

[Spotify Podcast Discoverability and Engagement]

1-line description

Team: Podcast product team

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Status:/In Review

Launching on: 1st May 2025

Problem Definition

Many active Spotify users between the ages of 18 and 25 want to listen to podcasts, but they frequently skip entire seasons or episodes when they don't connect with certain speakers or topics but they have watched the reels from other social media platforms therefore these users may stop watching after just a few episodes, which lowers engagement and retention. This reveals a gap in discoverability and content tailoring, which results in lost chances to boost Spotify podcast view time and audience retention.

- **What is the problem?**

Users struggle to find podcasts matching their interests, leading them to switch platforms. Better tagging, search filters, and user-generated categorization, AI Generated podcast snippet can improve discoverability and retention rate.

- **Who is facing the problem?**

*Young Spotify users, especially those aged **18-25**, who actively consume content but **struggle to discover relevant podcasts** that match their interests.*

- **What is the business value that will be unlocked by solving the problem?**

Reduce Podcast drop-offs by 4% and increase podcast engagement significantly around 7%

Increase intent watchers which will directly increase by 5% opportunity of premium users which will also impact the reviews mechanism

Increase average listening time that will lead to generate ad revenue

- **How will the target users benefit if the problem is solved?**

For Viewers

Easily pick your next watch

Viewing snips will increase view intent

Save decision time

For Creators

Quick engagement boost by AI recommended summary

Snips helping user decisions will lead to more views

More intent watchers leading to better reviews more likes

- **Why is it urgent to solve this problem now?**
 1. *India's podcast industry is growing from \$560M to \$4,284M by 2023—Spotify must act now to stay competitive.*
 2. *Freemium users switch to YouTube and other platforms for better content; solving this boosts retention, engagement, and market share.*

Goals

Functional Metrics (Directly Related to User Actions & Product Performance)

1. **Podcast Completion Rate** – 5 % of users who complete a full episode or season.
2. **Podcast Discovery Rate** – 4 % of users engaging with AI-recommended or personalized podcast content.
3. **Conversion Rate (Freemium to Premium)** – 6% of free-tier users upgrading after engaging with podcast content.

Non-Functional Metrics (System Performance & User Experience Indicators)

1. **Recommendation Accuracy Score** – % of recommended podcasts that users listen to for at least 5 minutes.
2. **Load Time for Podcast Playback & Search** – Maintain a response time of <2 seconds for search and playback.

Why are these Functional metrics important?

Podcast Completion Rate: Measures how engaging and relevant the podcast content is and A low rate suggests drop-off points that need to be addressed, such as **content relevancy** or **episode length**.

Podcast Discovery Rate: Reflects how effectively the platform surfaces relevant podcasts to users. A high discovery rate means Spotify's recommendation algorithms and **search filters** are working well.

Non-Goals:

- *Content Creation & Podcast Production*
- *Monetization & Ad Revenue Optimization*
- *Live Podcast Streaming & Interactive Features*

Understanding the target audience

User Persona

Who is facing the problem



Sonali Singh
Age: 24
Location: Kolkata
Occupation: Analyst

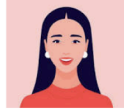
Bio: She likes to listen to podcast while doing mundane tasks commuting or cleaning. She also works out daily and is looking for more engaging playlist.

Wants & Needs:

- Wants to get better entertainment experience
- Wants to select which episode will be worth her time quickly

Pain Points

- Can not decide if she wants to spend her time on an episode
- Doesn't like all episodes therefore wants a way to selectively watches what she likes.



Prathikska Kankaria
Age: 28
Location: Bangalore
Occupation: Housewife

Bio: She likes to listen to podcast while doing household chores. She listens to sings or podcast mostly during afternoon to relax her thoughts

Wants & Needs:

- Wants to gain knowledge
- Wants to listen genre according to her mood
- Wants to share favorite key takeaways among friends and family

Pain Points

- Can not decide if she wants to spend her time on an episode
- Can not take a note of key takeaways therefore have to listen the podcast same multiple times

User's Narrative

"When I want to view Joe Regan's experience on spotify, I sometimes do not resonate with few guests or topics therefore skips through the whole clip and ultimately drop off after watching few episodes and think there is something interesting on YouTube."

"I recently catch up on Ted Talks daily this week, and found some interesting and insightful thoughts but due to lack of tool which would help to highlight the timestamps I had to re watch the episode to fill up on later".

Possible Solutions

Let's take a look at the proposed solutions to see the scope and impact of each, and further prioritise each

Prioritisation

Solution 1: Collections

A bookmarking feature that would allow users to revisit podcast segment with ease

How it works?

Easily save a clip with a swipe-up and refer back to it later on. You can revisit it in 'Collections', organise it & share it

Benefits

For Viewers

- Easy Insight Review
- Prevent context loss when revisiting
- Save the time spent re-viewing podcast
- Share the clippings with your friends

For Creators

- Quick engagement boost
- Watching and re-sharing clips increases views
- Improves brands visibility

For Business

- Understands views engagement & preference by analysing data
- Push targeted relevant content
- Sharing increases users traction

Solution 2: Podcast Snippets

A preview feature letting users listen 15 secs preview of podcast, aiding decision

How it works?

Users can easily pick which podcast to watch next by long pressing the thumbnail to get a short pop-up preview. Long tap or hover on the episode to play the preview, that is set by podcast creator

Benefits

For Viewers

- Easily pick your next watch
- Viewing snips will increase view intent
- Save decision time

For Creators

- Quick engagement boost
- Snips helping user decisions will lead to more views
- More intent watchers leading to better reviews more likes

For Business

- Reduce Podcast drop-offs
- Increase intent watchers
- Increase listening time

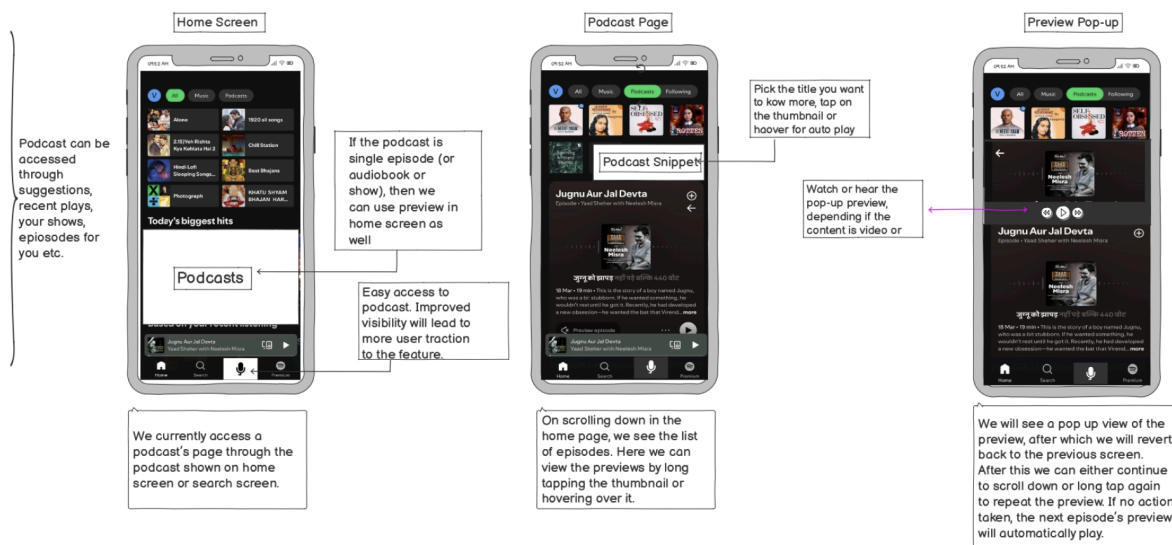
Parameters 📌	Collection	Podcast Snippet
Discoverability	2	4
Reach	4	4.5
Ease of use	3	4
Score	8	24 🏆



Podcast Snippet

- In above prioritisation, **Discoverability, Reach and ease** of use parameters are used instead of standard framework.
- All scores are given on a 1-5 scale based on relevance.
- Assumption is **infinite tech bandwidth**. Hence effort is constant. **Ease of use is used instead.**
- **Discoverability** is taken into account **instead of confidence** as it is more important for us that the feature is intuitive and discoverable for more adoption as podcasts is relatively new to Spotify.
- **Reach is calculated on the target user segment.**
- **Final score = (D*R*E) / 3**

Wire-frame to visualise the solution



Launch Readiness Plan: Podcast Snippets Feature

Key Milestones & Timeline

1. **Design Completion** – Finalizing UI/UX for preview feature (Week 1-2)
2. **Development Completion** – Backend & frontend integration of snippet functionality (Week 3-6)
3. **QA Testing & Bug Fixes** – Ensuring seamless experience across devices (Week 7-8)
4. **Dogfooding & Internal Testing** – Trial within select Spotify teams (Week 9)
5. **Beta Rollout** – Limited user testing & A/B experiments (Week 10-11)
6. **Full Launch** – Global availability & marketing push (Week 12)

Launch Checklist

- ✓ **User Support:** Ensure Help Center has FAQs & troubleshooting guides for snippet feature.
- ✓ **Operational Readiness:** Set up backend analytics to track snippet engagement & conversions.
- ✓ **Internal Stakeholders:** Product, Engineering, Design, Data Science, Marketing, Customer Support teams aligned.
- ✓ **Performance Monitoring:** Real-time dashboards for engagement tracking & bug reporting.
- ✓ **Marketing & Awareness:** In-app banners, social media announcements, and email campaigns.

Experimentation Plan

📌 **A/B Testing** – Compare engagement between users with snippet previews vs. those without.

📌 **Metric Tracking** – Monitor increase in podcast completion rates, listener intent, and total listening time.

📌 **Iterate & Improve** – Refine snippet durations & trigger points based on user behavior & feedback.