CS 147 Assignment 2:

POVs AND EXPERIENCE PROTOTYPES

1. Team

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2. Problem Domain

Our problem domain is music and/or musician discovery. From our field research, we discovered that there are few avenues for up-and-coming musicians to share their talent with other musicians, and moreover for music enthusiasts to discover existing live shows that are in their area.

3. Initial POV

We spoke with Griffin Stoller, a student producer and violinist. He expressed a desire to make connecting with other musical artists in the area more convenient. He felt that there would be a large space in the market for a platform to help artists get in touch with one another for collaborations. He stressed how much he enjoys connecting with other musicians and how much of a struggle it can be to initiate this connection. It would be game changing if a solution could be designed to facilitate collaborations between musical artists.

4. Additional Needfinding Results

To further test our POV, we went back into the field. Below are the key findings from four more interviews.

We met **Uche Uba**, an actor/singer/model living in Los Angeles, CA. As an upcoming singer in the music industry, Uche communicated a strong interest in connecting with others in the field to collaborate with. He expressed how difficult it is for up-and-coming musical artists to connect with others artists.

We talked with **Kevin Munui**, a student at Computer Science U.C. Berkeley with little musical experience but a special place in his heart for it. He spoke about the Bryan Adams concert he attended in 6th grade, where he felt the strongest emotional connection to music he's ever felt, sitting on his mother's shoulders as Adams performs "Here I Am" with his live band. He expressed how he wants to have more concert experiences like this but has trouble finding good local concerts to attend.

We also met, **Melina Rodriguez**, a TV producer based in Los Angeles, CA. Melina's life isn't focused on music, yet she retains it as a special significance in her life. Despite being in media and being involved in industry, her career in music never really took off, even though others could likely benefit from her production knowledge.

5. Three Revised POVs

POV 1: We met Uche Uba who wants to find local musical artists to connect with. It would be game changing to be able to connect with like-minded musicians within his geographical proximity, collaborate and advance in their respective careers.

- **HMW** help musicians meet other musicians in the area?
- **HMW** use his music abilities to gain attention from others quickly?
- **HMW** create a collaborative culture for him to work with others?
- **HMW** help him explore collaboration with his peers rather than the music industry?
- **HMW** help him produce music and reach his goals without the starting costs?
- **HMW** make networking less daunting and more inviting?
- **HMW** maximize connecting people's interests and goals in music production?
- **HMW** make people feel like they're in a shared space/intimate setting/more personal?
- **HMW** make it so that the sound of the computer is like the sound of live performance?
- **HMW** help musicians branch out of their own circle?
- **HMW** make musicians less worried about copyright infringements/keeping their work safe?
- **HMW** improve personal interaction?
- **HMW** make digital communication more engaging and interactive for musicians?
- **HMW** minimize the financial and time costs, and experience disparities that keep people from connecting together?

POV 2: We met Kevin Munui, a music enthusiast who wants to attend great live shows to feel the strongest emotional connection to music, but has difficulty finding them. It would be game changing if there were a way to streamline this process so that Kevin can find more live shows in his area and, in doing so, discover new artists.

- **HMW** tailor the concert search results to match the best of the user's need?
- **HMW** randomly introduce new artist to the user while giving them maximum control over the artist choices?
- **HMW** redundancy/disappointment in the process (i.e. finding an artist you like only to realize they're over your price range.)?
- **HMW** control the size/scene of the concert we go to?
- **HMW** reduce the amount of manual work involved in finding a live music to attend?
- **HMW** be able to provide an extremely accurate concert suggestions based on data and their record?
- **HMW** make the process of finding music enjoyable and worthwhile?

- **HMW** make meeting and discovering new artists (especially nearby) meaningful and desirable?
- **HMW** reduce the time commitment needed to stay updated and find artists and live music that the user will love?
- **HMW** use be able to provide the user with not just a concert suggestion, but be able to make it something unique and novel?

POV 3: We met Melina who needs a way to connect with others in the music industry to expand her experience within multi-media industries. It would be game changing if she could connect her career to her interests.

- **HMW** use pre-established connections to find opportunities in the music industry?
- **HMW** make her experience more relevant to her interests?
- **HMW** find a good separation between work and interests?
- **HMW** help people make a career out of their interests in music?
- **HMW** make finding opportunities easy instead of difficult?
- **HMW** turn her job to focus on her interests?
- **HMW** make entering the music industry more accessible? efficient?
- **HMW** minimize the financial and time costs that keep people from collaborating?
- **HMW** find another way for her to include music in her daily life?
- **HMW** help her gain more professional experience outside of television?
- **HMW** make music a more important work

6. Three Best HMW Statements

HMW 1: How might we help musicians meet other musicians in the area?
POV: Uche U

HMW 2: How might we reduce the time commitment needed to stay updated and find new artists/live performances that someone will love?
POV: Kevin M

HMW 3: How might we help people make a career out of their interests in music
POV: Melina

7. Three Experience Prototypes:

PROTOTYPE ONE:

For this experience prototype, we tackled the problem of connecting different artists to collaborate with one another. Our idea uses a Tinder-esque rating system that matches users who both indicate an interest in collaborating with one another. Users may swipe right on other users to indicate an interest in collaborating after viewing a short 20-30 second video of another user demonstrating their musical talent. A 20-30 second limit keeps this idea in tune with other social media platforms and prompts for a greater degree of creativity from users since every second counts.

We each put on a small 20-30 second performance for a test subject at the Stanford radio station (with an interest in music) named Jack. For most of us this involved light singing, with a little dancing. Jack was provided a card with our names written on it, and asked to indicate on this card whether or not he would be interested in collaborating with us musically after seeing this brief snippet of our "talent". We then got together in a separate room and made judgments as to whether we would be interested in collaborating with him. To keep him from having to put himself in an uncomfortable position by making him perform for us to judge, we randomized which ones of us were going to say "yes" to collaborating with him. We then asked him to reveal which people he answered yes to, and the end result was that he was matched for a collaboration with Michael! (Both responded yes to an interest in collaborating).

This prototype did not require much in terms of materials, just a card with our names listed on it. Some assumptions that we made in this prototype was that Jack's answers would remain the same whether this were online or offline, when in reality there is a stronger chance that he would be more critical of our performances if he did not have to show us his answers and see us in person. Jack indicated that he thought this was a very good idea, and he definitely saw a use for it. He did, however, note that different dynamics

will come into play as we move this onto an online platform. He also noted that it will be more interesting to see how actual musicians would use this idea. Because none of us are musicians and we did not have the benefits of editing, there was definitely a limit to how impressive our performances could be.

PROTOTYPE TWO:

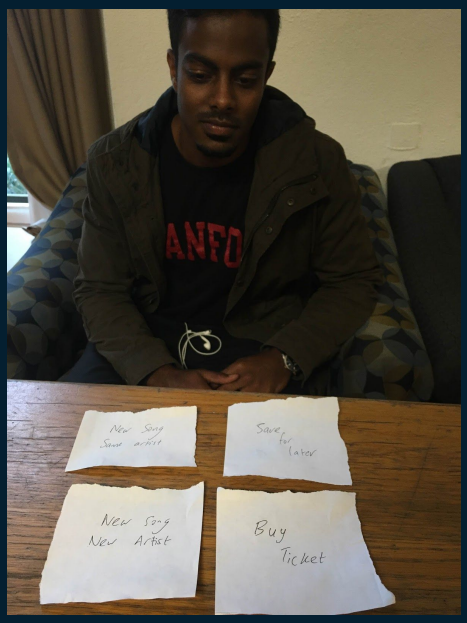
This experience prototype is inspired by the pasta challenge, often done in the D.School. In the first part of the experiment, we simply tell the user to find a concert in a given location. we did two iterations of this experiment. In the first, we asked the participant to keep looking until they find a concert they're happy with. The participant ended up spending 11 minutes and 14 seconds to check out three artists, listen to 1 song from each and choose to buy the ticket for one. Their process included searching for concerts on a website such as songkick, and then switching to youtube or spotify to listen to the artists of their prospective concert choices. After which, they would continue to try to buy it from a range of ticket resellers online, all of which require you to sign up -- adding to the required time.

In the second part, the user had four cards given to him which served as the only source of communication with me (we served as the app, simulating the actions that will be built in the final prototype.

The 4 cards included:

- New song by a new artist
- New song by the same artist
- Save for later
- Buy ticket

We would then play participant a song from an artist that was playing in Chicago over the coming weekend. By giving us a card, that actions would immediately be executed by us (the app simulator). It took him only 5 minutes and 36 seconds to go through a total of 4 artists and 6 songs before he decided to use the "Buy Ticket" card for Benny Benassi.



We then asked him to rate which concert choice he was more happy with and that also was the one we obtained using the experience prototype.

With this prototype, multiple assumptions were made. In addition to the small sample size of two people, we assumed that people's level of interest and likeliness to continue with the task at hand to be the same in both tasks. Additionally, we made the assumption that the time it took me to perform the user's actions/cards as fast as the envisioned app. I would find the concerts in the given location, find each artist and have them open on

different tabs. When given the "New song by a new artists", I would randomly choose an artist and randomly play one of their songs and wait for the user's next actions. Alternatively, I would randomly choose a new song to play from the same artists. This went on until the "Buy Ticket" card was used.

I tried this idea with two people, both of which felt in support of the idea and the need to reduce the amount of time and work needed in finding a concert. When asked, they did prefer to have more control over the concert choices (genre, price, size of venue, etc..) which our concept plans to provide to the user. We learnt that it is important to give the user the essentials controls that would facilitate an easier decision-making with the concert ticket; nonetheless, the amount of time the process takes is also something to keep in check and balance with the user's control. We learnt that it is possible since in our two tests, we managed to find a concert the user preferred more and took much less time (at least by a factor of 2) to find it, that is despite the unavailability of certain enviosioned services and options that couldn't be provided by my simulation using Last.fm and Spotify.

PROTOTYPE THREE:

In this experience prototype, we considered how various media industry professionals could find other professionals and opportunities in music. The prototype attempts to mirror an online network where musicians, industry professionals, and venues can network with one another wherever there is a listing. We assumed that this would be useful for those in the music industry. Say a band is touring, but their drummer falls ill--how can they quickly find another replacement in their current city? Or alternatively, say we have someone like Melina with experience in television and video production--how can someone looking to hire a motivated producer locate someone like her? The possibilities for matching are endless, as these sorts of needs always arise, but it's not always easy to find a match. We will assume that our offline pages will accurately be able to simulate the online experience.

To simulate how a network would facilitate this need, we put together a paper prototype (see image) to simulate the searching process through our proposed idea. A user signs himself up, as a musician, industry professional, or perhaps as a venue owner on a name card. That user then finds a page listing a set of options within these categories. We assume that the user will understand these categories. Each category has its own separate page. If this user is a musician, he might be looking for other musicians to collaborate with. He can search through other users who are currently available and refine his search by genre, talent, etc on the musicians page. Or say this user is already in a band, and would like to find a tour coordinator, road manager, among other professionals, so that they can hopefully get their career going. The media page can connect individuals looking for other

professionals in the music industry if they're available for hire. Another option, is for venues that want to find performers or other music professionals for their events, and people that would be happy to find work through this avenue. This page originally had a confusing name, so we changed it to "venues" ultimately.

To test how people would feel about the idea, we asked student musicians to write down their names and talent, and look at the sample pages of what their search on the interface would look like. We observed how they reacted and what they understood, then ultimately asked them for their thoughts.

The first person we interviewed, Sinclair, a saxophone player who used to play in a band in highschool, did the exercise and at first was unsure about the original categories listed on the page. He was under the impression that they implied all kinds of performers (models, actors, etc.) and it was unclear to him that it was music specific. After some tweaks, another issue raised later on, was the target audience. Was it specifically for amateurs or professionals? How can someone find jobs through this? Additionally, the simplistic drawing had a design flaw that made the listed professions of searched musicians/professionals look like surnames of the fictional people. What did work was the option to refine the search, and the overall cute look of the pages. We learned however, that despite look, people do need more than just simple words to understand what is going on, and that being precise in defining categories is especially important.

Our assumption that people would want to use a music industry specific network to find collaborators and jobs was somewhat accurate. Since there is already established websites it's seems only a small number would begin to jump on this new one. However, seeing as it is music specific and a bit less uptight than other professional networking sites, it could appeal to a large market of independent and up-and-coming people who just want to find others to help them get their foot in the door. Another important assumption that didn't quite work out was that people would understand the categories and simple descriptions as they were. So ultimately, we found that categorization is a key feature that can easily be misunderstood.

8. Our Most Successful Prototype

We found that our prototype 1, which aimed at finding potential collaborators, was the most successful in achieving a desired solution. We wanted our users to be entertained by the brevity and creativity of a short performance, then hopefully be able to find a match with someone they would collaborate with. Although its drawbacks were that each offline performance could not match the potential of a recorded performance with editing and extra takes, we found that it was still possible for users to show their talent and make a good impression. Our participant Jack in the end was pretty enthusiastic about the idea and enjoyed taking part in the experiment. The set up overall made sense to people and also appealed to a number of concerns raised in our need finding process. In contrast, prototype 3 had some significant issues with design and prototype 2 had less support from our need finding interviews.