

PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT (PRD)

1. Overview

1.1 Background

Through user interviews (4 users) and survey responses (n=14), we identified a consistent issue:

Active music explorers disengage from discovery playlists because they don't understand why songs are recommended and feel they lack control over the algorithm.

Discovery playlists (e.g., Discover Weekly) are core engagement drivers for Spotify. However:

- Users skip early songs frequently
- Users abandon playlists after 2–3 poor recommendations
- Users revert to old playlists instead of exploring

This weakens Spotify's personalization advantage and risks long-term retention.

2. Problem Statement

Active music explorers struggle to trust Spotify's discovery playlists because they do not understand why songs are recommended and cannot intentionally influence recommendations. This leads to:

- High skip rates
 - Lower playlist completion
 - Reduced discovery engagement
 - Increased fallback to familiar content
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3. Goal

Primary Goal:

Increase engagement with discovery playlists among Active Music Explorers.

Target:

+20% increase in discovery playlist completion rate within 3 months of launch.

4. Target Users

Primary Persona: Active Music Explorer

Profile

- Uses Discover Weekly regularly
- Intentionally seeks new artists
- Saves songs selectively
- Skips quickly when disappointed

Pain Points

- "I don't know why this song is here."
 - "I can't tell how Spotify learns from me."
 - "It feels random sometimes."
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5. Proposed Solution

We will build a **Discovery Trust Layer** consisting of three features:

1. **Why This Song? (Explainability Layer)**
2. **Discovery Mode Toggle (Safe ↔ Explore)**
3. **Improve My Recommendations (Guided Tuning Flow)**

These work together to improve transparency + control.

6. Detailed Feature Requirements

6.1 Feature 1: "Why This Song?"

Objective

Provide contextual explanation for recommended tracks to increase trust and engagement.

User Story

As a discovery playlist listener,
I want to understand why a song was recommended,
So that I feel confident in giving it a chance.

Functional Requirements

1. A "Why?" icon appears beside every track in discovery playlists.
 2. On tap, a bottom sheet modal opens.
 3. Modal displays 2–3 contextual signals:
 - "Because you listened to [Artist Name]"
 - "Matches your high-energy rock preference"
 - "Similar to songs you saved recently"
 4. Two feedback buttons:
 -  More like this
 -  Less like this
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Non-Functional Requirements

- Modal must load within <300ms.
 - Explanations must be simplified and human-readable.
 - No raw ML jargon.
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Data Requirements

- Access to similarity clusters
 - Genre tagging
 - User listening history
 - Mood/energy classification
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UX Considerations

- Minimal UI clutter
 - Optional interaction
 - Clear exit path
 - Accessible design
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6.2 Feature 2: Discovery Mode Toggle

Objective

Allow users to adjust novelty level of recommendations.

User Story

As a music explorer,

I want to control how experimental my discovery playlist is,

So I can reduce randomness when I prefer safer options.

Functional Requirements

1. Toggle placed at top of discovery playlist:
SAFE ←————→ EXPLORE
 2. Default position: Slightly toward SAFE
 3. Slider adjusts novelty weighting parameter:
 - SAFE = 70% known similarity
 - EXPLORE = 50% similarity, 50% novel content
 4. Changes apply to next playlist refresh (not retroactively)
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Constraints

- Cannot break recommendation integrity
 - Must maintain minimum diversity score
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Data Requirements

- Adjustable novelty parameter in recommendation model
 - Experiment cohort logging
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6.3 Feature 3: Improve My Recommendations (Guided Flow)

Objective

Provide structured way for users to tune their taste profile.

Entry Points

- Settings → Improve My Recommendations
 - Prompt shown if skip rate exceeds threshold
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Flow

Step 1: "Genres you want more of" (multi-select)

Step 2: "Artists you're tired of" (search + select)

Step 3: "Discovery intensity preference"

Step 4: Confirmation message

Functional Requirements

- Updates personalization weights
 - Logs tuning actions
 - Applies changes within 1 playlist cycle
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7. Metrics

Key Metric

Discovery Playlist Completion Rate

Definition: % users who listen to >50% of playlist.

Secondary Metrics

- Song Save Rate (discovery playlists)
 - Skip Rate (<10 sec)
 - Playlist Revisit Rate
 - "Why?" button engagement rate
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Guardrail Metrics

- Overall session length
- Negative feedback rate

- Help center complaints about recommendations
 - Diversity index of recommendations
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8. Experimentation Plan

Rollout Strategy

- A/B test 10% cohort
- Control: Current discovery system
- Treatment: Trust Layer enabled

Duration: 4 weeks

Success defined as:

- Statistically significant +10% completion improvement
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9. Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Overwhelming UI	Medium	Progressive disclosure
Low feature adoption	Medium	Nudge tooltips
Explanations feel inaccurate	High	Use simplified signals only
Discovery becomes too narrow	High	Maintain novelty floor

10. Dependencies

- Recommendation engineering team
 - Data science team
 - Design system update
 - Experimentation platform
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11. Out of Scope

- Conversational AI assistant
- Full algorithm transparency
- Cross-platform redesign
- Podcast recommendation