BandLab Case Study - 14 March 2018

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TLDR

In this case study I have multiple types of users navigating up to 185 items with a few simple changes. Since BandLab is an established app with a large user base, I wanted to make sure that any changes I made would not disrupt the current workflows of the app's current users. I used the Jobs Theory framework and interviews to understand what the app could do. However, while surveying through the app, I found several flaws in the app's current UX that could be improved. I ended up making changes to the app's Recommended Tab, which I felt was a more critical UX flaw that affected more people.

Jobs theory allowed me to make a product with clearer goals and focus. Instead of a vague goal of "improve the Recommended Tab", I now had a specific goal to make it easier for users to find new music. This helped me make better decisions when designing and and I ended up with a more focused design.

Although I ended up making changes to the Recommended Tab, I felt that there were other areas of the app that could be improved upon. I ended up making changes to the Drawing Board, the Explore Tab, and the Collections Tab. I felt that these changes would have a larger impact on the app's overall UX.

Breaking The Problem Down

The app I chose to focus on was BandLab. I chose BandLab because I found that having familiar with more powerful desktop recording software like Pro Tools and Garage Band, I found the app's interface intuitive and fun to use. However, while surveying through the app, I found several flaws in the app's current UX that could be improved. I felt that these flaws could be improved upon with a few simple changes. I felt that these changes would have a large impact on the app's overall UX. Because I felt this case study to be more critical of the Recommended Tab, I ended up making changes to the Recommended Tab, which I felt was a more critical UX flaw that affected more people.

My initial thinking was there are two main types of users, creators and listeners. Let's take a look at the main page from their perspectives in mind.

I'm listening - I enter the "Listen" Tab and I'm presented with an endless feed of tracks to listen to.

Why would I follow these people? - I don't know how I'm supposed to follow people before making recommendations.

Ironically, in this feature filled app, **the listener is not enough to do anything in the app**. The app's main focus is about giving "voice" or "beats".

Right now the navigation is all hidden in the left pane. As a listener, I don't need to access most of these features. Hiding these features in the left pane appeals to both Android and iOS users.

(Left pane is iOS interface)

While listeners are important, I felt that the app would be better served if the app's UX focused on the creators. Personally, I don't feel like the app's tagline, "Make a Beat", is the more important UX. I felt that the app's tagline should be more focused on the listeners. I felt that the app's tagline should be more focused on the creators.

What are the most important parts of the app?

Here's the results of a quick brainstorm:

BandLab Goals
Make music easier to create
Allow listeners to discover
Allow creators to collaboration zone / didn't think of this at first, kind of a combination of creators and listeners)

Features (ordered by importance, as seen on the Play Store Description)
Multi-track recording
Share your beats with the world
Collaborate with others
Competitions
Unlimited BPM tracks
Collections
Playlists

	Needs	User-driven Difficulties
CREATORS Creators is a guy that sort of edges into a dreamy jumble in the free-feel but wants to mess around with different guitar sounds and maybe record a song.	Multitrack recording	Can't find the create project option
LISTENERS As a teenage drummer that loves creating hard beats, I want to find new music and maybe collaborate on a song. But what I just want to listen to. I want to find people to collaborate with. I'm a fan of the music but I want to be more involved with the music.	Multitrack recording Find people to collaborate with a track Discover collaborations	Can't find the track I want to listen to Can't find the track I want to collaborate Can't find the track I want to listen to Can't find people to collaborate with
LISTENER Elise is a jazz pianist, and is always on the lookout for new music to listen to. She's looking for music that's unique, but not too far-out. She's looking for skills and expenses.	A consistent jazz feed	They looked at other things because there isn't a jazz feed. Can't find a jazz feed.
As a manager of the B-Cappella Jazz Ensemble, Elise is always looking for talented musicians and groups. She hopes that the new feature brings more event-things.	Find B-Cappella artists and songs to listen to	Can't find B-Cappella people, since it's not a broad genre

So here's where I want to formulate what I want to improve in this case study. I want to better consider the user with the features that are available. The features are all there and are useful. But my data shows that **two users already can't find what they're looking for**.

Goal

Each persona can fulfill their need either on the front page, or know where to go for it on another page.

Of course, the main purpose is to connect the users to the features faster. But this goal is a more tangible thing we can shoot for.

To the Drawing Board

If people can't find the features they're looking for on the front page without creating it, it'd be interesting because we'd need to have both creators and listeners in the app. Since the app's current UX is focused on the creators, I felt that the listening UX was a little more critical. I felt that the listening UX was a little more critical. I felt that the listening UX was a little more critical.