SoundCloud

Usability Report

SoundCloud is an online audio distribution platform and music sharing website based in Berlin, Germany, that enables its users to upload, promote, and share audio.

Objective

The brief was to create new features within SoundCloud that help people easily share their content and get people talking about it on their social feeds. The aim was to make the listening experience a social experience as well as making it into a more personal experience and a platform to connect with others on a deeper level.

Description

SoundCloud serves as an online based music sharing website, and is used by tons of artists and listeners. The website has some great features, like curated playlists, creating a radio based on the song I played, and many more. One thing I particularly like about this app over others is that it makes listening to music more of an experience than just something you do in the background. This app also makes the whole experience more social with it's Radio Room feature, which allows you to join a room with your friends and queue songs to the current playlist.

Overall, SoudCloud makes listening to music an interactive experience, but when needed can also be a background music player.

Task Description

Criteria for selecting the task was to ensure that the task should be multi-step, should sound familiar to the users and should be simple so that it can be completed easily within the timelines.

The following tasks were decided:

1. Task A is where the user needs to login into the website after creating an account.
2. Task B is where the user needs to change the themes and test them out.

Participants

10 Participants

Age Group
18-24 yr

Gender
5 Males
5 Females

Methodology

For the study, we recruited a total of ten participants. Five participants are female, five are male, and all participants are college students at the Symbiosis University between the ages of 18-25 years old. All of the participants chosen met our pre-screening requirements and listen to SoundCloud on their desktops an average of 2-4 hours per day. All participants use laptops or desktops.

Our target audience for SoundCloud website are college-aged students who are familiar with the app, but do not necessarily know about every feature SoundCloud has to offer. Due in part to our screening questionnaire and environment, all of our study participants matched the criteria to be the target audience.

We basically called all the participants on discord via video and conducted the test.

Task Design & Scenarios

Since we wanted to measure the ease and efficiency of SoundCloud's website features, we broke up the usability test into two tasks - each testing out a different action that a user might do to discover new music through SoundCloud recommendations, radio, and social circles/friends. Follow up questions were asked depending on the actions of the participant during the task.

For each task we started by providing the participant with an applicable scenario to provide context and observe the participant's natural response. From our screening questionnaire, we were able to determine that most users use SoundCloud website when they want to upload their album, want some tracks for their projects, or really bored at their workplace.

Test Goals

- User can navigate through the app without any major issues
- User can view the Liked songs, open settings, change themes.
- Identify issues surrounding visual hierarchy
- Receive feedback from participants

Test Results

Through our usability testing research we derived the key observations and feedback from our users. From these we derived the important patterns and looked for opportunities for improvement, as well as test completion and error-free rates.