



Organization of personal
music collections

MyMusic

Andrew Hankinson :: MUMT 611
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Agenda

Organization Overview

Emergent Structures

Post-iPod World

MIR Implications

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MIR Implications

Organization

- Most Research is focused on Large Library Collections
- A few studies on Personal Music Collections / Use (Cunningham et al, 2004; Bull 2005)
- This field is changing dramatically....

With Physical media...

Small sub-collections		
<p>Stacks are made of the 'most played' or 'current favourite', usually near the primary music device.</p> <p>These stacks are cycled, replaced periodically</p>		

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Small sub-collections	Larger collection base	
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With Physical media...

Small sub-collections	Larger collection base	Dispersed & Directed
<p>Stacks are made of the 'most played' or 'current favourite', usually near the primary music device.</p> <p>These stacks are cycled, replaced periodically</p>	<p>Larger collection body is organized alphabetically, chronologically (newest purchases), preferentially (most to least favourite), or haphazardly.</p> <p>This can also include archival formats (never/infrequently played), often stored in separate locations. (garage, basement, etc.)</p>	<p>Smaller collections are located in appropriate geographic areas: "Driving Music" for the car, "Drowsy Music" for the bedroom, "Ambient Music" for the office.</p>

Death of the Album

- Personal collections are increasingly track-based
- Creation of 'Playlists' indicates that people want to play associated music together their way.
- Playlists are made for mood or use, less frequently for genre & artist.

Emergent Structures

**Music is most frequently organized
by mood and/or event**

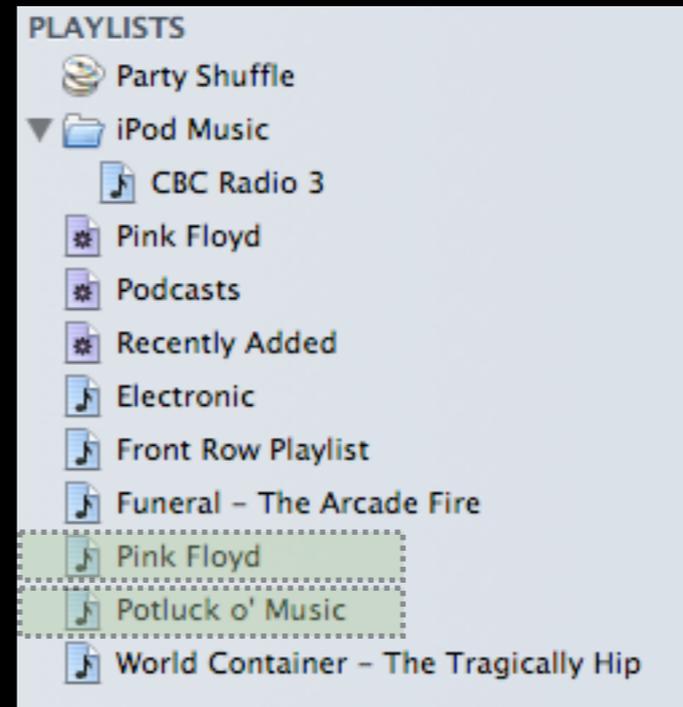
Highly Individual

- Mood can be "the mood I'm in" or "the mood this evokes"
- Memories and association play a very big role in organization
 - ◉ "I listened to this when I was a kid"
 - ◉ couples have "our song", typically a first date, first dance, etc.

Small Survey

Responses to "What types of playlists do you have?"

- "Study Music"
- "Halloween Party Music"
- "Mom's Music"
- "Music that makes you feel like you're there"
- CDs burned for friends
- "Rock" and "Not Rock"



Least Effort

- CDs may be organized once, but this typically dissolves into "newest first"
- "If much effort...is required beyond a couple of clicks, then it seems likely that the metadata tagging will be deferred indefinitely and the digital collection will also subside into disorganization." (Cunningham 2004)

Associative & Social

- Albums are increasingly replaced by individualized playlists as the "grouping standard"
- "Mixes" and "Mashups" allow users to associate music in ways that communicate personal experiences
 - ◉ Personal Recommendations are a very important avenue for new music discovery

Bound to Physical Locations

- CD collections are typically spread over many places: car, living room, bedroom
- Users don't like this - they want their music to be everywhere
- This is changing....

ipod
Post ~~9/11~~ World

**iPods are changing the
way people associate
with music**



"Entire" Music
Collection on one
device

No longer tied to
physical locations: the
music is where they
are

Provides a
'soundtrack' to their
life

Allows people to
create more
relationships with their
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The iPod Shuffle

- A device built specifically for the element of 'surprise'
- Reduces the need for active decisions: "I don't care what I listen to right now"
- Lack of Control (uncomfortable) is balanced by Less Effort Required (comfortable...except when it isn't)

iTunes

- Tracks play count & Last Played to provide
 - ◎ Temporal: Listened to / Not Listened to; Recently added
 - ◎ Preferential: Most / Least Listened to
- 'Smart Playlists' provide easy building of playlists based on rules, not explicit definition
 - ◎ "Give me 50 songs I've not listened to in the last month, and replace them with others once I have listened to them."

MIR Implications

Not the same as impersonal collections

Haphazard, disorganized, little
time (usually) invested in
organizing... so software should
do it for them

Highly Individual

Yet systems can be built to
exploit general principles

People want music with them

...and they don't want it to be
difficult to do so

Questions

Abbreviated Bibliography

See website for full references

- Cunningham et al, "Organizing Digital Music for Use", 2004
- Bull, "No Dead Air!", 2005
- Haake, "Music Listening Practices", 2006
- Images from <http://www.sxc.hu>