**Diaa El All:** 0:00

Currently no, and we have no plans to allow users to upload any musical instruments or sounds into the platform One, because we can't tell, really, if they have the clearance of that sample and it can open a sound pool for infringement. Again, sound pool, training materials and data and everything that is in under the hood for us is proprietary, 100% sound pool and it's not infringing or trained on anything else. With any technology, there comes a lot of scare and there's a lot of people that are saying, with sound pool or others, that AI generative work is going to replace the human, whether it's a musician or an artist, etc. I completely disagree with that. It's AI is not going to replace human. Who's going to replace you if you're doing your job is the person that is leveraging AI and the technology to advance and become from human to superhuman.

**Craig Smith:** 0:53

I'm Craig Smith and this is Eye on AI. This week, I speak to Dia L L, co founder and CEO of Soundful, an AI music creation platform that helps artists, creators, singers, songwriters and producers analyze, create and monetize music. I'm fairly selective about the founders that I have a podcast. I prefer to interview researchers, but Dia caught my attention because AI is changing the way that music is created and produced, and Soundful is unique in that it doesn't depend on copyrighted training data. I want to give a shout out to our new sponsor, mind Studio by UAI, which is giving creators an opportunity to build and deploy generative AI apps for fun and profit. Now is the time to build AI businesses. Imagine if you could go back to the early days of the mobile app marketplace. Don't you wish you were one of the few that built an early app making millions today? The AI marketplace is emerging today and Mind Studio is the best way to build an AI business. Start driving some serious revenue before everyone else. Anyone can do it. Mind Studio allows you to use conversational language to program incredibly powerful AI tools. No coding knowledge is needed to start your AI business. Today, there are countless ideas that can be transformed into AI solutions, which means there are limitless opportunities for Mind Studio developers to capture interest and customers. It's easier than dropshipping or building an e-commerce site. All you need is an idea or a problem to solve and you can build an AI application with Mind Studio, publish it everywhere and start monetizing. Check out Mind Studio today at uaicom. That's y-o-u-a-i dot a-i slash Mind Studio. It'll be worth your while. Oh, excuse me, sir. Did you remember to mention Mind Studio by U-A-I? I'm building a virtual butler to supplement my meager income. Tell your listeners to visit youaiai today. Carry on.

**Diaa El All:** 3:37

Oh, is that Beauregard.

**Craig Smith:** 3:39

Yeah, yeah, that was Beauregard. Why don't we start by having you introduce yourself, give us some of your background, your educational background, how you came to your current position, and then we'll talk about what you guys are doing?

**Diaa El All:** 4:01

Sure, absolutely so. My name is Dia and I am the founder and CEO of Soundful. I'm originally born and raised in Cairo, egypt. I started playing piano and into music since I was a little kid and went and studied classical piano when I was 13 in London and from there moved to the US and I wanted to make a career out of music. So when I got a degree in sound engineering and music production and during that time of the sound designer for one of the largest gaming studios in the world, and then from there my career transitioned to a touring artist, dj producer, working with some of the biggest artists and major record labels and signed to a few of the majors and signed to a few others out in Europe, in the Middle East, and from there my career shifted into ghost production. This is when I started writing for a lot of the big names back in the day and I left the industry that time and went into the finance to get my feet, went into the business world and from there, when the entrepreneur route started, multiple ventures had successful exits and the last one that resulted into starting Soundful was a digital marketing agency, smart Boost, and we started as three guys in the garage me and two of my business partners and we wanted to get an edge into the market to work with some of the bigger brands, not just like your local bonds and bonds. So we started hiring our own data science and software engineering team and developing our own AI and ML tools in-house. That helps us from running campaigns to content creation and analyzing content, to SEO optimization, cro optimization, etc. That gave us the edge to work with some of the biggest brands in the world, from Ferraris and Lamborghinis of the world to multi-billion-dollar SaaS companies to large enterprise corporation. But during that period of time, I am not a software engineer, but I am a sound engineer and a product and a marketing guy. During that period of time I got the exposure of what the power of the machine is and what you can teach it. This is when Soundpool Idea was born. This is when I linked up with my co-founders and born to Idea in 2020.

**Craig Smith:** 6:25

Give us an overview of what Soundpool does.

**Diaa El All:** 6:29

Absolutely what Soundpool is in a very easy, brief sentence. It's a human-aided AI music creation platform. We help artists, producers, content creators, tv and film production houses, anybody any creator from the creator economy today that wants to create or monetize music, whether it's behind their videos, whether it's on the streaming platforms, whether it's on an ad or just as a background music in their home. We're able to help them. The mission and vision of Soundpool is to democratize music creation to the masses, the same way the phone has democratized video creation and broke the barriers to entry.

**Craig Smith:** 7:10

Yeah, when we spoke before, I mentioned Google's jukebox, which is the only AI engine that I was familiar with to generate music. I'm not sure if they're using generative AI, but generative AI is pulsing through the economy now. Is Soundpool using generative AI? If so, can you talk about how that's done?

**Diaa El All:** 7:43

Of course, there are a lot of players out there. As you mentioned AI or AI music or generative AI it is the hottest word out there but Soundpool we go way beyond that, for the mission from the beginning is that can we create studio-quality output, high fidelity, that will not be infringing on anything and not trained on any proprietary materials, like what Google has done recently with Google MusicLM? They trained on 280,000 hours of copyrighted materials. By doing that, then they started infringing. But Soundpool took a completely different approach. We are a micro-engineering team. We are music producers and software engineers. We call them music-dust. That's where really the secret sauce of Soundpool is. We trained only on proprietary materials. Also, when we are developing our algorithms and training data, it's not one size fits all. It's how we can mimic the human way of playing an instrument and build an algorithm and train it. The same way a musician plays a guitar. It is a completely different from the way a musician plays a piano. If you're playing a piano, you're going to hit certain notes that a guitar player. There is no way they're able to do it. This is when it starts sounding generic and it started sounding synthetic. You can tell that it's created by a machine. But when we were creating Soundpool, we went back to our roots. How can we deep-instruct a music producer brain and a musician and teach it to the machine to follow the same building blocks? First we trained on music theory rules based on the specific style and genre, so taking core progression melodies and baselines and training on that, then leveraging also what is called one-shot samples. A one-shot sample is a character of a sample, a scene note is a sample. Arguably Soundpool developed and owns one of the largest one-shot sample libraries in the world today. Then the last part is automation. So it's combining generative BI. It's really our algorithms that are trained to play core progression melodies and baseline, along with automation, along with mimicking the human way of playing an instrument, and this is how Soundpool has an output.

**Craig Smith:** 10:10

Yeah, and this is all on a web interface, I would guess.

**Diaa El All:** 10:16

That is correct. We're a mobile web and a web interface, but we are having plans towards end of the year to be launching our mobile app and early top of 2024, we will be launching our BSTs and plugins as well. That will be whether it's integrating into a DAW like Logic Pro Tools, ableton, or integrating with Final Cut, pro, adobe, etc.

**Craig Smith:** 10:41

Yeah, are you guys integrating with ChatGPT? Like seems everybody is, so we can use natural language to instruct the platform to do what they want it to do.

**Diaa El All:** 10:57

We are looking into integrations. With that, however, it's not going to be more driving the creation of the music itself, but how we can integrate and, as a step further, democratizing core, helping songwriters etc to have a tool inclusive within the platform as well. Partnering up is in our DNA and we're looking into partnering up with other generative AI, whether it's ChatGPT for lyrics, etc. Or whether it's Dolly, too, or other platform image and video generation, all the way to partnering up with distribution platforms and really bringing in the full circle into Soundful. That it's a one-stop solution for any of the creator or kind of, whether from the start of the creation, distribution, monetization as well.

**Craig Smith:** 11:48

Yeah, and with Google's model, you tell it that you want a song to sound like something else, right, and because it's been trained on so much stuff, or you describe the kind of song you want. I would imagine I haven't used it but genre and tempo and key and all that and it generates a song, is it? Even though the underlying tech is different? Is it the same for Soundful? And, as I recall, you don't generate vocals. This is purely instrumental, is that right?

**Diaa El All:** 12:45

Correct. Soundful is completely different than Google Music alone. Google Music alone, as I mentioned, they train on 280,000 hours of copyrighted materials. It's not public domain. They're not going to be deploying the project and they're keeping it as a research project or research paper right now. But what has been said is that 1% is infringing direct infringement and replication of the materials that they created. Well, first they didn't get the rights to actually train on these materials and the record labels. Being close with the record labels like Samford, they're extremely, extremely upset about that and, of course, as you know, the record industry, they're getting right now their legal themes up and running and getting ready for them. However, soundpools is in a very unique situation where, because we've never trained on any copyrighted materials and we broke everything down to the fundamental building blocks of how styles of music is created and teaching it to the machine so it doesn't impringe on anything else. So what we're doing here by Soundpool today is working with some of the biggest major record labels to the biggest gaming studios, the TV and film production houses, helping them expedite the process in a very short period of time without getting any problems with the quality whatsoever. So our vision and mission is to make human, superhuman and leveraging these relationships and working with them. Now, going back to how Soundpool does music today the user will go online. They select the genre, which is, let's say, hip hop, edm, raw, you name it. Then they select the template. What a template is is the style of the genre. So, for example, if they're selecting hip hop, are they selecting trap or old school? They're selecting EDM, are they selecting deep house or drum and bass? And from there they select certain parameters, the BPM and the key, which is the tempo and the key, and we're introducing mood as well for the content creators that don't understand the key. From there, they click create. In three to five seconds, the platform creates a brand new composition that can trigger the human ear to believe that it was done by a human rather than a machine. If the user saves that track, then there is a metadata locking into the back end. That would never. Soundpool would never reproduce that track twice.

**Craig Smith:** 15:17

What's the main use case right now for this and how do you see the use cases developing?

**Diaa El All:** 15:25

Currently we have two target markets that we're and it's kind of like an equal split. To be honest with you. We have the music from the B2C side and we don't really like to call it business to consumer. It's business to creator. So it's split into two parts. We're seeing music creators and content creators. Music creators you have your producers, singer, songwriters, et cetera, and in that specific cohort we have people from the up and coming that want to understand and learn an instrument, all the way up to Grammy award winning producers, singer, songwriters that are using the platform today to get over creativity blocks, to come up with records quick if they're in the studio and in the rush, or to tap into different genres that they were never really producing before and come up with different ideas. That's one Second, which is the content creator side we have. We're seeing vloggers, podcasters, marketing agencies, anybody that creates content on a daily or a weekly level. They're leveraging Soundpool because, first of all, we're different than any of the music libraries out there. Because the music library is out there, you're using the same songs that are available to a lot of different people. And when you're monetizing, when you come to monetizing from YouTube, youtube will send one check to the content creator and another check to the music library. But with Soundpool we're flipping that whole ecosystem upside down. By allowing the users if they did the paid subscription that month, which is 999, extremely affordable they're able to monetize on the content. Not only that, but every creation from Soundpool. It's exclusive to the user, so it would never replicate the same track life, so you will never hear the same song on multiple videos and you're going to be able to monetize on it from YouTube. Youtube is not going to send Soundpool a check for the music. You're getting that check, so it's allowing the creator economy. Now to monetizing and simplifying the licensing problems and copyright strikes, et cetera.

**Craig Smith:** 17:24

Yeah, since this is primarily an audio podcast, could you give us a little demo? Absolutely.

**Diaa El All:** 17:34

Absolutely so. Once a user logs into the platform, this is the UX UI that they're able to see. We're democratizing music creation for the masses, so we didn't want to include any of the complex music production or music theory looking kind of UX UI. So, left-hand side we're currently in the navigation bar. Home we're currently in the home page. This is where we templatize every genre and subgenre. Tracks is a global royalty-free library that gets adjusted by hundreds and thousands of new tracks on a daily level. If users don't want to create from scratch, they're able to leverage just library. But let's say a user want to create something new. They're selecting the red button, click create a track. It opens up a drawer. Then they're selecting a genre let's say hip-hop and then they're selecting subgenre. Let's select lo-fi, for example. Speed, key, major, minor, that's it and they click create. Three to five seconds. It produces a brand new, unique track. So let's say, leaving the same exact grammar as the same and clicking create again, it will never produce the same track twice. It will stay into the style of it, which is a template, but it will be different arrangement, maybe different sounds, every single time. We're in it a little bit.

**Craig Smith:** 19:13

That's amazing. Right now, is it primarily a creative tool that people are using either for inspiration or for one track in a multi-track production, or do you see people producing commercial music? Are they using it and just taking it from sound full and putting it out, maybe doing a vocal over it?

**Diaa El All:** 19:47

We're seeing a lot of different ways. We're seeing some professionals in the music space on the B2C side that they are leveraging the track. They create some ideas, they create the tracks and then they export the full stem files. They're able to export MIDI and WAVE every single instrument. Then they drag it into their DAW and they manipulate it a little bit. Or in certain cases also for vocalists and songwriters that they don't know how to produce, they use sound full, then download, like the full track instrumental and then they sing on it and then they publish it. That's one side. The other side is that we're working with, as I mentioned earlier, is that with large TV and film production houses with major record labels on leveraging sound full being a tool for their producers. So sound full we look at it as we augment human creativity rather than replacing it. It used to take I don't care if you are an up-and-coming person or you are the timblons and doctor-drains of the world you get creativity blocks, you get in the ruts, you sometimes you can't just flip over to another genre because just the creativity gets shut down. So sound full we say sound full as a tool for that and for the TV and film side. They want to build a lot of different cues in a very short period of time, like a thousand cue for like, for example, unscripted TV shell or scripted TV show and with sound full. It used to take, like a normal producer, like six months to a year to complete a build of a, like, you know, a thousand library cue or two thousand With sound full. They're able to leverage the technology and we're seeing four to five X more output in a much shorter amount of time for the producers because now they have the idea started, they put on their secret sauce, if you would, and tweak a few things and then it's done.

**Craig Smith:** 21:45

And just for myself and listeners what is a cue? I'm not a musician.

**Diaa El All:** 21:52

Yeah, a cue is, it's not a complete track. So a complete track is usually, you know, sometimes it's two minutes, three minutes, five minutes, ten minutes in certain cases. A cue is usually a transition in a it's a term for the TV and film where you hear like a 30 seconds or one minute or a minute and a half, and it's that even the layout for the cue is completely different, because you need to be like, for example, like a suspense, a sense of like a high rise and then a draw, so different and we cater to both.

**Craig Smith:** 22:23

Does the platform allow musicians to load in a? Again, I don't know the terminology, but a melody or a phrase of music that then the AI can build on?

**Diaa El All:** 22:41

and then the sound pool Great question. That will open currently now, and we have no plans to allow users to upload any musical instruments or sounds into the platform One, because we can't tell, really if they have the clearance of that sample and it can open a sound pool for infringement. Again, sound pool and data and everything that is in under the hood. For us is proprietary 100% on sound pool and it would stop infringing or trained on anything else If we allow users to do that. Then there is a lot of different steps of clearing music. You know whether it's a loop or a sound that they own it. However, towards the end of the year we're going to allow users to be able to sing on to the platform, introducing a vocal capability that users would be able to sing on to the platform, upload vocals and just mix it and match it with the music.

**Craig Smith:** 23:39

Right, and so they would be able to sing on to the platform, and then the platform would match to what they're singing, or they're singing over a sound pool generated track.

**Diaa El All:** 23:53

The second part. Users will be able to do the second part. There is, without saying too much, can't share too much about it yet, but there is a huge R&D project that we're going under right now in regards to vocals and matching vocals, music, etc.

**Craig Smith:** 24:08

This is fascinating. How do you think this is going to change music and music generation? I mean already production costs of plummeted allowing people in their bedrooms to produce music, but they still have to learn how to produce. You talk about democratizing is is. How do you see this developing? I mean, it's a little bit like the generative image platforms or text platforms that are allowing people to do a lot more work than they would otherwise if they were creating out of their heads.

**Diaa El All:** 24:56

Taking a step back and looking at the creator economy and the two older tools that are launching right now. My personal thesis is that the creator will be a one man band for lack of better terms of empowered and entitled to be able to create everything that are surrounding, whatever. Whatever they do. So let's say, for example, if they're longer, they will have tools that helps them, without any background in video editing or vocal processing, to be able to do that as well, as they have access to generate. Like to be a graphic designer, they're going to be a music producers. They're going to be a content creator, right? So it's really the technology is going to be advancing the careers of a lot of people and then also forcing other people to come out of their you know their shell and be able to leverage the technology. With any technology, there comes a lot of scare and there's a lot of people that are saying you know sound with sound for others, that AI generative work is going to replace the human, whether it's a musician or an artist, etc. I completely disagree with that. It's AI is not going to replace human. Who's going to replace you for doing your job is the person that is leveraging AI and the technology to advance, to advance and become from human to superhuman. And especially in the music industry, we've seen advancement, like you know, exactly as you said, from a multimillion dollar studio, studio, laptop and we have now way more artists and producers that we all love, and it's thankful to the democratization. But with any technology that comes from the music industry, same thing happened when we've done, you know, the drum machine. When the drum machine came out, or the synthesizers came out, like the synthesizer, for example, like the orchestral people like, said the musicians, like said no, this is cheating, we don't want it, but now it's integrated, even with them. Right, it opened up the creativity for other people that don't have the talent to play these other instruments, but they found their niche with this. Right, you can take anything in the world and make it work for you, for good or for bad. It's all about how the user is sending to them. But with us, how we can simplify things. Simplify licensing, which is a legacy issue in the industry and it's going to continue to be an issue, and we're trying to do our part of how we can simplify it. Allow the creators to own exclusive music and to empower them. I want to be the reason that the next you know, taylor Swift or Ariana Grande or Justin Bieber be discovered because they can't afford to be in a studio where they don't have the talent to produce. Well, soundfool is a tool for them to take that step and help them be discovered.

**Craig Smith:** 27:42

Is there anything out in the public domain that's getting traction, that SoundFool has played a part in producing any songs or television commercials or movies?

**Diaa El All:** 28:00

Yes, yes, yes, the old lady above unfortunately can't hear yet because, again, with any technology, people want to use it their own first and see how the, you know, the public will take it and then from there they can, you know, be out and loud about it. Yes, there are songs out there that hit top 100 on Billboard, that were, you know whether it started or helped by SoundFool etc. And to be honest with you, craig, it's not this song, you know, soundful. When it creates a song, it's not the perfection that makes it a hit, it's the imperfection of the human element that gets added to the song. We've fallen in love with the song because the voice of the singer on it. We've fallen in love with the song because the drummer took it and lift around and took out the drums and made it their own and unique. It's the imperfection that catches your ears. That's where you're not going to replace and that's where I stand tall about. You know you're not going to replace human by the technology. It's going to advance the output, but it's always the human touch to it that makes us human, connect with the song.

**Craig Smith:** 29:15

You said earlier that there are a lot of players in the space. Is there a where do you think the industry is going? I mean, is there going to be a shakeout or consolidation at some point?

**Diaa El All:** 29:30

The majors are looking about how they can adapt and work with companies like Soundful. There is going to be the biggest question and it's funny because I had two of the biggest major record labels and the first question I'm not even exaggerating as soon as I sat down with their heads, the first question that I got asked what did you train on? And if I set copyrighted materials on it's not my proprietary data then they would have said this meeting is over. We're not doing proceeding with everything Right now, working with the biggest publishing houses and working with the biggest major record labels on how we can adapt Soundful in their day to day operations and whether it's in ENRs or for their producers and artists. They are adapting it right now because it's just a tool to help them get from point A to point B faster. Now, with Soundful, even the way that we approach it is that we're not using any loops, pre-made loops, and it's only using the fundamental building blocks, which is the one shot samples. That opens up the variation for us more and flexibility onto the platform, meaning we're also Soundful is going to be doing major collaborations with major artists and producers some of the biggest people on the planet building, as I showed you the template, the style to bottle the artist's sound, that it's using the fundamental building blocks of some sound but it's not trained on any of the copyrighted materials that the artist has produced. But this allows the artists and producers to enter in a completely new category and demography that they were never able to enter before they get ripped off by people trying to duplicate their music and put it up on YouTube and sell it as type beats, etc. But now Soundful is trying to make an effort, how we can allow the artists to monetize onto the platform as well, not just leveraging as a tool.

**Craig Smith:** 31:23

So give me an example of how that would work.

**Diaa El All:** 31:27

Working with X-name producer. Soundful works together in building the one shot library, like how they do a bass sound or some of their drums that they use, but it's not pre-made loops, so there is no publishing or falls under a mastering agreement or anything. And then my team builds it based on the style of the artist. We'll build a template based on the style of the artist and then we'll start working on collaborating with the artists of how they do the mixing and mastering onto their music and send it back and forth Now. Then, once it's done and it's in a place that it's agreed upon with Soundful team and the artists, then we will put it up as a premium template. Let's say it's $9.99 or $19.99, not a part of the subscription. When a user buys this template, they're able to create thousands and hundreds of thousands of tracks from it. But when they buy it, then there's a split that goes to the artist and a split that retains with Soundful. And then if a user even wants to buy a copyright for one of the records that they produce from that template, then the same split applies to the artist and applies to Soundful. But think about it this way as a creator or economy as a whole, we sit at a $1 billion create. We're a little bit over that actually right now and it's forecasting to be $2 billion by 2028. I believe it's going to be way more. The biggest pain point in that category for content creators or the creator economy as a whole is music licensing. Copyright strikes that they're getting all the time and the major artists they're locked in a way that it's just monetization on Spotify or selling records and it's not tapping into the biggest. You know TAM, so Soundful, is trying to marry both sides of the equation together. It's too early for us to tell where the industry is going. Licensing in the music industry is a disaster, even like dealing with publishing and mastering. It's really complex. So we're trying to do everything we can to protect the artists and producers' DNA To allow them to be able to monetize and enter in a new category.

**Craig Smith:** 33:41

What I found interesting is that you're building up these tracks from a library of discrete sounds, as you were saying, like one One-shots. Yeah, so can you talk about what a one-shot is? I mean, and particularly when you're talking about known artists doing these premium templates is it you know a particular artist tunes a guitar particular way or has a particular kind of guitar that sounds distinctive? Is it that sort of thing where they strum a chord and you capture that? Or is it each guitar string? You capture sound from each string and then build up chords? I mean, how do you do that?

**Diaa El All:** 34:39

What a one-shot is. It's like the kick drum is sampled once or a C note on a piano is sampled. Once is sampled, and then you know C. And then you know we sample every single note on whether it's the piano and what type of pianos or what type of guitars. And we build these libraries ourselves, we developed it in-house, we rented studios, brought it in, you know, musicians to help us sample different amps, different things like that. And when we're working with a premium artist, they usually have their signature sounds, whether it's coming from a specific guitar the LV-2 and their guitar, like which amps they use, etc. And then like how they use synthesizers, for example, like a VST plugin that they use on Ableton or Logic onto the EDM side, and then my team samples it in a very specific way that we've developed and it's proprietary to SoundFool, and from there it's the fundamental, granular building block that builds the songs from there and we have, like you know, one of our patent technologies that it's also lies into sound synthesis that it will take some of these sounds, it will layer them together, it will EQ them, compress them, distort them to its infinite amount of even sounds out of the libraries that we have.

**Craig Smith:** 36:02

Are there any tracks that you've developed that you guys are particularly proud of that I could use in this podcast?

**Diaa El All:** 36:14

We've done songwriting camp end of last year where we had some of the biggest songwriters on the planet to came for two days. We've rented paramount studios in LA. By the end of the day we came out with over 10 tracks that are completely done. This is just normal songwriters. Put them in the studio to write songs using the technology they created from the normal, traditional what everybody sees today on SoundFool, and they started writing to it and again you have a monthly subscription model.

**Craig Smith:** 36:49

is that what you were saying?

**Diaa El All:** 36:51

Correct. Currently it's a premium model and then a paid one paid subscription model, which is 999 and it's unlimited creation and downloads. However, we're introducing another tier very shortly in regards specifically for content creators, where the monetization side on the social media platform, etc. Which is going to be even lower than a 999.

**Craig Smith:** 37:14

That's it for this episode. I want to thank Dia for his time and for the music. I also want to thank our sponsor, mind Studio by UAI, which is giving creators the opportunity to build and deploy generative AI apps for profit. Uai has an emerging AI marketplace and Mind Studio is the best way to build apps with generative AI. Anyone can do it. Mind Studio uses conversational language to program incredibly powerful AI tools. No coding knowledge is needed to start your AI business today. Check them out at UAI. That's why are you AI, ai and start building your AI app today. And remember the singularity may not be near, but AI is about to change your world, so pay attention.