

Persuasive Campaign Proposal: Spotify Wrapped

Porsche Nicole Brown

Kennesaw State University

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Dr. Amanda Weed

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Campaign Overview

Spotify is a music streaming service that began in 2008 and became a popular platform in 2011. The company currently claims a user base of 381 million subscribers across 178 markets (Spotify, n.d.). The platform offers a plethora of music and podcast options under both free and subscription-based service. According to Spotify, the number of their premium subscribers comes in at 172 million.

A unique aspect of the service is that it expands nearly all basic demographics regarding age, ethnicity, cultural tastes, and most income levels. If a user has access to mobile data or internet services, they can utilize Spotify, either by downloading the mobile app or visiting the web player. Users who are unable to afford a premium subscription have access to the service for free. There are also a variety of premium subscription promotions as well, including student and family discounts.

By uploading a diverse amount of content in music and podcasts, Spotify can appeal to nearly all psychographic qualities as well. If a user likes music or

podcasts, then they can use the service. The current largest age range of users for the service ranges from 18 to 54 but even stretches into those in their senior years.

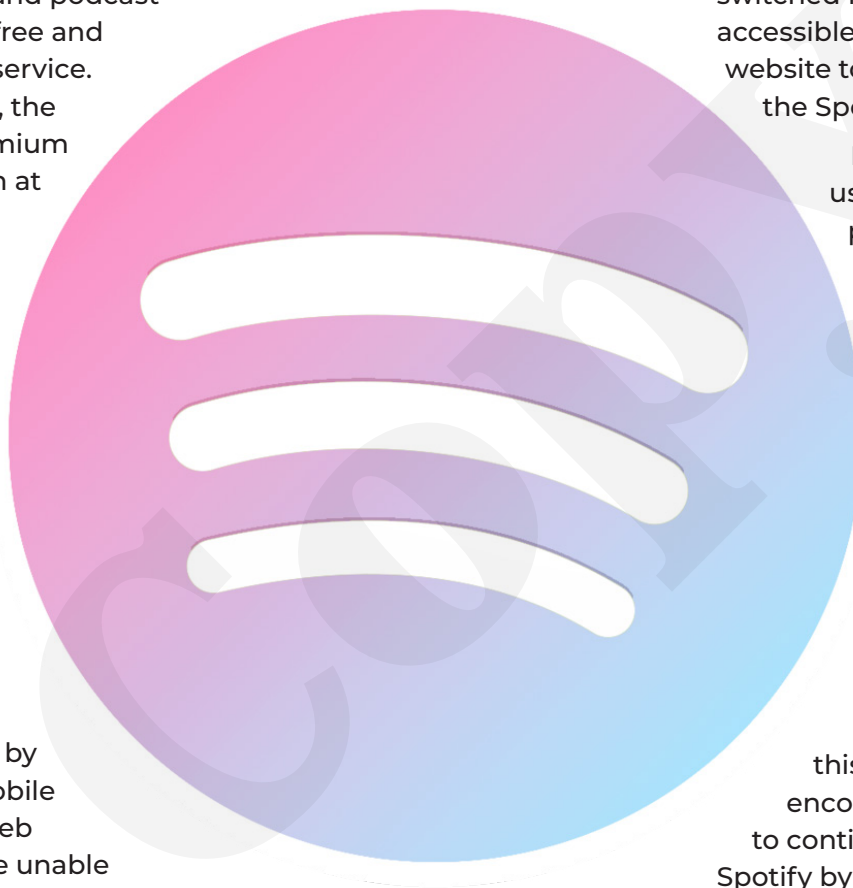
summary of their Spotify listening data through a custom website labelled as the “Year in Review.” Campaign engagement vastly improved beginning in 2019, however, when it was rebranded to Spotify Wrapped. This version switched from being only accessible through a custom website to being integrated in the Spotify app.

Every year in December, users receive custom playlists of their top listening choices for the year as well as a video to share on social media for others to see. This switch allows Spotify to advertise the upcoming release in the app itself as well as subtly offer users a simple way to spread the hype to others.

The beauty of this campaign is that it encourages current users to continue to engage with Spotify by giving them something to look forward to at the end of the year, a way to remember and reflect on the year before moving into the new one. By making these reviews so easily shareable, a second wave of hype is passed on to those who are currently not using the platform, inviting them a glimpse of what they are missing out on. The campaign is a self-feeding loop.

There is almost an equal split between genders as well as between which version of the platform used—web player or app (Hlebowitsh, 2021).

A consistent PR campaign ran by the company began in 2015 offering users a yearly



Message Analysis



How It's Made: YouTube Ad

Spotify released an informational video providing a behind the scenes look on how Wrapped content is created, detailing how the data is collected, summarized, and how the idea was born (Spotify, 2020). On the surface, this seems like an innocuous video without an intent to persuade, however it is a prime example of the two-way asymmetrical model. Although the comments section of the video is turned off, it still allows the organization to engage with viewers through the like and unlike buttons to get an idea of interest.

This particular video was released in April, after the 2019 rebrand of this campaign from Year in Review to Wrapped. By providing this information to the public, Spotify continued to garner interest by explaining their “new” service. This may also be an example of the awareness stage of the sales funnel by providing details to those who do not use the platform about this new perk offered to those who regularly do.

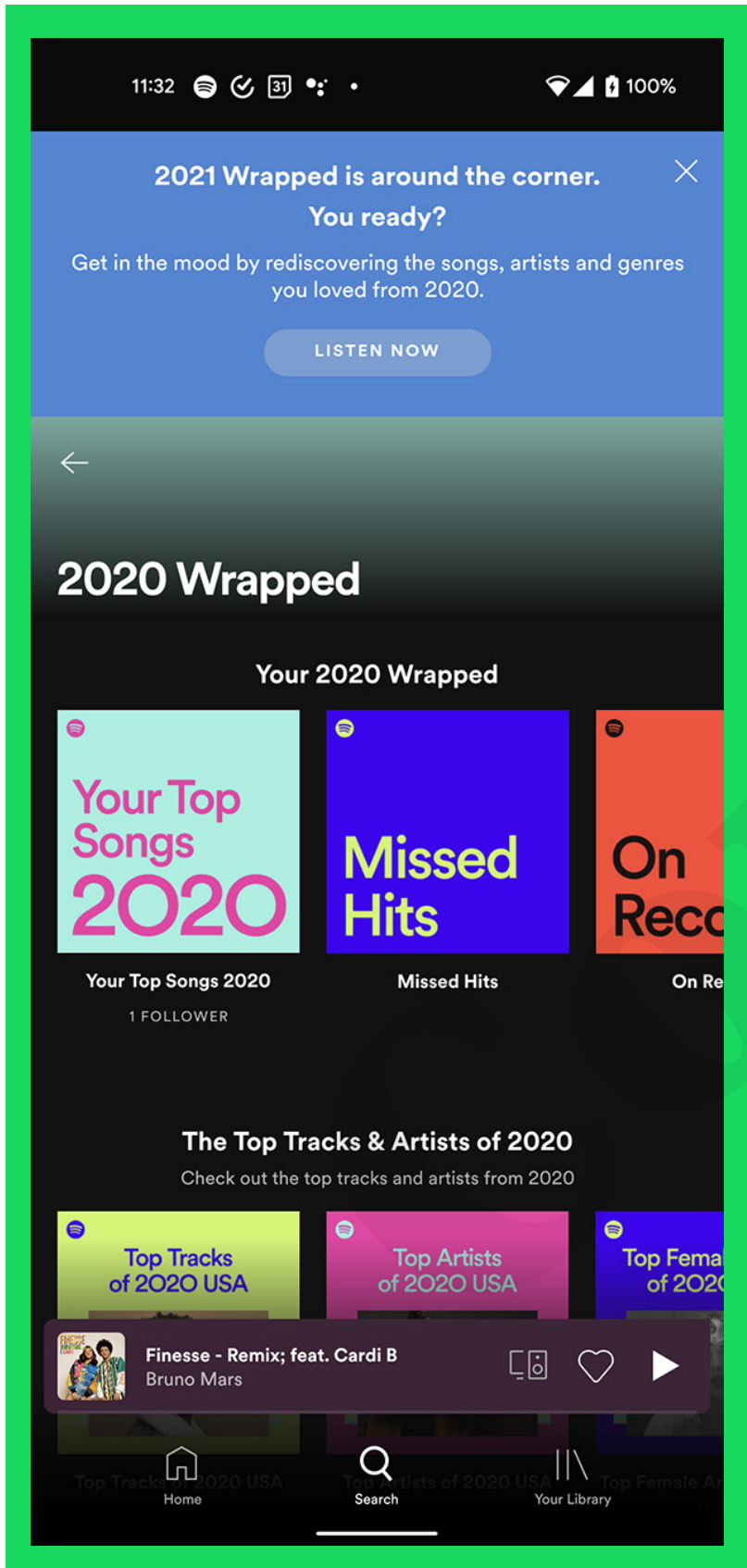
#2020Wrapped: Twitter Ad

With the in-app transition of the Wrapped campaign came the benefit of making each user's individual story easily shareable on their social media. Spotify takes advantage of this each year by encouraging this sharing, especially via Twitter and Facebook Stories. The example provided here is of the 2020 release that spread throughout Twitter using the Spotify promoted hashtag #2020Wrapped.

This ad type is an excellent example of the Elaboration Likelihood Theory, by which it uses social proof to get nonusers or low engagement users to the interest level of the sales funnel. By having a large portion of social media sharing these stories of their individualized year in review, it creates a sense of "everyone else is doing it" which is an extremely powerful method of persuasion.

This is especially important as other streaming platforms start to copy this same concept. While Apple Music may be doing the same thing, the question becomes whether everyone else is sharing the Apple version of a year in review?





2021 Wrapped is Almost Here: In App Ad

Spotify has harnessed the excitement that surrounds the Wrapped campaign and uses it to create hype in expectation of the release for each new year. Per the social judgement theory, the company has identified an anchor point in the collective societal desire for a sense of nostalgia and a need to have a summary or sense of closure for each year. This is especially true for difficult years such as 2020 and 2021. By sticking to this anchor point, Spotify keeps people involved with the service, heavily falling in the latitude of acceptance. Once they established their point, the company has remained consistent with their yearly release which encourages current members to stay and to continue to regularly use the service in anticipation of the next year.

Key Takeaways

Social media integration can utilize social proof as a self-sustaining method of persuasion.

One of the strongest tools that a company has at their disposal in this digital age is the ability to use social media as a never-ending cycle of free advertisement. The FOMO effect, Fear of Missing Out, is a compelling tool for enticing new users, even those who are using similar products such as Apple music in the case of Spotify (Swant, 2019). By integrating social media tools in an easily accessible way that is

intuitive to consumers, a company can harness the power of peer influence to create product led growth. The 2020 transition of Wrapped to exclusive Spotify app availability led to a 20% increase in downloads which could largely be attributed to the consistent sharing of the content among current users (Jain, 2021).

Brand engagement is essential for a successful release of new content.

It isn't enough to generate interest only before and during the release of a new campaign surrounding new content. Companies need to hold on to that interest long after the newness wears off, especially in the case of content that has a consistent periodical release. Two-way asymmetrical or even symmetrical model provides an avenue for the brand to continue to engage with their consumer base in a way that is innocuous and informative for both the company and the stakeholders.

In the context of Spotify Wrapped, the release of an informative YouTube video revealing the behind-the-scenes intricacies of the product gave users a reminder of the rebranded content months after it officially rolled out. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the content of the communication be interesting to the stakeholders. With the YouTube video, Spotify did so by providing a unique insight on how the data they acquire from consumers plays an important role in providing the popular year end summary released (Morgan, 2020).

Closely aligning to the consumer anchor point allows for easy assimilation.

Finally, for seamless integration of new content into consumers lives, it is essential that a company knows their audience and what they will best relate to. The reason why Spotify was and remains successful in their Wrapped campaign is that they've created a readily available form of nostalgia that can be accessed at any time. Users in 2021 can still see their Wrapped playlist from 2019, allowing

them to have a point of connection with their past selves (Morgan, 2020). By latching on to a collective desire, a company can take advantage of the latitude of acceptance which allows their campaign to be easily accepted and persuasive.

Campaign Content Proposal

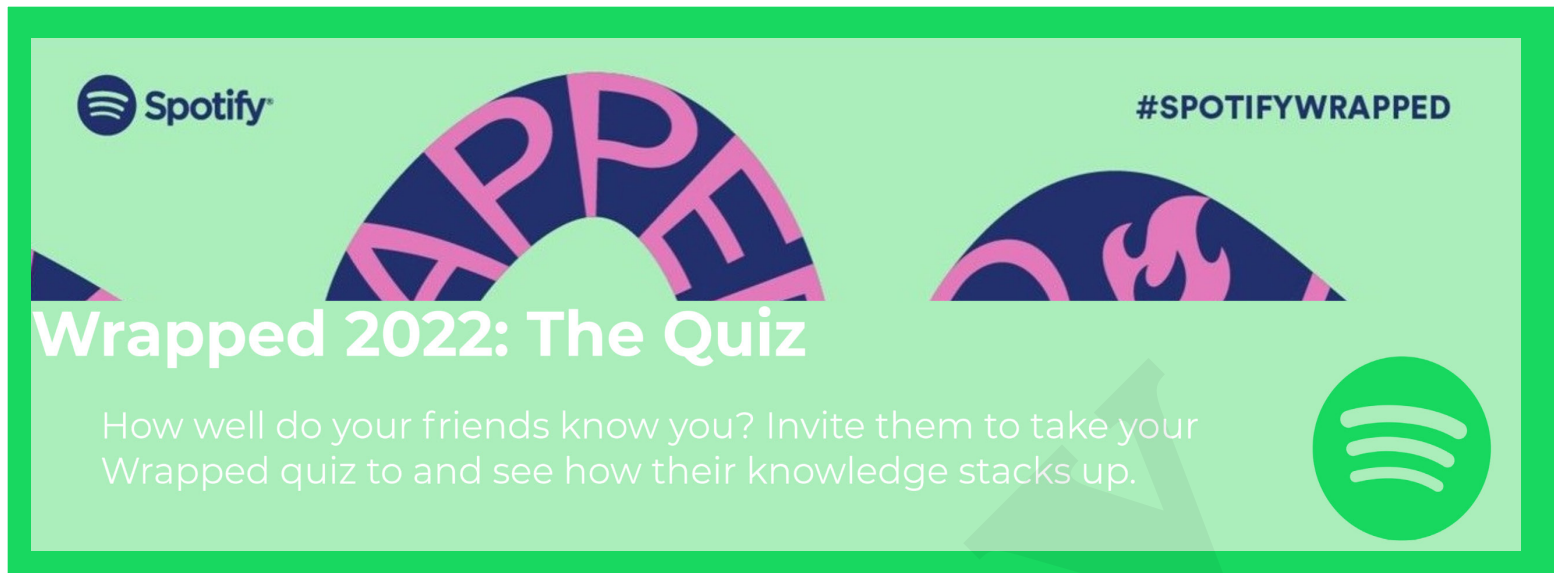
Proposed Design #1: Mid-year Social Media Post



The idea of this design is to remind current consumers and potential new consumers to use their Spotify accounts with the end of the year Wrapped playlist in mind. It would be released on Twitter and other social media platforms mid-year. This maintains the anchor point needed to engage with the audience and, again, latch onto a collective desire. Current consumers who may not have been listening with their account as much would see this

as encouragement to up their interaction, so they have a well rounded Wrapped at the end of the year. Potential customers who may have felt left out the previous year but forgotten or ignored their desire to be included would be reminded of what they would be missing out on again.

The post is just one question: Are you listening? It's meant to be simple and succinct, a question that might catch the eye and linger in the back of one's mind. The design is kept within the recognizable brand aesthetic with the green Spotify has become associated with along with bold colors and gothic font. There is the hashtag of #wrapped2022 which is indicative of the hashtag that is released when the end of the year Wrapped campaign ramps up, linking both this post and future posts together if the hashtag is searched for or starts trending.



Proposed Design #2: Shareable Quiz

It's important that Spotify consistently make sharing Wrapped content both easy and consistently shareable with others as social media engagement is the strongest part of the Wrapped campaign. Previously, a brief quiz is included with a consumer's year in review that's one question but isn't shareable. The idea behind this design is to turn that one question into a full-fledged quiz that can be shared from the Spotify app with a consumer's friends.

This is a play on the current "Blended" feature that allows a consumer to collaborate with friends on a Wrapped playlist. By creating this quiz, the shareable aspect becomes more interactive and increases the company's latitude of acceptance advantage. Consumers get to engage with their friends more closely and solidify bonds they have with each other based on their musical interests, also capitalizing on the core concept in the uses and gratifications theory.

By creating an in-app banner, this new feature would be easily visible to learn about and easily shareable to other social media platforms, again capitalizing on free advertising. The color scheme is once again in the familiar Spotify aesthetic with an accentuating pattern to draw the eye. Simple instructions are included to make sharing as easy and compelling as possible. The wording also chosen carefully to suggest to a consumer a fun way to engage with others asking simply, how well do you think your friends know you?

Proposed Design #3: YouTube Celebrity Interview

The final design is meant to continue Spotify's pattern of brand engagement through the social attractiveness and charisma of a celebrity. The idea is to pick a top artist or a series of top artists and do an in-depth interview with them surrounding the content of their Spotify Wrapped and post this to YouTube. This video could perhaps be released a week or so in advance of the official release to consumers, building on consumer anticipation.

This gives the audience a chance to relate to some of their favorite artists, getting a glimpse into that celebrity's musical tastes. This could also persuade those same consumers to revisit Spotify to listen to the songs within the YouTube video by playing a small clip of each one as the interview progresses. Using a musical artist in particular establishes an authority figure whose tastes are worth emulating. A link to the playlist would be available in the description of the YouTube video to encourage this as well as make it easy to be done.

Shown here is a mockup of the potential YouTube thumbnail that would initially be seen by a consumer. The large bold year is in white with Wrapped in green to catch the eye of someone scrolling through YouTube recommendations as shown at the bottom of a video. This would be overlaid on top of an image of the artist to also pique a consumer's interest as well. Lastly, a tagline of the artist's prominence, such as being the most streamed artist of the year, is included to show why this celebrity is a notable authority figure.



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