

# Absolut Icebar

## The Sound of Ice

### What does Ice sound like?

#### The History “The world’s first bars made of Ice”

Absolut Icebar has a magnificent history. The world’s first hotel entirely made of Ice was built on the northern outskirts of Sweden in the village of Jukkasjärvi in 1990. Together with Absolut Vodka, the company is now opening up Icebars in metropolises from Tokyo to Milan. Bars entirely made of Ice are shipped from the northern part of Sweden all across the globe. Even the glasses the drinks are served in are made of ice.

#### Our Mission – “How does the brand of Absolut Icebar sound?”

Absolut Icebar came to Heartbeats with a mission to define a music identity for their brand and to find a way to implement this music in all bars across the globe. Our mission was to create a persistent experience of the brand whenever and whichever Icebar is visited by the customer.

#### The Situation – “What does Bob Marley have to do with the Icebar?”

The first time we visited an Icebar, the bartender played Bob Marley. On our second visit it was Abba and the next time it was Britney Spears. Clearly we were experiencing a classic problem for many enterprises in the retail/bar/hotel sector. The music selection

was in the hands of each staff member and therefore the music played depended entirely on who was working in the bar on that specific day.

The music was played from stand alone CD-players and it showed that the staff (without the management’s knowledge) brought their own burned CDs, resulting in that the company actually illegally played music. This could of course result in big problems for the company, since the copyright associations today are actively chasing companies who are playing music illegally in their environment.

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Absolut Icebar Stockholm

“The music was then divided into different playlists for the various times of the day. Together it creates an eclectic mix bound to amaze the visitor, The Sound of Ice.”

### **Sound of Ice - The Music**

#### **Identity of Absolut Icebar**

Heartbeats first had to determine what the Absolut Icebar brand sounded like. Following the Heartbeats branding model, we analyzed both the internal factors such as values and core brand values as well as outer factors such as the target group and visitor demographics.

#### **Absolut Icebar Radio – Solving the problem of distribution**

Now when we had the right music, we had to solve the problem of distributing the music to the various bars across the globe. We had to ensure that the same music was played at all locations simultaneously.

Together with our technical partner Royal Streaming, we set-up a music



Absolut Icebar Copenhagen



Absolut Icebar Tokyo

server with all the music selected from the musical profile. The music was designed in to various playlists to fit with the different times of the day and we set “rules” for an interactive DJ as to how the music should be mixed.

We then used the technique of Internet radio to live “stream” the music to their various locations across the globe. Each bar had an internet radio receiver connected to their amplifier system just as a standard CD-player (but connected to the Internet). In this way we could also ensure that the music was updated weekly without the staff having to do anything.

#### **The next step**

The concept of “Sound of Ice” is not limited to the music that is played in the bars. In the concept is a clear strategy for how the company could expand it to other platforms such as branded CD compilations sold as merchandise, iTunes releases for download and live events and other PR activities.

#### **The legal rights aspects**

Today more than ever it is important for brands that work globally with music to keep control of the legal rights of their music being played. The copyright agencies are more active then ever in monitoring so that companies pay correctly and only play legally secured music. Through our partnership with Scandinavian Law firm Hagenburg AB we could secure agreements with international copyright associations so that all music that is played at all Icebars across the globe is legally cleared.

## Results and Benefits

- ✓ A policy for how Absolut Icebar works with their sound
- ✓ A contentiously updated music library with music streamed “live” to their various bars across the globe.
- ✓ One and the same experience of the brand whichever bar you visit.
- ✓ The music reflecting the time and mood of the day and divided into various playlists.
- ✓ An enriched customer experience where the sense of hearing stimulated as well.
- ✓ PR in local as well as international media about the concept
- ✓ Controlling that all music that is played is legally secured from copyright associations.
- ✓ Saving time for management. Music automatically updated over Internet.
- ✓ Return on investment through production of merchandise when producing CD compilations and digital releases with the music.



Absolut Icebar Tokyo

“We are very happy about working with such a creative and professional music agency as Heartbeats. Music is an important part of our guest’s experience in ABSOLUT ICEBAR, as well as a booster for our brand image.”

**Agnetha Lund, Director**  
ICEBAR International,  
ICEHOTEL AB



Absolut Icebar Milan