Project Report-out & Lessons Learned

ENSE 271

December 4, 2021

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Team Name and Members

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Business Need/Opportunity

It is very hard for people to keep track of all the music they have listened to, and even harder to keep track of songs they once used to love a lot in the past. It is so frustrating trying to remember the name of songs and therefore, we decided to create a music database where users can track what songs they have listened to, rate these songs and decide whether they love or hate it.

It is a good way for users to keep all the music they have listened to in one place and make it easier for them to find songs they really liked. It is also a good way for users to reflect back on their thoughts and opinions about certain music from their past.

"Our mission was to create a website which helps music lovers to rate and review songs they love".

Not only is this helpful for users to post their opinion about music, but it is also useful for artists and producers to add their own music into our database so other users can see it.

Goal of the project

Summarize did you achieved goal (yes/no):

The main goal of the project is to build a website/platform for the music lovers where they can rate music. We have seen many movies rating websites like IMDB, but there is no popular website to rate music. Rate My Music, is created for those people who loves listening to music. This website allows music lovers to rate and review song they like or dislike. People can express their thoughts and feelings towards the song through rating that song.

It is very difficult to remember the name of the song we use to listen before couple of years ago. So, our goal was to solve users struggling towards finding a music/song they used to listen. Rate My Music will allow people to track the song they rate and this way users can easily find the song and their rating of it with our 'search ratings' feature.

The goal was to build a website which is user-friendly, engaging to customers, easy to navigate and highlights the main purposes of Rate of Music, which is rating music. We are successful in building a user-friendly website for music lovers and were able to achieve all our goals.

Reflections on Project Planning

Reason behind creating 'Rate My Music' website is it allows people to rate the song they love to listen. We chose to do this since there is no popular song rating website similar to IMDB. We want to keep track of our own opinions of songs and of the songs we have listened to in general because it is so hard to remember the name of songs. We want to allows users to enter their own music into our database because it may help promote it. 'Rate My Music' is a website that allows users to search and rate songs so they can keep track of the songs and their feeling about it. This website is a for everyone who loves to listen music and people who wants to rate and review songs. For independent artists who would like to add their own music to the database. Overall, our project planning went very well since we all immediately liked the idea of Rate My Music. We did have some questions about the functionality and had to limit many of our nice-to-have features for future MVPs due to the time limit.

Initial and Evolution in MVP

Our initial User Story Map outlined several MVPs, including functionalities such as designing a website, creating a log in and sign up for an event, designing a "Search" function that allows users to search song based on song name or artist name, so that user can find a music he/she is looking for very quickly. We decided to create home screen where user can see his/her rates and reviews, sorted music in playlist so that they can refer right away. We decided to have a song page where when a user clicks on the name of the song, user will get an option to rate and review that song and that song will be moved to the list of other rated songs. According to one MVP mentioned, we also decided to given option to create users own playlists on the home screen.

Our nice-to-have MVPs includes so many ideas of having something in our project like a user will have all their own playlists, all songs rated and reviewed on the home screen so that they will easy access to all those. User can search songs in the search bar with the name of the song or the name of the artist, so that user can easily find the song. We also decided (nice-to-have) for the users, website will allow users to edit the rates and reviews provided earlier according to their current opinions. We also decided to provide a platform to artist who are not popular/famous to add their own song to the database. We decided to put these ideas in our nice-to-have MVPs. Our nice-to-have MVPs also consisted of the option of having a list of recommended music to the users according to their interest so that users get updates on the songs of their interest.

Our final website reflected the previous MVP's closely, with a few changes. We were able to implement all user stories mentioned in (to have) MVPs except the playlist feature, since music applications already offer that. We instead opted to choose one of our nice-to-have features, and settled on allowing users to input music into our database instead. We created a login and signup page for the user to create account and a homepage to rate and review song rating. In our designing stage, our team wanted to ensure we created a website that included the design components we learned in class. This meant creating a website that had a low threshold and coupling, and a high ceiling and ensuring that the design prioritized concepts of usability, utility, and desirability.

Our home page displayed the functionalities and details, sign up for events, view recent ratings, and navigate through the various music/songs available. We also implemented the option for users to post a song name. The search function also searches for song or artist name if user searches by 2-3 alphabets in the search bar. For instance, if user searches for "re", the results will show Red by Taylor Swift, Born to Die by Lana Del Rey, and many more related searches. This is what we did not mention in the MVPs.

For instance, on our homepage, we tried to include many of the topics learned in class. We maximized utility by highlighting the main functions available on the website (i.e., the song search, recent rate and add song page highlights). We wanted to make the website easy for the users to navigate, so we made sure the navigation bar highlighted each link as clearly as possible and included a search bar as well for users looking for specific information. The layout of the homepage is consistent, with only the information changing dynamically. This improves the memorability of the website but also makes the design desirable. So, we prioritized those pages on the homepage. Overall, our website design has lots of features and is straight-forward to use for any customer, regardless of whether they are a music lover or not.
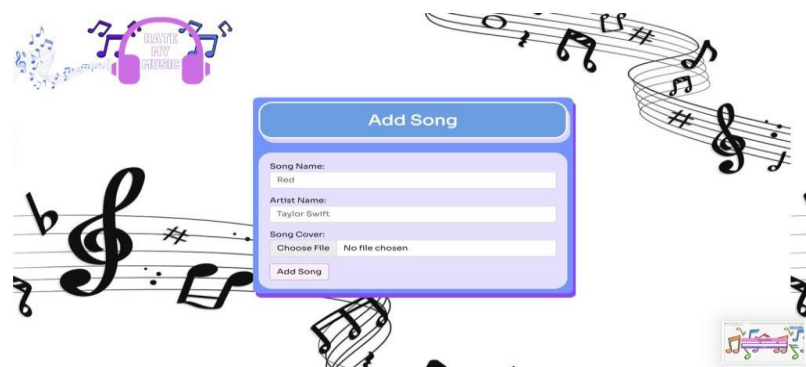
Reflections on Project Results

Summarize how you felt about this project (likes/dislikes):

In general, we as group feel positive about the entire project. We feel we were successful since the main goal of 'Rate My Music' is to allow users to rate and keep track of the music they listen to, which we have created. We felt most proud of the final result since completing a project with a team online was more challenging than we predicted. We learned the importance of communication and working together as a team for our common goal. We will use agile workflow, both incremental growth and 2-week sprints, in future projects to limit procrastination.

We would definitely like more help with using APIs, although we decide against using an API since we were unable to allow users to add their own music to the database with the API. We were also having trouble using Spotify's API since our API request was only working for the search function.

Overall Feedback

Summarise what impact does feedback have?

As the creators of the project, we don't always see the problems we might have with what we are doing. So, it's always helpful to have comments and constructive criticisms coming from an external source which in our case, came from our professor Timothy (Tim) Maciag and from colleagues in ENSE 374. The feedback we received gave us insights of what we have to do, and also some ideas that may make our project better.

Project Sponsor's comments gave us a written summary of what and how our team is doing during the week but most importantly, it gave us a sense of urgency on what we need to focus on. Throughout the project, our team did not really have good communication with each other, so seeing "I'm concerned" comments brought urgency to the group and made us think that we need work to be done which helped with getting things done and under control.

Another type of feedback we received are the observation and analysis by our colleagues from our team's past activities. These feedbacks are the feedbacks we really needed. It provided insights of what we are doing well, what problems we have that we did not notice, and how we could go about fixing them.

Each of the comments were mostly similar to each other with what was going well and what's still confusing to people that are not in on the project. One thing that people found good was the main project idea of a music rating website. Another re-occurring topic that was given in the feedback was the confusion of what was being rated, whether it's the music or the musician. There were some comments about some unclear diagrams and also things about the Kanban board.

Thanks to these responses, we got understandings on what we are doing well and also what problems we don't realise. It helped our group make revisions on some of the things that were mentioned that helped the project improve even if for just a little bit.

Summarize what went well during the project

We as a group feel like the conversations with each other went well. We seemed to be on the same wavelength in our discussions, and if there was a questioning of our priorities from one side, we would try to address it and achieve an outcome which both sides desired. The main contributor to our meshing was the steps we made early on in the project. Things like finding and keeping track of music for the users.

Summarize what not went well during the project

The most difficult part we faced during whole project was working online as it was more challenging for all of us since we were not able to meet in person with each other and this cause lack of communication as it is hard to communicate online than in-person discussion. However, we managed working online. It was difficult to choose designs from a low fidelity, and then go straight to implementation to a high fidelity because the time commitment to making a high-fidelity is much greater. We wanted to make sure we picked the right design to continue with, while still managing our time in the semester. This is a constraint fairly specific to the academic structure, as the design timeline was greatly condensed.