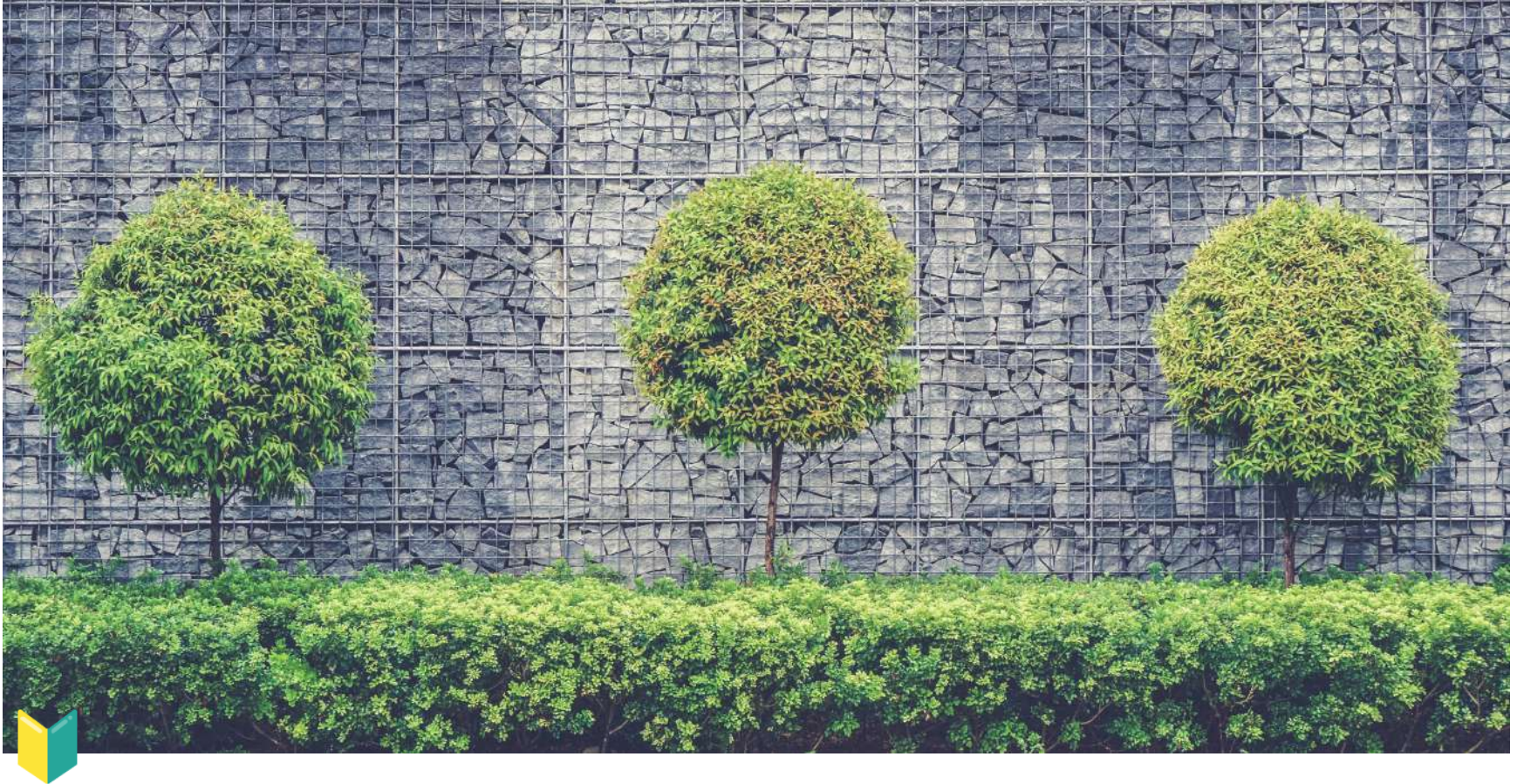




Assignment - 1: Phase III

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Step 0: JTBD Check

Before moving onto any solutions, feature enhancement or innovation lets try to answer a few questions based/inspired by **JTBD Framework** just to make sure I am on the correct path and **solving for the right problem**.

If I am able to answer these few questions without guessing or reverting to any ideas, solutions or features then it is safe to say that the problem is very well understood and what I stated in the previous phase's end is the true-final crystallized and well-framed problem statement.

1. What job is the user really trying to accomplish ?
2. Who is doing it, and what matters to them in that moment ?
3. When and where are they facing this struggle ?
4. What's the real cost of not solving it ?

Answers -

1. Now, for a loyal free user → after a certain amount of time spotify becomes an important part of life to whom they have given a lot of their time and attention; an app which they have admired and used a lot since quite a few years atleast. This feels like a good amount of commitment to them and it is very obvious from a human point of view to have a psychological need of getting atleast something back from a relationship in which he/she has invested a great deal of time. This raises the key issue of ads acting as interruptions after a certain period of time which initially weren't as much of a big problem as it seems now. Even in statements obtained from surveys and interviews — I found people are constantly complaining about the ***"pattern of ads"*** as well. This was found a lot among loyal free users.

In a nutshell -

"The job user is trying to get accomplished is obtaining a feeling of comfort by the means of music. through a platform which they have made an essential part of their life now."

2. Now the answer 1 pretty much gives the answer for this question as well. Who = loyal free users. What matters = comfort, escape from worldly problems and hence any interruption ruins their purpose of seeking peace/comfort through the platform.

Conclusion so far -

This feels more like now an expectation mismatch after unconscious habit formation.

3. When and where = no particular specific time and place in this context , can be in any of the random daily workflow depending on user's situation mentally and physically.
4. The cost of not solving this particular problem is - gradual decrease in engagement from the free user base which could very slowly & over a long period of time cause the free user base to completely vanish, hence, also breaking the conversion cycle of free → premium users which usually take place after habit formation after a lot of time → and finally, this would saturate the premium user base as well causing the number of users to stabilize and cease the growth of revenue very gradually with time.



Net JTBD:

When I desire to listen to music either in background or intentionally on any random day in my life in order to achieve a mental node I desire a smooth emotional and cognitive flow and interaction without any friction.

Now, actually things have taken a different turn - I won't need to rigorously study and understand the nuances of revenue model to think about the solutions (which was the situation beforehand) - but rather will only need an idea about it.

Clarified Problem Statement :

Long-term free Spotify users develop a sense of ownership over their listening sessions, but the platform's forced and unpredictable interruptions (ads and playback restrictions) remove perceived control over the session, leading to gradual disengagement and eventual drop-off.

It is important to note that we need to treat and find the solutions for reducing disengagement among the loyal free users. As if this is treated, then the 'drop-offs' won't occur.

Now, when we talk about the various restrictions in spotify for a free user they are as follows :

1.) ads, 2.) smart shuffle default, 3.) no queue control, 4.) skip limit(6 per hour), 5.) no offline/download option, 6.) lower audio quality (~160kbps)

Let's categorize them based on a broader term

S.No.	Issue	Control Type
1.)	Ads	Continuity Control
2.)	Smart Shuffle Default/ No queue control/ Skip limit	Sequence/Planning Control
3.)	Lower Audio Quality	Quality Control
4.)	No offline save feature	Accessibility Control

Out of these 4 categories → it is the sequence/planning control which causes the maximum disengagement by interrupting user flows the most logically and developing that feeling of 'not being valued by the platform' the most → hence, we have successfully reduced the scope of our problem.



Final Problem Statement :

How to reduce disengagement of loyal free users by resurrecting ownership via a new feature/updates 'majorly' referenced to sequence-planning controls in Spotify?

Step 1: Brainstorming Solutions

S.No.	Idea	Category
1.)	Introduce a "Loyalty Music Mode" for our selected user base - shown as a perk of being loyal to the platform (3 months provision) : - Toggle availed between smart shuffle and shuffle (removes smart shuffle default). 6 skips upgraded to 9 skips per hour. - Previous song button is activated - but it will be counted as a skip as well if used.	High Confidence
2.)	Provide 'Switch to Video' option for 2 videos a day for loyal free users - show this as a loyalty perk.	Low Confidence
3.)	Avail them for three trials of 'Eat my Playlist' feature after they have listened to 1500+ minutes in a month.	Low Confidence
4.)	Introduce a 'Flappy Bird' or 'Google Dinosaur' or 'Whack a Mole' gamification feature for playlist where each time user crosses 100m mark a new song from the playlist plays.(Same model - available for premium users and listening based reward for free users)	Moonshot
5.)	Form Partnerships with game-applications specifically to promote 'playable ads' on the app so users may feel interested even in ads at time + those games will promote Spotify as well.	Low Confidence
6.)	Form a Partnership with Instagram/YouTube where Spotify uses your song likeliness/ preferred genres data and provide you with reels/shorts recommendation on those platforms → 3 times a month for loyal free users.	Moonshot
7.)	Advertisement Break Warning : Before an ad plays, Spotify shows a small message like: "Ad break after this song (20 sec)"	Low Confidence
8.)	Session Anchor - At the start of a listening session, free loyal users can choose - a specific song or a "mood anchor" track	High Confidence

Step 2: Prioritization

RICE (Reach, Impact, Confidence, Effort) Method - Quantifies solutions based on how many users it affects (Reach), how strongly (Impact), how certain you are (Confidence), and how hard it is (Effort).

RICE Score = (Reach * Impact * Confidence)/Effort

All scores are on the scale of 1-5.

- Reach - is approximately was percent of users of the free-loyal user base can be affected by this feature.
- Impact - is how effectively does the solution solve the user pain point.

- Confidence - is my confidence in the problem being validated and backed by my own user research.
- Effort - is simply the resources/effort required to build that solution.

S.No.	Solution	Reach	Impact	Confidence	Effort	RICE Score	Priority	Notes
1.)	Loyalty Music Mode	5	5	4	3	33.33	P0	A smart workaround - keeps monetization principles intact and at the same time gives user some sense of being valued by the platform.
2.)	Twice a day Switch to Video Perk	3	2	2	2	6.00	P6	Needs A/B Testing initially.
3.)	Three trials on Eat my Playlist	3	2	3	2	9.00	P4	Low-impact, needs validation.
4.)	Introduce New Arcade Gamification Model	4	4	2	4	8.00	P5	High impact but operationally heavy.
5.)	Playable Ads	4	3	3	3	12.00	P3	A probable engager but needs validation and efforts on collaboration.
6.)	Partnership with Insta/YouTube	3	4	2	5	1.20	P7	Conceptual moonshot, needs social data for validation.
7.)	Ad Break Warning	5	3	3	2	22.50	P2	Low-effort effective solution that increases predictability (basically just a notification).
8.)	Session Anchor	4	5	4	3	26.67	P1	Based on insight validated by user research, provides smooth emotional flow.

Step 3: Wireframes

FigJam boards depicting mockups for P0 and P1 -

Aa Name	🕒 Created
0 Loyalty Music Mode - P ₀ solution	@February 22, 2026 1:44 AM
1 Session Anchor - P ₁ solution	@February 22, 2026 1:44 AM

Step 4: Metrics

S.No.	Metric Type	Metric Name	Definition	Why It Matters ?
1.)	Key Metric	Session Duration	% increase in an average music session length before and after the introduction of features	Tells us about improved/stagnant/reduced engagement
2.)	Secondary Metric	Click through rate for - Activate Now (P ₀) , Yes and Set Another Song (P ₁)	% of users who click the buttons embedded in the new features	Tells us about feature adoption
3.)	Guardrail Metric	CTR (maybe later/skip for now)	% of users who click the buttons embedded in the new features	Tells us about users’ preference in regards to feature usage
4.)	Guardrail Metric	Early-Session Exits/Drop-offs	Number of times a user exits the app only after a few minutes of session time or abruptly after a few skips or ads.	Guides the business decision to keep or remove the features based on data

Step 5: Pitfalls and Mitigations

S.No.	Assumption at Risk	Failure Mode	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation	Detection Signal	Containment/Rollback
1.)	Users get too much comfortable with the Loyalty music mode.	This habit forming might even irritate users more once the validity is over for three months and churn them out even quickly.	High	Medium	Once the validity of loyalty mode is over - the platform should at random times still offer users a few increased skips or use of previous CTA so that, the feature feels gradually taken away instead of a quick change.	Increased number of drop-offs	E-mail and contact the users to remind about their emotional bond developed with the platform for years and try to draw them back.
2.)	Users are not patient enough to read the banner.	They do not click activate now/ maybe later is clicked every time.	Low	Medium	Design Teams should keep backup banners and product design strategies ready for such situation.	CTR	It won't harm the business as users continue their normal flow (but still time/resources invested goes to waste) → no rollback required.
3.)	Premium Users won't get affected by this.	They might feel this is unfair to them → makes them irritated and drop-off at times.	Medium	Low	Make their home-space even more personalized by using data garnered over years and for a few days invest more tech resources to make their listening even more intuitive.	Decreased Engagement from premium user base + Relevant Feedbacks Complaints	Give them a small quarter monthly wrapped and improved insights in the sound capsule feature - to make the the experience more personalized and in turn make them feel more valued.

Step 6: PRD

Link - [click here](#)