

Case Study

Christopher Bracke



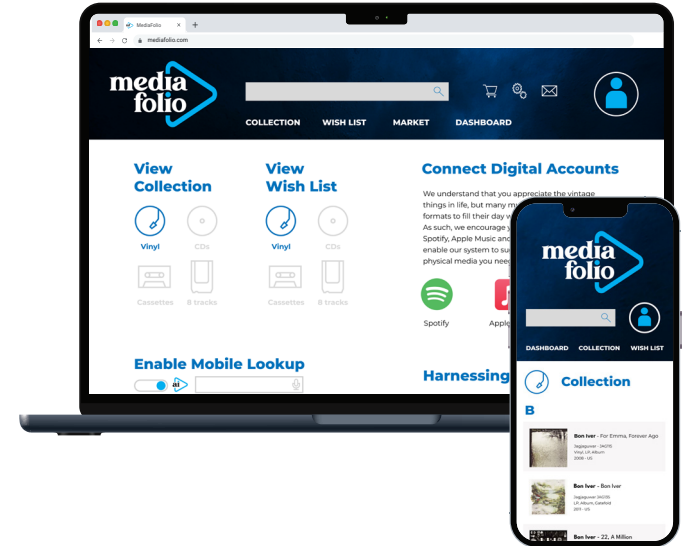
PROJECT OVERVIEW



THE PRODUCT:

By the end of 2022, revenue from vinyl record sales grew 17% to \$1.2 billion dollars year over year. It was the sixteenth straight year of growth and first time since 1987 that vinyl outsold CDs (RIAA statistics).

The website/app Discogs has been the dominant source for music physical format collectors who wish to organize their stash and buy or sell from their stock of wax. It has done an admirable job for collectors and being among that group I felt compelled to make improvements to the system in the form of a new competitor...**MediaFolio**.



PROJECT OVERVIEW



THE PROBLEM:

Users of tools like Discogs love the robust catalog their system provides but there are inefficiencies in the marketplace and it lacks some other modern solutions that can improve user experience.



THE GOAL:

Design solutions to improve the sale of physical formats on the site and look for ways to infuse the experience with new features that make common tasks easier.

Understanding the User

User Research

Personas

Pain Points

USER RESEARCH SUMMARY



I was initially able to draw upon my own experience with Discogs to find areas I wanted to focus on. That wasn't going to give me enough material to build the kind of result I strived for.

I was able to conduct user studies with a record collecting group of 1,000+ members. Issues with the tedious nature of inputting your collection, navigation issues, and grading issues from sellers were among the main concerns. I figured I could inherently draw upon my decades of design experience to make a more visually appealing solution while tackling these issues.

USER PAIN POINTS

1

Sellers simply rely on the placeholder image for an album and this subjects the buyer to their interpretation of grading it's condition. It's infuriating to spend the kind of money and get a record scraped up and sleeve with rips and notes written on it in Sharpie.

2

It can be entirely too tedious and confusing to determine what version of the album I have in my collection. Even if I do figure it out, it's entirely too tedious to input them into the system.

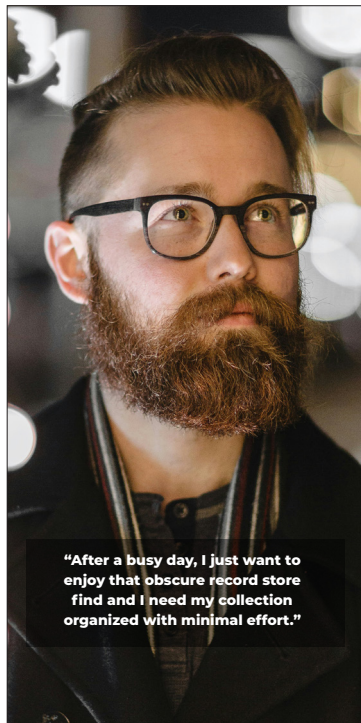
3

I love flipping through bins at my favorite record store but it's painful to get home and only then realize it's my sixth copy of Snow's "Informer."

PERSONA

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Jonah enjoys a comfortable life but there are some definite improvements that could be made to how he catalogues his vinyl record collection. Improvements that he feels would have a profound effect on him.



"After a busy day, I just want to enjoy that obscure record store find and I need my collection organized with minimal effort."

Jonah Herndon

- 36
- Brooklyn, NY
- Web Developer
- Apartment, Boyfriend, Son

Bio

Jonah is not offended by the term hipster, particularly when it comes to his robust record collection. He's a web developer in the city and after a long day in the office he enjoys a relaxing evening enjoying bourbon and flipping vinyl records.

Wants & Needs

- An OG butcher cover Beatles record.
- It would be nice to have an easier way to access my collection on the fly so to avoid buying repeats.

Tech

- Internet
- Social Media
- Online Shopping
- Gadgets
- Early Adopter

Favorite Brands

- Technics

Frustrations

- It's difficult to organize my records without hours of tedious effort.
- I can't spend significant coin on my grill record only to find it looks like it lost a cat fight.

USER JOURNEY MAP

Mapping Jonah's user journey revealed all the ways this app would help avid music collectors get the most out of their collections.

PERSONA: Jonah Herndon

GOAL: Increase satisfaction and efficiency with a cataloguing system for a hobby that has really become a major part of his life.

Action	Get App	Add Records to Collection	List a record for sale	Shop using the lookup feature
Task List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Download app B. Set up account C. Confirm location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Locate specific record using artist/album search. B. Filter through applicable versions to match up matrix. C. Click add button and pick the appropriate sleeve and record condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Locate specific information on the version of the record you are listing. B. Take and upload your photos of the item. C. Add brief details of item. D. Set price and click "list." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Go to your favorite local record store B. Use Siri to access app's lookup feature and search for a specific artist C. See results returned match artist specified.
Feeling Adjective	Optimistic about a system that organizes my record collection with as minimal of effort as possible.	Hopeful that a low effort system is created to catalog my record collection.	Anxious for confirmation from buyer that pictures matched specified condition.	Stoked that I have my own concierge while I shop for records!
Improvement Opportunities	A QR code at relevant stores/websites to direct people to the app.	Ability to scan album barcode to add it without the labor of manual entry.	A page with examples of various conditions aiming to guide people with their assessment of an item's condition?	Maybe this feature can connect with my digital music services to suggest other music for me to shop for.

Design Stage

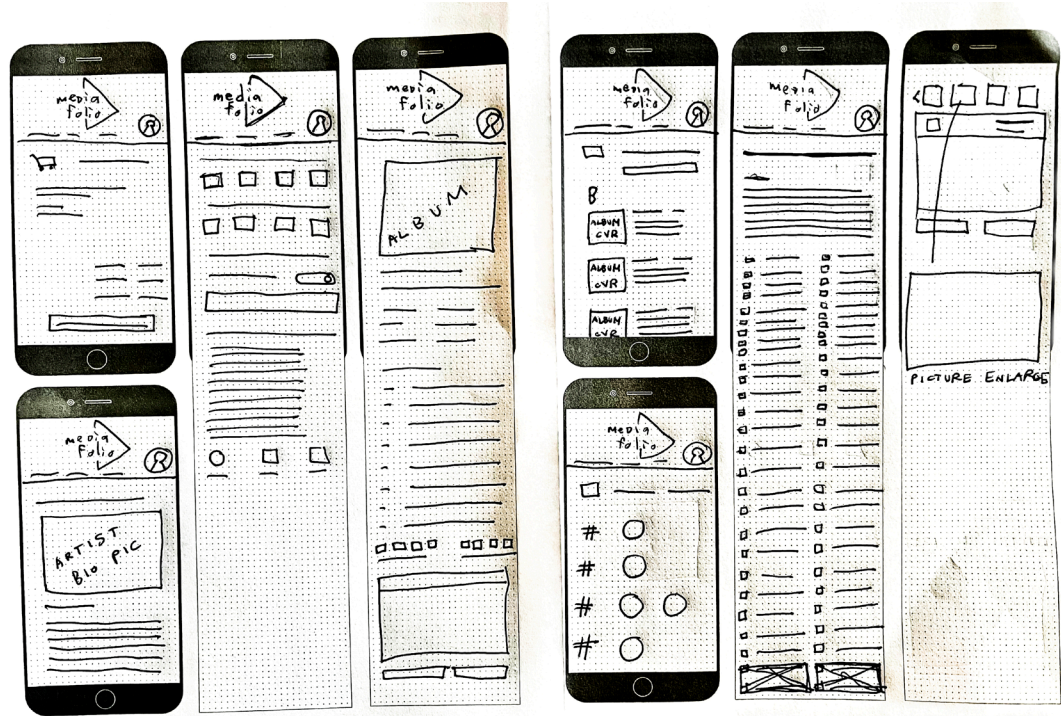
Wireframes

Prototype

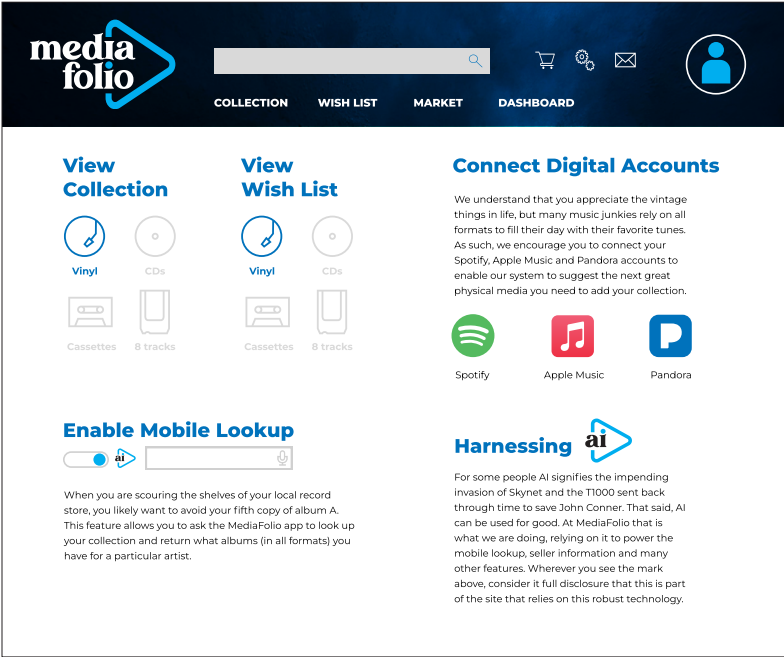
Usability Studies

WIREFRAMES

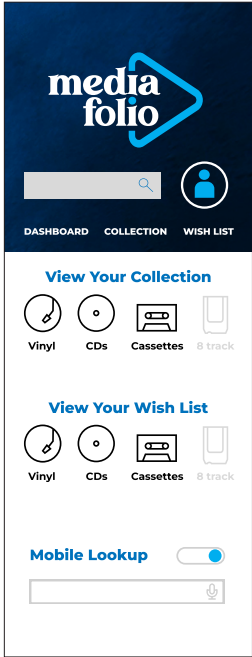
Sketching wireframes helped identify consistencies, visual elements needed, and which parts of the app would be static... among other things.



PROTOTYPES - Dashboard



desktop



mobile

PROTOTYPES - Collection

media folio

COLLECTION WISH LIST MARKET DASHBOARD

Collection

Artist (First A To Z)	Artist (Last A To Z)	Format	Value Range	Release Date	Genre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bon Iver - For Emma, Forever Ago Jagjaguwar - JAG115 Vinyl, LP, Album 2008 - US		Low - Med - High	Sept 21, 2009	Indie/Folk Rock
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nine Inch Nails - The Fragile Nothing Records - 80025682-01 Vinyl, LP, Album 2017 - US			Nov 10, 2018	Electronic Rock
<input type="checkbox"/>	Soul Coughing - El Oso Slash - 9 46800-1 Vinyl, LP, Album, Limited Edition, 180 Gram, Gatefold 1998 - US			Dec 02, 1999	Alt Rock

desktop

media folio

DASHBOARD COLLECTION WISH LIST

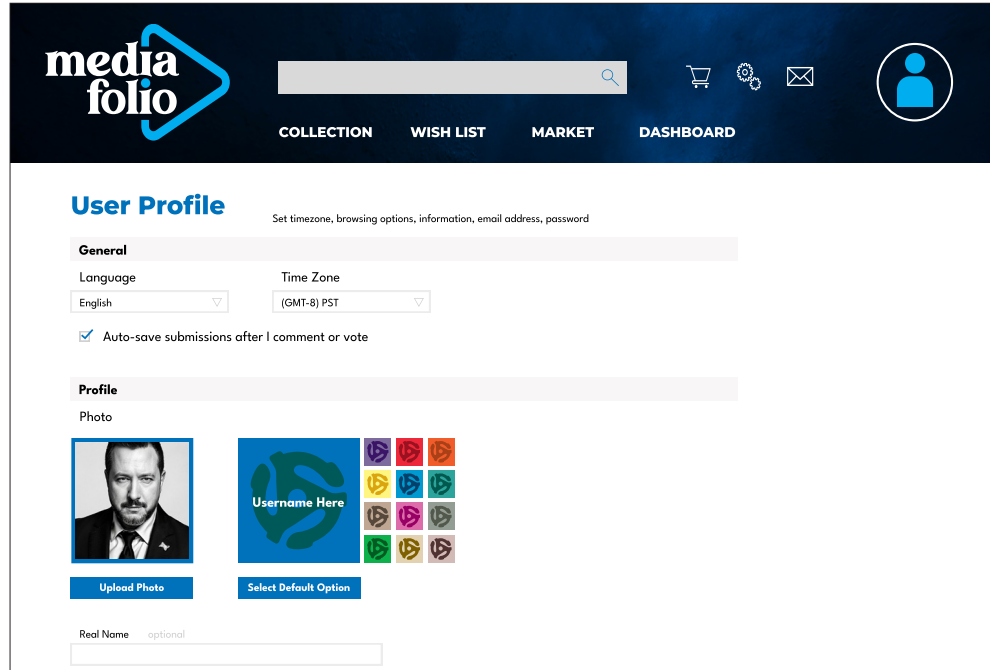
Collection

B

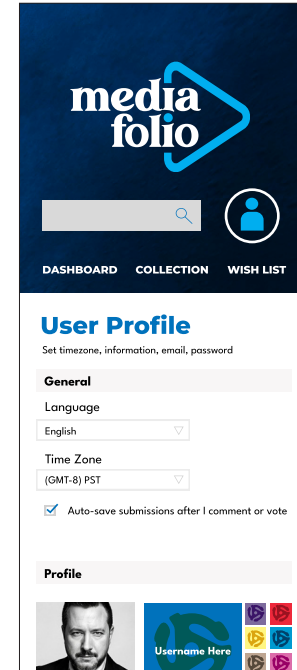
- Bon Iver** - For Emma, Forever Ago
Jagjaguwar - JAG115
Vinyl, LP, Album
2008 - US
- Bon Iver** - Bon Iver
Jagjaguwar - JAG115
LP, Album, Gatefold
2011 - US
- Bon Iver** - 22, A Million
Jagjaguwar - JAG300
LP, Album
2016 - US

mobile

PROTOTYPES - Settings



desktop



mobile

PROTOTYPES - Selling

media folio COLLECTION WISH LIST MARKET DASHBOARD

Lionel Ritchie - Lionel Ritchie
Label: Motown - VIL-6011
Country: United States
Released: 1982
Genre: Funk/Soul

Tracklist

A1	Serves You Right <small>Written By - John McVie</small>
A2	Wandering Stranger
A3	Tell Me <small>Written By - David Cochrane</small>
A4	My Love
B1	Round And Round
B2	Truly
B3	You Are <small>Written By - Brenda Harvey-Ritchie</small>
B4	You Mean More to Me
B5	Just Put Some Love In Your Heart

Seller: **EightTrackula24**
 ★★★★★ user feedback

Format: Format
Package Condition: Very Good Plus (VG+)
Media Condition: Very Good Plus (VG+)
Notes: [Edit](#)

Market: 152 For Sale from **\$4.90**

[Buy](#) [Sell](#)

[Share](#)

Companies, etc.

8 Track

media folio COLLECTION WISH LIST MARKET DASHBOARD

Alice In Chains - Dirt
Label: Columbia - 19439953541, Legacy - 19439953541, Velvet Hammer - 19439953541
Country: United States
Released: September 23, 2022
Genre: Alternative Metal, Grunge, Hard Rock
Format: 2x Vinyl, LP, Album, Reissue, Remastered, Stereo, Orange, 30th Anniversary

Tracklist

A1	Them Bones <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell</small>
A2	Dam That River <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell</small>
A3	Rain When I Die <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell, L. Staley, M. Starr, S. Kinney</small>
B1	Down In A Hole <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell</small>
B2	Sickman <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell, L. Staley</small>
B3	Rooster <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell</small>
C1	Junkhead <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell, L. Staley</small>
C2	Dirt <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell, L. Staley</small>
C3	Godsmack <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell, L. Staley</small>
C4	Untitled <small>Written By - 2 Cantrell</small>

Seller: **LayneLivesForeverh**
 ★★★★★ user feedback

Format: Vinyl Record
Package Condition: Very Good Plus (VG+)
Media Condition: Very Good Plus (VG+)
Notes: [Edit](#)

Market: 152 For Sale from **\$4.90**

[Buy](#) [Sell](#)

Vinyl

PROTOTYPES - Identifying Versions

media folio

COLLECTION WISH LIST MARKET DASHBOARD

How To Identify Where Your Physical Media Is From

VINYL

It can be fun to suggest someone try to count the rings in a vinyl record, but this is akin to asking where to put the blinker fluid in a car. Good for a laugh, not for progress. At a very basic level, you can start with the artist or album name, or even the catalog number on the round label of the record, but the number of results returned to you will often be overwhelming.

You should go right to the runout matrix when trying to nail down the origin of your record. The runout matrix is a combination of numbers, letters, other etched markers that reside in the dead wax area of a record (between the end of grooves and the center label).

Pressing Plants and Their Identifying Marks

ALLIED RECORD COMPANY - LOS ANGELES, CA	AB ABBEY RECORD MFG. - NEWARK, NJ
ALLIED RECORD COMPANY - LOS ANGELES, CA	OB ABBEY RECORD MFG. - NEWARK, NJ
MCA RECORDS - GLOVERSVILLE, NY	AR ALLIED RECORD - LOS ANGELES, CA
MCA RECORDS - PICKNEYVILLE, IL	BESTWAY PRODUCTS, INC. - MOUNTAINSIDE, NJ
MGM RECORDS MFG. - BLOOMFIELD, NJ	CP COLUMBIA RECORDS - PITMAN, NJ
CAPITOL RECORDS - JACKSONVILLE, IL	CS COLUMBIA RECORDS - SANTA MARIA, CA
CAPITOL RECORDS - WINCHESTER, VA	SEM COLUMBIA RECORDS - SANTA MARIA, CA

PL PLASTIC PRODUCTS - MEMPHIS, TN	SON SONIC RECORDING PRODUCTS - HOLBROOK, NY
PR PRESSWELL RECORDS MFG. - ANCORA, NJ	SONIC SONIC RECORDING PRODUCTS - HOLBROOK, NY
PRC PRC RECORDING CORP. - RICHMOND, IN	T COLUMBIA RECORDS - TERRE HAUTE, IN
PRC-C PRC RECORDING CORP. - COMPTON, CA	TH COLUMBIA RECORDS - TERRE HAUTE, IN
PRC-R PRC RECORDING CORP. - RICHMOND, IN	W CAPITOL RECORDS - WINCHESTER, VA
PRC-W PRC RECORDING CORP. - COMPTON, CA	W H.V. WADDELL - BURBANK, CA
PRCC PRC RECORDING CORP. - COMPTON, CA	WW CAPITOL RECORDS - WINCHESTER, VA
PRCR PRC RECORDING CORP. - RICHMOND, IN	SP SPECIALTY RECORDS CORP. - OLYPHANT, PA
PRCW PRC RECORDING CORP. - COMPTON, CA	S COLUMBIA RECORDS - SANTA MARIA, CA
Q QUALITY RECORDS - TORONTO	SM COLUMBIA RECORDS - SANTA MARIA, CA

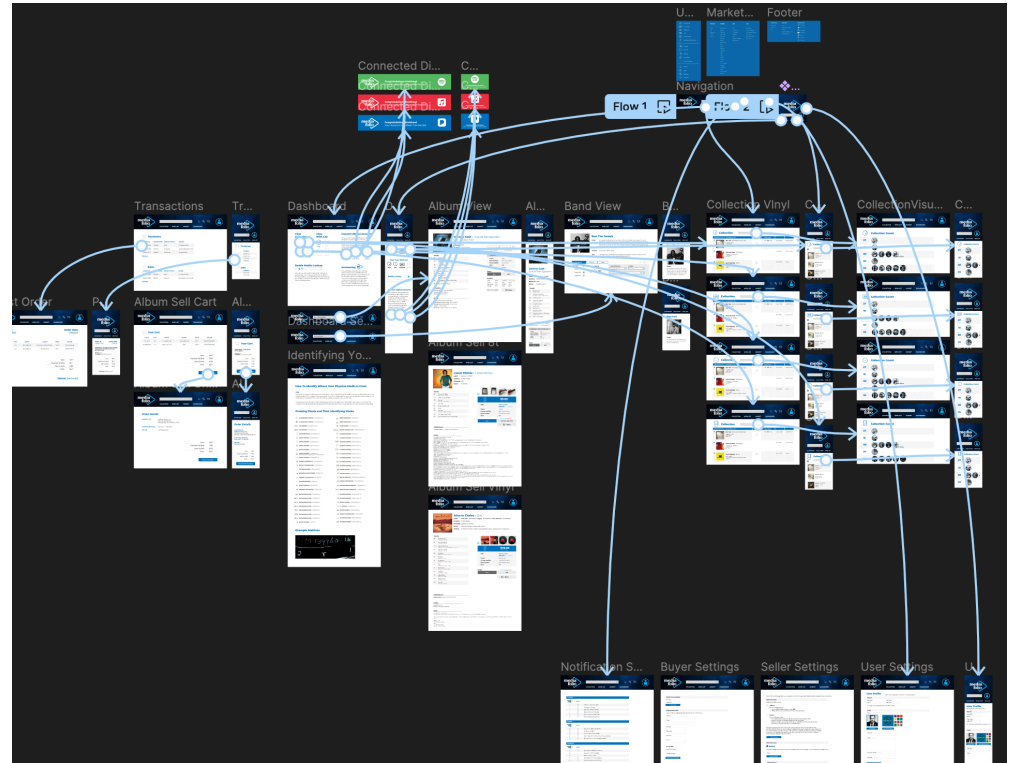
Example Matrixes

XSM 139760 LA

1

PROTOTYPES - Connections

I know more connections will be needed, but this was a good place to start and enough for conducting testing.



USABILITY STUDIES - Takeaways

1

Users appreciated an increased focus on visuals including the use of iconography, clear images and high contrast.

2

The AI isn't flawless yet, but as the number of users increase, so will the data on which to leverage a couple applications of the AI.

3

The impact of requiring users take recent photos of the items they are selling before they are allowed to list them could not be overstated. Users were ecstatic about this.