Fixing music metadata – not the participatory art project I signed up for!

This paper presents a case of 'collaboration and community building in the contemporary representation of music'. A representation that is screen-based (Hilmes, 2013) and reliant on correct metadata (Morris, 2012). The Spotify Community website offers an online meeting place for Spotify employees and fans of music and fans of the Spotify software itself. The case is the 2018 Spotify Line-in experiment and its sites: the frontend software and its forum threads. It is a case of crowdsourcing in relation to the development of the digital music product. Specifically, the development of the online digital music experience through the enhancement of the service as presented in the software. The software designers' motivation was to crowdsource the correction of metadata to help produce the full experience reminiscent of physical formats or surpassing them.

By analyzing the thread of comments for the post that announces the shutdown of the Line-in experiment this paper addresses the following problem: users perceive their participation as contributing to represent the musical *artform* in the best way possible by correcting metadata errors while the software developers at Spotify apply time-limited user-oriented experiments to better their *product*, the software and their *service*, the music listening. The users are sad and frustrated, while the moderators remain silent, seemingly not participating. Drawing on the platformization of the cultural production (Nieborg & Poell, 2018), the paper ends on a discussion of how the (web)site, the (digital) material, and the medium contribute to this problem and its possible solution. The paper represents a work in progress.

Short Bio
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