

Updated 5/22 - all changes are highlighted

SharedMusic

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Product Description

General Description

Our project's mission is to create a social environment in which people can collectively choose, play and experience music without being in close proximity to one another. To do this we are creating a group based music player, which allows for multiple people to put together a playlist that can then be played in unison across all of the user's computers. Through solving this problem of not being able to effectively share music with friends in real time our team hopes to provide our users with a new way of discovering new music through their friends.

Our app bridges the gap between two existing markets in digital music experience, music discovery and group based music players. With respect to music discovery, unlike most radio based discovery apps, which show you music based off of similar songs that you have liked in the past, we want to take a more holistic approach to discovering music. Our taste in music is often shared, and even shaped by the tastes of those around us, and we believe that by allowing people to share those tastes directly and communicate about them in real time will ultimately help people discover new music more effectively than otherwise possible.

In addition to that, our app has many similarities to that of other group based music players. However, we believe that unlike other platforms out there, our focus on having people create rooms to listen to music with friends rather than listen to them in large centralized groups like plug.dj, we create a new dynamic for listening to music. One that is more social and intimate in nature. This social aspect is what makes the music sharing experience special, and it's what most prominently sets our platform apart from other group based systems.

Market Strategies

Our team will remain in stealth mode until our first MVP is releasable, and at that time we will focus on gaining users through promotions via social networks and public hacker forums like hacker news. Because our product does not require a large critical mass of people to be useful, we hope to slowly gain exposure and penetrate friend groups through word of mouth.

We believe that using word of mouth and social platforms for growth will be effective since our target audience is primarily young professionals and higher education students. These kinds of users are very receptive to social media invites from friends, and also are most willing to adopt new apps with regards to their surrounding generations.

Competitive Analysis

Our project is not the first platform to make a group based music player. Similar products and their profiles follow:

- Plug.dj - this product allows for people to login to a room of avatars and listen to a playlist of music that is put together by people of the group. It is very decentralized, and focuses on the ability to browse various groups, rather than the ability to make a room with friends. In this way I think that our product and plug.dj address different problems, even though there are many similarities. Our main focus is on providing a personal experience whereas theirs is public. They focus on anonymity through avatars, where we focus on authenticity amongst friends.
- sharedplaylists.com - provides a search engine service for spotify playlists. They require users to have spotify accounts in order to use their service, where you can then browse other users playlists. This provides for the opportunity to find new music, and also to find new song mixes easily. They don't have any group unison experience portion to their product however.

What sets our product apart from the above competitors is ultimately our focus on catering to smaller groups of friends and the temporary nature of the groups made in the app.

Features

Our application features a couple of major operations which are listed below:

- Create a group for listening to music (we call them venues)
- Join a group
- Search and add songs to the group playlist
- Stop playing a current song (veto the current song)

Given that our group gets the time to finish implementing these features, we also have ambitions to tackle the following non-critical features:

- Facebook authentication inside of the app
- A group based chat system

See our product use cases and process documents for more details on these features.

In order for our app to ship at the end of 10 weeks, our requirements that need to be met include the implementation of the above critical features.

We decided to add an additional extra feature to our list because we feel that a chat system will be possible to add. Our new feature is having a discovery portion on our webpage because in trying to design our initial interface we found that we had a lot of extra space. The discovery section of our page would help users who did not know what songs they wanted to listen to and instead we would provide suggestions, currently our idea is just to provide popular songs.

There are a couple minor features that we have implemented and added to our web app. The first minor feature that we have added is a system of tiles that aid users in discovering new music. Some of the other minor features we have added allow the user to mute and adjust the volume of the music in the room.

External Documentation

For the purposes of this class we will create a 1-2 page document regarding the processes of interacting with our app, however if this were not a class, no such document would be necessary or even helpful. Web apps very seldom have documentation for users like that, and they also tend to shy away from tutorials for first time users (unlike mobile applications).