

Premium HOME > MEDIA

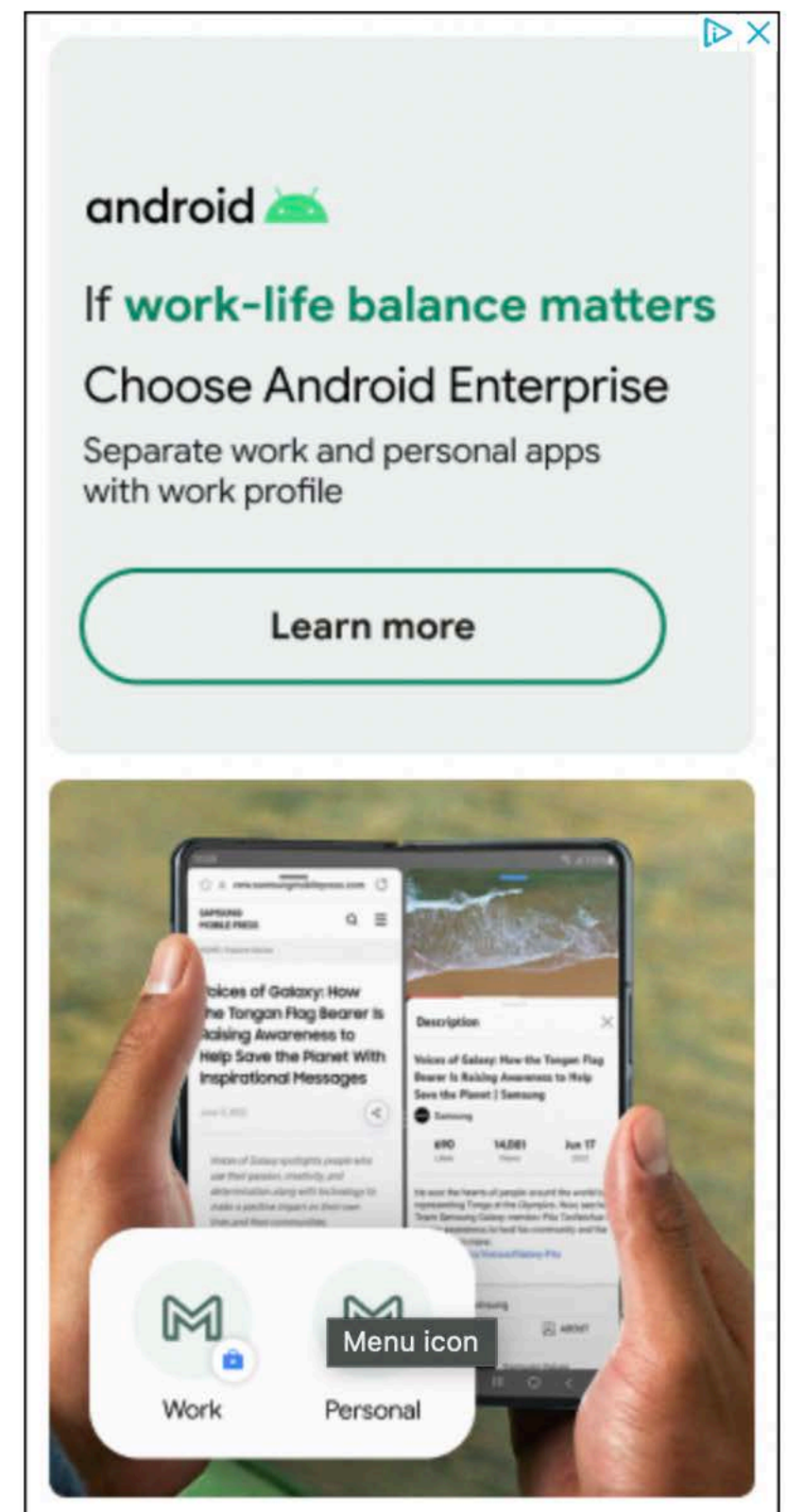
Read the 9-page pitch deck that music-marketing startup Ultimate Playlist used to raise \$2 million

Madeline Berg Updated 2 hours ago



Khalid Jones and Shevy Smith, the founders of Ultimate Playlist Ultimate Playlist

- **New startup Ultimate Playlist offers daily cash prizes to users who listen to and rate new songs.**
- **The app is a marketing tool for musicians hoping to get discovered by new fans.**
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Whether it's "TRL" or a meet-and-greet, musicians and the labels behind them have always looked for new ways to grow their audiences. Recently, labels have been pushing artists to TikTok, even telling big-name stars like Florence Welch and Halsey to turn to the app to try to break through the noise.

Ultimate Playlist, a new app founded by composer Shevy Smith and investor Khalid Jones, is another new marketing tool for musicians hoping to grow their reach. This time, by paying users to listen to a set number of songs.

"An artist is hoping someone out in the ether is going to listen," Khalid said about the current state of the industry, which sees

80,000 new songs uploaded to Spotify every day.

Ultimate Playlist, which launches on Monday, is a way for artists to know that they will reach listeners.

Each day, a new mix of 40 songs is uploaded to the Ultimate Playlist. While some are chosen by the app's editorial team, eventually most will be paid placements, with rights holders paying between \$200 and \$300 for a song to be on the list. The playlist will contain a variety of genres, and both new and old songs, making it another avenue for older song catalogues to be rediscovered.

"There's not a lot out there for this middle-class artist," Smith said, adding that the tool would be an add on to an artist's existing marketing plan. "One key component of Ultimate Playlist is that it isn't anchored by superstars."

The first playlist features songs from big names like Taylor Swift and Jack Harlow, as well as smaller ones like Tyler Childers and Victoria Bigelow. (While Ultimate Playlist declined to comment on which artists paid and which were editorial choices, Smith said that the platform is for "the artist that doesn't have Drake's marketing budget.")

In exchange for listening to the songs and completing certain tasks, users rack up tickets to be entered into a raffle — completing a full song gets a certain number of tickets, as does rating it or adding it to an Apple Music playlist. Each day, 18 users win a cash prize between \$50 and \$500. Listeners will also be entered into a Powerball-style "ultimate jackpot" that will start at \$20,000 and increase monthly until there is a winner.

The artists, meanwhile, get their songs in front of active listeners. Plus, the app will also provide data to the artists like the ratings given to songs, which users finished songs to completion, songs that were played multiple times, and more.

"As a songwriter, I like the idea of a listener listening to more than 15 seconds of a song," Smith said.

Eventually, the app hopes to be a self-contained ecosystem: It will generate revenue — and prize money — from rights holders who pay to have songs included in the playlist and from advertisements.

But to start the business off, Jones and Smith partnered with an unconventional, though logical, investor: the Arizona State Lottery. The organization, which is no stranger to running similar games, invested \$2 million in the company, which was in part used for the app's development and in part to fund prizes.

Here's the nine-page pitch deck that the Ultimate Playlist used to raise its first funds.

The title slide introduces the startup and its motto, "It pays to listen!"

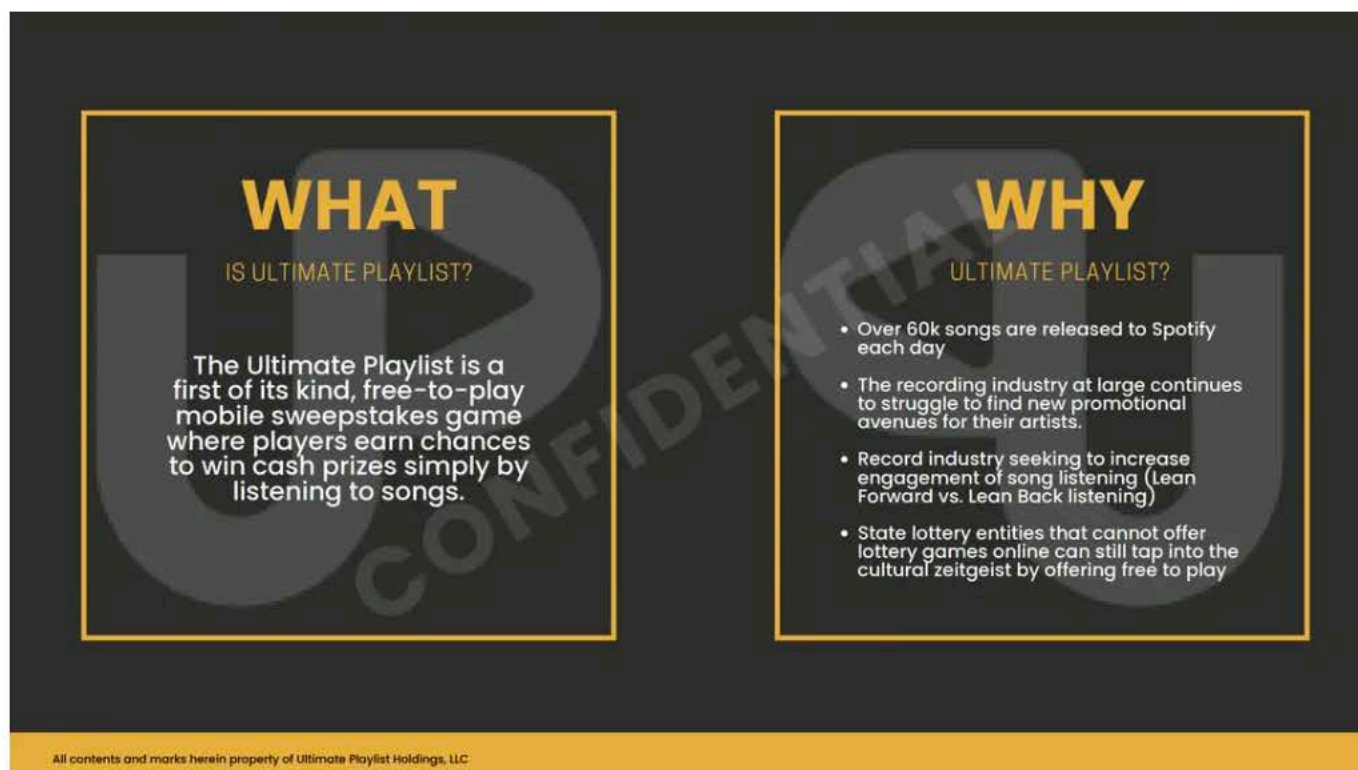


The title slide introduces the startup and its motto, "It pays to listen!"



Courtesy of Ultimate Playlist

The second slide explains what the app does and why it's needed.



The slide reads:

What is Ultimate Playlist?

The Ultimate Playlist is a first of its kind, free-to-play mobile sweepstakes game where players earn chances to win cash prizes simply by listening to songs.

Why Ultimate Playlist?

- *Over 60k songs are released to Spotify each day*
- *The recording industry at large continues to struggle to find new promotional avenues for their artists.*
- *Record industry seeking to increase engagement of song listening (Lean Forward vs. Lean Back listening)*
- *State lottery entities that cannot offer lottery games online can still tap into the cultural zeitgeist by offering free to play*

Next, the deck breaks down how to play.



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HOW TO PLAY

UP

ULTIMATE PLAYLIST

Benefits Players and Musicians Alike

For players the Ultimate Playlist is a new and exciting lottery format that rewards people for doing what they do every day- discover new songs

For artists, labels and publishers, the Ultimate Playlist provides an exclusive opportunity to cut through the noise by promoting new songs to a previously untapped, massive, captivated audience.

HOW ARE TICKETS EARNED?

- 40 songs appear on the Ultimate Playlist every day
- Players will have the chance to earn 5 Daily Cash Drawing tickets per song.

WAYS TO EARN

- 1st ticket if they listen to at least 30 seconds of the song.
- 2nd ticket at 60 seconds
- 3rd ticket for completing the song
- Can earn an additional ticket by rating the song on a scale of 1-5
- Can earn an additional ticket if listener chooses to add song to DSP of choice

All contents and marks herein property of Ultimate Playlist Holdings, LLC

Courtesy of Ultimate Playlist

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- *Players earn tickets to cash drawings by listening to songs on playlists in UP's freestanding mobile application*
- *Players are presented a playlist consisting of 40 songs per day*

- *Tickets earned by listening to playlists will be entered into a guaranteed cash drawings with 18 winners per day of prizes ranging from \$50 - \$500.*
- *In addition to the guaranteed cash drawings, there will also be a daily jackpot drawing each day for \$20,000*

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-

The following slide explains the drawings and jackpots.

DRAWINGS AND JACKPOTS

18
CASH WINNERS

Each day will award 18 guaranteed cash winners.

Unlike traditional lottery games where the prize pool comes from player purchases, the Ultimate Playlist will be free to play. The prize pool will be drawn from fees paid by music rights holders to appear on the Ultimate Playlist each day.

\$20k
ULTIMATE PAYOUT JACKPOT

One jackpot drawing per day with min Jackpot of \$20,000

Players listening to atleast half of the day's songs will earn 1 drawing entry into jackpot.

Players listening to all of the day's songs will earn 3 drawing entries into jackpot.

Jackpot will be a Powerball-style progressive jackpot starting at a minimum of \$20,000 and growing larger until it is won.

UP
ULTIMATE PLAYLIST

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\$20k Ultimate Payout Jackpot: One jackpot drawing per day with min Jackpot of \$20,000

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The deck then discusses how songs get on the playlist.



UP
ULTIMATE PLAYLIST

SONGS

mechanics + order

- Song rights holder purchases a slot (or multiple slots) to appear on the Ultimate Playlist
- Rights holders submit songs for approval by Ultimate Playlist Editorial Team (will always need to be edited version)
- Once approved, songs will appear on the Ultimate Playlist on the days selected by rights holder

- 40 songs per day will appear on the Ultimate Playlist each day
- Song's appearances on the playlist will be randomized to ensure that each song has an equal chance for favorable promotional exposure
- Listeners can skip up to 6 songs per hour
- While listening to songs, players can rate the song on a scale of 1-5 and also add a song to their chosen DSP playlist.

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HOW DO SONGS GET ON THE ULTIMATE PLAYLIST?

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The following slides detail various aspects of the app.

The image shows three vertical slides with a dark background and yellow text. Each slide has a downward-pointing triangle icon at the top. The first slide is yellow and titled 'LEADERBOARDS AND TIERS'. The second slide is dark grey and titled 'REGISTRATION/ VERIFICATION' with a yellow 'UP' logo above the title. The third slide is yellow and titled 'RESULTS SHOW/ DRAWING'.

LEADERBOARDS AND TIERS

Nothing spurs action like competition! Ultimate Playlist will include leaderboards showing where players rank on various metrics of engagement- including total number of minutes listened, total number of tickets earned, and total number of songs rated. Possibly include bonus game stats.

REGISTRATION/ VERIFICATION

While the game will be free to play, we will still need to ensure that the winners of the game are of legal age to accept prizes. Each player upon registration will be required to give his/her age. Minimum age to play will be 18 years old.

RESULTS SHOW/ DRAWING

Eventually, it is anticipated that the daily guaranteed cash drawings and Jackpot drawing will occur via a live streamed telecast that can be tuned into by anyone. The drawings will occur in real time. And add an extra layer of excitement, drama and sales opportunities to the day's events. The live show should last approximately 30 minutes each evening.

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This slide answers questions about the songs on the playlist and where it's available.

slot details

Will the playlists be separated by genre?

At launch all players will receive the same set of songs on the Ultimate Playlist. It is envisioned that in future iterations that the playlists will be tailored by genre based upon player preferences.

How are slots on the playlist priced?

There will be a flat fee for appearing on a day's playlist. However, bundled pricing will be available for rights holders seeking to purchase multiple slots or seeking to be exclusive in a certain window of time.


In what order will the songs appear?

Ultimate Playlist seeks equal and maximum exposure for all songs appearing on the platform. Therefore, each player will see a randomized order of songs to ensure equal exposure across the platform.

MULTI-STATE

SCALE-ABLE INNOVATION

Unlike a traditional lottery game that can only be offered in individual states, the Ultimate Playlist will be available nationwide (with the exception of a few states with restrictions on sweepstakes offerings).



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This slide features more FAQs.



What kind of data will rights holders receive?

Rights holders will receive a comprehensive data report regarding a song's reach and performance. The report will include but not be limited to:

- total number of spins broken out into categories.
- Average rating
- Total number of times a song was skipped
- total adds to listener's chosen DMP
- All data points can be sorted by age, gender, genre preference, and zip code and individual anonymized data can be included

Is there a limit to how many times a song can appear?

Yes, right's holders may purchase as many promotional slots as they like. However, no song may appear on the Ultimate Playlist more than 3 times in a 7 day period.

What happens to songs after they appear on the Ultimate Playlist?

The Ultimate Playlist is NOT a DSP. UP falls under Section 114/ Non-Interactive streaming internet radio licensing provisions. Songs appearing on the Ultimate Playlist appear for promotional purposes only and are not stored on servers for future listening by players. Players will be able to view a history of all songs they have listened to on the Ultimate Playlist, however if a user wishes to listen to any song that have appeared on the Ultimate Playlist in the future, they must do so through their streaming service of choice.

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The final slide provides the founders' contact information.



Courtesy of Ultimate Playlist

Read next



Premium MEDIA

14 innovative music startups helping artists, labels, and other creators grow their businesses, as technology shakes up the industry

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