

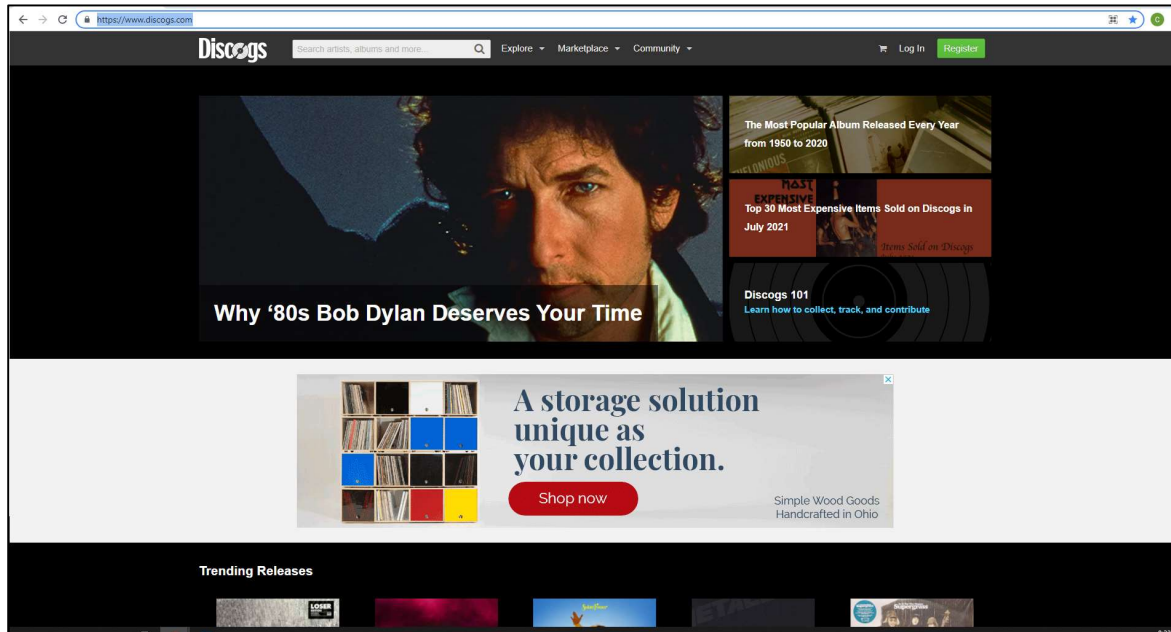
# Assignment 3 – Competitor Analysis

## Subject - Music Database Website

### 1. Identify 3 competitors

#### a. Discogs

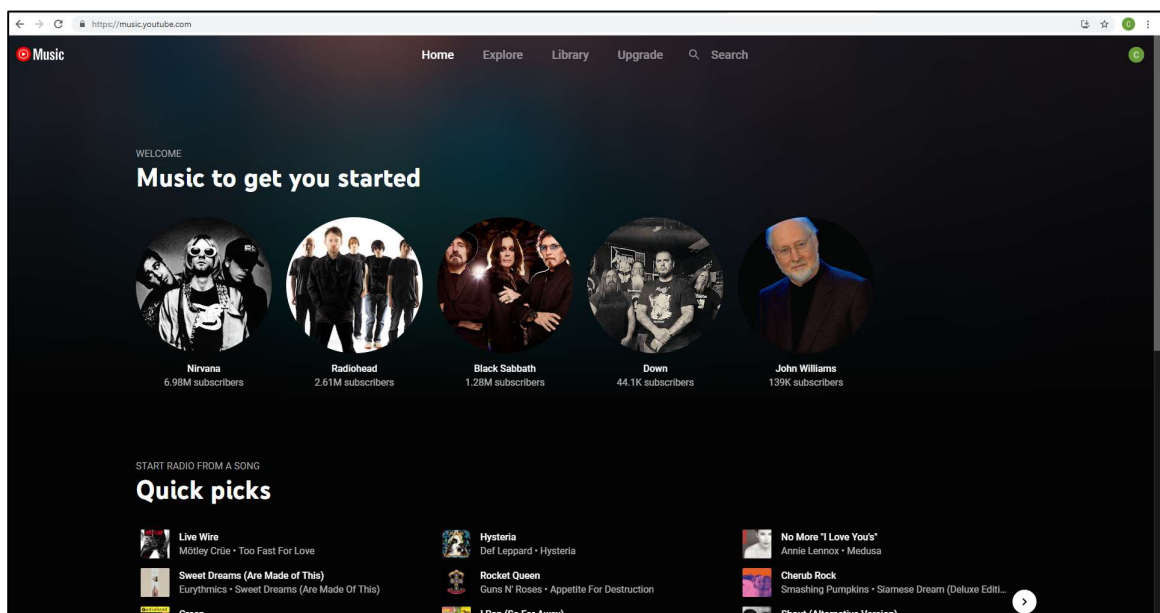
- i. <https://www.discogs.com/>
- ii. Discogs is an indirect competitor. Short for ‘discographies’, the website is a great resource to search for existing audio recordings from many different musical genres. However, it does not provide an option for streaming music for free; it only allows for the selected track/album to be purchased as a digital (mp3) or hard copy (vinyl and CD).



Discogs Home Page

#### b. YouTube Music

- i. <https://music.youtube.com/>
- ii. YouTube Music is a direct competitor. The user is able to search for music from any genre and play an entire song for free. The user can also sign up for free and create playlists.

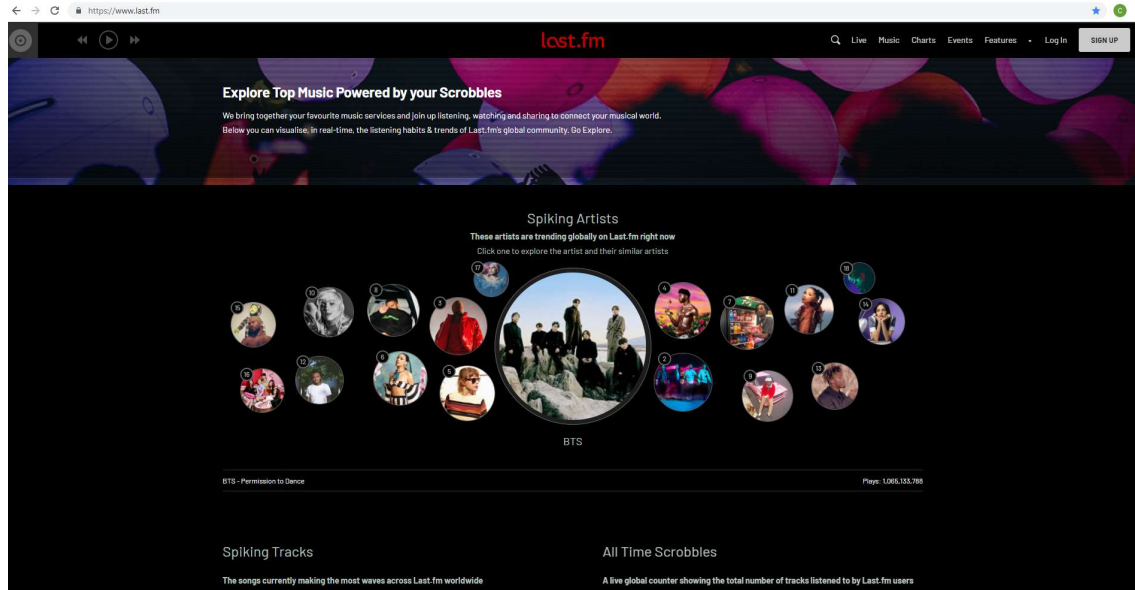


YouTube Music Home Page

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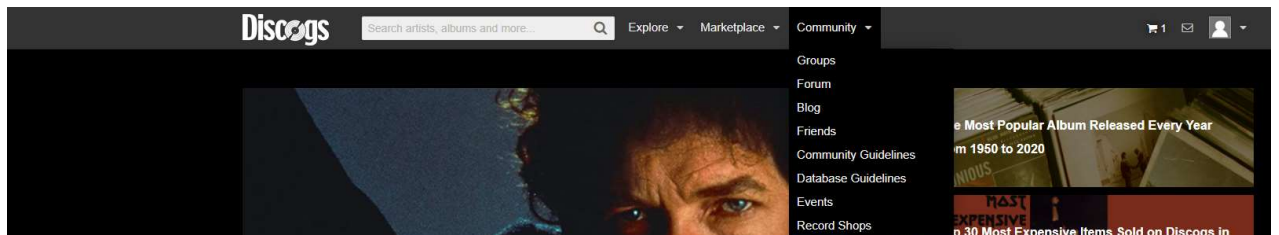
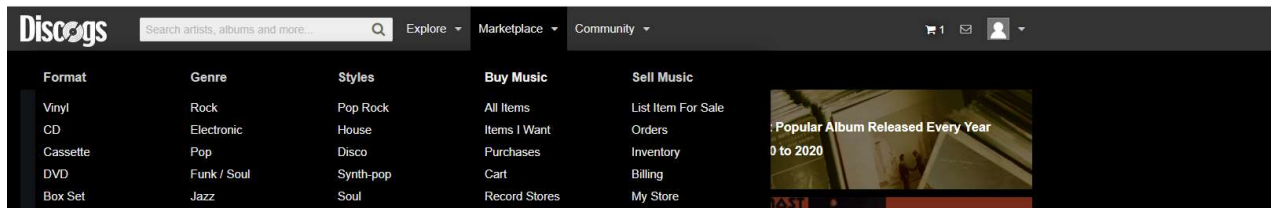
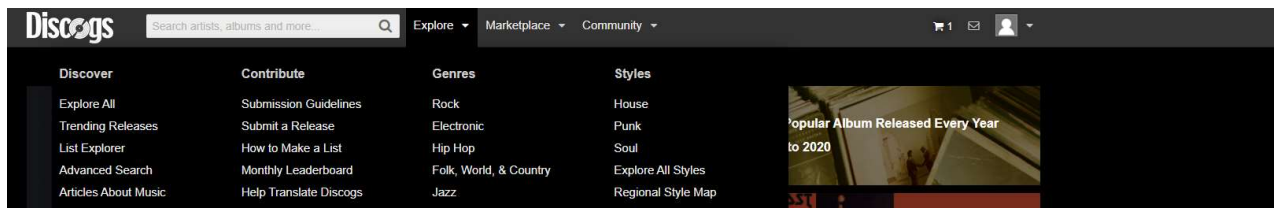
### c. Last.fm

- i. <https://www.last.fm/>
- ii. Last.fm is a direct competitor. Users are able to search for many artists and have access to their entire discography to listen to for free. There are also external links to Amazon and eBay if the user would like to purchase a digital download or the hard copy in vinyl or CD format.



Last.fm Home Page

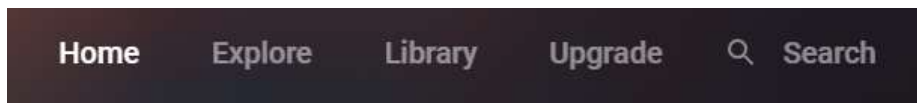
### 2. Content and navigation



Discogs Navigation Menu Images

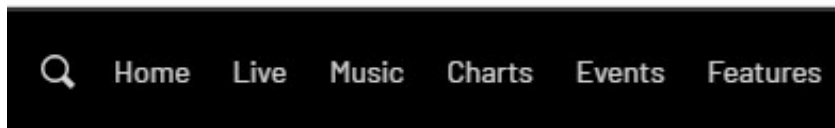
**Discogs:** The main navigation menu is located at the top of the homepage. To the right side of the 3 primary selections - Explore, Marketplace, and Community – are dropdown arrows that the user can click on to reveal many links to additional information on the site. The text is very small and the white text on a black background makes it difficult to read. This navigation is adding unnecessary work for the user and may confuse them because there are too many options.

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YouTube Navigation Menu

**YouTube Music:** The main navigation menu is located at the top of the homepage. There are 5 links for the user to choose from – Home, Explore, Library, Upgrade, and Search (which expands when the user hovers over the option to reveal a search bar). The menu is easy to use, but when the options are not chosen, the text is grayed out, making it difficult for the user to see what the word is against a black background. The words would be easier to read if the options stayed white when not chosen and turned to a lighter red matching the YouTube Music logo color when selected.



Last.fm Navigation Menu

**Last.fm:** The main navigation menu is located at the top of the homepage. There are 7 links for the user to choose from – Home, Live, Music, Charts, Events, Features, and a magnifying glass on the left-hand side to directly search for selections on the website. This menu is similar to the YouTube Music navigation, but unlike the typography of that site, the menu selections do not gray out when not selected; they consistently stay white. When the user hovers over their selection, the word becomes bold.

Rank – Best Menu to Worst Menu

1. Last.fm
2. YouTube Music
3. Discogs

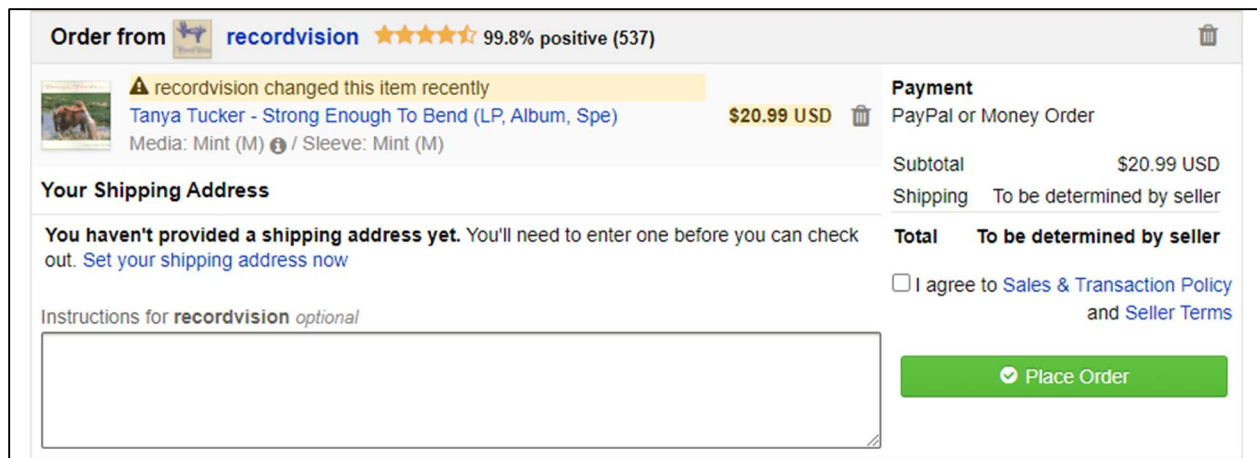
The Last.fm navigation menu is simple to use and easy to read. The YouTube Music navigation menu is very similar to the Last.fm menu, but the gray color of the options when not selected make it hard to read. The Discogs navigation offers the user too many links under the main menu selections, making the user work harder to locate the information on the website.

### 3. Aesthetics and style



Discogs Music Selection Images

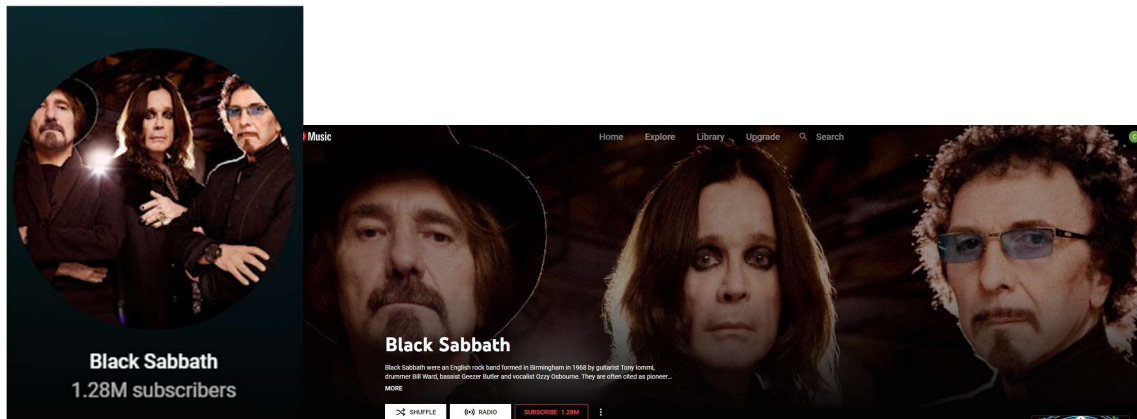
## Assignment 3 – Competitor Analysis



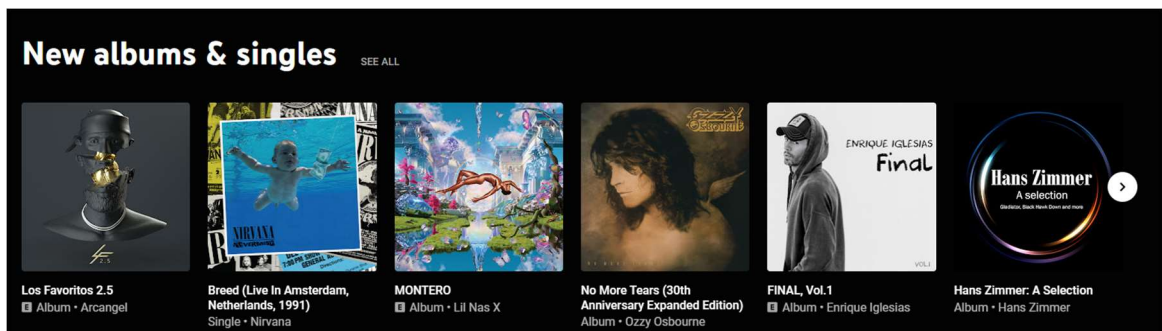
Discogs Cart Image

**Discogs:** Although the database provides a lot of very useful information on discographies of popular artists, the aesthetics of the webpage are very outdated. All links are in blue, while text is in black. When the user clicks on a link from the home page, the background changes from black to white, but there are no interesting graphics in the background. The album selections are shaped to look like a vinyl record, but the background is completely white.

If the user selects an item to purchase, that selection gets added to the shopping cart, located at the top right of the home page. The image above shows what the shopping cart looks like when selected. The text positioning is very jumbled on the shopping cart page and the font colors make it hard for the user to clearly read their selection(s). The site does not have a consistent look for its brand.



YouTube Music Artist and the Artist Home Page

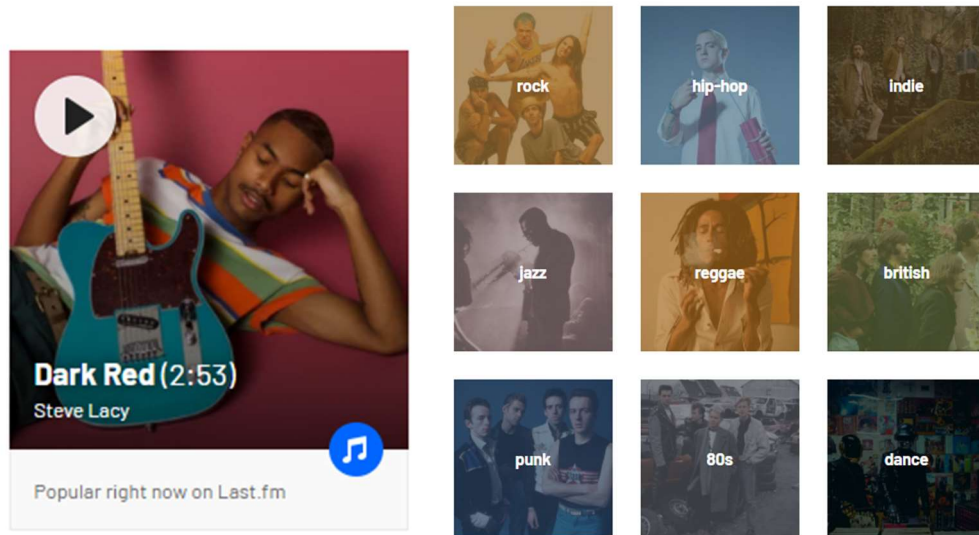


YouTube Music New Albums & Singles Selections

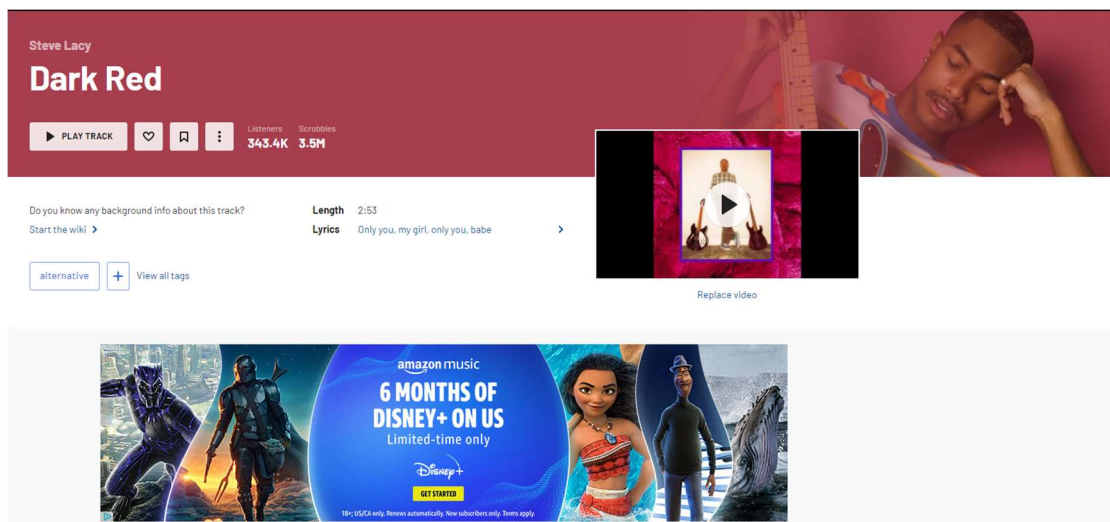
**YouTube Music:** Artist images are enclosed in circles, while albums are in a square shape like real life. When the user selects the circular artist icon, the link will go directly to the artist home page. The colors used on YouTube Music are white and red text with a black background, reinforcing the YouTube brand.



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Last.fm Artist and Genre Selections



Last.fm Artist Home Page (including advertisement)

**Last.fm:** The background of the webpage is white, while the text is either black or white, depending on where it is used on the site (white text on top of images, etc.). Like the YouTube Music website, this site has a home page for each artist. The background colors for the artists are not consistent, nor do they have a pattern, they just seem to be randomly selected.

The most noticeable problem with this website is that every single page selected has an overwhelming number of ads (see above for the Disney+ ad), distracting from the main content of the site. Users are getting more accustomed to ads popping up on websites frequently, but the Last.fm website has more noticeable ad space than the usual website, which may be problematic for users who like finding information quickly and easily. There is a logo for the webpage, but the visuals on the page do not reinforce their brand.

#### 4. Heuristic analysis

- a. **#3: User control and freedom** – All 3 websites are very clear on user control.
  - i. Discogs: When the user selects an item for the shopping cart, a pop-up window appears to confirm with the user that this item was selected intentionally. If the user agrees with the selection, they can then choose the 'Yes, Add to Cart' button.
  - ii. YouTube Music: If a song is selected by mistake, there is clear guidance on stopping the selection and even removing it from the user's playlist. It's very simple to undo a selection by using the back arrow button.

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- iii. Last.fm: There are 2 buttons that appear with every selection – Reset and Back. This makes it easy for the user to navigate away from an incorrect selection.
  - b. **#8: Aesthetic and minimalist design** – YouTube Music excels at an excellent UI design.
    - i. Discogs: This site does not keep to a simple design. There is too much text on each page, making some pages hard to read. The multiple navigation links at the top of the page lead to time wasted trying to locate necessary information.
    - ii. YouTube Music: This site is very good at keeping the content and visual design on the UI essentials. The visual elements support the user's primary goals. All graphics and text are necessary and is utilized in a way that benefits the user experience.
    - iii. Last.fm: This site has an overwhelming design, which does not keep content and visual design at an essential level. It is too busy with unnecessary graphics, advertisements, and varied font colors, potentially confusing the user and leading to a longer search for information on the site.
  - c. **#10: Help and documentation** – YouTube Music has the option for a Help resource without an account, while Discogs and Last.fm have outdated resources.
    - i. Discogs: The Help menu is only accessible with a registered user account. Once Help is selected on the dropdown menu under the user account icon at the top right of the home page, the user is directed to a separate Discogs Help Center with many search options to locate information.
    - ii. YouTube Music: If the user did not register an account on the site, there is still an option to use the Help menu by selecting the 3 vertical dots at the top right on the home page. If the user is a member of the site, the Help menu can be found by selecting the user account icon at the top right of the page. Once the user clicks on Help, a pop-up window appears with popular search items and a search bar for the user to type in whatever content they need to better navigate the site.
    - iii. Last.fm: The user can locate the Help menu by scrolling down to the very bottom of the web page. The menu is located at the bottom left side in between the links Company and Goodies. Once the Help option is selected, the user is directed to a new page with a Frequently Asked Questions menu and search bar. This Help menu is very outdated compared to the other 2 competitor sites options.
5. **UI animations**
- a. **Discogs:** The UI animation is outdated on this site. All the available links on the page are in blue, while the text is in black. It makes the site difficult to read and navigate. When the user selects a link to a blog on the site, it opens a new window, taking unnecessary time away from locating the desired site information. The UI animations are fluff and not valuable on this site.
  - b. **YouTube Music:** The UI animation is very easy to navigate and flows very well. Each link follows the intended destination and is easy to understand. When a song is selected, it automatically plays. If the user is not ready to hear the selection, there are recognizable pause, play, and stop buttons at the bottom of each page. The UI animations are valuable on this site.
  - c. **Last.fm:** The UI animations is not user friendly. It is set up like YouTube Music, but the user must hit extra links to hear a selection. When an artist is selected, the user must hit a play button for their selection instead of hearing it automatically. The selected artist's song will play using a YouTube pop up window, which comes up as a separate window instead of playing within the web page. The UI animations are somewhere in the middle on this site; some are valuable, while others seem like fluff.

YouTube Music has the best UI animation out of the competitors, making it easier to use and more visually appealing.

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### 6. Score each website

	Discogs	YouTube Music	Last.fm
Content & Navigation	7	8	9
Aesthetics & style	5	9	4
Heuristic Analysis	5	9	4
UI Animation	4	9	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5.25</b>	<b>8.75</b>	<b>5.75</b>