

Executive Management Report to the Board

Q1 Activity (Jan-Feb-Mar 2026)

•
T0 Live

PRESIDENT & CEO'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Q1 2026 reflected continued momentum towards our goal to represent the city on our stages, through our programming, community engagement, venue operations, and organizational modernization initiatives. TO Live delivered a strong mix of artistic, commercial, and community-focused activity while advancing key capital, accessibility, and technology improvement projects across all venues.

Our *TO Live Presents* programming featured critically acclaimed and sold-out performances across music, theatre, circus, and family programming, while free and accessible initiatives such as *Soundbreak*, *Studio Sessions*, Xenia Concerts, and community arts programs continued to expand audience reach and community engagement. Our audiences continue to grow, particularly in areas where programming is community-driven through partnerships and leadership, and reflective of the communities we serve.

Commercial activity remained strong across Stage Rentals and Corporate & Private Events, with continued partnerships with major promoters, new client acquisition, and several high-profile bookings secured for later in 2026. Although Q1 financials reflect a soft start to the year, we are confident that the operating results can be managed to a balanced or better budget by the end of Q4. Development efforts also progressed positively through sponsorship renewals, grant submissions, and expanded corporate partnerships.

Operationally, significant progress was made on capital projects, accessibility upgrades, patron-service improvements, cybersecurity initiatives, and implementation of new organizational systems. Financial and administrative operations remained stable, with completion of the 2025 year-end audit and launch of the 2027 budget planning process.

As TO Live moves into Q2, priorities remain focused on audience growth, financial sustainability, strategic partnerships, operational modernization, and delivering inclusive, artistically ambitious programming that reflects the diversity of Toronto.



Clyde Wagner
President & CEO



PROGRAMMING

TO Live Presents

- [The Orchestral Qawwali Project](#) featuring Rushil Ranjan, Abi Sampa, and the TO Live Orchestra was a thrilling fusion of Sufi poetry, Indian classical dance, and sweeping orchestral sounds.
- [Paradisum](#) at the Bluma Appel Theatre, delivered high-caliber circus and acrobatic performance work.
- Jazz concerts at the George Weston Recital Hall included extraordinary performances by [The Bad Plus with Chris Potter and Craig Taborn](#), alongside a sold-out performance by [John Scofield Trio](#).
- March Break family programming featured [Shrek 2 in Concert](#) with the TO Live Orchestra, as well as a sold-out presentation of [Peppa Pig: My First Concert](#), focused on music education and family engagement.
- The free weekly [Soundbreak](#) series, and monthly [Studio Sessions](#) at Meridian Arts Centre, continued to build momentum, showcasing a wide range of Toronto-based artists across multiple genres.

Communities & Outreach

Making Space

- Provided free space to 4 companies - City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation (STOMP auditions), Creative Collectivities (York University), Shifting Grounds Collective, and Red Sky Performance – as well as 1 independent visual art exhibition ([A Persian Calligraphy Exhibition](#)) attended by 324 people, 2 independent performing artists (Rick Miller and Mark Samuels), reaching 400 individual artists. In-kind support totaled \$12,445.
- Provided free space for 2 residencies (*She Holds Up The Stars* by Red Sky Performance and *Eyes Wide Open* by Naishi Wang). In-kind support totaled \$20,825.
- Provided waived-rent support to Dance Immersion's *Zayo* (in-kind value \$12,600).

explorations

- Received 272 applications for the 2026 explorations cohort.

Community Classes & Programs

- [Xenia Concerts](#)
 - Delivered 2 inclusive concert experiences with the Eybler Quartet at Meridian Hall and Trio Carnaval at the Meridian Arts Centre, reaching 191 attendees
 - Trio Carnaval featured a zoologically themed mime and music performance that strongly resonated with intergenerational and family audiences



- Dancing with Parkinson's & Ballets Jazz Montreal: "Dance Me"
 - Reached 125 in-person and 300 virtual participants through a hybrid model, including national and international audiences.
 - Attendance reached 160% of projected participation, reflecting a strong demand for inclusive and accessible arts experiences.
- March Break Youth Arts Programming with STOMP
 - Delivered a full-day performance, professional skills workshop, and auditions for 35 youth ahead of *STOMP*'s early-May performance at Meridian Hall.
 - Engaged 50 youth through the annual March Break dance program.
- Paprika Theatre Festival: Indigenous Arts Program
 - Facilitated 39 rehearsal sessions between March and April, reaching 117 artists and the development of new works by emerging Indigenous creators.
 - Increased support by +18 sessions year over year (39 total), demonstrating significant growth in artist engagement and demand.

Stage Rentals

Welcomed 41 events, presented by 33 clients in Q1.

- Continued strong relationships with major promoters presenting high profile, sold-out events including Live Nation (La La Land), and Productions GFN (Lord of the Rings film & orchestra).
- Comedian Hannah Berner filmed her latest comedy special for Hulu over several nights at the Bluma Appel Theatre, to premiere worldwide later this year.
- Secured significant bookings for later in the year, including:
 - Outside Looking In (Bluma Appel Theatre, May 2026)
 - Adekunle Gold with Orchestra (Meridian Hall, July 2026)
 - Big Thief (Meridian Hall, August 2026)

Corporate and Private Events

- Delivered 12 corporate and private events in Q1, including 4 new clients and 8 recurring events.
- Secured new business with Lawson Climate Institute, CLIO, Vaughan Multicultural Community Association, and SOL Dance.
- Achieved level budget January results, supported by new client activity including major technology sector booking CLIO.
- Continued retention of recurring clients and annual bookings, including International Youth Fellowship, Milestone Church, Pures College, Toronto Business College, Nestlé, Seneca College, and Yorkville University.



Production Services

- Strengthened leadership with the internal promotion of Production Manager to Senior Production Manager.
- Completed Capital Project work on the hoist system in the Lyric Theatre at MAC.
- Completed negotiations with IATSE 822 (wardrobe) at STLC.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing and Communications

- Recognized holidays of national and social/cultural importance on social media and digital signage, including New Year's, Family Day, Pink Shirt Day, Lunar New Year, Ramadan, Eid, and International Trans Day of Visibility.
- Created and shared content to highlight TO Live Presents shows, including:
 - The Bad Plus: Editorial article featuring Dave King interview - [Reimagining Jarrett: The Bad Plus' bold tribute before goodbye](#)
 - Paradisum: Editorial article featuring Bence Vagi interview - [Inside Paradisum: Recirquel's genre-defying fusion of dance and circus](#)
 - Dance Me: [Social media reactions video](#)
 - Shrek 2 in Concert: [Talking-head TikTok/reel](#)

Earned media highlights included:

- Orchestral Qwwali Project: *Ludwig Van TORONTO* - [INTERVIEW | Sufi & Symphonic Traditions Meet: Composer Rushil Ranjan Talks About The Orchestral Qawwali Project](#)
- Paradisum by Recirquel: *My Gay Toronto* - [Paradisum: circus and dance give human existence a new meaning](#)
- The Bad Plus: *NOW Toronto* - [The Bad Plus, Chris Potter, and Craig Taborn](#)
- John Scofield Trio: Jazz FM 91.1 FM - [Live radio interview on Wake Up! with Heather Bambrick](#)

Ticket Services

- Ticketing activity continues to show signs of stabilizing into more consistent levels following the post-pandemic period, with high event activity in Q4 giving way to more event building in Q1. The first quarter of 2026 saw approximately 97K ticketed attendees within the quarter (a drop compared with 2025), approximately 110K new tickets booked during the quarter (roughly matching 2025), and over 150 performances were put into market across 88 events (an increase over 2025).



- Ticketing/Box Office support for external clients continued strong, with TO Live extending services at the Elgin & Winter Garden through to the end of Q1 2027, and working through an expanded programming and ticketing partnership with the Luminato Festival for 2026.
- Extensive preparation and training was undertaken for the launch of TO Live's new Box Office Phone Queue, occurring at the end of the quarter. This was part of TO Live's larger overhaul of its phone system, and the updated queue was successfully implemented, seeing several significant improvements in functionality, flexibility, and reporting.
- As part of continuing training and empowerment of front-line staff, policies pertaining to ticket printing and pickup were expanded and refined, and were adopted by Box Office staff members at all venues.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Finance

- Completed year-end audit for 2025.
- Issued 2025 T4A-NR (Non-Residents).
- Completed City's submission of yearly & quarterly reports.
- Started 2027 budget process.

Payroll

- Issued over 1,000 T4's and T4A's for 2025.
- Completed yearly payroll filings.
- Completed yearly OMERS annual pension reports.

Information Technology

- Executed Letters of Authorization for Phone Migration Project from Mitel to Microsoft and accepted by Bell and Rogers.
- Completed reviews and updates for Information Technology Policies.
- Completed assessment and security reviews for Microsoft Windows 25H2.
- Started roll out of Microsoft Windows 25H2.
- Continuing framework document for moving on-premises file shares to Microsoft Teams.
- Continued work on enhancements to EBMS reports (Cross-functional Finance & IT activity).
- Continued work on TO Live new Point of Sale System (POS) for concessions.



HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- 127.5 non-recoverable FTEs at the end of Q1 which was below budgeted non-recoverable FTE of 139.9. The recoverable FTEs was at 112 at the end of Q1 which was 5.8(6%) more than 2026 budgeted recoverable FTE of 106.2.
- Employee turnover was 0.52% in Q1 compared to 2.2% the same time last year. 66% of those who left had less than 3 years of service.
- 8 positions were filled in Q1, with 10 positions currently open.

Training

- Compliance training (online)
 - 346 employees - Addressing Racism in the Workplace Training for Employees
 - 351 employees - AODA Customer Service Standards Training (Comprehensive Content, Immersive)
 - 342 employees - Demonstrating Respect at Work Training
 - 207 employees - Unconscious Bias Training for All Audiences
 - 333 employees - Workplace Violence and Harassment Refresher Training for Employees & Supervisors (Ontario, Immersive)
 - 65 employees – WHIMS Training Comprehensive and New WHIMS Training

New HRIS – HR & Payroll System (ADP Workforce Now):

- Activated time-off module.
- Completed employee training for time-off requests, self-service functions.

Indigenous Action Plan:

- Renewed partnership agreement with the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business (CCIB) to support the UpFRONT Festival.
- Expanded support for Indigenous artists through TO Live's Making Space program, which has seen increased participation from Indigenous-led organizations, including Paprika Theatre Festival's Indigenous Arts Program, Red Sky Performance, and the National Arts Centre's Indigenous Theatre. As of May 6, 2026, the program has received 31 requests and fulfilled 19, including approximately \$18,600 CAD in in-kind space donations.
- Advanced Indigenous arts presentation and commissioning initiatives by supporting Tkaronto Open IV at Union Station in partnership with FFDN and US through an approximately \$7,500 contribution, and by co-commissioning two Indigenous productions: She Holds Up The Stars by Red Sky Performance, which premiered at Roy Thomson Hall in April, and Rose by the National Arts Centre's Indigenous Theatre with John Alcorn, Tomson Highway, and Tanya Tagaq, which premiered in March 2026.



- Strengthened the Indigenous Song Project (ISP) through the onboarding of a Researcher/Writer, Project Manager, and Indigenous Associate Producer, while preparing for its first invite-only performance and networking event on June 11 at the Meridian Arts Centre's Greenwin Theatre. The project focuses on collaborating with Indigenous communities in Ontario and Quebec to collect, perform, and share Indigenous songs with Indigenous youth. The National Arts Centre has also agreed in principle to serve as a future performance partner alongside TO Live in Toronto.

OPERATIONS

Capital Projects

- **Meridian Arts Centre (MAC) highlights include:**
 - Completed Phase 1 dressing rooms and turned them over to Operations.
 - Completed the First Aid Room and Phase 1 associated corridors.
 - Installed custom lobby elevator programming.
 - Completed video relay systems and Recital Hall rigging projects.
- **Meridian Hall (MH) highlights include:**
 - Advanced accessibility renovations in lower offices, dressing, and green rooms.
 - Relit auxiliary corridors and advanced final finishes, including painting.
 - Advanced redevelopment of the Catering and Events offices and orchestra changing area, completing washrooms and offices for turnover to Operations.

Facility Services

- Executed a new [Siemens](#) BAS preventive maintenance service agreement at MAC.
- Migrated the facilities work order system from Hippo to [Eptura Asset](#) and trained staff.
- Coordinated flooding remediation at MH and STLC following a Front Street water-main failure.
- Submitted waste diversion and energy consumption reporting.
- Completed corrective work on annual fire-inspection deficiencies across all sites.
- Transitioned MH and STLC CCTV management from ExacqVision to Axis Camera Station and trained Operations staff.
- Completed annual Category 1 escalator testing.
- Supported the City of Toronto cybersecurity review for Operational Technology systems.

Patron and Event Services

- Welcomed approximately 88,000 patrons across all venues.
- Launched new point-of-sale system to improve transaction speed, reporting, and guest experience.



- Relaunched inventory management software to improve tracking accuracy and stock control.
- Established new concessions vendor partnership to diversify and elevate food experience.
- Collaborated with Development to launch a new beverage partnership with [Moosehead Breweries](#).

DEVELOPMENT – Philanthropy & Corporate Sponsorship

- Grants
 - Secured Canada Council funding for the UpFRONT Festival of Indigenous Arts, Music and Culture.
 - Submitted Canada Council grant in support of Rangreza.
 - Submitted an Ontario Arts Council application in support of UpFRONT Festival.
- Sponsorship
 - Renewed sponsorship from TD Bank in support of UpFRONT Festival.
 - Launched a new partnership with Moosehead Breweries, including staff product training for Food & Beverage teams.
 - Finalized negotiations with Lavazza as TO Live’s exclusive coffee sponsor.
 - Renewed partnerships with Arterra Wines (cider) and The Earth Group for an additional year.
 - Pursued sponsorship renewals with all previous UpFRONT Festival sponsors.
 - Advanced sponsorship discussions with Power Corporation through submission of a renewal proposal for explorations programming.
- Philanthropy & Corporate Giving
 - Continued stewardship and cultivation activities with individual donors and foundations following with proposal submissions totaling \$757,000.
 - Expanded the Corporate Champions program with new commitments from two companies, bringing total program support of this pilot initiative to \$20,500 to date.
 - Continued cultivation activities with prospective major donors.
- Stewardship & Engagement
 - Hosted a pre-show donor reception for *Orchestral Qawwali Project*.
 - Continued donor engagement through stewardship communications and TO Live Presents audience outreach initiatives.

TO Live Foundation and TO Live fundraising are separate entities.

