

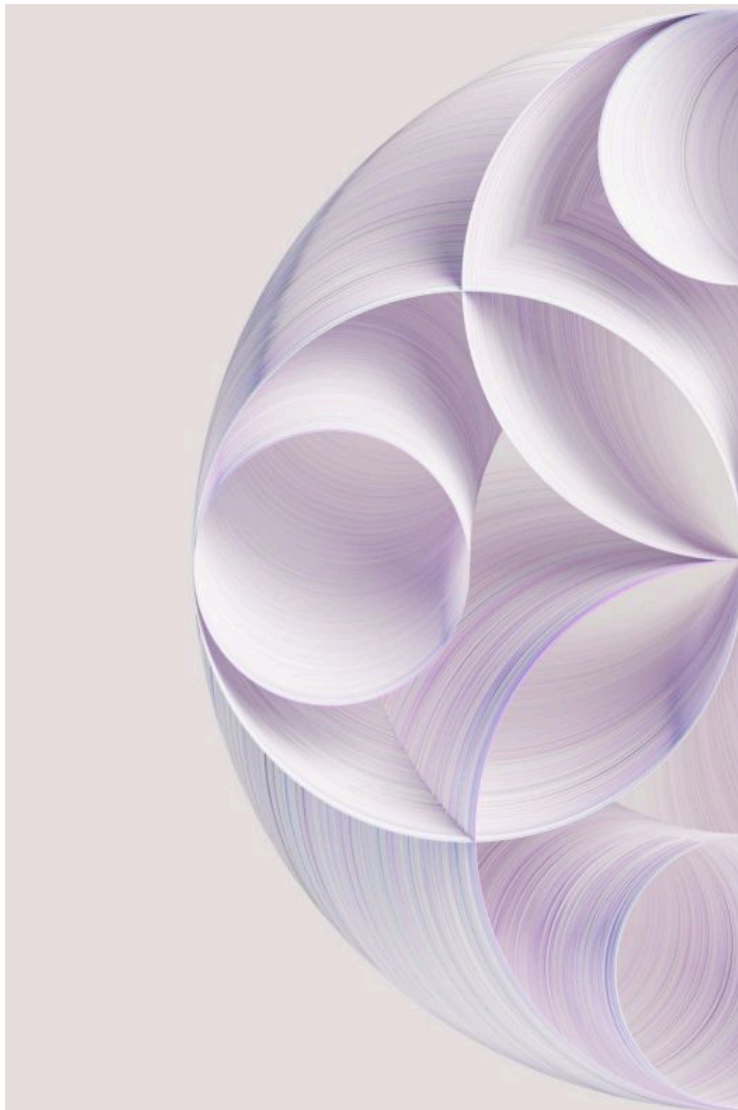
IBM at the GRAMMYs

Transforming digital experiences for music fans and members of the Recording Academy with watsonx.ai

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The pursuit of world-class experiences

Once a year, the biggest names in music gather in Los Angeles for a global celebration of music. For the Recording Academy, the event hosts the GRAMMYs—it is the culmination of a year of work to deliver unforgettable experiences to its two most important audiences: those who make music, and the fans who love it.

Though thousands attend the GRAMMY Awards show at Crypto.com Arena in person, millions more people around the world experience the GRAMMYs through digital channels. That's why the Recording Academy has prioritized the creation of world-class digital experiences, for both its fans and its members.

For example, on GRAMMY night, fans flock to the GRAMMY broadcast and GRAMMY.com, hungry for a glimpse of their favorite artists as they hit the stage or step onto the red carpet. It's impossible for fans to have too much information about their favorite artists—which presents a serious challenge to the Recording Academy's editorial team. Nearly 1,000 artists are nominated for GRAMMYs in almost 100 categories. The Recording Academy editorial team wants these artists to get the attention they deserve. That means serving up timely, relevant content to fans across multiple channels, as excitement escalates throughout the night.

But the GRAMMYs are just one night. The rest of the year, the Recording Academy cultivates the well-being of the music community by serving more than 23,000 members, from artists to producers to sound engineers. And each member has a unique relationship with the Academy. For example, there are voting and non-voting members, students, lifetime members and online learners. The Recording Academy wants to provide an easy and personalized digital experience to each member, whether they're buying tickets to an award show or renewing a membership.

"This is the digital age, and digital experiences define your brand, whether you're a retailer, a bank or the Recording Academy," says Panos A. Panay, President of the Recording Academy. "And IBM has been essential in helping us take our digital experience to the next level."

80%

more efficient ticketing

200+

artists featured with instant, AI-generated stories

“We have the same concerns as many other organizations about the trustworthiness of generative AI. But we trusted IBM to build and manage the model the right way.”

Harvey Mason Jr.

CEO

The Recording Academy

Timely, relevant, and personalized

To help the Recording Academy redefine its digital offerings for fans, [IBM Consulting](#)[®] started with its [IBM Garage](#)[™] methodology, which uses an enterprise-grade version of design thinking to accelerate the design and development process. During these Garage sessions, the team determined that music fans wanted accurate, intriguing stories about their favorite musicians on the night of the GRAMMY Awards. But the show is dynamic and somewhat unpredictable, featuring a variety of artists over several hours in a variety of settings, from the Red Carpet to the GRAMMY stage. And the Recording Academy editorial team couldn't possibly research, write, edit and publish stories about hundreds of artists in real time.

To solve this problem, IBM Consulting tapped into the power of generative AI (gen AI), building a content creation engine to produce "AI Stories with [IBM watsonx](#)[™]." The team began with an open-source large language model (LLM) called Llama 2, which is available on [IBM[®] watsonx.ai](#)[™]. They then trained the model using the Recording Academy's proprietary, trusted data, and tuned it to produce content that is consistent with the Recording Academy's brand standards and tone of voice. The model and its output are monitored by IBM Consulting to guard against drift or hallucination.

"We have the same concerns as many other organizations about the trustworthiness of generative AI," says Harvey Mason Jr., CEO of the Recording Academy. "But we trusted IBM to build and manage the model the right way."

To help the editors at the Recording Academy use the gen AI model leading up to and during the show, the team built an AI Content Builder dashboard that accelerates and simplifies the process of publishing new content. Editors engage with the AI Content Builder using prompts—both free-form and pre-generated. They then make any necessary edits to the content before publishing directly to GRAMMY.com or Recording Academy social channels, like Instagram or TikTok.

"It's awesome," says Katie Stockman, Director of Business Intelligence at the Recording Academy. "IBM built a generative AI content engine in a matter of weeks. Our team is still very much in the loop, reviewing and editing the content. But the quality of the output has been great. And it is really helping us reinvent how work gets done."

For members, the challenges were very different. Two years ago, the Academy recognized a need to better engage its members over digital channels. They began the process of migrating their legacy CRM database to the cloud-based Salesforce platform. But the team quickly realized they needed help optimizing their use of the Salesforce Experience Cloud and Salesforce Marketing Cloud platforms as part of a broader digital transformation.

"We wanted to improve the nominee experience and make our communications with them more efficient and meaningful," says Kelley Purcell, Vice President of Membership

& Industry Relations for the Recording Academy. “The team at IBM Consulting is helping us use Salesforce to do just that, really unlocking the full potential of the platform to simplify and personalize the experience.”

IBM Consulting worked with the Recording Academy to develop a roadmap focused on a handful of specific digital journeys that were common among members: nominations, ticketing, voting and membership renewals. Work began just weeks before nominations for the 2023 GRAMMYs were scheduled to go out.

Again, IBM Consulting used the IBM Garage methodology to define the user journeys and deployed a series of pre-built Salesforce accelerators that saved 1,000 development hours and allowed the Recording Academy to customize the experience in time for the 65th GRAMMY® nominations. The now automated process takes GRAMMY nominees on an engaging and easy-to-follow journey, where they can access all the exciting GRAMMY-related information, such as events leading up to the ceremony and how to buy tickets.

Phase two of this work began immediately following the 2023 GRAMMYs. It includes a seamless end-user experience for payments, the development of a member experiences for a mobile app, enhanced security and permissions, and the final stages of migrating legacy processes onto the Salesforce platform.

Generating trusted experiences, at scale

Thanks to AI Stories with IBM watsonx, the Recording Academy’s editorial team has been able to scale the volume of their work without sacrificing accuracy or authority. Using a custom dashboard, the team curates content by choosing headlines, insights and art, then selects the most effective channel for distribution and publication. With AI Stories with IBM watsonx, Recording Academy editors can keep timely stories flowing no matter how fast-paced the action.

Fans don’t just read the stories—they interact via a widget on live.grammy.com, using a “tell me more” prompt to delve into additional content. With comprehensive, relevant and trusted editorial across channels, fans have never been more engaged with Music’s Biggest Night, or closer to the artists they love.

For Recording Academy members, the Salesforce customizations built by IBM offer an improved, personalized digital experience. The ticketing process is now 80% more efficient. It's simpler than ever for members to perform everyday tasks, such as payments and membership renewals. By enhancing security and permissions, Recording Academy staff have improved flexibility in managing member profiles. And by completing its cloud migration and retiring its legacy technology, the Academy maintains and pays for one platform instead of two, and is ready to continue offering both members and fans the exceptional experiences they've come to expect.



About the Recording Academy

The mission of the Recording Academy is to recognize excellence in the recording arts and sciences, cultivate the well-being of the music community, and ensure that music remains an indelible part of our culture. As the leading community of music professionals, the Recording Academy's purpose is to advocate, celebrate, educate and serve.

Solution components

IBM Consulting®	→	IBM Garage™	→
IBM® Salesforce Consulting	→	IBM watsonx™	→
IBM watsonx.ai™	→		

Watsonx.ai is helping companies custom build AI solutions to suit their specific needs.

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