

# **Innovation Pacemaker Entry**

## **Daily Nebraskan (University of Nebraska-Lincoln)**

### **Summary:**

- Press Play is a live concert by a local band in the DN office, coupled with a feature story on the local band. It's a combined effort between the Culture and Multimedia sections.

### **Goals:**

- Give reporters hands-on experience with cross-media journalism and storytelling
- Strengthen our connection to community actors and organizations
- Innovate cross-platform content by merging video with social and written digital.
- Have fun and connect with our peers!

### **Elements:**

- Video released on YouTube of the full concert
- Photo and video content of the band before the concert
- Feature story on the band
- Promotional content on social media to accompany the YouTube release

### **Details:**

- Press Play is a live concert in the Daily Nebraskan office performed by a local Lincoln-based band, recorded, edited and produced by our Multimedia team of video editors. Our Culture team of local music reporters finds the bands, then does a feature story on the band to accompany each concert video. It grows both our reporters' connections to the community and each other.
- Press Play 2025 was a revival of the idea from the early 2010s. It emerged from the love and excitement our Culture and Multimedia teams experienced

covering local Lincoln music festivals and a desire to give the newsroom something fun to unite them.

- This year, the DN welcomed 6 different local bands to perform: The Vix, Joyrager, JDreams the Alien and Friends, Jet Set, Groove Lagoon and Hold Your Breath.

## **Details:**

- Hold Your Breath: <https://youtu.be/sTHeWtVleqk?si=Z0EOiewrWmY3hpZd>
  - Feature story: [https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/hold-your-breath-performs-four-songs-at-office/article\\_819d4642-48bf-436b-98e4-895d7a3d5b1d.html](https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/hold-your-breath-performs-four-songs-at-office/article_819d4642-48bf-436b-98e4-895d7a3d5b1d.html)
- Groove Lagoon: <https://youtu.be/EKlYnYk41Ss?si=EW1VEAvYmr6yr70v>
  - Feature story: [https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/press-play-the-groove-lagoon-funks-things-up-at-the-dn/article\\_cc2b34f9-15a4-41e4-8091-7bd5321c7174.html](https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/press-play-the-groove-lagoon-funks-things-up-at-the-dn/article_cc2b34f9-15a4-41e4-8091-7bd5321c7174.html)
- Jet Set: <https://youtu.be/xETJohh-p4U?si=Mx2WVCE3x1wLyBR1>
  - Feature story: [https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/press-play-lincoln-band-jet-set-rocks-daily-nebraskan-office/article\\_6a548ae1-efe9-4d7b-9090-9c5da48f0d2d.html](https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/press-play-lincoln-band-jet-set-rocks-daily-nebraskan-office/article_6a548ae1-efe9-4d7b-9090-9c5da48f0d2d.html)
- JDreams the Alien + Friends:  
<https://youtu.be/5qflaTorO3o?si=ZD3VvPWWdwXnDfQh>
  - Feature story: [https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/jdreams-performs-on-press-play/article\\_975d9b7d-2e53-47c8-946f-59ec2f8ac983.html](https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/jdreams-performs-on-press-play/article_975d9b7d-2e53-47c8-946f-59ec2f8ac983.html)
- Joyrager: <https://youtu.be/lqyN6MV4l9A?si=G1fMkbF3sDSicGbh>
  - Feature story: [https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/joyrager-performs-on-press-play/article\\_ec87ef57-a323-4f5d-a437-b1a40bcd03a1.html](https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/joyrager-performs-on-press-play/article_ec87ef57-a323-4f5d-a437-b1a40bcd03a1.html)
- The Vix: <https://youtu.be/rNt1v5SZWFw?si=KY7fspER-aAxKBu4>
  - Feature story: [https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/the-vix-perform-on-press-play/article\\_658be883-3f8e-4399-92c9-d3a634608b03.html](https://www.dailynebraskan.com/culture/the-vix-perform-on-press-play/article_658be883-3f8e-4399-92c9-d3a634608b03.html)

- Social media pushes:
  - <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DIta0jpR8uJ/>
  - <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJSuYgGAHMP/>
  - <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHlay5nAahQ/>
  - <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHhMLTWyScU/>

### **How it's done:**

- A member of the Culture team selects a band to reach out to. They develop a connection and get contact information for the band. They coordinate interviews for the profile piece and times for recording.
- A member of the Culture staff does the interviewing and collects footage and photos of the band, writes and edits the feature story.
- The band comes into the office and performs. While reporters enjoy the concert in the office, the Multimedia team is hard at work integrating the band's equipment with video and audio equipment.
- Our team of video editors puts together the final product and publishes it on social media channels, primarily YouTube. The Digital team works to promote it across other platforms.

### **Impact:**

- Press Play has increased our engagement on social media and on the web. On average, Press Play videos garnered around 400 views, a dramatic increase from our channel average of 75.
- Press Play dramatically increased the DN's connection to the local music scene. Moving beyond concert photo galleries and reviews, viewers were offered the opportunity to experience the band for themselves. Several bands volunteered for future DN community events– one band lead singer even cut one of our reporters' hair in the office.
- Press Play united multiple teams in our newsroom. It created a space for community and connection across sections, fostering collaboration between reporters who started two weeks and two years ago. It got people in the office for something fun and exciting that mattered to them.

## **Student Testimony:**

- “Press Play is a professional level experience that you can’t get anywhere else in college and adds so much culture to the newsroom on weekends.”  
Ben Beecham, Assistant Sports Editor
- “Press play helps local bands gain exposure and gives them a platform to share their music and their passions! It also strengthens the local music community and helps form connections, especially between the music scene and our newsroom! Press Play has helped so many of both the band members and our staff to grow their skills and experiment creatively!” Nina Kudlacz, Senior Multimedia Editor
- “Press Play allows student journalists to step into varied roles that include video and audio production, writing and interviewing, and event organization.” Gus Kathol, Assistant Video Editor
- “I love Press Play because I love local music and I love getting to share it with my coworkers at the DN! Press Play is incredible for our staff to gain experience and work on a unique project they’re passionate about!!” -Alex Gryczanowski, Senior Culture Editor

## **Future:**

- Press Play is not slowing down! Our Culture and Multimedia teams have close connections to the local Lincoln music scene and are always connecting with new bands to bring in. Its goals for next year are to grow in person attendance in the office, experiment with editing forms, bring in new bands and increase views! Deciding how to market Press Play on our social media is a big step in that process, something our Digital, Multimedia and Culture teams are planning right now!