

Spotify

Infrastructure and Affordances



includes paid promotion (not)

Explaining media jargon

Affordances (in the context of psychology):

- J J Gibson (*The ecological approach to visual perception*, 1977): “*The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill*”.
- Positive or negative (can be enabling or constraining)
- Also depends on the ability of organism (“*relative to the animal*”).
- Neither subjective nor objective, or can be both.
- Concept of ‘niche’ (Affordances may be present for only one individual or a group of individuals but not for others- not merely materialistic, depends on interaction)
- Later used in cognitive science by Donald Norman (*Psychology of Everyday Things*, 1988) (door handle example)

Affordances (in the context of media):

- What a particular technology/medium/platform allows you to do more efficiently or do in the first place.
- William Gaver came up with technology affordances in 1991 with HCI - difference between perception and hidden affordances
- Social affordances (the affordance of a social media platform is its interactivity)
- High level and low level affordances
- Ambiguity - Nagy and Neff talk about the inability of the term
- Came up with the notion of “imagined affordances”
- Seeing platforms as environments (Gavers buttons on screen)

Infrastructure:

- Allows us to recognise the action potential of a technology
- We need a certain amount of social/technological/economic/educational infrastructure for an affordance
- Infrastructure is the reason why affordances are not objective/not generalisable.
- There is no access to media without infrastructure
- Control over infrastructure wields more power than ownership of media (BSNL, IT industry in BLR, Jio, role of govt and increasing private role)
- Driven by commercial interests (in most cases, today at least)
- Controls content to a certain extent

History of listening to music

(How did people listen to music before?)

- Radio, television
- The days of cassettes, CDs, vinyls are over (although vinyls are still considered cool)
- Music channels on TV (my after school VH1 and 9XM runs)
- Downloads from iTunes (not so popular as it had to be paid for)
- (illegally) downloading from websites on the internet- my number one sources being the websites songspk and musicpleer.
- Use of USBs and MP3s despite having YouTube



Music Streaming

- In a technological sense, the term streaming refers to a data transferring process in which the simultaneous transmission and reproduction of a file is made possible without producing a permanent copy of the file on the device of the user.
- What have music streaming services contributed to the music industry?
- Significant shift from owning music to accessing it.
- Solution to illicit downloading(?)

Who are the contenders?

- Apple music, Amazon music
- Gaana, Jio Saavn
- YouTube
- Certain artists aren't on spotify
- Content in regional languages is limited
- So why spotify?

**Finding the
song on
spotify**



**It's just a
playlist
named with
the song
name**

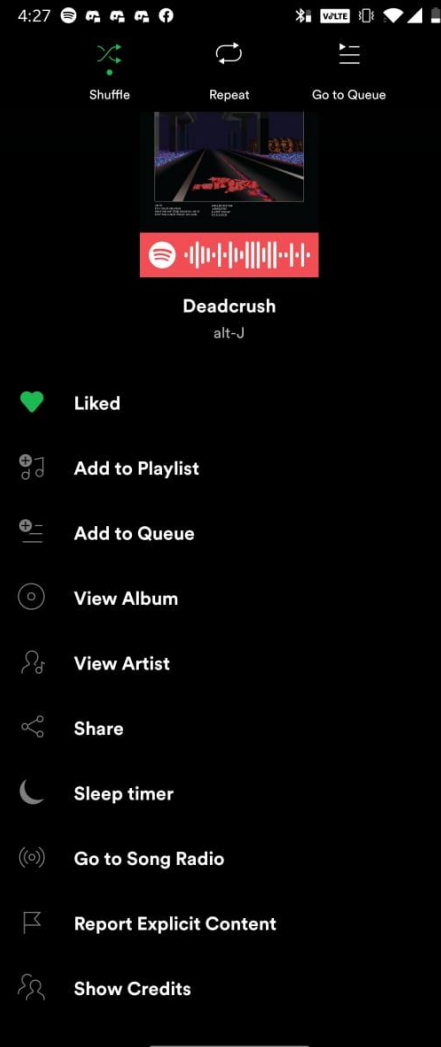
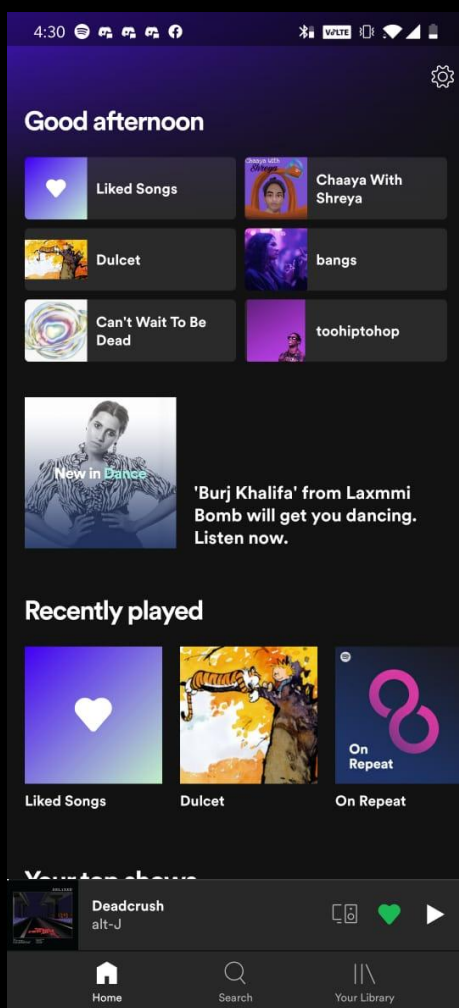


Infrastructure

- Electricity - includes transmission towers and cables from power plants
- A device with a functioning speaker system/ earphones or headphones
- Access to internet - includes functioning servers
- An e-mail ID (or Facebook or Google account)
- A certain degree of literacy (and digital literacy)
- Leisure

Affordances

- To stream music/audio by artists across the world - allows you to play, pause, skip, search
- Play albums, podcasts
- Create playlists, curates playlists, collaborative playlists
- Cross platform sharing
- Viewing lyrics and Genius notes
- Social interaction by following your friends and artists, listening to their playlists.
- Desktop app: Friend activity (my personal favourite)
- Premium users: Ad free listening, enhanced audio quality and group sessions, downloading music



4:26

PLAYING FROM YOUR LIBRARY
Liked Songs

RELAXER

Deadcrush
by alt-J

WhatsApp

Instagram Stories

Facebook

Twitter

SMS

Copy Link

More

Arziyan
Javed Ali

अर्ज़ियाँ सारी मैं चेहरे पे लिख के लाया हूँ
तुम से क्या माँगू मैं
तुम खुद ही समझ लो
मौला मौला मौला मेरे मौला (या मौला मौला)
मौला मौला मौला मेरे मौला
मौला मौला मौला मेरे मौला
मौला मौला मौला मौला
मौला मौला मौला मौला
दरारें-दरारें हैं माथे पे मौला
मरम्मत मुकद्दर की कर दो मौला, मेरे मौला
तेरे दर पे झुका हूँ, मिटा हूँ, बना हूँ
तेरे दर पे झुका हूँ, मिटा हूँ, बना हूँ
मरम्मत मुकद्दर की कर दो मौला
मरम्मत मुकद्दर की कर दो मौला
जो भी तेरे दर आया, झुकने जो सर आया
मस्तियाँ पिए सबको, झूमता नज़र आया
जो भी तेरे दर आया, झुकने जो सर आया
मस्तियाँ पिए सबको, झूमता नज़र आया
प्यास लेके आया था, दरिया वो भर लाया

0:03 8:39

10:38

Listening on
This phone

Select a device

DESKTOP-8TIF825

In a group session **BETA**

Pick what to play and control the music together.

SEE LISTENERS

END SESSION

- Platform for uploading their work (has to be paid for, except for podcasts)
- Source of income for artists/record labels: contracted royalties, 52% off the revenue per stream goes to the label (more than that of YouTube)
- Exposure through algorithms
- The algorithm for data crunching-listening activity, immense power to the app (hidden affordance)
- To advertisers: the infamous spotify ads, the duality of the ads- primary source of monetization, based on content behaviour.



When a Spotify ad talks about how annoying Spotify ads are:



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The end.