

# WRIK Entertainment's Rick Lataille opens up about the effects of the coronavirus on the entertainment business



Rick Lataille, the founder and CEO of WRIK Entertainment, has profoundly felt the negative consequences of COVID-19. Lataille, who has made his living off of trivia, karaoke and DJing for local events since 1990, counts on social venues staying open, and his has been one of the many businesses affected by the recent pandemic.

**Amanda Grafe (Motif):** Could you describe your business?

**Rick Lataille:** We are an entertainment business that provides DJs, photo booths, lighting, game shows and interactive activities for weddings, corporate events and family functions. We also provide trivia, music bingo and karaoke nights to restaurants on a weekly basis.

**AG:** COVID-19, and the government's response to the pandemic, is unprecedented. As someone whose business thrives on social venues being accessible, how has their massive shut-down impacted you professionally and personally?

**RL:** It has hit me and my business extremely hard. I literally have zero income and have not yet received any of the financial assistance that I applied for. It's taking a long time.

**AG:** What is WRIK doing differently during the lock down, and how have your fans responded?

**RL:** We are trying to stay in front of our customers on social media by having an at-home version of our trivia game on Facebook while promoting our restaurants at the same time. We also have a WRIK Karaoke Korner Facebook group where you can post yourself singing a song.

**AG:** You have a lot of contact with bars, restaurants, entertainment venues and other people in the

entertainment industry. What have they shared with you about their experience?

**RL:** Some of them are providing take-out and delivery, but some are not able to and are in the same situation as my business with zero income.

**AG:** When bars and restaurants are allowed to reopen and society returns to “normal,” how do you think that will play out? What advice can you give to other businesses in the entertainment field that may help them?

**RL:** I’m not sure how going back to normal will play out. It will likely be a slow roll out of allowing customers back into bars and restaurants with capacity limitations. If this is so, then WRIK’s return to the bar and restaurant scene could potentially be delayed by months. Hopefully summer weddings will happen as scheduled and by fall, all events will be back to normal.

My advice to other entertainment companies is to get yourself ready for when the time comes to get back out there. Also find other ways to make money including reinventing yourself and your business. Check out IBM. They’ve changed the focus of their business a number of times.

**AG:** When this is over, I have faith that, just as people are doing now, the community will come together to support those who were deeply impacted by COVID. When that time comes, how will people be able to support you and your business?

**RL:** Come out and attend as many of our weekly events as possible. Our schedule is always available at [wrikgigs.com](http://wrikgigs.com). I and all our hosts are looking forward to seeing everyone again.

**AG:** As a practicing DJ, what is your favorite lockdown song?

**RL:** Any song by Akon.

*For more information on Rick Lataille and WRIK, please visit: [wrikdj.com](http://wrikdj.com)*