Initial Interview Protocol for HFID User Interaction Study
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The goal of our project is to design an interface that will allow people to easily listen to digital music. In particular, we would like to make the process of selecting and playing songs as convenient and intuitive as possible. The first step of this design process is to perform short (approximately 20 minute) interviews with people who are relatively comfortable using computers to learn about how they listen to music.

We will first ask interviewees how they usually listen to music (i.e., what media and situations). Those who regularly use their computers to listen to digital music will be asked to demonstrate their standard music listening habits. We are particularly interested in how users go about choosing what songs they will listen to and how they select their music-playing software. Users will be given the choice of performing this demonstration using their own computers or a laptop that we will provide, which will be equipped with a variety of popular media players and a large selection of music. (Note that we will not ask about the origins of any material on the users’ computers.) After the demonstration, we will ask these users what they like and dislike about their current listening style and if there are any functions they wish their programs could do or do more easily.

We will ask users who do not often listen to digital music to describe their current practices and to demonstrate these if the necessary equipment is readily available. We are interested in learning whether there may be some way to make digital music more accessible or desirable to these individuals. To learn about this, we will ask what the users like and dislike about their current systems and what impressions or thoughts they have regarding digital music.

In all of these interviews there will be two or three team members present. There will always be one person taking notes and one person asking questions. If a third interviewer is present, (s)he will observe the process but will not take notes to avoid intimidating the interviewee.

We will keep all of the interviewees’ identities confidential. We will collect names and phone numbers, to allow us to contact subjects again, and we will do sound recordings of the interviews to allow us to check our interview notes for accuracy. However, we will not disclose any of this information. The sound recordings will be destroyed at the conclusion of the course. Additionally, we will not describe the schools, home towns, or music preferences of individuals included in the study, as this combination of data may be sufficient to identify people at Olin and other nearby colleges. We will identify particular subjects by their age groups: 18-23, 23-33, or 33+ and by their broad level of comfort with computers.