

**\$1M saved in
costs with user
research**

**Changing the team direction at a
100M users social network.**

Streaming Wars: Disney Raises Prices | Podcasts Bounce Back | End of Peak TV | \$20 Billion Sports Med



BandLab surpasses 100 million users

BandLab, the mobile app that allows users to make and distribute music, has reached a new, big milestone: surpassing 100 million users.

For the unfamiliar, BandLab is an all-in-one music creation, distribution and services platform that allows artists to make and monetize their music in one place. It also serves as a social media network with users sharing and chatting about tracks. Many of the app's creation tools are free to use, but users have to pay to get their songs on streaming services and for access to certain features.

BandLab is a social network with 100 million users.

Context

In 2023 Bandlab's Social Network department was focused on three product directions: music exploration, newsfeed, and chat.

I joined the Chat team as Senior Product Designer. However...

Challenge

Chat team was struggling to meet their OKR – grow the usage by 5 times. Huge cash was burned for nothing.

Production costs

Team had high production costs, covering all the devices. Any mistake could cost us 2-4 weeks.

Lack of data

Team relied on statistics and world examples. The vision wasn't clearly defined and validated.

My initiative

1. Take the lead over the vision validation and align with PM.
2. Validate the team's strategy through product research.
3. Optimise the design processes to lead both design and research activities.

Research Documentation

Goals

Validate the Chat team strategy
Identify the main Jobs to be Done
Understand the competition around.

Team

Project Owner — Konstantin Konstantinopolskii

Researcher — Pavel Dolgov

Stakeholder — Kübra Akçay

Method In-depth Semistructured
Interviews

Target Group Chat Users
Bandlab Users

Duration 40–60 minutes
5 interviews, 2 cycles

Budget \$  per each
interview.

Interview Guide

Warmup

1. Ask about user's journey in Music.
2. Plans and music Goals.

Creation process and collaboration

1. How do you typically create music
2. And so on...

We documented the initiative, aligned
the team, and got the budget.

Interviews

First 10 calls highlighted the main user segments and their patterns. But it felt they don't need anything.

Segments

2 people preferred to just create music alone.

3 had fun with friends.

4 worked on a music career.

1 were celebrities.

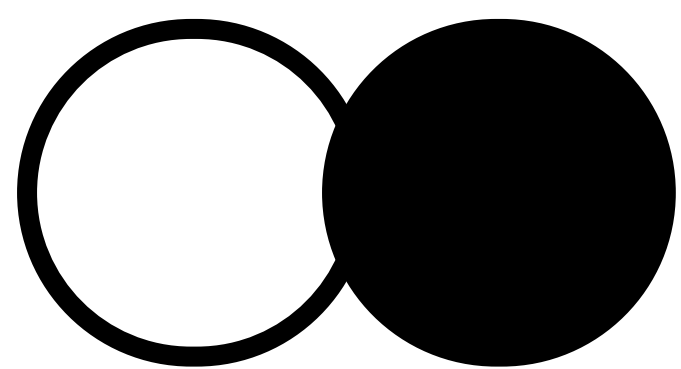
Patterns

People often referred to live-collaboration, project discussions, and lack of organization.

80% of chat users didn't know about recent features.

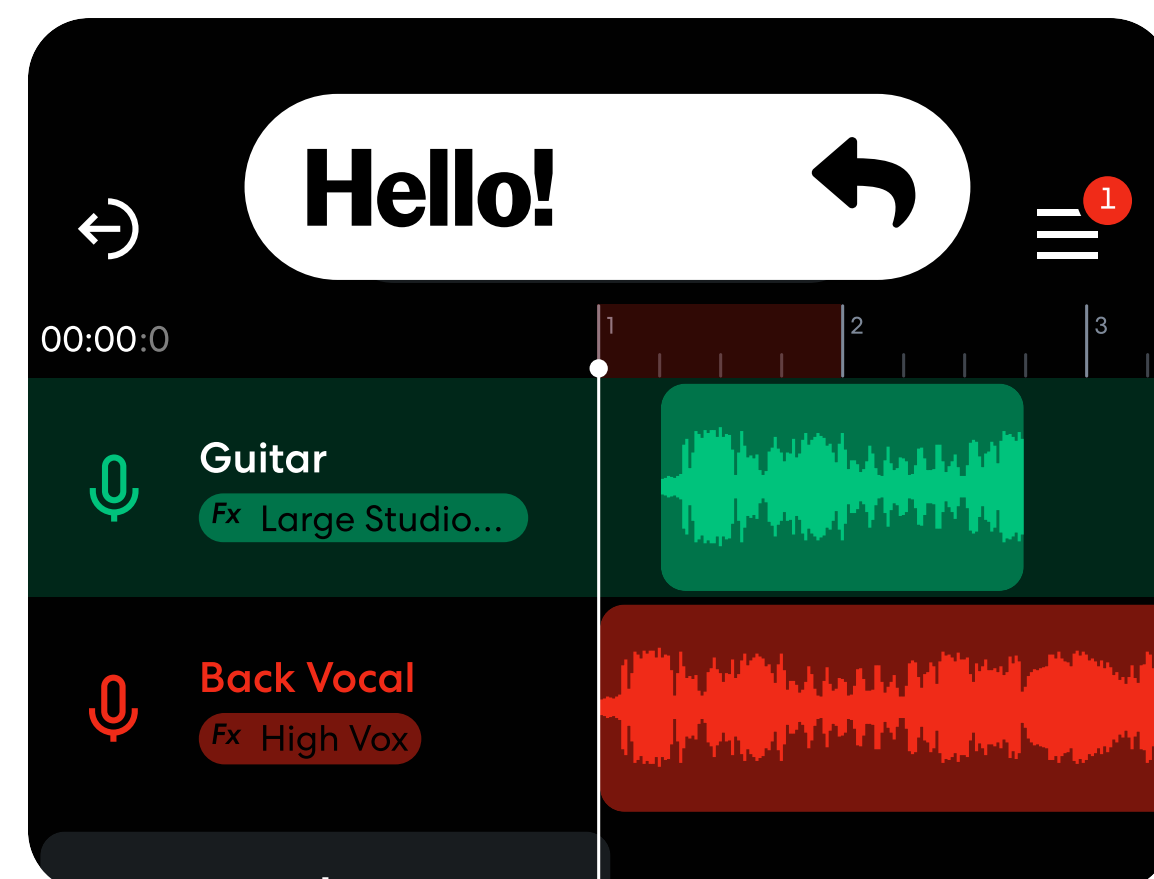
Vision

We decided to test it by designing the best vision possible. And then asking the users to vote for it.



**Distinct Project
and Regular Chat
Notifications**

**Live
Collabo-
ration**



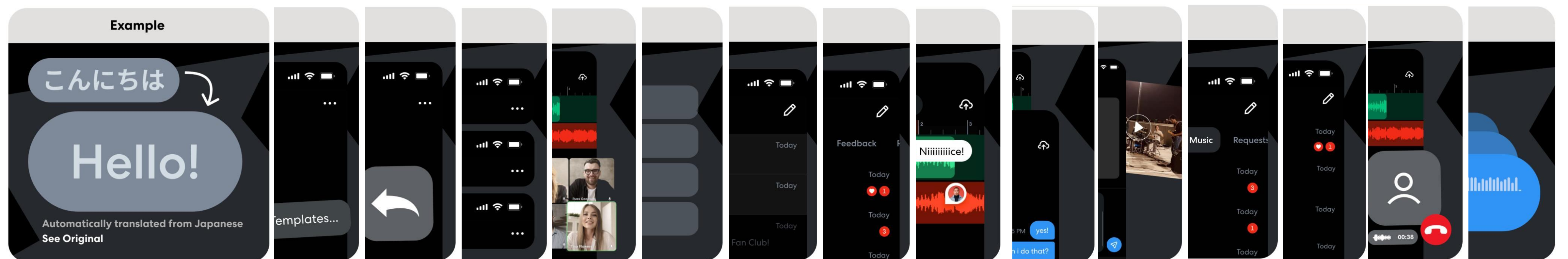
Plus

Statuses,
Folders,
Translation,
Desktop
Integration

Spam Lists,
Templates.

Validation

To see which part of the vision drives more engagement, we created a KANO survey.



To reduce misunderstandings, we illustrated each step in the survey.

9 → **If you WERE TO HAVE instant translation for foreign languages in your messages, how would you feel?**

☐ A I like it

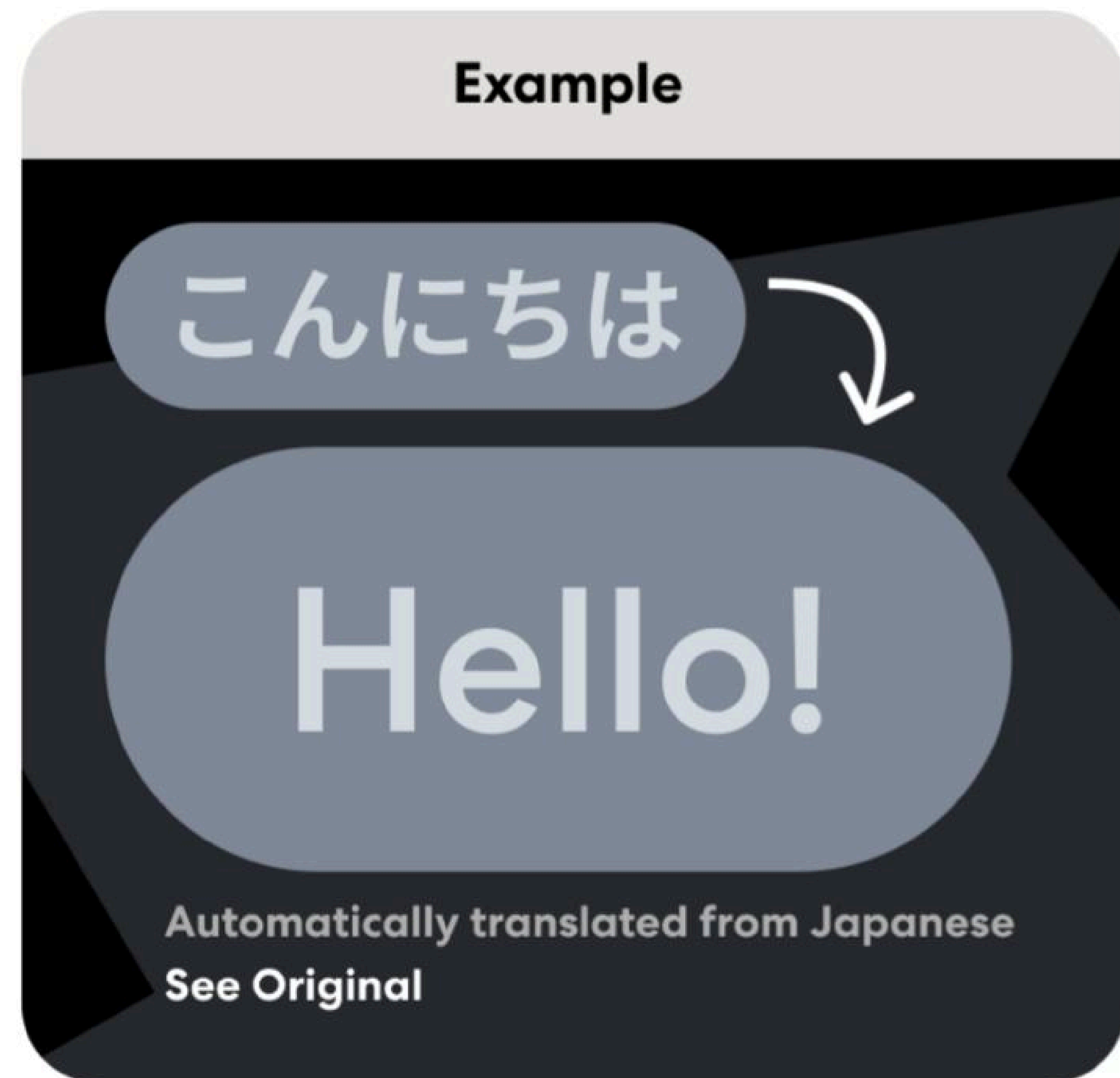
☐ B I expect it

☐ C I am neutral

☐ D I can live with it

☐ E I dislike it

OK



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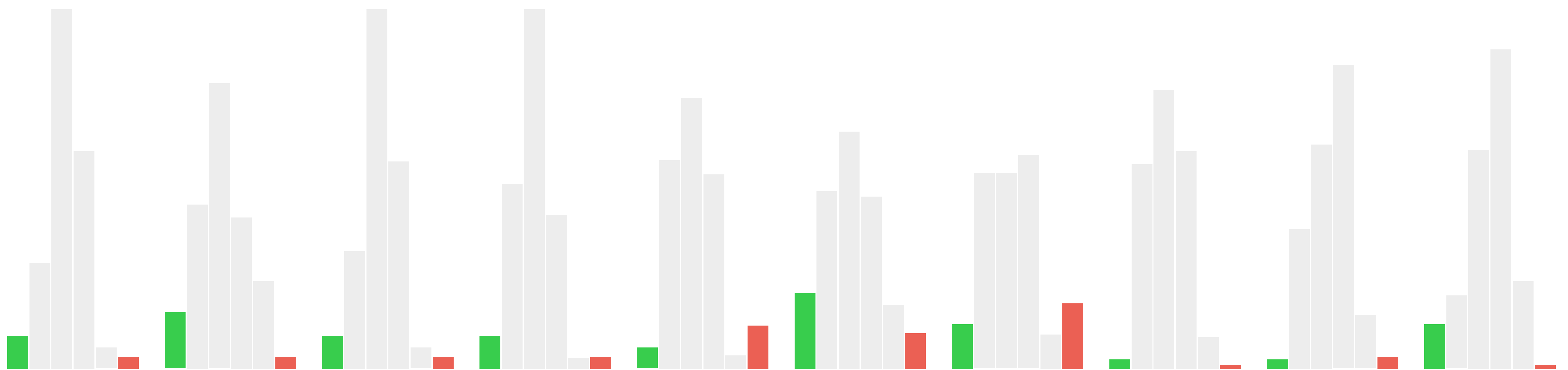
Final look of a survey step after UX-tests users.

\$1M at risk.

Users weren't interested in Chat improvements. At all.

Most of the features were in the
Nice-to-Have — **Don't-Do-It**
part of the spectrum.

Only one feature got
at least **10% Must Have**
votes.



Pivot

Together with the manager we successfully pitched the idea to pivot the team and focus on collaboration.

From the 2024, team started to work on the Bands concept.



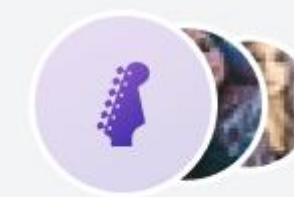
Near You



Worldwide



Rappers/Beatmakers



Guitarists

Bands

Results

Manager immediately escalated the research results. Bandlab decided to change the team's direction.

***Based on calculation of 10-person cross-functional team median salaries, infrastructure and maintenance costs.**

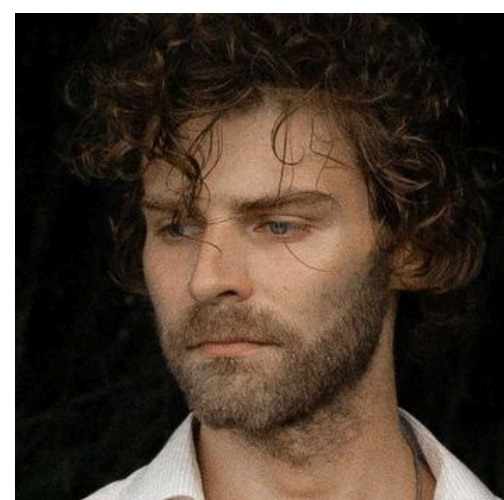
Special thanks to Kübra Akçay, Pavel Dolgov, and Roman Vagner for their trust and support in the process.

Testimonials



**Roman
Vagner,**
Design lead
at Bandlab
Technologies

**You proactively solved
one problem after
another to align closely
with the team's OKRs.
A great example for the
product, design, and
research.**



**Pavel
Dolgov,**
researcher at
Bandlab
Technologies

You transformed user research insights into tactical and strategic goals. This example helped to bridge the gap between research and business teams a lot.

**Multiply Outputs
with the Bold Strategy
from Your new Growth
Strategist & Mentor.**

**Deep Science, FinTech,
EdTech business.**

Starting at \$2K/mo.

With Love.

KK