

Week 1: Understanding the Product and Users

Product Chosen: Spotify

1. Product Analysis: What Works vs. What Frustrates Users

What Works Well (User Value)

- **Seamless Continuity:** Spotify resumes playback exactly where users left off, reducing friction and making the experience feel effortless.
- **Strong Personalization:** Long-term listening history powers highly relevant recommendations, making music discovery intuitive and engaging.
- **Social Connection:** Collaborative playlists and Jams turn listening into a shared experience, strengthening user stickiness.
- **Celebration of Identity:** Spotify Wrapped creates a nostalgic, shareable summary of a user's year in music, driving both delight and virality.

What Creates Frustration (User Pain Points)

- **Overwhelming Choice:** A cluttered homepage with overlapping playlists (e.g., “Jump Back In” vs. “Recently Played”) makes navigation harder.
- **Inconsistent Content Surfacing:** Podcasts appear sporadically on the homepage, creating confusion.
- **Redundant Navigation:** Multiple entry points for the same content create noise instead of clarity.
- **Broken Payment Journey:** Users are redirected outside the app for subscriptions and FAQs, disrupting a seamless experience.
- **Feature Cannibalization:** New features like “Sound Capsule” dilute excitement for flagship features like Wrapped.

2. Company Context & Positioning

- **Mission (Official):** *“Unlock the potential of human creativity—by giving a million artists the opportunity to live off their art and billions of fans the opportunity to be inspired by it.”*
- **Observed Strategy:** Expanding beyond music into podcasts, discovery, and social features.
- **Challenge:** This broad ambition risks diluting focus and overwhelming users.

Revenue Streams

- Advertisements (ad-supported tier)

- Paid subscriptions
- B2B partnerships (distribution, licensing)

Differentiation vs. Competitors

- **Spotify:** Standalone platform with a strong personalization and discovery edge.
- **Apple Music:** Ecosystem integration, spatial audio, karaoke features, classical music app (but UI complexity).
- **JioSaavn:** English-focused, limited language support, no podcasts.
- **Amazon Music:** Broad coverage of music + podcasts, simpler UI but fewer advanced features.

3. Reverse Engineering Top 3 Features

1. Spotify Wrapped

- **Problem Solved:** Users want to reflect on their listening habits and celebrate their personal music identity.
- **Why it Works:** Combines nostalgia, personalization, and social sharing to build annual anticipation and viral moments.

2. Pre-Save / Countdown Pages

- **Problem Solved:** Users miss new releases from their favorite artists.
- **Why it Works:** Keeps fans updated, builds hype, and ensures discovery of upcoming releases.

3. Collaborative Playlists (*instead of Lossless for stronger differentiation*)

- **Problem Solved:** Music is often a social activity, but sharing across platforms can be clunky.
- **Why it Works:** Allows friends to co-create playlists, turning listening into a communal and sticky experience unique to Spotify.

4. User Segments

Primary Users: Music & podcast listeners.

Sub-Segments (Archetypes)

1. **Casual Listeners:** Stream trending music, limited engagement with advanced features.
2. **Engaged Music Fans:** Heavy users who curate playlists, explore recommendations, and use Wrapped.

3. **Podcast-First Users:** Treat Spotify as a podcast hub with secondary music usage.
4. **Social Sharers:** Use collaborative playlists and Wrapped primarily for social identity and sharing.

Key Needs & Pain Points

- Centralized access to music & podcasts.
- Easy discovery of relevant content.
- Seamless subscription/payment experience.
- Simple, uncluttered navigation.

5. Top Problem Hypotheses

P1 – Playlist Migration Barrier

- *Hypothesis:* Users switching from other streaming apps feel high friction because they cannot transfer existing playlists, leading to abandonment during onboarding.
- *Why this matters:* Switching costs discourage adoption, giving competitors an edge.

P2 – Broken Subscription Flow

- *Hypothesis:* Users expect seamless in-app payment and FAQ access. Being redirected outside the app frustrates them and risks churn, especially for short-term pack buyers.
- *Why this matters:* Payment friction undermines conversion and retention.

P3 – Overwhelming Interface

- *Hypothesis:* Users feel overwhelmed by redundant playlists and cluttered UI, making content discovery less effective and reducing the perceived value of Spotify's personalization.
- *Why this matters:* A noisy UI dilutes Spotify's core competitive advantage in personalization.