

SonicVoyage

IPD 590 - Escape the Algorithm: Final Project

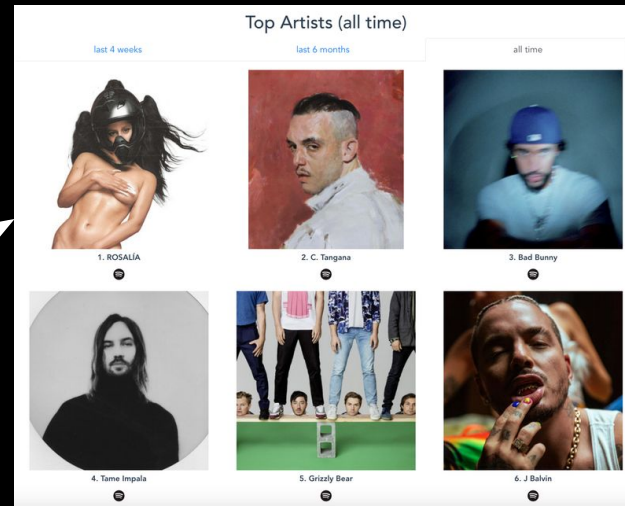
Dani Fernandez-Castro
Miles Soto-Aguayo
Shivani Toshniwal

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Outline

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A Personal Story of Unusual Music Exploration



More info: <https://readymag.com/u22126762/4459906/>

The Benefits of New Music Exploration



Platforms

More diverse listeners have higher conversion rates from Free to Premium plans, and lower probability of quitting the platform (Spotify, 2020)

Users

Might foster tolerance towards the unknown

Different genres bring different benefits (concentration, motivation...)

Enables an unlimited potential for exploration

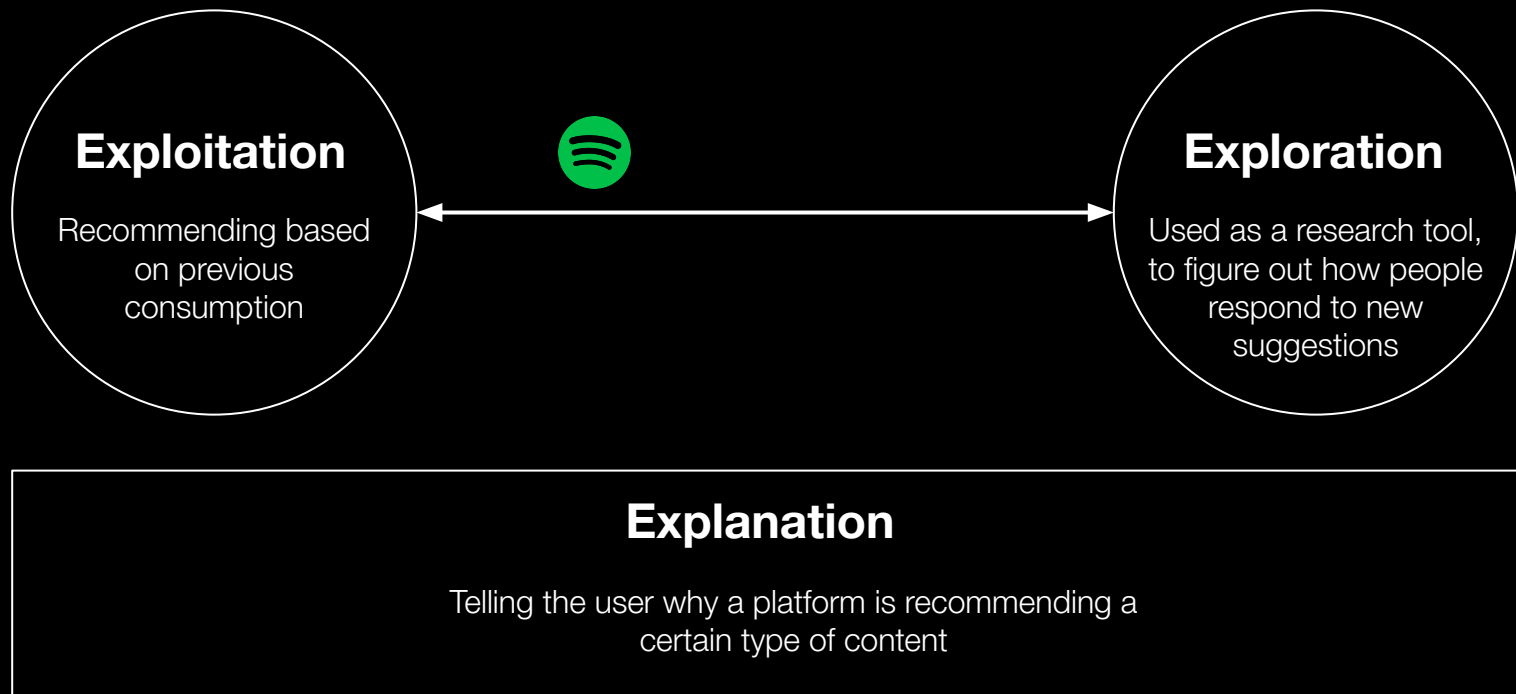
Allows people to be comfortable in more environments/with more people

Musicians

Allows more musicians to live from their music (via streaming payouts and shows, merch, etc.)

*Like... really new. Not the last album of your favorite band or an adjacent artist

Content Recommendation Algorithms: **The Three E's**



The Algorithms We're **Pushing Away From**

Recommending music...

Within the user's **common genres**

That is already very **popular**

Is safe because...

It fosters **platform engagement** and reduces churn

It's good for **established artists** (who have multi million contracts with platform)

But ends up in...

Taste bubbles/echo chambers, lack of real novelty

Limited exposure to **new artists struggling** to make money from their content

The Algorithms We're **Pushing Towards**

Recommending music...

Outside the user's **common genres**

That **isn't necessary popular**

Is risky because...

Completely unknown content might initially create a feeling of **rejection**

It might lead to **lower bargaining power** with large music labels

But ends up in...

Expanded music tastes

Better conditions for **less-known musicians**

Our Audience

Music lovers who:

- would love to **discover new music** outside of their usual taste,
- **don't know where to start**, and/or
- currently feel **discouraged** by usual “genre-adjacent” recommendations.

Mitigating the Rejection to Newness: **How Might We...?**

How might we make it easier for people to **explore music outside their usual taste**?



Using what we know of user's current **musical preferences** (rhythm, acousticalness, beat...) that might be shared across genres to inform recommendations

How might we use music to **connect with others**?



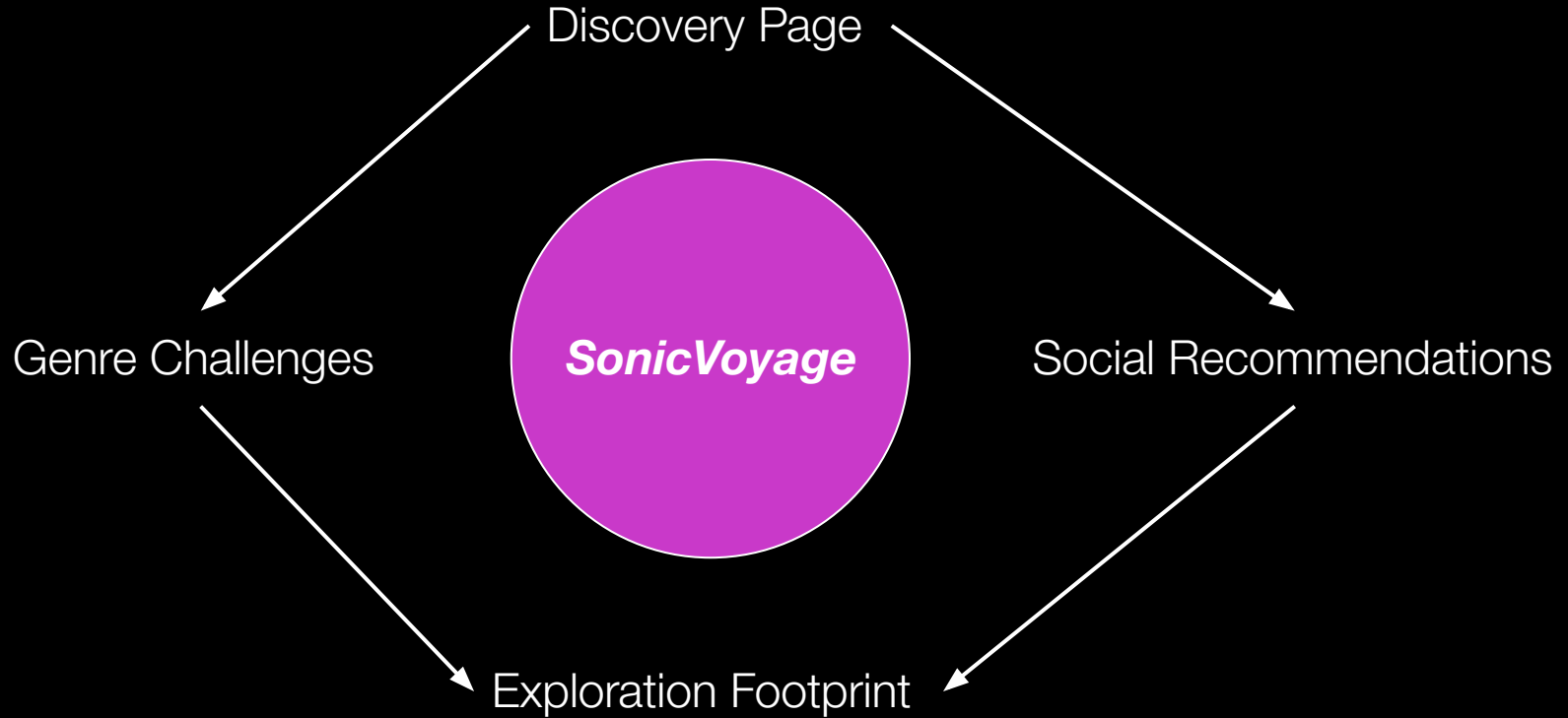
Relying on **social connections** (trust) and recommendations between friends/family

How might we make **recommendations more transparent**?

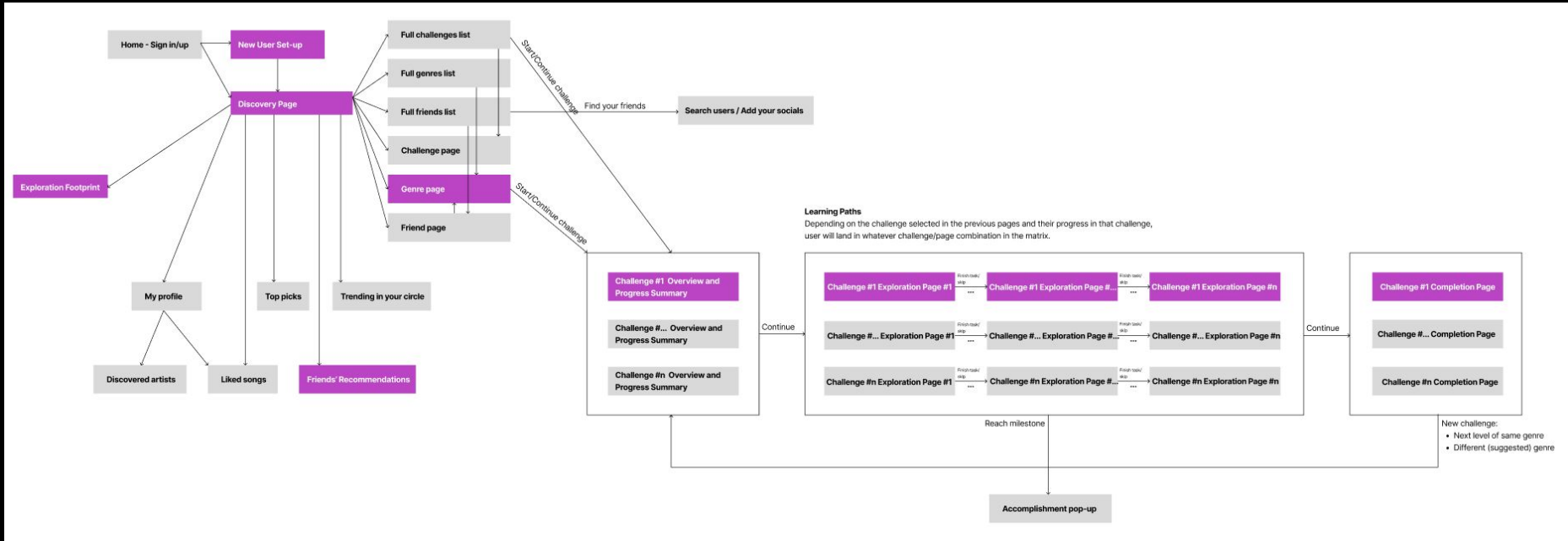


Allowing users to **choose their exploration** paths

Feature Overview



Detailed Flow Chart



Prototype

[Link to Figma prototype](#)

Technical Feasibility

- **Technology exists and is freely available** - it just requires development work!
(Spotify API calls + additional recommendation layer, standard social interaction flows...)
- Genre exploration challenges would require **manual curation** at the beginning
(Later we could look into utilizing machine learning based on user listening patterns and explicit feedback)

Monetization

Some possible strategies:

- **Freemium model:** service mostly free, but advanced features (such as challenges beyond lvl. 1, or more than 2 challenges/month) require payment
- **Acquisition:** streaming services might be interested in incorporating the technology and user base

Things We Could Look Into in the Future

- **Improving user experience** based on user interviews and testing
- **Automating challenges** to expand to all genres (in the tens of thousands)
- **Embedding external articles** in the app (audio and video can already be embedded)