SeatSwap PSIP 2018 Student Challenge

The SeatSwap summer internship team or as we so aptly call it, the “Manhattan Project” team is a group charged with a unique task in that we expect our interns to not only be talented but creative; both practical and forward-looking, constantly thinking about what the future of SeatSwap and the ticket buying/event-going will look like. In fact, the goal of the Manhattan Project team is to shape the future of SeatSwap and interns are tasked with the responsibility of devising and building solutions to some of the most complex issues that face the company. As such, the challenge that we have provided is intentionally broad and consists of two steps.

Below, we have outlined some of the bigger problems that we grapple with internally and what we would like from you is to come up with several ideas or concepts that you believe could provide the solution to one of these problems and then pick one of the ideas and build a simple working prototype of said idea. Ideally we would like to see something that demonstrates your technical abilities without being too exhaustive. For example, if you build a script that does something awesome there is no need to build something that would be ready to submit to the app store. It can be a program, a deck, a script or anything that you think would adequately push us in the right direction towards a solution to the problem that isn’t just a write-up. However, if you wanted to do some rudimentary wire framing to show off your UX abilities, it definitely won’t hurt.

Finally, we don’t plan on sending you into this challenge sight unseen, below is a link to demo version of the SeatSwap platform, feel free to request an invitation, create an account, and get a sense of the platform before diving into any of these problems. We have found that a couple trips through the platform will provide enough inspiration to get you started.

Link:

seatswaptickets.com/members

1. How do we create more engagement in our community that will add value to users but won’t cannibalize the transactional experience?

The “low hanging fruit” value proposition of SeatSwap is in our name, we give fans the ability to trade or “swap” event tickets with one another so they can get to another event they went to see with the tickets they already have/paid for. However, SeatSwap is much more than the barter
transaction; it’s a place where every ticket has a name and a face; where fans who are more concerned about getting to an event and having an experience than making a buck come to connect with one another. Right now, the primary points of engagements that connect fans are ticket inventory and common interests. Considering SeatSwap’s use cases range from upgrades to ensuring that your tickets don’t end up in the hands of opposing fans to event discovery and everything in between, we feel as though we can be giving users more points of engagements to cleave on to and reasons to connect with one another. That said, we only want to do so if it will provide a distraction to our core revenue generator, which is the swap transaction, so finding the appropriate balance is critical.

2. How can we make SeatSwap’s inventory available across channels and platforms (social media, blogs, ticketing aggregators, etc) such that users who visit one of these channels can seamlessly make a transaction with the least amount of friction possible?

SeatSwap’s success is contingent upon our continued ability to maintain a robust ticket inventory populated primarily by our users and then creating possible matches between users. Not only is inventory a driver of proposed and completed transactions within the SeatSwap platform, but it is also a huge catalyst for growth because showcasing inventory to hot events across different channels will prompt more people to register and use the platform. The issue then becomes how we can open up our system/inventory such that SeatSwap users can easily broadcast their inventory to their different channels in a way that will drive more registrations and inventory?

3. How do we make ticket inventory that we didn’t originate more interoperable across platforms such that a user who purchases a ticket via site x and another user who posts a ticket on site y can then import those same tickets to SeatSwap in the simplest way possible?

Over the past few years retail ticket sellers such as Ticketmaster have made it much more difficult for their retail purchasers to post their inventory on secondary platforms that are not owned by the ticket originator. As such, we have seen a wave of teams and venues doing away with paper PDF tickets altogether, not for environmental reasons but because it makes it harder to resell them on non-Ticketmaster secondary platforms. Virtually every secondary ticketing platform has been trying to crack the code of how to get around the blockades that primary ticket vendors throw up that prevent ticket holders from being able to easily move their tickets between platforms. While it may be challenging without access to an API, we still believe there is a solution here.

4. How do we programmatically reach ticket holders/purchasers who attempt to make de facto secondary market transactions via social media and sites like Craigslist in real time?

The hassle and fees associated with some of the entrenched secondary platforms has prompted savvy secondary market uses to flock to alternative channels such as Facebook groups, Twitter, and of course, Craigslist to move their ticket inventory without incurring the exorbitant fees. In a perfect world, we would like to be able to consolidate such chatter and engage with those users in real-time such that they can be prompted to upload their inventory to SeatSwap instead.
5. What is after Swap?

Yes, we are a ticket trading platform at the moment but the swap model as presently constructed provides an incredible foundation to build something that remedies the pain points that fans like ourselves constantly experience with the ticket buying, selling, transferring, et c experience. This is the most open-ended of the questions we grapple with but also leaves the most room for creativity.