Literature Review

**Spotify: The Addiction**

**Problem Statement**

In today’s world, social media helps connect people from all points of the world. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have changed the way we interact with each other and allow us to stay in touch with our friends, family, and the news. In addition, social media has become an integral part of the music industry. The Swedish digital music streaming service called Spotify has built an empire for music and offers music content for all. Spotify has the potential to play an even larger role in the world of social media by becoming its own platform.

There are many types of social media, from networking websites to mobile applications. Today, people have been experiencing an increasingly popular activity of scrolling through their phones mindlessly and compulsively on these social media apps. From Instagram to TikTok, some social media craze apps create a massive influence on their users’ phone use. (Nugroho) Both of these apps have a community of users that directly message their followers- in app- to share content and amuse each other. (Nugroho) The ability to share posts, videos, and music all in an app make the apps more marketable in how they impact culture. The mobile app and platform Spotify has no limits to running the music industry. Even with their successes, Spotify still lacks the best social experience it could have because of the limited ability to share music within the mobile app. A redesign of the Spotify app
would offer interaction opportunities between users to make it a solid social media platform and a stronger competitor to the rising TikTok app.

TikTok addiction stems from the short clip videos structured in a scrolling flow. (Arantxa, V. V., Patricia, D. C. M., & Tirocchi, S.) With shorter clips, TikTok can entertain the user for enough of their attention span. (Avdeeff, M.) Viral video clips that constantly update show how personalized data allows TikTok to overtake the music industry that music streaming platforms like Apple Music, Soundcloud, and Spotify continue to fight for popularity. (Arantxa, V. V., Patricia, D. C. M., & Tirocchi, S.)

Spotify is the most popular music streaming platform out there. Spotify’s service of over 70 million paid subscriptions exhibits their innovation for music lovers. (Zhang) Also, Spotify boasts over 200 million users. This large user base has given Spotify the perfect audience to create a successful social media platform. Spotify has reached many fan bases and tops the charts for exclusive music and content. However, TikTok is currently giving Spotify a run for its money for trending music. Artists and creators are all dominating on TikTok because of viral video trends. (Avdeeff, M.) Spotify could profit on trends by allowing users to post on their accounts what they are listening to, to share with their followers. By leveraging its current user’s love of music, Spotify could create a social media experience that is tailored to music fans with their favorite musicians. Spotify’s current features, such as curated playlists and personalized recommendations, could be further enhanced to create an engaging social media experience.

On top of providing an engaging music-centric social media experience, Spotify could also provide a platform for independent artists to showcase their music. Social media can be an invaluable tool for aspiring musicians, providing them with a
platform to promote their music and connect with potential fans. As of now, anyone can be an artist but music can only be uploaded by record labels and aggregate services. Competing music streaming service, SoundCloud, allows users to comment, like, and share songs on the social media platform. SoundCloud gives artists the ability to connect with their fan bases, while giving users the ability to be treated both as an artist and listener simultaneously. Through a re-designed Spotify, these musicians could be featured more, giving them more exposure than ever before.

Currently, Spotify followers aren’t as important because there are no fundamental uses other than growing Monthly Listeners count for Artists or for checking out a friend’s playlist on their profile. (Zhanf) The user behavior drives how, “Spotify is a peer-assisted music streaming service...” because of how long people can have music from it playing on and off the app. (Zhang) Since Spotify has transformed the way we listen to music, I plan to make it a way we can connect through music. My focus would be on editing Spotify’s pages for Profile and Artists, and creating a Direct Messaging page. These redesigns would
allow users to really connect with each other and share music.

My process of innovation would start with a concept, development, and design mockups through Figma. Reactions are the main part of business to interact with mobile apps. I am going to allow users to see and react to who they are following and listen too. Spotify already exists so by editing the old design I can use it for A/B testing with Qualtrics. Then, I can define my deliverable with real user interaction to finalize the app. To produce the social media addicting Spotify I would need to use data from Instagram and TikTok to show how trends affect the music industry. (Avdeeff, M.) With social media, comparisons and new app designs to support Spotify’s mission for their users to be a part of their favorite artist’ creativity. Overall, my designing and testing process of sketches, wireframes, and having users give input will create a better version of Spotify with social interactions of friend activity, messaging, and a smarter collaboration of sharing music.

**Literature Review**

Usability and UX come first in the designing process for the Spotify redesign. UX design is becoming increasingly important in Spotify because of the user-centered content strategy. This is because it provides an integral part of the user experience and user value on mobile applications. Effective UX design is essential to the success of Spotify, as it can help to increase user engagement, foster better user experiences, and drive user loyalty. (de Assunção, W. G., & Zaina, L. A. M.) UX design helps to create intuitive user experiences, which makes it easier for users to navigate the service and quickly find what they are looking for.

Good UX design is seen in Spotify’s social media presence through the yearly roundup called “Spotify Wrapped.” This innovation allows users to watch animations of their top artist and most-listened to songs which can later be shared as a graphic
to other social media apps. In my redesign, I allow users to be able to post their Spotify Wrapped to their followers instead of having to go to Instagram or Twitter to share the image. UX design enables the new Spotify to present its services in a more attractive and engaging way on social media, which can lead to increased user engagement. (Jönsson, M.) Additionally, by developing a strong branding for Spotify, the UX and UI design creates a recognizable identity that users will associate with it. This can be helpful for user loyalty and help to differentiate Spotify from its competitors.

Effectively, the innovative UX design makes Spotify more attractive than apps with hard to use functions like playlist curating features. (Besseny, A.) The navigation bar, Home page, and Explore page use colors and fonts that are aesthetically pleasing, as well as creating transitions that make the user feel like they’re in control. (Besseny, A.) It’s also designed to ensure that the app is consistent with the look and feel to fit in with the user’s expectations. (Besseny, A.) The balance of uniform structures and a simple dark interface prevents user frustration and abandonment. Usability involves making sure the app is easy to use, even without technical expertise from the user. This includes having a clear user interface that is straightforward, with well-labeled buttons and menus that make it simple to navigate. Music fans are able to search easily and quickly for songs or artists all in the app. (Siles, I., Segura-Castillo, A., Sancho, M., & Solís-Quesada, R.) Overall, the app has been quick to use and responsive which makes it an essential everyday app.

Spotify needs to implement more social media features into its platform to remain competitive with the likes of TikTok and SoundCloud. This will enable the platform to reach a wider audience, allowing users to more easily discover, share and comment on new music. Additionally, integrating social media into its platform
will enable Spotify to better track user trends and discover what type of music they are most interested in.

The primary reason Spotify needs to implement social media is to increase its visibility and build an engaged audience. By leveraging social media, Spotify is able to connect with its users on a personal level and increase user engagement. (Ding, Y., & Liu, C.) One element of usability and UX is the current trends feature which is led by Spotify’s Wrapped Campaign. The viral annual custom soundtrack displays how the user listened to music. Current trends like this one increase engagements and impressions on the app. (Chandra, Y. U., Christian, L., Juwitasary, H., Atmojo, R. N. P., & Febrianto, W.) Additionally, Spotify can use visual variables to apply UI elements for aesthetics. Designs are key for emotional reactions to grab users’ attention. This element of UX helps delight users when they create custom playlists or heart their favorite songs.

All in all, social media is essential for Spotify to remain competitive with its competitors. To increase its visibility, build an engaged audience, and differentiate itself, Spotify needs to implement social media as part of its overall strategy. Due to the element of factors in UX, which is specifically social. Currently, with the growth of social apps and the effect Spotify has on the music industry, social aspects in the UX design become increasingly important. Spotify keeps up with features that allow them to understand and anticipate users’ needs. Users are able to hop on the app and find a “Daily Mix” designed for the listener and are able to find social media trending songs. This will help Spotify stay ahead of the competition and provide users with an enjoyable experience. Finally, using social media to its advantage will help Spotify keep up with the competition. As TikTok and SoundCloud are increasingly becoming popular, Spotify needs to find ways to differentiate itself. By
leveraging the power of social media, Spotify can stay ahead of the curve by providing users with a unique and engaging experience.

Ultimately, Spotify has the potential to be the next great social media platform. With a large user base and a music-centric experience, it could provide a unique platform for connecting music lovers from all over the world. Additionally, it could provide independent musicians with more exposure than ever before and give fans a new way to connect with their favorite artists. All in all, Spotify has the potential to revolutionize the way we experience music and social media. Finally, having a social media presence will allow Spotify to make it easier for users to connect and collaborate with other users, creating a more engaging and interactive experience.

Results

I created a prototype of Spotify My first wireframes included Discovery page features and a new Social page. In these pages, I was able to create profiles for users to have an Instagram bio feature. Then, I added Your feed and Activity sections for users to interact with their followers. Users could post songs with captions, and also comment and like their music choices. With Social, users could directly message each other.
The second wireframe approach, I finally implemented the send-to-friend features. The concept of sending each other music in the app gave purpose to their followers' interaction to share privately songs they like. The prototype includes a lot of interactions, and I had a lot of fun mocking up music interactions after my own Spotify account. I had a lot of positive feedback for exploring the opportunity of turning Spotify into social media. I hope to continue iterating this project to integrate Spotify Wrapped. I accomplished my main objectives to make Spotify as addicting as TikTok has become. The way I tackled the issue of what Spotify lacked, helped pave the way to designing public feeds and direct message features in the app.

**Final Reflection**

Re-imagining the Spotify mobile user experience was a creative outlet for me to design on Figma. My project was made possible by researching the influence and
impacts that social media apps have on the music industry. Combined with user experience criteria and new visualizations, I was able to make a prototype that saw friends and followers connect with each other in the Spotify app. What went well was fixing the exporting music out of app feature into a Social in app feature. My inspiration came from my college peers’ complaints about too many clicks to send each other a song. I would have liked to get to do A/B testing but with a series of other events I ran out of time. My simple survey and user interviews were efficient enough for quantitative and qualitative data. I had completed other UX testing methods before, but this project was a lot more complex with iterations based on the re-design and recreating Spotify.

My Gantt Chart and Brainstorming Board helped me create solutions from different sides and complete tasks for each step. With a busy schedule this quarter, I had to stay more on task to create my deliverable. In class assignments like the Gantt Chart, formed a task plan that made it a lot easier to follow-up each week on my project. The software Miro had great tools to collect my ideas and build a Brainstorming Board to find the core solutions that I could make possible.

One challenge I had while using Figma was the amount of time it took to build the Spotify User Interface and replicate it with each song or album cover. In the beginning, I had to collect photos from my own Spotify account to incorporate into the re-designed interface. These tasks made me want to add more UX solutions to the re-design. While there are many current app features, users spend too much time trying to find a specific song or artist. My ongoing challenge was to make shortcuts to discover music, send music to each other, and integrate the Social tab-
a new feed and activity features.
Overall, I believe that Spotify as social media would be successful today. The easy to navigate functions would allow users to experience a more fun and improved mobile streaming service. My development of Figma skills and creating Social for Spotify makes the app a more ergonomic digital music platform. I had a great time using Figma and making high and low fidelity wire-frames. Now that the project is completed for class, I plan on making more additions to fully implement social media into Spotify for my portfolio.

Check out my presentation and Figma prototype below:
Senior Project Showcase Presentation:
https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:80265858-609f-31c6-b73b-6a0e553f5d4d

Prototype:
https://www.figma.com/proto/84wetlq9loqoHGeHShgRq5/Spotify-Re-Design?page-id=44%3A6090&amp-id=326-6281&amp-viewport=1625%2C-831%2C1.11&amp-scaling=scale-down&amp-starting-point-node-id=44%3A6997

Bibliography:
