LOVE WINS MEDIA, INC. · RESPONSE TO APP REVIEW

Velvet by AudienceKit: a night at the venue

Guidelines 4.3(a), 4.3(b) and 4.2.6. This document follows one night at a venue across our apps: Focus, Velvet (the staff app under review), Backstage and Hot Mess, with a screenshot of each step. The written answers to the nine questions follow at the end.

App	Velvet by AudienceKit (Apple ID 6820764256)
Version	1.8 (build 430056)
Bundle ID	com.audiencekit.Velvet
Developer	Love Wins Media, Inc.
Related apps	Hot Mess (since 2017), Focus, Backstage, Arbiter
Demo data	All screenshots use the AudienceKit Demo audience and its venue, The Review Room. No real guest data is shown.

OVERVIEW

The lifecycle of a night

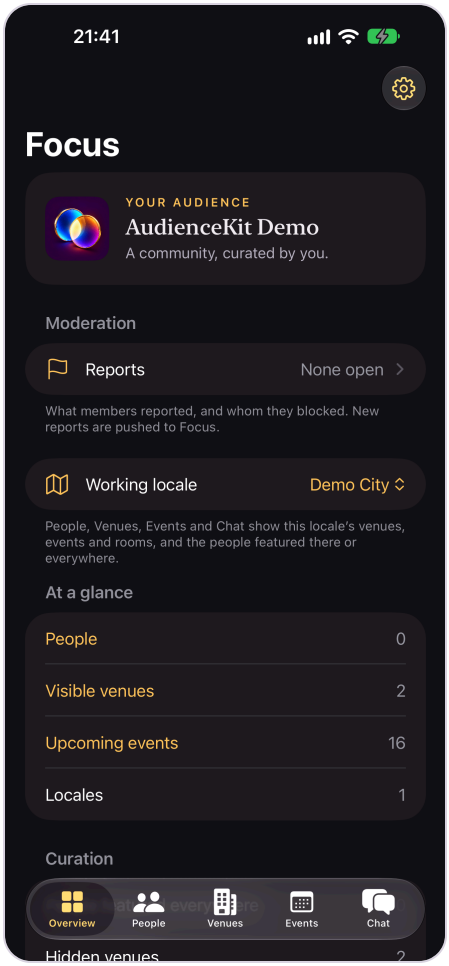
Each app serves a different person in the same night. **Focus**: the scene's administrators, who list the venue in Hot Mess and back its staff up. **Velvet**: the venue's own staff. **Backstage**: the talent, who plan the lineup with the venue back of house. **Hot Mess**: the guests. Each step below is a page with screenshots.

1	BEFORE THE NIGHT	The scene's administrator lists the venue in Hot Mess	Focus, Hot Mess
2	BEFORE THE NIGHT	The venue's staff are invited	Focus, Velvet App Clip
3	BEFORE THE NIGHT	Staff sign in, or a shared door device is connected	Velvet
4	BEFORE THE NIGHT	The venue plans its calendar	Velvet
5	BEFORE THE NIGHT	Talent keep their profile and bookings current	Backstage
6	BEFORE THE NIGHT	Venue and talent work out the lineup, back of house	Backstage, Velvet
7	DOORS OPEN	Guests find the night in Hot Mess	Hot Mess
8	DOORS OPEN	Tonight at the venue	Velvet
9	AT THE DOOR	The guest's pass meets the door	Demo door pass, Velvet
10	INSIDE	Guests join the venue's chat	Hot Mess
11	INSIDE	Venue staff moderate in Velvet	Velvet
12	INSIDE	Posts, and the new comment ban (this build)	Velvet
13	INSIDE	The scene's administrators back the venues up	Focus
14	INSIDE	A guest feels unsafe	Hot Mess, Velvet
15	ALL NIGHT	The venue's screen	Velvet, Velvet marquee
16	AFTER THE NIGHT	The venue's owner keeps control	Velvet

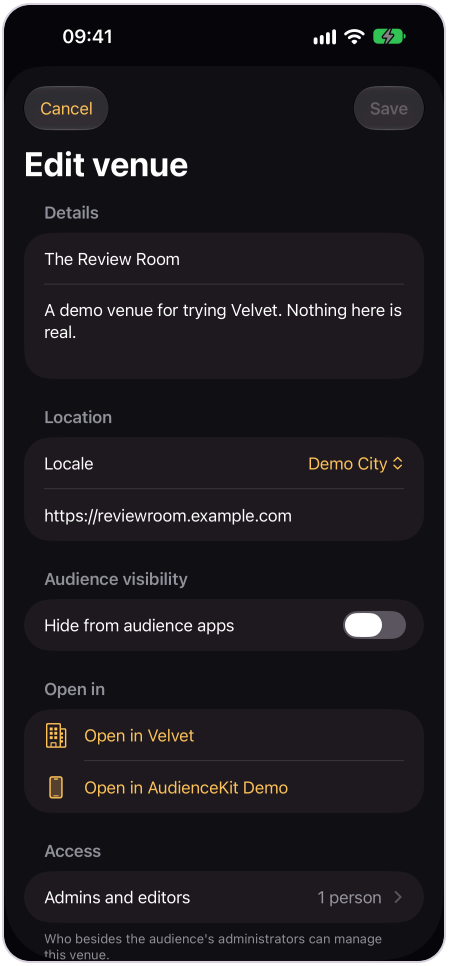
BEFORE THE NIGHT · STEP 1 OF 16

The scene's administrator lists the venue in Hot Mess

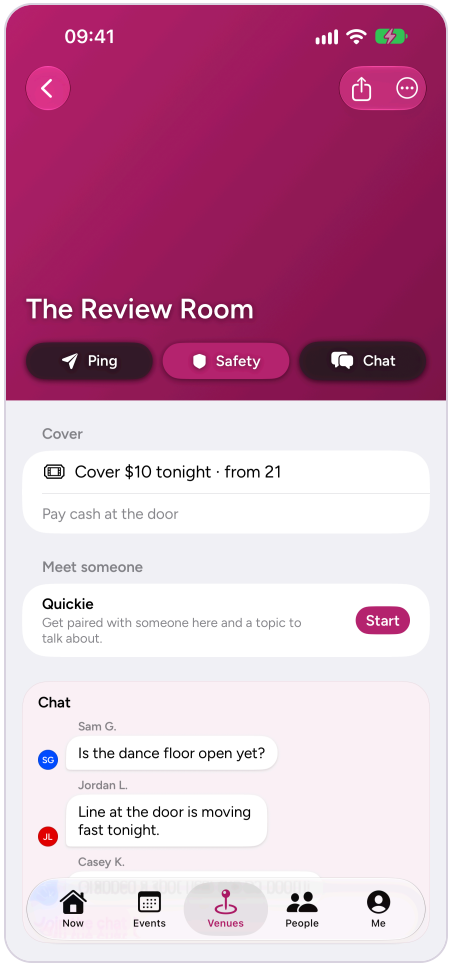
In Focus, the administrator of a city's scene adds and curates the venue: its listing, locale and events. That listing is what guests see in Hot Mess. Focus works across the whole city; it is not the venue's own tool.



Focus · iPhone



Focus · iPhone

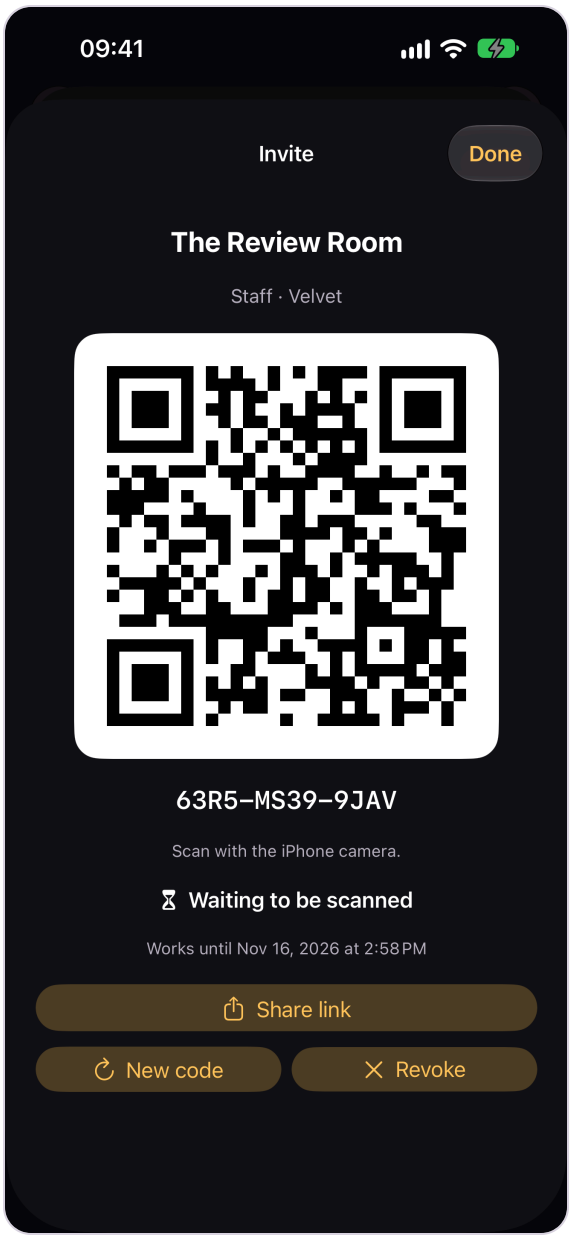


Hot Mess · iPhone

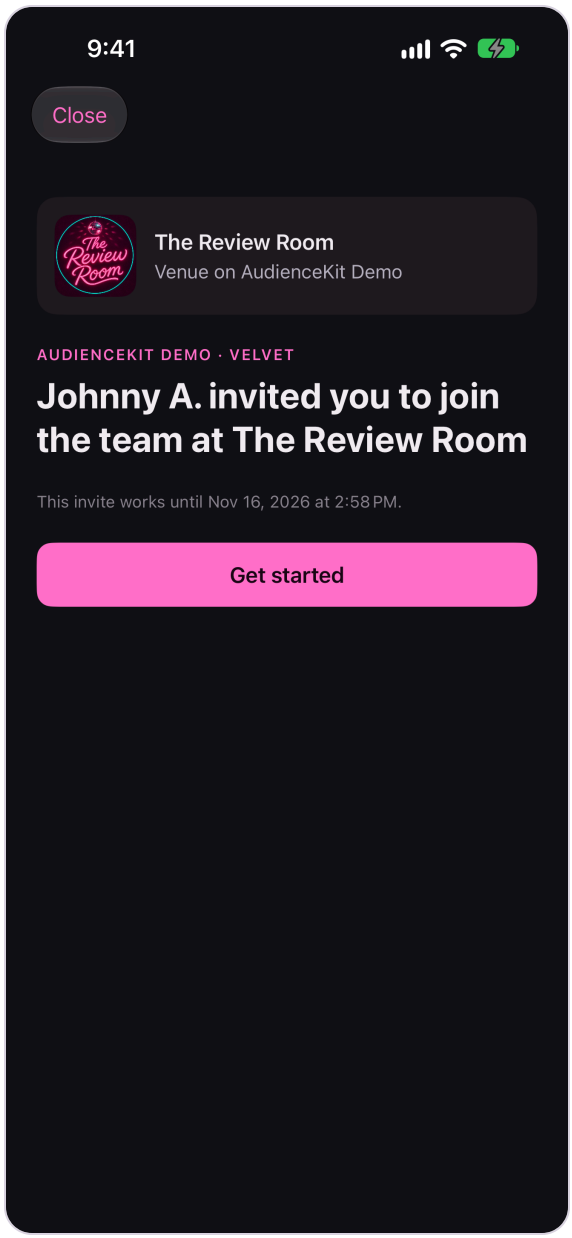
BEFORE THE NIGHT · STEP 2 OF 16

The venue's staff are invited

The administrator issues a staff invite for the venue in Focus. The new staff member scans its QR code, Velvet's App Clip opens, and they accept with Sign in with Apple. Velvet then opens at their venue.



Focus · iPhone

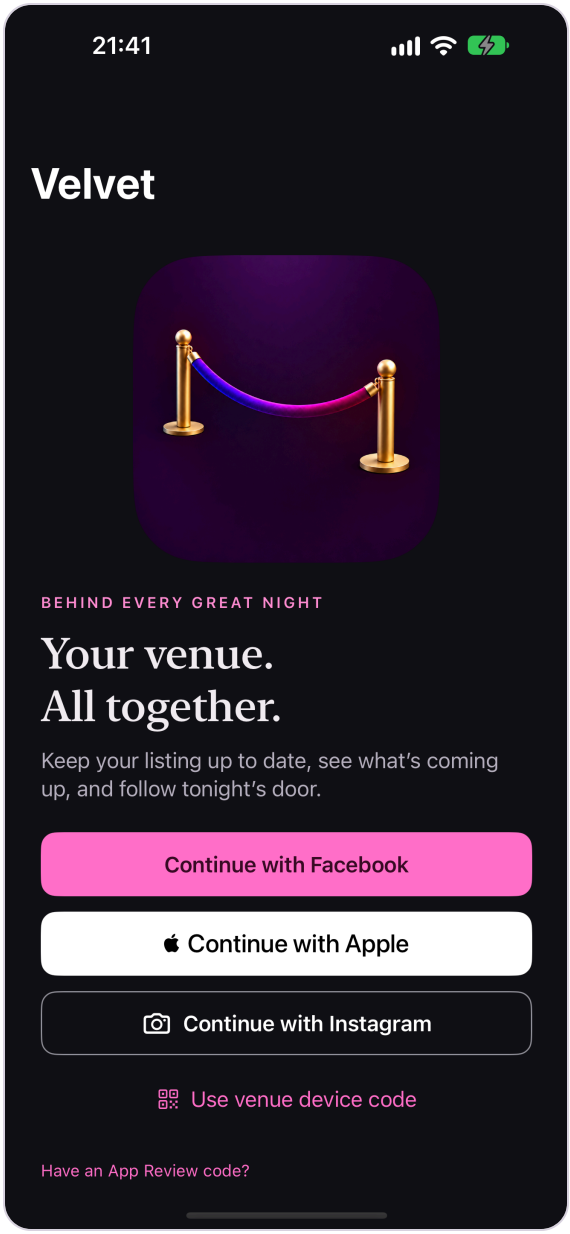


Velvet App Clip · iPhone

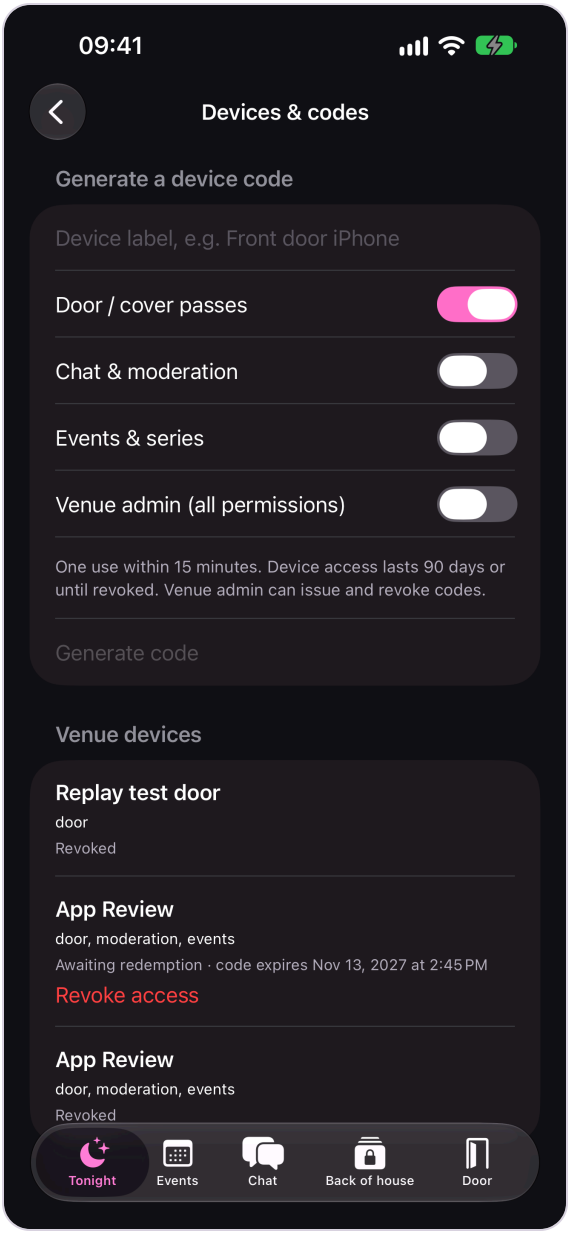
BEFORE THE NIGHT · STEP 3 OF 16

Staff sign in, or a shared door device is connected

Staff sign in with Apple or Facebook. A shared door iPad uses a venue device code instead of a personal account; codes are limited to door, events or moderation and can be revoked at any time.



Velvet · iPhone

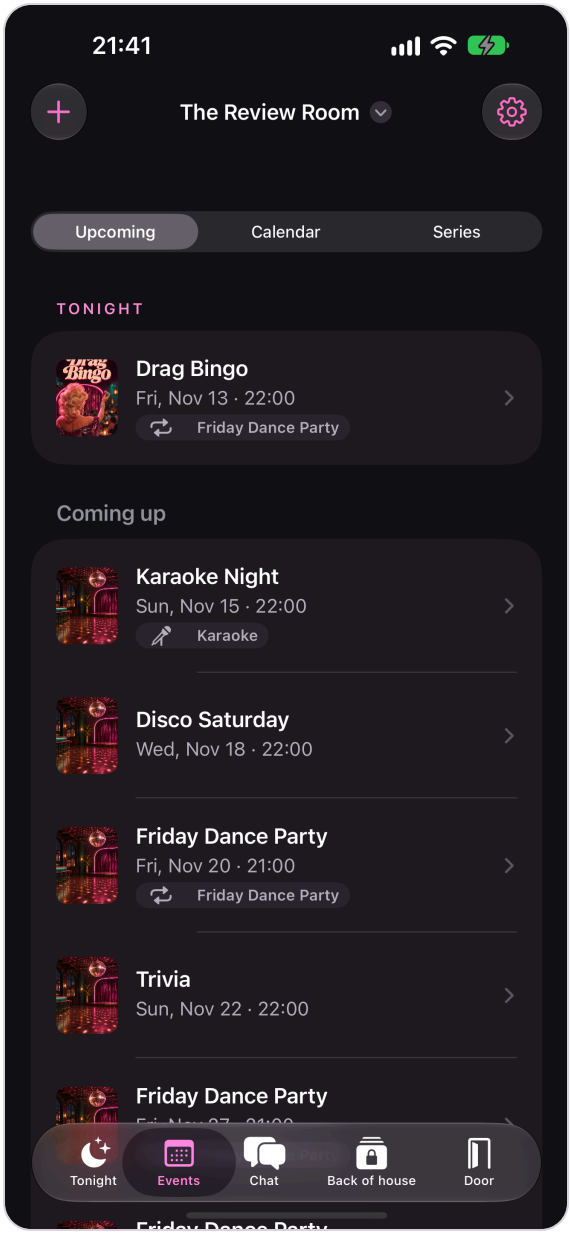


Velvet · iPhone

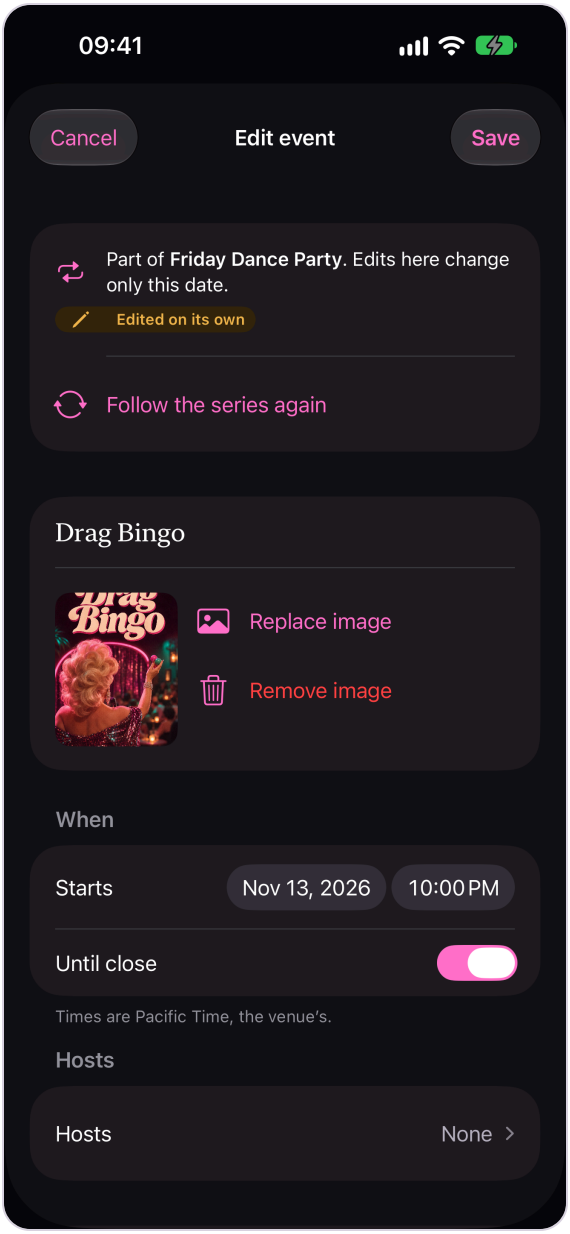
BEFORE THE NIGHT · STEP 4 OF 16

The venue plans its calendar

Venue managers create and edit events and recurring nights in Velvet, and can change one date without touching the rest of the series.



Velvet · iPhone

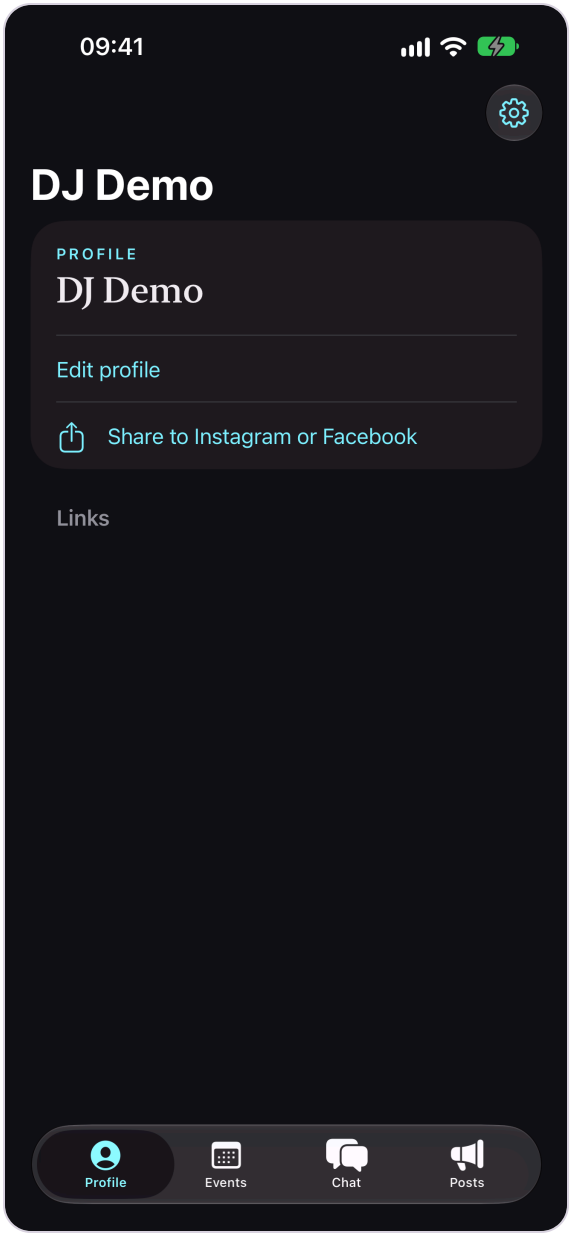


Velvet · iPhone

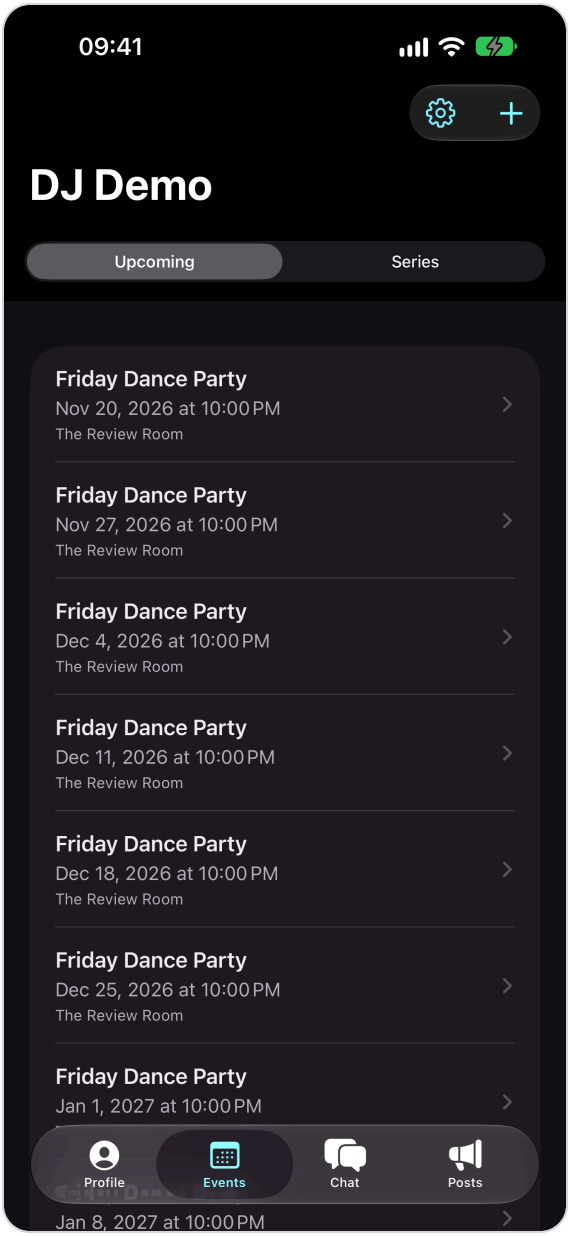
BEFORE THE NIGHT · STEP 5 OF 16

Talent keep their profile and bookings current

Performers, DJs and hosts use Backstage for their own listing: their profile and tip links, and the appearances venues have booked them for. What they publish there is what guests see on the lineup in Hot Mess.



Backstage · iPhone

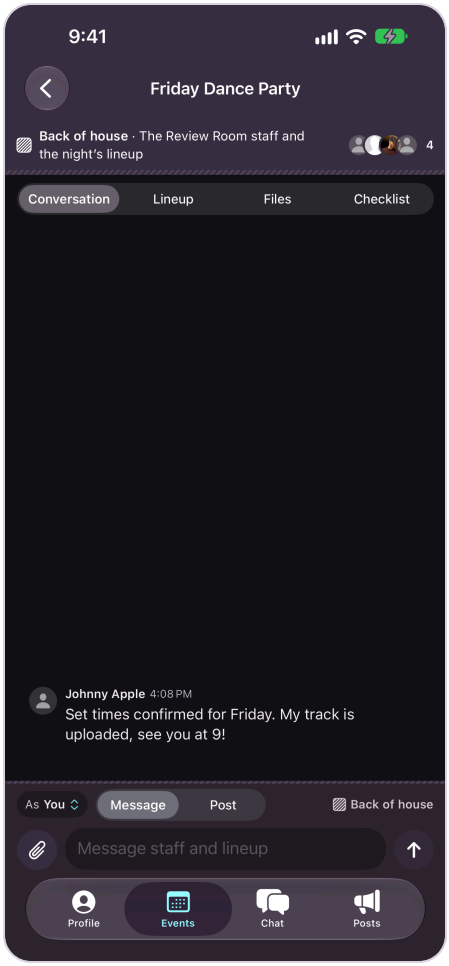


Backstage · iPhone

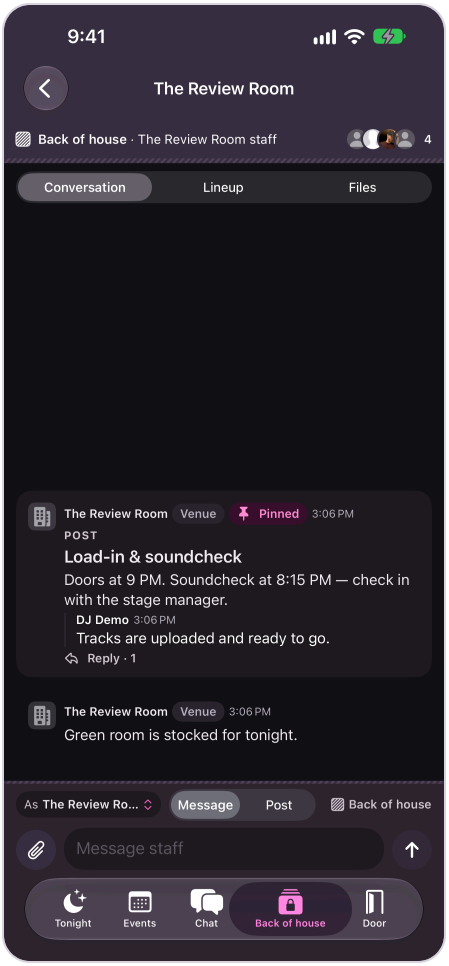
BEFORE THE NIGHT · STEP 6 OF 16

Venue and talent work out the lineup, back of house

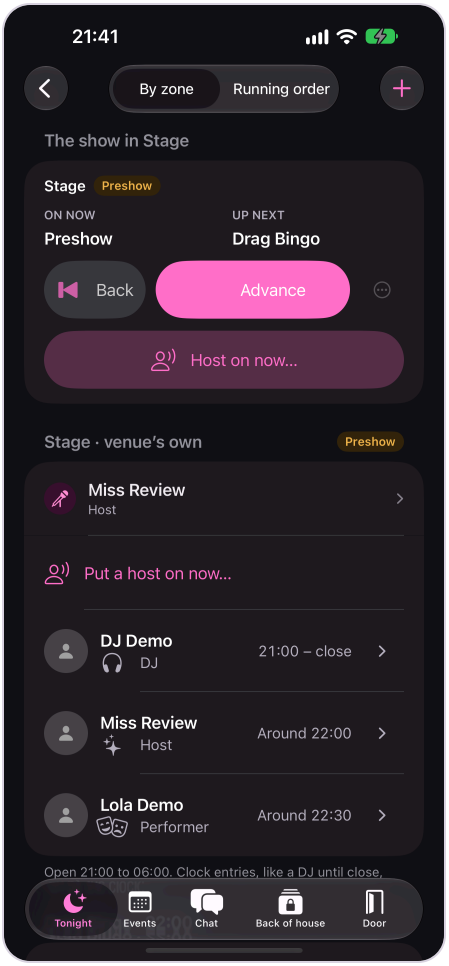
Every venue and event has a private back-of-house room that guests never see. The night's performers (in Backstage) and the venue's staff (in Velvet) agree on set times, share tracks, posters and the run of show, and tick off tasks. Velvet's lineup shows which acts' tracks are in.



Backstage · iPhone



Velvet · iPhone

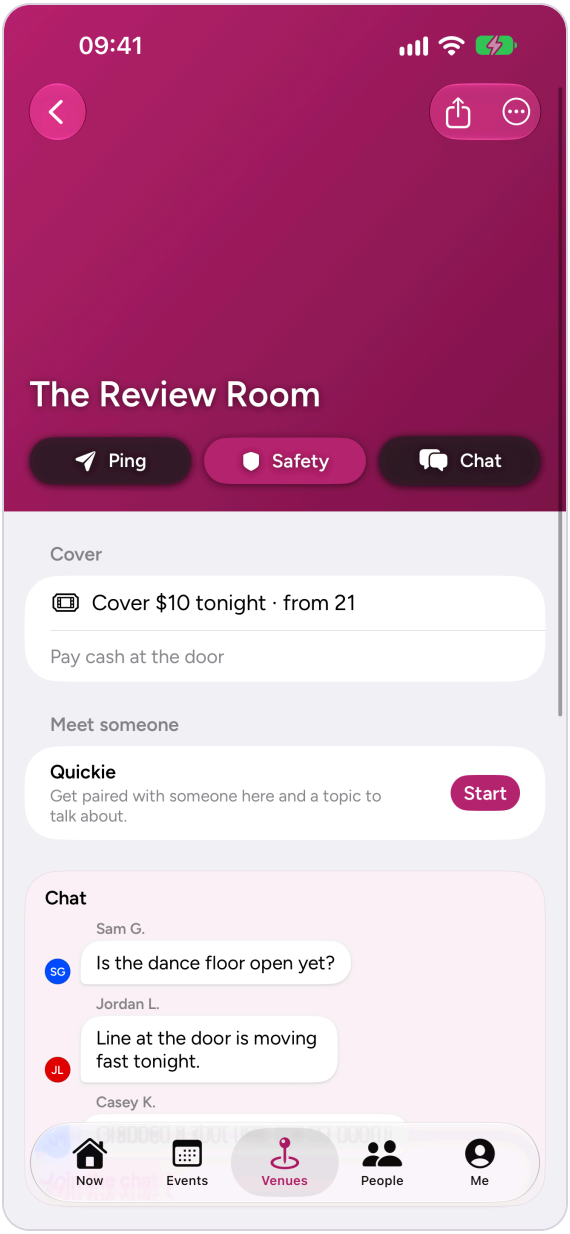


Velvet · iPhone

DOORS OPEN · STEP 7 OF 16

Guests find the night in Hot Mess

Guests see the venue tonight in Hot Mess: tonight's cover, paid in the app to the venue, and its live chat, which they can join once they are there.

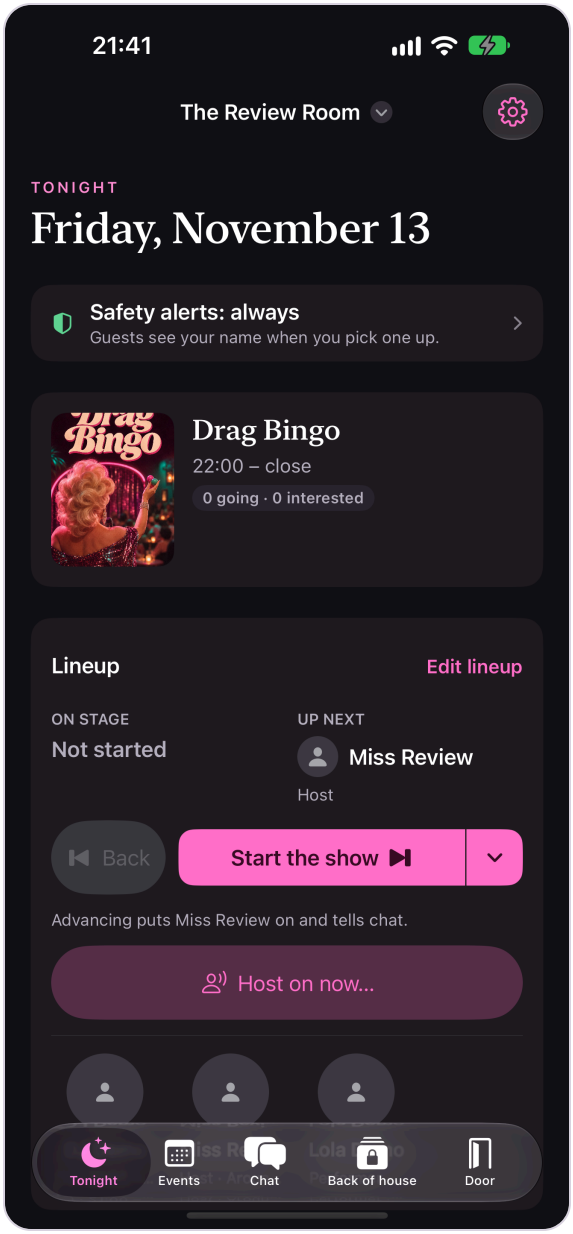


Hot Mess · iPhone

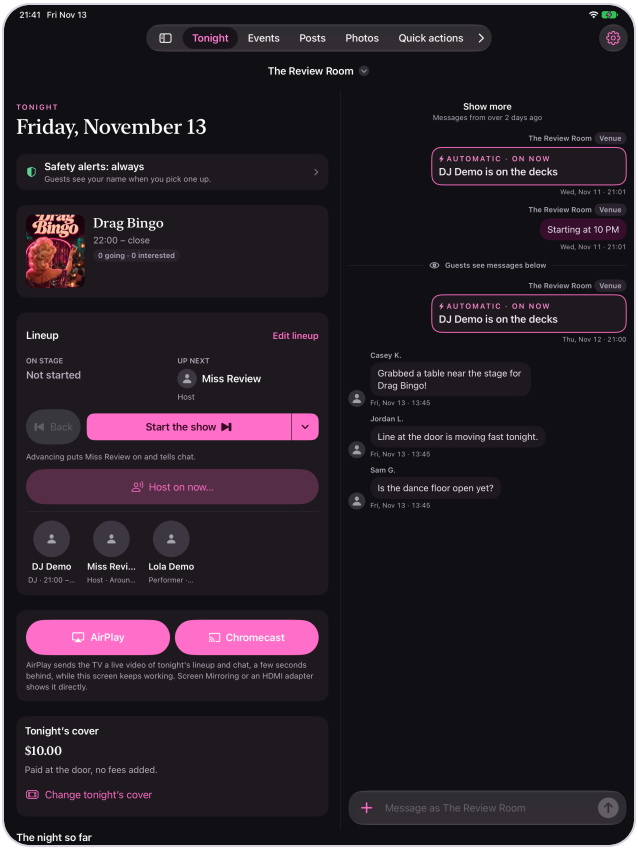
DOORS OPEN · STEP 8 OF 16

Tonight at the venue

Velvet's Tonight tab shows the lineup with set times, tonight's cover and the pinned announcement. On iPad it sits beside the venue's live chat.



Velvet · iPhone

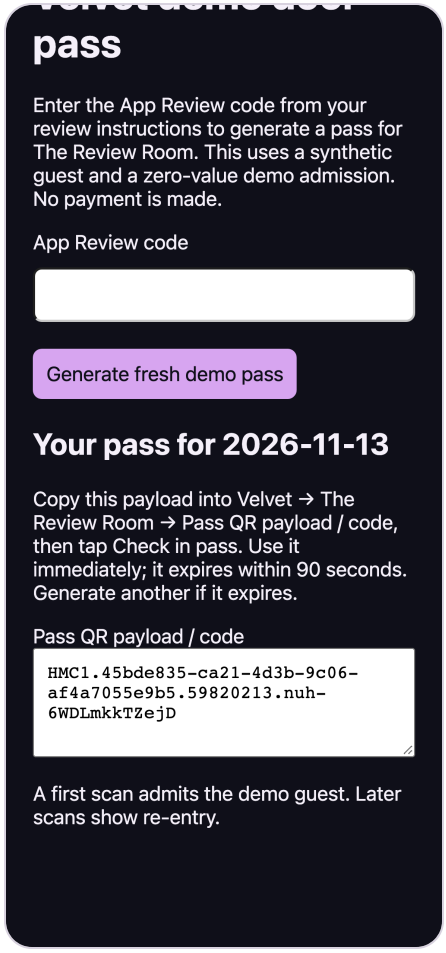


Velvet · iPad

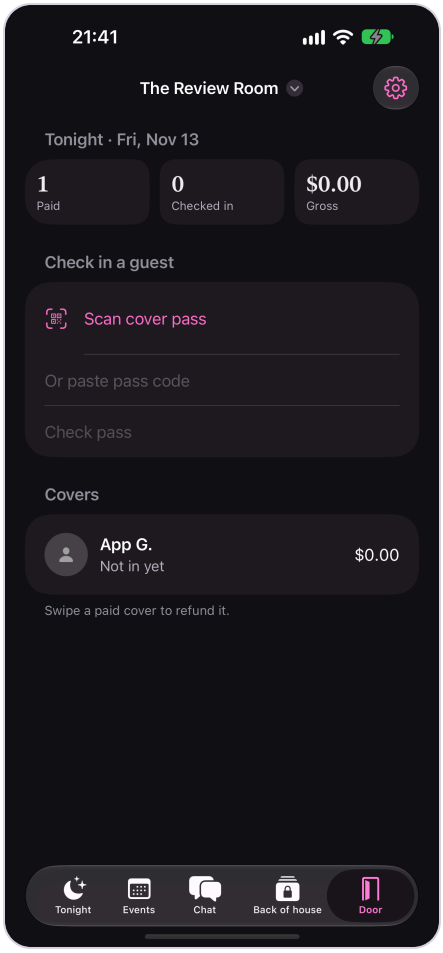
AT THE DOOR · STEP 9 OF 16

The guest's pass meets the door

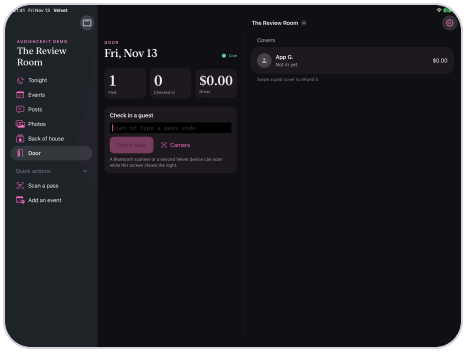
The guest's cover pass, paid in Hot Mess to the venue's own Stripe or Square account, is scanned at the door. Every door device updates live. On iPad the Door tab becomes a fixed door station.



Demo door pass (web) · Browser



Velvet · iPhone

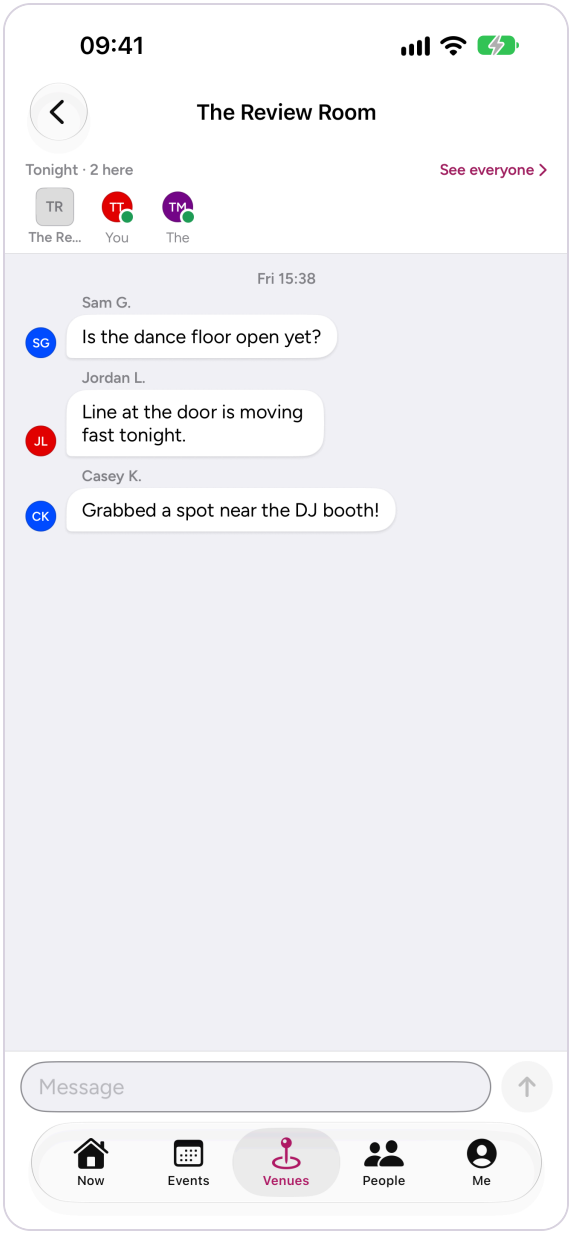


Velvet · iPad

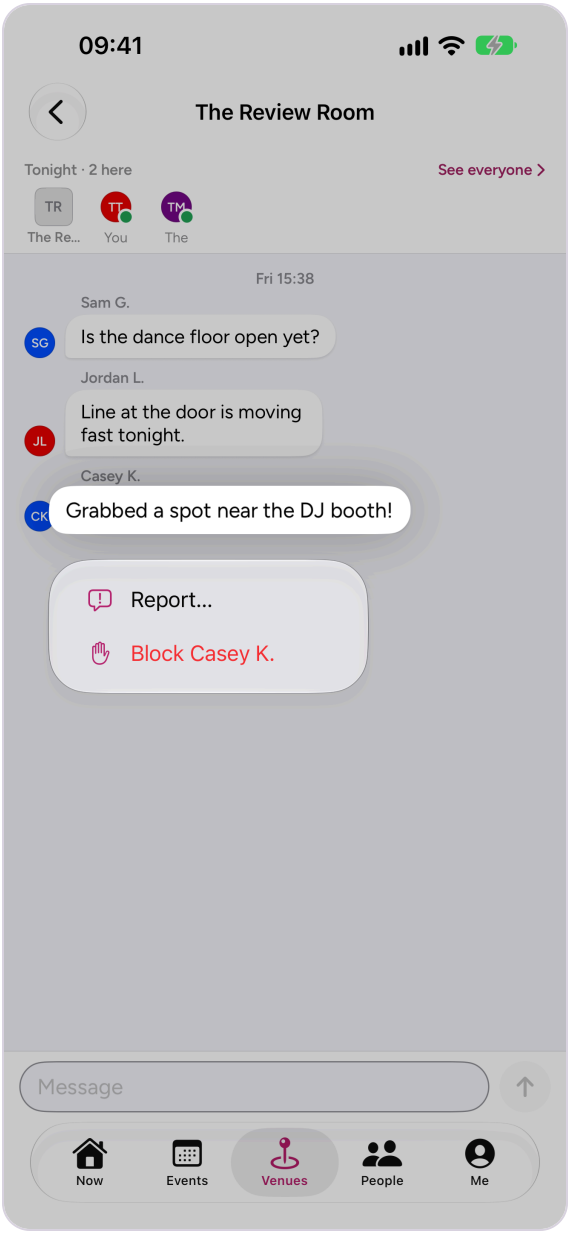
INSIDE · STEP 10 OF 16

Guests join the venue's chat

Only people physically at the venue can use its chat room in Hot Mess. Guests can report messages and block people there.



Hot Mess · iPhone

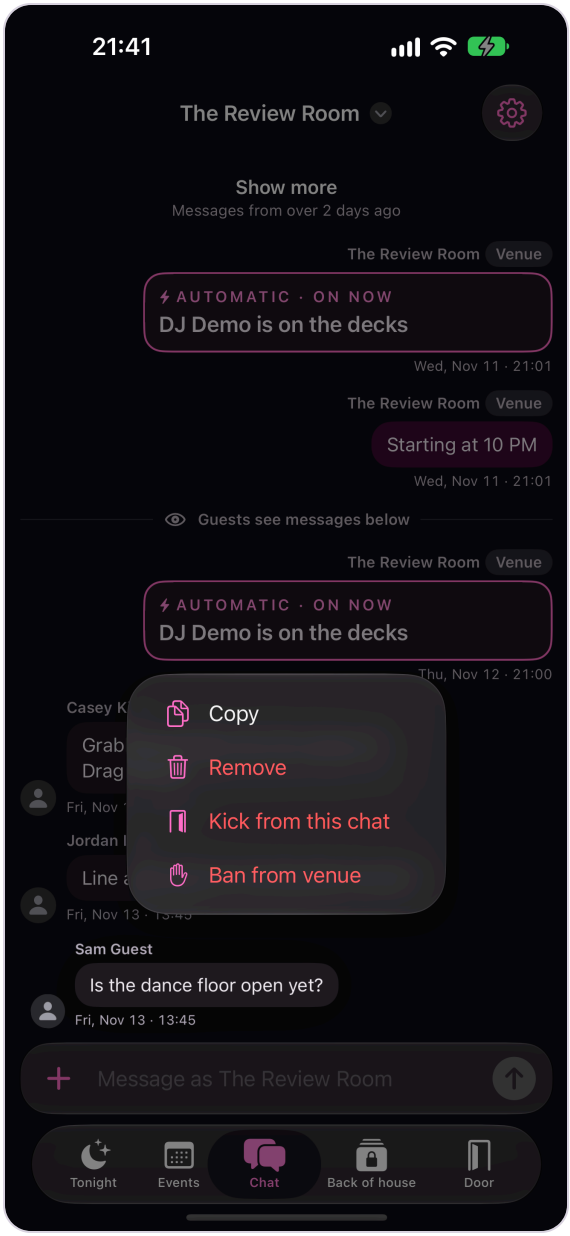


Hot Mess · iPhone

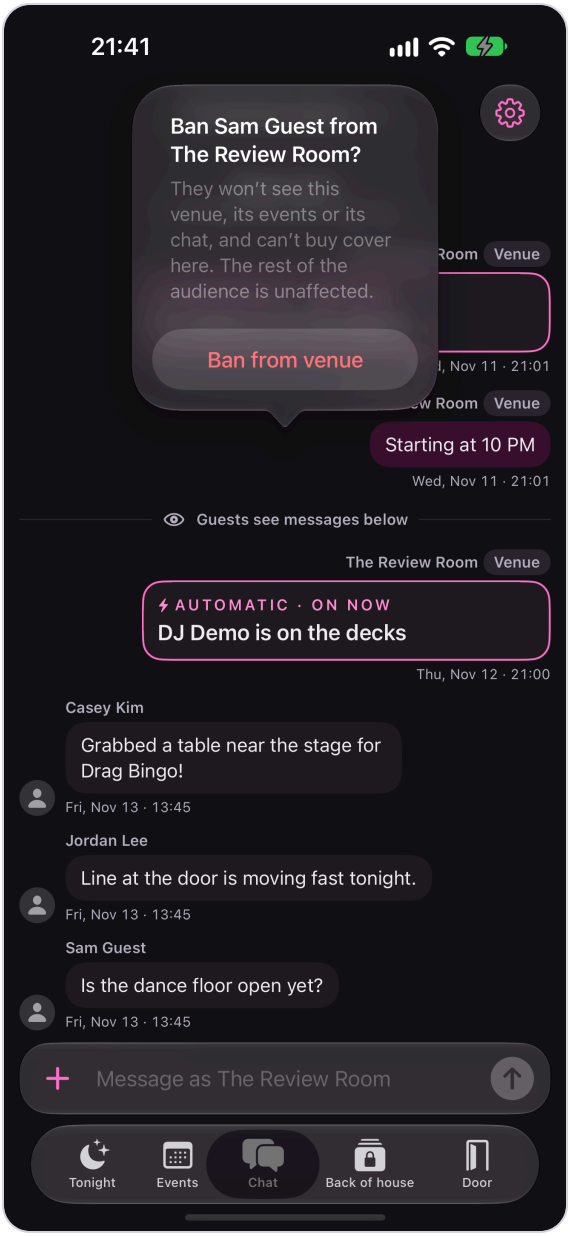
INSIDE · STEP 11 OF 16

Venue staff moderate in Velvet

The venue's staff act on what guests report: remove a message, kick someone from the room, or ban them from the venue. A ban removes their access to the venue's chat, events and listing in Hot Mess.



Velvet · iPhone

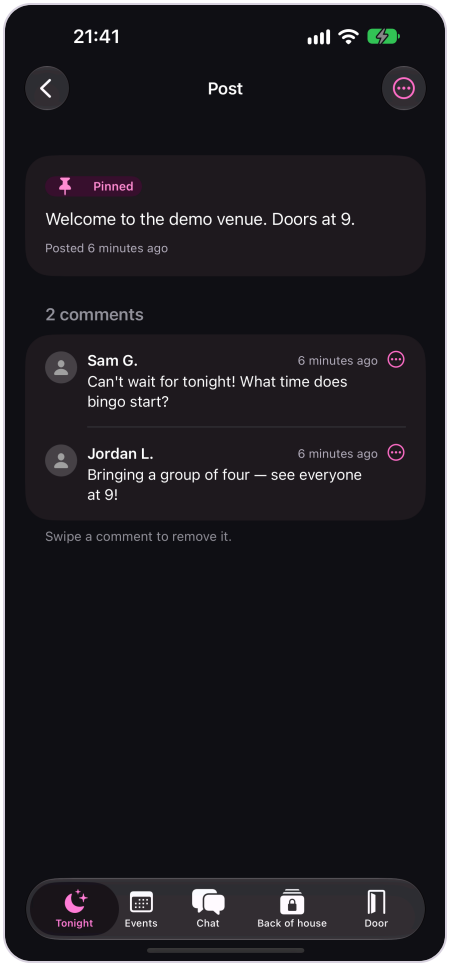


Velvet · iPhone

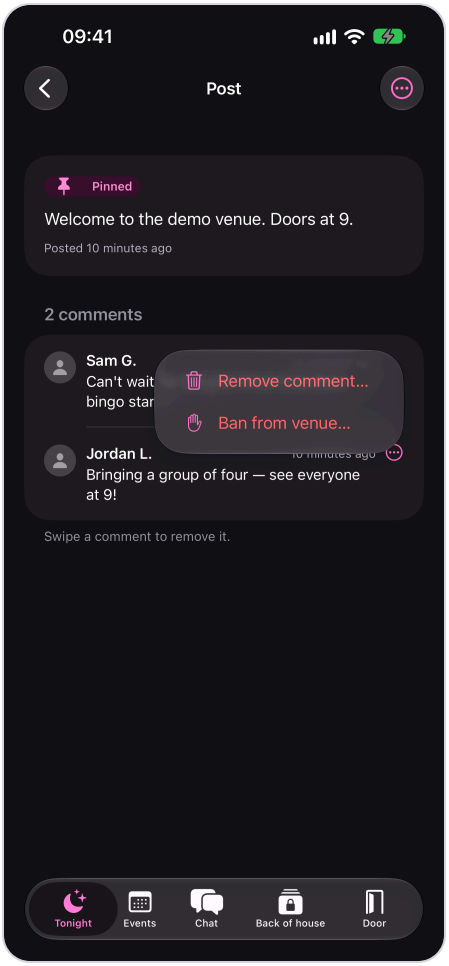
INSIDE · STEP 12 OF 16

Posts, and the new comment ban (this build)

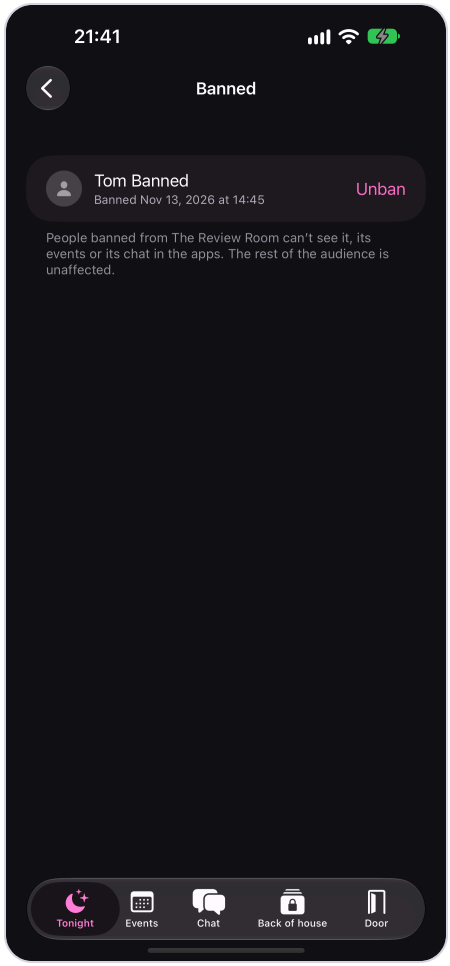
Venue posts appear in Hot Mess. Guest comments are not enabled yet; the venue's tools come first. This build's only change: "Ban from venue…" directly in each comment's actions menu, with a confirmation.



Velvet · iPhone



Velvet · iPhone

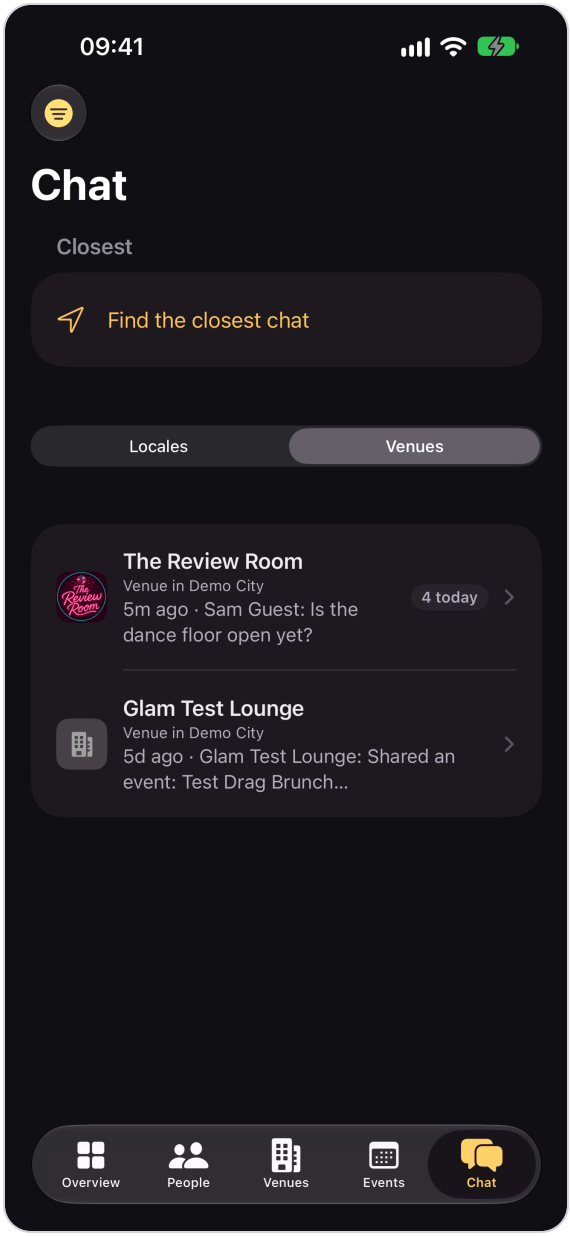


Velvet · iPhone

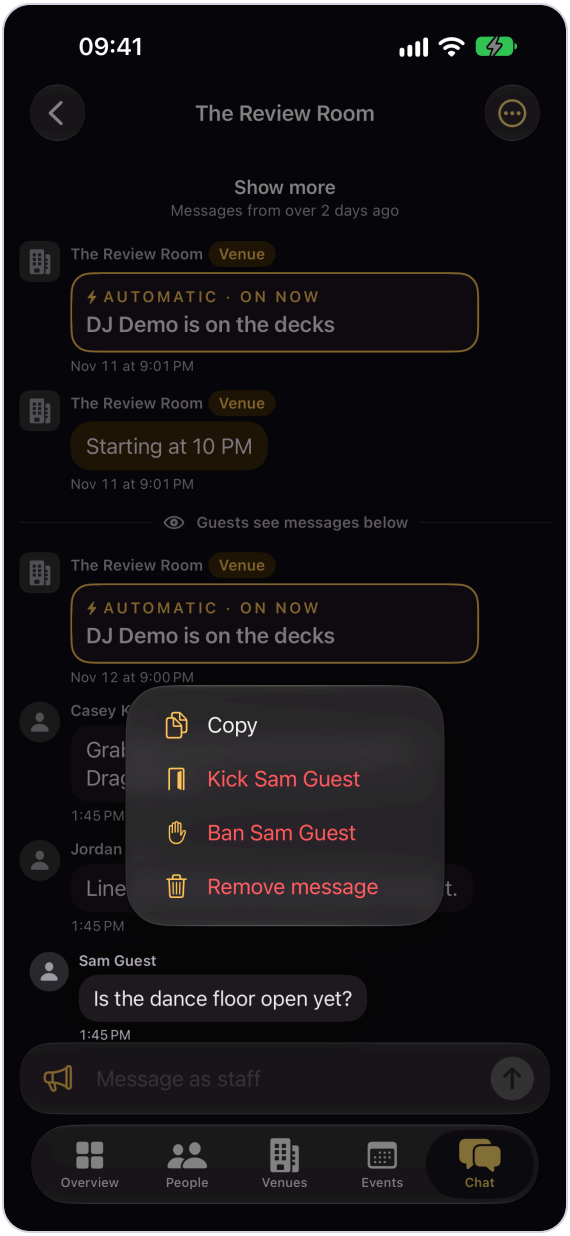
INSIDE · STEP 13 OF 16

The scene's administrators back the venues up

Focus sees every public room across the city, so the scene's administrators can step in when a venue's staff are busy, and act city-wide where a venue can't. Arbiter, our approved moderation app, lets our safety team decide the cases automated moderation escalates.



Focus · iPhone

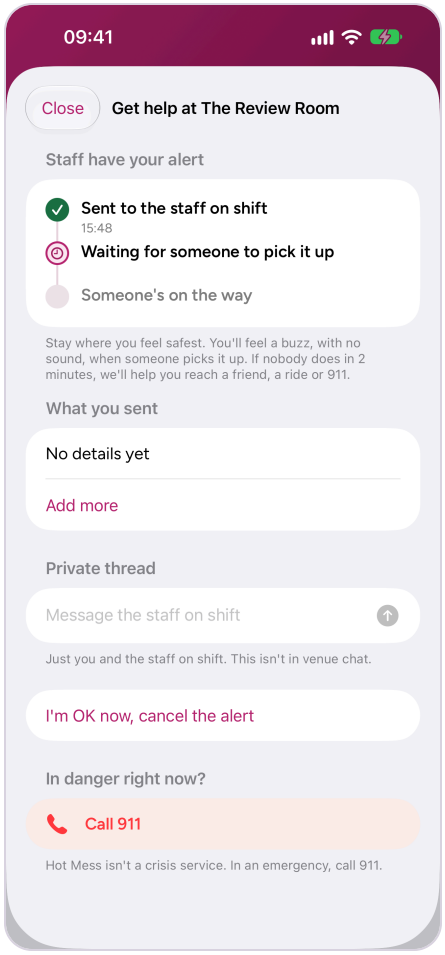


Focus · iPhone

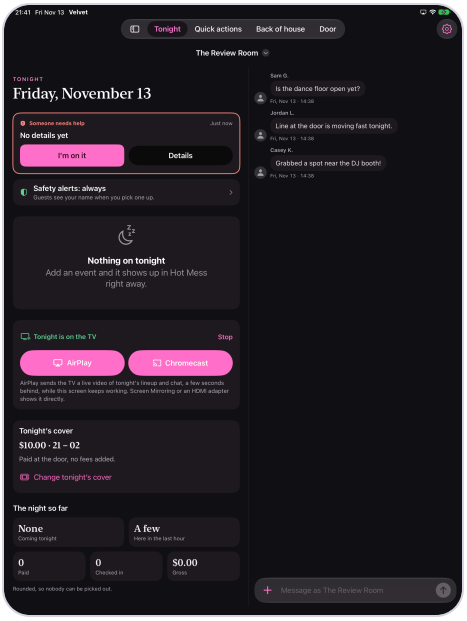
INSIDE · STEP 14 OF 16

A guest feels unsafe

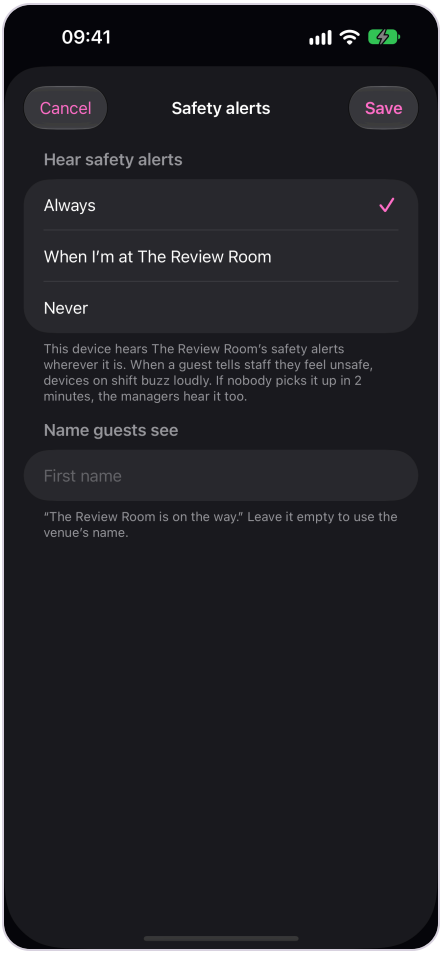
A guest taps "I feel unsafe" in Hot Mess. Staff on shift hear it in Velvet at once, one claims it, and the guest is told who is coming. Unclaimed alerts escalate to managers.



Hot Mess · iPhone



Velvet · iPad

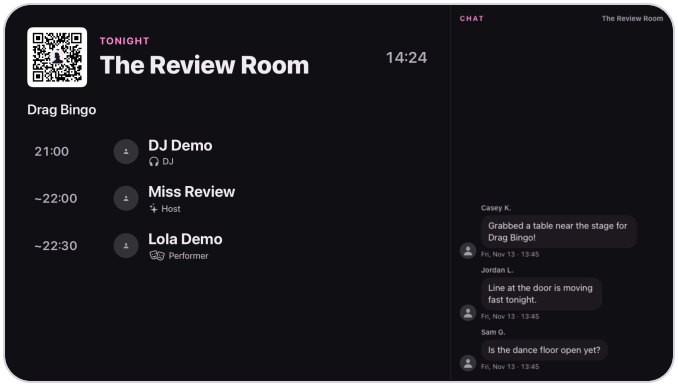


Velvet · iPhone

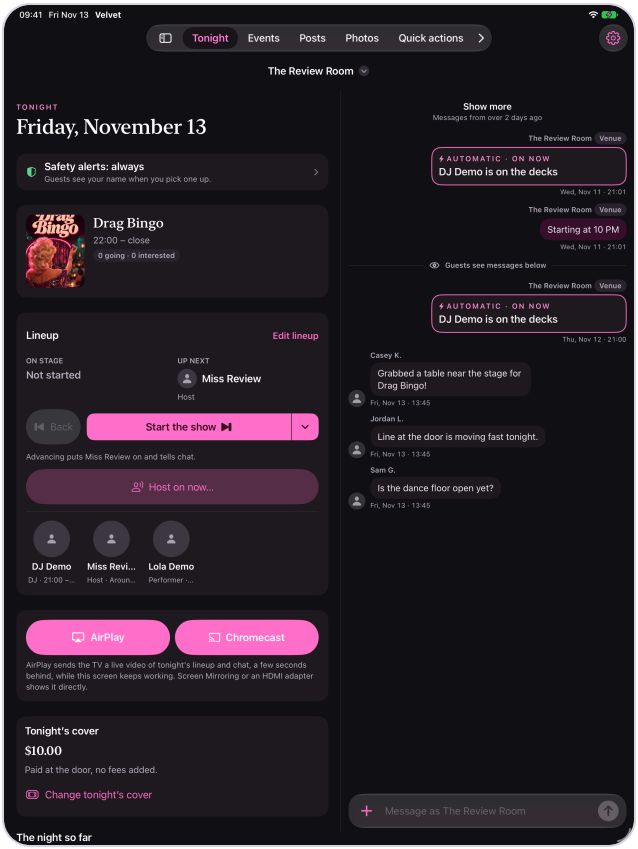
ALL NIGHT · STEP 15 OF 16

The venue's screen

Connected to a TV by cable, AirPlay or Chromecast, Velvet shows a silent board of tonight's lineup, who is on now, the venue's chat and a QR code to join it.



Velvet marquee · External display

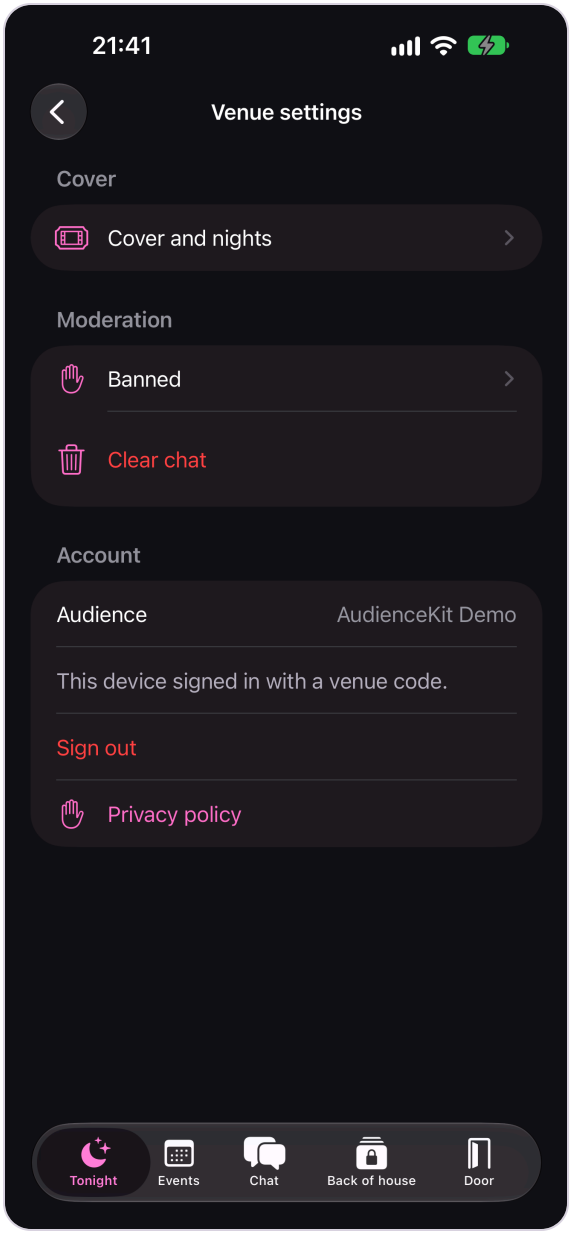


Velvet · iPad

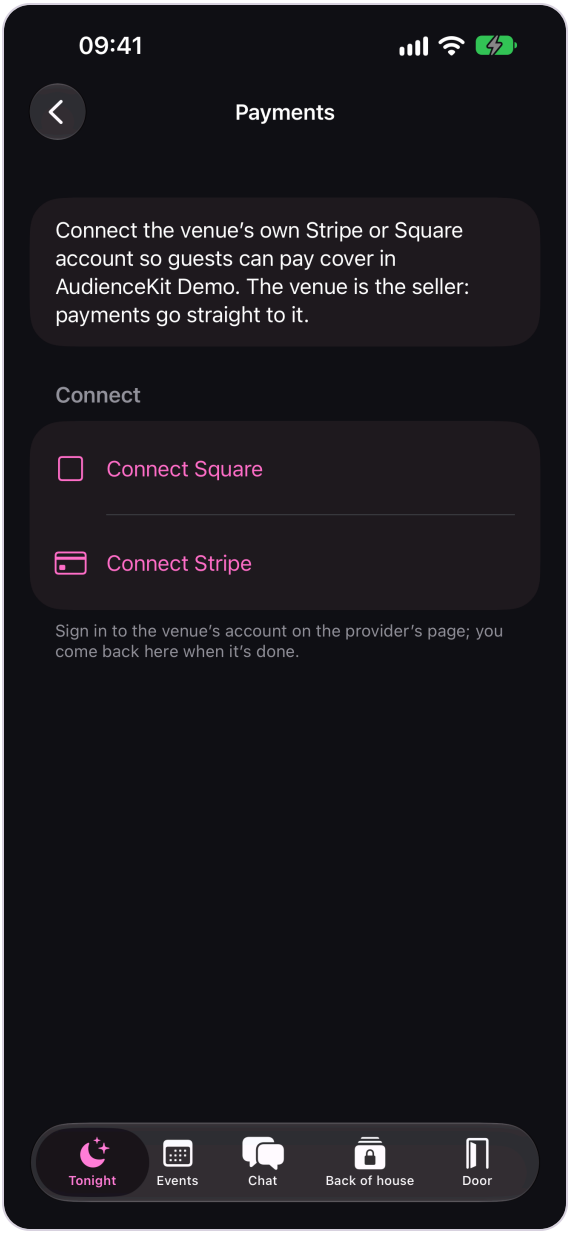
AFTER THE NIGHT · STEP 16 OF 16

The venue's owner keeps control

Owners connect the venue's own payment account, review banned guests and revoke device codes.



Velvet · iPhone

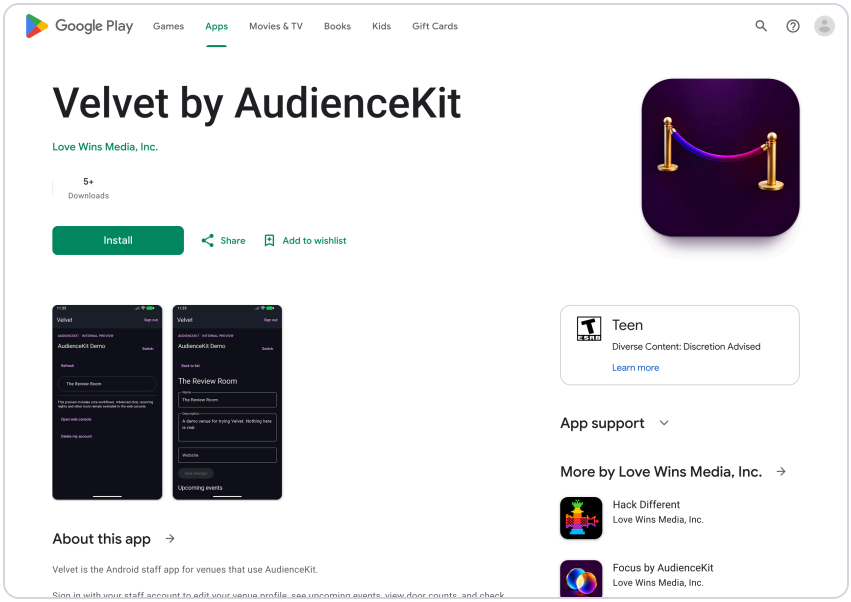


Velvet · iPhone

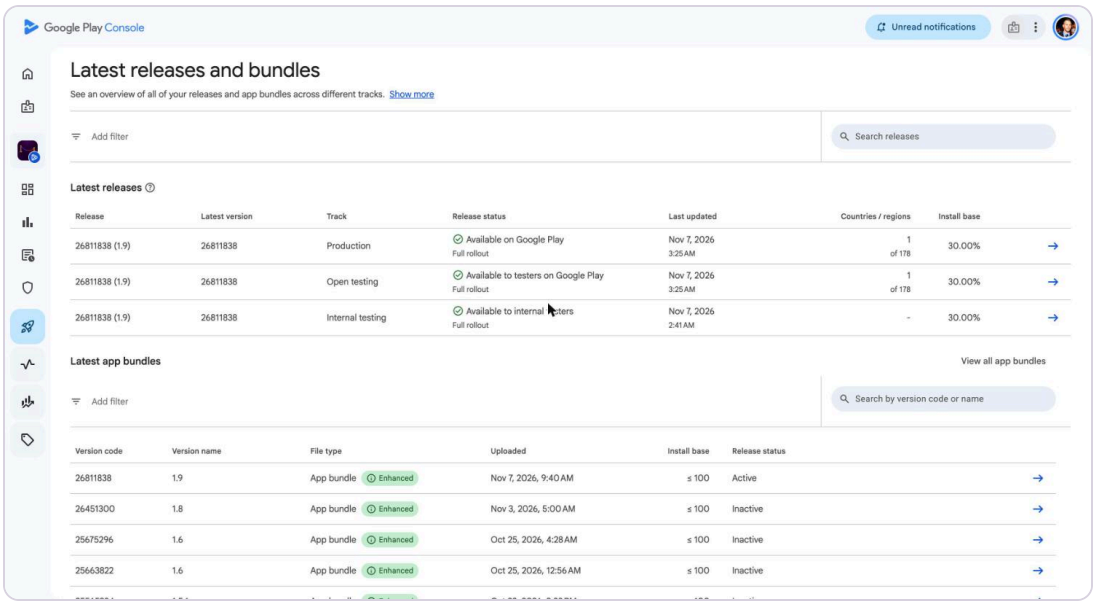
APPENDIX

Velvet is also on Google Play

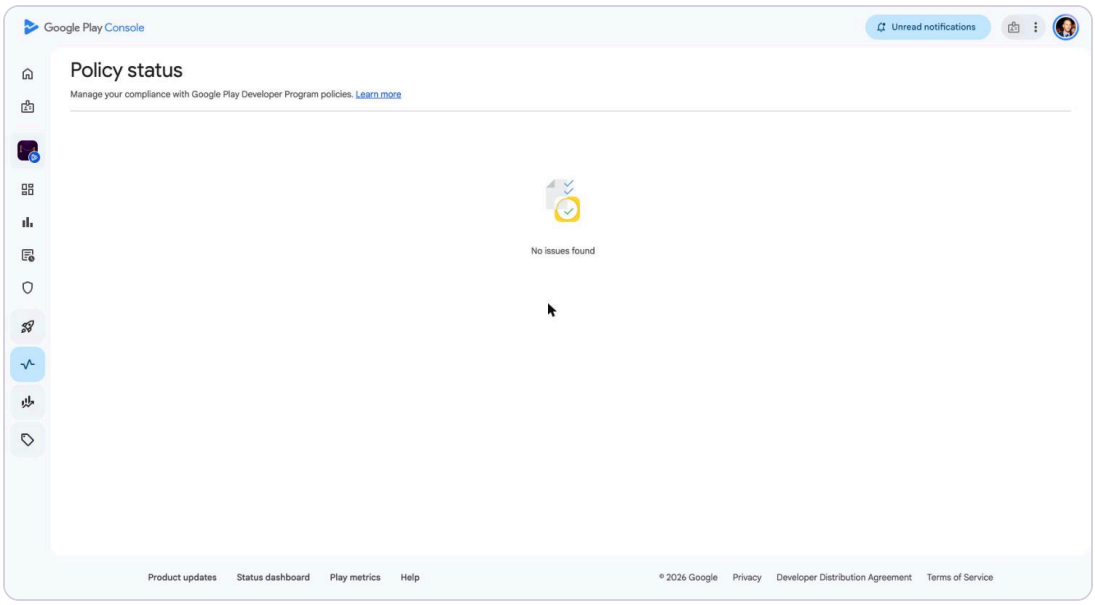
The same app, for Android, from the same developer: in testing on Google Play from October 18, 2026 and in production since November 7, 2026.



The public Google Play listing for Velvet by AudienceKit (com.audiencekit.Velvet).



Google Play Console: Velvet 1.9 in production since November 7, 2026, after builds in testing from October 18.



Google Play Console policy status for Velvet: no issues found.

APPENDIX

Written answers

Hello App Review,

Thank you for reviewing Velvet. We believe Velvet meets Guidelines 4.3(a), 4.3(b) and 4.2.6, so we are replying here instead of resubmitting. Each question is answered below. The attached PDF shows the lifecycle of a night across Velvet and Hot Mess, with screenshots of each step.

A note on the version number: this is Velvet's first App Store release. It is numbered 1.8 because our staff apps (Velvet, Focus and Backstage) share one release version, built from the same release of their shared libraries. Velvet was not copied from another app, and no earlier version of it has been on the store.

Velvet 1.8 has been in review since October 13. Each round raised specific questions, which we answered and addressed in the following build:

- comment moderation and blocking (Guideline 2.1);
- Velvet's audio background mode for its silent AirPlay venue display (Guideline 2.5.4);
- its business model. Velvet sells nothing: its only payments are guests' cover charges for entry to a physical venue, paid in Hot Mess to the venue's own Square or Stripe account (Guidelines 3.1.3(e) and 3.1.5(a)).

None of those rounds questioned Velvet's purpose or originality. This build (1.8, build 430056) contains only the change we committed to in our Guideline 2.1 reply. Each comment's actions menu in Posts now has a direct "Ban from venue…" action, with a confirmation that explains the consequences. It uses the same venue-ban mechanism that chat moderation already used. Velvet's purpose, audience and other features are unchanged from the build those reviews examined. The change only makes the moderation tools Hot Mess depends on easier to reach (see answers 1 and 6).

1. What Velvet does and the problem it solves

Velvet is the operations app for the staff of a nightlife venue, such as a bar or club: the door person, the manager on shift and the promoter. It covers the work done inside the venue on a given night. Today that work is spread across a card reader, a paper guest list, a group text, a printed lineup and a Facebook Page. Velvet puts it in one place:

- **The door.** Staff scan guests' cover passes with the camera, with a Bluetooth barcode scanner, or with a second phone. They handle re-entry and refunds and watch tonight's paid and checked-in counts. On an iPad in landscape the Door tab becomes a fixed door station, meant to be locked to Velvet with Guided Access. Every device at the door updates live as guests pay, get scanned or are refunded. A shared door iPad signs in with a revocable, permission-limited **venue device code** rather than a personal account, so door staff don't need accounts of their own.
- **Moderation for Hot Mess.** Hot Mess, our guest app, has a live chat room for each venue, open only to people physically there, and venues can post on their listings and events. Guest comments on those posts are not enabled in Hot Mess yet. As we explained in our previous review, we are putting the venue's moderation tools in place first. Each venue's own staff are responsible for that content, and Velvet is the tool they do it with. From a chat message, a comment (once enabled) or a guest's cover at the door, staff can remove a message, take down a comment, kick someone from the room, or ban them from the venue. A

venue ban removes the person's access to that venue's chat, events and listing in Hot Mess. Staff can also pin announcements and post as the venue. Moderation devices can be given out with a device code limited to the **moderation** permission. Hot Mess needs this: guests report content and block people there, but someone at the venue has to act on it, and on the night that is the venue's staff in Velvet. Our audience administrators back them up in Focus.

- **Safety alerts.** A guest who feels unsafe taps "I feel unsafe" in our guest app. Staff on shift at that venue hear it in Velvet at once. One of them claims it, the guest is told who is coming, and they can message privately. Each staff member chooses whether to hear alerts always, only while at the venue (a background geofence), or never. Alerts nobody claims in time go to the venue's managers.
- **The night itself.** The Tonight tab shows the lineup with set times, tonight's cover and the pinned announcement. Staff can change tonight's cover or lineup as the night changes. On iPad it sits beside the venue's live chat, which managers moderate.
- **The in-venue screen (marquee).** Connected to a TV by cable, AirPlay or Chromecast, Velvet shows a non-interactive board of tonight's lineup, with whoever is playing now highlighted. It can also show the venue's chat and a QR code that lets guests join it. This replaces printed lineups and manually updated screens.
- **Back of house.** Each event has a private room that guests never see, shared by the venue's staff and the night's hosts and performers, who use our talent app, Backstage. They settle set times, tracks and the run of show there before and during the night, and Velvet's lineup shows whose tracks are in.
- **The calendar.** Staff create and edit events and recurring nights, such as a weekly residency, and can change one date without affecting the rest of the series.
- **Getting paid.** A venue connects its own Stripe or Square account, so guests' cover for physical entry is paid directly to the venue.
- **Onboarding.** A new staff member scans an invite QR code, which opens Velvet's App Clip. They accept the invite with Sign in with Apple, and the full app opens straight to their venue.

2. Intended user

Velvet is for staff of independent nightlife venues that list on AudienceKit, our platform for local nightlife scenes:

- **Door staff**, often part-time, working from a shared iPad or a personal phone at the entrance with a line forming. They need a fast, offline-tolerant scan and live counts, and shouldn't need their own account.
- **Managers on shift** who move around the venue all night. They need the lineup, the chat, safety alerts and the cover price on one screen.
- **Owners and promoters** who plan the calendar, connect payments and issue or revoke device codes.

The first venues are LGBTQ+ bars and clubs whose guests use our 18+ guest app, Hot Mess (121 locales, 985 venues, 511 talent profiles, 1830 events). Velvet has no public sign-up. A venue's AudienceKit administrator grants each person access.

3. The need Velvet addresses better than existing apps

Venues today combine several tools, and none of them connects to what the guest sees:

- **Door and ticketing apps** (for example Eventbrite Organizer, Dice's door app, Square Point of Sale) scan tickets or take payment. They don't connect a scan to a live venue chat, an in-venue screen or a guest's safety request.

- **Guest-list and promoter apps** track names, not paid cover with refunds, and offer no safety channel.
- **Group messaging and social apps** (WhatsApp, a Facebook Page) are where announcements happen today. Venue staff can't moderate them as the venue, pin to the people physically there, or remove a banned person from the room, events and chat at once.
- **Digital signage apps** show slideshows, not the live lineup the staff are editing.

Velvet's differentiator is that it is the staff half of one live system. When a guest in Hot Mess pays cover, the door sees it immediately. When the guest is inside, they can join the venue's chat, which only people physically present can use. If they feel unsafe, the staff on shift there are alerted. The lineup a manager edits is the one on the TV and in guests' calendars. We don't know of another app that gives venue staff this, and the safety-alert flow in particular exists because our community asked for it.

4. Beta testing

Velvet has been tested through TestFlight since its first build on October 8, 2026. Every development branch is built by Xcode Cloud as a beta that runs against our staging server, with a separate "Next" icon and a server switch. Only `main` builds are submitted for review. Testers were bouncers, owners, bartenders and support staff at venues in the Salt Lake City area, testing through TestFlight groups and through Velvet for Android. Velvet is also published on Google Play (com.audiencekit.Velvet): in testing there since October 18, 2026 and in production since November 7, 2026, with no policy issues. The PDF's appendix includes the Play listing and release history. Feedback that shaped the production build:

- Door staff said holding a phone up to each guest was slow at busy times. → We added the iPad door station, with continuous camera scanning, Bluetooth barcode-scanner input and live updates across every door device.
- Venues didn't want to create accounts for part-time door staff. → We added venue device codes: revocable, permission-limited sign-ins for shared devices, issued and revoked from Settings → Devices & codes.
- Managers didn't want safety alerts on their personal phones while off shift. → Alerts now default to Never for personal accounts and Always for venue devices, with an "Only when I'm at the venue" option that uses a background geofence.
- Venues asked to show the lineup on their existing TVs. → We added the marquee for external displays, AirPlay and Chromecast.
- New staff struggled to get signed in. → We added App Clip invites that open straight to the venue after Sign in with Apple.

5. Standalone or part of a suite

Velvet is one of several apps we publish for the AudienceKit platform. Each one is for a different person with a different job, and none of them repeats another's functionality:

App	Who uses it	What it does that the others do not
Hot Mess	Guests (18+ public)	Finds venues, events and DJs; pays cover; venue chat for people present; "I feel unsafe"

App	Who uses it	What it does that the others do not
Velvet	Staff at one venue	Moderation of that venue's Hot Mess chat and posts, and of comments once enabled (remove, kick, venue ban); door scanning and refunds; safety-alert response; device codes; marquee; venue payments
Focus	Administrators of a city's whole scene	Curates people, venues and events across the city; moderates every chat room
Backstage	Performers, DJs and hosts	Their own profile, tip links, appearances and reminders
Arbiter (approved)	Our trust and safety reviewers (iPad/Mac)	Decides moderation cases the automated system escalated, and backs up venues when their staff can't watch continuously

The apps share an account system, so someone with more than one role isn't signed in twice. They don't share screens or features: Velvet's door, safety-alert response, device codes, marquee and payment connection exist only in Velvet.

6. Could this be an in-app purchase or feature of another app on our account?

No. We considered it and kept Velvet separate for these reasons:

- **Hot Mess depends on Velvet, so Velvet can't live inside it.** Hot Mess's venue chat rooms and venue posts are moderated by each venue's own staff, and Velvet is how they do it. If moderation were built into Hot Mess, the same app guests use would contain the controls for removing, kicking and banning guests, and a staff member's ordinary guest account would have to switch roles. Keeping moderation in a separate, staff-only app with its own sign-in and per-venue permissions keeps the guest experience and the enforcement tools apart. That separation is what makes Hot Mess's user-generated content safe (Guideline 1.2).
- **Hot Mess is a public guest app.** Putting door, refund, moderation and staff-safety tools in it would expose operational controls and staff-only data to the guest audience. It would also make every guest's app ask for "Always" location for a staff geofence feature they would never use.
- **Focus is for scene-wide administrators, not venue staff.** A door person must never be able to ban people city-wide or edit other venues. Velvet's permission model (device codes limited to door, events or moderation at one venue) and its single-venue interface differ by design.
- **Velvet runs as a dedicated device.** A door iPad locked with Guided Access and a TV marquee need an app that does only this job. Guided Access locks the device to one app, so a combined app would put admin or guest screens on the locked door iPad.
- **Different permissions.** Velvet alone needs the camera (scanning), background location (safety shifts), local network (Chromecast and AirPlay streaming) and an App Clip. Combining apps would make every user grant these.
- **There is nothing to sell.** Velvet is free with no in-app purchases. Guests pay cover for physical entry through Stripe or Square, so an in-app purchase split isn't possible. We explained this business model in detail in an earlier round of Velvet's review.

7. Code shared with other apps on our account

Yes, our own libraries, which provide plumbing rather than user-facing features. The AudienceKit SDK is one component inside each app, not a template, theme or skin that the apps are generated from. It supplies functionality the same way the Facebook SDK or the Google Cast SDK does for the many unrelated apps that include them: each app builds its own screens and features on top of it. Substantial parts of Hot Mess are specific to the Hot Mess audience and are written in Hot Mess itself, not in the SDK. An AudienceKit audience is more than a data source: it provides the safety and team features (moderation, safety alerts, staff roles and permissions, venue bans) that make running in-person experiences possible. Velvet is how a venue's team uses those features on the night; Hot Mess is how guests use the audience. For example, an existing community app can move onto the platform to use its moderation, event calendars and safety tools while remaining the same app, with its own identity and features, rather than becoming a different app. Sharing this groundwork lets each app spend its effort on what is specific to its own community, instead of rebuilding and maintaining the same safety and operations plumbing, which is what lets each one innovate.

- **AudienceKit SDK** (AudienceCore, AudienceKit, AudienceKitUI). Our client for the AudienceKit API: networking, the data models for venues, events and people, the live-update connection, and shared design tokens. Hot Mess uses it too.
- **StaffKit** (StaffKitCore, StaffKitServices, StaffKitUI, StaffOnboarding). The sign-in and session layer for staff (Sign in with Apple, Facebook Login for Business, App Review code), the staff API client, account deletion, and shared controls such as the audience picker and settings rows. Focus and Backstage use it too.

Velvet-only code: the door station and pass scanning, the device-code session, safety-alert response and its geofence, the marquee and its live HLS stream for AirPlay, the Google Cast sender, venue payment connection, the App Clip, and the Tonight and chat desk layouts.

8. Code, SDKs or content shared with third-party apps

No. We wrote the AudienceKit SDK and StaffKit ourselves (Love Wins Media, Inc.) and publish them under our own license, which allows their use only in apps that connect to AudienceKit as we host it. Third-party frameworks are the Facebook SDK (login), the Google Cast SDK, and New Relic (performance monitoring). Venue listings and events are entered by the venues and our staff. They are not sourced from a content library.

Recently, others have attempted to copy our apps and features. If a similar-looking app on the store prompted this review, please note that Love Wins Media is the original author. We have published Hot Mess on the App Store since 2017, our source history is dated, and we keep a public, dated record of what we shipped and when: https://hotmess.social/record/hot-mess-dated-record.pdf. We are prepared to defend our intellectual property where needed, and we can provide further evidence of authorship on request.

9. Created for a client, partner or third party?

No. Love Wins Media, Inc. owns Velvet, the AudienceKit platform and both brands. We designed and built it, and we operate the service it connects to. Venues are customers who use Velvet. They don't supply its concept, content or branding, and Velvet is not rebranded or republished for any of them. It is one app, under our name, for every venue on the platform.

A request. If the concern is that Velvet overlaps with another app, whether one of ours or another developer's, please tell us which app and which of its features you see as overlapping. We would like to answer that comparison directly, and we can provide more detail or a call to walk through it.

Thank you for your time. A demo account is available through the App Review code in the review notes.

Love Wins Media, Inc.

Velvet by AudienceKit: appeal, as submitted

Added November 19, 2026. This is the text of the appeal we submitted to Apple's App Review Board through the Apple Developer appeal form, after the record above. Apple's form allows 2,000 characters.

Submitted	November 19, 2026, early morning Mountain Time
Channel	Apple Developer, "Submit an appeal to App Review" form
App	Velvet by AudienceKit (iOS), Apple ID 6820764256
Ruling appealed	November 13, 2026: Guidelines 4.3(a), 4.3(b) and 4.2.6
Version awaiting review	1.10 (build 430087), Waiting for Review since November 14
Earlier appeal	November 14, 2026

> Velvet by AudienceKit (6820764256): request for an independent re-review of the Nov 13 ruling under 4.3 and 4.2.6, follow-up to our Nov 14 appeal, and prompt review of Velvet 1.10 (430087).
>
> The ruling came 12 seconds after review began. After 7 days 19 hours in the queue, App Store Connect recorded In Review at 12:53:35 PM MT and the rejection at 12:53:47 PM. Every other notice on Velvet names the review device and version. This one names neither. Three earlier reviews (2.1 sign-in, 2.1(b) business model, 2.1 moderation and 2.5.4 audio) engaged with what Velvet does; none raised spam or duplication.
>
> Since: Nov 13 we answered all nine questions. Nov 14 we appealed, submitted 1.10 with an expedite request, and Apple approved 1.10 builds 430081, 430087 and 430088 for external TestFlight. Nov 17 we asked again to expedite. No response.
>
> Around Nov 14, I saw an entry in Velvet's App Review submission history that listed Apple, not us, as the submitter. It no longer appears. Please explain what that entry was.
>
> Velvet is not a duplicate or a template. It is the staff app for venues on AudienceKit (Love Wins Media, Inc., also publisher of Hot Mess since 2017): door scanning and counts, an iPad door station, the response side of Hot Mess's "I feel unsafe" alerts, venue chat moderation, a TV lineup board and the venue's own Square or Stripe connection. Focus serves city administrators, Backstage performers, Arbiter our internal safety reviewers. "Next" records are internal TestFlight channels, never submitted. Velvet is never rebranded for a client. Until it is approved, venues run their guest safety response on a TestFlight beta.
>
> We ask that you: 1. Withdraw the ruling, or name the app Velvet is thought to duplicate. 2. Review 1.10 (430087) promptly. 3. Assign reviewers with no prior involvement in Velvet's decisions and no connection to our company or its people, so the outcome is clearly impartial.
>
> Richard Mark, Love Wins Media, Inc.