

Preparation for Bachelor Project

E18 E6BAC-01

Designing Multichannel Audio- and Video-Playback System:
Showman

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Chapter 1

Project Description

The following text is the project description pulled from the project catalog.

Development of multi-channel audio/video playback system for touring artists. This project will integrate both hardware- and software-design with emphasis on hardware design. Approx. 70-80 percent of modern Danish and international touring artists utilize audio backing tracks (prerecorded material played back on some chosen device) and video content projected on large screens as part of their performance.

However, there are a multitude of options ranging from iPod-playback to complex, customized systems operated by technical personnel. Common for these systems is instability, making artists to purchase redundant backup-systems in order to deliver their audience a flawless and uninterrupted performance.

In a typical scenario, at least one laptop – often several laptops – with various audio- and/or videointerfaces, handles and runs the audio backing track and video-content in sync.

This project will integrate both audio- and video-handling in a single 19" rack-mounted device and provide the user with a user-friendly GUI (Graphical User Interface) while complying with international standards for audio and video and electronic devices.

For design and implementation of the device, a research is needed in:

- Circuit/hardware design
- D/A audio converters
- Standardized audio input/output formats
- Audio file formats
- Standardized video input/output formats

- Video file formats
- Time codes for synchronization
- User feedback for feasible GUI design

This project is already in the early stages of development as part of an apprenticeship in entrepreneurship (iværksætterpraktik) at Navitas Science and Innovation.

Current status on project:

- Requirements specification finished
- FURPS finished
- Market research ongoing

The project is requesting confidentiality as the device is in development intended for market release to prosumers in the music industry, thus an eventual project partner must sign a non-disclosure agreement.

Project partner profile: Electronic Engineering student or Information and Communication Technology student.

Chapter 2

Requirement Specification

Introduction

This chapter will describe the requirements needed for the multichannel audio/video playback system called Showman. This chapter contains an introductory overview of Showman in general that covers a System Description, System Overview and Usage Situation followed by Functional and Non-Functional Requirements. The chapter ends with a MoSCoW- and FURPS-analysis to organize a list of priorities needed to develop a functional prototype.

System Description

The purpose of Showman is to play back prerecorded audio- and video-material during a concert performance. Prerecorded audio- and video-playback material is colloquially called 'backing tracks'. The primary reason of backing track usage is to enhance a concert performance by play back additional material that artists on stage do not have the option or time to play themselves.

User (or artist) uploads synchronized audio files in 44.1 kHz 16-bit .WAV-format and video files in MPEG-4 format to Showman before using Showman during showtime. User creates, edits and organizes playlist with a software application Graphical User Interface (GUI) on laptop (PC or Mac). The content of the playlist is the backing track material that user produced beforehand. After playlist creation, user uploads the playlist via a USB-connection to Showman's internal memory.

Showman play back 8-tracks of audio along with video-content. The audio tracks can be connected directly into the XLR-inputs of a live sound mixer through Showman's XLR outputs, while the video-material can be connected to screens through Showman's HDMI-output. User starts each song in the playlist separately by pressing the 'Play'-button on Showman. The first song

on the playlist begins and playback stops automatically (auto-stop) after each ending of a song.

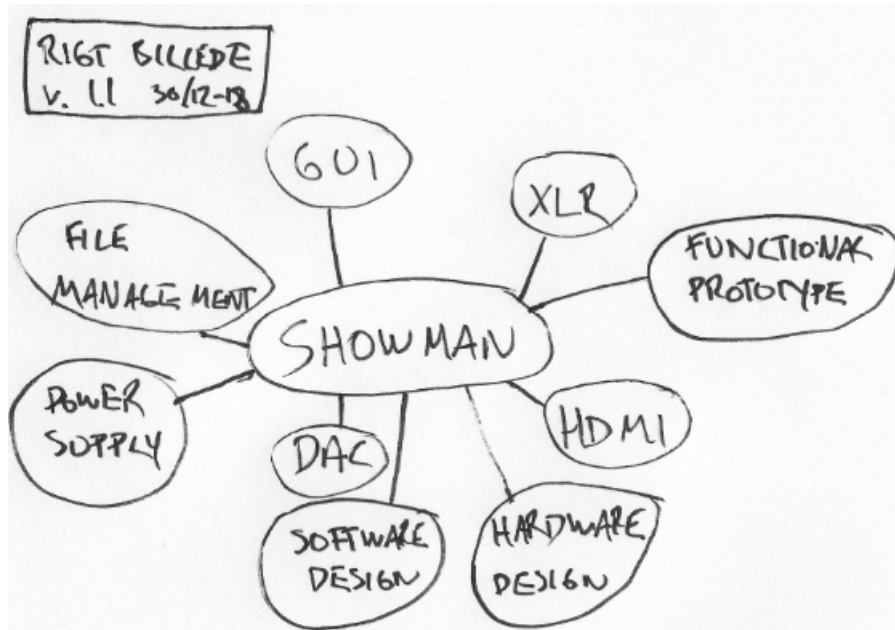


Figure 2.1 – Content of Showman as a rich picture.

Usage Situation

Showman's intended users are artists that utilize backing tracks at concert performances to enhance/augment their performance. Preconditions are essential to Showman, as user must have up to 4 stereo or 8 mono .WAV-files and a MPEG4-videofile available for each song that has backing tracks. The artist need to have produced the backing tracks beforehand.

As Showman's intended usage conditions are tough touring conditions and periodic hard handling, Showman's user interface is a 2U 19" rack mounted device with a LCD screen for user monitoring and panel buttons for navigation.

When the user have the necessary files available, the user assembles the playlist in the software application GUI and assigns the audio outputs. The GUI uploads the playlist project into specific folders in Showman's internal 500 GB flash memory.

When user need to start playback of a song, all user need to do is press 'Play' on the user panel. An auto-stop function after the end of each song in

the project is embedded in Showman.

Actor-Context Diagram

The figure below is an overview of actors that interact with Showman:

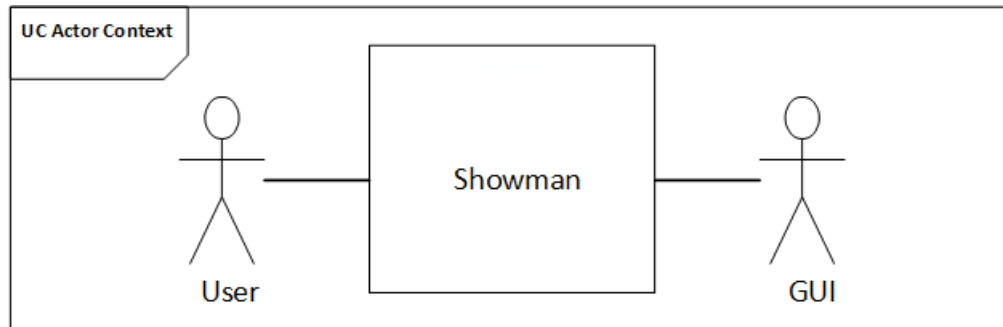


Figure 2.2 – Actor-Context diagram of Showman.

User

User is the primary actor. User creates the playlist and uploads the playlist to Showman. User operates Showman. User's interaction with Showman is outlined in detail in the specification for the individual Use Cases.

GUI

The Graphical User Interface (GUI) is the secondary actor. The GUI is the software application that handles the file management and playlist creation that is uploaded to Showman's interaction with Showman is outlined in detail in the specification for the individual Use Cases.

Functional Requirements

This section presents the functional requirements outlined for Showman. The figure below presents a Use-Case diagram that displays the actors' relations to the Use-Cases followed by Fully Dressed Use-Cases.

To keep this document brief and concise, only the first Use-Case is included. The additional Use-Cases will be explored further in the bachelor project.

Use-Case 1

Name:	Create Playlist
Scope	User wants to create a playlist
No. of concurrent events:	1
Primary Actor	User
Stakeholders	User wants to use backing tracks with Showman.
Preconditions	User has backing track files
Postconditions	User has uploaded files successfully
Main Success Scenario	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. User connects GUI to Showman via USB-connection. 2. User opens GUI. 3. User clicks on 'New Playlist'. 4. User sets desired playlist name. 5. GUI ask User to drag and drop files in Playlist Content panel. 6. GUI assist User in assigning output ports. 7. User saves playlist. 8. User clicks 'Showtime'. 9. GUI transfer playlist to Showman. 10. Showman is ready for use.
Extensions	<p>[Extension 4a:]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GUI prompt displays 'Playlist already exist. Overwrite?'. 2. User prompts 'Cancel'. 3. GUI returns to Main Success Scenario step 4. <p>[Extension 4b:]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GUI prompt displays 'Playlist already exist. Overwrite?'. 2. User prompts 'OK'. 3. User overwrites playlist. 4. GUI continues to Main Success Scenario 5. <p>[Extension 5a:]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GUI displays 'INCORRECT FILE FORMAT'. 2. GUI returns to Main Success Scenario step 5. <p>[Extension 5b:]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GUI displays 'The files exceeds memory limit. Please reduce file size.' 2. GUI returns to Main Success Scenario step 5. <p>[Extension 6:]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GUI displays 'Too many files. Reduce number of files to accommodate number of available output ports.' 2. GUI returns to Main Success Scenario 6.
Special Requirements	

Figure 2.3 – Use-Case diagram of Use-Case 1.

Non-Functional Requirements

Non-Functional Requirements (NFRs) are quality-demands, which are the qualities or constraints on the services of the functions offered by the system rather than a specific behaviour. Qualities are properties or characteristics of the system that its stakeholders care about and hence will affect their degree

of satisfaction with the system.

Quality demands/NFRs should satisfy two attributes:

- Must be verifiable - e.g. measurable metrics.
- Should be objective.

The NFRs are drawn up using two techniques: FURPS and MoSCoW to determine system requirements and to prioritize and rank Non-Functional Requirements.

FURPS+

FURPS+ is an acronym that represents a model classify a product's properties: **F**unctionality, **U**sability, **R**eliability, **P**erformance, **S**upportability and + (Design and Physical constraints, Interfaces, Legal, Test, Reuse, Economic constraints, Aesthetics, Comprehensibility, Technology tradeoff, etc.)

A point-system from 1-5 is used to classify priorities, where 1 is the lowest and 5 the highest priority.

F - Functionality

The functionality describes the capability (size and generality of feature set), reusability (combability, interoperability, portability) and security (safety and exploitability) of a system.

Use-Case 1 - Create Playlist

UC1 has the highest priority as it is essential for Showman to create playlists with GUI in order to operate Showman.

Score: 5

U - Usability

Accessibility

Description of the ease of access to system

As the target group are touring artists and artist crew both with little to no time, the system need to be easy to use and operate with minimal learning curve.

Score: 4

User Interface

Description of the Graphical User Interface's functionality

The system need a GUI that need minimal learning curve, and therefore has to be similar to GUIs of software applications such as ProTools, Apple Logic

X, Ableton Live, Cymatic Audio uTool.

Score: 3

R - Reliability

Predictability

Description of the system's stability

This requirement is ranked highly in order for User to be reliant on that file-transfer does not malfunction nor malfunction does not occur during operation of the system.

Score: 4

Maintainability

Description of the system's maintainability

This requirement is also ranked highly in order for User to be able to acquire spare parts in case something breaks as the system will be in transit daily and is exposed to hard handling or manufacturer/producer updates firmware or software application.

Score: 4

P - Performance

GUI start-up time

Description of the software application GUI's accessibility when opening software application

Showman's GUI must be accessible max. 5 seconds after opening software application in order for User to create or edit a playlist and transfer playlist to Showman.

Score: 3

Showman start-up time

Description of Showman's User Interface accessibility when turning Showman on

Showman's UI must be available and accessible max. 5 seconds after turning the system on in order for User to play playlist.

Score: 3

Execution time - File transfer

Description of the fast the system can complete the given functionality described in the Use Cases

This property is not ranked highly, as long as the file transfer is finished within a few minutes. A research in file transfer speed is needed to determine file transfer speed.

Score: 2

Execution time - Play playlist

Description of how fast the system can complete the given functionality described in the Use Cases

This property is ranked in the middle. Showman must start playback within 5-10 microseconds of User pushing 'Play'-button. A research in push buttons is needed to implement and determine speed of play playlist execution time.

Score: 3

S - Supportability

Repairability - GUI

Description of GUI's level of repairability

The GUI's level of repairability is ranked low, as it is assumed that the User always have the latest software- and firmware-version installed on laptop and Showman.

Score: 1

Repairability - Showman

Description of Showman's level of repairability

Showman's level of repairability is ranked in the middle, as the goal is to create a system with as few as spare parts as possible except for a USB-cable for USB connection between GUI and Showman and a 230V 50-60Hz power cord for Showman. It is also assumed that Showman is rackmounted in a flight case designed for hard handled while in transit.

Score: 2

Compability - GUI

Description of the GUI's compability with other units

GUI's compability is ranked low as long as the User's laptop is compatible with GUI's technical requirements such as available hard disk space, RAM, CPU, etc. That is why the GUI is not required to be compatible with other units other than Showman.

Score: 2

Compability - Showman

Description of Showman's compability with other units

Showman's compability is ranked low as long as Showman is compatible with its corresponding GUI and has XLR-outputs for audio and HDMI-output for video. However, this project focuses on a **Minimum Viable Product** (MVP), that focuses solely on the necessary features for Showman to work. In a possible future scenario, a DANTE-protocol can be considered for implementation,

opting for digital audio connection via DANTE between Showman and audio mixing desk instead of using Showman's internal D/A converters and their analog XLR-outputs.

Score: 3

+ - Design constraints

The “+s” of the **FURPS**+ acronym allows us to specify constraints, including design, implementation, interface, and physical constraints.

Legal

Data Protection

Showman's software application will be available for download from manufacturer's website when User has created a free account. User must fill out a form containing **name**, **username**, **contact info** (e-mail address, phone number, address, etc.) in order to sign up for an account. This user data will be regarded as confidential and must be treated and stored accordingly in compliance with the GDPR act introduced in May 2018.

Score: 4

Health and Safety

The final design and implementation of Showman must be compliant with EU rules on product safety, The General Product Safety Directive.

Score: 3

Test - Conditions

Stability is *essential* for Showman as that is how Showman differentiates itself from other key actors that produce and market similar products.

Stability for Showman includes a system that never stalls during playback and stable hardware that does not break down of wear and tear from hard handling.

Score: 5

Test - Environment

Showman will be exposed to hard handling during daily transit and changing weather conditions from humid air to dry air and temperatures below zero degrees Celsius to upwards of 55 degrees Celsius. It is therefore imperative that Showman is applicable during these hard conditions.

Score: 4

Reuse

It is the goal to produce Showman to have as few replaceable parts as possible because of the conditions and environment stated above. The only 2 replace-

able parts therefore need to be the USB-cable used for connection between GUI and Showman and a power cord for Showman. These two parts need to be widely available in most hardware- or electronics-retailers globally.

Score: 3

Enviromental - RoHS

RoHS stands for Restriction of Hazardous Substances. RoHS, also known as Directive 2002/95/EC, originated in the European Union and restricts the use of specific hazardous materials found in electrical and electronic products. All applicable products in the EU market after July 1, 2006 must pass RoHS compliance.

As Showman will be produced and marketed within the EU, Showman must be produced with respect to RoHS compliance. In practical terms, Showman need to be RoHS certified following a series of steps involved for RoHS certification:

Document Review: Review Bill of Materials, assembly drawings, Materials Declarations for each component and product, test reports and Conformance Certificates.

Audit: Inspect all manufacturing processes needed to meet RoHS compliance for the six restricted substances.

Testing: On-site portable XRF testing is done to determine values of the six restricted RoHS substances.

Certification: After successful audit, a RoHS certificate is issued.

Score: 4

Enviromental - WEEE

WEEE stands for **W**aste from **E**lectrical and **E**lectronic **E**quipment. WEEE Directive 2002/96/EC mandates the treatment, recovery and recycling of electric and electronic equipment (90 percent ends up in landfills). All applicable products in the EU market must pass WEEE compliance and carry the 'Wheelie Bin' sticker.

Score: 3

EMC

The Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive 2014/30/EU ensures that electrical and electronic equipment does not generate, or is not affected by, electromagnetic disturbance.

The EMC Directive **limits electromagnetic emissions from equipment** in order to ensure that, when used as intended, such equipment does not disturb radio and telecommunication, as well as other equipment. The Directive **also**

governs the immunity of such equipment to interference and seeks to ensure that this equipment is not disturbed by radio emissions, when used as intended.

As Showman is exposed to electric devices or installations nearby such as GSM handsets, wireless communication devices such as wireless microphones, wireless In-Ear Monitoring (IEM) beltbacks, etc., it is a high priority to keep all those side effects under reasonable control.

Score: 4

MoSCoW

MoSCoW analysis is a prioritization technique used in management, business analysis, project management and software development to reach a common understanding with stakeholders on the importance they place on the delivery of each requirement.

M - Must have Requirements labeled as Must have are critical to the current delivery timebox in order for it to be a success. If even one Must have requirement is not included, the project delivery should be considered a failure.

S - Should have Requirements labeled as Should have are important but not necessary for delivery in the current delivery timebox. While Should have requirements can be as important as Must have, they are often not as time-critical or there may be another way to satisfy the requirement, so that it can be held back until a future delivery timebox.

C - Could have Requirements labeled as Could have are desirable but not necessary, and could improve user experience or customer satisfaction for little development cost. These will typically be included if time and resources permit.

W - Won't have/Would like Requirements labeled as Won't have have been agreed by stakeholders as the least-critical, lowest-payback items, or not appropriate at that time. As a result, Won't have requirements are not planned into the schedule for the next delivery timebox. Won't have requirements are either dropped or reconsidered for inclusion in a later timebox.

This section for requirement specifications is the *first draft*, so to keep this document concise, the **MoSCoW**-analysis is omitted as it needs a revision along with the rest of the requirement specification section.

Chapter 3

Project Plan

This section is an excerpt of the project plan. The project plan features descriptions of which experiments, technologies etc. to conduct and investigate during the Bachelor's Project.

This section contains how the project work will be structured, which methods to be used, etc.

The Bachelor's Project (Thesis or Final Project) is an extensive project dealing with a realistic engineering assignment. The bachelor project should document the students' ability to work independently to apply engineering methods and theories in solving professional problems and development issues in a specific field. The project constitutes the conclusion of the programme and is placed in the last semester.

The Bachelor's Project workload is 20 ECTS points. 1 ECTS translates to 27 hours of workload, totaling 540 hours of workload for the Bachelor's Project. Assuming 18 weeks of Bachelor's Project work, total workload/week is 30 hours/week.

During the project period, 2 elective courses with 10 ECTS points in total to fulfil the goal of 30 ECTS workload each semester. Assuming 18 weeks of lectures and assignments, total workload/week is 16-17 hours/week.

Total workload is expected to be 45-50 hours/week during the semester. To keep track of the project, weekly meetings with supervisor is essential along with project management tools: The ASE-model, SCRUM and Redmine.

ASE-model

SCRUM

Redmine

Supervisor Meetings

Timetable

Chapter 4

Project Research

Undersøgelse af tilsvarende projekter og relevant litteratur.

Similar Projects

Mircea Gabriel Eftemie, medialogy at Aalborg University.

Similar Products

Cymatic Audio LP-16

Ableton Live

QLab

MAINSTAGE

Logic Pro X

BlackBeagle

Arduino

Raspberry Pi

Linux Ubuntu Studio

Chapter 5

Project Expectations

After initial project proposal was accepted, an application for project working space was filed to secure an assigned working space at the university campus. As of this document's handin, no working space has been assigned yet.

Evt. aftale om forventet arbejdssted og tid.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Konklusion på det indledende arbejde med forprojektet.

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