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The Music Campaign Heard Around the World: Spotify Wrapped

BACKGROUND

Dick Clark said, "Music is the soundtrack of our lives." Spotify took the world by storm when it launched in October 2008. The Swedish music streaming service was co-founded by Daniel Ek and Martin Lorentzon in April 2006. The company's mission is "to unlock the potential of human creativity – by giving a million creative artists the opportunity to live off their art and billions of fans the opportunity to enjoy and be inspired by it" (Spotify Company Info, 2020).

The days of music lovers waiting in line to buy a new CD are over, but even streaming has a cost. After creating an account, users may choose to use Spotify with ads and limited song skips per day. The majority of users, however, opt into purchasing Spotify Premium, a paid subscription with a monthly cost. A Spotify Premium membership costs $9.99 per month, and a student-exclusive membership costs $4.99 per month (Sraders, 2019). As of March 2020, Spotify has nearly 286 million monthly active users, with more than 50 million songs, 1 million podcasts, and 4 billion playlists (Spotify Company Information, 2020).

SITUATION/CHALLENGES

Every year since 2016, Spotify "wraps up" each individual user's year in music statistics. Spotify Wrapped is a feature that shows listeners their favorite songs and


artists throughout the year (Williams, 2019). Released in December, this annual project gives users a detailed report of their top songs from the last
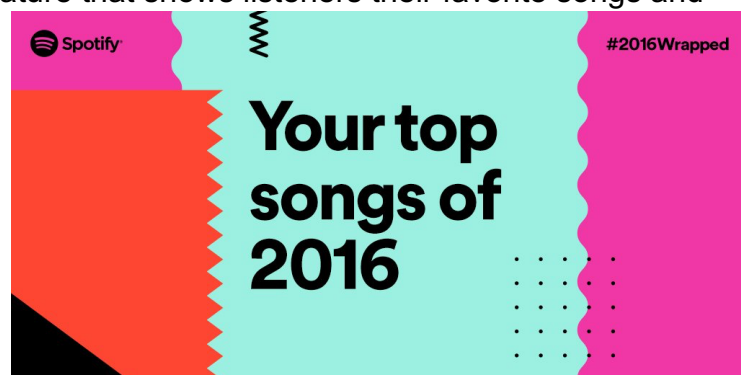
year featuring most played, favorite genres, favorite artists, etc. After users reminisce in their year of music, they are given the option to share their year "Wrapped" to social media via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or text message.

SOLUTION

The 2010's were coming to an end, as well as the childhood for most of Generation Z. To celebrate the transition to adulthood and welcome the new
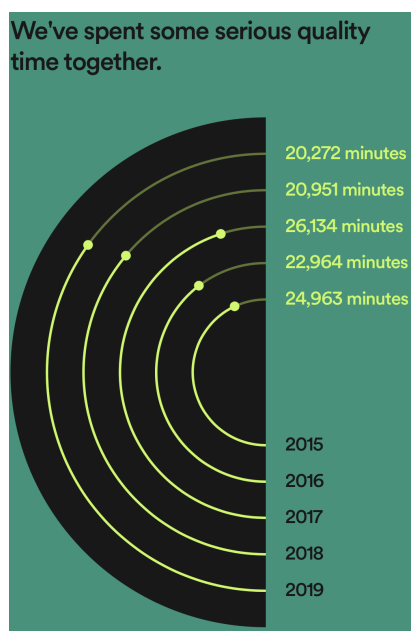

generation's "roaring '20s," Spotify Wrapped included both the user's 2019 music statistics as well as their 2010's music statistics. Spotify released an article describing the new Wrapped and said, "It's 'Wrapped' the way you love it – but with more nostalgia than ever before" (Decade of Discovery, 2019).

The Decade Wrapped shared more information than ever with users, including the total number of minutes spent listening to Spotify over the decade. This photo is a screenshot from my personal Decade Wrapped. I joined Spotify in 2015, and since then I have listened to over 115,000 minutes of music through Spotify. Decade Wrapped also included the user's top five genres in a bar graph. My statistics might not be the best example, however, because I listen to quite a wide variety of music.
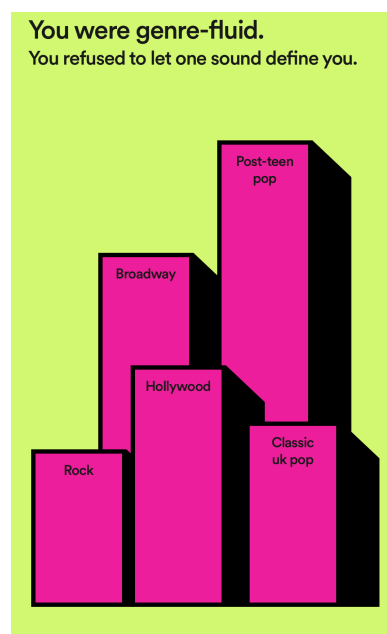
One of the most popular and exciting features of Decade Wrapped was the reveal of each user's artist of the decade. Spotify Wrapped tells the user their top artist every year, but there's something about the phrase "Artist of the Decade" that makes the end of the 2010's surreal.
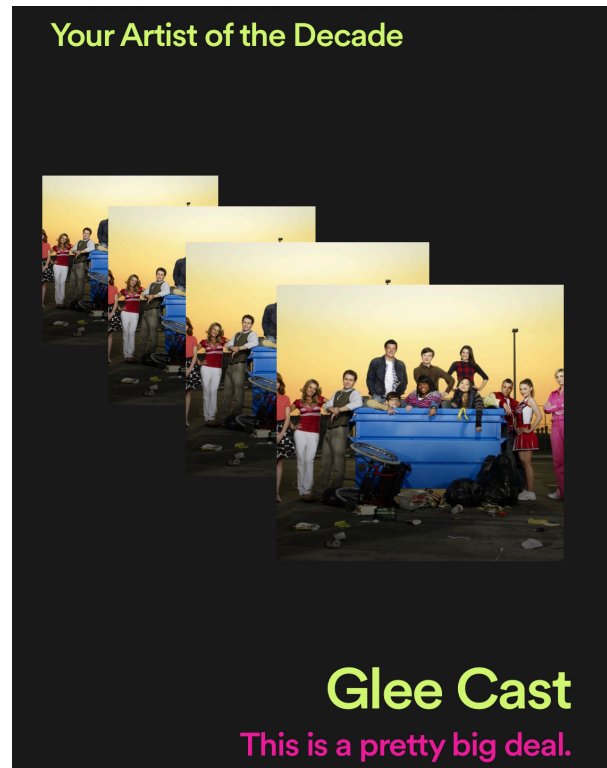
RESULTS

Initially launched on the Spotify app and website, users were able to share their year and decade statistics on social media. This year, however, the sharing dominated all social media platforms, with over three million shares using #SpotifyWrapped on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In the first week that Decade Wrapped and 2019 Wrapped were launched, Twitter had more than 1.2 million tweets using #SpotifyWrapped. As a result of the shares by current users, Spotify gained more than 60,000 new users and subscribers. "This creates this FOMO [fear of missing out] effect

that happens and inherently entices new users to consider Spotify," says Jane Sauvaget, head of consumer and product marketing for Spotify (Swant, 2019).

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Spotify has given music streaming a whole new meaning. Users and subscribers get to experience their year in review every December, and Decade Wrapped changed the game. I think Spotify could be even more successful with the Wrapped Campaign by broadening their statistics to podcasts creators as well as music artists; almost like an end-of-the-year progress report.

With COVID-19 changing the definition of normal, I think Spotify has an amazing opportunity to launch a "Quarantine Wrapped" Campaign. Set up like 2019 Wrapped, Quarantine Wrapped could serve as a teaser for users for what their 2020 Wrapped will look like. Quarantine Wrapped would consist of the top songs, artists, and genres listened to between March and May 2020, when everyone was mostly stuck inside their homes.

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Figure 1. Time Spent Using Spotify. December 5, 2019. Personal photo by Kate Nichols.

Figure 2. Genre-Fluid. December 5, 2019. Personal photo by Kate Nichols.

Figure 3. Artist of the Year – The Jonas Brothers. December 5, 2019. Personal photo by Kate Nichols.

Figure 4. Artist of the Decade – Glee Cast. December 5, 2019. Personal photo by Kate Nichols.

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