WLUW App Concept Document

I. Premise and Purpose

The WLUW app will be an all-in-one mobile application for Loyola University Chicago's student and community-run radio station, WLUW 88.7FM. The app will allow students and community members interested in college and community radio to listen to the station while on-the-go in addition to being able to access an events page, a log, a show schedule, a staff page, a request function, links to social media pages and a link to donate directly to the station.

Currently, there is no mobile application for WLUW, so it will be a unique app in that it's the first of its kind for the station. The features mentioned in the introductory paragraph will also allow for more user engagement than simply a radio app with only the ability to stream audio.

There are three distinct purposes for the app, which are to entertain, inform and market WLUW 88.7FM. The entertainment purpose speaks for itself in that the app's primary function the ability for users to steam/listen to WLUW while commuting, in the office or at home without having to dial-in to terrestrial radio or access the stream through the WLUW website or via a third party application. The app can also be informational, as it will list events and a show schedule, so users are easily keep up-to-date on any events WLUW is sponsoring both on and off campus throughout the year as well as keeping the users aware of the ever-changing radio show schedule. The WLUW app will also market the station itself by its only true mobile app, as one currently does not exist. Within the app, there even will be a way to donate to the station quickly and easily by linking specifically to the "Support

Loyola" page on the luc.edu website. Also, the app will link to the station's Facebook and Twitter pages in order to generate more "likes" or "followers," so that the station can build an even stronger social media presence.

While WLUW does have a website, it does not even have a mobile version of the website available. If you navigate to WLUW.org from a cell phone, it opens the website as a full version rather than a mobile version, so there is a chance it could not look right or not function properly on older cellular devices. So, an app would be an easier, more efficient way to listen to and get information about WLUW.

The working name of this app is simple: WLUW 88.7FM. It's a clean and short name that precisely reflects what the app is and what it does. It's the mobile and app extension of an already great radio station that already has a following in both the Loyola and greater Chicago community.

II.   Audience and Market

The WLUW app will be for anyone who is a lover and supporter of college and community radio, which spans a large set of demographics. However, in terms of app's audience and market, potential, current and former Loyola students are the app's the primary target. This is because it is these three groups who potentially have more name recognition when it comes to WLUW as Loyola University Chicago's radio station. Demographics for these groups could be anywhere from 18 to 35 years of age of all races and a fan of online radio, streaming music or the mission of WLUW.

Speaking of online radio, a 2011 study indicated listenership of audio on digital devices is only increasing, while terrestrial radio's numbers have decreased or

remained static according to a Pew Research Center graph from

Stateofthemedia.org:

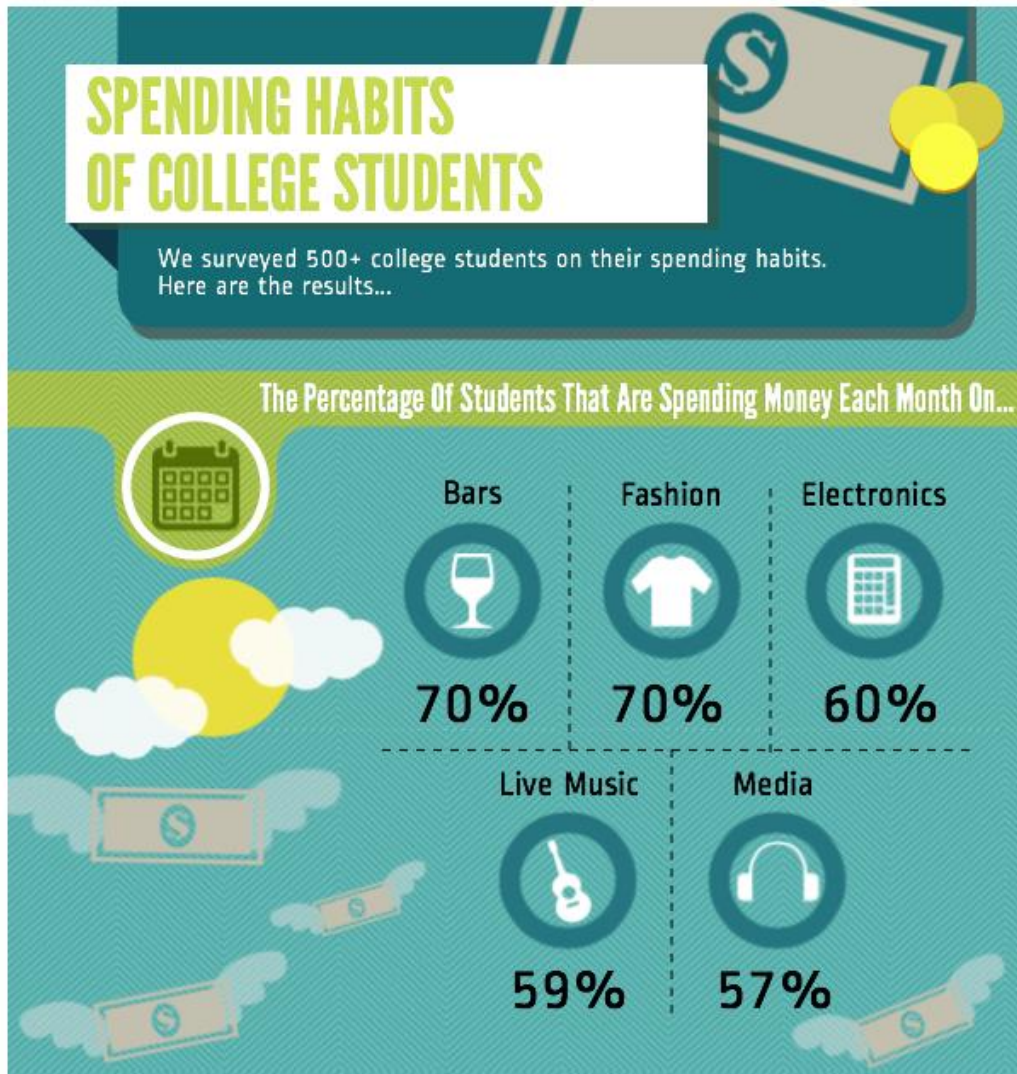| Terrestrial Radio's Use Has Remained Nearly Static Over the Last Decade				
Percentage of Americans Age 12 or Older Who Use or Own a Platform or Device				
	2001	2009	2010	2011
Television	98%	N/A	98%	98%
Local AM/FM Radio	96	92	92	93
Cellphone	54	81	84	84
Broadband Internet	20	N/A	64	70
Online Radio	28	49	52	56
Online Video	23	N/A	49	54
Facebook*	N/A	N/A	48	51
YouTube	N/A	N/A	46	49
Digital Video Recorder	N/A	N/A	41	36
Video on Demand	20	N/A	N/A	35
iPod	N/A	28	28	31
Smartphone	N/A	N/A	N/A	31
Audio Podcasts	N/A	22	23	25

Source: Arbitron
Note: Infinite Dial 2011 asked 'Social Networking Sites,' not Facebook. In previous years, respondents had been asked if they used social networking sites.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S PROJECT FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

2012 STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA

Source: http://stateofthemedia.org/2012/audio-how-far-will-digital-go/audio-by-the-numbers/

These numbers show that listening to audio on a cellphone have increased in the past decade, so a mobile app for WLUW would fit into the current trend and listening habits of Americans age 12 or older who own a platform or device.

In addition, a survey completed in the summer 2014 reports the buying spending habits of college students, which shows that 60% of their money is spent on electronics, 59% of their money each month is spent on live music and 57% of their money each month is spent on media:

SPENDING HABITS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

We surveyed 500+ college students on their spending habits. Here are the results...

The Percentage Of Students That Are Spending Money Each Month On...

Bars	Fashion	Electronics
70%	70%	60%

Live Music	Media
59%	57%

Source: http://studybreakscollegemedia.com/2014/college-students-spending-habits-survey-results/

While the WLUW app can be for anyone with an interest in college or community radio in Chicago, past, current and future Loyola University students are the main target as music and technology are appealing to them as they consume a great deal of it. Thus, we can also make the assumption with this graph that college students are technically sophisticated enough to download and easily use a streaming radio app.

III. Competition

In terms of apps that are similar to the proposed WLUW 88.7FM app, there are quite a few. First there is the WBEZ 91.5FM app, which is the mobile application for Chicago's public media station, WBEZ 91.5FM. The app not only features an online stream of the station but utilizes tabbed-view navigation buttons for users to read WBEZ news and blogs, a program schedule, a "support us" link so that users can donate to the station directly, an events page, a form to contact WBEZ and more.

There is another similar app for WBEZ's sister station, Vocalo 89.5FM. The app, simply called Vocalo, is similar in design to the WBEZ app in that it offers tabbed-view navigation buttons for users to stream of the station, view a playlist, read blogs, check out events listings, donate directly to the station as well as a way to sign-up for the stations mailing list. Lastly, another similar app is the app for CHIRP Radio (the Chicago Independent Radio Project). The CHIRP app offers a very simple design that's just a stream of the online station and a list of recently played songs. It's sleek, but it doesn't offer any other bells or whistles or navigation functions.
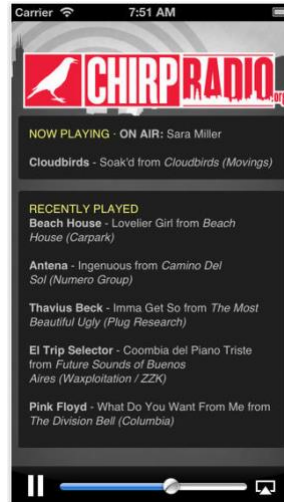
The WLUW 88.7FM app will be different mainly in that it will be an app for WLUW 88.7FM, which has no mobile application. Some of the functions and navigation will be similar to these already existing radio apps, but one difference is that the WLUW 88.7FM app will allow users to easily access social media pages as well as a page giving more information on individual DJs.

The WBEZ, Vocalo and CHIRP Radio apps are all free of charge, which is why it would make sense for the WLUW app to be free as well. In addition, all of the aforementioned apps are quite successful in their own right as WBEZ and Vocalo are well-known Chicago stations and have a built-in following, so the apps are simply an extension of those brands. The CHRIP app's history is a little different. The organization, CHRIP, is an online-only radio station was launched by former WLUW program director, Shawn Campbell, who left WLUW in 2007. Campbell went on to form CHIRP, which has been very successful in gaining an audience in Chicago local music scene.

IV.   Medium and Platform

The strength of developing this application for a smart phone is that it will provide an easy to access online stream for WLUW 88.7FM for users to listen to anywhere they want including on-the-go without having to access a website or third party app. The limitations for developing this app will be in the design to ensure that the app will mirror all the functions of WLUW's current website. Some pages will be easier than others to design such as a show schedule or staff page, but getting some of the more complicated functions, such as an automatically updated log of songs played on the station, may be more difficult to design and have it embedded in the app, which is the preferred method than simply linking to the WLUW website.

Mobility is a major purpose served by this app, which is a major advancement from the current WLUW.org website. Users can currently listen to WLUW 88.7FM on their smart phones via third party applications such as Tunein or Streema, but those apps do not offer any other details about the station other than a live stream. To get more information about the station itself, a user would have to navigate to WLUW.org, which, in the age of accessibility, is a lot of work to simply find out what show will be on Thursday evening at 7 p.m. With this app, all the information is bundled together and delivered in a very accessible and easy to use manner. The app could also utilize the feature of single-button dialing or the ability to easily craft a tweet to WLUW on twitter to make requesting a song an extremely streamlined process.

V.   Narrative/Gaming Elements

The WLUW 88.7FM app will not contain any true gaming elements, as it is an app more for entertainment, informational and marketing. The tone of the app will be

fairly serious in manner, like the radio apps mentioned above, but can be light

hearted in its design, tone and feel. Like the WLUW website, the app can use light

colors and in side jokes (see Cat Relations on the WLUW.org staff page) to make it

more appealing to college students. At this time, there are also no plans for any sort

of gaming or rewards elements for the WLUW 88.7FM app, but in the future, maybe

there could be some tie-in to give students discounts at local campus eateries or the

ability to be automatically entered into mobile-only contests for concert tickers.

VI.   Structure and Interface

When a user opens the WLUW 88.7FM app, the first thing screen they will see is

a WLUW logo background image with scrollable tabs below that and a live stream

start/pause bar at the very bottom. It will show a tabbed-view design that will

feature the following tabs from left to right: Log, Schedule, Events, Staff/About,

Request, Donate, Facebook, Twitter. Each of these tabs will take the user to these

specific pages or link the user to these pages that are hosted on the WLUW.org

website.

Similar to the WBEZ app, the tabs will be scrollable, and though when first

opening the app the user may only see Log, Schedule and Events tabs, a simple

swipe to the left will reveal more tabs. But as the user scrolls through the tabs, the

live stream start/pause bar will remain static throughout, so even as the user scrolls

through the tabs, they will still be able to pause or play the live stream at their

convenience. Here is a quick and dirty mock-up of the app's landing page:

VII.   User Engagement

The additional functions of this app will keep the user engaged. A user can
potentially open the app to hear the station, but while open, he or she will also be
able to check out what events or concerts are coming up, "like" WLUW on Facebook,
see what radio shows are coming up later in the week or find out more information
about their favorite on-air DJ.

The end goal for any user of the WLUW 88.7FM app is to not only stream the station through their smart phone, but also be able to find out more information and interact with the station without navigating to the WLUW.org website through their web or mobile browser or using a third party app.

Works Cited

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