

Using Radio as a Tool for Teaching Music Industry

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This presentation at: <http://rkwilley.com/presentations>

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Some of the goals in my class include helping students develop an entrepreneurial mindset, develop communication skills, to get in the habit of looking at things from other people's points of view, to get practical experience, and to make contacts off campus. I'm going to report on some ways I've been using radio in its various forms to provide experiences for students to develop these skills by creating content and by adding value by curating what's already out there. Along the way they are becoming more aware of our regional music and entertainment culture.

What makes radio radio?

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What makes radio radio? It provides a sit-back, hands free, experience that you may enjoy when you can't, or don't want to, interact, for example, while working or driving.

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Radio began as a social experience, and music was often heard in a group





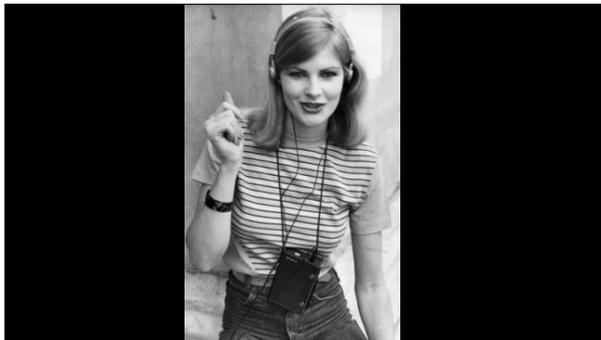
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Popular music forked off and turned into a youth business when young people were able to buy records and record players that they could afford in their own rooms.



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It became mobile and even more isolating with the invention of transistor radios



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The Walkman cassette system allowed you to record personal collections and share them with friends



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The iPod's ability to put a thousand songs in your pocket and create your playlists became a feature of smart phones.



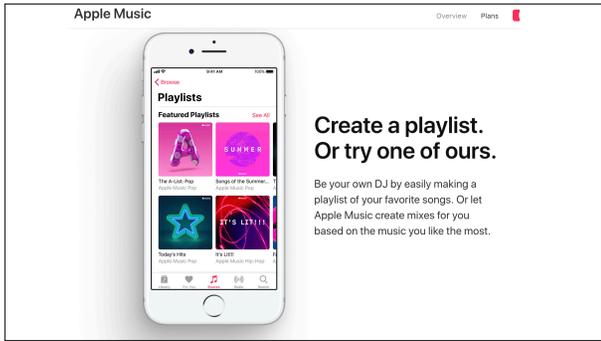
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Apple continued to miniaturize the technology in the Apple watch.



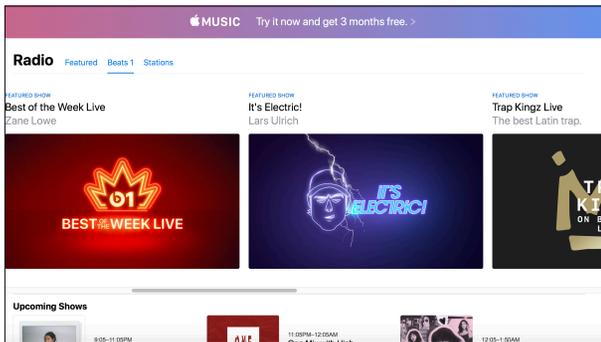
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For now, Apple's HomePod speaker only works with Apple music.



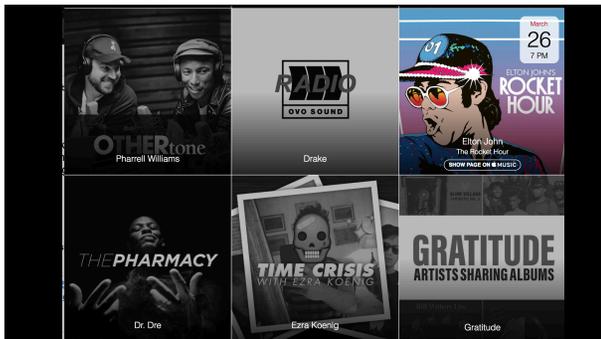
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Steve Jobs said that people wanted to own their music, but they, like other companies, are shifting to streaming.



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Apple radio - a playlist introduced by a DJ



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Beats 1 with celebrity DJs and curators like Zane Lowe from BBC. It is a radio station accessible through iTunes music or iOS device.



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We are no longer attached to a set of past purchases, instead we can subscribe to a service like Apple Music or Spotify to listen to our playlists pulled from a huge library. The music comes from the cloud and we can connect to it through a variety of devices.



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Faced with an overwhelming, unlimited choice, it is comforting to retreat to your old favorites or songs chosen algorithmically from your past choices. Another options is to leave the choice of music to someone else and have a sit back experience where all you have to do is select the channel, or change channels if you lose interest. If Pareto was right that life breaks down to a 80-20 division, then perhaps you find yourself wanting someone else to feed you 20% of the time. Civilians may prefer to be guided 80% of the time, by a DJ who knows more about music than you—a specialist who has the time, expertise, and sensitivity to design an experience. Sometimes it's nice to hear a voice that is connected to a specific place rather than a faceless algorithm.



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Would like to show some examples of how we're using the curation experience that radio and other technologies offer in a four different classes: A large survey of the Music Industry class w/ 125 students, a Songwriting class, Senior projects, and radio production.

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	Commercial	Non-commercial
Network	iHeart (?)	National Public Radio
Independent	Locally owned	College

I assign my students to report on what they hear on four types of stations. In the process they come to understand how much autonomy the DJ has to choose which song to play, and how much comes from a playlist or rotation. Local stations offer a voice connected with a place, and can incorporate news, weather, public service announcements, take requests, and interviews with independent artists. Some students report liking the college stations because they play unfamiliar songs. Others dislike it for the same reason.

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Recent Episodes <https://indianapublicradio.org/thescene/>

The screenshot shows a list of audio episodes with the following details:

- S08 E24** – Carrington Clinton Trio, and Sean Imboden Trio (March 10, 2018)
- S08 E23** – It's Just Craig, and Chad Lett (March 3, 2018)
- S08 E22** – The Trees, and Shiny Penny (February 24, 2018)
- S08 E21** – Autumn Androids, and The Underhill Family Orchestra (February 17, 2018)
- S08 E20** – The Indigos & Katie Garringer (February 10, 2018)
- S08 E19** – Thunder Dreamer and Player Piano (February 3, 2018)
- S08 E18** – Laura K. Balke and Bob Barrick (January 27, 2018)
- S08 E17** – Caleb McCoach, and Lily & Madeline (January 20, 2018)
- S08 E16** – Tonic Ball 16 (January 14, 2018)
- S08 E15** – Metavari and Coke Bottle Classes (December 2, 2017)

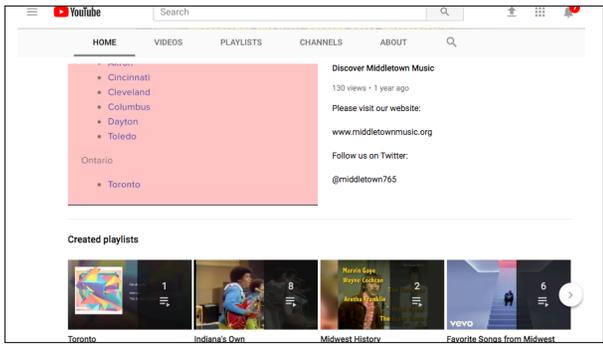
THE SCENE is a class for audio production students in partnership with our local NPR radio station. Students do field recording of live shows in venues across the state, conduct interviews, and come back to campus to edit/mix to make 55 minute episodes. Curating adds value to the experience, and is what differentiates it from algorithms driven by big data.

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<http://middletownmusic.org>

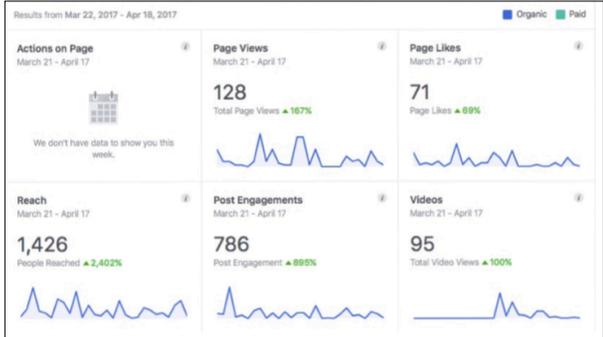
The screenshot shows a map of the Midwest region, highlighting the area around Muncie, Indiana. The map includes labels for states like Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio, as well as major cities and the Great Lakes.

My music industry class is developing a website called Middletown Music with resources to promote Midwest Music that serves as a hub for all our online resources. The name comes from an alias given the town by sociologists reporting the findings of their studies in the 1920s. Muncie was chosen because of how typical it was of small manufacturing towns. Our unfair advantage continues to be that we are extremely average, and we are trying to capitalize on having fingers on the pulse of the country's music tastes. We like to say that "If we like you here, they'll like you anywhere".



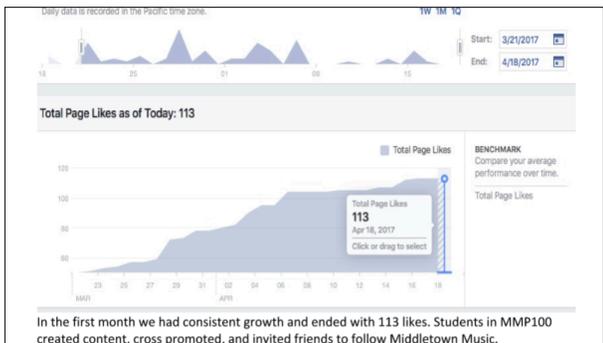
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The Middletown Music website links to the class's YouTube channel. The students find Midwest artists of interest to add to playlists that are organized by state, and add descriptions as part of their experiences writing social media content.



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They also create content for our Instagram and Facebook accounts about the bands they promote. I'm hoping that in the process of doing marketing they become more aware of how they are being marketed to, how their choices are manipulated by labels, and how to find new music to make their listening a richer experience.



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Here are some of the analytics showing how engagement is growing

In the first month we had consistent growth and ended with 113 likes. Students in MMP100 created content, cross promoted, and invited friends to follow Middletown Music.

MIDDLETOWN MUSIC | MiddleTown Music | MiddleTown Radio | City Music Guides | Blog

Kevin Krauter, musician and songwriter AUTHOR

2/23/2018 0 Comments

Wesley Foley conducted this interview with Kevin Krauter on February 19th, 2017. Kevin is a musician living in Muncie who is active as one third of the trio making up the band Hoops, and a solo musician in his own right.

Updates contributed by the site's producers and editors

VF: How did you first get into music, and when did it occur to you that you could do it for a living? And how was the transition from hobby to job and then that affected your feelings towards your craft?

ARCHIVES

February 2018
December 2017
November 2017
August 2017
July 2017

CATEGORIES

VF: I first got into playing music with my older brother when I was really young, like maybe 10 or 11. Then in middle school through high school I started playing in bands with my friends. I started writing and recording music in college, then Hoops put out our first tapes and started touring so we started taking it more seriously. When we got signed to Fat Possum, it seemed exciting like this was something I could do full time and eventually make a career out of. Making the transition from music as a hobby to actual job was definitely rough and took me by surprise, but it was also really exciting and has led me to take myself more seriously as an artist and work a bit harder.

VF: How has your experience been in the music industry? We often hear that record companies can be shady and exploitative of their artists. You mentioned Hoops being signed to Fat Possum, but I see that your two solo albums have been released under the Indiana label Wimpster.

VF: I put out my first two releases with Wimpster, and working with them has been really awesome. It's on a different label now, but Ben and Jared, who run Wimpster, are still managing me. They're two close friends of mine, and it feels good to have them with me.

VF: My professor runs a blog called MiddleTown Music. It's really into bringing more attention to the Midwest and the music scene in MiddleTown areas. Hoops is actually on the website. How would you describe the music scene here in Indiana? If you feel like getting more specific, how does it differ from city to city?

0 Comments

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Students conduct interviews, if the subjects agree we publish the conversation on our blog. Some students choose to call radio stations, especially those interested in careers in radio.

City Music Guides <http://middletownmusic.org/guides>

We're creating 30 websites with information about the music and entertainment scenes in the largest cities in the Midwest.

Illinois

- [Aurora](#)
- [Champaign-Urbana](#)
- [Chicago](#)
- [Joliet](#)
- [Peoria](#)

Indiana

- [Bloomington](#)
- [Evansville](#)
- [Fort Wayne](#)
- [Indianapolis](#)
- [Muncie](#)



We've got our own way of defining the Midwest—a mashup of the Upper Midwest and the Great Lakes

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We have music scene guides to the largest 30 cities in the region...

Radio Stations in Fort Wayne

WELT - Variety Radio

WBYR - Rock Radio

W245CA - Top 40 Radio

WLDE - Classic Rock Radio

WDFM - Variety Radio



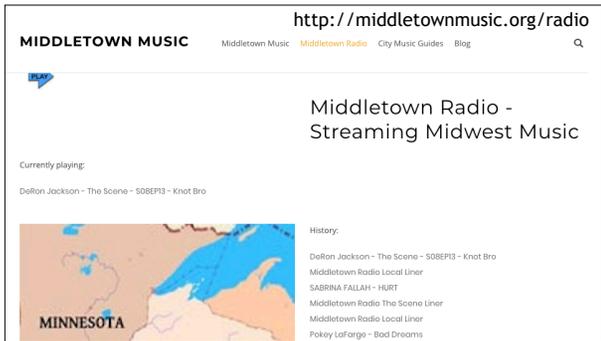
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...including info on local radio stations



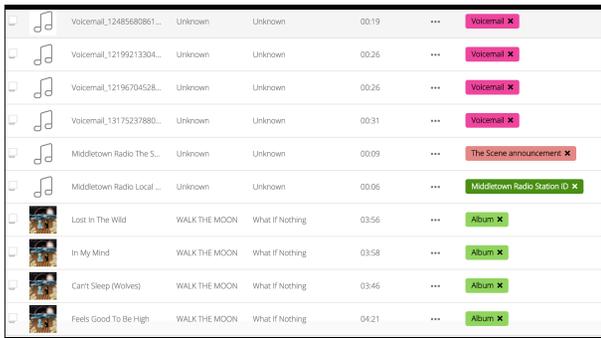
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indieonthemove.com is a website that helps musicians find places to perform. We have partnered with them to have students develop their phone skills by calling venues to check the listings in the database, and we're helping them expand their listings of radio stations.



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We have switched from distributing content through podcasts to having our own Internet radio station broadcasting original music from bands headquartered in the Midwest. The students use some of the skills used in A&R to find music from bands they are promoting and call our Google voice number to leave announcements and station IDs which are added to our stream. This gives them another reason to talk with musicians and an opportunity to develop their ability to pitch an idea. Students can stream from their laptops at home or live events in the field. The switch to Internet radio means that broadcasting is no longer tied to a studio in one physical location, and listening not limited to one geographical region. Our most faithful listener lives in Germany.



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In the meantime, one of our seniors has taken on the role of music manager as part of his capstone project. He is designing the schedule, adding his favorite episodes of THE SCENE, reviewing submissions, and picking album cuts from Midwest artists...

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...like Pokey LaFarge who is representative of the Americana genre associated with the Midwest...



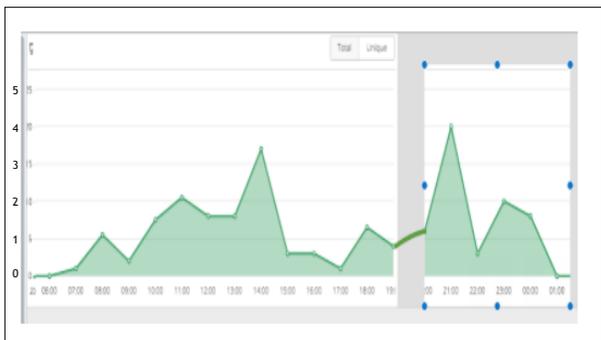
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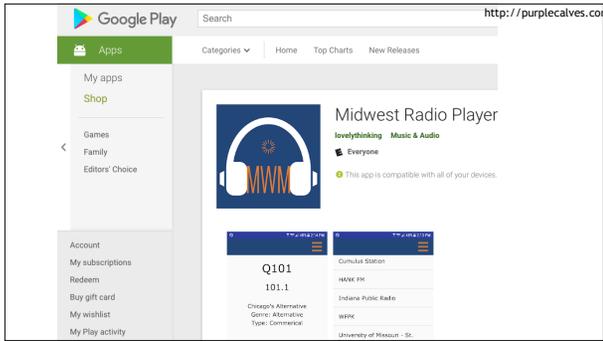
...and WALK THE MOON. The band was formed in Cincinnati, and their bass player is a graduate from our music production program.



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Here is a graph showing the number of listeners over a 19-hour period.





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There is a version of the MIDWEST RADIO PLAYER app for Android...



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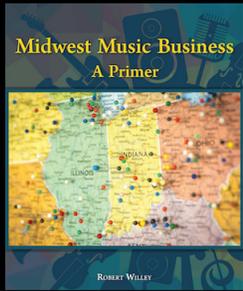
...and for iOS. Both versions are being tested and will have features added by the end of the semester.



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The app emulates a car radio that you can use until manufacturers make it a standard feature. There are scan forward/backward buttons, and you can save a station as a preset by doing a long press on one of the 6 locations. You can find the apps by searching for "Midwest Radio Player", or going to purplecalves.com. The code is open source, and would only require minor changes to make it work in your area. I'm looking for collaborators who would like to release players for other geographical areas. You can use this app until car manufacturer's build it into new cars.

<http://willshare.com/mmb>



MIDWEST MUSIC BUSINESS: A PRIMER

Contents

- Chapter 1: A Short History of the Music Business
- Chapter 2: The Artist's Team
- Chapter 3: Traditional Marketing
- Chapter 4: Digital Marketing
- Chapter 5: Sampling and Copyright
- Chapter 6: The Recording Industry
- Chapter 7: Publishing
- Chapter 8: Live Performance
- Chapter 9: The Music Business Today
- Chapter 10: Music and Entertainment in the Midwest

Interviews

- Adel Hyatt: Marketing Maven
- Bandy Chiaruzzo: DIY musician survival
- Katie Carlson: Creative Director, WALK THE MOON
- Rick Kinagy: Fort Wayne's Clyde Theatre
- Zoya Kinnett: Pianist for John Mellencamp
- Timothy Hays: Chicago's music scene and touring
- TJ Miller: Traditional jazz in St. Louis

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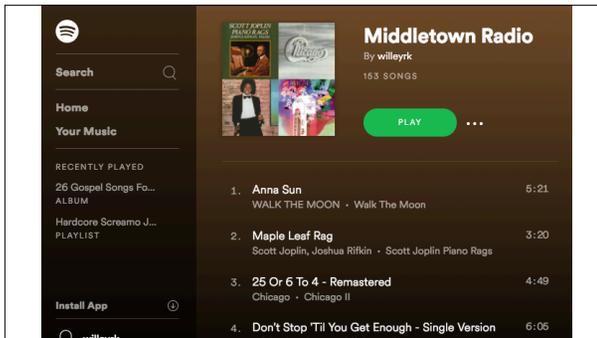
The activities on Midwest music and the radio app tie in with my book and its companion website. It covers the basics of how the music industry works today and includes a chapter on special features of the music and entertainment scene in the Midwest. Please let me know if you know anyone that teaches music industry and who is looking for a publishing opportunity, who could replace the chapter on the Midwest in order to create a new edition about the music scene in the west, south, or east. There is a review copy at the registration table.

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Spotify

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We use Spotify playlists for a variety of purposes. We have a collaborative playlist that students can contribute to that we listen to before class. We won't be renewing our subscriptions for our Middletown Radio streaming radio station next year since it is cheaper to piggyback on Spotify, who is in a better position to pay the costs of licensing and streaming.



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Radio is going to increasingly be driven by big data. Here is some of the data that a Spotify develops Echo Nest can derive from analyzing Spotify's library.

```

artist_mbid: db92a151-1ac2-438b-bc43-b82e149ddd50
the musicbrainz.org ID for this artists is db9...
artist_mbtags: shape = (4,)
this artist received 4 tags on musicbrainz.org
artist_mbtags_count: shape = (4,)
raw tag count of the 4 tags this artist received on musicbrainz.org
artist_name: Rick Astley
artist name
artist_playmeid: 1338
the ID of that artist on the service playme.com
artist_terms: shape = (12,)
this artist has 12 terms (tags) from The Echo Nest
artist_terms_freq: shape = (12,)
frequency of the 12 terms from The Echo Nest (number between 0 and 1)

```

41

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42

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artist_terms: shape = (12,)

```

Examples of Echo Nest song data

- Start time of each bar
- Danceability
- Duration
- Time at end of fadeout
- Energy
- Album name
- List of 100 similar lists
- Tempo
- Year released

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Echo Nest is a music intelligence company spun off from the M.I.T. Media lab intended to help with music identification, recommendations, creation of playlists, audio fingerprinting, and analysis. The company was acquired by Spotify in 2014.

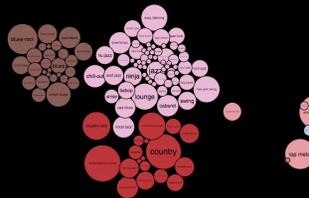
Examples of Echo Nest Algorithms

- Gradually move from one style to another
- Roadtrip playlists start to end points
- Learn about new genre
- Explore proximity between styles

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Spotify is the new radio, and offers listener choice of choosing what they want to hear or by using their past choices as seeds for algorithmically generated customized playlists, as well as Spotify's own playlists chosen for different times and situations in the day. If they allow users to embed commentary and advertisements there won't be any need to have radio anymore.

Echo Nest's Popcorn



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Here is one of Echo Nest's examples of programs that can built on their data about songs {wait for cursor to appear} click on a genre to listen, and see its relatedness to with other styles, in this case bossa nova. In the future songs themselves will be written for your tastes.

"Daddy's Car", generated by Sony CSL Research Lab

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We can't predict what environment our students will work in. I'm trying to foster basic character strengths like grit and communication skills that should transfer. What will be the result of iHeart Radio imploding, and new delivery methods like virtual reality systems, and how will artificial intelligence impact both the delivery as well as the creation of content itself? The researchers have developed FlowMachines, a system that learns music styles from a huge database of songs. Daddy's Car, a song composed by Sony CSL Research Lab in the style of The Beatles.

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