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showMe Interactive Medium-fi Prototype

https://projects.invisionapp.com/d/main#/projects/1998652

PROBLEM AND SOLUTION OVERVIEW

showMe aims to create a sharing community that fosters user connectivity and music discovery using proximity and tailored suggestions.

Current methods of sharing music through music clients such as HypeMachine and SoundCloud involves copying and pasting bland hyperlinks into texts or emails, which are sent to the recipient. This type of system is fragmented, lacking the organization and interaction that is needed to sustain social exchange. To solve this problem, we have designed a mobile app to facilitate and encourage music sharing through a mobile app interface that is both fun and easy to use.

REPRESENTATIVE TASKS

We have developed the same three representative tasks from our low-fi prototype:

1.   (Simple) Discover trending music by location and genre – To strengthen a sense of community, users will be able to look up a list of songs ranked by popularity in a geographical location—for example, the top 10 songs in Stanford, CA. Since people who live in the same area often share the same cultural and entertainment preferences, we thought this would be a great way for people to discover new music that they might like from a broad network of people in their local community. To tailor the discovery experience, users can narrow down the music list by genre to find songs in niche categories.

2.   (Medium) Create playlists to curate song suggestions – We changed this concept so that users can create more than one playlist to receive music. Previously, we believed that limiting the suggestion quota would encourage friends to be more active in submitting music suggestions, due to the exclusivity that is generated when playlist slots are limited. We have since removed this limit in response to user studies feedback. Like before, each playlist enables the user to request unlimited songs that correspond to a specific occasion and genre. The user has the option to limit quotas if he or she wants to make playlist suggestions more exclusive.

3.   (Complex) Share suggestions to friends' playlists – We have extended sharing options so that users can now suggest artists or albums in addition to specific songs. We have also incorporated a privacy toggle button for suggestions. Recommendations are private by default, but can also be publically broadcasted. We have also made it much easier for users to send songs to multiple friends at once.

REVISED INTERFACE DESIGN

Our overall strategy for the redesign of our initial prototype included adding more visual appeal to the media applications (home page), dispersing actions across multiple pages (location/genre discovery), and limiting the use of complicated, novel interfaces (sending songs to friends).

Specifics of our task redesigns will be discussed individually on the following pages.
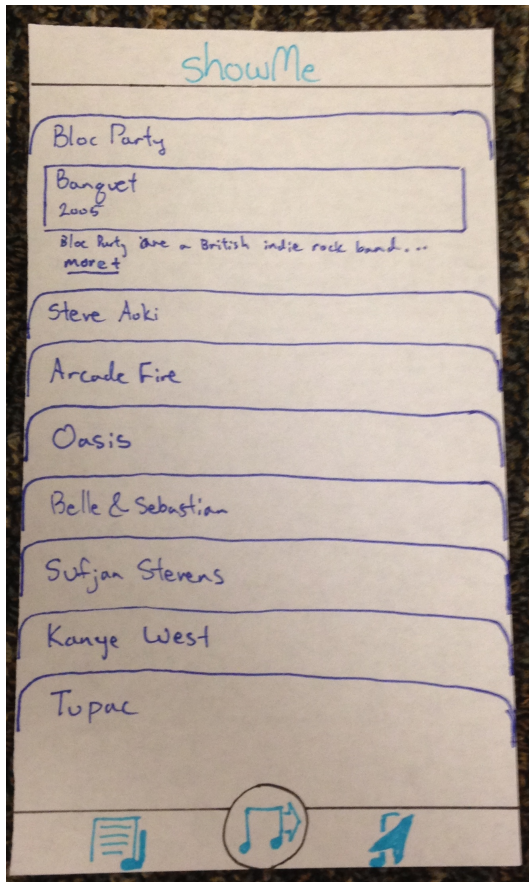
HOME PAGE REDESIGN

Fig. 2. Low-fi home page

Fig. 3. Medium-fi home page

The overall design of our home page remained the same. The home page contains an inbox of all received suggestions, with three icons along the bottom for navigation to the three main tasks (create new playlist, send songs, search for popular local songs). Minor changes (Fig. 3) included incorporating more color for visual appeal, as well as creating better icons for easier navigation. We added numbers so that it would be easier to quantify the number of suggestions.
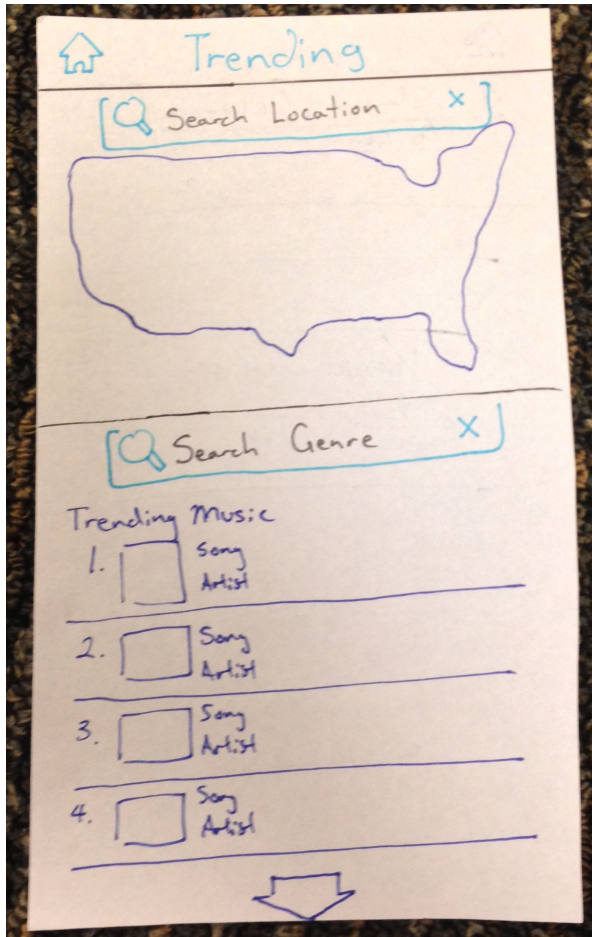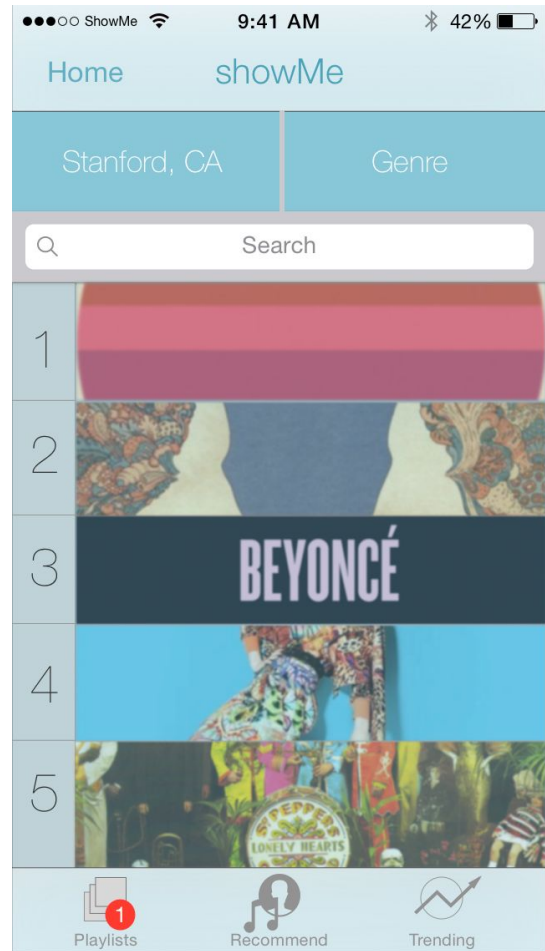
Fig. 4. Low-fi trending page

Fig. 5. Medium-fi trending landing page

Clicking on the bottom right button on the home screen brings the user to the trending page. We received lots of negative feedback about the confusing double search bars, as well as cluttered layout and irrelevant map (Fig. 4). We have since changed the layout so that it is simple and streamlined (Fig. 5), with the list of popular songs occupying most of the space. There is also a default location, which is the user's current location. Clicking on either the location or genre button at the top will allow for further filtering.

TASK 2 REDESIGN: CREATE NEW PLAYLISTS
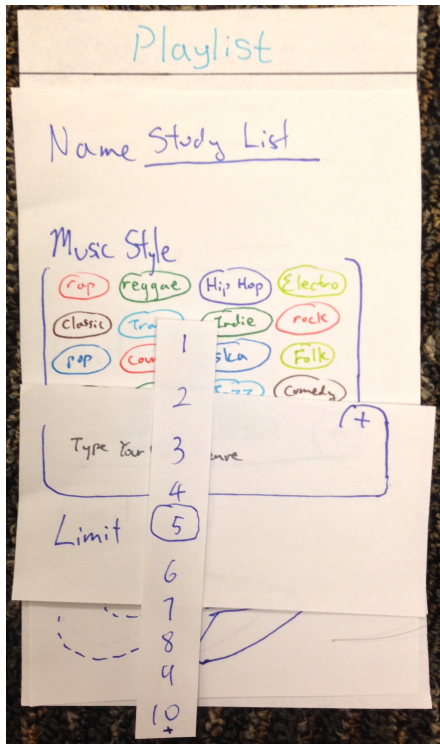
Fig. 6. Low-fi playlist creation
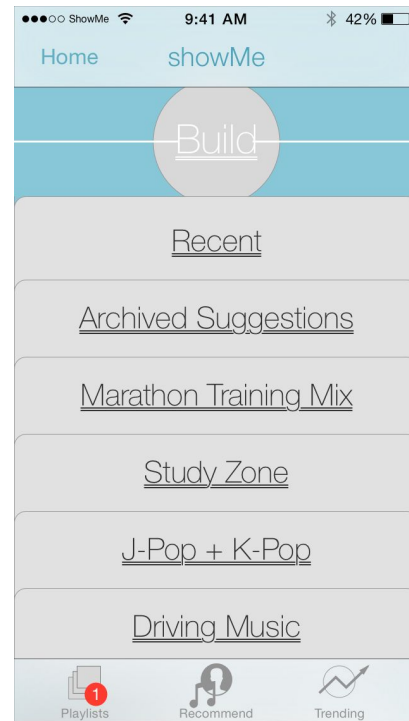
Fig. 7. Medium-fi playlist landing page with multiple playlists
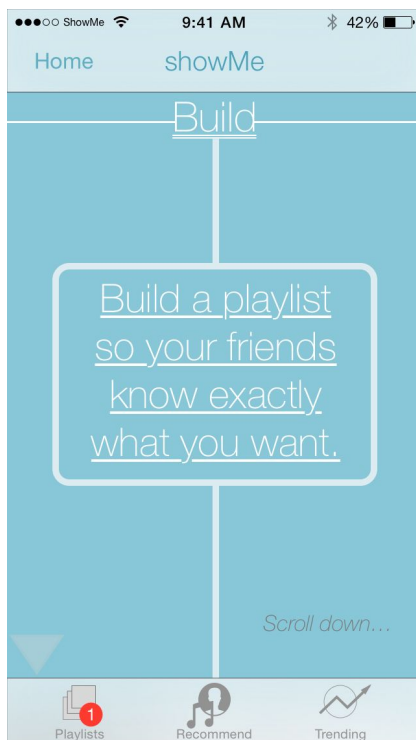
Fig. 8. Start customizing playlist

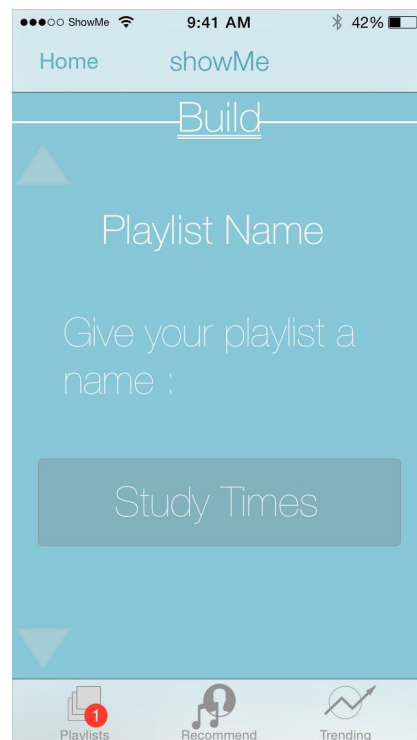Fig. 9. Name playlist, indicate situation

The biggest addition to our playlist creation page is the option to view multiple playlists. Previously, it was only possible to create one playlist (Fig. 6) for receiving music suggestions. The first time a user creates a playlist, there will be a tutorial (Fig. 8) that walks through the creation process, including naming the song (Fig. 9), indicating a genre, and changing the playlist limit, if desired.

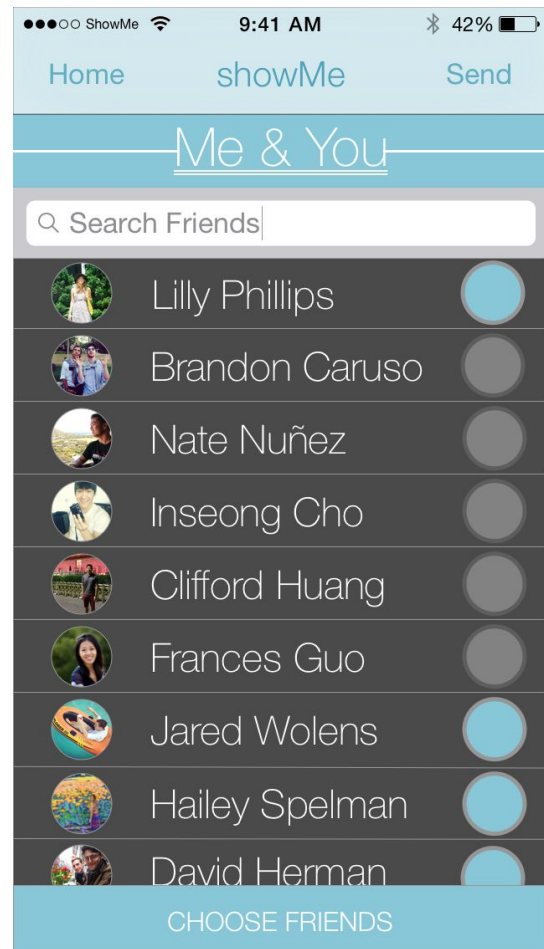## TASK 3 REDESIGN: SEND A MUSIC SUGGESTION
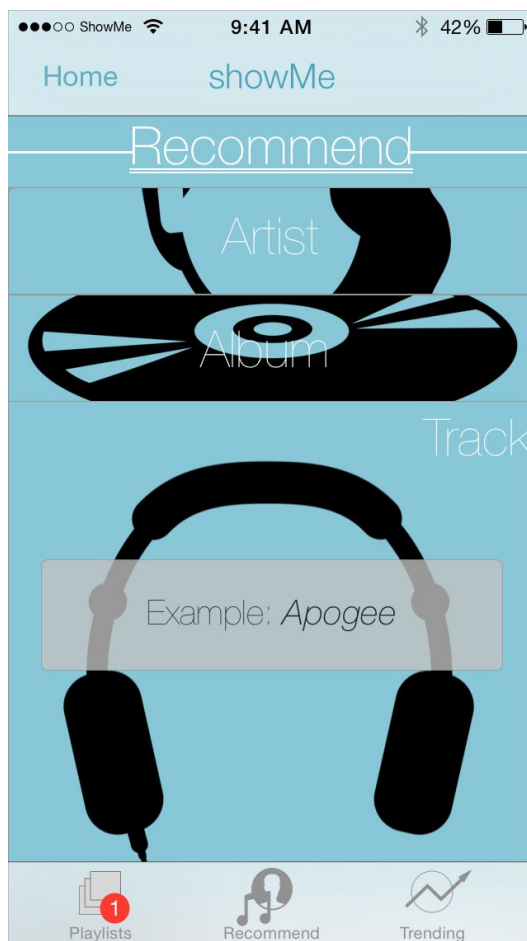
Fig. 10. Recommendation landing page

Fig. 11. Send to multiple friends

We have streamlined our recommendations page so that it no longer features friends' playlists. From the user studies, that feature was not very useful and it cluttered the design. Now, the recommendations button immediately directs to a page with a variety of options (Fig. 10) for suggesting music: by artist, album, or track. We have made it much easier to send to multiple friends at once (Fig. 11). Before, this was a suboption and the user had to type in each person's name individually.

PROTOTYPE OVERVIEW

We used Sketch and Invision as two main tools to create the interactive medium-fi prototype. Sketch was used to design the interface and organize different tasks and Invision was used to add interactivity to the prototype.

Limitations

Sketch is a simplified version of Adobe Photoshop. Sketch was simple, had quick access to necessary tools and presets, and had iOS templates. Sketch provided less detailed options compared to Adobe Photoshop but it had enough options to quickly and easily create interface designs. The drawbacks were that it crashed and lagged often and tools were too automated at times, preventing fine-tuning. Invision was great in that it allowed online collaboration through shared screens. It also had a clean interface for easy interaction when building prototypes. The drawbacks to using Invision were the difficulty in implementing scrolling and swiping and lack of templates. The said difficulties forced us to replace scrolling feature with a "tap to scroll".

Wizard of Oz Techniques

The actual app would feature scrolling to move through screens when building a playlist but due to difficulty with Invision to create a scrolling function, we implemented "tap to scroll" (Figure 12). The user can tap anywhere on the screen and imitate scrolling but the underlying functionality would simply be a tap.

Hard-coded Features

Our application is meant to operate with user data so most of our hard-coded features were data points that we would have had to gather through actual uses. We had to hard-code user data (friends), user playlists, suggested songs, trending songs, and album arts. We also had to hard-code user inputs: search and choices of friends. Invision is simply a tool for prototyping so we could not incorporate searching or real-time updates.
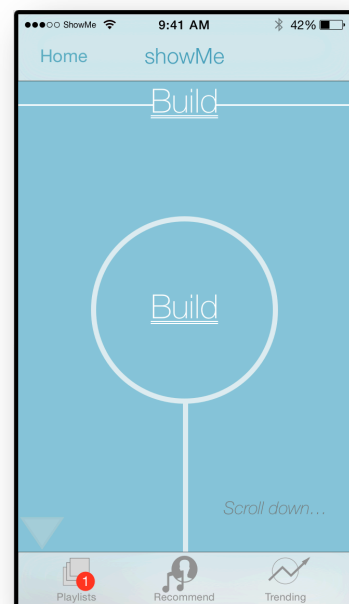

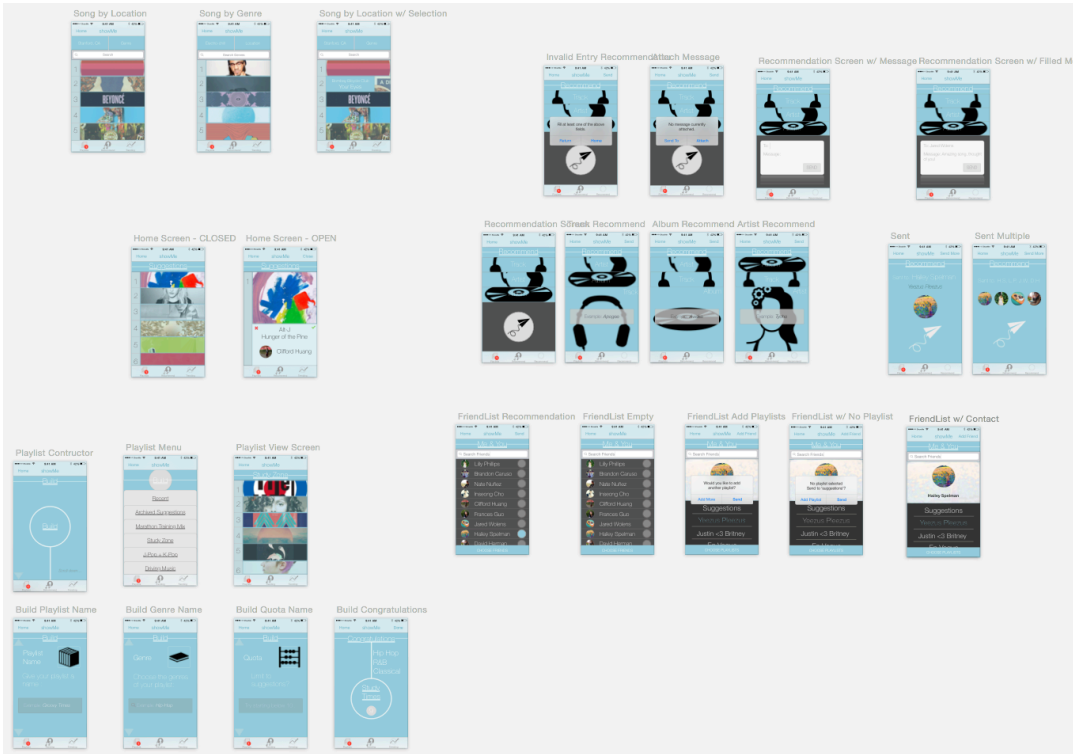Fig. 12. Wizard of Oz technique: replacing scroll function with taps.

Figure 13. Overview of the medium-fi prototype for showMe

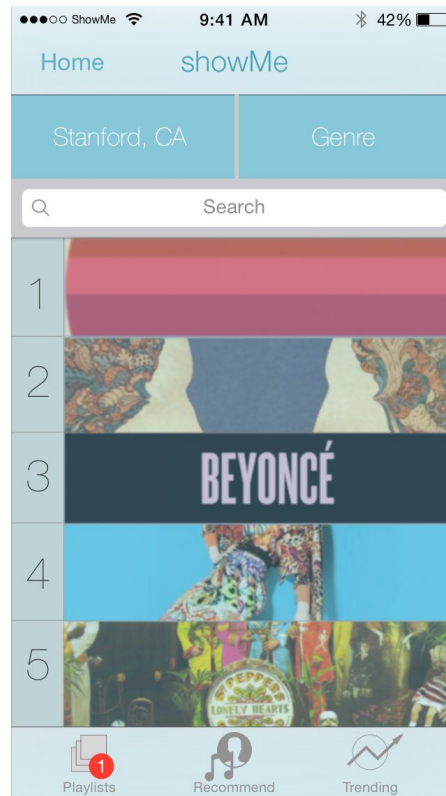Figure 14. Home page contains suggestions inbox
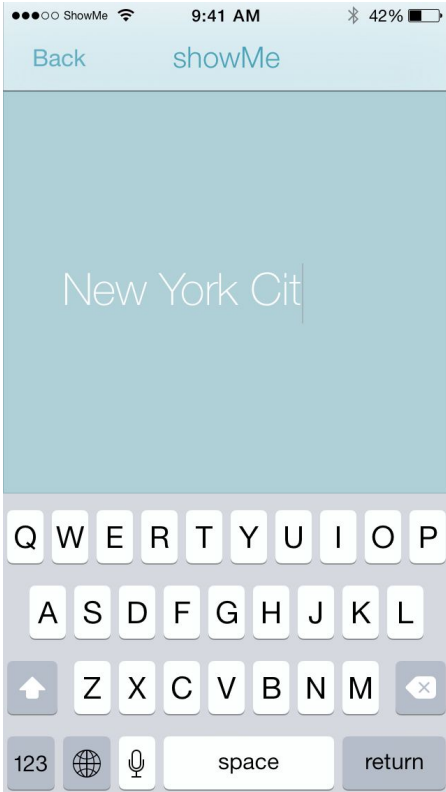

Figure 15. Suggestions landing page

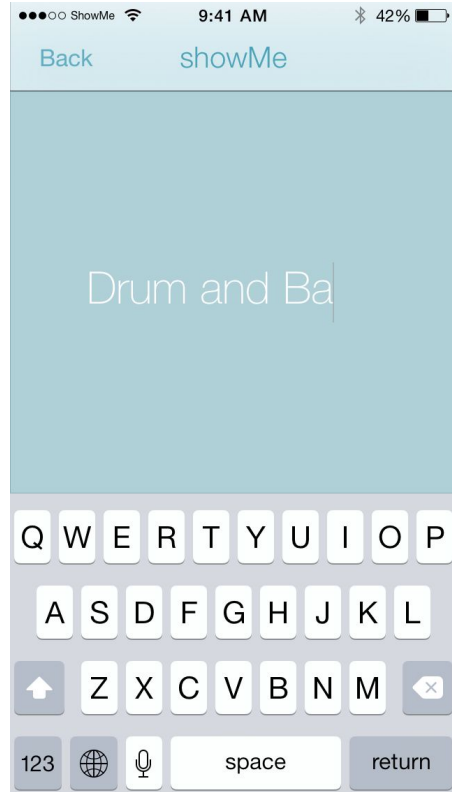Figure 16. Change location for trends

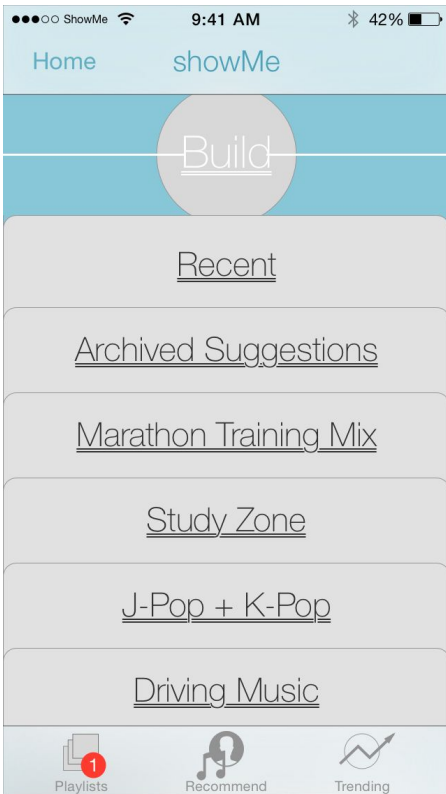Figure 17. Change genre for trends
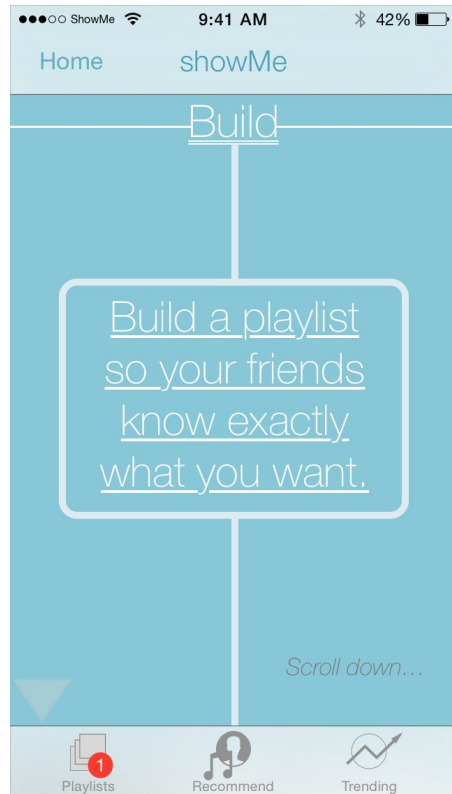

Figure 18. Playlist landing page
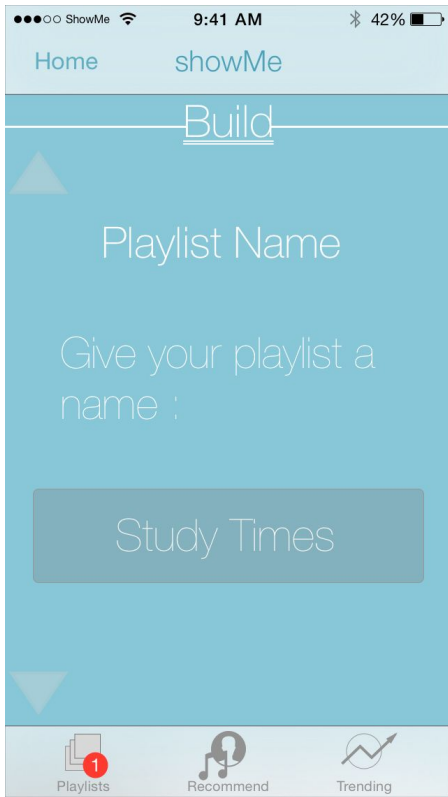

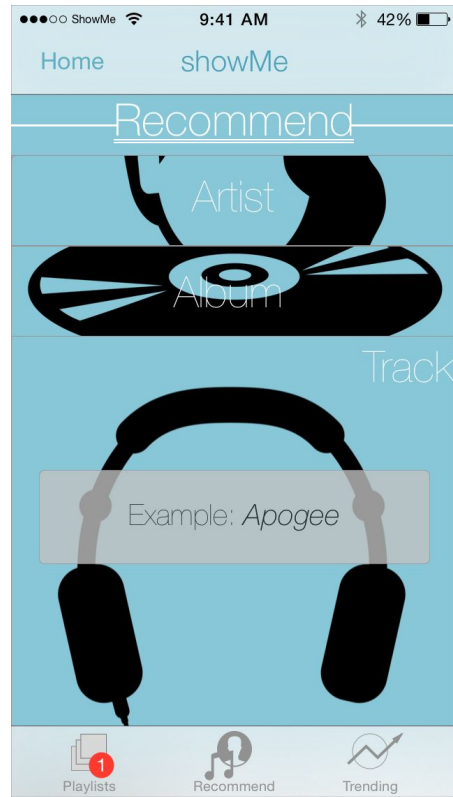Figure 19. Playlist creation tutorial

Figure 20. Playlist customization

Figure 21. Recommendations landing
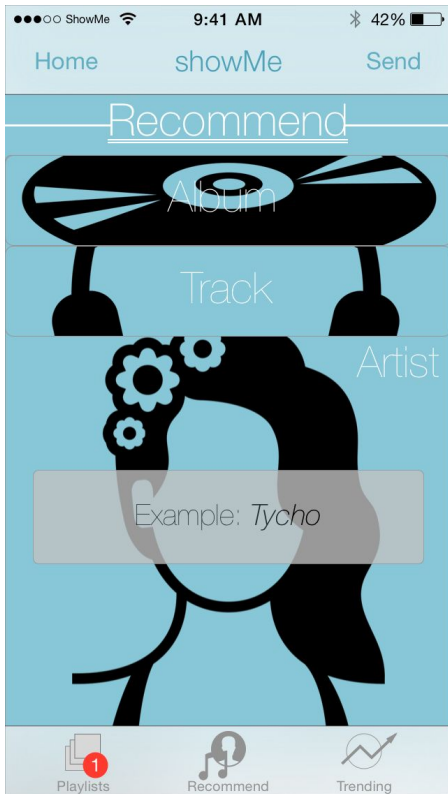
Figure 22. Recommend by artist

Figure 23. Recommend by Album
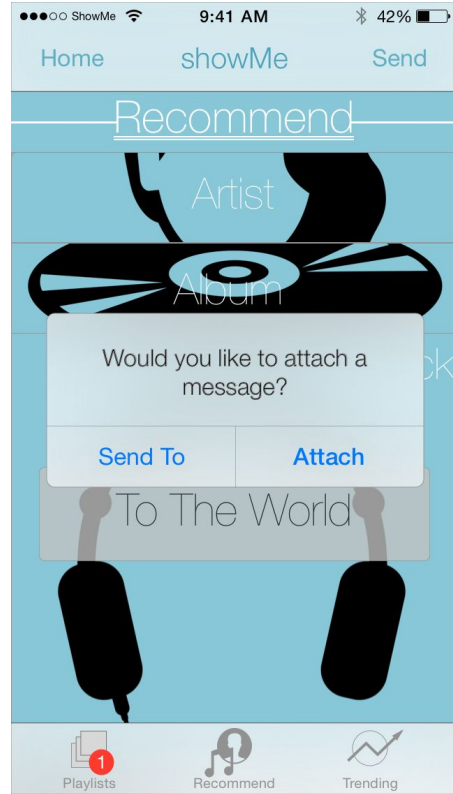
Figure 24. Recommend specific track
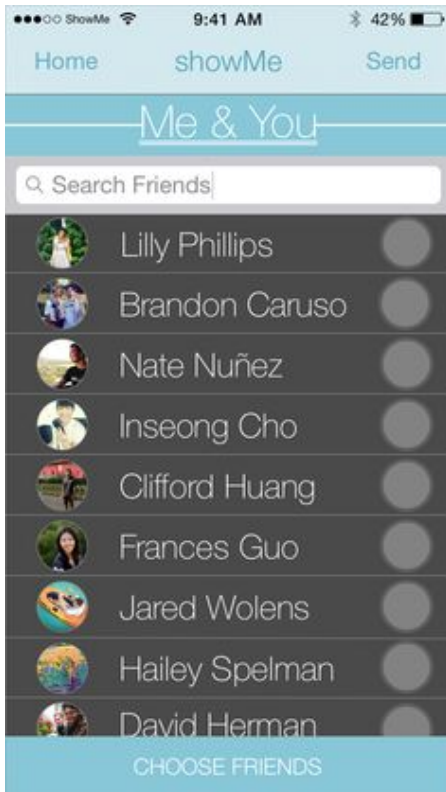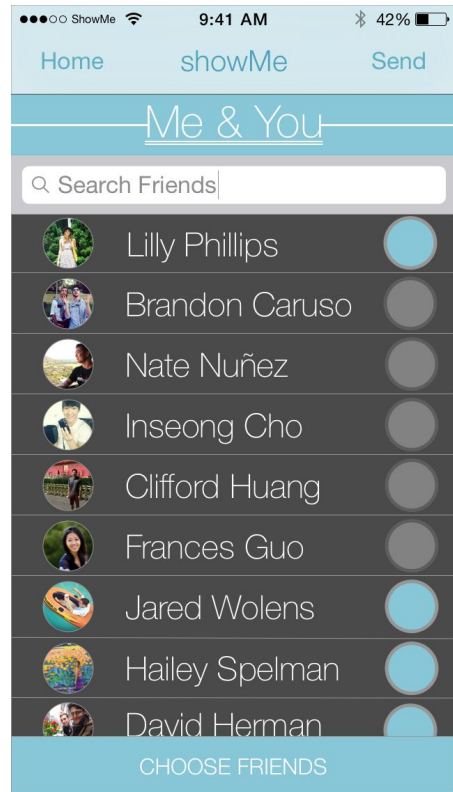

Figure 25. Send song with message

Figure 26. Choose a friend to send to

Figure 27. Choose multiple friends