

To stream or not to stream

by Adam Sheffield

Let's be honest here, when was the last time you actually bought a song or CD? The music-streaming industry is constantly changing, and iTunes is slowly becoming a thing of the past.

While Apple Music, YouTube, and Pandora certainly still have a place in the music industry, two websites are taking the forefront: Spotify and SoundCloud.

Personally, I have both apps on my phone, and I find myself flip-flopping between the two quite frequently. I carry about half my music on each app, which raises the question, why not just use one? And from a social media aspect, which is better?

Spotify launched its app Oct. 7, 2008, and as of June 2015, it has amassed over 75 million users. Due to its partnership with Facebook, many people were introduced to Spotify after seeing it mentioned on their newsfeed after a friend played a song from the site.

Spotify playlists are often heralded as the best feature of the site. Spotify itself releases things called "mood playlists" which allow you to listen to a variety of playlists based on how you're feeling. Examples of playlists include "Good Vibes," "Intense Studying," and "Party Hits 2015." You also have the option to make your own playlists, which can feature whatever songs you want. Spotify features 20 million songs and over 1.5 billion playlists made as of 2015.

Regular Spotify, as well as the app, costs nothing. Spotify Premium, which costs \$9.99 per month, comes with added perks. It allows you to select any song you want, which is not a feature on the normal app. In the normal app, you can only shuffle playlists, which becomes frustrating if you want to hear a particular song. Premium also features better sound quality, no ads, and allows you to download music so you can listen to it offline.

"Even though it costs money, the

ability to listen to playlists whenever you want without wifi is great," said senior Ceejay Xiong.

Within Spotify, you can follow certain artists, as well as other users. This means you will receive an update whenever they post something new. Another feature is the running feature, which matches the music with the tempo at which you're running.

SoundCloud is a much more "user-run" site, which has both pros and cons. Unlike Spotify, SoundCloud allows anyone to upload music. This means that you are bound to hear some great songs you've never heard before, but also there is a lot of plain weird stuff on the site. Also, SoundCloud only allows you to upload 3 hours worth of recordings per person. If someone wishes to exceed that, it will cost \$145 dollars per year for unlimited uploads.

"SoundCloud is great for unknown or rising artists, specifically EDM artists. As a result, there are a lot of hidden gems you wouldn't be

able to find on Spotify," said Xiong.

Much like Spotify, you can also follow people and artists, as well as make playlists. The key difference between the two comes down to quality vs. quantity.

Even though Spotify has over 30 million songs, as of Dec. 2014, over twelve hours of content are uploaded to SoundCloud every minute. This means that SoundCloud has an immense library of options, but a lot of it is either terrible quality or just not good. Spotify is more selective with their songs, which means quality is much improved.

Both websites/apps are likely to be around for awhile, and both have their place in music. If you're looking for a place to find well-known artists, as well as good sound quality, then Spotify is your go-to music place. But if you want to discover new music, try to make a name for yourself as an artist, or even listen to a podcast, SoundCloud is the app for you.

Yik Yak downvoted by high schools nationwide

by Michael Blickstein

In 2013, Furman University graduates Tyler Droll and Brooks Buffington launched a trendy little app called Yik Yak, a location based app where your feed is determined by your one and a half mile radius.

Since its initial launch, it has ushered in ups, downs, and lots of controversy. The app was originally intended to be used on college campuses to promote school spirit and to communicate with like-minded people in the same area.

Now, you might be wondering "well, what's wrong with that?" But if you know anything about the general demographic of people who use Yik Yak, you might infer that giving high school and college students a tool to anonymously post anything could lead to bullying, harassment, and general misuse. The result? Hurt feelings and offended people.

Because of these problems, Yik Yak teamed up with a Vermont-based company called Maponics to create a system of fences that go around middle schools, high schools, and other places where Yik Yak could easily be misused.

However, Yik Yak does have a couple of interesting upsides. Because the app is location based, it allows people to give real-time updates on important events unfolding around them. For example, if there is an important student government election happening, users can give real time updates on how the election is proceeding and people reading their feed will be the first to know who will win.

Yik Yak is also a great marketing tool for giant gatherings of younger people. Last year, BBYO, an international Jewish youth movement, didn't discourage their members from using Yik Yak during

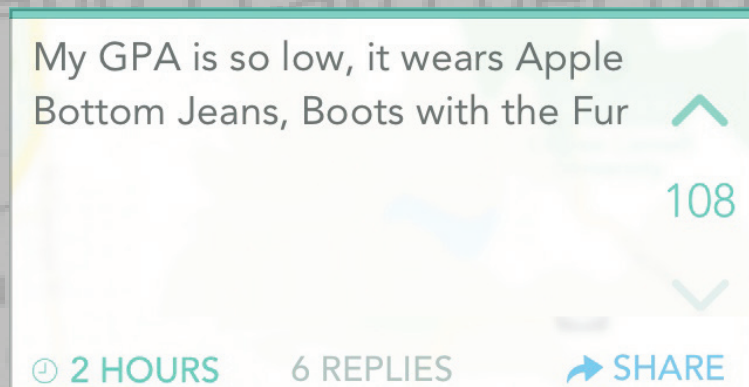
the convention. Members using the app were constantly talking about how much fun they were having at the event and spreading information about everything happening there. Even the negative feedback proved

always outweigh the drawbacks, of which there are quite a few. Because Yik Yak is anonymous, people can basically say whatever they want without any consequences. This leads to the obvious bullying problem

they're popular.

Yik Yak has the rule that users can't post people's full names, but most posters are smart enough to get around that. When posters write offensive posts about people and get lots of upvotes on their posts, there's no way of getting it taken down. Possibly the biggest flaw of Yik Yak is that it almost relies on people being decent to each other on a regular basis, and that's just not characteristic of high school users.

Since its release two years ago, Yik Yak has created a few features that set it apart from the rest of the herd. You can now "peek" at other areas, which is a way to look at what's going on in other places, without the ability to post or vote. Yik Yak has also created a way to differentiate people in comments by putting predetermined avatars while still keeping the app anonymous.



This is one example of a Yik Yak that became quite popular | Yik Yak app

helpful for organizers to figure out how to improve for next year.

However, the benefits do not

because of Yik Yak's upvote/downvote system, which keeps posts that people vote "up" for as long as

Newtriertrevs.vSCO.co: The dark side of the grid

by Rachel Melancon

Firstnamelastname.vSCO.co has become a staple in the bio of countless Instagrams since the rise of its popularity over the summer. But is the website worth all the hype?

I recently submitted to peer pressure and made a VSCO. I joined the ranks of countless Trevians who post pictures that aren't quite right for Facebook and not high quality enough for Instagram.

The app VSCOcam comes with a default of ten filters that I find are better than those offered on Instagram. It offers unique ways to adjust your pictures to find the perfect saturation, contrast, and brightness.

However, I find it difficult to use. I spent almost five minutes figuring out how to post pictures to my "grid." Like an Instagram or Facebook profile, the grid has all the photos you post publicly to VSCOcam on one page. In order to

access the grid, you are required to hit numerous buttons, all labelled with vague icons. The act of posting a picture is just as complicated. You must first upload the picture onto the app and then edit it. Only then can you upload one photo at a time.

After recruiting my friends to decrypt the process of posting, I finally began to upload the pictures in my camera roll.

I found that the two most common types of photos posted to

VSCO are either pictures of people with their friends, selfies especially, and multiple "artsy" pictures from their past vacations.

One of the riskier aspects of VSCO is that anyone can view your grid. Even non-VSCO users are able to view a profile because VSCO is not privacy protected. Once you post your url, anyone can look through your pictures.

The great thing about VSCO is that I don't have to worry about how

many likes I receive on each photo because, on VSCO, there are no likes. This simple fact mitigates stress, since users can't be consumed by the number of likes their pictures receive on Instagram.

This is probably VSCO's best feature.

"I really do like VSCO," Senior Stephanie Song said. "It has allowed me to post more creative photos. The lack of pressure is freeing."



Gannon Lee