



SAND TRACKS

REMOTE INDIGENOUS CONTEMPORARY MUSIC TOURING PROGRAM

DIGITAL STRATEGY

CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	3
SUMMARY	4
AUDIENCE	5
CONTENT	6
DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM	7
DIGITAL PROPERTIES	8
TOUCH DOC	8
DUST UP GAME APP	10
SAND TRACKS MUSIC BOX	11
WEB ALBUM	12
RADIO PACKAGES	13
MINI DOCOS	13
ON THE NIGHT (EVENTS)	14
PRODUCTION SUPPORT	15
BAND SELECTION PRESENTATION	15
INFORMATION SHARING AND PROJECT LOGISTICS	15
ASSET ARCHIVING	15
SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS	16
FACEBOOK PAGE	16
DIGITAL AMBASSADORS	17
PROPERTY BREAKDOWN	18

"Storytelling is a very old human skill that gives us an evolutionary advantage. If you can tell young people how you kill an emu, acted out in song or dance, or that Uncle George was eaten by a croc over there, don't go there to swim, then those young people don't have to find out by trial and error." - Margret Atwood

BACKGROUND

In Central Australia, story is history. Not in the way a film's verisimilitude blurs the lines between truth and fantasy. Not in the way a journalist's lens is encumbered by context and bias. Not like an archive's incomplete glimpse at the past where the gaps are filled by the viewer. In indigenous Australia, stories make history. Literally. Dreaming stories or Songlines carve waterways, conjure creatures and forge mountains. Here stories are the genesis of 'country'; every story an artefact in its own right. A history carried for a lifetime and transferred to the next generation. Through songs and dances, histories are retold for and by their future custodians. These activities reinforce people's relationships to land and their responsibility to it.

Since the advent of the Broadcasting in Remote Communities Scheme (BRACS) in 1987, indigenous Australians have increasingly seen their stories side-by-side with mainstream media. Skills in presenting stories through film and TV were developed and the tradition of storytelling expanded to new mediums. Radio and TV supporting indigenous content from different language-speaking nations was further supported through Indigenous Community Television (ICTV) and National Indigenous Television (NITV). Bands like Coloured Stone and Warumpi Band that pre-dated BRACS sung mostly in English. After the initiative, traditional languages become more prevalent. Although the Sand Tracks artist aren't as famous in Australian cities as Yothu Yindi and Gurrumul Yunupingu, they are some of the most popular artists in remote communities. Their skills in storytelling and traditions of songwriting combine with the cultural melting pots of blues, rock'n'roll and reggae to create unique histories that speak directly to the custodians of remote lands. They unite communities through one of the oldest storytelling platforms in history – music.

In 2007, the Australasian CRC for Interactive Design released an ambitious project aimed at preserving Cultural Heritage through a digital framework. The Digital Songlines (DSL) project provided a virtual world for language-speaking nations to record and preserve their stories. The tool used topographical maps taken from stalactites to create environments in a 3D game engine. Community groups and students could fill this world with personalised cultural artefacts. Users could then explore these virtual worlds in native language; discovering Songlines from different 'country' and learning about tribal life. The project surfaced much data and was well-received however it suffered the same issues that befell the initial BRACS rollout.

Equipment for recording film and sound have change as computing has evolved. Production equipment provided to communities under BRACS was superseded by advancements in desktop computing. Home studios and software based solutions made it easier to record and distribute stories, songs and games. DSL was built on this desktop model of interaction. Since 2007 the ways in which people engage with technology and digital knowledge has changed significantly. The penetration of portable computing from laptops to tablets to phones has done away with cumbersome specific location creation. People are now free to create and record anywhere. People can engage with vast knowledge archives in seconds. Access to the Internet is now integrated. Histories and stories are not contained in physical institutions, only accessible at certain times and at specific places. They are accessible on demand. Held in the cloud and carried with us.

A black and white photograph of a musician performing on stage, with a young audience member in the foreground looking up at the performer.

SUMMARY

Sand Tracks isn't just the 'Big Day Outback'. The Sand Tracks tour is a unique and compelling event that showcases the most popular musicians of central Australia. It benefits thousands each year by pairing experienced bands with emerging artists; spreading opportunity and fostering creativity.

This digital strategy outlines key projects that advance the goals of Sand Tracks through achievable and incremental processes. Its priority is to enrich events for specific audiences. A collection of properties has been designed to build awareness and educate people from indigenous and non-indigenous backgrounds.

These properties are aimed at key geographical and cultural audiences - Festivalgoers, Remote Australia, Metropolitan Australia and Stakeholders and Community groups. Each property is designed to support or enrich experiences for these specific audiences. These range from promoting making production with the Deadly Jam App to facilitating better communication with communities through web services and cloud based archives.

We have taken a holistic approach to what constitutes a digital strategy. We have taken the promotion of the Sand Tracks festival as one part of a broader engagement with music creators, community, broader audiences and festivalgoers. The most important aim of this strategy was to capture the ethos of the tour and build properties that extend it to new media and platforms.



AUDIENCE

Festivalgoers

- Born and raised in central Australia
- Almost exclusively indigenous
- Speak multiple languages

Stakeholders and Community groups

- Groups working with various artists and creators
- Various backgrounds
- Some local, some remote

Remote Australia

- Born and raised in central Australia
- Almost exclusively indigenous
- Speak multiple languages

Metropolitan Australia

- Born or moved to cities
- Various ethnicities
- Predominantly English speaking

CONTENT

Sand Tracks presents many opportunities to collect and create content. This digital strategy identifies ways this content can be presented to engage, inform and enrich experiences for each of the audience groups.

Main Types



audio



articles
and text



video



photos



3rd party
websites

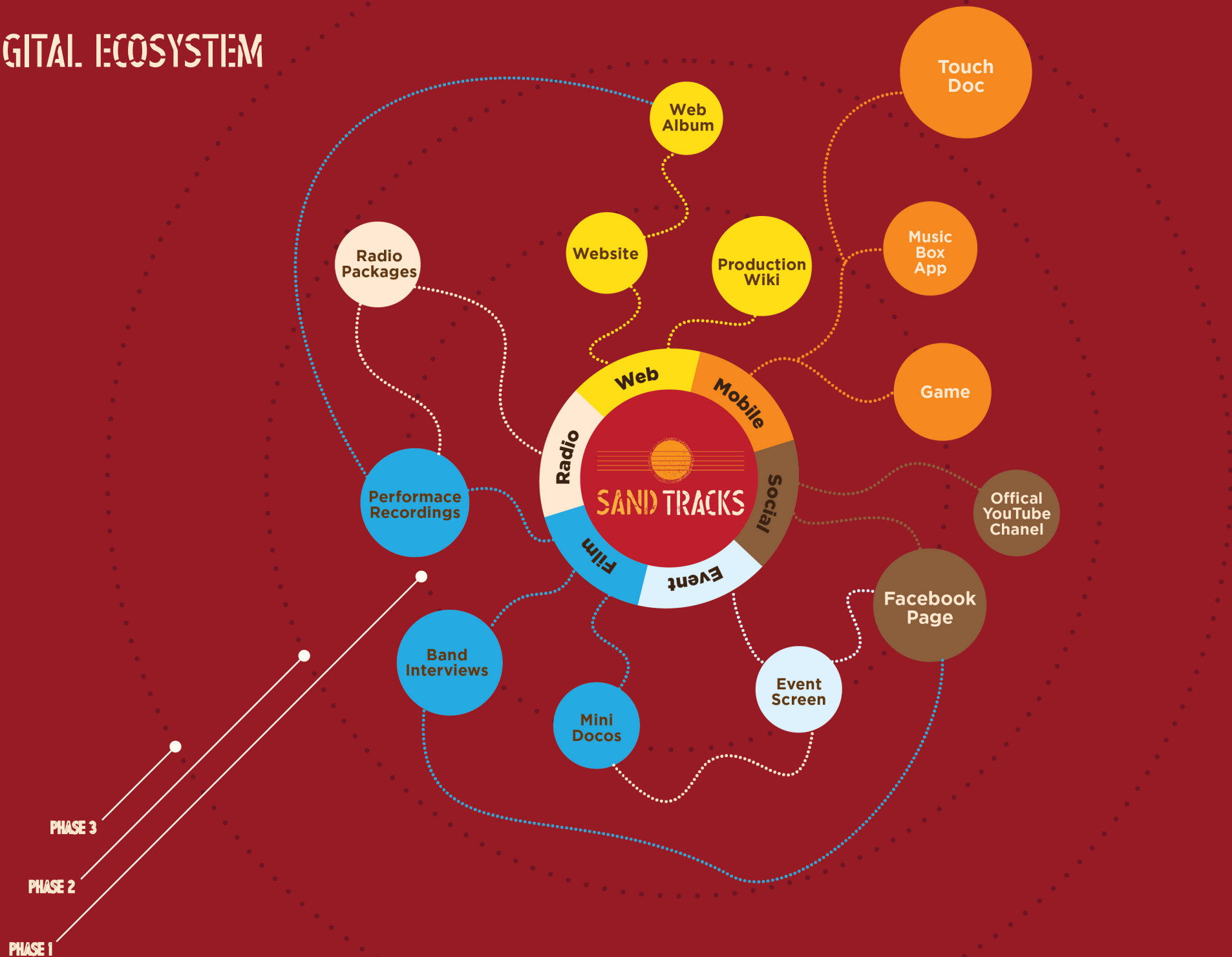


Statistics

Main Sources

- Performances
- Band recordings (licensed)
- Images posted to social media
- Images taken by band and crew on tour
- Official photography
- Commissioned video content
- Video by band and crew on tour
- Archival video and photography
- Workshop activities
- Workshop documentation
- Survey data
- Aggregated content from stakeholders and bands
 - Film clips
 - interviews
 - YouTube channels
 - Album art
 - Tour videos and photos
 - Band documentation
 - Websites
 - Promo pieces

DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM





DIGITAL PROPERTIES

TOUCH DOC

Sand Tracks Touch Doc (STDoc) is a major interactive property documenting the processes, people, bands and culture of the festival. It is delivered to portable devices via a new and innovative format that allows users to explore and engage with a major narrative through various interactive elements. While a traditional linear documentary provides the central narrative, interactive opportunities are presented throughout the viewing experience. The viewer can explore a rich collection of media and create their own path through presented information.

A broadcast documentary is a compelling way to express the ethos and achievements of Sand Tracks. This requires viewers to “tune in” at a particular

time and place. Once broadcast, depending upon availability of on-demand services, the documentary is often unseen for some time and tied to licensing agreements restricting its broadcast by others. Without a major marketing spend to secure an audience, films often miss out on reaching much of their potential audience.

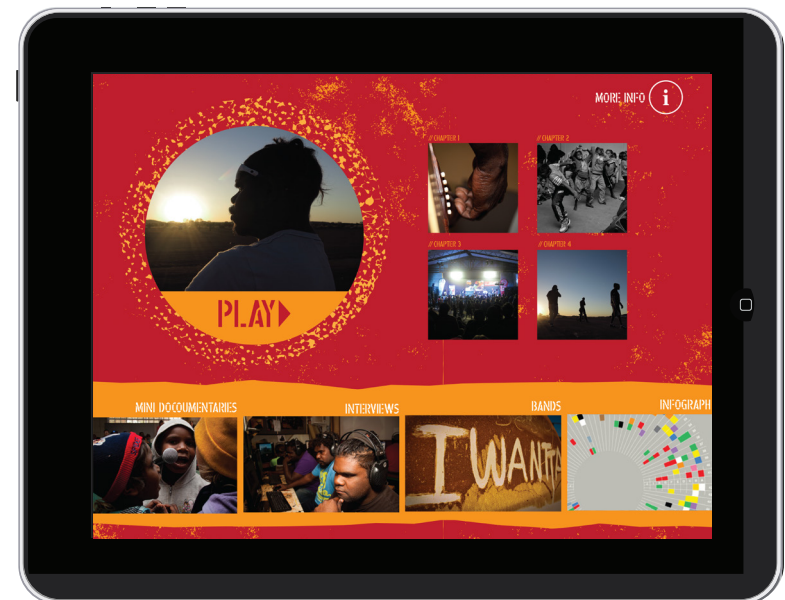
The Touch Doc format flips the broadcast model by delivery to anyone at anytime. This means the property can slowly build viewers allowing word of mouth and advocates time to spread the word. As distribution is carried out via significant mobile marketplaces – Apple’s AppStore or Andriod’s Marketplace – the potential audience is considerably larger than terrestrial broadcast in Australia. Additionally if a broadcaster does become interested there remains potential to secure a traditional broadcast outcome.

STDoc chronicles the 7th iteration of the Sand Tracks tour, using the tour as a strong narrative arc for a film that tells the story of that one tour

and the whole Sand Tracks history. It delivers a compelling window into contemporary indigenous music from central Australia and illustrates how Sand Tracks has helped to celebrate the artists, communities and characters of this isolated part of the world. Secondly it aims to introduce metropolitan and city viewers to some often overlooked aspects of culture and country that have guided people for generations. Key interactive components will allow the user to diverge from the main narrative and explore with freedom. These items will include:

- An interactive map demonstrating the vast distances people travel to visit Sand Tracks.
- Triggerable stories that expand the histories of communities and country.
- A selection of songs recorded during the festivals or released by bands, creating an ad-hoc sound track.
- Breakouts throughout the documentary that pause the film and trigger additional information about the current topic, person, organisation or event to be overlaid.
- Infographics that capture some of the more astonishing numbers relating to the tour including distance travelled, percentage of people from towns that attend, the impact of improvements to communities and any other data identified during scoping.
- Vlogs from various crew and band members chronicling their experiences on tour. These personal perspectives help to give viewers a greater understanding of the people and their psychology on tour.

The App will be developed with portability in mind. A third party, platform agnostic framework will be used to allow the delivery to multiple operating systems. Content will be encoded for specific platforms and stored 'on-device' rather than streamed. This means more download time initially but no need for an internet connection after installation. The App can be preloaded on devices and will be much more responsive in areas where internet connection quality can vary.



DUST UP GAME APP

Sand Tracks Dust Up (STDU) is a game for portable devices that promotes skills and knowledge development in an engaging and informal way. The goal is to convey information about bands, artists and social issues through various playful interactions. The game draws its inspiration from the highly successful Dumb Ways To Die project for Victoria Rail. It takes the form of a collection of mini-games each with different themes and gesture controls. The player plays each game for about 10-30sec. If the player fails to finish a game their turn is over and they are returned to the main screen. If successful, they are rewarded with new characters and special collectables. Games are then repeated in a different order and with increased difficulty.

The production of STDU builds skills not just in music but in design, illustration and multimedia production. Where possible the development team should work with the community to ensure authenticity and relevance in what messages the game promotes. Input from the community on what personalities to use and what stories to focus on will increase relevance. Where possible, assets like characters, illustrations, game sounds and music should be sourced from the community and local practitioners. The development team would work with contributors to curate the content and ensure continuity in the final product.

Revenue opportunities exist for individual screen sponsorship and sales. Each mini-game can be sponsored by different organisations. This could be through a simple logo or an integrated approach involving tailored graphics or narratives. It is important that sponsorships do not undermine the ethos of STDU or Sand Tracks.



Possible mini-games:

Tune up Jeremy's guitar (Iwantja)

■ Tap the guitar strings along with Jeremy. Don't fall behind

Beat that mob to school – (Workshop talk, Animation)

■ Runner game: jump the obstacles

Keep the dance alive – (Saltwater)

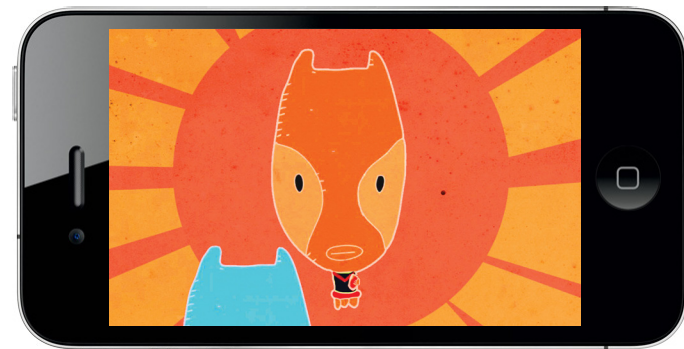
■ Tap the action points to make the character dance

Clean the house before mum gets back

■ Tap all the trash before the timer runs out

Get Narbarlek to all their gigs (Big Tour 2004)

■ Tap all the map points before the time runs out



SAND TRACKS MUSIC BOX

The Sand Tracks Music Box (STMB) is a standalone application for mobile devices that connects aspiring music makers with the music that has come before. It works by helping users create backing tracks from the music of previous touring bands. The goal is to support future indigenous music creation through a safe (and forgiving) app that acknowledges the past as much as it does the future.

Music samples are taken from popular bands that have toured for Sand Tracks. The user then lays these samples out in a timeline to create loops. These sequences can be saved to the device and played back later as backing tracks to sing or play along with. Or they can be played back just for fun as an interactive music arrangement experience.

Tutorials on how to use the app are not just instructional but should also provide insights into how the bands went about creating the song or their approach to song writing. Bands talk through laying out a track. They instruct the user where to find a sample and where to place it in the interface. They talk about instruments, timing and song structure from their experiences. This can be presented as voice over or text enriching the experience and providing support. This is a great informal way to provide valuable mentor support to many people without needing to have them all in the one room.

The app can also be used in workshops during the Sand Tracks tour to reduce the pressure on presenters and to give the participants alternative approaches to music making.

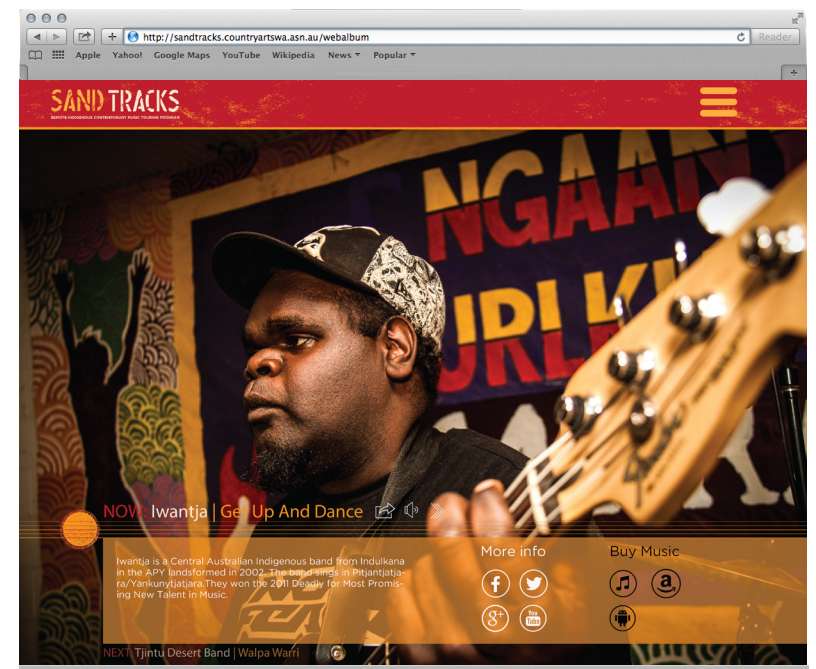
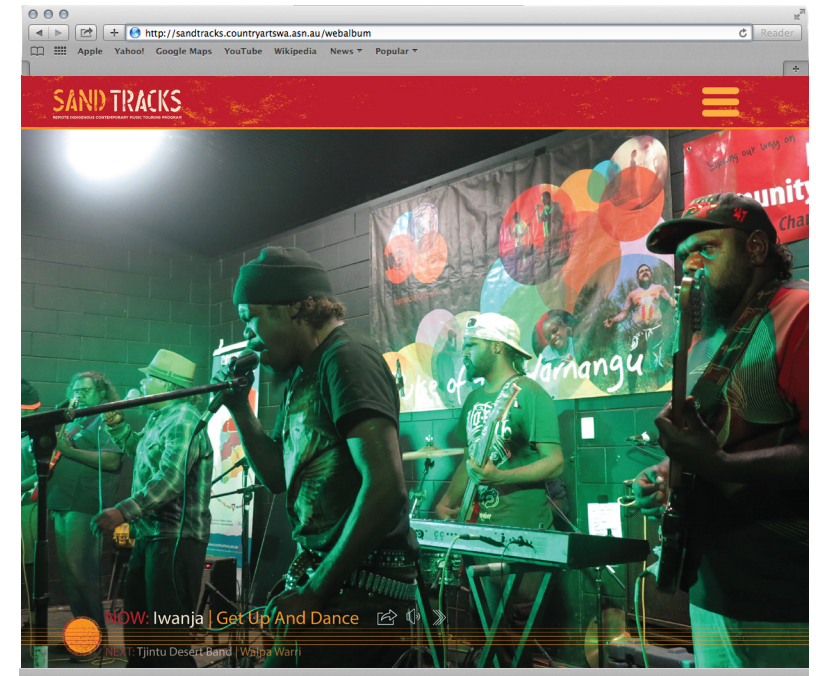


WEB ALBUM

The goal of the Sand Tracks Web Album (STWA) is to showcase the best recordings and visual content in an intuitive and accessible framework. It takes the form of an innovative website where anyone from anywhere can stream selected tracks through a custom web media player.

The site breaks from the traditional website aesthetic by being very visual – focusing on a ‘show don’t tell’ approach to content delivery. Music plays over images and video creating dynamically generated music clips. Event photos, very short videos and photos from attendees are repurposed to create vignettes of the Sand Tracks experience. Users can learn more about the bands and tracks through band bios and lyrics sheets with translations. New content can be added easily as there is no need to create polished film clips or to sync images and music for each piece of new content. Instead, audio recordings can be updated separately to visual media and the framework will take care of the rest. Each dynamically created track can then be shared via social media services like Twitter and Facebook.

The site can be promoted to the core audience as a way to relive the fun and festivity of the Sand Tracks tour between event while, for others, STWA provides an entry point to the Sand Track ecosystem. It requires limited interaction and can play in the background at work or be explored on a bus ride. Users can be directed to other properties like Sand Tracks Music Box (STMB) or Dust Up Apps (STDP). The site will be developed using HTML5 media components and RESTfull data delivery. Different designs will be developed for mobile, web and tablet to ensure the best experience for each platform. Many media assets will be reused and only minor changes will be required to optimise some content for different screen sizes.



RADIO PACKAGES

Radio is an often-overlooked yet extremely compelling platform. For Sand Tracks, radio is a valuable way to engage the core audience between tours. Radio is a highly supported medium in remote areas and with the opportunities Sand Tracks presents for collecting audio it seems a natural platform for extension. Recording and packaging interviews creates high quality content that would be very difficult and expensive for media outlets to create themselves. This content could be released to various outlets between tours, keeping the brand current.

Band interviews taken on tour can be packaged and released to regional radio and the ABC, CAAMA broadcasters like 100.5FM in Alice Springs, PAW Media Radio, TEABBA Radio and RadioNGM to be played in the months leading up to festivals and in the months after. These interviews can also be trimmed and repurposed for other properties like the STDoc.

Song recordings from the festival can be released to various radio to be played as they see fit. These unique and exclusive live tracks not only promote the festival but also provide additional produced material for the bands.

MINI DOCOS

Mini documentaries are versatile pieces of commissioned content that document and engage new audiences. Specifically targeted short narratives about songs, bands, culture, country or attendees can be integrated with other properties or presented standalone. A collection of 15-20 documentaries of about 1 to 5 minutes will help communicate the success of Sand Tracks and reward the participants and audience.

Mini documentaries provide value inside and outside the Sand Tracks ecosystem. Inside the ecosystem they enrich other properties like the website and social media campaigns. They can be integrated into STDoc and provide additional content for the Web Album. They present opportunities to capture content like interviews, ephemeral video or event and workshop documentation. Outside, they can be used to promote services, engage funding, enrich partnerships and market the project.

One exciting outcome could be to present documentaries during the festival, either between bands or as additional satellite events. The stories presented could focus on different people, places and organisations and should involve members of the community.

One important consideration is ensuring there is enough content to be spread across other properties. When someone takes the time to explore all the various properties of Sand Tracks they should not be exposed to repeat content too frequently. It is important to reserve content for exclusive use on specific platforms and in specific properties.



ON THE NIGHT (EVENTS)

LED and projection screens have become a common sight at festivals in recent years. Interactive engagement with the screens, everything from simple twitter feeds to complex integrated MIDI works, have become possible thank largely to social networks and the falling price of multimedia equipment. Sand Tracks could incorporate a small projection unit for exciting interactivity and/or to present short films and photos at festival events. Some simple examples include:

- Pictures gathered during the night to incorporate attendees into the performance
- Presentation of mini-docos between sets
- Invite artists to create site specific works that involve and engage communities
- Opportunity for activations for stakeholders and a valuable platform for messaging



PRODUCTION SUPPORT

Digital strategies are not limited to client-facing services. Projects can often be improved by better communications, faster asset sharing, quicker problem resolution and greater transparency. An integrated digital support strategy helps project owners maintain continuity and foster project harmony across vast distances, time zones and languages.

Sand Tracks can benefit from introducing some digital tools around band selection, consumer satisfaction evaluation and information sharing. Tools could also be repurposed for other projects undertaken by Country Arts WA. They have been conceived to facilitate dialogue, reduce repetition, and to support data collection and decision making.

BAND SELECTION PRESENTATION

An interactive presentation with songs, images, bios that is preloaded onto a tablet and taken to remote communities to canvas support for bands. This could be a custom built application or made up of a suite of existing products that when combined can increase productivity in the following ways:

- Quickly showing images, playing music and videos, and recording respondents feedback
- Registering interest and collecting contacts
- Easily connected to projectors or passed around at conferences or meetings to share information faster

Many of the modern software solutions allow for custom data to be collected, stored on the device, shared via standard formats (like PDF or CVS) or printed to wireless printers. Some examples of existing low cost or free software are:

- Keynote (Apple), Powerpoint, PDF
- FormConnect (<http://www.formconnections.com/formconnect/>)
- Form Entry (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/formentry/id335355434?mt=8>)
- Do Forms (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.mdt.doforms.android&hl=en>)

INFORMATION SHARING AND PROJECT LOGISTICS

In recent years many new platforms have been created to facilitate conversation and process tracking for distributed projects. Some focus on task completion and project tracking while other aim more at creative thinking and discussions. They are generally private platforms that rely on inviting users to become part of a project and enforce organisational hierarchies to ensure responsibility and focus on tasks. Many also include file-sharing functionality where users can upload content to cloud storage.

- Using a platform like Freedcamp or Trello means conversations can be stored in one place and information can be quickly shared without digging through emails.
- Individuals can easily connect to tasks or milestones every aspect can be discussed in one place that is available anywhere
- Using a Wiki type platform to share procedures, forms, broadcast updates and notify stakeholders

ASSET ARCHIVING

- Using cloud storage FTP, a cloud storage service Dropbox and reconciling assets to a local store regularly
- Digital assets loaded onto an app for showing people potential bands for touring

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

FACEBOOK PAGE

A Facebook page is nowadays the first place people look for up-to-the-minute information about events, bands and organisations. It is essential in today's digital world that Sand Tracks has an active and relevant Facebook presence to communicate to audience and stakeholders and to build an advocate network in metropolitan Australia.

The priority is to support the tour and engage with the audience in central Australia. This doesn't mean there needs to be daily or even weekly updates. It means that content needs to be posted when it comes to hand or as part of a campaign leading up to key moments in projects. The following is a list of some of the key information and content that needs to be made available:

- Festival information or links to information:
- Dates
- Band profiles
- Venue information
- Maps
- links to the website
- Music by bands embedded from various sources. Where possible these should be embedded from or link websites that promote the band or support indigenous music like CAAMA, Skinnyfish Music and PAW.
- Information relating to participating artists like new albums, interviews, ventures
- information about any other Sand Tracks property like release information for apps, the Web Album, Touch Doc or radio events
- Curated albums of photos taken during production and at events
- Links to mini-docos or other video that has been flagged for public release
- Links to press or media

- Bios for potential artists
- Song with clip on facebook
- Short with image and link on twitter
- Aim awareness for stakeholders and gatekeepers
- Sand Tracks big mob
- Post short video saying who your town wants to see
- Big mobs speak big noise



DIGITAL AMBASSADORS

Digital Ambassadors (DAs) help facilitate digital content in remote communities while learning transferable skills. DAs work with Country Arts WA to discover, facilitate and promote practitioners and artists from remote communities. Providing a tool for empowering self-determination and overcoming negative stereotype, it was instrumental in dismantling preconceived ideas of self worth and image – the normally held view that somehow indigenous people ‘cannot do this kind of non-indigenous hi-tech work.’

- Active community content creators – photos, video.
- Local individuals appointed to support digital projects in each community
- Provide basic training in using social media and other ST properties
- Creating content on tour (taking photos, surveys, posting, helping production team)
- Managing content and asset archiving



PROPERTY BREAKDOWN

ID	COMPONENT	PURPOSE	BUDGET	PRODUCTION	DEPENDANCY	PHASE	RESOURCES
1	Touch Doc	Documentation External Awareness	\$\$\$	6-8 Months	(2) Recordings (4) Interviews	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developers ● Film makers ● Promo ● Designer ● Film makers
2	Performance Recordings	Artist promotion Aspirational	\$	3 weeks	Tour events Band signings	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Artists ● Sound recordings
3	Web Album	Promo Music Broaden accessibility	\$\$	1 month	(2) Recordings	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Web Developer ● Designer
4	Interviews	Role models Promote paths and culture	\$	1 week	Band signings Tour events??	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Film makers
5	Mini Docos	Promote the culture of the tour and bands	\$\$\$	6 months	Tour Events Band Signings Stakeholders	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Film makers
6	Asset Archiving	Archive and document	\$	Ongoing	Tour events	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Archive Officer
7	Music Box	Mentor Aspirational	\$\$	6 months	(2) Recordings	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● App Developer ● Designer ● Testers
8	Big Screen	Reward Involve	\$	1 week	None Expandable	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Digital officer
9	Radio packages	Expand Promote	\$	2 weeks	(2) Recordings (4) Interviews	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Audio engineer
10	Official Channel	Accessibility Awareness	\$\$	2 weeks (Ongoing)	(2) Recordings (5) Mini Docs	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social Media Officer
11	Facebook Page	Accessibility Communication	\$	1 week (Ongoing)	Website Official Channel	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social Media Officer
12	Dust Up App	Expand Educate Engage	\$\$	6-8 weeks		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developers ● Designer
13	Band Selection Presentation	Communication	\$	2 Weeks		-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Designer

Prepared 2015 by



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