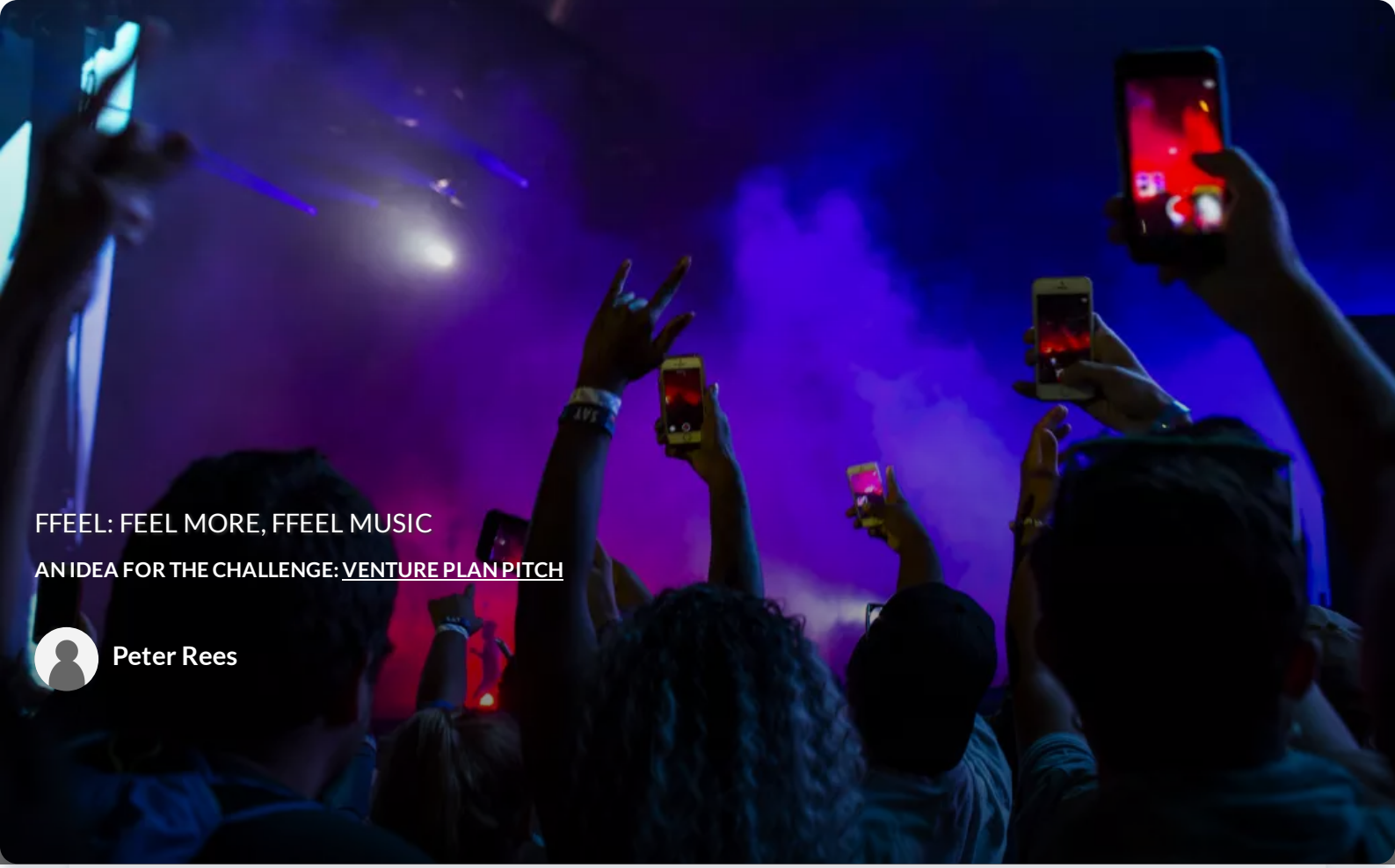


FFEEL: FEEL MORE, FFEEL MUSIC

AN IDEA FOR THE CHALLENGE: VENTURE PLAN PITCH

Peter Rees

Attachments

screenshot.jpg

CONCEPT

hearing-impaired · hearing loss · accessibility · deaf · community · portable · mobile · app · music · affordable · social enterprise

Ffeel is an app for Android and iOS devices that enhances the experience of music for people with severe to profound hearing loss. Deaf people experience music largely through rhythm and bass, using touch and sight as well as hearing, but their needs are often ignored by traditional music platforms.

Ffeel is a small utility that sits on the user's phone between any regular music source and the phone's audio output. **Ffeel** dynamically emphasises and adjusts key frequencies to deliver music the way deaf people already enjoy it - only with much greater clarity and power.

Ffeel is easily calibrated for each unique user. It can even make your phone vibrate in time with the beat. With **Ffeel** on your phone, music will simply feel better.

CUSTOMERS

Our customers are primarily deaf music lovers. This includes those with severe-to-profound hearing loss, and constitutes approximately 5 percent of the population or 466 million people globally, rising to around 10 percent by 2050 (World Health Organisation, March 2018)*.

Mobile-phone ownership stood at approx. 62.9 percent in 2016, and is expected to reach five billion by 2019.** We can extrapolate therefore that our potential market is up to 250 million people worldwide and rising.

A secondary but important customer base may be organisations and educational providers looking to increase their reach into the deaf community to whom we can license the underlying technologies.

*http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/deafness-and-hearing-loss

**https://www.statista.com/statistics/274774/forecast-of-mobile-phone-users-worldwide/

DANCING DANNY

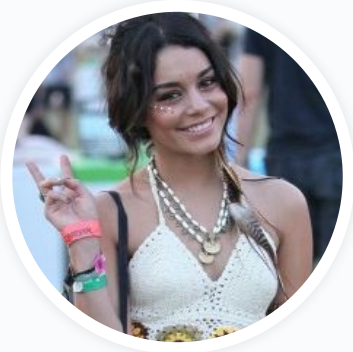
HAVING FUN

Kid (pre-secondary) years old

Dancing and Singing

Spending time with Mum and Dad

Banging things in time to music; Danny is profoundly deaf



FESTIVAL FFION

STUDENT OR YOUNG PROFESSIONAL

16-30 years old

Hanging with friends

Social media savvy

Plans her summers around gigs and deaf music festivals

DEAF-FRIENDLY BIZ

DEAF-SUPPORTING SCHOOLS, EDUCATORS AND BUSINESSES

May already work with deaf adults and children

May make or produce music apps or technology

Interested in increasing reach into the deaf community

Strategy

Distribution

Distribution will be through the Apple App Store and Google Play. We will offer a free, basic 'Tier 1' version with all the core functions, and a paid-for 'Tier 2' version with additional features. The free app may be supported by targeted advertising or sponsorship (eg by deaf music festivals). Sponsors will be able to create customised app skins for download on our website.

Public Relations/Advertising/Direct Marketing

The deaf community is very active online, with many dedicated forums and blogs. We could utilise these channels to:

- Advertise
- Engage with our market during app development
- Build brand identity through demonstrating commitment to the audience, the continuing development of the product, and the deaf community as a whole.

Deaf music festivals are increasingly popular. We will set up stalls on-site at major festivals, sponsor stages and/or individual signers (many of whom are celebrities in their own right), and support up-and-coming deaf artists in the burgeoning deaf music scene.

Sales Promotion

Carefully targeted promotional events, such as silent discos, in larger cities can serve as both branding exercises and technical demonstrations. Our branding (posters, flyers, t-shirts etc) will employ taglines that play on the double 'f' in our company name, eg '**ffit**' and '**ffull on**', and will be placed in bars, gyms, schools, cafes, clubs, nurseries and day-care centres - wherever people engage with music.

Website

To reinforce our brand and increase engagement with our market, our website will look and feel like a community hub, with music news, festival reviews, blogs etc sourced from within the deaf community. We will investigate creating a **Ffeel** browser plugin for use on sites such as YouTube. This would either be supported by a small fee or used as a branding exercise to support the main app.

COMPETITORS

SUBPAC

https://subpac.com/

What they're missing

It's expensive

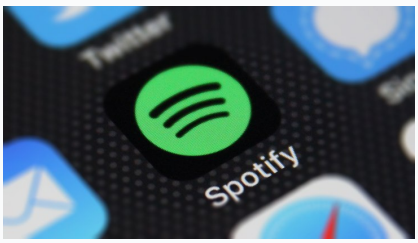
It's fairly large and unwieldy

It's sweaty

It looks odd

Not everyone wants that much vibration

It's not compatible with a normal rucksack



SPOTIFY AND OTHER MUSIC APPS

www.spotify.com; play.google.com/music/; www.apple.com/uk/music/

What they're missing

Mainstream music apps make few, if any, concessions to deaf people

Most have no in-built EQ functionality

Lyrics-display functions not always great

HEARING AID MANUFACTURERS

eg www.phonak.com; www.personamedical.com

What they're missing

Can be very expensive

Tuned for the human voice, not music

Some have music settings but these are limited by devices' inability to deal with typical music mastering (high dynamic range, bass and high frequencies)

Can't have 'music' and 'voice' settings at the same time

Users tend not to use different settings in any case

No bass 'feel'

Strategy

Product

Our product is:

- Unique – there are currently no other software options with a comparable feature set.
- Portable – no expensive or bulky hardware required.
- Agile - we can add, change, or remove features quickly and cheaply according to customer feedback
- Useful – **Ffeel** has been developed in consultation with Rhys Meredith (ABM ULHB - Audiology), Consultant Clinical Scientist and Head of Audiology for ABMU Health Board (Swansea).

Price

Ffeel is:

- Accessible – there will always be a basic, freeware version of the app, made possible by using existing open-source tech in novel ways. This is crucial to our social-enterprise ethic.
- Adaptable – new features can be added to the paid version
- Skinnable– opening new markets (eg kids) and avenues for commercial sponsorship
- Repurposeable – tech can be monetized in various ways

Place

- **Ffeel** lives in your pocket – as long as you have your phone, you have it with you.
- Easy to buy – if you don't already own it, it is only a few clicks away.
- Cheap to sell – no specialist retail infrastructure is required.

Promotion

Ffeel's market is relatively easy to find and define. **Ffeel** sits well within a burgeoning deaf-music scene and, being free in its core version, is an easy sell as long as we get the message right. Promotional events can be tied in with existing community events, or shared with other deaf-supporting organisations and businesses.

People

The team at **Ffeel**

- Is familiar with existing open-source music technologies, such as Pure Data.
- Has access to experts in the fields of music tech, audiology and app design.
- Has design, advertising and sales expertise.

COMPATIBILITY

PETER REES

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

I am a Music Tech student with a background in publishing, illustration and design. I have managed numerous book projects from inception to publication, overseeing small teams usually including designers, writers, editors, illustrators and researchers. I have written more than 70 published titles and edited more than 30 novels. I have taught typographical design at tertiary level, and for ten years ran an artisanal fine-art printing business, printing gallery prints, exhibitions and portfolios to exacting standards.

ADRIENN FUSCSICS

MARKETING GURU

JAMES MARSHALL DAVIES

HEAD OF MARKET DEVELOPMENT

STEPHEN THOMAS

NUMBER CRUNCHER

7 8 10 6 8

Passion	Resilience	Communication	Planning	Network
7	9	10	8	9

WE'RE 82% COMPATIBLE WITH THIS IDEA

CONTENTS

Office Manager

To run the day-to-day office business

Small office (eight or nine desks)

App development training

Some basic training so we can deal with basic app maintenance issues that may arise

Accountant

Tax returns, VAT, ensuring we have a robust financial structure in place

Ffeel Website

Solicitor

Basic legal, company law and IP advice.

FInance Director

To deal with day-to-day fiscal matters

Bespoke media content

Much of this we can generate in-house using our existing skills.

Online Marketing Manager

To run our social media channels and website

All the usual accounts + a presence in more deaf-oriented online communities

Social media will be a key marketing and outreach channel for us.

Promotions Manager

We will need someone with experience in event management and real-world promotion

Computers, mobile devices, storage drives, camera

We will need computers and iOS/Android devices for product development and testing, camera for media content creation.

Phone, broadband and cloud

Usual stationery requirements

Online advertising + flyers

storage provision

As an online company, fast broadband is a necessity for us. Cloud storage is a safe and cost-effective way to back up our digital assets.

Tightly targeted advertising is a key part of our business strategy.

SEO consultant (external)

To make sure we are visible in online searches and that our website functions correctly from a user perspective

Who

Initially we will need:

- Freelance app developer proficient in iOS and Android (approx. 40 hours initially, followed by approx. 5-10 hours annual maintenance and upgrades
- The usual external professional services (accountant, legal services etc)

As the business grows we will require:

- Office Manager
- SEO consultant (part-time) to ensure online visibility, and also that our website gets our message across and drives commerce seamlessly
- Finance Director to manage cashflow
- Promotions Manager to take charge of event management and real-world promotion
- Online Marketing Manager to maintain website and social-media channels

Additionally, from the start we may require basic app training and *ad hoc* music-technology and audiological advice on a consultancy basis.

What

We will need:

- Website (built in eg Squarespace to keep costs down)
- Social-media accounts (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook)
- Eight or nine computers + peripherals (hard drives, NAS drives, printers, headphones etc)
- Basic office furniture (including any required kitchenware etc)
- A range of iOS and Android devices for app development and testing
- Camera and small lighting rig for producing in-house media content
- Subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud for producing marketing materials
- Marketing materials for use on festival stalls etc.
- Business bank and telephone/broadband accounts, as well as cloud-storage provision

Where

We will require a small to medium-sized office in a social-enterprise or tech start-up hub or similar. TechHub would be ideal as it provides very fast broadband, an essential requirement for us, as well as networking events and other features aimed specifically at start-ups.

As the product is sold through existing online channels there will be no need for bricks-and-mortar retail premises.

- Targeted online advertising, as well as flyers and posters when required

Additional information

We are hoping that, as our R & D costs will be fairly low, any social-enterprise funding we receive will cover much of our start-up costs without recourse to extra lending.

CASH

Making money

We see a number of potential income streams from our product:

- Advertising and/or sponsorship on the free app
- Income from the paid app

NB: Sale price of the paid app will be small (perhaps £2.99/$2.99) but the market is global. App stores generally take around 30 percent of app sales, so 1000 paying customers would gross £2100 before taxes.

Additionally, there is the potential for further downstream earnings from:

- Sale or licensing of underlying technologies
- Development of a donationware or micropayment-funded browser plugin

Spending money

In our first year, we anticipate spending:

- Rent: eg TechHub membership approx. £1600/month
- Bills (including electricity, phone, broadband and cloud storage: around £3000/yr)
- App development:

Estimated* 40 hours @£100/hr + VAT in the first year

- Consultancy fees:

SEO: estimated** seven hours @£80/hr + VAT

Audiology: estimated five hours @£200/hr + VAT

Technical assistance: estimated 20 hours @£80/hr + VAT)

- Equipment:

Five computers @£1000 each + VAT plus peripherals approx. £2000 + VAT

Mobile devices for testing and development: approx. £5000 + VAT

Camera + lighting rig: £1200

- Squarespace web page hosting: £180/year
- Adobe Creative Cloud subscription: approx. £700/year
- App developers fees (Apple App Store and Google Play): £124.00
- Insurance: approx. £600/year
- Companies House Incorporation fee: £40.00

- Legal and accountancy fees: approx. £1500/year***

Sources:

* Bruce Rees, Head of Mobile, Syngency (New Zealand)

** Charles Meaden, CEO, Digital Nation Ltd, Swansea.

*** Tim Taylor, Managing Director, Tim Taylor & Co (Accountants), Swansea

Funding

We will attempt to find funding through social-enterprise grants or loans, as well as funding for technological innovation; for example, through the Welsh Digital Development Fund.

The Abbey Road Red Music Tech Incubator (Incubation Programme) provides funding specifically for music-tech start-ups.

Jobs Growth Wales subsidises six months' worth of wages for up to five employees below the age of 25.

Numerous grant and social-investment providers are listed at: https://www.the-sse.org/resources/starting/what-funding-is-available-for-social-entrepreneurs/#1

Equity crowdfunding is another possible funding source.

SIMPLY DO IDEAS

This idea was created using Simply Do