

Elephant Trax – Requirements Analysis

I. Introduction

The concept behind my senior project is to present myself as a diverse and talented music artist, better known as **Elephant Trax**. I intend to do this by showcasing my collection of songs through a unique Flash MP3 player. Additionally, 3 specific tracks will be chosen as “singles” and along with these tracks, I will create unique visuals that will play adjacent to them. For the visuals, I am going to use a collage of photos, animated gifs, and video. One tentative idea is to have each single open in a new pop-up window, in which the user can listen to the track and watch the unique visual associated with it. The idea of presenting each single in a new window is because I want to saturate the user with an entire canvas of visuals and to allow him/her to make a more personal connection with the music.

I will also have an interactive section on the site where users can “mix-n-match” different song clips together to form their own songs. I am going to design a keyboard in Flash, which will allow users to add unique notes and sound clips into their song, and make the user feel as if they are “performing.”

I would like for my website to portray a talented artist who is abundant in musical talent and knowledge, as well as professionalism. These qualities are important because I want visitors to look at me as a serious artist who is capable of offering professional music and sound design services.

II. Career Goals

This project relates to my career goals in that I wish to work in environments that are richly saturated with music, audio, and entertainment. Additionally, I wish to aspire to become a composer for movie sound tracks. I also wish to gain opportunities that allow me to work with various people, such as performers, songwriters, production-teams, and studio-based artists. My main goals are to compose beats for hip-hop artists, create atmospheric music for interactive media, and intern for large music producers and/or studios.

III. Objectives

Business –

- To promote the musical skills and talent of Elephant Trax (Carrie Sucharski).
- To seek potential clients/work.
- To seek a recording contract and the interest of the media.

Communication – Communication will be achieved by offering an intuitive navigation system to allow users to explore the site with ease. I also plan to use a hierarchical layout scheme in order to clearly and effectively display information and content. All of these aspects will tie together through the use of consistent design and style.

User –

- Music is appealing to the Target Audience.
- Give the user a “hands-on” experience through the “mix-n-match” section.
- Give the user knowledge by showing them how to create their own music in the Tutorials section.
- Promote musical knowledge, awareness, and community through the Forum/Message Board.

Technical –

- Site can be viewed in any browser and on a high-speed connection.
- Site will use a Flash viewer and QuickTime player.
- Coding will be error-free and comply with web standards.

IV. Target Audience

Users exploring my site are going to be males and females, ages 13-33, with some high school to college education, of any race, of any class, and are deeply passionate for music. This site is also going to cater to those who have an appreciation for local artists and music. Some of these users are also going to be interested in learning how to create their own music, which will be explained in the Tutorials section. I also

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aspire to attract industry professionals who sign artists and support their growth, as well as booking agencies, and media contractors.

V. Competition and Inspiration

Competition –

- Maniacs of Noise (<http://www.maniacsofnoise.nl>) is a website for a company that composes music, sound effects, and dialog for video games. They also offer music design for film, TV, radio, interactive presentations, and websites.
- <http://www.repeat-to-fade.net> is the website for Owen Lloyd, who is a musician, sound designer, and sound programmer. Owen Lloyd has worked with many large clients such as MTV2, Playstation, SonyEricsson, Motorola, and Red Bull.

Inspiration –

- Virus Music (<http://www.virusmusic.com>) is a beautiful website that showcases its music portfolio in a very sleek fashion.
- Abstract Noise (<http://www.abstractnoise.org>) is an inspiration for musical talent more than it is for website design with an extensive portfolio of sound bytes.

VI. Skills

Skills and tools required to execute this project include, but are not limited to: extensive HTML and coding knowledge (including CSS, JavaScript, and PHP), graphic and art direction (Photoshop and Illustrator), audio and video optimization, and Macromedia Flash MX 2004 (including Action Script 2.0 and XML). I am most comfortable with the coding aspect of this project. I have been coding for over seven years, and know this information like the back of my hand. I also feel very comfortable with rendering optimized audio and video files for the Internet in order to maintain standard loading times.

Although I have strong Photoshop skills, I do not feel very confident in the graphics/branding area. For instance, I already know that I want my logo to have a

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vector art render of an Elephant. However, I do not know how to draw or sketch animals, so this aspect of the project is going to take some time, research and outside help. I am aiming for a visually stylistic website in order to grab the audience's attention and keep them looking around the site.

I feel optimistic about my Flash skills, but will require some additional resources in order to execute the "mix-n-match" section of the site, as well as preloading all of the media files involved for fast playback.

VII. Resources

Human – Human resources refers to the labor involved with executing this project. The responsibility for executing this project will rely solely on me. Other human resources will include gathering constructive feedback from class members.

Technical – In order to properly execute this project, the following technical items will be utilized: Adobe Photoshop to slice and optimize images; Macromedia Dreamweaver to create error-free HTML, CSS, PHP, etc files; an FTP client to upload the website to the Internet; Fruity Loops Studio 4 and Cool Edit Pro 2 to slice, optimize, and render audio files; Adobe Premiere to render video files; and Animation Shop for miscellaneous graphic motion.

Financial – Hosting for this website has already been taken care of. Other expenses will include printing and packaging documents, as well as poster board for presentations.