Project X Proposal: LinkMeUp
A Mobile Application Centralizing Music Sharing

By Samvit Jain

At Hack Princeton this fall, a friend and I built a prototype version of LinkMeUp. The application, built for Android, allows users to send song links to friends without having to search for and copy/paste URLs. The user must still enter a song title and artist, but after that point, it is the application that executes the Vimeo video search, parses the search results, and extracts and sends the Vimeo video link as a text message to the target recipient. The motivating goal for this application is that sending music suggestions should be *instantaneous* and *painless*.

My goal for this summer is to build a Snapchat-esque interface for music sharing, where users can send music samples (instead of photos) to their friends with ease, especially songs they have just discovered on Pandora or Youtube on their phone. A key component of this application will be a notification listener that can detect a song currently playing on a user's phone.* Sending a song to a friend will then be as simple as selecting recipients from a drop down menu of contacts, and clicking one button: "Send Current Song." On the receiving end, users can access an inbox of song samples sent by friends, and options to forward song suggestions, purchase songs recommended to them through iTunes, or post links to Facebook or Twitter.

This application should essentially centralize music sharing to a neat mobile interface. Currently, when friends share song links in text messages or Facebook conversations, those on the receiving end are often not interested or not able to sample the recommended music at that moment. Suggestions become buried in pages of conversation, and it then becomes painful to return to these recommendations. This app allows a user to sample all their friends' music suggestions at one time, and at one place – perhaps when the user is looking specifically to discover or purchase new music. In addition, it eliminates the need to search for Youtube links, and copy and paste URLs, which can be tedious on a mobile device.

There is great potential to expand the capabilities of this application – to sharing news articles, website links, and other media. In additions, users are not the only party that gains; artists and producers would benefit from the increase in *targeted* music sharing. Music sent to specific friends or groups, chosen by the user, is more likely to interest them, as compared to links shared with hundreds of connections on a social network, who may not be able to gauge the relevance of a suggestion. Facebook and iTunes, too, may also be interested in integrating an application that streamlines the sharing of media between connections, lends itself to marketing (recommended links and song suggestions), and facilitates quick purchases of music.

*This "notification listening" functionality will require one of two approaches: 1) using the Shazam/Sound Hound API, applications that generate song information given an audio sample, or 2) accessing and parsing the notifications to the iOS or Android Notification Center – for example, Pandora notifies iOS or Android when the song changes.

Essentially, this is a very low-cost, low-bandwidth idea that will require minimal supervision, and few resources. I have experience in Objective-C so I will build the application for iPhone this summer while at Princeton. I could develop LinkMeUp in my dormitory room, or in a room in the Friend Center or Computer Science Building.

Proposed Budget:

- $5000 stipend for 1 student
- (*Optional*) $99 cost for iOS Developer Program, required to develop, test, and distribute an application built for Apple iOS (https://developer.apple.com/programs/ios/)

Here is a Youtube link describing my idea in 1 minute: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEuHVrBRxoA.

Here are two Flickr images of the prototype we built: https://www.flickr.com/photos/103475266@N07/.