

THE LIFE OF A HACK

Presented by Max Seiden
Michigan Hackers Mass Meeting #1
12 September 2012 Stamps Auditorium



SO WHY DO A HACKATHON?

It's A Real Challenge

hard training makes for an easy battle

Makes You Stand Out

parents, friends, and recruiters will love your hacks

More Fun Than It Sounds

who doesn't like 24 hours without sleep, fueled only by redbull !



A PREDICTABLE ROADMAP

Planning

prepare everything except the actual implementation

Execution

plan out interfaces, developer roles, and timelines

Presentation

revenue, user capture, and differentiation



APPLYING THE ROADMAP

Planning Our Hack

team of 3 for a distributed, real-time to-do list and “tab manager”

Projected Execution Plan

mobile payments, browser app, mobile web, rest api, soa, node.js

Key Points for Presenting

freemium pricing model, real-time is differentiated and novel



SOME PRE-HACK CONTEXT

Greylock Hackfest

hosted in dropbox's office, lots of great competition

Easy to Find a Team

other u-m students, friends from around the bay

“Kinda A Big Deal”

relative to other sf hackathons, this was the event to not miss

THE RESULT?



EVERYTHING WENT WRONG



EVERYTHING WENT WRONG

Before The Hackathon

- Lost One Team Member
- Gained Two New Team Members
- Spilled Coffee on my Laptop

Start of the Hackathon

- One Team Member Couldn't Stay 24 hours
 - One Team Member Simply Bailed
 - No More Mobile Expertise
 - Couldn't Decide on an Idea
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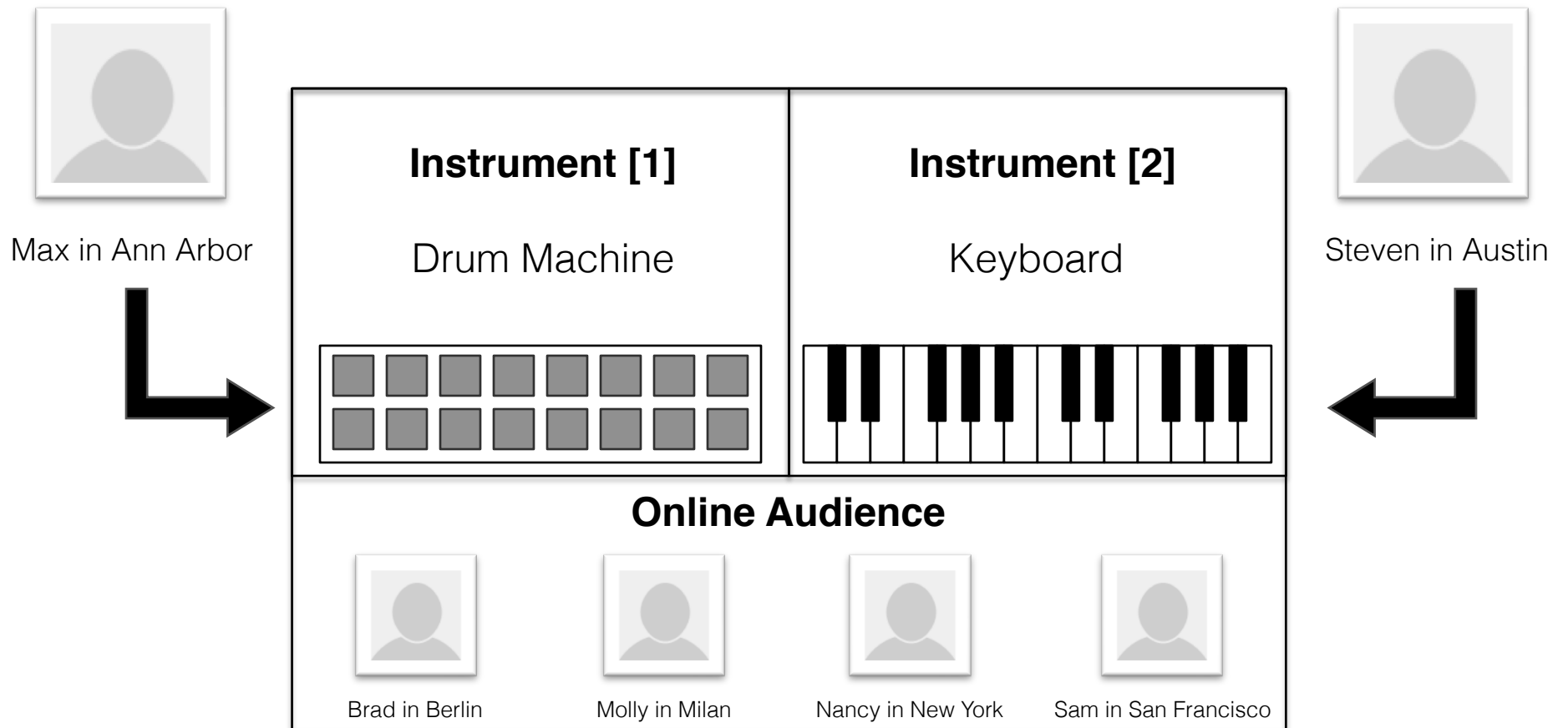
THE SOLUTION?

JUST DO IT LIVE

(LITERALLY)



WEB BROWSER JAM SESSIONS



RETROACTIVE ROADMAP

Planning on the Fly

real-time and social music performance over the internet

Actual Execution Plan

websockets, html5 audio, tornado, sequencer, synchronization, xmpp

Key Points for Presentation

solving technical challenges that enable artistic collaboration



HOW DID WE DO?

Amazing Development Process

as a 2 man team, we finished everything “hard” in 18 hours

It Caught Peoples’ Attention

in the top 10, and had more tech questions than any other team

Probably the Most Annoying Team

to summarize, we were playing the drums and the piano at 5:00am

SOUNDS HARD, EH?

YOU CAN DO IT TOO!



THE TAKEAWAYS

Work With A Great Team

ideas are fickle, a great team is not

Always Go Big, Really Big

who cares if you can't pull it off, you'll be commended for trying

Don't Sacrifice ANY Fun

be the ones running around, playing musical instruments at 5:00am



THANK YOU!

ANY QUESTIONS?

