



A comparative study of Soundcloud and Mixcloud

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Abstract

Automated communication on social media has seen augmented attention. Podcasts and streaming music from various DJs and radio announcers are demonstrating itself to be quite the dawn in terms of the popularity of the music industry. This contemporary research paper is mainly focused on dualistic superlative online audio distribution and podcast streaming platforms which are known as Soundcloud and Mixcloud. In this paper researcher will emphasis on comparison between Sound cloud and Mix cloud. Further, researcher has provided discernment on pros and cons of audio distribution and podcast streaming platforms grounded on number of variables. Similarly, the present research paper will deliver highlights on analysis of deliberated online audio streaming services through various former services and platforms such as You tube and Beat port. To accomplish the expected outcomes of the study researcher has designed structured questionnaire and collected data from respondents. Further, collected data is used for data analysis. The outcomes from the analysis done by researcher are shared in the paper.

Keywords: Audio Streaming, Data Analysis, Mixcloud, Online Streaming Service, Soundcloud

1. Introduction

In today's progressive, innovative and hi-tech era plenty of online streaming platforms are available to the artists. With the commencement of an Internet several companies emanated with copious platforms to give artists and listeners acquaintance to multiple genres and types of music. Soundcloud and Mixcloud are the most extensively used and favoured online audio streaming platforms. There are many other services also like Youtube, Beatport, Gaana, Saavn, etc.

An online music store is an online business which deals with audio files selling over the Internet. Conversely, online music stores usually deal with partial streaming previews of songs, sometimes few songs are available for full length listening. Online music stores typically show a picture of the album art or of the performer or band for each song. Some online music stores also sell recorded speech files, such as podcasts and video files of movies. Now a day there is increase in amount of new services which enable musicians to sell their music directly to fans without third party involvement. These type of services habitually use e-commerce-enabled web widgets that entrench into numerous web pages.

In the early 2010s, online music stores—especially iTunes—experienced a marked increase in sales. The iTunes platform has been the main reason for this shift, as it originally sold every song in its library for 99 cents. Furthermore, with the arising popularity of Cyber Monday, online music stores have further gained ground over other music distribution sources

It has been observed that consumer spending is shifted away from the purchase of compact discs (CDs) in favour of purchasing albums from online music stores, or more commonly, purchasing individual songs. Factually, albums would be sold five times the cost of a single, but iTunes was selling every song for a tenth of the price of an album.

Nevertheless, in order to increase album sales, iTunes instituted "Complete My Album," which offered a discounted price on the full album, if a consumer has already purchased one or more songs.

The main aim of this research paper is:

- To compare between pros and cons of online audio streaming platforms i.e. Sound loud and Mix cloud.
- To find out reason behind popularity behind Sound cloud and Mixcloud in terms of mixes and singles.
- To discover the view of artists and listeners with data analysis.

What is sound cloud and Mixcloud ???

Soundcloud is the largest music and audio platform which allows populaces to discover and enjoy the utmost assortment of music from the supreme diverse creator community on earth. It was launched in the year 2008. Soundcloud is well-known for the aforementioned exclusive content and features which the ability to share music and connect directly with artists. It also featured with unearth breakthrough tracks, raw demos, podcasts and many more. It's all possible due to the open platform which has an ability not only to directly connect the creators and their fans across the globe but also creator can receive feedback from SoundCloud community.

Mixcloud is a British online music streaming service was founded as a start-up company over and done with the lean start up process in 2008 by Nikhil Shah and Nico Perez, who met at the University of Cambridge. Mixcloud allows to listening and distribution of radio shows, DJ mixes and podcasts, which are crowd sourced by its registered users. The prominent users include Wired, Harvard Business School, TED Talks, and Barack Obama. As of 2012, Mixcloud was reported to have over 3 million active users and over 500 thousand registered Facebook application users. In October 2017, Mixcloud signed direct licensing agreement with Warner Music.

Mixcloud also provides an API which users can search, upload, and embed its content. Users may also share podcasts and mixes via Facebook, Twitter, and Google. Mobile apps are available for both Android and iOS. In December 2018, Mixcloud announced a new form of subscription called "fan-to-creator". This modernization is an endeavour by the company to find a new ways of funding. Mixcloud restricts its users from downloading audio content from its website for licensing reasons. Mixcloud also requires its users to attribute their audio uploads with correct Artist and Song metadata in order to preserve intellectual property rights.

Mixcloud has constantly been a smart choice for DJs who want to stream their DJ sets to the world. It is 100% legal, to start with. It is also one of the much trustworthy names in the industry so the chances of disappearing in one day are moderately squat.

When comparing Sound cloud vs Mixcloud, the Slant community recommends Sound Cloud for most people. In the question "What are the best music streaming services?" SoundCloud is ranked 4th while Mixcloud is ranked 16th. The most important reason people chose SoundCloud is : You can subscribe to artists to be notified the instant they upload a new song or give an update.

Pros and Cons of Soundcloud and Mixcloud

Soundcloud Pros

Subscribe to artists: You can subscribe to artists to be notified. The moment they upload a new song or give an update will be received by subscriber.

Follow people: You can trail people with similar discriminations or that frequently find new music. When they preferred a song Soundcloud will notify you also for the same..

Recommendations: Links related music, based on what you're listening to, can be found in the sidebar.

Explore tab has new music constantly: Explore tab has a constant stream of new music. This tab on Soundcloud shows trending music that can be filtered based on genre/tag.

Free to use: Sound cloud is free. You don't even have to log in or sign up for an account if you don't want to. It also provides a paid option for the people who want to upload large quantities of audio, but it's free to download as much and as often as you like.

Pre-releases: One can get new release earliest on Sound cloud as it has the ability to show it before appearing anywhere else.

Creative Commons filter: Soundcloud allows for finding music that is licensed under Creative Commons.

Sound cloud Cons

Can't do an advanced search: Advanced search option is very poor on Sound cloud. Example: Creative commons music with the tag #trap. It could be useful to search for music you like that is under Creative Commons.

Interface is full of bugs: The Sound cloud website has tons of problems, including issues with notifications, favourites, and uploading sounds.

Audio ads in some uploaded content: Some content on Sound cloud includes audio ads, particularly sponsored podcasts.

Mixcloud Pros and Cons

Mixcloud Pros

Wide & varied content: There is an enormous and mottled assortment of content across many styles, genres & vintages all effortlessly found via tags and particularly effective recommendations.

Totally Free: People are free to listen and upload as much as they like.

Sound Quality: Music sounds crisp and punchy when streaming/playback specially when using quality headphones/speakers.

Friendly Interface: Mixcloud is user friendly due to its features. It's easy to use the simple and attractive platform, unlike the Archive.org.

Mixcloud Cons

Ads even in paid Pro account: Free and Pro Accounts put ads in your content. If you don't want ads, you have to pay 6.99 USD/mo. for the Premium account.

Engagement tools just for paid accounts: If you want to grow and monitor your audience in the platform, you'll need to sign the Pro account, which costs \$15/month or \$135/year.

Data charges by surprise: Surprise data charges can be applied. SO people need to watch out for those data charges if they are interchanging.

Some common differences between Mixcloud and Soundcloud:

Table 1: Comparison between Soundcloud and Mixcloud

SoundCloud	MixCloud
Soundcloud is for any type of sound file. E.g. a snippet, a full track, or a 3h DJ set.	Mixcloud is for DJ sets / Radio shows. Not for single tracks.
Very tiny free plan as limit is based on hours	Mixcloud has no such limits.
It has a very effective/annoying sound file introspection system.	It doesn't have any such system.
It is more than Mixcloud.	Less popular as compared to Soundcloud.
Don't provide Track list.	Provide Track list

Source: Designed by researcher

Research methodology

Research Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of research. In this paper the theoretical and philosophical assumptions underlying the research methodology were reviewed. In this paper to do the comparative study of Soundcloud and Mixcloud researcher has designed the questionnaire. Researcher has designed google form to collect the data from the respondents. The questions are mainly comprised of Sound and Online Audio Streaming Services such as Mixcloud, Beauport, Soundcloud, YouTube, etc. Researcher has used Likert Scaling method to study the responses received from questionnaire. Hence, to obtain the answer and calculate the average Mean, Median and Modes has helped.

The calculation of mean is helped to find out average answer which will provide the information about hypothesis is being proved. The details for the same are as shown in below table:

Table 2: Average wise result

Average Value	Result
1 To 1.67	Will represent Null Hypothesis
1.68 To 2.34	Will represent Non-Directional Hypothesis.
2.35 To 3	Will represent Directional Hypothesis

Source: Designed by researcher

Each partition have 0, 67 difference in between and where ever mean will fall in the above range that is concluded in the paper. For example if my mean will be 1.3 then my null hypothesis will be proved or if 2.7 will be my mean then my directional hypothesis will be proved like that whatever will be the mean and in whichever range its falling in, that will be my hypothesis for this research.

Statement of the problem

For this paper researcher has focused on comparison of Soundcloud and Mixcloud.

In this research, researcher has focused on study about how influential the two platforms namely, Soundcloud and Mixcloud are for consumers and artists. Throughout the industry, there is a resounding question among artists i.e. which is the preeminent platform to showcase their mixes and tracks, at the same time procurement maximum response and activity for their uploads while being cost effective.

Objective of research

The objective of the research is as below

- To study various aspects of an artist uploads grounded on various parameters.
- To conduct unbiased study of people who listen to and make mixes and music online using online audio streaming platform.
- To perform data analysis on collected data.

Research Scope

The scope of the study is to revise and compare the SounCloud and MixCloud aspects. The aspects considered to this research are various aspects of an artist upload grounded on various parameters. Like Copyright Claims/ Strikedowns, Type of upload, Duration of upload, Services provided by company. User Interface of the app/website, Ease of use, Fee of the subscription.

In addition to it to help industry artists and the common man comprehend what tools are superlative for individuals out of the massive number of options of publishing various audio streaming services such as Youtube, Soundcloud, Mixcloud, Beat port etc.

To find out what’s the superlative platform for a specific person on the basis of the type of content wants to upload to showcase their mixes and tracks, at the same time obtaining maximum response and activity for their uploads while being cost effective.

Below mentioned are some of the major scopes of the current research

- This research will comfort industry professionals to make right choice to elect the right platform which will help to grow a better profile of them.

- It will also guide the artists to comprehend the utmost favoured platforms used by the listeners.
- The listener will also get an insight of the choices made by artists and make them aware about where it would find what kind of music more.
- Sample selected for the study will help artists and listeners to make the choice of the audio platform as per their need.

Research methodology

This research is based on the primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained with the questionnaire and the secondary data has been collected from different types of sources as local and international journals, articles, web sites and published and unpublished thesis, reports, blogs, articles etc.

Content validity

In this study the content validity of the survey instrument ensured by

- Printed and digital books
- Extensive Literature Review

Though the content are ensured by various ways mentioned above all the content from this paper are own contribution of the researcher.

Data collection and analysis

For the current study researcher has analysed the data and made it easier to understand. To collect the data from the respondents researcher has designed questionnaire which consists of 10 questions. Questionnaire was made available online to the respondents through google form. The details of data collection and analysis done are as described below:

Collection of the data

This research is based on the primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained with the questionnaire and the secondary data has been collected from different types of sources as local and international journals, articles, web sites and published and unpublished thesis, reports, blogs, articles etc.

Data analysis

Researcher has done a survey on a mix of artists as well as listeners so as to understand the reasons for preference of audio streaming platforms Soundcloud and Mixcloud. The survey samples of the study were selected from the peoples whose age varied from 18 to 30. Questionnaire was made up of 10 questions which were focused on the aim of study. The discussion of this survey and the division of the responses are done on below basis:

- Mix of artists and listeners selected as samples
- Questions formed to get a view of preferences of both the artists and the listeners on various music platforms.

Researcher has calculated mean of all responses received. The conclusions based on the calculated mean are as shown in below table:

Table 3: Conclusions based on the calculated mean

Mean Values	Hypothesis	Description
1 to 1.67	Null Hypothesis	The apps used for audio streaming are as per the preference (personal choice) of the listener
1.68 to 2.34	Non- Directional Hypothesis	The apps used for audio streaming are as per the genre of music the listener or artist is interested in
2.35 to 3	Directional Hypothesis	The apps used for audio streaming are as per the length of the content and the type of the content (singles or mixes)

Source: Designed by researcher

From the analysis made it has been observed that the torrents trends are as follows

- Today's listeners are listening to tracks which are around or over an hour and hence the numbers of mixes being produced by various artists are increasing day by day.
- Researcher has surveyed various listeners and artist to find the length of the content they are listening to and analysis says that most of the listeners prefer audio content which are more than 30 minutes going up to and above an hour.
- Listeners are grasped to be favouring to listen to singles on Soundcloud.
- Nevertheless the number of listeners using Soundcloud is high; it is not the single runner in this race for audio platforms. The other platforms like Saavn, Gaana, Spotify and Youtube are also widely used.

For the analysis of Non-directional hypothesis, researcher has asked the sample a specific question understand whether the genre of the music affects their choice of the audio streaming platform. The analyses of the responses received are as follows:

- In most cases the audio platform is not selected on the basis of genre.

Variables used for the study

- Dependent Variable - Length and Type of track (single or mix)
- Independent Variable - Genre of music
- Extraneous Variable- Choice of listener for the platform

Conclusion

In this paper researcher has focused on comparative study of SoundCloud and MixCloud. Researcher has drawn the conclusion of the study by analysing the authentic data received from respondents which was collected through primary data collection method. In this paper researcher has find out the reason for what makes SoundCloud and MixCloud the leading platforms in the market. Further researcher has described about the factors on the basis of which Soundcloud and Mixcloud are selected for audio streaming by the listeners and the artists. In continuation to this researcher come up with the conclusion that the platform selected by the artist is mainly based on two factors. The first factor is the type of the track to be uploaded and second one the length of the track.

It has been observed during the study that, Soundcloudat present allows uploading of both single tracks as well as mixes. Voluminous artists favour having their tracks as well as mixes on a single audio platform. It is favoured when the length of mixes is petite. i.e. less than 180 minutes as the uploads till this track time are allowed from a free account

rather than a paid Soundcloud account. Whereas, Mixcloudcountenances the upload of only mixes and does not allow single tracks. Consequently, Mixcloud is favoured by artists who have to upload mixes of more than 180 minutes. For artists predominantly working on mixes, Mixcloud is the go to platform. Researcher is happy to share that, directional hypothesis is proved as positive that the platform preferred is on the basis of the track length.

Limitation

The present paper is focused on comparison of Soundcloud and Mixcloud.

There were a few limitations confronted by researcher while conducting this research. These have listed below:

- Like any research, the data has been collected for a few samples and is not a comprehensive list.
- The age group surveyed was between 18 to 30. Hence, the results hold good for this particular age group only.
- The method used for this is only on the basis of the questionnaire considering the time available for the research.
- The availability and readiness of the samples surveyed.

Topics for further research

Grounded on the type of the content researcher would recommend that the audio streaming app should be selected for artists who famine to upload single tracks, there is or using Mixcloud. Mixcloud can be used only for mixes. Henceforth, for the artists who effort only with mixes, Mixcloud would be the utmost favoured alternative. Other alternatives such as Beatport are also available. Though Soundcloud can be used for mixes a single audio platform for uploading all the work of an artist may be favoured by the artist.

Soundcloud does countenance uploading tracks or mixes up to 180 minutes using their free membership but for above that we need to use the paid service of Soundcloud. Also the threat of copyright strike is high on Soundcloud. For artists functioning with single tracks, Soundcloud is seen as the go to option as it is more artists oriented. Single tracks can be uploaded on numerous platforms such as Spotify, Amazon Music, Gaana etc. Subsequently, researcher suggest below topics for future research:

- Copyright issues for soundClouds
- MixCloudImoprt from SoundCloud

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