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7-1-2014

Play It Forward

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Recommended Citation

Titulaer, Ankie. "Play It Forward." Master's Project, Berklee College of Music, 2014.
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Reflection Paper Culminating Experience:

Play it FWD

Summary of the project:

My project is a business plan for Play it FWD. It is an online interactive music education platform that allows children from all over the world to receive music lessons for free.

Play It FWD is a non-profit organization that unites Artists & Brands to provide music education to Children for free. Due to the trend in decreasing Arts and Cultural funding in many countries, we see the opportunity to provide an innovative approach to fulfill the need for progressive music education across the globe. As a result, we are developing an interactive online platform that educates and excites young people about music via an engaging live streaming experience and additional web-based content.

Our free business model functions by creating key relationships with and between Artists, Brands and our consumers, whom are Children and their Parents. We will work with top music Artists to serve as Virtual Teachers to Children in an online classroom environment, providing unique educational experiences that are both enlightening and entertaining. Our Brand partners will provide the funding to help underwrite the costs of our programming and educational initiatives in exchange for brand integration into our platform and content. The additional revenue generated from our partners will be reinvested back into the organization for continued curriculum development and enhanced content creation.

Our approach is specifically designed to bring significant benefits to every stakeholder in our ecosystem. Artists are able to contribute back to music culture as well as create a deeper connection with their fans (Children & Parents). Brands succeed by being socially responsible and reinvesting in lives of their core consumers. Children are the biggest winners by receiving an accessible high quality, innovative music education at no cost to them or their parents. This dynamic creates value for all parties involved through the means of working together for a common good.

At Play It FWD, our goal is to enrich the lives of children and elevate their cultural awareness to ultimately contribute to a better world society.

2. Explain the process, what happened

Emerging business model class

In the emerging business model class of the first semester we all had to present a business idea. One of these ideas was *Play it FWD*. The idea was presented by Chris Wade and about celebrities teaching children for free, funded by brands.

Before I came to Berklee Valencia I already wrote a business plan in music education and therefore the idea of *Play it FWD* spoke to me right away.

Chris had to choose a team to work on *Play it FWD* during class and Max Wright and I were chosen to be part of team *Play it FWD*. We worked on the idea in class and it didn't take us long to realize this was something that we wanted to do for our Culminating experiences and beyond school as well.

Choosing a Culminating Experience project

Before I came to Berklee Valencia I had written and won a business plan competition. The plan was for a sustainable music school with integrated marketing platform and artist management database. I came to Berklee to acquire the tools necessary to become an entrepreneur in music business.

Play it FWD is perfectly in line with my interests and exactly what I was looking for in a Culminating Experience. We were able to work on a great idea and create a solid business plan that will help us further in executing the business idea.

Designing the business

During all the classes of the emerging business models class we worked with our team on *Play it FWD*. We looked at the different angles of the business using the techniques that were taught to us by our professor. The exercises were used to make the idea more solid and get a better image of all the different aspects of *Play it FWD*. We refined the model and started to learn how to pitch and sell the idea to outsiders.

The design of the lessons of *Play it FWD* were my responsibility and I started to do the research of online music education. I researched all forms of music education online and the way the content is delivered on different platforms. I also tried to find the right age group that *Play it FWD* would be targeting and how they learn best. This all to find the best way to create engaging content for our platform and the right way of delivering.

Pitching the idea

One of the main exercises in this class was to learn how to pitch the idea in front of people from all walks of life including industry professionals. It was a great learning experience for me personally as presenting is something I had never done before. It made me learn how to find the right flow for a presentation and more important how to communicate an idea to people in the most efficient and understandable way.

Second semester addition of team members

In the second semester we added two new members to the team that would be able to help us realize the business plan and would be a value for our team. We chose Gabby Banks for her experience in music licensing and video production and Manuel Delgado for his knowledge of legal issues and overall hands on mentality.

Play it FWD is a big and complex business idea and we spent every day of the second semester in realizing the business plan and all the other elements that are part of this company but are not attended to in the business plan itself. For example, the development of the lessons and the partnering with the artists and the children.

Research (market, parents, brands, financial)

As a team, we needed to take on a lot of research in all elements of the business plan to come up with realistic outcomes. Because our business is structured like an ecosystem of different elements working together, we needed to do the market research and industry research for all three elements in the ABC model. This was an enormous challenge sometimes since we were under a lot of time pressure.

For my culminating experience it was my job to do the market research for the educational part of the business. There was very little information to find on the

internet about education. It was important for us to get an image of the importance of music education for parents and how many children were already receiving some kind of music education if it was in traditional form or online. To get a better image of the importance of music education to parents I created a survey for parents particularly in the United States of America since that is the market we want to start our business in.

We needed to know how important music education is to parents and if they would be open for a new form of education using new technologies.

I collected the data and analyzed the information from the survey. With this data we were able to create a better image of how to market the platform and the importance of the different parts in the education process and platform.

We were also looking for information of professional music educators. We wanted their opinion on the idea and the way we were designing the lessons. What do professionals think of the way we want to deliver music education? What would they recommend in the delivery and what is their experience with children in our target age group. I interviewed the music education professionals and used the information that I received to better the design of the lesson delivery and platform.

Writing the plan

After all the research we did on the different elements of the market and the idea we were to write the full business plan. We divided all of the work but we worked together with the full team on almost all the sections. I was in charge of the executive summary, market research analysis and the operational plan. In the appendix of the business plan I included a first draft of the curriculum as I worked

on that a lot as well but it is unfortunately not part of the business plan. We would meet almost every day to go over the individual work and help each other on the different parts. Especially the financial part of our plan was a big challenge since we are a non-profit that has a lot of start up costs. In the appendix of the business plan I included a first draft of the curriculum as I worked on that a lot as well but it is unfortunately not part of the business plan. The design of the lessons and the research is an ongoing process and we won't have a clear image of it until we can start building a proto type.

3. Results

Venture day competition win

At the end of the second semester we presented our idea at the Berklee Valencia Venture day and we were happy to find out we came first in the competition. The jury that was provided by Berklee gave us great feedback and we still are in contact with some of the jury members as they are helping us moving forward in making this plan a reality.

Business plan ready for the real world

We now feel that we have a good business plan that we can use to for the future of *Play it FWD*. We will need to revise curtain parts since we didn't have enough time in class to execute all of the sections in the best way due to class deadlines and the extend of our project. But I am very happy with the business plan we were able to finalize this year and all the research we were able to do in helping this project moving forward.

Good contacts

One of the best things that happened to us as a group during our work for *Play it FWD* is the contacts that Berklee provided to us in helping with the writing and knowledge. We have had a great amount of feedback on our project and help in various parts of our business. This network of people will continue in helping us through the process of realizing our business and is a great asset to our project.

4. Next step

Yes we are trying to get ready to pitch to investors

The next step is to refine the business plan into a shorter version that we can use during meetings and presentations. The goal for finishing this shorter business plan is the end of July. Then we will start building a proto type of the platform and a lesson to show to investors, brands and artists who we want to approach for *Play it FWD*.

We would love to be able to keep working in Valencia for the first six months as a group. We will hopefully soon find out the possibility of this. The plan is to work in Valencia for the first six months and then move to the US to to launch the platform and create all the content as well as getting the brands and artists involved.

Saying goodbye to team members

For the purpose of the class we were working on the business plan with a team of five members. We will not continue forward with the business in the full group. The two members that were added in the second semester wont continue working on

Play it FWD. This leaves us with a team of three members. Chris and myself will work fulltime on *Play it FWD* and Max will be a part-time member.

5. Contribution to the discipline

New form of education

With *Play it FWD* we are trying to close the gap between children who have the chance to receive music education and the children without the means but with the interest and musical talent. We want to create a new way of teaching that connects to the digital generation and education by using the newest technologies in delivering the content. We hope to be part of the new generation of online education and be an example for other disciplines.

We are using the brand companies by letting them pay back to society in a new innovative way and use their funding to help a good cause.

We will also use the celebrities to reach a bigger audience but in the first place to inspire children to make music and respect the creation of music as an art form that needs to be treasured.

Accessible for all children

Play it FWD is a free online music education platform and therefore available for all children in the world to be part of. We want to contribute to society with this initiative and hopefully reach a big audience.

6. Impact on me

Sequel to my first business plan

The business plan we wrote this year is precisely what I was looking for when I came to Berklee Valencia. I knew that my goal for this year was to finish with a complete business plan that I could use for my future career as an entrepreneur. I am very happy and lucky that this goal became a reality.

Great team

It was great to be able to work in a good team with very smart and proactive people. I learned a lot from my colleagues and we helped each other in all the elements of the process.

Leaning curve

Before I came to Berklee Valencia I never received any form of business training and I was pretty nervous in the beginning of the year of all the classes we were having. I am very grateful to all the teachers of the school for helping me getting through their classes. For me personally I learned a lot in all the classes and I was able to apply this knowledge almost immediately to other projects and especially *Play it FWD*. I feel more confident in applying for jobs or starting my own business due to all the tools I acquired this year.

Mind opening

Being in a school and class with people from all over the world and backgrounds has a mind opening effect. I did not only learn a lot in the courses but definitely a great deal from my fellow students as well. It was a great experience to be part of such a multicultural environment and it made me grow as a person.

It is my future

Play it FWD is my future. We are determined to realize this project and do whatever is needed to make this a successful business together with my partners. We know that we have a lot of work in front of us but I truly believe in *Play it FWD*.

7. Appendix

Lesson drafts

The first draft is a time based lesson plan. Every week there is a new chapter to the topic and new exercises.

The second draft shows a more custom-made lesson plan. Students are able to only view the topics they are interested in and are able to skip through the different levels if needed. i.e. skip the basic lesson when the knowledge is already there.

(This is just a draft of the first ideas. The development of the final lessons and plan will be an evolving process)

Curriculum draft 1

CLASS 1 INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC	Week 1 CELEBRITY X	Week 2 Games +Exercises	Week 3 Games +Exercises	Week 4 Games +Exercises
CLASS 2 INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games +Exercises	Games +Exercises
CLASS 3 DRUMS+BEATS	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +
CLASS 4 DRUMS+BEATS	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +
CLASS 5 GUITAR+PIANO	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +
CLASS 6 GUITAR+PIANO	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +
CLASS 7 VOICE+SCALES	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +
CLASS 8 VOICE+SCALES	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +
CLASS 9 MAKE A SONG	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +
CLASS 10 MAKE A SONG	CELEBRITY X	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +	Games Exercises +

sCurriculum draft 2

CLASS 1 INTRODUCT ION TO MUSIC	Video 1 celebrity +host+games/exer cises	Video 2 celebrity +host+games/exer cises	Video 3 celebrity +host+games/exer cises	Video 4 celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 2 DRUMS+BEA TS	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 3 DRUMS+BEA TS	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 4 DRUMS+BEA TS	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 5 GUITAR+PIA NO	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 6 GUITAR+PIA NO	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 7 VOICE+SCAL ES	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 8 VOICE+SCAL ES	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 9 MAKE SONG A	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises
CLASS 10 MAKE SONG A	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises	celebrity +host+games/exer cises