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INFO 608

User Research Report 1

## **Tidal User Demographic Interview Analysis Report**

### **I. Introduction**

Our team is analyzing Tidal Music's system. The purpose of this research is to identify how the user demographic interacts with the application and identify areas of design strengths and weaknesses in those interactions. Tidal is one of the many music streaming applications available to the public. While it doesn't have as large a user-base as some of the major competitors, it is well known for its Hi-fi sound quality and its popularity amongst music artists. After conducting a competitive analysis, our team provided a few recommendations on how Tidal could improve the design of the system to better meet user needs. However, we need to further understand the true needs of the user demographic to confirm those initial thoughts or further identify additional problems faced.

### **II. Methodology**

To conduct this research, we each conducted our own semi-structured interviews, using similar starting questions. The questions were as follows:

1. Do you use any music streaming apps? If so, which one(s) and why?
2. What platforms do you listen to music on? Computer? Mobile? Car Radio?
3. Describe how you use the music streaming application(s).
4. When do you listen to music?
5. What types of music do you like?
6. What is important to you as a music listener?
7. Are there any specific features of the application you use that are important to you?  
Describe
8. Which features are your least favorite and why?
9. How do you think streaming platforms should interact with and promote music artists on their platform? How should they pay/credit them?

These questions were aimed at understanding their interactions and behaviors with listening to music, as well as what features drew them to the applications that they currently use. They also prompted them to think about any problems they faced when using these applications and why that might be a problem for them. The protocol was also designed to be as open-ended as possible so that people could run with their thoughts and feelings. It showed their decision-making process and how the designs influenced their interactions. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes and was conducted over the phone or on Zoom. Three of the interviews were group interviews, as the individuals knew each other and due to time constraints with work. I would ask each question and based on the response, I would ask additional questions related to the response or sometimes would skip over or rephrase a future question as they had already answered that question. The last question was the most challenging question for people to answer because it was more of an opinion rather than a behavioral question. The reason I asked it was because I was curious as to if that mattered in their decision making to use one specific application over another.

As I did not know anyone who currently uses Tidal, I interviewed nine individuals who met the user demographic of Tidal: young, tech-savvy music listeners. Only one of the interviewees had used Tidal in the past. The ages of the individuals ranged from 22-31. Each person currently uses at least one music streaming service, though many use more than one medium to listen to music. These mediums include- car radio, record player, and multiple music streaming applications on their computer and/or mobile device. Six of the interviewees were female and three were male. Every interviewee had a variety of individuals with different backgrounds, preferences, and tastes. Music listening is universal; however, each person has their own unique needs and thus I wanted to make sure I interviewed a variety. One caveat is that each person lives in the United States. If I were to have more time, I would expand my research to global users in different countries who may have different preferences.

### **III. Findings and Analysis**

In this section, I will discuss each user and describe their goals, actions, needs, and preferences.

- i. User 1: Female, 30
  - a. Application(s) Used: Pandora (primary), YouTube, iTunes
  - b. Goals:
    - i. To listen to music that is tailored to her tastes.
    - ii. To be able to listen to music when completing tasks that she doesn't enjoy/mindless tasks.
    - iii. To be able to explore new music and read the lyrics to understand the songs meanings and relate to life.
  - c. Needs:
    - i. Expansive music library of songs she owns, so she needs to access those.
    - ii. Variety in the music selection provided by an application.
  - d. Problems:
    - i. Doesn't like commercials/ads.
    - ii. Pandora repeats a lot of songs and rarely introduces new songs.
  - e. Insights:
    - i. While User 1 doesn't like ads, she doesn't mind ones that promote their artists. For example, an advertisement for their upcoming concerts. Additionally, her cell phone plan has a benefit that allows commercial free weekends on Pandora. This could be a perk for not only the cell phone provider but also the music streaming platform.
    - ii. She loves learning about the meaning behind music and loves music trivia. This could be a way that streaming services provide an interactive element to their users.
    - iii. Bluetooth provides a means by which she can listen to music whenever she wants – car speakers, headphones, computer, Bluetooth speakers, etc. Music streaming and Bluetooth have made music listening a very accessible activity.
- ii. User 2: Female, 31
  - a. Application(s) Used: Pandora (primary), Spotify (partner's account)
  - b. Goals:

- i. To listen to music that is tailored to her tastes.
- ii. To be able to listen to music offline – for example, when traveling.
- iii. To be able to listen to music based on her mood.

c. Needs:

- i. To listen to music that connects with her energy and is more grounded in nature/spirit.

d. Problems:

- i. Feels Spotify is too complex and overwhelming. Pandora is simpler and chooses songs for her based on her likes.
- ii. Has an older car without Bluetooth but she prefers to listen to music in the car.
- iii. Her job is talking all day and she often enjoys silence over music after a long day.

e. Insights:

- i. She said she sometimes uses Spotify as her partner has a Premium account. She likes that it doesn't have ads, but her partner is worried about her ruining his Spotify wrapped. This shows that streaming apps are tailored to individual's preferences. While I understand why they may want to prevent multiple people from sharing accounts, parents with children should be able to have their music library catered to them separate from their children's.
- ii. This user likes the simplicity in Pandora. Many services today, like Spotify, have so many features that it can be overwhelming. We refer to this as feature bloat. Applications could pair down the number of features and focus on enhancing top features for users.
- iii. This user noted she likes to listen to Screamo music when gardening. While it is common for people to listen to music when completing tasks, I did not expect someone to listen to this genre when gardening. Many services provide recommendations based on mood, but I see opportunities where they could provide recommendations based on task. This could be something that users select, like in the app they

select the task, for example gym. Then, they further select the type of music they like to listen to while completing that task.

iii. User 3: Male, 26

a. Application(s) Used: Spotify (primary), Apple Music/iTunes

b. Goals:

- i. To listen to music and podcasts at work.
- ii. To be able to download audiobooks for long car rides, for a reasonable price.
- iii. To share playlists with friends when they are hanging out.

c. Needs:

- i. To integrate downloaded music into the streaming platforms.
- ii. Accessible music downloaded, as there is no Wi-fi at work.
- iii. Social component to the service that he is using.

d. Problems:

- i. The free version of Spotify is difficult to maneuver in the app.
- ii. Apple music is difficult to integrate stuff from the downloaded library in iTunes as it plays the non-explicit version of explicit songs.
- iii. Spotify audiobooks are more expensive than Audible, so still uses Audible for audiobooks.
- iv. Hard to move away from Apple Music because he has Apple products, and it is well integrated with those devices.

e. Insights:

- i. This user prioritized the social component of music streaming and is why he prefers Spotify. Spotify's large user base and social components are a differentiating factor that makes it difficult for others to gain market share. Luckily, users may use multiple services depending on the different features they offer.
- ii. He likes to consume music and thinks artists should be paid equitably but doesn't want to pay a premium. Though, when there is an artist or album that he really likes, he is willing to pay to download the music. This is a common challenge for both streaming services and music

artists and they mutually benefit from listeners of a platform. Despite this, once a platform has a large user base, smaller artists may not make a lot of money, but it is almost expected that their music be available on the large platforms. Additionally, people purchase fewer individual songs and albums when using streaming services.

iv. User 4: Female, 29

a. Application(s) Used: Spotify

b. Goals:

- i. To be recommended music and notified when artists have new music out.
- ii. To have all her music in one place.
- iii. To access her music from work, home, and in the car.

c. Needs:

- i. To be able to make shared playlists with her husband.
- ii. To have music as background noise.
- iii. Access to the music she likes as some platforms have artist exclusives.

d. Problems:

- i. Even though she has a family plan, her home devices are hooked up to her husband's account and it isn't easy to switch to her profile. So, she has to listen to his playlists on the home speaker.
- ii. She likes listening to podcasts but can't listen to them at work anymore because she must focus on the work. Now, she listens to background music.
- iii. Doesn't have diverse music tastes, so she prefers being recommended music rather than selecting it on her own.
- iv. Switched to Spotify for podcasts after changing from iPhone to Android phone because Android didn't have a good podcasts app.

e. Insights:

- i. Given her family account issues, I see an opportunity to allow households to connect their profiles so that they can easily switch to

another's playlists when at home. I envision this to be similar to how people can switch between different radio stations in their car.

- ii. The social component is also important to this user, but in a different way compared to User 3. This user likes hearing about updates on music from artists because she doesn't have social media. This can be helpful to listeners to stay up to date with their favorite artists.
- iii. She likes everything to be in one place and simple to use. Spotify meets most of her needs relating to this. I think this is why many people use and prefer Spotify to other applications. Most of the users I interviewed used Spotify, whether it was their primary application or not.

v. User 5: Female, 29

- a. Application(s) Used: iTunes (primary), Spotify, Pandora, Sound Cloud
- b. Goals:
  - i. To purchase and own music that fits her preferences.
  - ii. To use a service that has an extensive library to meet her diverse palette.
- c. Needs:
  - i. To have background music to block things out when she needs to focus.
  - ii. To be able to listen to songs she specifically selects.
- d. Problems:
  - i. She likes less-mainstream genres and music that she likes is often not available on streaming services.
  - ii. She doesn't like that the free version of Pandora and Spotify throws in random songs into her playlist rotation.
  - iii. Work desks are close together and people are loud. She needs music to drown out their conversations.
- e. Insights:
  - i. Smaller artists are less likely to have their music on streaming platforms and can prevent users from being able to discover or listen to

their music. Streaming services could promote smaller artists to gain additional users and improve the diversity of their music library and user-base.

- ii. She uses music as a focus tool, as many of the other users have noted. According to a book titled *Music, Public Health, and Health Promotion: Can Music be a Social Determinant of Health?*, music provides benefits to one's overall health and well-being (Stewart & Irons, 2017). Music streaming services could partner with companies to provide a benefit for their employees.
- iii. Most of the available streaming services do not offer a way to incorporate one's personal music library into the applications. So far Apple Music is the only one that I have identified with that capability. This seems to be an important factor with this user and many of the other users that I have spoken with.

vi. User 6: Female, 28

- a. Application(s) Used: Spotify (primary)
- b. Goals:
  - i. To listen to music in a simple format without extra features.
  - ii. To stay in the groove of life.
  - iii. To listen to the podcasts that she likes.
- c. Needs:
  - i. To be able to find obscure music that she likes.
  - ii. For the app to have the capability to discover new music easily.
- d. Problems:
  - i. She doesn't have awareness of other services, so she sticks to what she knows.
  - ii. Spotify has too many bloat features that she doesn't like. For example, the morning playlists contain podcasts, news, and music all in one playlist and doesn't like that taking up screen space in the application. She wishes it had more customization to remove features she doesn't like.



e. Insights:

- i. This user isn't aware of other services out there. Spotify disrupted this market before apps like Tidal were available. This makes it difficult for users to pay attention and look for new services when one already meets their needs.
- ii. In our competitive analysis, we discussed the lack of customization in the music streaming space. While not all users expressed an outright need for this, this user had a strong opinion regarding a desire for customization. Furthermore, customization could aid in user's desires for accessibility in music selection and payment mechanisms for their favorite music artists.
- iii. She, along with other users, mentioned listening to podcasts on Spotify. This makes me believe that podcast options are also important to listeners in their application choice. Tidal does offer podcasts, however Spotify does have some exclusive content.

vii. User 7: Male, 22

- a. Application(s) Used: Spotify (primary), Apple Music, Sound Cloud
- b. Goals:
  - i. To easily navigate the application and find music and podcasts to listen to.
  - ii. To be able to listen to music at any time during any activities.
  - iii. To discover new artists and music based on other music they are listening to.
- c. Needs:
  - i. To share playlists with others.
  - ii. For the application to be easy to use.
  - iii. For the application to have an appealing user interface.
- d. Problems:
  - i. Having to use multiple services because some artists exclusively publish their music there.

- ii. When using Google Maps, it interrupts and pauses the music or podcast that he's listening to when giving directions. It disrupts the listening experience. To combat this, he turns the sound off on Google Maps.
- iii. Spotify doesn't have freestyle or unreleased music like Sound Cloud. So, it is another reason he has to use multiple services.
- iv. He doesn't have a car that is Bluetooth enabled or has an Aux cable, so has a Bluetooth speaker in the car to listen to music.

e. Insights:

- i. He loves Spotify and would be difficult to change to a different primary service. Even though he mentioned a few problems, he didn't really fault Spotify's design for this. This makes it difficult for competitors, like Tidal, to gain new users. Even when their user interface is comparable.
- ii. This user uses music as a motivation to get him into a certain mood or will listen based on a certain mood. Many apps incorporate mood into their music exploration options. Though, I could see how expanding on this type of feature could benefit user experience.
- iii. Music streaming faces some legacy problems, like difficulty pairing with older cars without Bluetooth. Cars are large purchases, though there are ways users can connect in cars without it, such as through a cigarette lighter or aux port. Services such as Tidal and Spotify could draw users in by providing premium users such devices.

viii. User 8: Female, 23

- a. Application(s) Used: Spotify (primary), Music on her Clock Radio
- b. Goals:
  - i. To listen to music to help her mood transition from different modes in her day. For example, from work to going out.
  - ii. To have social cohesion with music and be able to discuss with friends.
- c. Needs:

- i. To use a service that is easy to navigate and is user friendly.
- ii. To be able to listen to music at work.

d. Problems:

- i. With music streaming services, she finds that she ends up listening to the same music over and over. It feels repetitive and is less likely to discover new music. That is why she has switched back to her clock radio so she can get variety in her music.
- ii. The free version of Spotify didn't meet her needs. She upgraded to the Premium version as a result.
- iii. Wants to support small and local artists but feels Spotify doesn't do a great job of that.

e. Insights:

- i. While application customization isn't offered in any music streaming service that our team analyzed, Spotify has their Wrapped feature. This feature seems to be popular amongst many users, including User 8. Wrapped is personalized to each person and shows them insight into their music tastes. This is a differentiating feature of Spotify and is a way to make their users feel connected to the music they listen to, and ultimately to the application they use.
- ii. She upgraded to the Premium paid version of the service because the features of the non-paid version didn't meet her needs. This is common amongst avid music listeners. This is a common sales tactic in this industry to persuade users to upgrade their account. While I don't disagree that companies should do what they need to make a profit, I do think they can give some of the power back to the user. For instance, a user could select to take a survey rather than having ads interrupt their listening experience. Or they could choose where some of their money goes to like a charity or their favorite local artist. Since music listening is a very personal experience in many ways, why not allow users to personalize their spending power in the application.

- iii. The sharing and social aspects of an application are very important to many users. This makes it difficult to leave a platform as playlists cannot be shared across platforms in the same way they are shared within the platform. This problem would be difficult to solve, though if there is a solution to this problem, some users may not feel obligated to use one service over another.

ix. User 9: Male, 26

- a. Application(s) Used: Spotify (primary), Sound Cloud, Apple Music, Tidal, Shazam
- b. Goals:
  - i. To explore different music streaming platforms and get a variety of listener experiences.
  - ii. To be able to listen to top sound quality while accessing a wide variety of music options.
  - iii. To train the music service algorithm to recommend music specific to his likes.
- c. Needs:
  - i. Music to provide a calm environment as he has ADHD.
  - ii. Access to different platforms, as some music artists have platform exclusivity.
  - iii. To move through the user interface quickly and find what he wants to listen to.
  - iv. To be able to download music to a device vs. downloading to the service itself.
- d. Problems:
  - i. Stopped using Tidal because he had trouble with the music transfer services to be able to copy playlists between other apps and there were issues with the music queue.
  - ii. Can't download music off-app in Spotify and he likes to manage his music in folders locally on devices.

- iii. Spotify's integration with Apple TV isn't great and so he prefers Apple Music in that circumstance.
- e. Insights:
  - i. He strongly believes Spotify is the gold standard of streaming services. This can cause applications to fall into the design trap of trying to make their applications like Spotify. This doesn't draw many new users to their application because it likely doesn't address many specific user problems or needs that aren't already addressed in Spotify.
  - ii. While this user prioritized sound quality, more than the other interviewees, he still did not fully convert to Tidal and switched back to Spotify because of a few issues. Additionally, Spotify has announced that they plan to roll out a Hi-fi option to its users. This potentially will further Spotify's hold on its users and may even pull users back to Spotify from Tidal or other options with Hi-fi quality.
  - iii. He liked that Tidal credits their music artists properly, compared to some of the other competitors. He is also willing to pay more to credit artists. This has been a common theme in the interviews that I conducted. While business models do help get people's interest in an application, it does not seem to be a large factor in people's decisions. Convenience, familiarity, comfort, and usability are key in meeting user needs.

While many insights were discovered in this study, I recognize that it is a small number of music listeners. As noted in the competitive analysis, Spotify alone has approximately 500 million users (Curry, 2023). Certainly, interviewing nine people is not quite as extensive and cannot fully represent the entire population of users. Additionally, this study is limited to people of similar background and economic circumstance as myself. This is because they are people that I know. Thus, the diversity in this study is also limited. Time was a major constraint that prevented further expansion in the research. Also, as mentioned I was not familiar with any current Tidal Music listeners as Spotify has the majority market share. Now that we understand

the limitations of this study, we can summarize the results of the insights provided by the participants.

Out of the nine interviewees, only one did not use Spotify at all. Six of the participants use Spotify as their primary streaming service. Many of them had great things to say about Spotify and were generally satisfied with the service. They all had very similar motivations for listening to music such as, to align to or get into a particular mood, to discover new music, to have background music while completing tasks throughout the day, and for the social aspect of it. While many cited accessibility of music as a priority and the ability to listen to their favorite music offline as a need, only one cited sound quality as important. Given that sound quality is one of Tidal's main selling points, this means it is limited in how many users prioritize this as a need.

There were also many problems faced amongst the group. I found that the problems they faced varied depending on the genre of music they listened to, where they listened to music, and whether they pay for a service. Those that listened to smaller artists in more obscure genres, had trouble finding their favorite artists in one place. Thus, they had multiple streaming services and were also likely to have purchased music into an application, such as iTunes, where they can store their purchased music. Many people listened to music throughout the day, at work, at home, while gardening or exercising, or even when playing video games. The biggest issues faced occurred while the user was in the car or at work. Some people didn't have Bluetooth in their vehicle, and they had to resort to other ways to listen to their streaming services in the car. Additionally, one user cited an issue with Google Maps interrupting their music/podcasts as they drive. I know that personally, I have faced similar issues. At work, one user cited that they need music downloaded because they do not have Wi-fi where they work. This also relates to the free vs. paid versions of the applications. Many users mentioned that they pay for services now because the free versions are more complicated to use and force them to use it in a way that doesn't fully meet their needs. While this may not be a problem for all users, those in the younger demographic are more likely to face economic restrictions. I believe there are ways that streaming platforms can make the free versions more accessible without sacrificing profit.

#### **IV. Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations**

To summarize, this report analyzes a variety of young, tech savvy, music listeners from ages 22-31. Many insights were gained from the interviews. Overall, I concluded that many users feel their needs are being met by the current services they use and are unlikely to use something new unless it disrupts the market. From our competitive analysis, we drew the conclusion that Tidal was very similar to Spotify and only had a few differentiating features such as Hi-fi music quality and artist credits. Given that Spotify has announced that they plan to roll out a Hi-fi plan in the future, this is not a good sign for Tidal music. While Tidal will likely stand strong with the music artists, users do not seem to be swayed to use Tidal because services like Spotify already meet their needs and credits and payouts are a need specific to the artists themselves. So, unless large names remove their content from a platform and provide exclusivity to Tidal, music listeners will continue to use Spotify. Additionally, for those users that listen to artists with exclusivity on a platform, they often will utilize multiple services because much of the music is provided on their primary platform. Thus, many well-known artists would have to do the same.

Despite these implications, I do see that some user needs are not being by any services and Tidal could make some changes to their system and business model to better accommodate those needs. However, they would need to focus on these differentiating factors rather than trying to be similar to the big competitors. My recommendations are as follows:

1. Enable the users to personalize their spending power and be connected to the music artists they listen to. This could be by allowing them to endorse small artists and to select where some of their monthly subscription fee goes to. Or if they have the free version, they could select the type of advertisements they would like to see and from which artists.
2. Application customization. Allow users to switch between light theme and dark them and to select which features they want to appear in their user interface. Customization is important here as music is a personalized experience.
3. Allow families to easily access each other's playlists on shared listening devices rather than only being connected to one profile. This could be done by having a home or car profile where you can select which user profiles you want accessible on those devices.

4. Add a task-driven playlist feature, that is like how the applications allow users to select music based on a mood. This could be where the users select activity types and then the type(s) of music they like to listen to in that situation. For example, one user noted that they like to listen to Screamo while gardening.
5. Offer a way to upload personal music into their music library and playlists. For example, if Tidal doesn't have a particular song or artist, users can purchase the song and then subsequently upload it to their Tidal library – only available to them.
6. Enable users to be able to connect to users of other platforms and collaborate on playlists together. While this may seem counterintuitive because it wouldn't require users to move to Tidal, services like Spotify have a hold on users in this regard and some may not want to switch to a different platform because they would no longer be able to collaborate with their friends.
7. Partner with employers to provide a health-benefit to their employees. Where the companies could pay a subsidized price and offer free or reduced-cost subscription services to their employees.
8. Allow users to submit requests for artists whose music isn't available on the service.

While this list is limited to one research study, I feel that these recommendations would further meet the needs and support the behavior of music listeners. In my next research study, I plan to observe the Tidal subreddit and further deepen my understanding of the user base.

## **V. References**

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## **VI. Appendix**

### **a. Interview Transcripts/Notes:**



**1. Users 1 (K) and 2 (S):**

Do you use any music streaming apps? If so, which one(s) and why?

K: Pandora/youtube, had ipod before and car flooded and they don't make ipods anymore. Used pandora ever since college. Like it, put in one song and mood and curates playlist and use for music discovery. Partner use Spotify Premium, doesn't want that to be messed up but will sometimes use that. Have been listening to for 10 yrs.

S: Pandora, pride that her Christmas station is curated to her. Purchased \$5/mo plan, can download 4 playlists offline – good for travel. Would use the same songs in a playlist. Partner has premium spotify as well, and doesn't listen to spotify too much/complex. Have been using Spotify more recently to listen to albums, less ads with premium. Use both when it works, Pandora is less overwhelming.

What platforms do you listen to music on? Computer? Mobile? Car Radio?

S: don't listen to music much, primarily in the car. Sometimes will listen to music on record player at home. Bluetooth ...and sometimes when I cook

K: home, doing chores, through phone – speakers, headphones...sometimes will use it at gym, not when running to do to headphones. Car radio, sometimes pandora in car, youtube often – will listen to full albums. Indie compilations. Sometimes lo-fi.

Describe how you use the music streaming application(s).

When do you listen to music?

What types of music do you like?

K: indie, pop, folk, rock, anything but country or heavy metal – indie rock station go to

S: knuckle and medicine for the people – global fusion of rhythm, folk rock..indigenous sounds, “white-people reggae”, pop-indie, reggatone when running or edm/dance, noah cyrus – pc Musgraves on pandora playlist, screamo music when gardening, appreciate the juxtaposition/feels like white noise, taking back Sunday playlist – soasin, good throwback

What is important to you as a music listener?

K: profound lyrics, cryptic messages, drop song lyrics in everyday conversation, deep thoughts, artists, pleasant sounding to the ears. Sometimes you just feel it, don’t like to cook so have to listen to music when doing something that’s boring or feel better about what im doing with the task in front of me. If I don’t need to concentrate at work will listen. Also like to explore and music and music trivia. I had an expansive library on my ipod and feeling that you owned the music/song. And put face to name and match lyrics and artists.

S: for the longest time used CDs, had old car, I like silence a lot because my job is talking a lot. I choose based off of my mood – reggae/windows down/outdoorsy/beachy. Likes the energy and feel connection to nature and spirit.

Are there any specific feature of the application you use that are important to you?  
Describe

K: T-mobile Tuesday benefit, commercial free weekends with Pandora. When traveling long or getting stuff down around the house – great perk. In the description, have lyrics for the song. User-friendly and press one button and low maintenance.

Which features are your least favorite and why?

K: commercials are annoying, does repeat songs a lot. Rarely introduces new music.

How do you think the streaming platforms should interact with the music artists?  
How should they pay/credit them?

K: ads targeted towards concerts and musicains (pandora does this) (not sure if they do it for free), with pandor x amt of times per day – contracts and agreements. Pandor provides links to direct listeners to source and learn more about it

## 2. User 3:

Do you use any music streaming apps? If so, which one(s) and why?

Use spotify for podcasts – at work, can be downloaded at work, apple music is blocked. Use apple music, has a feature with everything in downloaded music replaces with apple music vsn and is non-explicit

What platforms do you listen to music on? Computer? Mobile? Car Radio?

Most of music listening is on computer and phone, sometimes radio on car, stream audio books while driving, apple music when I drive via Bluetooth

Get audiobooks through audible, spotify is more expensive, audible credits are cheaper then the price of the books

Is aware of tidal, has a friend who uses it – used for half a year (Mark)

Describe how you use the music streaming application(s).

When I play video games, put on background. When hanging out with friends will put on playlist

When do you listen to music?

What types of music do you like?

Rap, old time rock, edm, alt rock. Instrumental/classical when want to focus, less distracting. Hanging rap/hip hop/dance for drinking and socializing, video games – rap albums/ background music. Mood driven when put on music. Task driven music selection, at work words can be distracting, so depends what doing at the time

What is important to you as a music listener?

Accessibility is big – at work don't have wifi, have to have it downloaded. When hanging with friends, like to find other's playlists like friends playlist – share music. We'll go on spotify, use public/shared playlists...or build a playlist together for certain events and everyone can add songs. Social functions, one of the best functions

Are there any specific feature of the application you use that are important to you?

Describe

I really like on spotify – see what friends are listening to at the time. A way to talk about music with friends and see what they like. Apple doesn't have that social aspect of that, gets more out of spotifys services.

Why both? – have iphone, apple does a lot to integrate apple music into their platforms – have a lot of downloaded music there, convenient and familiar way to access music. Out of habit. Intuitive – not the best service

Which features are your least favorite and why?

I have free version of spotify – difficult to maneuver in app, can shuffle but cant scroll to shuffle

Apple music – difficult to integrate stuff from library and they play non-explicit version, itunes doesn't fully integrate into apple music. Cant add stuff from apple music into library, frustrating – integration only for iPhone users, clunky for non apple users

How do you think the streaming platforms should interact with the music artists?

How should they pay/credit them?

Artists in the last 10-15 years, sharing services can be popular but not make a lot of money. Artists should get paid equitably for the share of business they bring. Not sure how. You as a consumer don't want to rip the artists off...tough though because they are designed to make money for the company..landscape has changed. I have spotify free and gf has family plan. I like to consume the art but don't want to pay the premium. But will buy an album I really like.

### 3. Users 4 (R), 5 (M), 6 (C):

Do you use any music streaming apps? If so, which one(s) and why?

M: I don't use a lot of streaming music, purchase from iTunes and play it. I have used Pandora, but deleted. Do have Spotify and SoundCloud. Why I use them – most people use streaming services so if people want to share they link to that so I have them to listen. I listen to diverse selection and each one has a different collection.

Rachael: I only listen to Spotify – main reason it recommends music to me. Tells me if artists have new music out, and don't have social media. I don't have a diverse music palette. All in one place, lazy

C: yes – Spotify because I'm a sheep. Because it's the only one I'm aware of didn't know others.

What platforms do you listen to music on? Computer? Mobile? Car Radio?

R: that's where it gets complicated, we have fam acct \$15, have separate profiles. Listen on my phone, speaker in house via Matt's comp or phone – so sometimes listen via his phone so it's his playlist. Sometimes make playlists together, he has a lot of lo-fi music. All about outsourcing finding of music. Will listen to Matt's to find music. Make music loud enough so dogs don't hear outside noises. Do listen in car as well

M: I exclusively listen on phone, and Bluetooth.

C: phone, car, 2% of time off of desktop

Describe how you use the music streaming application(s).

When do you listen to music?

C: cleaning, driving, doing work on a computer – excel spreadsheets, laundry. No particular reason, but extra stimulation to stay in the groove

R: a lot during work, cant listen to podcasts anymore, put music on as background music. Like the stimulation and block out noises don't want to hear. And stress relief thing in the car, angry music in the car. It helps to reset, sometimes listen to petty taylor swift petty boys ....podcasts, used to have separate app when had iphone, on android didn't find another app so use spotify now.

C: spotify have premium content that others don't....american hysteria – cant get through android antenna pod...so will listen on there

R: some are spotify exclusive

M: about the same rach and c said, do listen when I exercise (though not often). Do listen when im bullet journaling. most the time because need background music and to block out things. at work need to be listening to something, desks are close and some people are loud

What types of music do you like?

M: I mostly listen to kpop, anime (genre in Japan,), jrock, indie, post hardcore, ...no taylor swift for me

R: looking at my current playlist, 6 hours long...tswift, general pop (one dir, lizzo), a little bit of indie (walk the moon), irish punk, megan the stallion, baby metal. Japanese plaid skirt girl screamo

C: im not trying to be goofy, sad white boys, people like everything everything, few name brands, punk, ive been into acoustic guitar, nature folk, steampower draft indie with robot gimmick, British guys, soundtrack from anime and games, composers – max grifter/neo-classical,, songs about pelicans don't worry about it

What is important to you as a music listener?

C: accessibility, the thing I want is obscure and want to be able to find it. Ill just go to youtube

M: its important to me that if im using a streaming app, if I can have it locally/not connected to the internet. If im using a streaming service and artist/song/album gone, sways my opinion if I should buy it.

R: stuff not being available, jay z made tidal couldn't have beyonces song it. Tswift had an issue, prince music not on spotify. Makes it more of a conflict using spotify. If there was another platform that promotes new artists/extensive library then id switch.

Are there any specific feature of the application you use that are important to you?  
Describe

M: not that I can think of....most allow to share playlists. Though don't share with a lot.

C: I really like spotify as a discovery tool. You like this heres this artists radio, something similar to broaden horizons. I like most recent part, heres the 6 most recent playlists/categories for quick access. Playlist feature of course. Unwrapped, fun to go back and see what you were listening to 2020 was all hamilton

Which features are your least favorite and why?

M: if I use spotify or pandora free version, I have to listen to random other songs that I don't like in there. For non-streaming, like itunes, written in 1700s and cant sync music between devices, faster to copy paste. Making playlists or moving. I want you to know I have mac, and itunes just as bad as windows.

C: split bag, spotify offers a lot of stuff im not into, like morning playlists – news + pods + music in all playlists....would love to see one where I can remove bloat features, customize it to myself. Spotify seems to listen to me despite not having access to my microphone. I prefer older style interface, basic bitch. Spotify differentiating them by adding bloat features. Morning commute hate it. Turn off new shit would set them apart.

How do you think the streaming platforms should interact with the music artists?  
How should they pay/credit them?

R: I like how spotify, I thought one of the top paying per listen. Buying direct obviously is most. Spotify pricing model...should get paid for people listening to it, ads or listening.

C: It is distressing, to look at artists and got like no money from Spotify. A lot goes into making art then we are willing to pay. Co-fi, Patreon, pay small amount to people. Tidal could distinguish, build in a co-fee feature put money on my account could allocate to artists you're listening to – tips based on songs. Pay-as-you-go. Allocate based on what I'm seeing and liking, makes platforms attracted to artists and promoting to people.

M: don't know much about how streaming pays....but I have thought about if I purchase songs by iTunes how much do they get vs listening on platform.

Would love to pay for songs I know are less popular.

#### **4. Users 7 (S), 8 (N):**

Do you use any music streaming apps? If so, which one(s) and why?

N: I solely use Spotify, mainly got into it was free and easy to navigate, stuck with it since it works for me

S: I use Spotify, used to use Apple Music because some artists preferred on there. Spotify has podcasts I enjoy, spitting chinklets, Joe Rogan, that sort of stuff, easy to navigate. In college got it, cheap to use. Used to use Apple Music

What platforms do you listen to music on? Computer? Mobile? Car Radio?

S: I use my computer often with phone, through Bluetooth speaker in car, car doesn't have aux. my Spotify linked to Google Home and put it on in the morning. Plays liked song playlist.

N: I primarily use my phone, sometimes computer. Always usually Bluetooth headphones. Don't have a car. I have a clock radio in my room, but stopped using that, now transitioning back to clock radio. Sometimes with using streaming, I stick to songs I know/used to and felt repetitive and clock radio will play new songs and I



don't have to think about it. More mindless. I like hearing people talk in the morning. I have more energy to put thought at end of day.

Describe how you use the music streaming application(s).

When do you listen to music?

N: listen at work a lot, do solo work – throw on headphones and watch a show/listen to music for 4-6 hours. Put on music when getting ready to set a mood to transition from work to pumped to go out. In social settings, motivation is social cohesion, something to talk about – who we like and recommendations. Provides background noise when nothing else in the background. Music in the shower. Typically don't listen to it on walks, listen to podcasts. When working out will listen to music. Listen to podcasts.

S: when doordashing, driving, working out, walk on treadmill (listen to podcasts), partying with friends, when trying to get hyped up. Motivation to get hyped up or sad will listen based on moods. Also listen to podcasts on spotify – some only have deals with spotify.

What types of music do you like?

S: rap is my main, rock, edm, nostalgia, indie, dance, hip hop, I dabble into many genres...mostly rock and rap

N: rock, rnb, rap, pop music, alternative 104.5

What is important to you as a music listener?

N: either music is getting me in a mood or im in a mood and I can find music based on that. User friendly-ness of the app, has become easier to use over time. Prioritizes music you listen to. It makes it easy to listen to. I do pay for premium now, not having ads since they ruin the mood.

S: ease of use. Like when I like a song, it goes right into a playlist it suggests other artists. No ads, want to choose my song. I have premium.

Are there any specific feature of the application you use that are important to you?  
Describe

N: I always get a lot of excitement with spotify wrapped, and each year they come up with different themes, ad free aspect. You can have collaborative playlists to share with others.

S: the like feature is awesome, shared playlists and invite people and you can invite people to add songs to the queue. Fade songs into each other, itll start your next song 10secs before to fade it. Spotify wrapped. I like how it makes me a playlst if I want to discover new songs with different mixes. Love it when they track my data.

Which features are your least favorite and why?

N: when I didn't have premium, I found myself not using the app it was more annoying then helpful. I don't like when I get to the end of a playlist, itll try to show me new music and venture off, I want to listen to my playlist

S: I cant think of any. Google maps integration, when you have the directions itll pause your podcast when google interrupts the player. More compatibility in between apps or if they worked better together. Any features? Sound cloud has freestyles/unreleased music. Love spotify.

How do you think the streaming platforms should interact with the music artists?  
How should they pay/credit them?

N: I definitely agree with getting paid by number of listens, like royalties. I think spotify could do better with promoting small artists. They have a big staff creating playlists and they could promote them there. They promote a lot of big names but people can easily find those. They might have more interaction with the app. Im always fro supporting local small companies

S: they should ger paid per plays, active monthly listeners, how much business they bring to the platforms. Most should go to the artists and ad rev to spotify. Or pay them for exclusives. Only reason I downloaded apple music was to listen to mac miller.

S: I love spotify, it's a great app. They're the best out of the 3 I've used. Best ui. Apple music is meh, deleted my account cuz spotify has everything. Number 1.

N: in general some things not on spotify, in the past could download own music offline. Can't upload your own stuff/stuff that you own. Have to use different applications to listen to that stuff.

## 5. User 9:

Do you use any music streaming apps? If so, which one(s) and why?

On tidal 2-3 months.

Spotify is top – first streaming app I used. My music listening habits, informed by the interface and comfortable. Spotify exclusives – enjoy that – they have artists come into their office and do set/song and release it on their page.

Subscriber to sound cloud, use it for edm/electronic. The amt on sound cloud – lot of remixes and cool stuff that's not on spotify.

Apple Music – leveraging free trials, like exploring diff envs. Like apple's ecosystem. Apple music on the apple watch, spotify isn't as interactive as apple music. Full integration would be nice with spotify.

What platforms do you listen to music on? Computer? Mobile? Car Radio?

Most of the time streaming on phone, listen in car, have spotify car play. Bluetooth. Have receiver and Bluetooth on tv list on apple tv. Apple tv has apple music, the interface is nice. You can get your music library, auto starts playing when you connect to your speaker, kinda annoying

Describe how you use the music streaming application(s).

When do you listen to music?

Music is, adhd and I need music to calm. Nice to have in background, any situation when I can. Sometimes when running can be challenging to listen while running. Driving and exploring new music. When cutting the grass. More mindless, can get lost in thoughts and easy to explore. Also use spotify for podcasts.

What types of music do you like?

Main 3 – hip hop, alt, indie, electronic/dance music. My habits, spotify playlist 70-80 hours all music I listen to. If I feel a certain way ill explore. My favorite feature is discovery weekly – train the algo, good results. Happy with it. Mixes sometimes cool, mix of ones I listen to and new ones. Train the algo by listening...playlist took a lot of work and focus on that and discover weekly knows history. So many playlists – some specific to genre, less edm since that's on sound cloud.

What is important to you as a music listener?

Availability – like if artistis have exclusives on certain platforms, tswift only apple for awhile

Interface – I want to move through the env quickly, don't want to waste time figuring out.

Tidal – the main reason I liked it – sound quality, more tiers then spotify. Spotify is mulling the idea but don't have it. I had weird experiences with the app that turned me off. That was 2 years ago. Like the business model – the artists – they get all of the earnings from the streams on their platform. In my time, found a service that transfers music between services and had trouble, the queue had trouble. It looks nice but the usability of it.

Are there any specific feature of the application you use that are important to you?

Describe

Music quality – definitely why I play for sound cloud, can download and don't have to worry about being in service – in app only

Downloading

I like that I can put my playlists into folders on spotify, cant do that

Which features are your least favorite and why?

Sound clouds ui is engaging but I just want to go into my library

Spotify – its easier to explore. Nothing glaring about spotify that turns off.

Any that you wish they had?

Apple music – better algo, I don't have strong implementations to sound cloud

Spotify nothing off the top of my head. They have audiobooks now. Audible because of the pricing, because of the credits.

How do you think the streaming platforms should interact with the music artists?

How should they pay/credit them?

They should do their due diligence and music artists should be credited properly.

Tidal – artists get what are due to them. Definitely willing to pay more money if the interface offered it.

Spotify is the gold standard. The availability of audio mediums, they offer a lot for their users. Music nerd, I like you can read the lyrics.

I like in shazam, you can add music from it to the playlists directly.

Apple music is more rigid, your in your files. I like neat and order but spotify has added the spice.

The local files – music that's been downloaded can also be in your apple music. More complex in spotify.