User Study Report

Group 4 - SpotiFind

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Executive Summary

This week, we took many user studies in order to determine new ways in which we could improve our product. To ensure these user studies provided useful information, we made sure to focus our studies on many different personas. Particularly, we focused on 3 separate personas: the user, the admin, and the group creator. Additionally,

Personas

There are 3 types of personas that we focused our user studies on:

1. User
2. Admin
3. Group Creator

User Study Participants

We reviewed people with both technical and non-technical backgrounds to better encompass our user base and gain more valuable insights into potential changes for our application

User Study Participants:

1. Rob   -   Computer Science TA
2. BJ Paul   -   CSCE Student
3. Tommy   -   Computer Science TA
4. MG   -   Non-technical background User
5. RG   -   CSCE Student

Proposed Design Moves

The broad takeaways from the user reviews are:

Urgent Changes:

1. Streamline group messaging system (make the create and delete processes more intuitive and make sending messages easier)
2. Make linking external music platform accounts the first priority after creating an account
3. Additional admin features needed for group management

Potential Changes:

1. Add hover popups to make navigation easier

2. Add notifications for new messages and new friends on the platform
3. Add aliases for users so they are known from something other than their email in chats

Personas

Group Creator:
-   A group creator needs to not only be able to invite other users, but also examine the current state of their invites/requests. Additionally, they should not be limited to only inviting friends because the goal of groups is to connect people to new people. Additionally, the initial friend system has been revised to be follow based versus friend request based because of the more natural flow of communication and interaction on the platform.

Admin:
-   We assume that only the developers or moderators will have the need/permissions to make/generate an admin account. Additionally, the admin still needs to be able to make real-time updates during site launch. Also, a revision was made that an admin account should be separate from a user level account in order to ensure better account safety and because there should be no overlap between the needs of an admin and the needs of a user.

User:
-   Initially we assumed that a user would know what our site did and would have the desire to use it with their selected music streaming platform of choice. However, we want to additionally introduce new users to our site, and we were incorrect in assuming that even those interested already knew what the site provided. Also, we assumed our current color scheme would be okay for those with color blindness, but we need to focus more on contrast rather than accent colors to make sure that certain elements stand out more.

User Study Participants

Participant Name (May be Changed for Privacy)	Persona and Accessibility Needs	Responsible Team Member
R O B B Y	This person is a TA of a computer science class. This means that he should have an above average technical understanding of how to navigate websites.	Nathan and Jordan
BJ Paul	This individual is a student of the CSCE department. He possesses a base-level understanding of computing.	Akash
Tommy	This person is a TA of a computer science class. This means that he should have an	Nathan, Jordan, Josh, Akash

	above average technical understanding of how to navigate websites.	
MG	This individual falls under the category of an average user that is unaware of the programming aspect of our application	Akash, Sehun
RG	This individual is familiar with web development.	Akash

User Study Findings

2 minutes per a user

USER #1
1. Were you able to create an account
   a. Yes
2. Were you able to link your spotify account?
   a. Yes
3. Were you able to access the group chats?
   a. No, kinda… Access denied
4. Was it intuitive to use?
   a. Better than some of them, not great. Create account button was good, after that was confusing. Linking should be the first thing to do, but wasn't forced. No clarification on what website was meant to do, especially on login page.
5. What stands out to you?
   a. Clean UI, "pretty nice and clean." Pretty wide scope
6. What is difficult to use?
   a. The group chat design is pretty unintuitive. The managing group vs joining group is confusing. Pop up asking to join groups you haven't joined
7. Would you recommend this product to a friend or colleague?
   a. No. No better than just texting somebody
8. Any other comments?
   a. More useful for users who use multiple platforms as opposed to just one
   b. Landing page should give a brief introduction to what to do
      i. Gray overlay highlighting what features the project has
   c. Being able to view profiles is helpful

USER #2
1. Were you able to create an account
   Yes

2. Were you able to link your spotify account?
   Yes
3. Were you able to access the group chats?
   Yes
4. Was it intuitive to use?
   Mostly yes
5. What stands out to you?
   Good design
6. What is difficult to use?
   Returning to console after chat, username email confusion, not being able to press enter to send message, once you create the group you should join the group, edit-create logos misleading in group settings
7. Would you recommend this product to a friend or colleague?
   Yes
8. Any other comments?
   Great app! Maybe you could add "sign in to see your trending artists" under the trending artists and remove the link button on top right

USER #3
1. Were you able to create an account
   Yes
2. Were you able to link your spotify account?
   Yes
3. Were you able to access the group chats?
4. Was it intuitive to use?
   Group explore not intuitive
5. What stands out to you?
   Clean looking UI
6. What is difficult to use?
   Group stuff => Leaving/Creating+Joining process
7. Would you recommend this product to a friend or colleague?
   Maybe once finished
8. Any other comments?
   Do not show Access Denied => Redirect to console + dialog box?, Case sensitive group names an annoyance,

USER #4
1. Were you able to create an account
   Yes
2. Were you able to link your spotify account?

Yes

3. Were you able to access the group chats?
   Yes
4. Was it intuitive to use?
   No, needs assistive prompts for buttons
5. What stands out to you?
   The concept of finding friends through music
6. What is difficult to use?
   The UI is not explained clearly
7. Would you recommend this product to a friend or colleague?
   I would after a few more iterative revisions
8. Any other comments?
   Add notification for messages, no clear way to go back to the console and when cursor moves on button - maybe explains what the button does

USER #5
1. Were you able to create an account
   Yes
2. Were you able to link your spotify account?
   Yes
3. Were you able to access the group chats?
   Yes
4. Was it intuitive to use?
   Yes
5. What stands out to you?
   I liked how smooth the connection is and the console isn't cluttered
6. What is difficult to use?
   Sign up error messages are cryptic
7. Would you recommend this product to a friend or colleague?
   Sure upon further revisions
8. Any other comments?
   Add login features on the sign up page, do not remove filled up details if signup goes wrong.

Proposed Design Moves

High-level Design Move	Detailed Description	Justification

Mention login credential restrictions during the signup page	At the moment, our credentialing process requires username to be an email, passwords to be of a min length of 6 characters. It would involve adding a note of these features with the LoginPage container that we designed.	It gives the user important insight that is missing at the moment with regards to the signup.
Alter signup messages and allow persistent user info upon wrong entry	Upon a failure to meet the login credential restrictions mentioned previously, we received feedback that the error messages were cryptic and the filled in entries being removed was considered an annoyance. This will consist of deleting the setter functions being used to set the fields to empty and making custom error messages.	These changes would help improve the customer's experience according to the user studies that we have conducted.
Add application specific information on the first wireframe. Alter the initial page of the user's experience.	We will be looking at explaining the usage of the platform and our mission. This change would involve changing the SignUp/Login containers of the application.	Providing this change will enable the user to learn more about the team that's driving this application.
Add initial assistive prompts for users when first joining the site	This change would enable our end user to see and visualize what individual buttons do and learn more about their behavior and what they would trigger. This change would involve adding a spotlight feature that can highlight certain elements while dimming others.	One of the consistent feedback that we received is that it takes a while for any user to understand how to navigate through the website. This would help add to the overall user-friendliness of the application.
Add notification capability to the respective group chat icons	This would consist of displaying a new message notification within the respective group icon. We would have to separate check to see if a new message has come through on the firebase collection and trigger a notification on the frontend.	Helps the user know if they have received in real-time once they login into their console or are in the process of using it.

Redirect to console through "Spotifind" in navbar	Many users attempted to redirect from group chat to the main user console through the Spotifind. This task would involve creating a button that redirects to the main user console upon click.	It would be a feature that would assist the user as observed behaviour has consisted of sample users intuitively using the "Spotifind" to navigate back.
Improve groups feature by providing more clarity	Repeated issues we observed were that the group chat feature was cryptic. We will implement an explore groups function to increase visibility surrounding the total groups and only display groups that the user is part of at any given time as opposed to all groups and display "Access Denied"	This change would help improve the application's readability for a given user and make it more intuitive to use the chat.
Allow automatic join into the group that an admin makes	One counter intuitive feature that sample users mentioned was the fact that a group being created did not allow automatic admission for the user into that group. We will implement this change by enabling the creator of a group to be a part of the group automatically.	Minor change that makes the application user experience more smooth.
Display "Sign In To View Top Artists" in empty user-specific music data components	This change would indicate that a user should first sign-in and link their Spotify/Apple Music account. The change mentioned would involve creating a transparent box component that would disappear once the user successfully linked their respective account.	The change suggested would direct the user towards signing into their music platform once they login and view the console.
Remove case-sensitive group names and allow users to see a list of groups when they click "Join"	This change would involve removing case-sensitive name requirements when joining a group. Additionally, we can add a dropdown component showing the names of the pre-existing group that we	This would help make the user experience of trying to join a group much easier as they wouldn't have to repeatedly exit for merely looking up the group names.

	extract from the firebase collections.	

Appendix 1: User Study Observations and Interview Notes

Participant Name	Observations	Interview Notes
Robby	Thought that the initial interaction of how to interact with groups was unintuitive, as well as the main home console.	Mentioned that adding a potential tutorial for new users would be helpful.
BJ Paul	Found it counterintuitive to navigate group features and noticed visible frustration trying to exit group chat and failure of pressing "Enter" to send the message	Set the precedent of having sample users struggling to find a way from the group chat, the exit button did not seem visible enough to the user. The user expressed how group specific "Leave" button etc. would be more in line with instinct than separate "Leaving group" feature
Tommy	Had issues with some redirects but could navigate fairly well. Upon initial login and sign up he mentioned that he did not fully understand the goal of the platform. Additionally, he attempted to perform a SQL injection.	Make more "notes" for users during login/signup. Provide more error checking. Redirect users more often when it is natural to do so.
MG	Stuck trying to figure out a way out of group chat and expressed need for prompts to understand what the "Link" button etc. require from the user	Realized the need for hover based assistive prompts or gray/dark layer wireframe that expresses navigation/functional components purpose
RG	Spent significant time of user experience trying to understand requirements for login credentials.	Noticed the need for more clear signup messages tailored to express credential requirements.