Goal: We would like to create a social application for finding and viewing people with similar music tastes. This system will only search people who are closely connected to the current user.

Idea: Last.fm is an online repository of music preferences and song history. It also provides a rich programming API for accessing this data about each user. We are going to leverage the API to develop an application which can visualize any user’s musical preferences. There will be two visualizations styles. One is an abstract representation of an animated character. The other is a simple pie chart displaying the user’s most listened to musical groups. A user will also view the avatars for each of their friends and the avatars for each of their friends’ friends. We hope that the user will use the application to find people with two degrees of separation with similar musical tastes.

Avatar: The avatar is the key component of this visualization. Each user’s musical tastes are depicted as an avatar. The avatar’s clothing will change depending on which genres and music groups the user listens to. In this way, similar tastes in music will result in similar looking avatars.

Pie Chart: The pie chart will show the 10 or so most popular bands to which a user listens. Each band will take up a portion of the pie chart representing the influence that band has.

Interface: A user of the program will first type in their Last.fm user name. The system will get data for that user, that user’s friends, and their friends. The avatars for all these people will be displayed. This system will utilize the idea of small multiples. If the user so wishes, they may switch to a pie chart view instead.