

Built for Change: Episode 1

Evolving the customer experience

Time	Script
00:00	<p>Carrie SiuButt: So when the co-founder started off the company, it actually started off as a contact lens company...</p> <p>ELISE: This is Carrie SiuButt. She's the CEO of SimpleHealth. But, it actually used to be called SimpleContacts.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: ...and it was meant to be a platform to bridge a gap between patients and doctors to get their needs managed, and really get their contact lenses in a very efficient way.</p> <p>JOSH: The idea was to take the convoluted, time-consuming process of getting contact lenses and reimagine it so it occurs entirely online. Patients could take an eye exam right on their phone and get their prescription delivered directly to their door.</p> <p><i>MUSIC MOMENT/PAUSE</i></p> <p>ELISE: But that's not the story we're telling today.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: What happened was, 60% of our team is female, and they just saw a need and a want, given that they had built a platform for a subscription-based model, that they felt like, "Why not try birth control?"</p>

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01:00	<p><i>THEME MUSIC</i></p> <p>ELISE: What happened next was radical. And today, we'll tell you the story about how this company's obsession with <i>Customer Experience</i> led them to change everything.</p> <p><i>INTRO</i></p> <p>JOSH: I'm Josh Klein...</p> <p>ELISE: And I'm Elise Hu.</p> <p>JOSH: This is Built For Change, a podcast from Accenture.</p> <p><i>THEME MUSIC PLAYS</i></p> <p>JOSH: Alright, so, 2020 had crises. Lots of crises.</p> <p>ELISE: Yes. Public health, economic, and social crises, all in one.</p> <p>JOSH: Yeah. So, we managed to hit all the boxes and then made some new boxes. The, the good news to this though, is that all of this turbulence, all of this change, made lots of opportunities.</p> <p>ELISE: Yeah, because we are reckoning with ourselves, and we're reckoning, sort of, collectively. Not just for, you know, government systems, or public policy, but also for business.</p> <p>JOSH: Yeah, yeah. It's, uh, it seems like every single company out there has an opportunity to shift.</p> <p>ELISE: And that's what we're talking about on Built For Change.</p> <p>JOSH: So, over the course of the season, we'll be talking about what's next in business: from technology, sustainability, purpose... and much more.</p>

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02:00	<p>ELISE: In each episode of Built for Change, Josh and I will take turns bringing you research and insights from the experts at Accenture — and we'll talk to industry leaders who are actively reimagining the future of business, even as they build it.</p> <p>JOSH: So this episode, we're going to be talking about the Customer Experience revolution.</p> <p>ELISE: OK. What is that? Traditionally, CX, or Customer Experience, has been defined in this really narrow way. It's like a collection of touchpoints where a customer meets the business. So that's well-designed billboards, helpful customer service, you know what I'm talking about. And the goal for all these CX efforts is to get the customer to buy what you're selling.</p> <p>JOSH: Right, but... Some innovative new companies, companies like SimpleHealth, are changing up this strategy entirely. They're putting customer needs at the center of every aspect of their business. And that's the Business of Experience.</p> <p>ELISE: So, to continue with the acronyms, CX is no longer enough. BX is in.</p>
03:00	<p>ACT I</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: The conversation really was like, "We're a small team. We're seeing a need where people really want our prescriptions, and we should focus on that."</p> <p>JOSH: Here's Carrie Siu Butt again. She's talking about SimpleContact's decision to change everything, stop offering contacts and instead, focus on birth control. And this might sound odd but Carrie's team realized that the personalized telehealth service they already had in place for contacts could really help patients access birth control.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: Oftentimes, we hear our patients are like, "We have to wait months," for them to get an appointment. And birth control is a very time-sensitive prescription. And they have a copay of \$60, or 50, there's just no transparency there, and then when they get their prescription, they have to take it to the pharmacy and then they have to wait for the pharmacy to fulfill it.</p> <p>JOSH: SimpleHealth's goal was to permanently change the way that patients get birth control. And, they have. They've taken what's usually.</p>

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04:00	<p>a 2 weeks to 2 month-long process, and made it 3 to 5 days. Patients log in, answer questions, get their prescription from a doctor, and then their medication is shipped directly to their door... in discreet packaging... and at an affordable price.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: It's actually a little bit deeper. We've heard oftentimes from women that when they have gone to the traditional doctor, that oftentimes they've felt judged. Sometimes women don't go to get birth control because they're looking at, you know, contraception, but it's really, it's a prescription for endometriosis, PCOS, bad cramps, acne. So it's like any other medical prescription.</p> <p>JOSH: And Carrie herself knows a lot about this. She has a neurological disorder called Dystonia, which causes muscle tremors.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: So I personally have had so many hurdles in my healthcare journey, just either it's because I was differently abled, I'm a minority. And so when I asked doctors, it was almost like I had to justify why I needed birth control. This is almost like my life's</p>
05:00	<p>purpose and my life's mission, because I've dealt with this for the last 30-plus years of my life.</p> <p>JOSH: For Carrie, everything she does is about her patients.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: We really want to put the patient at the center of care, and everything else is just sort of noise.</p> <p>JOSH: And, it's not just a talking point. Every business decision is oriented around anticipating and exceeding customer needs.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: I can't think of running a company without putting your patients or customers first. I want to be the person setting up that bar and raising the bar consistently.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>JOSH: SimpleHealth's patient-centered strategy is far beyond traditional customer experience, or CX strategy. In fact, under those standard models, SimpleHealth might still be a... contact lens service... trying to edge out competitors through advertising. But their near obsession with their customers' needs is a new model of doing business. It's what we're calling the Business of Experience.</p>

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06:00	<p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: A lot of times, CEOs take it just for granted, just profits, profits, profits. And they miss the whole key connection that if you keep your people, customers, happy, the profits come, right?</p> <p>Brian Whipple: Consumer experience is typically a very narrow view of how a person experiences satisfaction with a particular product or service.</p> <p>JOSH: This is Brian Whipple, the CEO of Accenture Interactive.</p> <p>Brian Whipple: I'll give you an example. Most pharmacy chains typically measure their perceived customer experience or customer satisfaction based on things like basket size, time spent in the store, loyalty... But that may or may not link to what a consumer actually wants.</p> <p>JOSH: And what a customer actually wants has shifted dramatically, especially in the last few years. And a lot of that is due to the rise in digitally native companies who have made things easier than ever for customers. So, now, with the click of a few buttons, people can stream their favorite</p>
07:00	<p>movie instantaneously when, not too long ago, we had to get in our cars and drive somewhere to get a movie. Now we can order rides, or find rental properties, and order food with just a few clicks. And, more and more, customers are expecting that ease in every experience. And that is what Brian Whipple calls Liquid Expectations.</p> <p>Brian Whipple: I expect that seamless interaction with companies like banks or car dealerships or department stores. And this dynamic is especially prevalent among the younger generation. If you have teenagers or in that, like, 15 to 25 age range and you ask them to call a, uh, a call center and they, and they have to wait two minutes, they're like, "What? Are you kidding me? I'm not waiting two minutes." And their set of expectations is, it's liquid. It has poured over from the apps. They want products and services that make their lives more effective, more efficient or in some way more meaningful.</p>

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08:00	<p>JOSH: So this makes the playing field for any business more competitive. Because... a business isn't just competing with other companies in their own industry. Now, they're competing with the rising tide of expectations from across every industry. And yet with more competition than ever before, there are loads of companies that haven't evolved to meet their customers' needs and expectations.</p> <p>Brian Whipple: You know, we put a man on the moon 50 years ago, right? We can have, uh, diapers delivered for our baby in two hours, just in a few clicks. Yet at the same time, have you tried on a sport coat in a dressing room at a high end department store lately? It's the exact same processes from maybe 50 years ago, maybe even longer. It hasn't changed at all. These technologies are long present. They are completely available, but these companies have not broken through the permission barrier to innovate.</p> <p>JOSH: This permission barrier Brian is talking about – it's this invisible boundary separating</p>
09:00	<p>"innovation" from "the way we've always done things." And many companies just don't want to be the first one to cross it. Why is that?</p> <p>Brian Whipple: Well, there is the immense power of inertia and, uh, risk aversion. And it is a lot easier for these companies to keep doing what they've been doing and perhaps generate mediocre results rather than take some risk. I will say that beyond that, and I don't consider that to be a sufficient answer, it is a mystery.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>JOSH: It's a mystery for sure... Resisting customer experience innovation is a massive missed opportunity. Accenture's research has shown there's significant differences in profit.</p> <p>Brian Whipple: Experience-led companies outperform industry peers by sixfold in profitability growth.</p> <p>JOSH: So – Customers' liquid expectations have been growing for the last decade or so as these innovative companies set new standards. But 2020 accelerated</p>

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10:00	<p>this... in an unexpected way. The pandemic, the economic crisis, and the social crisis led customers to reevaluate their purchasing behavior. Now, they're demanding more than just a seamless interface. They want to spend their dollars with brands who share their values.</p> <p>Brian Whipple: Arguably the path to profit is through purpose. And there are empirical reasons for that. If you look at the transfer of wealth that's upcoming in the world in the next few years. The people on the receiving end of that macro transfer of wealth feel drastically differently about the companies that they're buying their products from, about where their goods are made, about the labor practices that are used in making them, about the sustainability nature of these goods and services. So that purpose element is a critical element of the business strategy going forward and that has not historically been true. Historically it's been, like, a sister effort.</p>
11:00	<p>Now it is core.</p> <p>JOSH: So how does a company become a Business of Experience company?</p> <p>Brian Whipple: It's got to start from the, from the grassroots, ground up, what is the customer need? What do they, not want, but what do they value? And it has to start with that. It doesn't start with engineering. It doesn't start with technology. It doesn't start with what we can do. It has to start with what we should do based on who our customer is and what they value.</p> <p>ELISE: OK. This is about to sound like a major understatement, Josh, but there's one thing that's really been exposed by this pandemic and quarantine lifestyle, which is there are a lot of things about our interaction with businesses that could be fixed.</p> <p>JOSH: Yes. It, it seems like it, the pandemic has highlighted things which before were sort of annoying...</p> <p>ELISE: Mm-hmm.</p> <p>JOSH: ...and now much more than annoying.</p> <p>ELISE: [laughs]</p> <p>JOSH: Like, uh, like, for example,</p>

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12:00	<p>um, waiting on hold is killing me now.</p> <p>ELISE: Oh! You're still waiting on hold for 20 minutes? That does sound like something from yesteryear.</p> <p>JOSH: Yeah. Yeah. This kind of stuff should be fixable, right?</p> <p>ELISE: Mm-hmm. I feel like my requests during this time of quarantine are so much more simple and yet thorny. Right? Like, I just really want businesses to reinvent or to step in to rethink childcare.</p> <p>JOSH: Yes.</p> <p>ELISE: Um. There's a lot of things about life in, in 2021 that are challenging and so in order for a company to be adaptable, to be a BX company, um, they have to be super flexible as our needs change and our situations change. And that's not always easy.</p> <p>JOSH: And, and it's not just the flexibility, companies have to really track customer needs and then adapt to them in real time. And they also have to do it during a little thing like a pandemic. Good news is I recently got to catch up with someone at Accenture who studies customer behavior, and has done each and every year.</p>
13:00	<p>And then goes through and distills that information into something called Fjord Trends. And these trends are calling out the biggest challenges for companies. So, it gives them a blueprint for understanding and meeting these challenges, so that companies can deliver a more holistic experience to customers.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>Mark Curtis: I cannot remember a year, not only since we've been doing Trends, but since I've been working, where consumer behavior has changed so much. There just has never been a year like it, at least not stretching back to probably the Second World War.</p> <p>JOSH: This is Mark Curtis, the Global Lead for Innovation and Thought Leadership at Accenture Interactive.</p> <p>Mark Curtis: Everybody knows that what business had to do, with incredible alacrity, back in, well, in many countries in March, April, was to completely reconfigure their supply chains, and therefore actually, their entire infrastructure around this new reality. And, in so doing, they learnt a lot about what they could do,</p>

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14:00	<p>and began to ruminate on that and think, "Well, maybe there are different ways of doing things here." That means let's draw new maps. Let's see what the world should look like the way we want it to be and begin to design around that.</p> <p>JOSH: So in analyzing 2020, Accenture pinpointed seven main trends that will really shape how businesses can transform their customers' experiences. And today, we're going to focus on two — and both of them were driven by the extreme changes to our lives that began during the pandemic. And the first has dominated virtually everyone's lives. It's called Collective Displacement.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>Mark Curtis: ... Which is that quite literally, we've been displaced in a whole number of different ways. So there's the obvious displacement, where we're doing things at different times, in different places. Activities that we thought we did over there, we're now doing over here. And we may be doing them at different times of the day or week, or with a different regularity. But then you've also got the displacement in our sense of empowerment.</p>
15:00	<p>So these, these collective displacements, they're around us in a whole number of very, very important ways. The customer you thought you knew is actually gone. They're different now in time and space. And how do we make ourselves visible to our customers? And, and all of that needs to be rethought.</p> <p>JOSH: Thinking about displacement, few organizations were harder hit than those in the health sector. But being a telehealth business, SimpleHealth was in a great position to keep delivering to customers despite their patients sheltering in place. Here's Carrie SiuButt again:</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: Before the pandemic, 11% of a small population was using telehealth, telemedicine. The pandemic took that from 11% to 76% overnight. Right? We were forced to use this platform. We were forced to get our needs figured out online, when we weren't leaving our houses.</p> <p>JOSH: SimpleHealth also had to contend with a displacement beyond the physical one... as women were displaced from the workforce</p>

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16:00	<p>and many of them lost health insurance. In December of 2020 alone, employers cut 140,000 jobs. And women accounted for ALL of them. Despite that, SimpleHealth saw 200% growth in the first few months of the pandemic.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: We literally waived consultation fees for anyone that wrote into us and said, "Hi, I lost my job, but I really need birth control." And in some cases, we actually said, "You know what? Just take it, we'll, we'll cover it for you for, for a month, so you, you get your feet on the ground."</p> <p>JOSH: When the US Postal Service and other delivery companies were experiencing massive shipping delays because of the pandemic, SimpleHealth thought deeply about what their customers really needed — and adapted. They moved up shipping times and automatically refilled prescriptions for emergency contraception. And Carrie says there was a clear and resounding response from their patients.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: We're actually seeing an uptick in feedback, because people just want to write in and say, you know, some people have said,</p>
17:00	<p>"Look, you guys are a godsend, especially during these difficult times, for people who have lost insurance."</p> <p>JOSH: SimpleHealth had a huge impact on patients' sense of agency and control, which had otherwise been massively displaced.</p> <p>Carrie SiuButt: You can't control how you feel at your time of the month. You can't control how you feel, you know, if you have a flare up with endo or PCOS, but what you can control is knowing that you have someone right there with you that will give you the prescription you need when you need it.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>JOSH: Alright, Elise, how much screen time have you had last year?</p> <p>ELISE: Oh. I don't know if "infinite" is a count.</p> <p>JOSH: Rough, rough, roughly continuously? 24/7?</p> <p>ELISE: [laughs]</p> <p>JOSH: Yes. Part of my experience for that has been a realization that my love affair with the internet has hit a, a little bit of a rocky bump.</p> <p>ELISE: Well, that happens when you find the end of the internet.</p>

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18:00	<p>JOSH: Yeah. [laughs] And maybe we're there. Well, I feel more like the internet needs a little bit of personal growth. And it's not just the internet, I, for me, particularly, it's the interfaces, the way that we're, we are interacting with each other. Everything's on a screen now.</p> <p>ELISE: Right. It has adapted the way that my daughter even relates to people. My oldest daughter, who is eight, um, we got into an argument and she felt like she was unheard or unseen and she said to me, "Mom! I'm not on mute!"</p> <p>JOSH: [laughs]</p> <p>ELISE: Um, and she was like, live, in front of me, right? So it's just an example of how we've had to, like, our realities have adjusted to ones that exist on screen. It all feels like the same and there's no delineation between work and leisure. This is why Zoom birthday parties can be so exhausting, right, because it actually feels a lot like your 9:00 A.M. work meeting.</p> <p>JOSH: Yeah. Yeah. It's a, a remarkably similar. In both cases I always need more coffee.</p> <p>ELISE: Right.</p> <p>JOSH: So that, that screen fatigue that you're feeling,</p>
19:00	<p>it's obviously super, super common. And it's a challenge for businesses. Think about it: To be a Business of Experience company, you have to meet that customer need – of alleviating screen fatigue when everything we do is on screens, and that requires a lot of creativity and innovation.</p> <p>Good news is that's the next Fjord Trend that we're about to dive into.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>Mark Curtis: We're spending so much more of our time absorbed by screens. For the logical reason that, in many cases, we're having to work, learn, shop, pretty much everything, we're having to do through screens.</p> <p>JOSH: That's Mark Curtis again. He says all our screen activity, and there's a lot of it these days, is increasingly monotonous.</p> <p>Mark Curtis: A lot of the designs that we're looking at, I wouldn't say they were stale, but they've become commoditized. So that differentiation in the minds of the customer is getting lower and lower and lower,</p>

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20:00	<p>between different activities that you do on the internet.</p> <p>JOSH: Mark says that so many of our screen experiences have been designed with similar interfaces. And it's not that they're poorly designed. Quite the opposite. They're designed for what works. But the problem is that we're using our screens for so many more aspects of our lives right now.</p> <p>Mark Curtis: That's creating this desire, I think, both on the part of customers to see something new, but also on the part of organizations to differentiate themselves in new ways...</p> <p>JOSH: This is called Interaction Wanderlust. It's our increasingly desperate desire for interactive experiences that are different.</p> <p>Mark Curtis: So we're seeing people beginning to explore much more immersive ways of using these platforms to create these interactions.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>Chris Milk: There's an expression that every, every disruptive technology at first, appears to be a toy to most.</p>
21:00	<p>JOSH: This Is Chris Milk. He's the founder and CEO of Within...</p> <p>Chris Milk: ...the makers of a product called Supernatural.</p> <p>JOSH: Supernatural is a completely revolutionary virtual workout product. It was named one of the best fitness inventions by Time Magazine in 2020. Chris Milk actually used to be a music video director working with some of the biggest musicians in the world. But eventually, he found his way into Virtual Reality. Using VR, he developed experiences for music, art, even multi-player gaming projects. But then... another possibility arose...</p> <p>Chris Milk: You start with a question, right. Um, and the, and the question for us was really, "What would it take to love rather than loathe working out?" I've never been able to find joy in running on a treadmill, but I've been able to find some of the most joyous moments in my life skiing.</p>

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22:00	<p>Chris Milk: I was in the best shape of my life. And, you know, never once did I think, "This, this is a slog." Every time I went around a turn on a downhill race, I never thought, "Oh, here comes another squat that I have to do. How many more squats before this is over?"</p> <p>JOSH: Chris, and his co-founder Aaron Copeland had noticed some really interesting effects that VR has on its users. First, when they'd previously worked on a multiplayer game, users would come out of the VR experience sweating and exhausted and, notably, gleefully laughing. And second...</p> <p>Chris Milk: Everyone that had a virtual reality experience that we'd show them would think that it was a shorter amount of time than it actually was. So someone would go into a headset for twenty-five minutes and they'd come out and they'd swear that they were in there for 10 minutes. I don't know the last time you ran on a treadmill and twenty-five minutes felt like 10, but I've never had that experience.</p>
23:00	<p>JOSH: So it became clear that perhaps the answer to that question, of how to love, rather than loathe working out, might be virtual reality.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>Chris Milk: To imagine Supernatural, imagine standing in your living room and putting on magic glasses and then suddenly being transported to Machu Picchu. And there's a coach that's virtually there with you, that roots you on, guides you through the experience.</p> <p>JOSH: Your favorite song comes on, and then all of a sudden these targets start flying through the air right at you, and you're smashing them. Lunging, squatting, ducking.</p> <p>Chris Milk: You're sweating and all while playing this sort of epic sport from the future, and you feel incredible. You don't even register the exercise part of it until you take off the headset and you're dripping in sweat.</p> <p>JOSH: And then the next day, you're sore. Like, surprisingly sore! Because you don't remember all of that cardio and squatting and lunging that you did.</p>

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24:00	<p>Chris Milk: If you can make an activity that is intrinsically fun on its own, that equation unlocks cardio exercise for a huge group of people potentially, that never really thought that they could be a person that exercises. They've never thought of themselves as, "I am a person that's healthy."</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>JOSH: Supernatural was developed before the onset of the pandemic because even before stay-at-home orders and gym closures, there was a massive group of people who wanted to exercise but hadn't found something that worked for them. But, through the pandemic, Supernatural has offered its users much more than a great workout. It's been an incredible antidote to users' Interaction Wanderlust. The photorealistic locations allowed people to escape from the monotony of their own four walls. For a brief moment, they could travel again. And with realistic renderings of coaches, people could be social again. And in fulfilling that need, Supernatural found an amazing business opportunity.</p>
25:00	<p>Chris Milk: I'm naturally inclined to believe that the best business decisions are based around, that providing a meaningful experience that you can give to people, um, that, that if you can resonate in someone's life, um, in a meaningful way, that there, there's a meaningful business to be built there.</p> <p><i>MUSIC</i></p> <p>ELISE: I love that. I love that there's a real return to humanity, um, from business, or at least we're hearing, um, Chris Milk talk about that, and Carrie SuiButt, earlier, with SimpleHealth, and that thinking about meaning, and giving customers meaning, has also benefited their bottom line.</p> <p>JOSH: Yeah. It, the, the thing that's strikes me most in listening to both these people is the authenticity in their mission. And I've got to believe that makes it a heck of a lot easier to make that, that focus on customer experience central to their business.</p> <p>ELISE: Right. And you know that they mean it when they talk about, um, focusing on customer experience</p>

Time	Script
26:00	<p>because in SimpleHealth's case, for example, it shifted the entire business of what it was doing in order to deliver what customers wanted.</p> <p><i>OUTRO MUSIC IN</i></p> <p>ELISE: To be a company that's truly dedicated to all aspects of customer experience these days, leaders need to be able to completely reorient their business around learning who their customers are, and what their needs are, so they can fulfill those needs and become a business of experience company.</p> <p>JOSH: And if a business can do that successfully, there's a ton of untapped growth to be had. And in order to take advantage of that opportunity, executives really need to be those leaders who are raising the bar like Carrie SiuButt and Chris Milk.</p> <p>ELISE: You can go to Accenture dot com slash built for change to learn more about the Business of Experience and this year's seven Fjord Trends. They're so insightful and include strategies like redefining rituals, being an empathetic brand, democratizing creativity to users, and more.</p>
27:00	<p>JOSH: Thanks to Brian Whipple and Mark Curtis from Accenture.</p> <p>ELISE: And Carrie SiuButt and Chris Milk, for talking with us.</p> <p>Josh: Built For Change is a podcast from Accenture.</p> <p><i>MUSIC OUT</i></p> <p>More episodes are coming soon. Follow, subscribe, and if you like what you hear, leave us a review.</p>
27:15	