CS 147 - Shopping Studio

ASSIGNMENT 2

POVs and Experience Prototypes

Introduction - Our Team


Alex F.


Tyler Y.


Joy Y.


Adam H.

Problem Domain

Our problem domain is empowering store workers in their relationship with customers and making the employee's knowledge and experience more accessible to the customers and other employees. Our people of interest right now are cashiers, baristas, retail associates, and all other customer-facing employees involved the in-store shopping experience.

Initial POV

We met Ken, a long-term worker at Trader Joe's for 9 years. We were amazed to realize that he's never worked a second job, despite high employee turnover at his location. It would be game-changing if there was a way he could somehow make his knowledge and expertise accessible to customers and other employees.

Additional Needfinding Results

To build upon our initial POV, we conducted interviews with four more people in and around Tresidder Student Union on campus.

We talked with Shrada, an international student from New Delhi. When asked about how shopping in the US compares to that in India, she talked about street shopping and the bargaining that occurs when shopping in India. She described how bargaining can make or

break a customer's relationship with the storekeeper as she relayed the negative aspects of bargaining, such as how time-consuming it is, requires a lot of effort, and the item being bargained isn't worth it sometimes. Also, she rarely shops for clothes online because of concerns about fit, texture, and quality.

We also talked with Ramiro, an international student from Mexico. He describes himself as an infrequent shopper since he only goes into stores to buy clothes, but buys everything else (electronics, books, etc.) online. In terms of quality control, Ramiro finds customer reviews useful, but still subjective. When asked about his relationship as a customer to store workers, he said that the Starbucks barista knows his name, but this is not the reason why he returns to Starbucks.

We met Natalie and Matt, a couple of physical therapists visiting Stanford for the first time from Miami, Florida. When asked about their experiences with shopping, they both expressed point-blank that they disliked shopping. They feel a sort of loyalty to their local grocery store because the clerk there knows their name and gives them special treatment. They said that they mostly shop online for non-clothing items because of concerns about quality, so they sometimes check out items in a store and then proceed to buy them online. Natalie said that "We don't have much room, so if we don't NEED things, we don't buy it" and Matt said that "[I] always research the items I want to buy and a parking spot before going to a store".

Three Revised POVs and HMWs

POV and HMWs #1: Integrate online and in-person shopping

We met Natalie and Matt, a physical therapist couple from Miami. We were amazed to realize that, despite striving for efficiency while shopping, purchasing an item is a multi-step process for them. It would be game-changing if there was a way to integrate online and in-store shopping into a single unified experience.

- *How might we enable customers to locate products in-store as seamlessly as they an navigate an online shopping site?
- How might we allow store workers to help customers shop online?
- How might we get the selection of online shopping, but in-store?
- How might we allow customers to interact with the products (touch, feel, etc.) while shopping online?
- How might we make it easy to get the fit right during online clothes shopping?
- How might we provide the same relationship-based customer experience to online shoppers?
- How might we facilitate the development of relationships between online shoppers and store workers?
- How might we allow remote workers to assist remote shoppers (move the entire shopping experience online, without sacrificing worker-shopper relationship)?
- How might we imitate the immediacy of possessing a bought item in-store to online shopping?
- How might we make online shopping a more social environment, similar to going to the store or mall with others?

POV and HMWs #2: Build customer-worker relationships

We met Shrada, a Stanford undergrad from New Delhi. We were amazed to realize that the act of bargaining can often build or destroy relationships between customers and shop keepers. It would be game-changing if there were a tool that helps any employee develop personal rapport with the customers.

- *How might we help any socially-awkward employee build rapport with customers?
- How might we encourage customers to reach out when they need help?
- How might we make store workers more approachable?
- How might we build lasting relationships between store workers and returning customers?

- How might we match up store workers and customers who share a mutual desire for interacting with each other?
- How might we allow store workers to brighten up a customer's shopping experience?
- How might we incorporate the social aspect of bargaining, but reduce the stress and effort associated with such an act?
- How might we encourage returning customers to get help from store workers that they liked working with in the past?
- How might we build rapport with customers that shop online?
- How might we let customers know that store workers genuinely enjoy interacting with their customers?

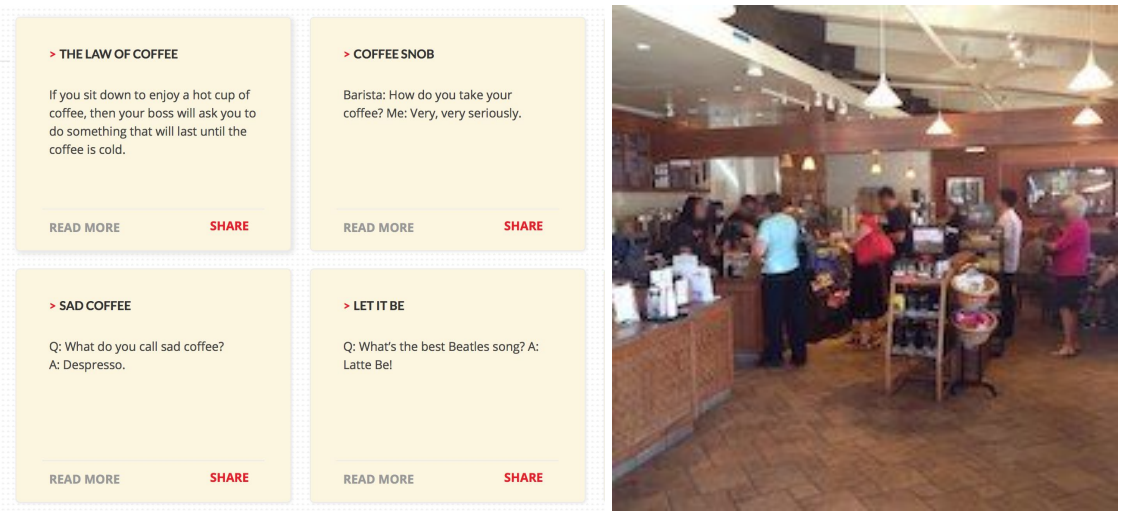
POV and HMWs #3: Measure customer service skills

We met Jeremy, a Peet's coffee shop manager. We were amazed to realize the he derives much of his happiness from mentoring his younger colleagues. It would be game-changing if there was a way for managers to track and develop employees' service skills.

- *How might we create a mechanism for managers and employees to measure and improve their customer service skills?
- How might we train managers how to effectively manage workers?
- How might we remind employees to expect this kind of relationship with their mentor?
- How might we integrate vocational studies into a store-setting?
- How might we encourage employees to hone their craft?
- How might we build an employee's reputation across multiple jobs?
- How might we implement a mentor/mentee mindset between managers and their employees?
- How might we notify store workers of personalized, instant feedback from a customer that they helped?
- How might we implement a customer service resume that a store worker can provide other potential employers?
- How might we allow frequent customers to provide references for a well-loved store worker?

Three Solutions and Experience Prototypes

Experience Prototype #1: Coffee + Joke

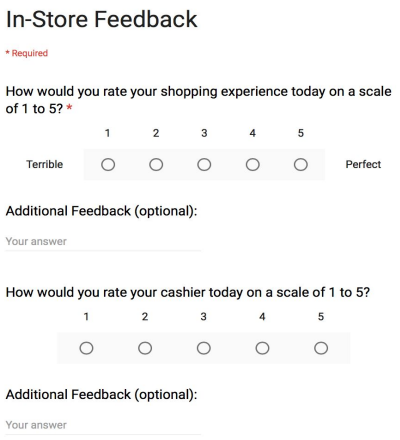


For this experience prototype, we are assuming that something as simple as telling a joke to the customer would improve the customer's experience and make that customer more likely to remember the barista's name. We made the prototype by listing out a handful of jokes related to coffee, since we were testing this prototype in/around Peet's Coffee in Town and Country. We tested the prototype by roleplaying serving a customer coffee with a joke. We measure the impact on customer experience, such as rating the employee actor and seeing if the customer could remember his/her name. As a whole, this prototype did not work very well since the Peet's barista was not allowed to read from a script given to him because of company policy and the Peet's customer we roleplayed with (Rachel) just responded with uncomfortable confusion. We learned that humor varies between people and how important delivery of the joke is. As a result, we concluded that a one-size fits all template that helps workers bond with customers through humor is unfeasible.

Experience Prototype #2: CVS Map

The assumptions we were testing with this prototype was that most customers go into a store knowing what they want to buy and that those customers are looking for the most efficient and effortless way of obtaining these items. We also wanted to make in-store shopping as quick and easy to navigate as online stores. We made the prototype by creating a mock grocery list and a mock map of CVS with the items on the grocery list marked and the most efficient path for obtaining these items. We tested the prototype by asking a CVS customer (Rachel) how long they estimated it would take them to obtain the 10 items on the list and then how long they estimated it would take with the CVS map. We then further tested it by having both Adam and Joy try to gather the items on the list, but Adam was following the CVS map. The assumption that a map would make a shopping experience faster was valid. We learned that having a map of the store does make the shopping quicker and more efficient by 66%.

Experience Prototype #3: Real-Time Customer Feedback


In-Store Feedback

* Required

How would you rate your shopping experience today on a scale of 1 to 5? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Terrible	○	○	○	○	○	Perfect

Additional Feedback (optional):

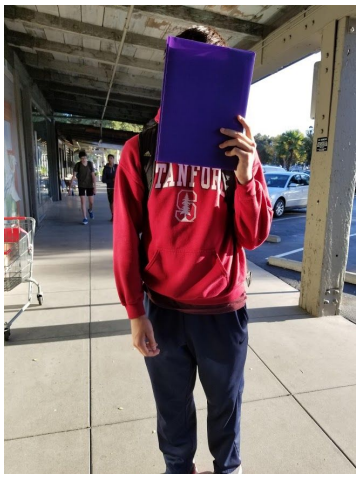
Your answer

How would you rate your cashier today on a scale of 1 to 5?

1	2	3	4	5
○	○	○	○	○

Additional Feedback (optional):

Your answer



The assumptions we were testing with this prototype was that if offered a very convenient mechanism for rating their store experience and cashier, customers would provide valuable feedback. We made the prototype by creating a simple 10-second rating card with a 1-5 star rating system about the store experience and the cashier, as well as one or two lines to elaborate. We tested this prototype by waiting outside CVS and, as a customer exited, we approached them and had them fill out our feedback card about the experience they just had with their cashier. Based on our prototype, we found that the customer rated his cashier a 5 out of 5 stars overall and did not have specific feedback to give. The customer did not remember his cashier's name. Overall, the results of this test was mixed and providing an immediate feedback card to a customer might be overkill.

Key Takeaways

The key takeaways from the additional needfinding and experience prototypes was that there are many tradeoffs involved in our prototypes. For example, telling a joke and rating every interaction created more inefficiency than good, and ultimately hurt the customer experience while attempting to improve it. On the other hand, the improvement in time efficiency with the CVS map proved to be significant. This path with the store map shows promise if we can figure out a way to deliver the map to the customer quickly enough so that the saved time is worth it even when the added time of retrieving the map is factored in.