

SoundWave Studios

Collaborative music creation software for indie artists

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Problem Overview

Collaboration in music creation today is inefficient, fragmented, and costly. Artists often rely on asynchronous file sharing, leading to multiple versions of the same track and significant delays in the creative process. The alternative—collaborating in person at studios—is expensive, logistically challenging, and limits creative freedom due to time constraints. These barriers hinder musicians' ability to work to their best capability, especially in a digital-first era where remote collaboration is the standard across industries.

SoundWave Studios' new real-time collaboration tool will address these challenges and streamline the music creation process. The tool, like the "Google Docs for music," will enable musicians to record, edit, and listen to tracks together in real time. With secure cloud storage and permissioned access, artists can collaborate seamlessly from anywhere in the world. This product's goal is to streamline the music creation process, bolster creativity, and make collaboration accessible, efficient, and easy for musicians of all skill levels.

Scope and Objectives

Scope

The real-time collaboration tool aims to revolutionize how musicians create and collaborate by enabling seamless, live interaction on tracks. This product will integrate directly with the SoundWave platform, providing users with features like live recording, editing, playback, and secure cloud-based storage for managing tracks across different devices. It will allow multiple users to collaborate simultaneously, with permissioned access controls to maintain privacy and security.

The initial scope focuses on building a desktop-first experience to meet the demands of professional and indie musicians who require robust tools for their workflows. While basic mobile functionality will be included for accessing and reviewing tracks, advanced features such as deep mobile editing, DAW integration, and live video calls will be deferred for future iterations. The project is designed to deliver a scalable, high-performance product that supports remote collaboration without downtime or latency.

Objectives

Primary Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Launch a fully functional real-time collaboration tool by Q2 2025, enabling live editing, recording, and playback for distributed teams of musicians.
- **Objective 2:** Increase SoundWave user retention by 25% by Q3 2025 by addressing current collaboration pain points.
- **Objective 3:** Ensure the product maintains 99.9% uptime and provides a low-latency experience globally for the first six months post-launch.
- **Objective 4:** Achieve adoption by at least 15% of the active user base within the first quarter of release.

Secondary Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Introduce a scalable version control system for track management, allowing users to track changes and revert to earlier versions effortlessly.
- **Objective 2:** Develop a simplified mobile interface for reviewing, commenting, and basic editing on collaborations.
- **Objective 3:** Pilot an integrated messaging feature for real-time communication among collaborators to enhance workflow efficiency.

Inclusions

- Real-time collaboration capabilities for recording, editing, and playback.
- Cloud-based file storage with version control and customizable permission settings.
- A desktop-first interface with mobile support for track review and playback.

Exclusions

- Advanced mobile editing and offline functionality.
- Integration with third-party DAWs for the initial release.
- Features like live video calling or AI-driven music editing tools.

This focused approach ensures that our product delivers core functionality first which will address the most significant pain points of musicians today while laying a strong foundation for future expansion. By clearly defining these inclusions and exclusions, our team can prioritize quality in the new tool and ensure a successful product launch.

User Personas + User Stories

Target Users

SoundWave Studios is strategically designed to empower a dynamic cohort of independent music creators—passionate artists and producers aged 18 to 40 who are navigating the challenging landscape of modern music production. These emerging talents are characterized by their creative ambition, technological adaptability, and economic constraints that traditionally limit their musical aspirations.

One of the most significant pain points for these artists is the exorbitant cost of professional studios and their limited availability—often pricing out talented musicians from accessing high-quality recording environments.

Our platform directly addresses these challenges by offering remote collaboration capabilities in a digital audio-workspace setting that fundamentally transform how independent artists create music. Unlike expensive studio rentals that can cost hundreds of dollars per hour, SoundWave Studios provides an affordable, accessible alternative that enables musicians to connect and produce professional-grade recordings from anywhere.

These artists typically work with limited budgets, small collaborative networks, and minimal professional production experience. They require innovative tools that can translate musical visions into high-quality recordings without the prohibitive costs of conventional studio setups. By eliminating geographical and financial barriers, SoundWave Studios creates a user-friendly ecosystem that empowers artists to overcome systemic limitations in music production. The platform isn't just a digital tool—it's a gateway for talented creators to realize their musical potential, bridging the gap between artistic vision and professional execution.

Through real-time remote collaboration and intuitive design, we're redefining possibilities for independent musicians in the digital age.

User Personas

Emily (25) is a freelance singer-songwriter who recently graduated from music school. She lacks the budget for professional studio space and relies on file-sharing platforms, which delay collaboration. Emily seeks an affordable tool that enables real-time interaction with her network to finalize tracks for her first Extended Play (EP).

Jake (28) is an aspiring producer working a day job while building his portfolio in Ohio. He struggles to collaborate remotely with artists due to the challenges of coordinating sessions and sharing files. Jake needs a seamless platform to connect with collaborators on the West Coast and produce high-quality music efficiently.

Maya (22) is a college student and part-time DJ exploring music production. She finds traditional DAWs overwhelming and expensive. Maya looks for an intuitive and budget-friendly solution to collaborate with peers and release her first mixtape.

Story Maps



Emily just graduated from music school and is excited to work on her first EP, but she doesn't have the resources to rent a professional studio.



She struggles with collaborating remotely, relying on delayed email exchanges and file-sharing platforms to communicate with her producer and musicians.



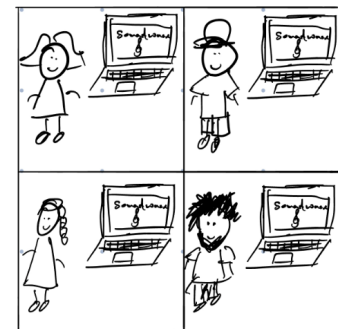
Emily feels frustrated because the lack of real-time collaboration slows down her creative process and leaves her feeling disconnected from her team.



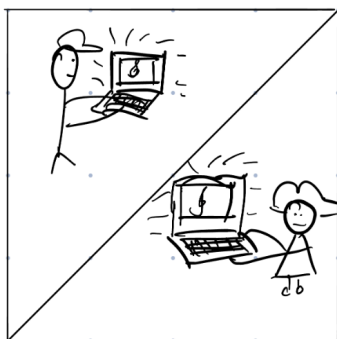
Her friend tells her about SoundWave Studios, a platform designed for real-time remote music collaboration.



Emily visits the SoundWave website, where she reads about its live editing, commenting, and chat features.



She signs up for the free trial and invites her producer and collaborators to join her in working on her first song.



Emily and her team use SoundWave Studios to work on their track in real-time, easily making edits, sharing feedback, and finalizing the song together.



Emily successfully completes her first EP, feeling empowered by the seamless collaboration SoundWave Studios provides, and she plans to continue using the platform for future projects.

Functional Requirements

The functional requirements for SoundWave Studio's live editing tool are listed below. Priority is denoted as P0, P1, and P2, which represents high, medium, and low respectively. Requirements marked with priority P0 must be completed before launch, whereas those marked with priority P1 and P2 can be addressed after launch.

Requirement	Priority
Real-Time Collaborative Editing - allow multiple users to collaboratively edit a music project in real-time, similar to Google Docs Dependencies - low-latency server infrastructure and robust synchronization algorithms	P0
Track and Layer Editing - enable users to add, modify, and delete individual tracks and layers within a shared music project Dependencies - integration with existing Digital Audio Workstation capabilities	P0
Automated Conflict Resolution - handle conflicts when two users edit the same element at the same time Dependencies - conflict detection and resolution algorithms to ensure consistency	P0
File Import and Export - allow users to import/export files in standard formats, such as WAV, MP3, MIDI, for compatibility with other tools Dependencies - file handling and conversion	P0
Version Control - allow users to view and revert to previous project versions Dependencies - data storage and version control mechanisms	P0
Live Chat and Communication - integrate a real-time chat feature that supports video and audio calls to further simulate studio collaboration Dependencies - video/audio calling capability and UI integration	P0
User Roles and Permissions - provide role-based permissions such as editor, viewer, commenter, to control access levels in collaborative sessions Dependencies - user authentication and authorization system	P1

AI Assistance for Collaboration - integrate AI tools to suggest edits and mixing improvements based on project data Dependencies - existing AI system for integration	P1
Audio Annotation Tools - allow users to mark specific points in the tracks with comments, notes, or tags to provide feedback or reminders Dependencies - timestamped annotation system	P1
Mobile Compatibility - provide a responsive and functioning mobile experience for basic editing tasks Dependencies - UI adaptation and mobile device performance optimization	P2
Customizable Workspaces - allow users to customize their interface, such as rearranging toolbars, resizing tracks, and setting default views to suit individual workflows Dependencies - flexible UI design and user preferences storage	P2
Collaboration Analytics Dashboard - provide insights into collaboration patterns, such as contributor activity levels, session duration, and task progress Dependencies - data collection, aggregation, and visualization tools	P2

Non-Functional Requirements

The functional requirements for SoundWave Studio's live editing tool are listed below.

Requirement
Performance - real-time updates must have a low latency (< 100ms) to ensure smooth collaborative interactions
Usability - UI must be intuitive with a minimal learning curve to ensure users can perform basic actions within their first session
Scalability - infrastructure must be able to handle usage spikes, especially during high traffic hours. The system must support multiple collaborators without performance degradation
Security - implement encryption for all real-time data, including audio streams, chats, and project files to protect user data
Reliability - system must remain online with robust mechanisms for detecting and recovering from server failures. The system must also prevent data corruption that may arise

from the editing of multiple users simultaneously.

Data Privacy and Ownership - ensure that users retain full ownership of their projects, with clear terms on data usage

Accessibility - include features such as screen reader and keyboard navigation to make the tool accessible to users with disabilities

User Support - provide 24/7 customer support via calls, emails, or messaging for troubleshooting common issues

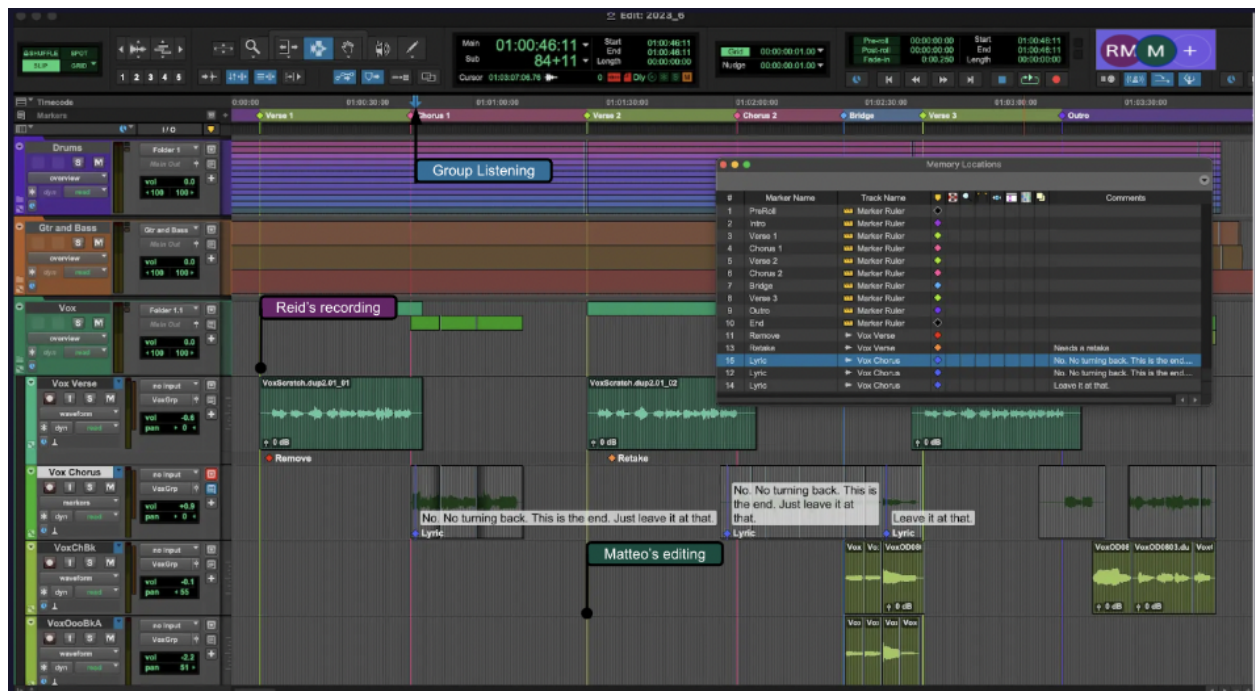
Compliance - comply with global data privacy and protection regulations, including the **General Data Protection Regulation** for users in the EU and the **California Consumer Privacy Act** for users in California. This ensures that our platform adheres to laws regarding the transparent handling of personal data. Additionally, the platform must adhere to the **Digital Millennium Copyright Act** by implementing a notice-and-takedown process for copyright infringement claims. This enables our platform to provide safeguards to protect users' intellectual property and support proper licensing for shared content. (see References for compliance information)

Wireframes/Mockups/Prototypes

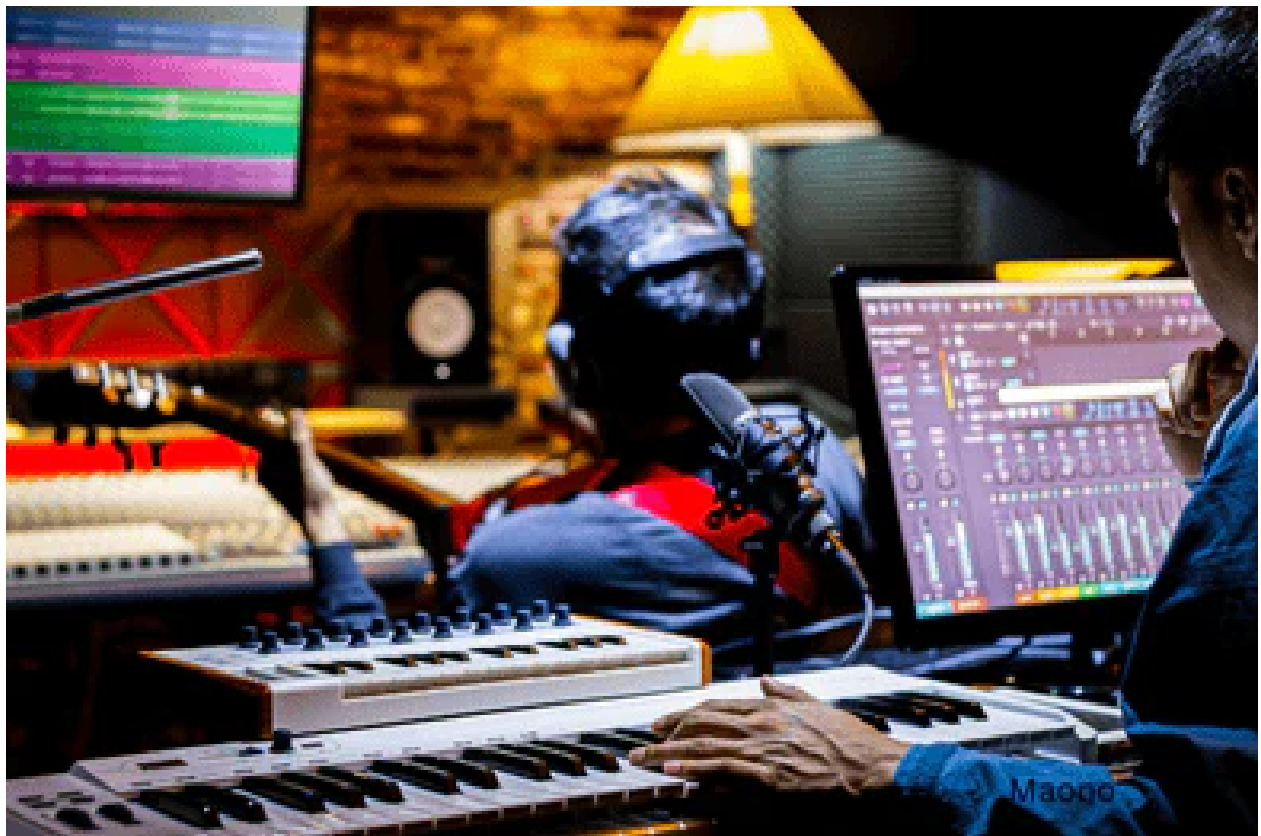
Soundwave Studio Music Project Dashboard UI- Search, File Management, Sharing



Google Docs for Music, live collaboration, recording and listening visual representation



Recording instruments and Uploading Tracks directly into Soundwave Project Files



Constraints and Assumptions

From our assumptions testing work we narrowed down a final list of assumptions:

1. Software tools can recreate in-studio engagement and productivity.
2. Musicians would benefit from sharing music for feedback and collaboration pre-release, provided IP protection and sharing / exporting is controlled for.
3. Musicians are generally willing to help others in their field / genre by offering feedback and constructive advice on music.

Constraints & Limitations: based on our product timeline and objectives, there are several key constraints which could delay development and deployment.

1. Resource Constraints. The R&D budget for developing AI music tools, "Google Docs for Music", as well as providing a low-latency experience for a large user base, becomes extensive.. In addition to budget, engineering team time allocation becomes a limitation. Working on several objectives simultaneously (real-time collaboration, version control, mobile interface, messaging) may face prioritization conflicts and slower progress due to multitasking, inattention and burnout, all of which cause errors and delays. Because we are trying to service Indie artists, ethically we are trying to reduce the price burden and thus executing R&D while maintaining customer accessibility will be highly limiting.

2. Technical Constraints: achieving low latency will require lots of back-end infrastructure work, which has to be completed on top of feature design. Additionally, server traffic and data optimization will require complex back-end building, as well as rigorous stress testing for usage spikes. The Soundwave tools also need to be updated in accordance with the devices and systems they are used on, which are equally subject to software updates. This monitoring and maintenance will inevitably slow down dev cycles.

3. User retention and Feedback constraints: While rigorously developing our tools and features, we also need to be iteratively improving them towards customer needs and tracking how they are being received. This creates a lot of coordination and communication stress to make sure we don't misalign development and user needs. We need to be honest and manage user expectations with new features and their potential bugs- all of this can lead to development and deployment delays / product re-launches.

4. Market / User constraints: Because our mission is to appeal to Indie artists around the world, we need to make sure features and product updates are accessible to our user base worldwide. On one hand this means adapting to user infrastructure globally- It also means adapting the compliance, data privacy, and IP protection laws to protect our users.

Milestones and Timeline

TARGET DATE	MILESTONE	DESCRIPTION	EXIT CRITERIA
2025-01-01	✅ Start development	Engineers start working from the PRD/designs	PRD/designs from PMs/designers are complete
2025-03-01	🔴 MVP	Development complete of “Google Docs” for music MVP	Basic functionality is built out and requirements are met
2025-03-15	🔴 Dogfooding	Employees test and use the product	No major bugs, use cases are able to be met
2025-04-15	🔴 Beta	We release a beta to a select group of power users/testers, rapidly iterate and improve our MVP	Positive feedback from most of our customers
2025-05-15	🔴 Early Access	Users can register to get early access, so we can continue to get feedback. We continue developing/adding to the roadmap from feature requests.	Exit surveys from these early access customers are positive
2025-07-15	🔴 Launch	We launch to all of our customers	We continue to measure, monitor, and actively triage any issues. We continue adding to the roadmap.

Resource Requirements

Human Resources

We believe that this new product is critical for our company. As such, we want to have a larger team building this out, but not too large since we still want development to be lean and quick.

We want a team composed of:

- 2 product managers
- 3 senior software engineers

- 5 junior software engineers
- 2 designers

Technical Resources

Some key technologies/tools include:

- SQL/MongoDB
- React/Python
- Redis
- GitHub
- Figma
- AWS/GCP/Azure for storage and compute

Metrics and Success Criteria

To measure the impact of our new real-time collaboration feature, we will track both quantitative and qualitative metrics. These insights will help us assess adoption, user satisfaction, and the feature's contribution to SoundWave Studios' overall growth.

Quantitative Metrics

1. **Feature Usage Rates:** We will monitor the number of collaborative sessions per user and the frequency of real-time collaboration sessions. These rates will give us insight into adoption and the appeal of the new feature among our users.
2. **Active Collaboration Metrics:** Key metrics will include the average time spent in collaborative sessions, the number of files shared per session, and the number of artists participating. These metrics will help us understand the depth of usage and if the tool is fostering meaningful engagement.
3. **User Retention:** We'll compare retention rates for users who actively use the collaboration feature with those who do not. Increased retention among feature users will indicate its effectiveness in keeping artists engaged with our platform.
4. **Churn Rate:** By tracking any changes in churn rate post-launch, particularly among premium users, we'll assess if the feature has an impact on reducing user drop-off.
5. **Revenue Impact:** We'll analyze the conversion rates from free to paid tiers, as well as any increase in ARPU (Average Revenue Per User). This data will show how the feature drives revenue growth by encouraging users to experience the benefits of seamless collaboration.
6. **Storage Utilization:** Monitoring increases in cloud storage use will reveal the extent to which artists rely on the new feature to manage and share files efficiently.

Qualitative Metrics

1. **User Feedback & Satisfaction:** We will collect user feedback through surveys, focusing on satisfaction, usability, and the feature's impact on their creative process. Direct feedback will allow us to understand pain points and areas for improvement.
2. **Support Ticket Analysis:** By analyzing support tickets related to the collaboration tool, we'll identify common issues and gauge overall user satisfaction. This will help us refine the tool to better serve our user base.
3. **Community Engagement:** Tracking interactions in our community forums, social media, and user comments will provide valuable insight into how the feature resonates with artists. This qualitative data will give us a sense of its popularity and potential influence on our brand.
4. **Case Studies and Testimonials:** In-depth case studies and testimonials from artists who regularly use the feature will illustrate its impact on their work. Their stories will help us showcase the tool's effectiveness and serve as a valuable resource for marketing.

Together, these metrics will allow us to track adoption, evaluate engagement, and continuously improve the collaboration tool, ensuring it meets artists' needs and strengthens SoundWave Studios' position in the music creation space.

Go-to-Market

Our go-to-market strategy will involve multiple aspects, such as distribution channels, sales strategy, marketing and promotion plans, and customer service strategies.

Distribution Channels

We will distribute our software in a multi-channel strategy to ensure maximum reach and alignment with our target audience.

Digital Channels

Official SoundWave Website: Our website will be the main hub of distribution where users can download the software. It will feature tutorials, product updates, and support resources to ensure a seamless onboarding experience.

App Stores: We will list on platforms like the App Store, Google Play, and Microsoft Store. These platforms provide visibility through app rankings and user reviews, helping attract new audiences.

Partner Marketplaces: We will integrate with online music-focused platforms and marketplace. These partnerships will allow us to cross-promote with complementary tools and services, strengthening our position in the music production ecosystem.

B2B/Partnerships

Music Schools and Institutions: Partnering with universities, music schools, and online music education platforms will help us integrate our software into music production courses and become a standard for music collaboration.

Labels and Studios: We will have enterprise licenses that let artists across different labels and studios to collaborate. By co-marketing with labels, we will be able to showcase projects built on our SoundWave and boost brand visibility.

Sales Strategy

Direct Sales

We will form a dedicated sales team to directly engage with independent artists and music production companies. This team will be responsible for executing marketing campaigns and driving customer outreach, such as reaching out to potential users through hosting information sessions and product demos.

Channel Partners

SoundWave Studios will partner with online music equipment retailers to sell the collaboration tool as part of their product offerings. We will also collaborate with other music platforms, such as Boombox.io and Ableton, to introduce our tool to a broader audience. Since these other platforms are already trusted by independent musicians, offering our tool to their services is a sensible integration. Our plan to increase partnerships will expose our live collaboration tool to a larger segment of our target market.

Self Service

Finally, we will maintain and improve our self-service model, where musicians can purchase and download the live collaboration tool directly from our website or app store platforms, such as iOS or Google Play. We offer a free trial to allow musicians to try our tool with minimal risk, instead of a freemium offering due to low user conversion rates observed with our previous freemium approach. The freemium model failed to showcase the full value of our tool. With a free trial, we provide users with access to the tool's complete functionality, which we believe will lead to higher conversion.

Marketing and Promotions

The marketing and promotion strategy for SoundWave Studios is designed to drive adoption and retention, targeting independent musicians, producers, and small bands. The plan focuses on leveraging social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and LinkedIn to

create awareness. Campaigns will highlight user testimonials, product tutorials, and partnerships with indie musicians and content creators.

Advertising and Content Marketing

Advertising efforts will focus on paid search campaigns targeting keywords like “best DAW for collaboration” and “online music production tools,” as well as retargeting ads for users who visited the website but did not subscribe.

Awareness Building Initiatives

A beta testing program will engage early adopters, who will receive free trials in exchange for feedback and testimonials. These testers will also be encouraged to share their experiences online, further driving organic interest. Meanwhile, active engagement in music production communities on Reddit and Discord will foster discussions about SoundWave, providing opportunities to host Q&A sessions and promote key features.

Differentiation and Messaging

SoundWave Studios’ unique value proposition is its position as the only DAW offering seamless live editing and commenting, making real-time collaboration effortless. This will be reinforced with the tagline, “Create Together, Anywhere,” to resonate with the target audience of indie artists and collaborative teams.

Customer Service Strategies

Tutorial Content

When a user initially downloads SoundWave Studios, they will be given an optional walkthrough of the app to create a basic song, along with a bank of online tutorials recorded by our sales and product teams. There will be basic modules, such as creating a project, creating a collaboration, and how to use the mixers, and more advanced modules. SoundWave Studios chooses to employ this strategy specifically so users can take their time to explore the platform and learn to do whatever their project requires.

In-App Support

If users bump into issues while actively working, there will be several options for customer support. First, there will be a chatbot, where users will be connected to either an automated chatbot for simpler queries, or a real support person for more complicated ones. Second, SoundWave Studios will maintain a FAQs section in the app and website. We do this so that users feel actively supported by the company and so that unexpected issues are quickly resolved.

Community Support Forum

Since creating music is a community-based activity, SoundWave Studios will also build an online community support forum where users can write/answer questions and upload their own content/tutorials. This creates a lot of organic growth and interest, and users can come with

creative new approaches to solve problems/create new music that other users can then follow. It is also a great way to actively get customer feedback, as they discuss problems with one another.

Evaluation

Throughout the execution of our GTM strategies, we will continuously monitor them to evaluate if we should proceed or pivot from them. We will compile a list of KPIs for each strategy over time, and at every milestone evaluate if we are hitting them. If we see that a strategy is lacking, we will allocate budget/resources more towards successful strategies. We will continue to work with our team to come up with new ideas, especially as new trends/markets arise.