

News story: CMA clears festivals merger

This follows a [‘phase 1’ investigation](#) by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) into the deal.

As part of its examination, the CMA sought the views of a number of sector experts, including other organisers of live music events and industry bodies, as well as festival goers. A survey was sent to several thousand customers of the Isle of Wight festival to gain insight into what drives their choice between different festivals (or other activities, such as going to a concert or on holiday).

The evidence collected indicates that the Isle of Wight festival and Live Nation’s existing festivals were not competing particularly closely for customers. After the merger, people will continue to be able to choose between festivals owned by Live Nation and a variety of competing festivals. The fact that festival goers also choose between going to a festival and other activities will also ensure that Live Nation continues to face sufficient competition.

Following concerns raised by third parties, the CMA also investigated whether the merger would enable Live Nation to stop rival organisers of live music events (both festivals and concerts) from being able to book the range and quality of artists that they need to provide a competitive proposition. However, the evidence indicates that the merger will not materially strengthen Live Nation’s position in booking artists, and that a sufficient range and quality of artists will continue to be available for rival organisers of live music events.

The merger will therefore not be referred for an in-depth phase 2 investigation.