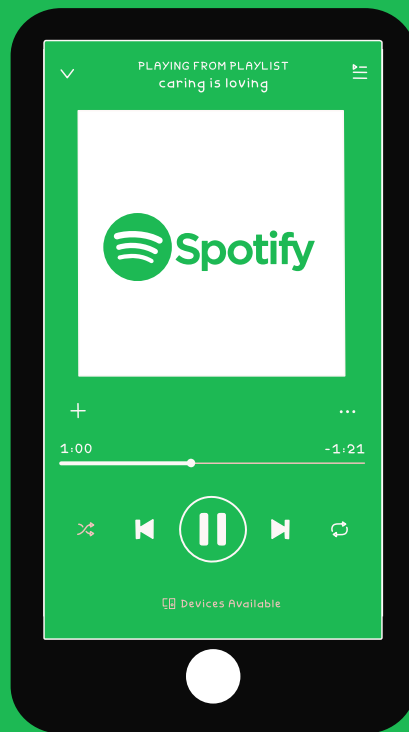


PROJECT #1

REDESIGN SPOTIFY MOBILE APP



Presented By
Gavin Renken
Sophie Yun
Tong Yang
Yujing Wen
Ziqian Liao



TEAM

RESPONSIBILITIES

✓ GAVIN RENKEN

- Proposal – Research Questions
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Proposal – Procedure
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Research Session I Moderator
 - Thursday – 2–3 PM
- Research Session II Notetaker
 - Friday – 2–3 PM
- User Profile
 - Sunday – 5 PM
- Presentation – Information Organization
 - Sunday evening

✓ SOPHIE YUN

- Protocol – Topic Discussion Guide
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Protocol – Warmup
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Protocol – Introductions
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Research Session II Moderator
 - Friday – 2–3 PM
- Root Cause Analysis
 - Sunday – 5 PM
- Presentation – Information Organization
 - Sunday evening

✓ TONG YANG

- Protocol–Topic Discussion Guide
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Protocol–Before Participants Arrive
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Protocol–As Participants Arrive
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Research Session I/II Notetaker
 - Thursday/Friday – 2–3 PM
- User Persona
 - Sunday – 5 PM
- Presentation – Illustration, Formatting & Proofreading
 - Sunday evening

✓ YUJING WEN

- Protocol–Notetaker Reminder
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Protocol–Goal Reminder
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Research Section I/II Notetaker
 - Thursday/Friday – 2–3 PM
- User Scenario
 - Sunday – 5 PM
- Presentation – Information Organization
 - Sunday evening

✓ ZIQIAN LIAO

- Proposal – Product History
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Proposal – Participants
 - Wednesday – 9 PM
- Summary of Findings
 - Sunday – 5 PM
- Presentation – Illustrations & Formatting
 - Sunday evening

Our product idea is a redesign of the current mobile application of Spotify to help improve users' experiences while finding, organizing, and listening to their music.

Based upon the user research conducted across two, one-hour focus group sessions, the biggest issues and user pain points with the current Spotify mobile application involve ownership. Users are frustrated with the lack of ownership they have over their music listening experiences. As users of a streaming application, our participants described feeling that they were merely accessing their music rather than being an owner of it. An impersonal homepage cluttered with general features not applicable to a given user further emphasized this and left our research participants wanting a more simplified and user-specific design. When describing the context of their use of the mobile application, it was uncovered that users also struggle to understand what liking versus downloading their music entails for offline listening. Their favorite and most listened to songs were frequently not what they found downloaded on their device.

In order to create a stronger sense of ownership for users, we propose four redesign ideas. First, we aim to construct a clearer conceptual model on how to download songs by emphasizing the difference between a liked song and a downloaded song during the onboarding process. Second, we plan to add a feature which allows users to download songs individually rather than the entire playlist. In this case, ownership can be improved by reducing downloading restrictions. Next, to incorporate more personalization into the app, we plan to create an "Edit" feature for users to customize the homepage, such as removing driving playlists if the user is not a driver. Finally, we will enable the socialization feature for users on the mobile application, replicating existing social features on the desktop end. Specifically, users can see what their friends' activities are and what music they are listening to. We will also enable users to turn on a private mode if they prefer hiding their listening activities and preferences.

In the supplementary materials, we have included Spotify's user profile, root cause analysis, user persona, scenario, and key findings from our study. The user profile shows Spotify users' average age, location, occupation and income, background, preferences, and behavior. The root cause analysis focuses on why users create playlists and reaches the conclusion that users' essential need is to have a sense of ownership with music. Next, we created a persona that describes how a user would use Spotify while studying, working and socializing. In addition, we create a scenario, showing how our users misinterpret the conceptual model of downloading in a specific situation due to the lack of intuitive design in the app. Lastly, we include the proposal, protocol, and key findings of our study.

According to our user feedback, personalized experiences were the key to many likes and concerns. People love the personalized experience brought by recommendations based on a smart algorithm in which they can easily find artists and songs that suit their taste. However, the lack of personalization in other aspects, such as not being able to customize their own library page, does frustrate them and has caused confusions. Another key finding is that the current user interface, though often regarded as being "beautiful" or "clean," may be not very intuitive, and the flow is sometimes convoluted. Redesigning pages that were concerned the most is thus suggested. Last but not least, users need a design that clearly shows contents offered for streaming and what they have downloaded on their phone. The discrepancy between these two parts in their mental models has led to much disappointment with their Spotify experiences.

SUPPLEMENTARY PAGES



CONTENTS

User Profile -----	Page 1
Root Cause Analysis -----	Page 3
User Persona -----	Page 4
User Scenario -----	Page 5
Focus Group Proposal -----	Page 7
Focus Group Protocol -----	Page 9
Summary of Findings -----	Page 11

USER PROFILE

Age

- Spotify's average user is 18 to 29-years-old (Watson 1).
- The user base is dominated by millenials and Gen Zers with 29 percent of its users aged 25 to 34 and 26 percent aged between 18 and 24 years old.

Location

- Users tend to reside in Europe (39%) and the Americas, 29% in North America and 21% in Latin America (Iqbal 6).

Occupation/Income

- Users range significantly in socioeconomic status with Spotify offering discounts to students but also being an attractive platform for established young professionals.
- A significant amount of users are students as a result of the student discount offered.

Background

- Many users are former Apple Music users that prefer Spotify's personalization algorithms over that of Apple's curated playlists.
- Many users formerly illegally downloaded music from the internet but are now attracted to the low cost alternative that Spotify presents.
- Users typically start with Spotify's freemium services before converting to its premium model.

USER PROFILE

Preferences

- Users value their user-specific playlists generated weekly based on their listening history and recent activity.
- Users tend to value Spotify's database of music over its podcasts.
- Users enjoy finding and listening to new songs, artists, and bands.
- The typical user listens to low-fi, chamber pop, indie folk, and indie rock (Iqbal 35).
- Users core taste preferences are for indie folk/rock, funk/soul, and folk/singer-songwriter (Iqbal 36).

Behavior

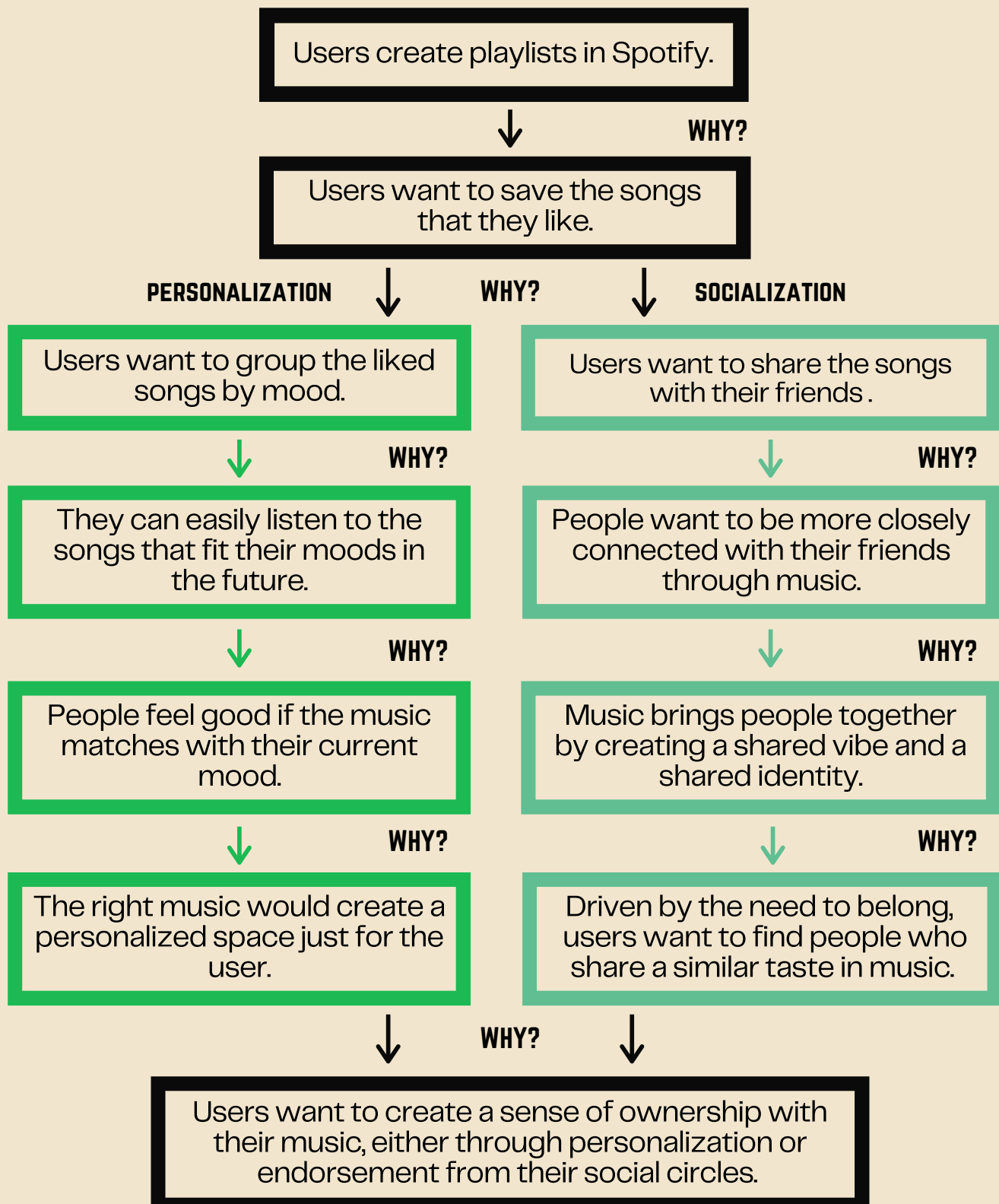
- Spotify users tend to be extremely loyal.
- The average user spends 148 minutes per day listening to music on Spotify 130 million of 286 million monthly active users utilize Spotify's premium features (Iqbal 3).
- Users music taste evolves quickly through age 25, before reaching "maturity" in the mid-30s (Iqbal 37).

Sources

Iqbal, Mansoor. "Spotify Usage and Revenue Statistics (2020)." Business of Apps, Soko Media, 30 Oct. 2020, www.businessofapps.com/data/spotify-statistics/.

Watson, Amy. "Spotify Users by Age in the U.S. 2018." Statista, Statista, 11 Mar. 2020, www.statista.com/statistics/475821/spotify-users-age-usa/.

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS





USER PERSONA

Name: Joe Bruin

Age: 20

Job: Editorial intern at a publishing company

Education: Pursuing a B.A. in English

Marital Status: Single

Disabilities: Needs to wear contacts

Hobby: Going to local concerts with friends

Joe is a junior student at University of California, Los Angeles, pursuing a degree in English. When he was a freshman, he learned about the student discount Spotify provided on monthly subscriptions. Ever since he tried the first month, Spotify has been his go-to hub for music. A typical day for Joe as an English major usually consists of writing and reading assignments. He describes, “I like how smart it is to somehow know what environment I am in and play the right genre I like. I always need music to make myself productive.” Joe lives with his two close friends from high school in an apartment close to campus. His two friends are fervent fans of pop music and jazz, so whenever the three of them are chilling together at home or just doing chores, there is always music in the background. Since they all like different genres of music, Joe created a collaborative playlist for everyone to put in their favorites. “This playlist is literally what holds us together. Without it, you will see us fighting over the next song to be played in the car on a Saturday night out together.”

Outside of his campus life, Joe works as an editorial intern at a local publishing company. His main responsibilities include screening articles, pitching potential publications, proofreading texts, and writing contents for social media. When Joe is in the writing mode, music makes his creative juices flow. He reveals his work habits, saying that “I always download my music and listen to music offline whenever I am working. It allows me to focus on my work instead of randomly scrolling on the Internet.” Joe also mentions that one of the main reasons he enjoys this job and his major is the creative freedom and a sense of ownership in his works. Therefore, when it comes to music, it is natural for Joe to like “whatever personalization Spotify can provide and the security of knowing he has access to his favorite music all the time.”

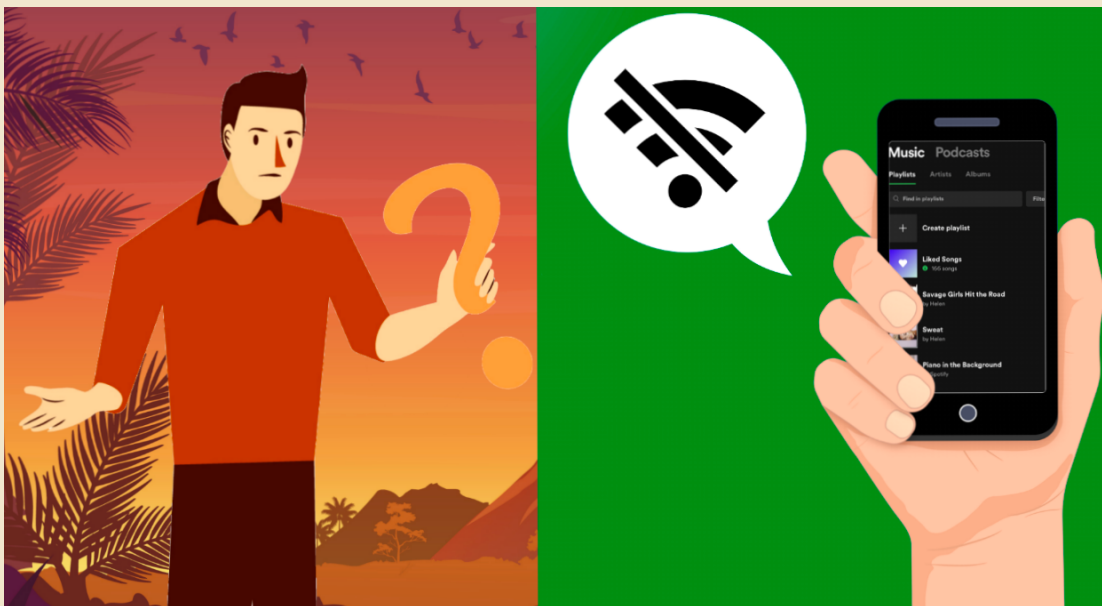
USER SCENARIO

Joe Bruin is a college student who loves to use Spotify every day while doing different tasks. Since Spotify creates versatile genres of music playlists for him, he really enjoys this app to feel the right vibe while doing different tasks in life.

For example, he loves listening to lo-fi beats while studying or working, which helps him concentrate on the tasks. When exercising in the gym, he likes playing loud hip-pop, which makes him activate the beast mode. Every time Joe likes the song and adds it to one of his playlists, he thinks that liking is downloading the song since most of the time he has the internet connection. Thus, he gets so used to just clicking his liked songs in the playlist. The little heart icon on the interface makes it so easy to like a song.



Joe Bruin does not realize that he misinterprets liking a song as downloading until recently. On a Saturday afternoon, he goes camping with his friends into the wilderness. When looking at the sunset and the colors on the edge of the horizon, he suddenly wants to play some peaceful music to create a cozy atmosphere. However, when he turns on Spotify, he realizes there is no cellular data in the wilderness. Since he always has the internet connection at his workspace and on campus, he hasn't downloaded most of his songs in his playlists to his phone. Most of the songs in his "Peaceful Music" playlist are greyed out and he hardly can play any songs. Disappointed by this fact, he then turns to his local library to find his downloaded songs. After clicking the "Artists" icon at the top of his local library, he suddenly notices that all artists displayed here are his "liked artists" instead of "downloaded artists" whose songs are saved offline in his local library. Not until this day when he lacks cellular data does he realize there is such a big gap between "what he likes" and "what he downloads" on Spotify. The lack of guidance to make him realize the difference between liking and downloading makes him quite disappointed. He is so frustrated that he cannot play the right songs when viewing such a pretty scenery.



FOCUS GROUP PROPOSAL

01

Team Member Responsibilities

Thurs 2–3PM

- Moderator: Gavin
- Notetakers: Tong, Yujing

Fri 2–3 PM

- Moderator: Sophie
- Notetakers: Gavin

03

Participants

- Students at UCLA taking class on the Fundamentals of User Experience
- Must have a mobile device that can download music apps
- Be active listeners of music on mobile applications

02

Product History

Spotify is a music streaming platform that offers digital copyright restricted recorded music and podcasts to its users. The key features for this app include:

- Searching for music based on parameters such as genre, artist, album, and playlist
- Creating, editing, and sharing playlists
- Following favorite artists and friends
- Receiving recommendations based on your listening history

No other research on Spotify has been done by our team.

04

Research Questions

- What is your overall experience with listening to music on your mobile device?
- Have you ever used spotify? If so, in what capacity, how often, what does using Spotify help you accomplish (i.e., what features do you tend to use)?
- Based upon the tasks completed, what are you biggest pain points with Spotify's product design?
- Beyond your overall experience with the application, what are other pain points you may have with Spotify's product design?
- What does Spotify do well (i.e., features that it should capitalize on)? What does Spotify not do well (i.e, features Spotify should simplify, revise, or abandon)?
- If you are a current user, why? If not, why? What can Spotify change to make you a user?
- Do you have any final suggestions that were not brought up in discussion that you would like us to know about?

FOCUS GROUP PROPOSAL

Proposed Methods

05

Our moderators will be leading relatively free-flowing unstructured conversations with a task-based modification at the beginning to familiarize participants with Spotify's mobile application.

Procedure

06

- Moderator and team introductions followed by round-robin style participant introductions
- Go over the procedure and rules that will be enforced for the duration of the experiment: do not edit yourself or others, no critiquing of ideas, speak one at a time, everyone should participate equally
- Start a conversation with the first two research questions
- Introduce the tasks one at a time and open up room for feedback based on the tasks
- Push further conversation through remaining research questions
- Wrap up with participants by summarizing the results of the study and asking for feedback and final suggestions

Focus Group Tasks

07

- **Task 1:** creating a playlist: Search for a song of your choosing, like the song, visit the artist page, and add the song to a playlist along with another song by the same artist. Look at your recommended songs within your playlist and add a recommended song to a playlist.
- **Task 2:** searching for a genre and listening to recommended songs: find the Spotify listing for R&B, go to popular playlist, and like a song. Go to your profile and open liked song.
- **Task 3:** finding recently played songs and curated recommendations: find Spotify's list of your most recently songs. Next, pull up Spotify's "Made for You" recommendations.
- **Task 4:** connecting with friends: find the profile of a fellow participant, follow them.

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Before Participants Arrive

Technology

- Team members who will be joining the focus group are familiar with basic Zoom functions, such as chat, recording, hand-raise, and reactions.
- All team members have downloaded Spotify on their phones.
- Create Zoom polls (if any) and make sure it is ready to launch.

Communications

- The team has prepared a general outline for the focus group.
- All team members are familiar with the outline and understand the main purpose of the focus group.

Instructions

- Team members who will join the focus group know how to instruct participants to download Spotify on their phones if they haven't already done so.

As Participants Arrive

- Meet and greet the participants as they join the Zoom meeting.
- Create a welcoming atmosphere so that participants are more comfortable with sharing their opinions later in the focus group (music).
- Answer any questions they have
- Ask participants to keep their cameras on if possible

Introductions

"Hello, thank you for taking the time to join our study! We are a group of students who like listening to music and are interested in making some improvement on one of the most popular music apps, Spotify. Today, you are here to help us improve the interface of its mobile app. This is a group study where __ of you will discuss your experiences or opinions based on your user experience. Please always feel free to express your opinion and at the same time, be respectful for others' opinions. This study will take no longer than an hour.

Before we get started, I would like to introduce ourselves. My name is __, and I will be the moderator for this study. My colleague __ will be taking some notes throughout the session. There might be some time when my colleague is not looking at the screen and is typing, but we want to assure you that we are always listening and paying close attention to your answer. We are recording this group session and the recording will be only available for our group members to review. [PAUSE FOR A FEW SECONDS]

To let the study go smoothly, we want to make sure that you have the following items ready. First, please have your mobile device with you. Second, please download and install the music app named Spotify. Take a few minutes to download the app if you don't have it on your phone yet. The app should be accessible through App Store or Google Play. Please tell us now if you have any problem downloading the app. If you have both your mobile device and the Spotify ready, please react with a thumbs-up emoji. [WAIT FOR A MINUTE]

During the study, I would have tasks for you and some following questions as you finish the tasks. Is there any question about the study?"

Warmup

"Let us start off by getting to know a little bit more about each other [Send Google form to collect demographic information] Can we have everyone introduce themselves? Please tell us your name, year, pronouns, and what is your favorite genre of music or who is your favourite music artist."

Demographics Google Form:

<https://forms.gle/Yznr8vBoiXFidoFG6>



Topic Discussion Guide

Topic	Example Statements	Duration	Goal
Introduction	Today's focus group will take around 1 hour. We will be focusing on your experience with a music application...	5 mins	Researchers introduce the flow of today's focus group. Estimate a time for participants and clarify any confusions they have.
Warm up	Please share your name, year, and major. What is your favorite music genre?	5 mins	Let participants get to know each other and be comfortable with sharing.
Opening Discussion (do a poll)	What is your overall experience with listening to music on your mobile device? Have you ever used spotify? If so, in what capacity, how often, what does using Spotify help you accomplish (i.e., what features do you tend to use)?	10-15 mins	-Understand the general user profile -Know what main questions to focus on
Task		10 mins	
Discussion In-depth		30 mins	
Summary	To summarize what we have said today...Does this sugary capture what we discussed?	2 mins	Recap and let participants validate/refuse key findings.
What's missing?	What are some things you would like to mention that we haven't covered today?	1 min	Participants can share their additional ideas freely.

Goal Reminder

- To see certain features of the music App that need to be improved based on the users' feedback
- What features matter the most and the least

Notetaking Reminder

- Keep track of: The situations when people find it not very useful/feel lost when using the app
- The circumstance when users cannot find the features that satisfy their needs
- Users' dissatisfaction with the UI/UX design
- Existent features of the product that people find satisfying

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Key Findings

- Users like personalized experiences offered based on the algorithm where they can easily find things that suit their taste, and an example of which is the curated playlist.
- Users are bothered with the lack of personalized experiences in using the app. People want more customization, including the organization of music, the arrangement of information on the screen, the display of add-on features such as podcasts, the weight assigned to social elements in using the app, and so on.
- The current user interface is often regarded as beautiful and clean (good on the visceral level), while may sometimes disappoint users with flow that is not intuitive (not satisfactory on the behavioral level).
- Users want a clearer conceptual model of the library of downloaded music so they won't be prone to the conceptual gap between what they downloaded and what they added into the playlist.

Nuanced Finding

- People do care about music sound quality when the difference is clearly noticeable on their device. Users may switch to other music apps that offer better listening experience if they find the current one not very satisfactory.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Quotations



“Streaming is pretty different from downloading the digital files, like what you originally had on iPod back in the day. It would be nice if I could have two different organizations. Here is my playlist; here is the downloaded music on my device, so I can access it when it’s offline, My downloaded music is really unreflective of what I have on my device right now. It gives that feeling that I’m just accessing this music; I don’t actually own it. It is true that it is a streaming app but that sense should be a little bit better.”

“One thing about the like feature that I dislike is that I have songs put in there a year ago that I forgot about, but it’s still there. ... the lack of organization is what annoys me sometimes.”



“I went to the search page, saw top genres, and then I saw browse all. But, under browse all, on the first page, I didn’t see genres, so I have to scroll ... I kept scrolling, and I still didn’t see it, so I kind of gave up. I just searched it, but I was even not sure if I could search genres... I have to scroll all the way down. The way that this page is set up is not clear. There’s a bunch of different colors going on, and all the titles are written in the same font. It’s just very confusing, and I have to focus on looking at every single one...”

