously, the only way to monitor music being played everyday in bars, cafe's, and other public performance areas was done manually – and inaccurately.

*Failing to monitor these public performances means that musicians and songwriters are missing out on royalties each year.*

I founded Audoo in 2018 to develop a technical solution for the problem. Audoo is a music technology company revolutionising the royalty reporting system for musicians through the our Audoo Audio Meter™, which monitors music played in public venues. Through Audoo, I sought to create a simple and smart tech solution to lay the groundwork for a more fair and transparent music royalty distribution.

## How does Audoo answer an unmet need?

Before we developed the Audio Meter™ at Audoo, the technology deployed to track music played across public performance locations was often limited to a clipboard and a pen and royalties were paid using estimations based on popular radio plays.

Our Audio Meter™, which can be installed in commercial spaces, accurately tracks the music which is being played using real-time data analytics, streamlining the process of data capture. This real-time data helps Performing Right (PROs) and Collective Management Organisations (CMOs) to accurately pay their members public performance royalties.

## What makes Audoo unique?

At the core of our work is technology, which stands out from everything else on the market right now. Using a microphone array, our GDPR-compliant Audio Meter™ can track large amounts of music in any given setting and match against a vast library of over 120 million songs. Our innovative edge signal processing techniques mean that it can accurately identify tracks, whilst stripping out the foreground noise in a venue.

## How does Audoo help to protect smaller

# artists? Where are you currently operating?

It can be incredibly difficult for up and coming music artists to make a living off their work, especially when they are not attached to a record label.

*Royalties are one of the only things they can rely on to make a living whilst pursuing their dream.*

Yet, many small artists receive little to nothing if there is no way to effectively monitor public performance broadcasts of their music. Independent artists can have their songs reach the top 20 charts, yet will not be fairly paid unless they have the data to show their song has been performed.

This is an issue affecting musicians across the world. Over the last few years, we have successfully launched in Australia and New Zealand, and are currently rolling out across Europe and the Americas.

## What is the working culture like at Audoo?

In two words, modern and flexible. We're a business that entered the pandemic as three people and grew to 35 employees by the end of it – and have continued to grow ever since. The team is based around the world from Bristol to Barcelona, Sydney to Staffordshire – and everywhere in between.

Although we are a global business, we do value the importance of face-to-face contact and twice a year we get everyone together for our 'Start of Year' and summer events – we've done everything from go-karting and ping pong to playing polo on horses and, of course, going to concerts.

## How has the business evolved since

# launch?

We have been lucky to have such an incredible team at Audoo, and as the business has evolved we have been able to bring on some of the best talent from the music industry to join our mission to ensure artists are paid fairly. Recently, we appointed Alistair Macdonald, former CEO of a NASDAQ-listed Contract Research Organisation Syneos Health (SYNH) as a board advisor, alongside our newly appointed Chairman, Nigel Elderton, European President of the global independent music publisher Peermusic and former Chairman of PRS for Music, to assist the business as we continue our international growth.

## How are you funded?

Since we first launched, we have collectively raised over £14M. Artists and songwriters are at the heart of everything we do at Audoo, and we are proud to have been backed by some of the biggest names in the music industry including ABBA founder and CISAC President, Björn Ulvaeus and MPL Ventures.

## What has been your biggest challenge so far, and how did you overcome this?

The biggest challenge, and one shared by many, was the pandemic. We were planning to launch the business fully in April 2020, however when restrictions came in and we weren't legally allowed to leave our homes, this caused a major delay. This delay lasted for over 12 months, including attempts to reschedule the launch later that year that were put on hold due to more restrictions.

We adapted and eventually launched in April 2021 in Australia. Overcoming these disruptions and challenges was not easy – the honest answer is that sheer grit and determination is what pulled us through. Following late nights testing over video calls, we finally deployed hardware and software on the opposite side of the world without leaving our homes!

## What is the one piece of advice you would give to other founders or future founders?

My one piece of advice is 'go for it'. If you have an idea and ambition, never

give it up. With the right people, from team members to advisors, you'll always find your way. There will be times you struggle and it often requires big decisions – but once you get through them, it's always better on the other side of those moments!

## What is your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

My daily routine tends to follow Rihanna's famous song – “Work Work Work Work Work”, although I can never quite make out what she sings next! On a serious note, I had the most amazing news just weeks after creating Audoo that my wife was pregnant. Parenting and looking after our daughter (who is now four years old) has ensured I factor in down time to just have fun. Although, you'll often find me with pink toe nails now!

Ryan Edwards is the CEO and founder of Audoo.

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