

The Fold, The Plan

The Fold (working title) is an immersive, interactive multiuser experience. It uses music as a common ground for engaging and connecting people in a unique, exciting and ever changing virtual environment.

Introduction

A recent report on VR by Goldman Sachs projects that VR and AR will be a **23-182 billion dollar market by 2025** with 75% of that being driven by VR. The Fold aims to establish itself within that market as the destination to experience music in immersive 3D environments in much the same that Mtv did with music videos. Below we present a clear path to accomplishing this goal.

Solution

The majority of VR headset owners will be relatively isolated from opportunities to travel to exotic parties and get inspired by highly creative people. The design of The Fold will be based on the **music festival experience**. This will include not just moments of ecstatic movement, light and color but also the more quiet experiences that allow for contemplation, reflection and conversation with **close friends and new ones**. The Fold will be an ever changing collection of experiences, allowing for nearly endless novelty as well as deep engagement with creation and interaction. The experience will work just as well with people that are together in the same physical space.

The Market

The industry is at a nascent stage of development. Our market will therefore consist primarily of early adopters (phase 1) and early majority (phase 2). Our distribution strategy will also impact audience reach and create more access points for early majority, such as application at music festivals or events. They will predominantly be in the 13-35 year age category.

We will focus on the US market, with other possible advanced markets (Europe, North America, Asia) with access to VR technology and/or technology and internet devices. Our primary customers are people who love music and attend events, actively engage with music and bands. They are the Spotify listeners, Burning Man attendees, and curious seekers of inspiring experiences. The idea is not limited to a certain type or industry (eg. gamers) so it's application is potentially vast.

The Fold is not a generic social VR experience, but a very specific kind of experience for a niche (but large) market. In this way we will remain agnostic to the ultimate winner of the race to become the social hub in VR.

Development

The Fold is a large scale project that will need to be developed incrementally. Each step along the way will provide opportunities for partnerships, methods for monetization and spin-offs. This is our proposed development path which will need to be refined through constant testing and tweaking.

Phase 1: Standalone immersive, interactive VR music videos.

We will begin the development process by quickly creating a set of immersive music videos designed to function as stand-alone applications as well as to test hypothesis about what people will actually enjoy, share and spend time doing in VR. As we create these experiences we will focus on building them using a custom toolset. Some of these tools have already been developed by our team and are either open source or owned by us.

Phase 2: Open world music browser

As soon as we have two or three well produced experiences we will combine them together into our open world explorer. This phase will begin our process of developing comfortable and effective UX/UI.

Phase 3: Socialisation

We can then allow multiple users to share the space and invite each other in. At this stage, we will include avatars and a basic communication scheme. We have already developed simple ways to share animated .gifs from the space and we will be able to quickly expand this toolset allowing users to share things the same way they would share in reality.

Phase 4: Creation tools including avatars, sculptures and vehicles

As we build our tools we will work toward making them easy for users to build their own creations. We will likely focus on tools for hand controls. In this way users of cardboard can view the space but users of higher end headsets will be able to create things with more complexity.

Phase 5: Machine learned parametric construction based on music

As our tools become more robust we will be able to train them to generate artwork automatically. We will use principal component analysis to discover essential attributes of songs and use machine learning to correlate particular kinds of imagery with those songs. In this way the system can read in a music library and automatically generate a musical city for flying through and interacting with.

Overlapping Applications: Live Performances

Goldman Sachs estimates that the live event market for VR will be a 4.1 billion dollar industry. Live events will provide us with opportunities for user testing, outreach and marketing, technical and creative R&D and live recording material to incorporate into the main experience. Our team is already heavily immersed in the development and production of shared, live VR experiences at NYU's Media Research Lab. These live events can be captured for playback at a later date. Events can be scheduled and tickets sold. Audiences will be able to actually participate in live events with the bands they love rather than just watching passively.

The festival market is growing and attracting larger sponsors. Our team provided VR content for the event mentioned in [this](#) article. Live events will provide important marketing opportunities for audience outreach. Live events will also provide a source of income and will provide more immediate feedback regarding what it is our audience wants from the product.

Business Model

Our revenue stream will come from different sources at different stages in the project. Early on, we will generate modest income via music experiences and live events. This can be generated through sponsorship or revenue share through ticketing. These productions will not be the end goal but a driver for tool development and R&D. As we build traction, we will focus on building acquisition numbers and integrate monetisation opportunities within the platform. These include:

- In app purchases - on songs, albums, merchandise
- Power ups - on avatars, vehicles, and creation tools
- Advertising - to be incorporated in a careful way to avoid alienating the audience and providing a seamless experience.

The VR market and the technology that will be driving it will be maturing as our product is being developed. Our goal will be to establish ourselves as a destination and a brand that will change as necessary while maintaining our values and core audience.

The Team

Our team brings a unique set of talents to this field. We are specialists in design and animation and have broad and extensive experience in production and business development. We are working at the forefront of VR research with an emphasis on social interaction and telepresence.

Creative Director - David Lobser

David has 20 years of experience producing animated content at some of the best production studios in the world. He has produced award winning shorts and was a director at a top animation studio before attending NYU's ITP program. He is currently researching VR at NYU with Professor Ken Perlin.

Strategy and Business Development - Wajma Mohseni

Wajma's background in marketing in the media industry balances the team's technical and creative skills, to provide insight and direction on communications and business development strategy. She helped establish MOBY Group, one of the fastest growing media companies in the Middle East, before moving to New York to pursue her Masters at ITP. She is currently Marketing Manager at Dow Jones, publisher of The Wall Street Journal and Barron's.

Chief Technical Officer - Gal Sasson

Gal Sasson has been programming games and art from a very young age. He is an engineer and an artist and is versatile as a software engineer, user interface designer, and creative coder. He has recently been working as a programmer with the production company Local Projects.

Artist/Designer - Scott Garner

Scott has an extensive background in digital art making and physical installation work. His unique vision and technical skills will help drive the development and feel of our parametric design tools.

Advisors:

Ken Perlin is an academy award winning legend in the field of computer graphics. He is an expert in the parametric animation of characters and has developed tools which have become standard in the industry.