

Nathan Spicer

Objective English major with Creative Writing and Communications minors. Experience with web and graphic design. Occupational backgrounds in web content development and design, writing, editing, technical support, teaching, and customer service. Strong storytelling techniques and interpersonal communication skills. Flexible and adaptable to change. Keen intuition regarding customer desires. Eager to reach team goals. Well-traveled. Conceptual. Creative. Committed.

Experience **Fivestars**
San Francisco, CA | 09/2019 - 03/2020
UX Writer and Content Strategist

- Translated complex concepts into clear language for tooltips, errors, landing pages, et al.
- Wrote UX microcopy that reduced app-related complaints and increased form completions and sign-ups
- Researched user pain points to determine most pressing improvements

GLIDE Foundation
San Francisco, CA | 08/2018 - 09/2019
Marketing and Communications Content Specialist

- Increased site traffic by 22% in five months through new email and social media campaigns, deeper SEO integration, and simplified site copy
- Composed Analytics and Pardot/Salesforce reports to understand our audience, and then created Google Adwords campaigns to expand that audience
- Increased donations through deeper storytelling that used graphic design, photography, and videography

University of San Francisco
San Francisco, CA | 08/2016 - 05/2018
Web Content Manager

- Corralled content from disparate departments and composed marketing copy that appealed to a broad spectrum of prospective students
- Increased site traffic and email click-thru rates by double-digit percentages, after writing email and website copy that played on the university's strengths
- Developed content for a fulfilling mobile experience by decreasing character counts, relying more on lists, reducing image filesizes, bolding key phrases, permitting an infinite scroll layout, etc.

Verbatim
Charlotte, NC | 01/2015 - 12/2015
Copywriter

- Sculpted a slew of copy types—packaging, white pages, Amazon—for various technological products
- Enhanced user engagement with storytelling techniques that gave meaning to products
- Researched cutting-edge technologies and explained their complexities in simple language, increasing reader comprehension

Elsevier

Atlanta, GA | 10/2011 - 06/2014

Web Content Editor

- Used web design and language skills within a regulated environment to edit 100 news stories per week related to medical findings
- Worked within an agile environment to improve user experiences, mostly through the creation of helpful features and guides, like HighSlide pop-ups for academic footnotes
- Mentored new employees and composed style guides based on MLA and proprietary decisions

Paste Magazine

Decatur, GA | 01/2011 - 09/2011

Content Editor

- Crafted stories on obscure corners of pop culture and articulated their wider importance
- Applied SEO techniques to front-facing content, landing it among the monthly top-five pages
- Expanded social-media strategies that grew readership by 9% and told stories in new ways

Sunshine State News

Tallahassee, FL | 02/2010 - 12/2010

Web Content Editor

- Designed visual components for stories, advertisements, and marketing promotions
- Increased site visitation by over 300% through best SEO practices, implementing Google Analytics data, and shaping more engaging social-media content
- Edited roughly 80 stories per week related to business and politics, using web-design knowledge and a self-constructed style guide based on MLA

Graduate Education

University of San Francisco

2016-2018, San Francisco, CA

- Master of Arts in Creative Writing

Undergrad

Flagler College

2004-2008, St. Augustine, FL

- Bachelor of Arts in English
- Minors in Creative Writing and Communications
- Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society

Further Accreditation

- Certificate in Publishing and Editing from Florida State University
- Professional certificate in Web Design from Florida State University
- Passed Florida Teacher Certification Exam, English 6-12
- Awarded Best Adjective User in fifth grade

Apps & Code

Design

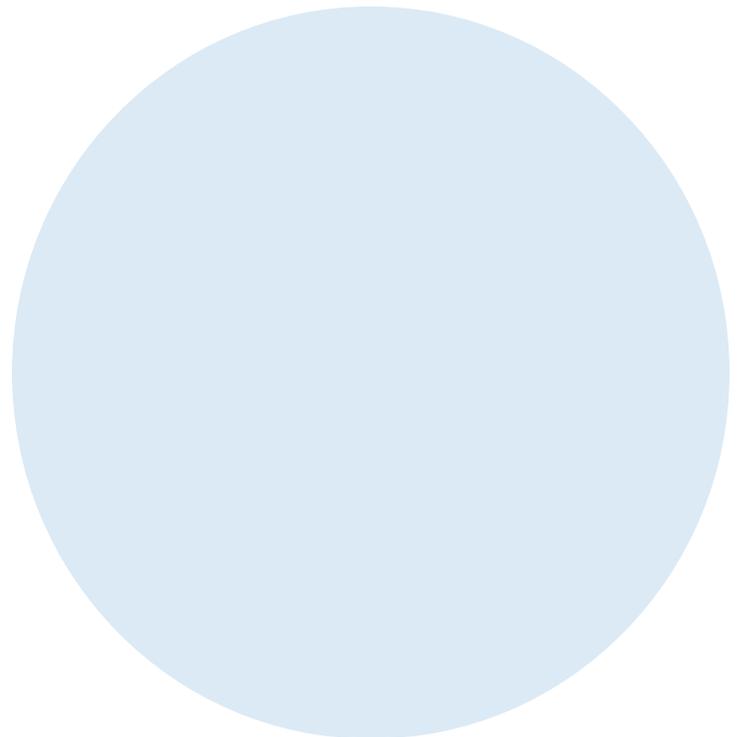
- HTML5
- CSS3
- Google Analytics
- Google Adwords
- Dreamweaver
- Photoshop
- Lightroom
- InDesign
- Illustrator
- XD
- Sketch
- Figma
- Audacity
- PowerPoint
- Word
- Excel

Content Management

- Salesforce
- Pardot
- SharePoint
- Slack
- Constant Contact
- WordPress
- Drupal
- AGILE

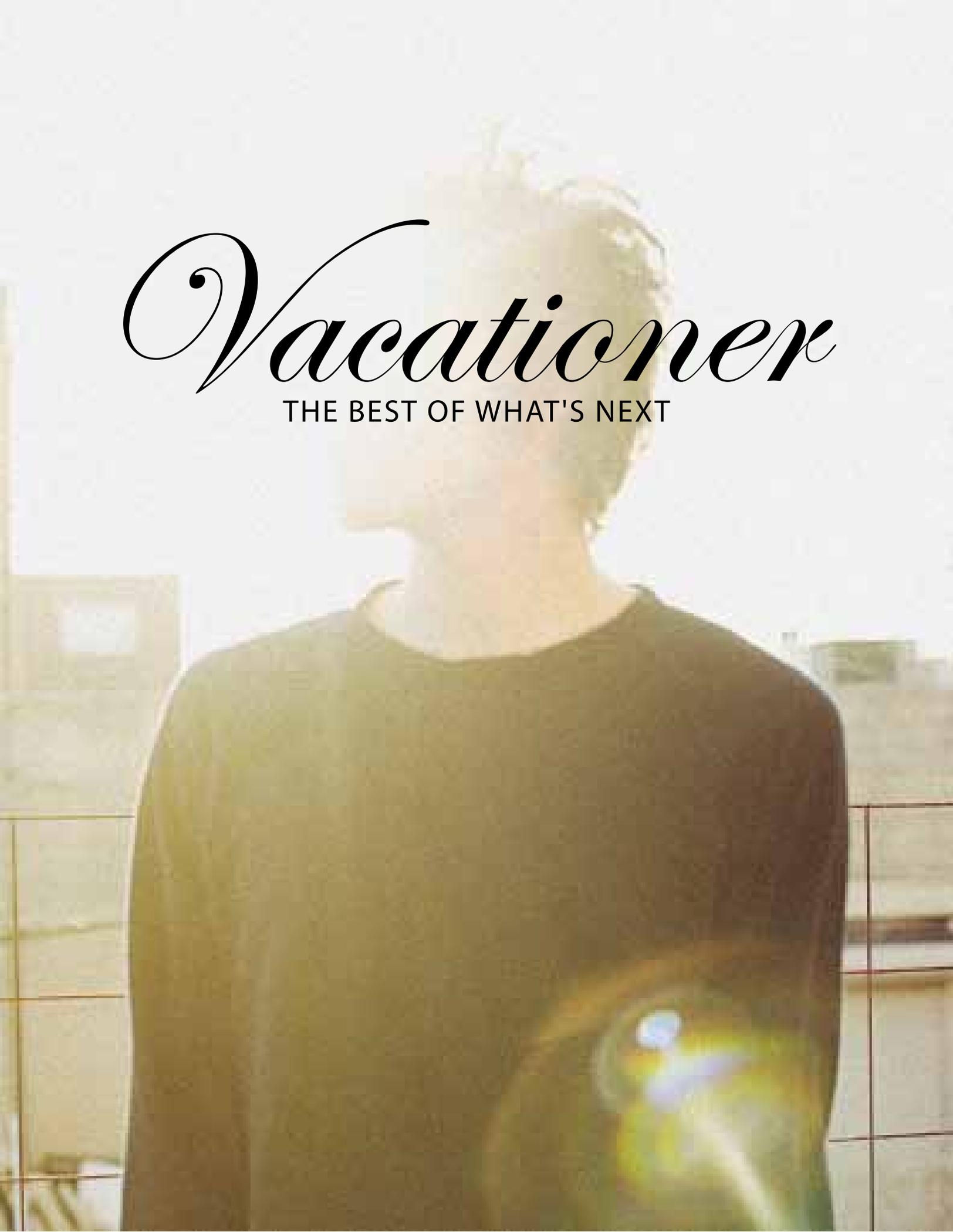
Extra Activities

- Stand-up comedy
- Public reading events
- Improv
- Guitar
- Singing
- Writing (fiction, poetry, nonfiction)
- Volunteering with various organizations (e.g. GLIDE, Muttville, 826 Valencia)



LONG-FORM WRITING



A person with light-colored hair, wearing a dark, long-sleeved sweater, is seen from the chest up, looking out of a window. The window shows a blurred cityscape with buildings and a bright sky. The overall tone is warm and slightly desaturated. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

Vacationer

THE BEST OF WHAT'S NEXT



acts. "Before the new year, it was just a show every few weeks or just every month," Vasoli says. Now they're embarking on long stretches of near-daily performances. They recently toured with Asteroids Galaxy Tour, and now they're on the road with The Naked And Famous, playing to sold-out crowds at legendary venues like The Wiltern in Los Angeles.

It's a nice start for a band that conducted its first official practice less than a year ago, and released its debut album, *Gone*, just a few weeks ago. "I really can't expect that stuff," Vasoli says. "I've been doing music a long time, and I've definitely learned not to count any chickens. But I kind of look at it like I have this lottery ticket, and I'm just really hoping that there's something to it."

The lottery, though, is predicated on chance. You toss out a few bucks and wait to see if you've won. Vasoli never waited. He worked for this. Luck may have played a part, but luck alone can't induce dancing from intoxicated barflies well past midnight.

Vasoli has been creating music and playing in bands since middle school. He dabbled in pop-punk and ska, and kept dabbling. "I could never really find my thing," he says. "I was always experimenting, going in all different directions."

Eventually he met and began writing with *Gone* producers and members of Body Language, Matthew Young and Grant Wheeler, both of whom had immersed themselves in the circuitry-heavy scene of electronic music. Vasoli had been enjoying what he calls "the surface" of that genre. The two producers pushed him below the surface. They exposed him to house and dub-step, trip-hop and experimentalism. "I got extremely enlightened," says Vasoli. He picked up new influences. He armed himself with Aphex Twin and Ratatat. Learned of Jaga Jazzist and the instrumental hip-hop of J Dilla.

His breadth of knowledge grew deeper. It grew sharper. It combined with Vasoli's appreciation of modern acts like Beach House and The Radio Dept. "Real guitars and vocals over top of little organ drum machines and stuff like that," he says.

His focus on modern music didn't detract from his admiration of older artists. "It may be weird to say, but there's a barbershop feel to what we do," he says. "We got turned onto stuff like The Andrews Sisters and this band called The Free Design from the '60s that were all just crazy vocal-pop aficionados."

Yet, as with Vasoli's middle-school musical ventures, there was something missing, something he was still searching for but had no way to discern.

Hometown: Philadelphia

Members: Kenny Vasoli (vocals, bass), Greg Altman (guitar), Michael Mullin (vibraphone, keys, and trigger finger), Ryan Zimmaro (drums)

Album: *Gone*

For Fans Of: Vampire Weekend, Dale Earnhardt Jr. Jr., Lord Huron

by Nathan Spicer

It's 1 a.m. in this muggy Austin bar. A band called Vacationer are setting up their equipment. People who've come to see Class Actress are exiting, leaving a smattering of late-night stragglers. Haggard souls hug the bar. The dance floor empties. A quiet falls, and it stays.

Vacationer then launches into its island-tinged electro-pop. Or as the band jokingly calls it, "Nu-hula." Live vocals mix with bass and electronics and sampled sounds of Pacific islands. In come plinks and plunks of electric guitars and ukuleles, the wide whistles of woodwinds, galloping toms and four-on-the-floor beats.

The flow of traffic halts. Those who were leaving turn around. They move, a little bit, toward the stage. And then they forget the hour. They forget they're tired, hungry, and half-drunk, and they start swaying and hopping and laughing. Every one of them. By the time Vacationer finishes their set, you can't see an inch of the dance floor.

"That's the dream," Kenny Vasoli—the band's lead singer, co-songwriter, and bassist—later says. "It was a really, really cool experience."

Like those curious music fans that had trickled in from the streets, Vacationer's sound has also grabbed the attention of the Internet and radio stations, not to mention well-established, headlining

He felt stagnant, in a sense, even with the expansion of his musical vocabulary and skill.

There was a “true” sound out there, somewhere, and maybe, Vasoli sensed, it was farther away than he'd thought. Maybe it was from places that that didn't sound like the slushy cold streets of Philadelphia, from which Vacationer unexpectedly hails, or the precise timing of Detroit's underground hip-hop. Maybe Vacationer needed something warm, something inviting. Sunny, even. Something that sounded like, well, vacation.

Vasoli had begun listening, on a lark, to music with tropical tones. One day, not thinking much of it, he told his bandmates he liked the twinkling chimes of the guitars and relaxed rhythms. Wheeler and Young said okay, and they took Vasoli, and they showed him a vault of limitless samples of the sounds he was after.

Vacationer had discovered the islands.

The song “Trip” channels a Polynesian feel while keeping electronic and pop elements intact. Slips of soft static appear and vanish, like a radio set by a sunbather on the beach, with its signal slightly off. The high whistle of a gibbon echoes from a rainforest canopy. A trip-hop beat shuffles forward. Guitars warble into space. Reverb shades Vasoli's tenor. It all coalesces into a relaxed pop groove that maintains an energetic eccentricity. It's a kind of energy that keeps people listening.

YouTube put the music video for “Trip” — showcasing a man break-dancing by a waterfall, which was inspired by the film *The White Diamond* by Werner Herzog — on its main music page. Then blogs noticed. Then Downtown Records, who signed the band.

College and public radio stations came next. “There's a radio station called WXPB,” says Vasoli, “that's a member-supported station in the Philly area that I just love. My mom called me the other day and told me she heard [‘Dreamlike’] on there.”

With such heavy production values, one would assume sterile recording environments would best accommodate Vacationer's talents. Not the case. They transport nu-hula to the stage, and as evidenced by the dancing barflies, they do it well.

Vasoli and the band (Ryan Zimmaro on drums, Greg Altman on guitar, and Michael Mullin on vibraphone, keys and trigger finger), reproduce the entire catalog of album sounds. “[Mike will] live-sample stuff on the spot,” says Vasoli, “and there's also extraneous trippy sounds that we have going on top of it. Also, Ryan has what's called an SPD,

which is basically a MIDI percussion pad...We're sampling so much, and there's so much real stuff... We try to make it hard to pinpoint who's doing what.”

They're also comfortable playing stripped-down sets. Comedians Jason and Randy Sklar had approached Vacationer after the aforementioned SXSW performance and asked them to sit in on their podcast, Sklarbro Country. The only digital thing there was the laptop and mics. Vacationer were fine. That takes solid craftsmanship, to be able to erase the flourishes from a song, and still be left with something charming.

Because they can perform with or without much electrical input, they're well on their way to achieving their half-serious goal. “The whole motive with this band [is] to stay in warm climates and work in endless summer,” Vasoli says with an audible smile. The group is fascinated by Don Ho's career. Ho played in front of copious crowds, night after night, without leaving the island. Vasoli would like to “do the nu-electro version of that.”

But for now, they're enjoying their ride through continental U.S.. And that's all right. They've already exceeded expectations. “The fact that [Gone] is getting any kind of attention at all, it's kind of indescribable how happy it makes me,” Vasoli says. “I feel like I have a new lease on life these days.”

See? He's okay. So Vacationer haven't yet realized their dream of playing permanently on bleach-white beaches. They're still taking us there — for a little while, anyway. Even if it's 1 a.m. in a muggy Austin bar, and we're tired, hungry, and half-drunk.

*It's kind of indescribable
how happy it makes me...
I feel like I have a new
lease on life these days.*

COPYWRITING





Subject: Get [Biz name] ready for record sales in 2020

Hi [FirstName],

Help us out a little. What's your biggest dream for [Biz] in 2020? Got it in your mind?

Cool. Now dream bigger.

Fivestars is a powerful all-in-one marketing platform that will grow [Biz] beyond what you'd imagined.

It lets you create a massive customer database, build a loyalty reward programs like Starbucks, send SMS messages and emails to your customers — all using automation, leaving you free to do what you do best.

And that's just the start.

To see more, [check out a 15-minute demo](#). We'll give you a \$25 gift card!

Cheers to your greatest year,
Fivestars





Credit card processing, reinvented.

Payments are the gateway to growth. They drive participation in loyalty programs, and they build a massive database for targeted marketing. Over the years, Fivestars has helped local businesses build bigger databases, and now we're helping businesses turn every cash or credit card transaction into a relationship.

Fivestars Pay

Fivestars Pay is merchant services reimaged. Every swipe from our credit card reader creates more repeat customers. It also allows for payment processing and a rewards program similar to what you find at big retail chains—without their big prices.

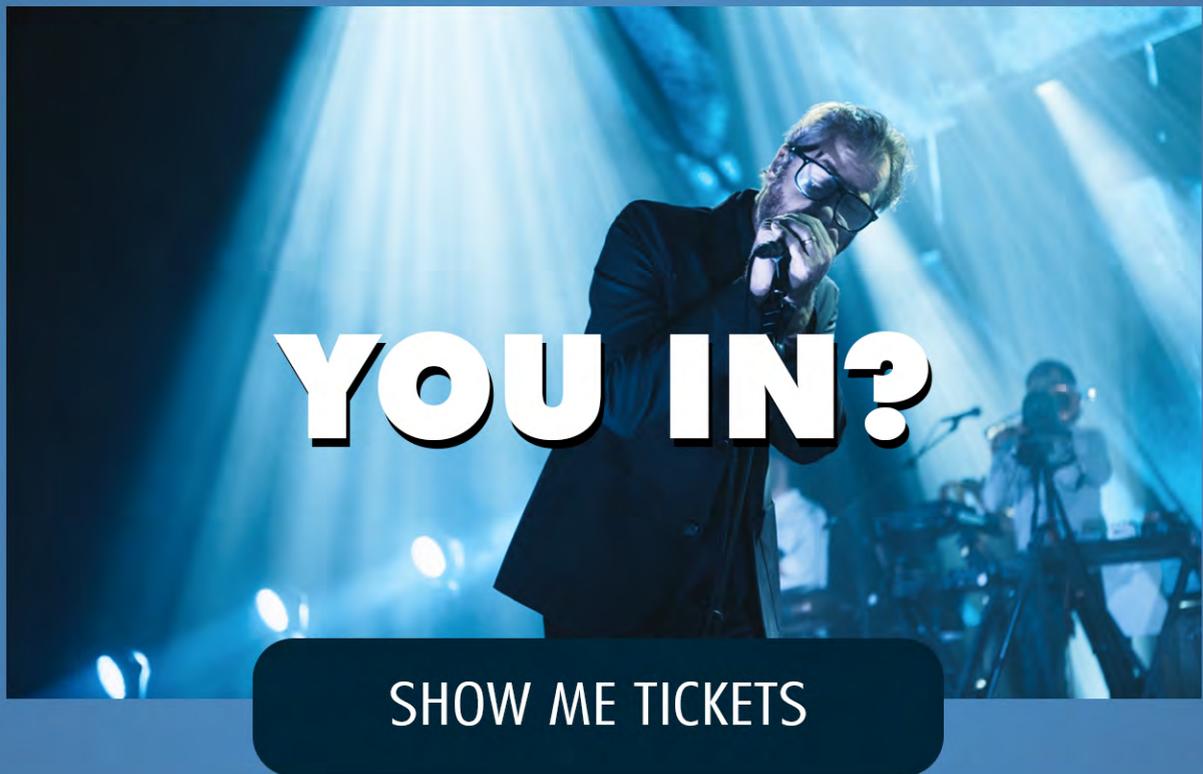


UX WRITING
&
DESIGN

[view prototype](#)

PUSH NOTIFICATION
Pssst... The National is in town!

THE NATIONAL
is playing at The Masonic on Feb. 6



UX WRITERS COLLECTIVE CHALLENGE

Scenario: The user is a casual music fan and (on occasion) goes to live concerts. They have a music player app on their phone.

Challenge: Tell the user that one of their favorite bands is playing live in their town. How would you compel them to want to go?

Headline: 30 characters max | Body: 45 | Button: 25



Lissie
Catching a Tiger