

TOPO SOPHY

PLACE MAKING & MARKETING AGENCY



The 24/7 revolution:

How cities are
transforming their
night economies

2024

The 24/7 revolution: How cities are transforming their night economies



Disclaimer: This white paper is part of TOPOSOPHY's reports series, exploring key aspects of placemaking and the visitor economy, starting with the nighttime economy. Keep an eye out for our upcoming publications for more in-depth analysis and insights.

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TUNE INTO
Common Ground
by TOPOSOLOGY



Why are so many late night venues across the UK and Europe shutting down?
How can cities and local councils draw the fine line between residents and revelers?
What role do developers have in keeping culture alive?
In this episode we're looking into the pros and cons of the night time economy.

Listen on



Why the night economy matters:

Understanding its impact on urban life post-pandemic

“““

To create a truly thriving and sustainable nightlife culture, cities must also prioritise inclusive planning.

As cities emerge from the pandemic, there's a renewed focus on the night economy's role in fostering a vibrant 24-hour society. This sector spans a diverse array of activities, from nightlife venues to crucial services like transportation and security. Its impact is profound not only economically but also culturally and socially.

Globally, about 80 cities have established nighttime commissions, appointing 'night mayors' or 'night czars' to advocate for this sector, as shown by the [Nighttime Advocacy Map](#). These roles have been instrumental, especially as the UK's nighttime economy saw a decline from 5.1% to 4.1% of its GDP between 2019 and 2022. However, it still plays a vital role in employment, with 1 in 9 UK workers employed in nighttime roles. There's a growing recognition of the sector's cultural significance, particularly in creative industries like music.

Cities like New York, London, and Sydney demonstrate the global impact of the night economy. For instance, New York's nighttime economy generates \$35.1 billion annually and has created 300,000 jobs. In London, it supports 723,000 jobs, and in Sydney, there's potential for significant growth with proper support.

The night economy offers more than financial benefits. It provides social advantages, like relaxation after a day's work, and helps alleviate daytime congestion in urban spaces. However, it also poses environmental and community challenges, including pollution and public safety concerns. Addressing these issues, along with promoting safety through initiatives like improved lighting and security, is crucial.

Cities must also focus on inclusive planning. This means considering the needs of all community members and including a variety of businesses and activities that cater for different demographics, thus supporting diverse communities and contributing to the overall vibrancy of urban life.

In summary, as we acknowledge the economic importance of the night economy, we must also adopt an inclusive, responsible approach to support a 24-hour society. Balancing economic growth with environmental, safety, and community considerations, and embracing inclusive planning, will pave the way for a sustainable and thriving nighttime culture beneficial to all.



UK NIGHT ECONOMY:
A significant shift from

5.1%
to **4.1%**
of GDP between
2019 - 2022



IN THE UK,

1 in every 9

workers is part of the nighttime economy.

Elevating your city's night economy:

Placemaking and marketing strategies

To support the growth of its city's night economy, destination authorities need to work in partnerships with a variety of organisations responsible for city management, such as local government authorities/agencies (city planning, licensing, transport, safety, promotion, economic development organisations, public health bodies, and community and voluntary organisations):

Forging strategic partnerships:

Collaborate across sectors for cohesive night economy growth and multi-stakeholder engagement.

Attracting value creators:

Boost city appeal by attracting innovative entrepreneurs, artists, and creative minds.

Crafting compelling urban narratives:

Create unique city stories that foster pride and diverse cultural representation.

Activating public spaces:

Use public areas for events and art to foster community interaction and creativity.

Fostering community involvement:

Include community voices in city planning for trust and collaborative growth.

Enhancing citizen wellbeing:

Focus on health initiatives and access to green spaces for a happier urban life.

Balancing resident and visitor interests:

Align tourist attractions with resident needs for harmonious urban living.

Understanding behavioural insights:

Research resident and visitor behaviours to inform strategic city planning and marketing.

Embracing new partnership models:

Seek innovative collaborations for an integrated approach to night economy development.

Prioritising diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI):

Support marginalized communities for a welcoming, inclusive night economy.



Looking to give your city's nightlife a boost?

Here are ten fresh and
innovative ideas that could help





NIGHT MARKETS

Many cities have established **vibrant night markets** that offer a range of food, crafts, and other goods. These markets can provide an exciting and unique nightlife experience while also supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs.

CASE STUDIES

The Night Market Philadelphia is a popular annual event that features food, music, and other entertainment.

[Find out more >](#)

The Bhangra and Beats Night Market brought multicultural arts, culture and food experiences across several blocks of downtown San Francisco's Financial District over three weeks in 2023.

[Find out more >](#)



POP-UP BUSINESSES

Cities can encourage the **development of temporary or "pop-up" businesses** that operate during the evening and overnight hours. This can provide a low-risk opportunity for entrepreneurs to test new ideas and help to add variety and excitement to the nightlife scene.

CASE STUDIES

The Amsterdam Dance Event hosted a range of pop-up shops, cafes and entertainment spaces in 2023.

[Find out more >](#)

Vacant to Vibrant is a programme by SF New Deal and the City of San Francisco, helping small businesses collaborate with local property owners to create engaging pop-up experiences and community spaces in the city centre.

[Find out more >](#)



NIGHTTIME BIKE SHARING

Cities can expand their **bike-sharing programmes to include overnight hours**, making it easier for people to get around during the evening and early morning. This can also help to reduce traffic and air pollution.

CASE STUDIES

The Oslo City Bike Scheme allows users to unlock bikes from 5 in the morning until 1am. The scheme is a partnership between the city of Oslo and Clear Channel Norway AS

[Find out more >](#)

The Velib programme in Paris, France, offers overnight bike-sharing options for people who want to use bikes after regular operating hours.

[Find out more >](#)

Late-night public transportation

To support the growth of the night economy, cities can consider extending the hours of their public transportation systems or adding additional late night services. This can make it easier for people to access nightlife destinations and support the growth of the after-hours economy, while feeling safe and secure.



Case studies

The Downtown Rideshare Hub Pilot Program in Orlando, US, helps advance the downtown entertainment district in terms of traffic congestion, crowd control management and, therefore, public safety.

[Find out more >](#)

The Adelaide Home Project, launched in 2020, aims at keep people safe while they wait for transport home after a Saturday night in the city.

[Find out more >](#)

Cultural events

Cities can host a variety of cultural events during the evening and overnight hours to attract visitors and support local artists and performers. These events can range from concerts and theatre performances to film festivals and art exhibits.



Case studies

In November 2023, the 'Dublin by Night Fest' celebrated the city's award of its tenth Purple Flag, awarded to towns with consistently vibrant nightlife.

[Find out more >](#)

The Vivid Sydney is a three-week-long light festival with significant economic impact on the city. The festival is curated across three major festival pillars: Vivid Light, Vivid Music and Vivid Ideas, while in 2023 a new pillar has been added, Vivid Food, following the success of the Vivid Sydney Dinner initiative in 2022.

[Find out more >](#)

Meraki Liverpool, a music hub, confronted potential risks from neighbouring residential projects. The venue's community united to express concerns to the developer and city council. Their joint efforts led to the rejection of the planning application, underscoring the vital role of community engagement in preserving existing nightlife spaces.

[Find out more >](#)

Nightlife districts and designated public spaces

Some cities have established designated nightlife districts that are specifically designed to support the growth of the night economy. These districts can include a mix of entertainment venues, restaurants and other businesses, and may also feature special programming or events to attract visitors. Additionally, the designation of public spaces (e.g. squares) for nightlife activities is another way to foster community engagement and strengthen the sense of safety.



Case studies

The York, Clarence and Kent Street precinct in Sydney was designated as Australia's first 'Purple Flag District' in February 2023 and will host a month-long festival of late night events from October to November.

[Find out more >](#)

District 1 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, submitted a plan to the municipal People's Committee to adopt initiatives aimed at developing its night-time economy.

[Find out more >](#)

The Rembrandtplein Gastvrij (Hospitable Rembrandt Square) was a pilot program by the City of Amsterdam, introducing hosts to welcome people at the square, providing incentives for proper behaviour, and implementing safety measures during night hours.

[Find out more >](#)



LATE-NIGHT PARKS AND RECREATION

Cities can consider opening their parks and recreational facilities during the evening and overnight hours to provide additional options for entertainment and recreation. This could include activities such as outdoor movies, sports games, or fitness classes.

CASE STUDIES

The Night Nation Run is an annual event that takes place in parks and other recreational areas across the United States. The event features music, games, and other entertainment.

[Find out more >](#)

Twilight with the Museums is an annual February half-term programme that allows families to explore Cambridgeshire's museums after dark and participate in various events and activities.

[Find out more >](#)



NIGHTLIFE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Cities can establish a team of “nightlife ambassadors” who can work with local businesses and organizations to promote the night economy and assist with issues, such as safety and public relations.

CASE STUDIES

The ‘Thrive at Night’ programme by Bristol City Council provides mental health and wellbeing support to the Night Time Economy (NTE) workforce in Bristol through resources, training, peer support and trauma response support sessions.

[Find out more >](#)

In 2018, the European Institute of Studies on Prevention published a training manual for staff in nightlife settings to identify, prevent and respond to sexual violence.

[Find out more >](#)

Nightlife ambassadors

Cities can establish a team of “nightlife ambassadors” who can work with local businesses and organisations to promote the night economy and assist with issues such as safety and public relations.



Case studies

The “Good Night Out” campaign in London, UK, is a program that trains “nightlife ambassadors” to assist with issues such as safety and public relations in bars and clubs.

[Find out more >](#)

In October 2023, The Night Time Industries Association appointed 30 Night Time Economy Ambassadors across the UK in a bid to accelerate local representation and strengthen the country’s nighttime economy

[Find out more >](#)

Nightlife grants

Cities can provide financial support to local businesses and organizations through nightlife grants, which can be used to fund new initiatives or events that contribute to the vibrancy of the night economy.



Case studies

In July 2022, the Irish Government extended the Nighttime Economy Support Scheme with an additional investment of €1.4 million bringing the total allocated to this Scheme to €4 million.

[Find out more >](#)

Greater Sydney business districts with plans to create innovative, buzzing nighttime districts can apply in 2023 to the New South Wales 24-Hour Economy Commission for up to \$200,000 in funding to turn their ideas into projects.

[Find out more >](#)



Shining a light on progress:

Metrics for a thriving nightlife

After evaluating the effectiveness of various nightlife initiatives, it's crucial to consider a diverse range of metrics that capture both the economic and social dimensions of a thriving nighttime economy. This includes but is not limited to:

Economic impact indicators:

- Revenue generated: measure specific annual revenue increments from nightlife businesses.
- Employment rates: track percentage increase in employment in nightlife sectors each quarter.
- Tourist numbers: count the yearly increase in tourists citing nightlife as a primary reason for visits.
- Local business growth: number of new nightlife-related businesses opening annually.
- Investment attraction: total amount of public and private investment in nightlife districts each year.

Socio-cultural Indicators:

- Cultural event attendance: number of attendees at nighttime cultural events per event.
- Diversity of offerings: quantify the number of different types of nighttime activities available monthly.
- Community engagement: percentage of local population participating in nighttime events annually.
- Public sentiment on safety: biannual survey results measuring public perception of nighttime safety.

Environmental Impact Indicators:

- Energy consumption: measure monthly energy usage by major nightlife districts.
- Noise pollution levels: quarterly assessments of noise levels in key nightlife areas.
- Waste management efficiency: biannual evaluation of waste collection and recycling rates during night hours.
- Carbon footprint assessment: yearly assessment of the carbon footprint of nightlife activities.
- Green space utilization: biannual tracking of green space usage for nightlife activities.

For a tailored selection of metrics that align precisely with your place's objectives and nightlife, TOPOSOPHY's consultants can offer invaluable assistance.

What are the key lessons & takeaways to managing the nighttime economy effectively?



In this section, we distill the key lessons and takeaways from our analysis of the night economy. As cities globally aim to enrich their nocturnal landscapes, these insights are pivotal, offering a blueprint for balancing economic growth with community wellbeing, environmental sustainability, and cultural vibrancy. This exploration highlights the strategies and practices crucial for developing a thriving and inclusive night economy.

Economic resilience and growth:

The night economy is not just a significant contributor to urban economies; its resilience through challenging times underscores its potential for growth. With cities like the UK, New York, and Sydney demonstrating its substantial role in GDP and employment, the sector presents untapped opportunities for economic expansion.

Urban challenges and adaptive strategies:

Beyond profitability, the night economy introduces complex urban challenges, including environmental impact and safety concerns. Adaptive city planning and forward-thinking strategies, such as enhancing public transportation and promoting community-centric initiatives, are crucial to overcoming these challenges.

Inclusivity as a growth catalyst:

Inclusive and diverse urban planning isn't just about fairness; it's a catalyst for growth in the night economy. Embracing the full spectrum of community demographics ensures a richer, more vibrant nightlife that supports wider economic and social objectives.

Innovation and creativity in nightlife:

Cities are increasingly using creative and innovative approaches to rejuvenate their night economies. From eclectic night markets to diverse cultural events, these initiatives highlight the transformative potential of nightlife in urban revitalization.

Importance of collaborative governance:

Effective governance in the night economy hinges on collaboration. Strong partnerships between city authorities, businesses, communities, and other stakeholders are vital for aligning economic growth with community welfare and sustainability.

Metrics beyond economics:

Evaluating the night economy requires metrics that encompass economic, social, and environmental aspects. This multi-faceted approach is crucial for a holistic understanding of the night economy's impact and potential.

Recognizing and valuing cultural contributions:

The cultural impact of nightlife activities, particularly in creative sectors like music and arts, is an often underappreciated aspect of the night economy. Recognizing and valuing these contributions can enhance the cultural richness and attractiveness of cities.

Safety and public health considerations:

Addressing safety and public health concerns is critical for a sustainable night economy. Strategies that enhance public safety, such as improved lighting and security measures, contribute to a more positive and welcoming nightlife environment.

Environmental sustainability in nightlife:

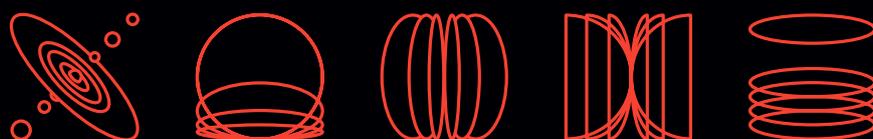
Sustainable practices in the night economy are essential for minimizing its ecological footprint. Initiatives focusing on reducing noise pollution, managing waste efficiently, and promoting green spaces are key to an environmentally-responsible nightlife sector.

Future-focused nighttime infrastructure:

Investing in nighttime infrastructure, such as dedicated nightlife districts and specialised public spaces, can significantly boost the night economy. These investments not only enhance the appeal of cities at night but also contribute to better urban planning and community development.

Role of technology and digitalization:

Leveraging technology and digitalization can optimise the night economy. From smart lighting to digital platforms for event management and promotion, technology plays a pivotal role in modernizing and streamlining nightlife operations.



Unlock the power of your city's night economy

with

TOPOSOPHY

TOPOSOPHY is a global leader in city marketing and placemaking, with a focus on helping cities to create vibrant, livable, and sustainable communities. The company offers a range of services and solutions to support cities in their efforts to enhance their night economies, including:



Strategic planning and consulting:

Our team delivers comprehensive strategy documents, including detailed action plans, timelines, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for tracking progress. We offer specific recommendations for policy changes, infrastructure improvements, and stakeholder engagement strategies to nurture a vibrant nightlife.



Partnerships and collaborations:

We facilitate the formation of partnerships, providing frameworks for collaboration between city authorities, local businesses, cultural entities, and community groups. This includes drafting partnership agreements and outlining joint marketing or event initiatives.



Placemaking and branding:

We create bespoke branding toolkits for nightlife districts, encompassing logo designs, signage guidelines, and marketing collateral. Our placemaking initiatives can include the design of public spaces, with blueprints for night markets, outdoor entertainment areas, and pedestrian-friendly zones that enhance nighttime appeal.



Training and capacity building:

We offer custom training modules for businesses operating in the night economy. These can include certifications in responsible service of alcohol, customer service excellence programs, and workshops on event management and safety protocols. Our services also extend to webinars and e-learning platforms for wider reach.



Marketing and promotion:

Our deliverables include a mix of digital and print marketing campaigns, social media strategy plans, and promotional event concepts. We also provide analytics reports to gauge the effectiveness of marketing efforts in increasing foot traffic and engagement in nightlife areas.

Overall, TOPOSOPHY can provide a range of support and expertise to help cities enhance their night economies and create thriving, sustainable communities.

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Coming up next...

Do it for the kids
How urban design is encouraging active play and social interaction

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