

SOUNDBYTE: I'm not afraid to be ugly or to be myself. -- Bono, 1981

BIGGER THAN ANYTHING IN THEIR WAY: POLLSTAR NAME U2 THE TOP-GROSSING TOURING ARTIST OF THE LAST DECADE

@U2 November 25, 2019 by Allie McClaskey



As the 2010-2019 decade draws to a close, reflection pieces on stats for the last 10 years abound. Unsurprisingly, U2 top one such list: Pollstar named U2 their Artist of the Decade, reporting that the band is set to gross \$1.038 billion and 9,300,500 tickets sold by the year's end (Arthur Fogel, Live Nation Global Touring head, notes that this number does not include an additional 500,000-600,000 tickets from the final run of Joshua Tree Tour shows). According to Pollstar's Box Office records, U2 is the only touring artist of the last 10 years to earn more than \$1 billion. A

This impressive feat is thanks to sales from the [Innocence + Experience](#) and [Experience + Innocence](#) tours in 2015 and 2018 and the Joshua Tree tours in [2017](#) and [2019](#). The Joshua Tree 2017 tour was particularly lucrative, with Pollstar reporting U2's year-end earnings at over \$300 million (matched only by Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran in 2018). A highlight of earnings from the article notes that runs of shows in Sao Paulo, the O2 and Madison Square Garden in 2011, 2015, and 2017 grossed a combined total of \$100.37 million.

Aside from numbers, the article discusses the particulars of U2's touring the last 10 years: the swinging light bulb of Innocence + Experience, the omission of *The Joshua Tree* favorites from the Experience + Innocence setlist, and the massive screen of the Joshua Tree tour.

Fogel finally hints at the future of U2's touring from a business perspective, saying that "there's always a strategy" when it comes to engineering the band's live presence in certain markets. "It's important when you lay out tour plans that you're thinking ahead to next time, and how to sort of play the markets but not overplay."

You can read the full article on Pollstar.com [here](#).

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