In today’s society most people are interconnected digitally, and communicate with one another through a variety of means including cellular phones, email and the Internet. The latter has given rise to so-called “social media,” such as Twitter and Facebook, where individuals can communicate with many people at once.

The problem with most social media services, is that communications are text-based, and lack the “character” of the intended message, leaving it flat, devoid of emotion and open to misinterpretation.

Shout! is a new social media project that aims to solve this problem by allowing users to publish their thoughts in their own voice using audio recordings, thereby retaining specific vocal cues such as inflection and emotion.

My role in the project was to allow users to post a shout that can be shared with followers. Also, users can see a timeline of their followed users and a separate timeline of local shouts based on their current location.

The biggest hurdle with posting shouts is that Shouts are the core of Shout!, so giving the user the ability to create a shout in a simplistic way and post it to his/her followers was critical. To achieve these goals we have used frameworks and techniques that allow for automatic spawning of additional background workers when needed, as well as constant monitoring of media files take time to transmit and give a slow user experience. I overcame this hurdle by using a job queue which handles the upload of media to S3 in the background to give the user the appearance of responsiveness and allows for scalability of the server.