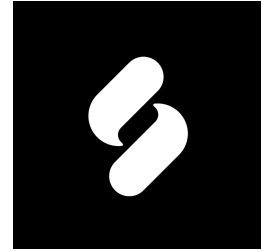


CASE STUDY 1: SPLICE

CASE STUDY 1: SPLICE



Overview ([Glassdoor](#), [Splice](#))

- *Launch: 2013*
- *Industry: Music Production & Distribution (version control)*
- *Funding: USD\$47million +*
- *Users: 1 million + (2018)*
- *Countries: 190+*
- *Employees: 90*
- *HQ: New York NY, USA*

Competition Breakdown

Positioning: “The cloud platform for music creation, collaboration and sharing. Create fearlessly with Splice.

According to the reviews on Glassdoor their staff say “We're creating a new way to make music. And we're not just reacting to what people want now. We're also building a creative ecosystem for what people will want next.

At Splice, we seek to empower all musicians to realize their creative potential and share it with the world. We believe that an open ecosystem leads to more collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and discovery, which leads to more musicians and better musicians, which means more and better music.”

Splice makes up a small portion of the musicians world, with its focus on the digital arena. Withstanding that position in the market, it is a clear contemporary regarding version control and a leader in the digital artistry platform.

In 2017, Co-CEO Steve Martocci updated the mission statement of Splice which had transformed to “Our mission is simple: to help musicians maximize their potential”
And since then have claimed to have

Primary Audience: Splice aims it's audience in the realm of music creators who use Digital Audio Workstations* (*DAW) as their working space, for creating their art.

These DAW platforms currently include

- [Ableton Live 8+](#)
- [Image-Line FL Studio](#)
- [Apple Logic Pro X](#)
- [Apple GarageBand](#)

Meanwhile, Splice initially started with a focus on users of Ableton on Mac (a primary platform of “established” or “serious” musicians/engineers).

Apple engineers, for a reason more or less (unbeknownst still) have been taken more seriously as engineers and musicians for a long time, with a stigma that is truly untraceable, and more underlying in an illegitimate idea.

Since digital musicians and artists use apple and pc programs and capabilities, it seems like Splice was interested in capturing the users who specifically used apple products.

Quite literally buying in to the stigma.

Since its inception Splice initiated aiming less at the general musician and focused on capturing the attention of musicians who use DAW, these include producers, “beat” makers, sound engineers, digital composers, studio-session writers and projects that require version control while using as a singular entity or as a co-collaborator.

In its initial upload and testing, Splice held it’s signature as a version control platform for people using DAW’s, however albeit being a fairly new company, have started branching out into other services and areas which seem to incorporate more musicianship than just DAW users.

As its developers would have it, the fundamentals of the company are deeply rooted in the companies coding backgrounds. Suggesting that they are targeting the way musicians make music. They suggest that their company is “designed to simplify and enhance the creative process”

The culmination of reflecting on the way programmers created a better ecosystem for tracking and collaborating their code in the world of programming, they were looking for a way of replicating the same version control through digital media

It appears that Splice may be heading in the direction of an all-encompassing musicians software and app database if they were to open up their primary target audience and capture a broader base than the Digital market.

Splices pricepoint aims to make using their services easier than piracy. Capturing the attention of assured musicians instead of fleeting amateurs who are flooding social media and media outlets with parse works of artistry.

SWOT Analysis

Internal Factors: Strengths

- extensive, royalty-free sample library
- Offers a monthly subscription package
- Creates a forum for musicians to post works publicly or privatize work
- Showcases different projects by category of interest
- Free signup
- Free download of Splice Software
- Supported by Microsoft Windows 7+ and Mac OS X 10.9+
- Splice Blog includes
 - Tutorials (how to’s)
 - Tools (make the most of Splice and relative software)
 - Artist reviews (latest, upcoming and relative music on Splice)
 - News about artists, artistry, the tech space and future project
- Has a community forums which delves into different musical genres
- Has a community forum which focuses on developing digital media techniques
- Links users to plugins and extra purchases and discounted pricing
- Ability to sync current local projects into an online folder for version control
- Ability to collaborate with others while keeping all files separate and in linear order

- Onboarding: Splice has a basic page for sign up with two areas for linking a user to sign up with the service.

Internal Factors: Weaknesses

- Landing page lacks the ability to showcase exactly what Splice is about
- Doesn't lend itself to all musician platforms
- Doesn't open itself up to the support of live music
- Heavily focused on Digital media
- The ability to offer such a cheap membership means that some amateur artists may consider amateur, parse works as hi-fi quality
- Web application isn't fluid with company filing system
- Appears Web application hasn't been updated since 2016
- Onboarding: Splice has a basic page for sign up with two areas for linking a user to sign up with the service without a clear indication of what their services entail.

External factors: Opportunities

- To move into the arena of live recordings
- To incorporate multiple languages for various use over different countries
- Possible joint venture with Soundcloud or ReverbNation
- Creating a call-to-action button that is more prominent on site visitation

External Factors: Threats

- Other music companies incorporating version control into their already established platforms
- Other cloud services incorporating version control for their already established clientele

CASE STUDY 2: SOUNDCLOUD

CASE STUDY 2: SOUNDCLOUD

Overview ([Glassdoor](#), [Soundcloud](#))

- *Launch: 2008*
- *Industry: Computer Hardware & Software*
- *Funding: USD \$10-25 Million per year*
- *Users: 1million + (2018)*
- *Countries: Mostly USA (54%)*
- *Employees: 289*
- *HQ: Berlin, GERMANY*



Competition Breakdown

Positioning: "SoundCloud is the world's leading social sound platform where anyone can create sounds and share them everywhere."

Recording and uploading sounds to SoundCloud lets people easily share them privately with their friends or publicly to blogs, sites and social networks.

It takes just a click to share sounds to Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook and Foursquare.

SoundCloud can be accessed anywhere using the official iPhone and Android apps, as well as hundreds of creation and sharing apps built on the SoundCloud platform.

Today, SoundCloud reaches more than 350 million people every month around the globe, across the web, mobile, our embeddable widget and our API. More than 175 million unique listeners monthly and our creators post 12 hours of new content on SoundCloud every minute." - Glassdoor

In 2015, Soundcloud cut 173 employees due to it's huge gap between revenue input and royalty output, putting Soundcloud in the precarious position of being overtaken as the lead. Since it's catastrophic choice to put outreach to the masses instead of taking care of it's participants, Soundcloud reinvisioned the company and began paying attention to it's artists for higher income streams and revenue, as opposed to being hit heavily with the fines and charges of copyright law and royalty output.

Primary Audience: Soundclouds primary audience consists of two different mediums.

Both of these audience members retain a special area of concern for the ability to wholly verbalize what Soundcloud stands for.

One audience member is the creators and contributors to and of artistry including live music, and digital media and the other is the audience who aims to listen, upload and stream those media sources.

The give and take of either audience member creates the demand while the other supplies the demand - creating a perfect housing unit and solution to a problem.

In this totalitarian way of viewing both audience members, Soundcloud had focused the majority of it's time the the onboarding of the artist sector. It wasn't until much later in their company processors did they realize the value of the listener/client.

SWOT Analysis

Internal Factors: Strengths

- Free content – SoundCloud currently pays no royalty fees to artists, publishers, or labels.
- Monthly visitor count shows huge amounts of users/browser
- Mass appeal to musicians
- Allows users to upload, record, promote and share originally-created music for free
- Offers distinctive URL for artist showcasing
- Users can create and join groups to create a common space for content to be collected and shared
- Distributes music using widget and apps.
- Apps and widgets can be placed on own websites/blogs so that SoundCloud will automatically tweet all artist updates and track uploads
- The ability to create playlists or track artists to repost, share and follow
- Complimentary downloads of their audio are available for money or free
- Availability of downloading others music (where possible)
- App offers a lot
- Ability to upload all new media through other apps in a widget

Internal Factors: Weaknesses

- Free content – SoundCloud currently pays no royalty fees to artists, publishers, or labels.
- Predominantly US Market (over 50%) showcases it's potential outreach hasn't succeeded with international success.
- Social media outreach to other users
- Geography
- Search Traffic
- Lack of leadership in showcasing artistry
- Users have complained that it is losing its primary services to artists in an attempt to appeal to the masses
- After the partnership with Zefr (a content tracking company that works with Youtube to help identify songs on platforms that could be an infringement on copyright laws) People were being flagged for content that was not in fact copyright infringing
- After partnering with Zefr, Artists felt violated for being tracked where there choice of coming to Soundcloud was to avoid content tracking for their own copyright issues)
- Soundcloud appears to appeal visually to m
- A cap of how much music can be uploaded to a users artistry site
- Soundclouds royalty payouts to major labels are draining the business of money
- Heavy risk of copyright infringement
- Risk of loss in intellectual property without a backtrack of who's heard, seen, read the file.

External factors: Opportunities

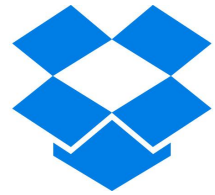
- Traffic from widgets to Soundcloud may offer features for signing up
- Monetization by introducing ads to the site.
- Paid subscriptions being available for users to upload content that is scalable in creating profit margins for artists with royalties
- Universal Search Capabilities

External Factors: Threats

- Social Media outreach
- Competing sites
- Engagement with users that aren't musicians
- Legal/licensing concerns
- Copyright concerns
- Legal problems regarding copyright law and intellectual property
- Other companies replicating Soundcloud platform

CASE STUDY 3: DROPBOX

CASE STUDY 3: DROPBOX



Overview ([Glassdoor](#), [Dropbox](#))

- *Launch: 2007*
- *Industry: Computer Hardware & Software*
- *Revenue: 1.106 Billion (2017)*
- *Users: 500 Million +*
- *Paying Customers: 11.9 Million (8.9.2018) (About 8%)*
- *Content Uploaded: 400 Billion + (400,000,000,000)*
- *Countries: 180*
- *Employees: 1001-5000*
- *HQ: San Francisco, CA*

Competition Breakdown

Positioning: Dropbox has positioned itself as one of the world's most recognizable data storage companies. Since its birth in 2007, this 11 year old company has established itself well into the super-producers of data services. With other competition such as iCloud (a subsidiary of Apple and their mega-peaking company), Google drive, IBM and Intel - DropBox carved out their place from what appears to be their only position in the game. Their start and finish point - Data Storage.

With that kind of superpower, it may appear that Dropbox is whole-heartedly invested in focusing on the best application for data-storage and therefore the best experience for their client/users.

They also may appear more juvenile or less experienced in the field than the companies who may have started in other arenas, but have incorporated the cloud data-storage appendage to their companies list of features and offerings.

Primary Audience: Since only 8% of Dropbox client base are paying, it would appear that Dropbox's Primary Audience would be to harness and take-care of their business-to-business clientele. Which is exactly what they do.

Their split focus ensures taking care of incoming revenue in their current state while onboarding a huge customer base for future transactions.

However with such a massive database of users Dropbox would now be in good stride to start implementing a stronger shift to all users who need more storage than just business, and of course everyone believes their data is important and paramount.

If Dropbox could shift their plans to incorporate smaller costs for smaller data storage plans it could be an incentive for users to increase their 2GB free storage capacity in smaller increments than to jump from 2GB to 50GB for US\$10.

Till then, Dropbox seems to run in favor of their primary return avenues, but if smart - should start a new concept of onboarding for their medium to high storage customers.

SWOT Analysis

Internal Factors: Strengths

- Supports 20 languages
- 12 office locations around the world
- 300,000 teams using Dropbox business
- DropBox creates a separate storage area such as a file in the user's computer and then synchronizes it with the company servers and makes it compatible with multiple devices.
- Flexible storage options
- File-recovery
- Version control across multiple files
- Landing page automatically has a call-to-action for signup, followed by:
- An automatic pop-up call-to-action to use Dropbox as the primary storage platform to store all documents, files and photos automatically.
- Flexible payment plans based on data storage needs
- Replaces the need for hard drive
- Easy way to synchronize and access data (when internet is available)
- Consumer orientated service
- Client software is available on most latest platforms

Internal Factors: Weaknesses

- Higher dependence on corporate contributors and businesses for revenue streams
- Unsuitable for huge volumes of data
- Creating a call-to-action too early in the onboarding process
- Security for non-paying customers is not apparent
- Weak storage and encryption mechanism
- Inability to use version control on collaborative tasks
- Redistribution rights of content are not properly defined
- There is a focus on corporate accounts which are only 8% of paying clientele
- Next available for storage is in large monetary jumps as opposed to smaller more feasible options

External factors: Opportunities

- Growing demand for information storage, who need to store vast volumes of data in video, imagery, audio, notes and documents.
- The ability to inject Dropbox into untapped Asian Markets
- Growth in offices around more densely populated areas that are projected to grow in technology and population.
- Creating smaller monetary payments for smaller storage usage instead of a 50GB jump from 2GB free storage
- Focus on non-paying members to increase storage usage
- Incorporate an encryption mechanism
- Differentiation from other cloud services

External Factors: Threats

- The growing start-up culture in India, china and other parts of asia, poses a threat to major population onboarding of asian cultures, if Dropbox cannot convert users from an Asian culture to its platform
- Competition from brands such as SugarSync, Skydrive, Google Drive, iCloud and others. There are plenty of cloud-storage based companies already out and projected to launch

- Inability to compute value of using company services for smaller cities or companies. Dropbox's Big picture optical poses a threat to its ability in being intimate with smaller regions, towns and people.
- Privacy Issues
- Breach of customer information

CASE STUDY 4: PATREON

CASE STUDY 4: PATREON



Overview ([Glassdoor](#), [Patreon](#))

- *Launch: 2013*
- *Industry: Publishing*
- *Pledged: Unknown*
- *Projects Launched: 50,000+*
- *Employees: 51-200 Approx.*
- *HQ: San Francisco, CA*

Competition Breakdown

Positioning: Patreon is quick to tell the world of creators that they support you. Their landing page is a creative showcasing of array of artists: bloggers, musicians, presenters, journalists, designers, and; much more.

"Creators, come get paid" sticks out like a sore thumb, followed by "What is Patreon?" and "Start my Page". Communicating an easy and effortless search to getting involved.

Patreon's dynamic landing page creates movement and excitement around their initial introduction to a user with a way of capturing many facets of art, innovation and tech in a 30-second slide that plays on a continuous loop behind its open invitation to creators, a link to find out what Patreon is and another link to Start your own page.

The CEO of Patreon, showcases the 'Why' behind the company with ease, as he 'relates' to his own personal struggle with creating an income from the only available streams before the creation of Patreon; thus creating an interpersonal relationship with users who may be feeling the same frustration.

The service provides illustration, almost like markers or step-by-step guides as how the Patreon service will work for "you". Providing clear imagery about how the company provides revenues stream and help, but also claims to do the "heavy lifting" of customer service for payments, while the artist retains full control of their artistry.

Primary Audience: To the automatic eye, at first glance, Patreon seems to offer a payment service to artists/creators.

Aimed at individual users who want more control of how to create monetary value from their art.

Patreon has two types of audience members, Creators and Patreons. Clearly defined as Creators and Payers. Those who create the art, blog, music, design, etc - and those who pay for it, in the form of a monthly "membership".

Their price point is competitive to the other main crowdfunding organizations that support the arts.

However Patreon is about Publishing content and paying the artist for time, based on genuine fans and followers. In return for 'patreons' following their artists, they are included into a "membership" that offers them "membership privvy incentives" such as pre-sales ticket pricing, access to privileged content and information and the possibility of a closer "relationship" with the artist.

Patreon charges 5% of each pledge of money toward an artist with a processing fee of 2.9% + USD0.35¢ per transaction. Making it affordable for users to consistently follow an artist or to divert their funds where their interests see fit.

Funding requests from 'Creators' appear to have no cap, leaving the Creator in full-control of how their funds are raised, used and distributed.

However, if an artist receives no followers/patrons that provide funding - Patreon charges no fee.

SWOT Analysis

Internal Factors: Strengths

- Strong use of artistic themes and expressions
- Invigorates curiosity by used of language
- Simple layout with eye catching illustrations depicting how the company works
- Creates curiosity by using video as their landing page intro
- Creates immediate call-to-action
- Clear and responsive landing page
- Invites a user to get involved
- Users know immediately that this is geared towards artists

Internal Factors: Weaknesses

- Landing page lacks the same hype for signing users up as 'Patreons'
- 'Patreons' is not an easy word to spell for younger generations
- Visually lacks cultural diversity
- Appears to be solely for artists to make money
- Doesn't showcase the benefits for becoming a follower and payer for an artist
- Lack of showcasing social media links
- Signup shows a bias, encouraging users to become contributors of its largest money makers
- Lacks showcasing, rising stars or artists related to previous search topics
- Doesn't showcase stories of users who follow creators of 'Patreon' and the benefits they've enjoyed by being a follower
- Seems to be solely American based, and lacks international appeal.

External factors: Opportunities

- An ability to showcase previous success stories through different forms of media
- Introducing non-profit contributions
- Incorporation to inspire people to join and become followers
- Incorporate new avenues with more diversity.
- Launching realtime listings of artist who are currently live and broadcasting that are Patreon artists
- Creating joint ventures with ticketing companies to create sales for unsigned or independant artists.

External Factors: Threats

- A new company with the user user in mind, creating a similar platform
- Artists looking for other companies due to lack of user outreach
- The market for artist support is growing quickly
- Artists not providing promissory content based on pledged funding

Summary

Summary

All companies Splice, Soundcloud, Dropbox and Patreon offer an array of packages that each other platform compared to does not.

In reference to all these companies and the way that they deliver their product, it may come in good stead that a new company would seek to take on board the best of each of these platforms to create a new idea that encompasses their finer details while learning from what is not working or can be worked upon.

While Splice and Dropbox offer platforms for version control, Soundcloud offers a platform of exposure but doesn't take care of the royalties, revenue or mature artists who are dedicating their craft as either a profitable hobby or a avenue of income for their life/lifestyle.

The two markets for music/artists can be argued that there is a fine line between the amateur and the seasoned. Nevertheless, real artists tend to invest a little more money into clearing their artistry to ensure that contracts, music, art, imagery etc are all in safe keeping - but we've not yet seen a platform cater to the security and broad spectrum of features that would encompass an artist's data storage.

In a day and age where when buying a new computer or tablet, offers a person to become a digital artist, there has been an influx of amateur "artists" who infiltrate the artist and music scene with offerings that are mediocre at best, while artists who dedicate their life to their craft often aren't seen as the depth of the ocean while the white wash above swirls.

The major differentiation of these amateurs flirting with digital offerings and those who are dedicated to their craft require a platform that can house the multitude of files, images, music and sharing capabilities as well as being able to house a version control of their music or artistry (mostly digital versions, or art rendered digitally) *version control capabilities can be used for live recordings too.

The ability to collaborate with other artists in a secure forum and with the copyright law as its backbone, as well as being able to explicitly share privately or publicly, would also give users a chance to track their own projects as well as see leads, and data about their works.

The upcoming company leading into this forum, for creating a cloud storage platform for musicians and artists combined, would be to take the key successes from each and learn from their faults and bounce off their weaknesses.

Aside from the above comparative analysis, because there is no platform as yet that encompasses all these key factors that would be assets to the key audience of artists and artist creators/supporters - it would be well advised to do further comparative analysis of companies such as Youtube, Reverbnation, Bandcamp, Gobbler, DJ Backup, Sugar Sync, Google Drive and Evernote.

Upon reviewing all these platforms, it is well advised that a new platform could emerge with the following: *(but not limited to)*

- Version control for live and digital music
- Ability to showcase music privately or publicly - with tracking abilities to where it's been sent or seen and the revenue production with any royalties involved
- Own end tag personal URL for artistry that is made public
- Templates for artists to take projects to another level

- Professional programs/widgets tagged on for extra charge or subscription to site
- Ability to collaborate with other artists or find new collaborations
- Forum for “artists seeking”, “reviews”, “company updates”, “upcoming projects” and “work availability”
- The possibility of adding venue options for artists to find venues/events and vice versa.
- A Data storage site for accessing data anywhere when online
- When offline projects can be worked on and when connected to internet, immediately update newest version
- Image data
- Invoice storage
- Contract filing
- Calendar for events, invoices, contracts, deadlines, time limits, etc
- Calendar syncs to personal choice calendars
- Updates on international reviews that will change/affect the industry and their participants
- House audio files
- House video files
- Feedback forums on public or private leads

None of the programs seem to outreach an incentive to get involved other than already being on the lookout for the offers that each platform seems to give priority to, and may be a great avenue to start incorporating a more youthful outreach, based on the future trajectory of the digital era coming into full effect in the next decade, while the babies of the 1990s start moving into their 20s and 30s. It would stand that this last generation of children have been heavily impacted on the internet and the digital age, so it would only make sense that any generation following would be generating much more commonality towards the internet and digital product.

If the future business used current markets with a scope of introducing youth into their platform early, there may be a way to capture the attention of the generations to come by making sure that the company is at least being spoken of, noticed or used.

I don't doubt the right company can create a powerhouse of Soundcloud, Dropbox and Splice rolled into one, with great appeal to the music/artist community.