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Mixhalo raises \$24 million to shape the future of live events

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A San Francisco-based provider of wireless high-quality audio streaming technology, Mixhalo, announced yesterday that it raised \$24 million in Series B funding.

Through its real-time audio platform, Mixhalo offers attendees at live events high-quality audio and other content so that every seat in the house feels like it is in the front row.

The way it works is pretty simple: Users download the free Mixhalo app on their smartphones and the network-based tech will tap into the event in real time — it can pinpoint exactly from where an audience member is accessing the app (the tech only extends around the perimeter of the venue), so that it reflects back the appropriate audio — and, using any personal headphones,



COURTESY OF MIXHALO

John Vars, CEO of Mixhalo, 2021

users are able to hear crystal-clear sound without the noise of fellow event-goers or other audible distractions that may otherwise disrupt the show.

The company was founded by Incubus guitarist and songwriter Mike Einziger and internationally-acclaimed violinist, Ann Marie Simpson-Einziger.

The round was led by funds managed by affiliates of Fortress Investment Group LLC ("Fortress") and include L-Acoustics, Foundry Group, Sapphire Sport, Founders Fund, Defy Partners and Another Planet Entertainment.

The new funding will be used to expand the technological capabilities of the platform as well as recruit key new hires. One such appointment is the recent hiring of veteran tech lawyer Dana Jewell as its general counsel who will be tasked with driving the company's intellectual property strategy and risk mitigation among other assignments.

Though the pandemic has devastated the live event industry, audiences are aching to gather again and a recovery — albeit a slow one — is in sight. Mixhalo has been able to grow over the past 18 months despite the precarious nature of hosting in-person events.

"Venues, artists and sports teams choose to offer Mixhalo at live events as it gives fans a more immersive, higher-quality sound experience compared to the PA system," said CEO John Vara. "They also like that they can personalize content — such as offering separate feeds for the guitarist in the band, or a Spanish language feed for play-by-plays at sporting events," he said.

I asked Vara whether the company will eventually be available to folks that aren't yet comfortable attending a live performance, it appears that — for now at least — Mixhalo is only available to in-person attendees. "Currently, we are laser-focused on elevating the live event experience and we have a lot to do here before expanding our product. We are not ruling out streaming for the future, but for now, this focus is extremely important," Vars said.

Mixhalo already has an impressive roster of clients and partners: Aerosmith, Charlie Puth, Incubus, Metallica, TechCrunch Disrupt,

Sting, Staples Center (soon-to-be Crypto.com Arena) and other venues housing NBA and NHL teams.

"There's an expression on people's faces the moment they plug in their headphones and try Mixhalo for the first time — we call it the Mixhalo smile," Vara said. "People love that they can hear the sound better, and that it feels more personal. Additionally, the pandemic has increased the desire for more physical space at events, and Mixhalo creates 'front row' behavior no matter where you are in the venue."

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