



Case study:  
MuseFuse musician-networking website

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# Project overview



## The product:

A profile-creation flow and responsive design for the musician-networking site MuseFuse.

MuseFuse will connect musicians with one another, whether as individuals or groups, via a unique profile-and-search matching system.



## Project duration:

Dec 2021-Jan 2022

# Project overview



## The problem:

Users need a simple way to create an informative and searchable profile.



## The goal:

To create a linear profile-creation flow that is friendly and straightforward, yet capable of containing many fields of information searchable by back-end database.

# Project overview



## **My role:**

UX researcher and designer



## **Responsibilities:**

Defining the target audience and identifying users' needs and pain points.

Designing and testing UX for the profile-creation flow.

# Understanding the MuseFuse user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

# User research: overview



Interviews were conducted with several amateur and professional musicians to identify the types of networking they would wish to do, and what their pain points are when using existing networking platforms, particularly social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram.

# User Persona: Marcus

## Problem statement:

Marcus is a professional bass player who wants to network with a large community of local bands and musicians without having to rely too heavily on keeping up with social media.



**Marcus**

**Age:** 33

**Education:** B.M. in Jazz Perf.

**Hometown:** St. Louis, MO

**Family:** Married, no kids

**Occupation:** Freelance musician

*“Constantly looking to meet musicians outside of my normal sphere of regular gigs.”*

## Goals

- Looking for new opportunities to meet and play
- Wants to showcase his recordings and videos
- Wants to not be locked into social media for networking.

## Frustrations

- Being locked into FB
- Many FB groups are too niche
- Isn't always comfy “schmoozing” or going to social events where he's not already playing.

Marcus is a 33-year old jazz bassist who lives in Houston, TX. He got his undergraduate degree in jazz performance and is now actively searching the Houston music scene for freelance gigs as both a performer and studio musician.

# User Persona: Sandra

## Problem statement:

Sandra is an electronic music hobbyist who'd like an easier way to find like-minded creators and collaborators so she can take her music to the next level.



**Sandra**

**Age:** 23

**Education:** B.A. in Business

**Hometown:** Brooklyn, NY

**Family:** single

**Occupation:** retail

*"I'm overflowing with ideas for using my electronic gear in combination with other musical voices and artists."*

## Goals

- Wants to meet other creative types for collaboration
- Looking for venues where she can perform her music
- Wants to organize her artistic contacts.

## Frustrations

- Wishes there were a more efficient way for artists to meet rather than at venues
- Feels she is missing out on cool events because she doesn't know the right people.

Sarah recently got her undergraduate degree in business, but her passion lies in making electronic music via her laptop and wants to get deeper into that scene in New York by finding new collaborators. She has started attending electronic music laptop jam sessions at a venue in Brooklyn.



# User research: pain points

1

## Networking within current social platforms.

Many users would like a way to network with like-minded musicians and bands without having to be locked into existing social platforms like Facebook.

2

## Creating multiple profiles for individual or group.

Users who maintain multiple professional identities (for instance, a violin soloist who also works in a quartet) should have a way to create multiple profiles that can all be gathered in one place.

3

## One-time search vs. ongoing active search.

Search is usually a one-time event, but it would be nice to be able to have an ongoing “search agent” feature that is constantly checking for new and matching profiles, much like a job search agent.

# Starting the design

- Paper wireframes
- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

# Paper wireframes

MuseFuse is being designed as a responsive website, and as such, wireframes needed to be sketched out that represented the UI in various sizes and widths: desktop, tablet, and mobile.

“My Searches” and “My Profiles” always stand out as the two main sections users in which users will spend most of their time. In the mobile site, these become stacked into one column with collapsible headings.

All designs share simple header and footer bars that lead to common site-wide features.

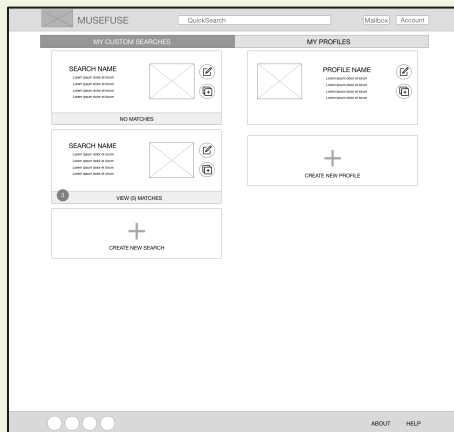


# Digital wireframes

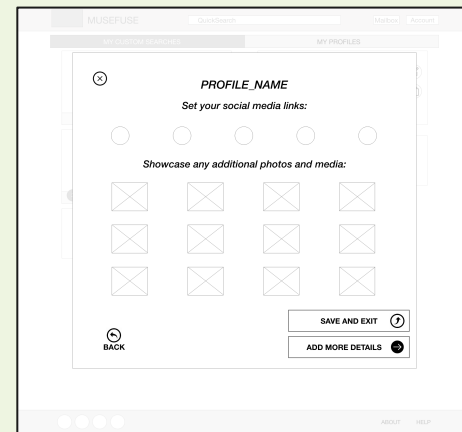
This case study focuses mainly on the user flow involved in creating and customizing a user profile. Search functionality will be addressed in a future case study.

Profile creation proceeds in a linear fashion across a series of seven steps that appear in consecutive windows that pop up atop the main dashboard window.

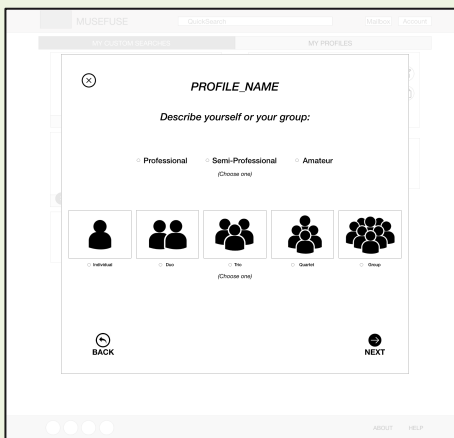
Upon either completion of all screens or exiting the flow, the user is shown their complete profile and can return to the main MuseFuse dashboard from there.



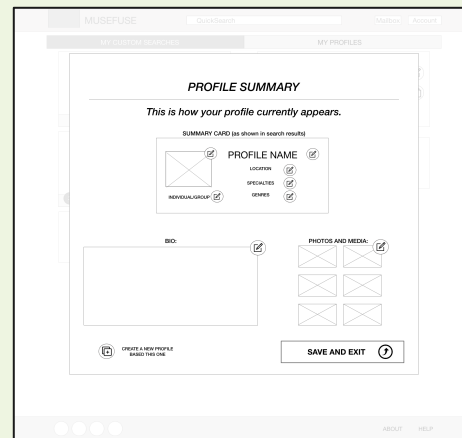
Site dashboard / landing page



Example step 6 of 7: adding social links and additional media



Example step 2 of 7: describing individual or group

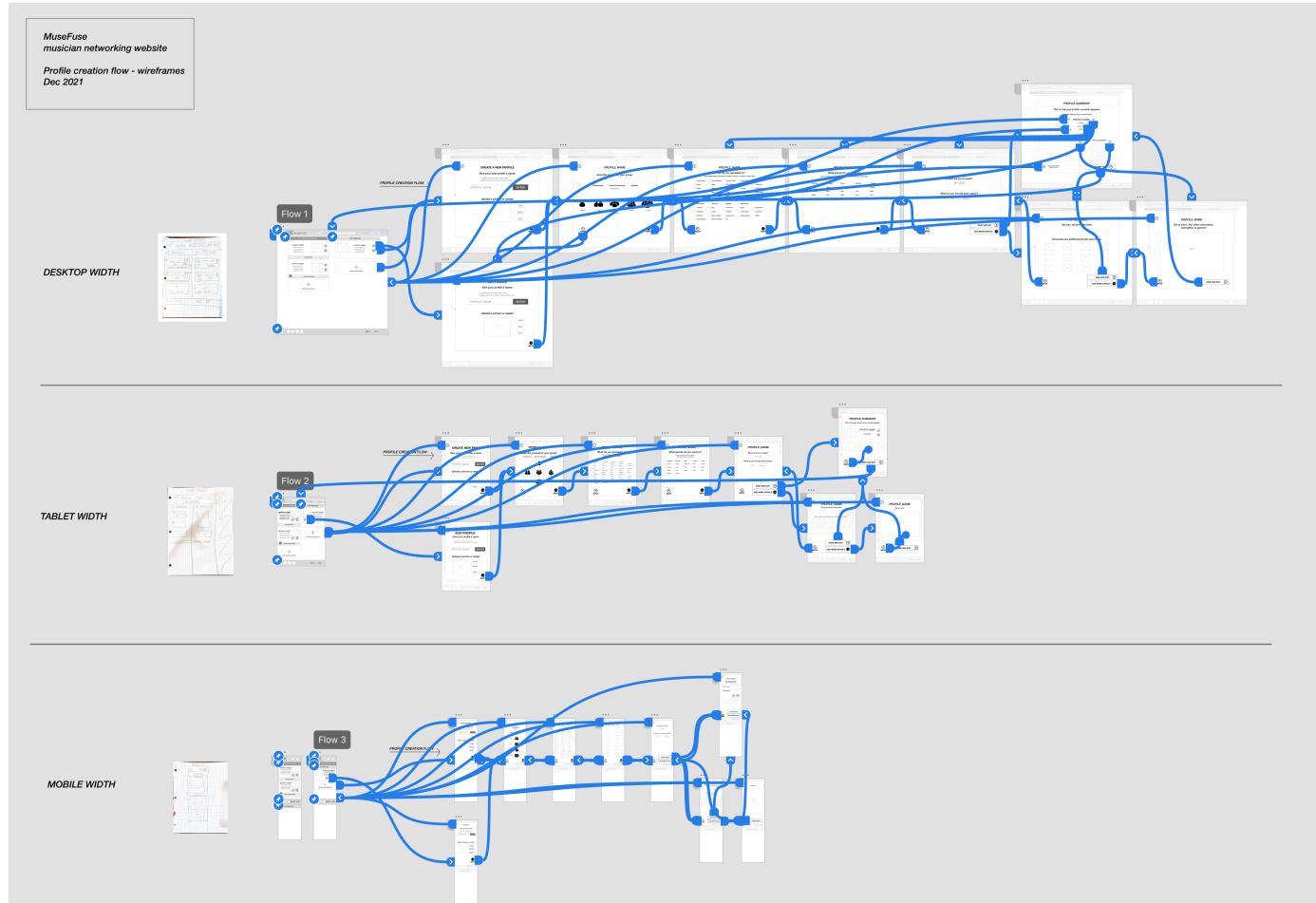


Profile summary page

# Low-fidelity prototype

Digital wireframes were connected to create the user profile-creation flow, and connections were duplicated across all screen sizes.

[View the MuseFuse low-fidelity prototype \(desktop-width\)](#)



# Usability study: parameters



Study type:

Unmoderated



Location:

Remote



Participants:

4



Length:

3 days

# Usability study: findings

A usability study was conducted using the low-fidelity wireframes, and the findings informed revisions that were incorporated into the mockups and eventual high-fidelity prototype.

## Study findings

- 1 Users appreciated the linear flow of profile creation, but were unsure why some pages seemed required and others seemed optional.
- 2 Some users were unsure of the difference between the site dashboard and the profile summary screen.

# Refining the design

- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

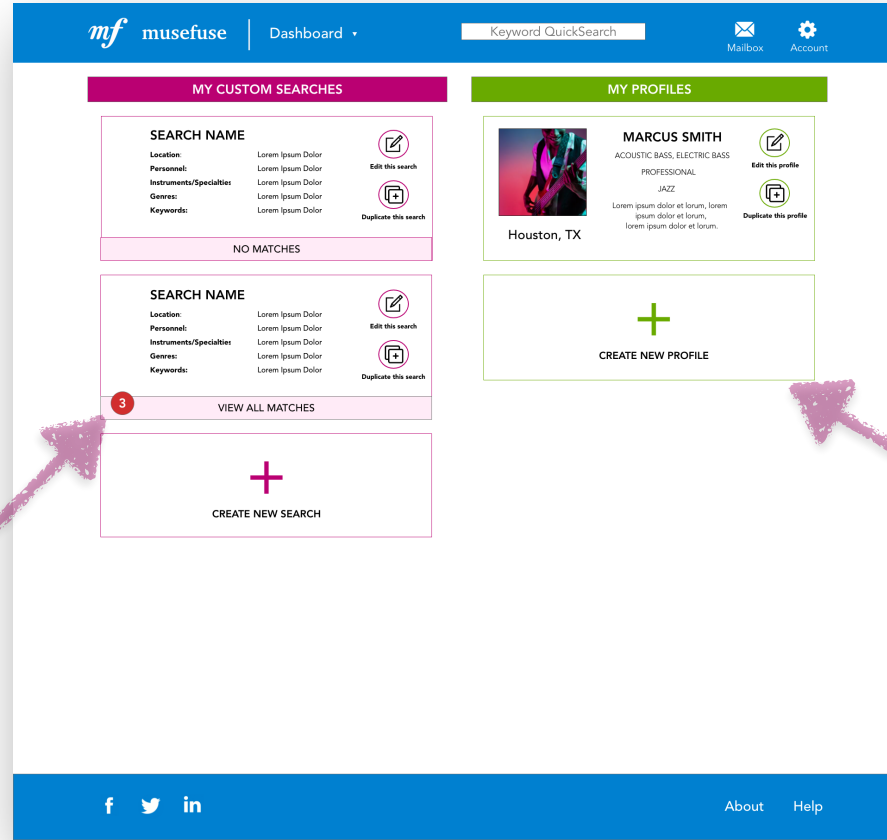


# Mockups

Mockups were created after synthesizing the feedback from the usability study.

A two-column layout on the site dashboard page differentiates between the two primary functions of the site: custom searches and custom profiles.

Users are notified of new matches for their custom searches.



Clear call-to-action initiates the profile-creation flow.

Site dashboard/landing page

# Mockups

The profile-creation flow was streamlined into a series of seven consecutive screens, each of which has a visible step number so the user knows where they are in the process.

1. Name availability and primary picture

CREATE A NEW PROFILE  
Give this profile a name.  
This is what will be displayed on your profile card and in search results.  
It might be your real name, your stage name, the name of your group, etc.  
PROFILE\_NAME ENTER  
Upload your primary picture or avatar:  
[Image Placeholder]  
UPLOAD MENU  
Step 1 of 7 NEXT

2. Personnel

PROFILE NAME  
Describe yourself or your group:  
Professional Semi-Professional Amateur  
[Choose one]  
Individual Duo No Group Band  
[Choose one]  
BACK Step 2 of 7 NEXT

3. Instruments and specialties

PROFILE NAME  
What do you specialize in?  
[Check all that apply. Genres not listed? You'll have a chance to add it later!]  
Vocals Lead Vocals Backed Vocals Chorus Keyboard Wind Keyboard  
Piano Organ Synthesizer Accordion Keyboard  
Drums Percussion Wurlitzer Trumpet Hand Drums  
Harp Harp Guitar Acoustic Bass Euphonium  
Electric Guitar Acoustic Guitar Keys Lap Steel  
Flute Clarinet Oboe English Horn Bassoon  
Woodwind Saxophone Trumpet Easy Wind  
Trombone Horn Baritone Euphonium  
Computer Lyricist Arranger Conductor  
Producer Music Copyist Sequencing Programming DAWs  
Sound Design Electronic Music Kit  
BACK Step 3 of 7 NEXT

4. Genres

PROFILE NAME  
What genres do you work in?  
[Check all that apply. Genres not listed? You'll have a chance to add it later!]  
Alternative RnB Blues Chordal Country  
Gospel Covers Dance Electronic Folk Gospel  
Hip-Hop Jazz Latin Latin Soul Soul  
Other Pop RnB Rock Soul  
Theater Wave  
BACK Step 4 of 7 NEXT

5. Location

PROFILE NAME  
Where are you located?  
ZIP CODE  
What is your normal work radius?  
10 mi/km  
BACK Step 5 of 7 NEXT

6. Social links and media

PROFILE NAME  
Set your social media links:  
[Social Media Icons]  
Showcase any additional photos and media:  
[Image Grid]  
BACK Step 6 of 7 NEXT

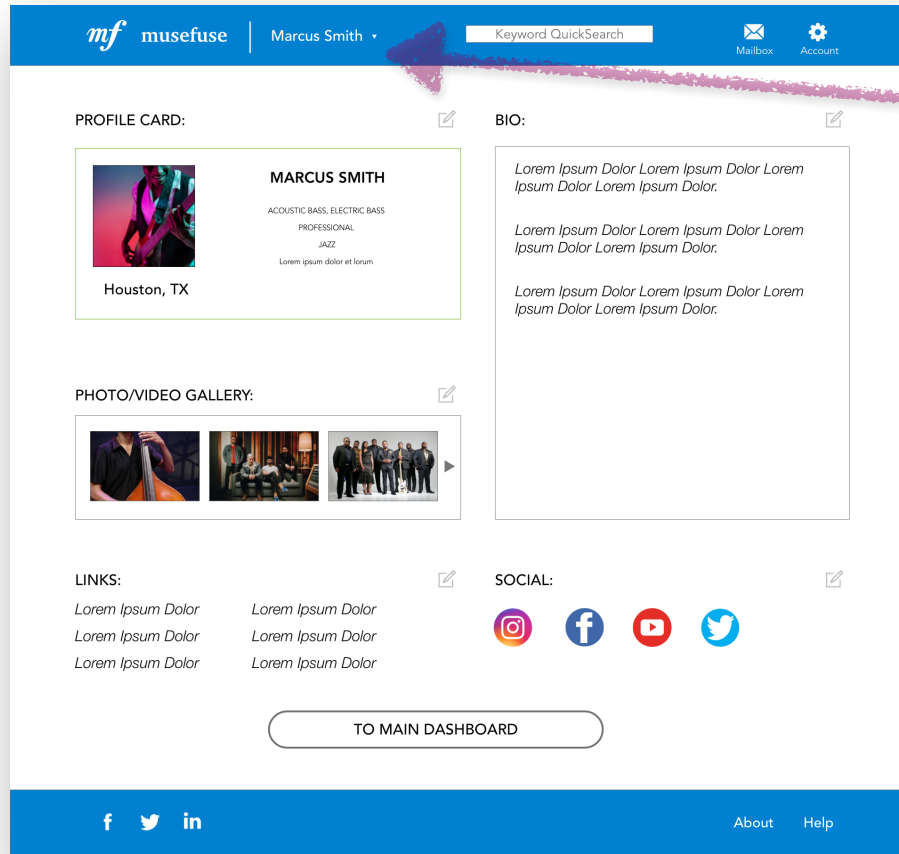
7. Bio and keywords

PROFILE NAME  
Tell us more. Any other instruments, specialties, or genres?  
BIO  
BACK Step 7 of 7 FINISH

In a change from the wireframes, the user no longer has to choose between “save and exit” or “add more details”; the profile is auto-saved upon flow exit, and details can easily be added from the subsequent profile summary page.

# Mockups

After profile creation, the user is presented with an editable profile summary and a representation of how their profile card will appear in search.



The user can now navigate between the site dashboard and any opened profile or search pages via a drop-down menu.

Profile summary page

# High-fidelity prototype

Mockups were connected to create a high-fidelity prototype of the profile-creation flow.



View the [MuseFuse high-fidelity prototype \(desktop\)](#)

# Accessibility considerations

1

The chosen colors were tested to meet contrast and readability standards.

2

Icons were utilized alongside text wherever possible: call-to-action buttons, mail, and settings.

3

Alt-text for screen readers will be added to images to aid users with impaired vision.

# Going forward

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- Takeaways
- Next steps

# Takeaways



## Impact:

Users were less interested in reading a newsfeed from musicians they already know, and more interested in direct discovery of new musicians for networking.

MuseFuse differentiates itself from a social network from the very first page; it presents the user's profiles and searches front-and-center, and essentially acts as a database, constantly querying searches and profiles for potential matches.



## What I learned:

The initial challenge was in determining what users would want from a networking site. By presenting MuseFuse essentially as a database matching profiles and custom searches, it became clearer how to structure the site dashboard.

Feedback from the usability study resulted in simplifying the profile-creation flow. Users always need to know where they are in the process and what their options are for navigating the site's main features.

# Next steps

1

## Search-creation flow

The custom-search flow needs to be designed and implemented, so that users can be alerted to profiles matching specified criteria. This flow should be as simple and straightforward as profile creation.

2

## Integrated messaging

A secure direct-messaging system needs to be designed and implemented, so that users can directly contact the owners of profiles they have discovered via custom search or quick search.

3

## Onboarding

First-time users should be able to quickly and easily learn how MuseFuse works and how it essentially functions as a database rather than a social network. An embedded video or series of splash screens could accomplish this kind of onboarding.



# Let's connect!



For more information on my UX, VR, and Music Design portfolios, visit:

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A dimly lit music studio with a brick wall and a large window. In the foreground, a drum set is visible. To the left, a Yamaha keyboard is on a stand with a microphone on a boom arm. In the center, a wooden chair sits on a table next to a lamp with a yellow shade. A small globe lamp is also visible. The scene is moody and atmospheric.

THANK YOU!