ACADEMIC PROJECT 2024 RESEARCH-LED PRODUCT STRATEGY

Assessing Product Risks & Adoption Barriers

FOR AN AI-POWERED MUSIC TRANSCRIPTION TOOL

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ORIGINALLY A GROUP PROJECT, THIS CONTAINS ONLY KARTHIK JAMBUNATHAN'S PARTS

PROJECT CONTEXT

This was a cross-disciplinary course at the University of Toronto that typically brings together students from business, law, music, and UX to build a digital music business proposal together.

While UXers typically work on wireframes, screens, concepts. I chose to contribute differently: focus my research on the business.

The product we conceptualized was Note4U, an AI tool that converts musical ideas into sheet music or MIDI files. The business problem we had was: who is this for, and how do you reach them in a market full of DAW integrations, standalone tools, and subscription-based competitors?

MY APPROACH

ASSESSING PRODUCT VALUE AND RISKS

WHAT NEXT

MY APPROACH

I ran secondary research and use insights from interviews with students, amateur producers, and professional musicians.

I synthesized research findings into a target customer profile and journey map that helped the team evaluate positioning, pricing, and go-to-market opportunities.

I mapped the current journey to identify where Note4U could create value, which informed positioning, partnership opportunities, adoption strategy, and future product decisions.

The frustration users felt wasn't only about slow transcription, it was about owning their process.

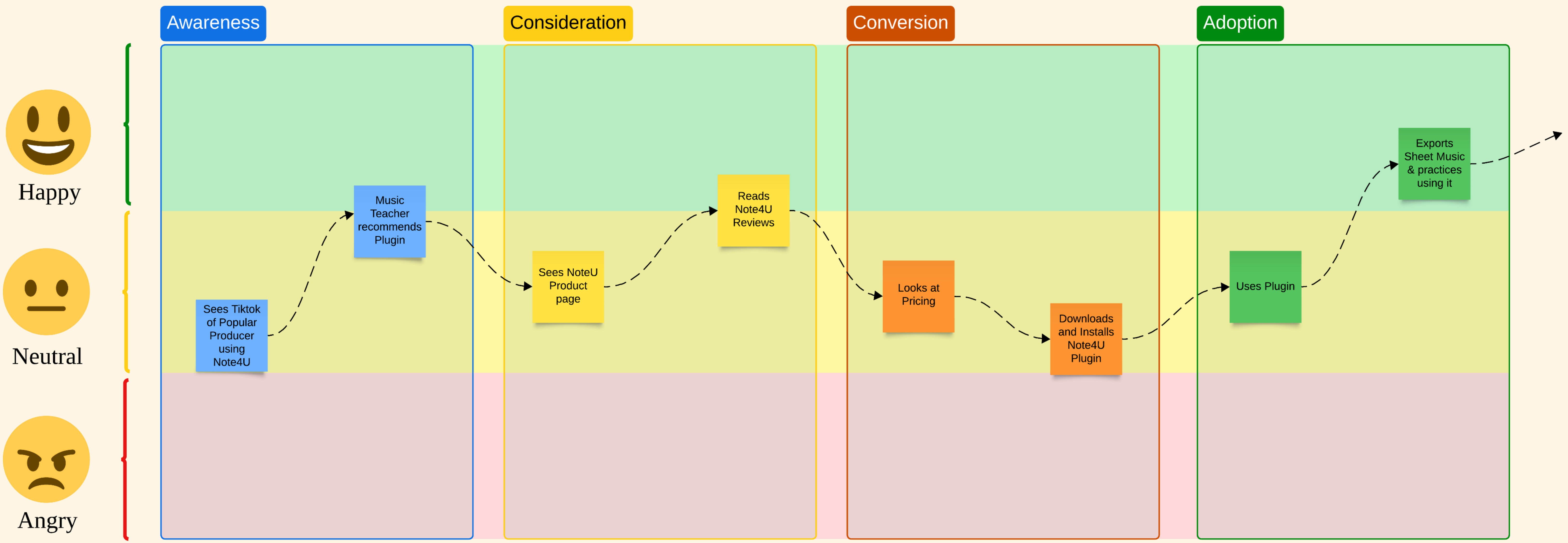
The research made clear that AI needed to assist the creative process, not replace the creation.

Note4U's value couldn’t be that it could generate sheet music.

Current Journey Map (As-Is)

	Step 1 - Manual Trial and Error	Step 2 - Seeking External Help	Step 3 - Testing & Practice
Thinking	I need to create sheet music for my track, but I don't know where to start.	I should find someone who can help transcribe this accurately.	Will these sheet music work?
Doing	Listens to the song repeatedly Transcribes the notes into sheet music Plays the notes they think they hear on their instrument	Searches online for professional transcription services Shares file with past collaborators, peers, teachers, etc	Uses manually created/externally sourced sheet music with musicians. Has to correct errors and clarify during rehearsal - Wastes Time!
Feeling	Frustrated Overwhelmed	Frustrated Relieved, but Annoyed	Stressed Worried

Note4U's adoption strategy emphasizing educational value



ASSESSING PRODUCT

We were strongest on value and business viability, as those were the primary criteria we were judged upon.

My Strategy centered around:

1. Value (Will they buy it?)
2. Usability (Can they use it?)
3. Feasibility (Can we build it?)
4. Viability (Should we build it?)

We also focused on the whole roadmap and self-assessed where our proposal was complete versus where it still had open questions.

VALUE & RISKS

We addressed the Value as our competitive analysis showed existing tools either require DAW expertise or are too expensive.

The persona work and user research identified a specific frustrated user and the journey map shows the cost of the current workaround including time, money, and dependency on others.

The business model canvas, revenue streams, pricing tiers, partnership strategy, investor targets, and competitive positioning we presented all speak to the Viability of the business directly.

The VST integration angle: fitting into tools people already use, is a Usability decision, but it wasn't validated with users.

Our proposal addressed Feasibility by proposing cloud-based infrastructure and VST distribution via Native Instruments or Kontakt. But the core AI transcription capabilities: how accurate it actually is, what the error rate looks like, whether it works across different instruments and genres, isn't validated.

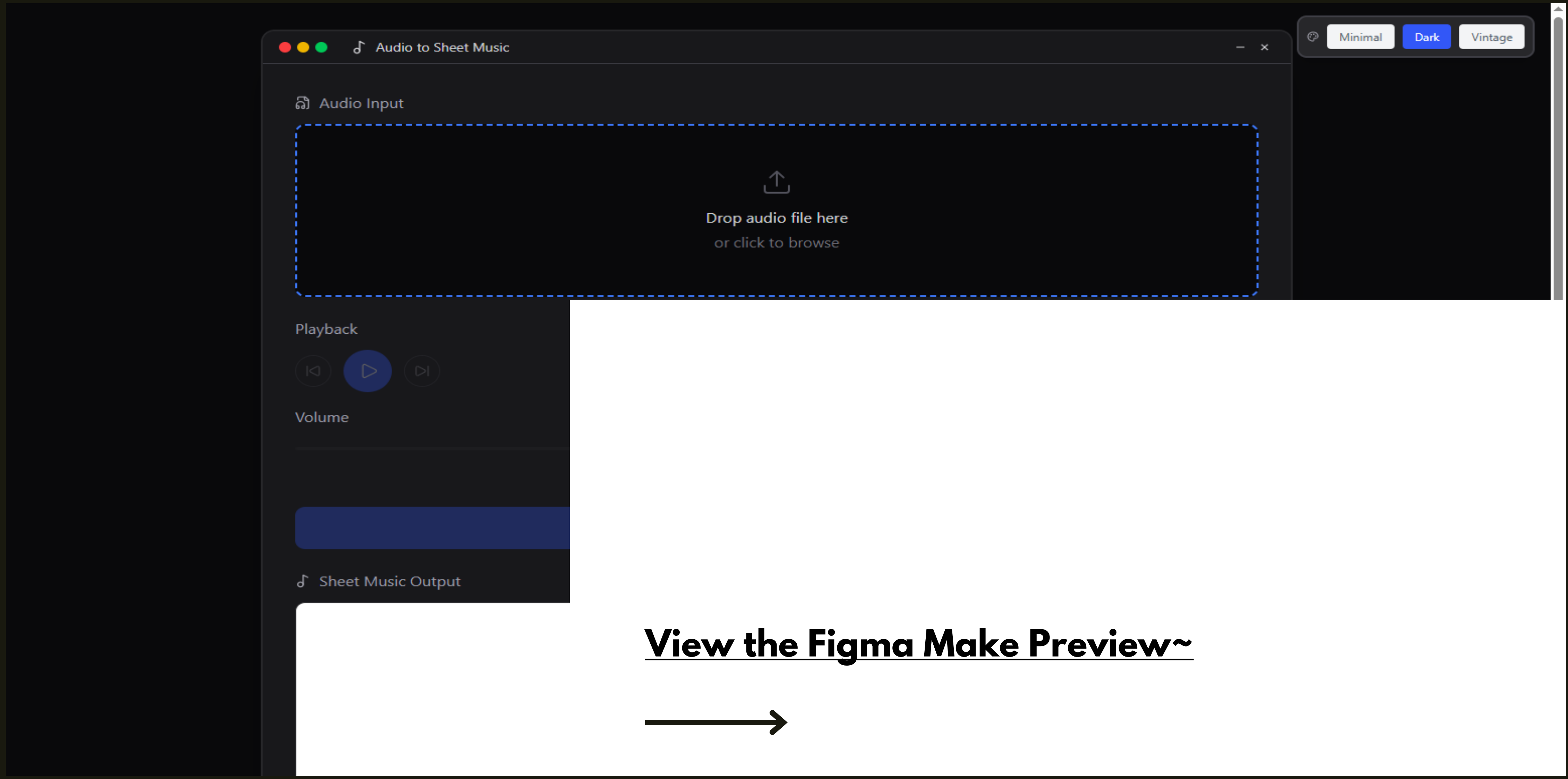
WHAT NEXT

We focused on understanding the opportunity, validating the business case, and identifying where Note4U could create value.

While we discussed product features and adoption strategies, product design and usability were out of scope.

After the course ended, I experimented with Figma Make to visualize what Note4U might look like as a product.

~These explorations were not part of the original project deliverables and were created independently as a way to explore the concept further.



View the Figma Make Preview~

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