

Advice report

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Introduction

What is “Night of the Nerds”?

Night of the Nerds is an event where young people (ages 14-20) can explore the latest advancements in innovation, technology, and creativity. With 3,500-4,000 attendees and a program featuring over 100 activities, it’s a vibrant place for showcasing ideas.

Our task for the project was to develop an innovative solution (e.g., VR, AR, interactive video, or game) aimed at encouraging teens to reduce their consumption of fast fashion due to its significant environmental impact.

Our team decided to create a choice-based game centered on making thoughtful shopping decisions to save enough money for the perfect prom outfit. Every decision impacts the player's journey, leading to different possible endings.

This report evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of our final product to provide recommendations for improvement. By analyzing user feedback and areas for improvement, we aim to analyze our solution and offer advice for future development. Specifically, we will:

- Examine game mechanics that may confuse the target audience based on user testing insights and suggest improvements.
- Address features we could not implement, explaining their potential value and proposing ways to implement them.

The sections that follow delve deeper into these aspects. After introducing the project and product, we describe our methodology for crafting recommendations.

In the **current situation** section, we provide context on the problem of fast fashion and its environmental impact, as well as its appeal to teens.

The **solution** section outlines our idea, detailing its purpose, mechanics, and development process.

The **SWOT analysis** section explains the concept and breaks down the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of our product.

Finally, in the **advice and recommendations** section, we suggest practical improvements to address identified challenges, propose how to incorporate unimplemented features, and describe an implementation plan. We also evaluate potential risks associated with these changes.

The report concludes with an abstract summarizing our findings and a final conclusion drawn from all the analyzed information.

Methodology

To write this report, we used several techniques from the CMD methods pack, including *library study*¹, *usability tests*², and *expert interviews*³.

Our team reviewed previous research to determine whether our final product matched with the findings and the target audience's needs. This helped identify the solution's strengths and weaknesses.

Multiple usability tests were conducted with teens, who played the game and provided feedback. These sessions helped uncover gaps and areas for improvement, which are detailed in the recommendations.

We gathered insights from teachers to gain diverse perspectives. This allowed us to identify recurring patterns and additional areas needing improvement.

Current situation

Fast fashion is one of the most environmentally damaging industries globally. Each year, massive amounts of textiles are discarded, polluting landfills and oceans, harming wildlife, and contributing to climate change. *The industry is the second-biggest consumer of water and is responsible for about 10% of global carbon emissions – more than all international flights and maritime shipping combined.*⁴

This issue is present due to fast fashion retailers like H&M and Shein. Teens are the largest consumer group, influenced by peer pressure and trends.

¹ <https://cmdmethods.nl/cards/library/literature-study>

² <https://cmdmethods.nl/cards/lab/usability-testing>

³ <https://cmdmethods.nl/cards/library/expert-interview>

⁴ <https://earth.org/fast-fashions-detrimental-effect-on-the-environment/>

Our solution

Based on research into Dutch teens' shopping habits and opinions on alternatives like high-end brands, upcycling, and second-hand clothing, we developed a choice-based game to promote awareness of sustainable shopping options.

Game Concept

The game takes place in one school year, starting with a budget of €200 and a wardrobe from the previous year. Players must attend multiple events where they choose to either wear existing clothes or buy new ones. The goal is to save enough money to purchase the ultimate prom outfit, reflecting a key concern for many teens: looking their best at prom.

SWOT of current product

The good and bad details will be categorized based on the SWOT analysis which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This framework is used to analyze projects and businesses with the purpose of evaluating a company's competitive position and to develop strategic planning.

Strengths

- Functional gameplay with a clear storyline.
- Research-backed concept.
- Consistent design.
- Relatable narrative for the target audience.

Weaknesses

- Lack of clarity in showing how events affect clothing durability.
- Missing features like repairing or selling clothes.
- Unrealistic budget due to a lack in research about Dutch teens' allowances.
- Poor notifications about durability drops for all wardrobe items.
- Excludes boys interested in fashion.

Opportunities

- Additional research could improve game mechanics such as:
 - Balance budget mechanics to reflect realistic spending habits.
 - Highlight negative consequences specifically for fast fashion.
 - Add a leaderboard to increase competition during events.

Threats

- Limited time for development.
- Missing features and unclear mechanics could reduce the game's impact

Advice and recommendations

Based on the analysis of the current state of the product, the following advice and recommendations aim to improve the effectiveness and impact of the choice-based game in promoting sustainable shopping habits among teens. These suggestions address key weaknesses, unimplemented features, and opportunities identified during user testing and expert consultations.

1. Add durability feedback:

Players need to see how their choices affect their clothes. Adding a durability bar or pop-up messages after events could make this clearer.

2. Adjust the starting budget:

The €200 budget should reflect the actual allowances of Dutch teens. More research is needed to determine what's realistic.

3. Include repair and sell options:

Players should be able to repair clothes to restore their durability or sell them to earn extra money.

4. Make the game more inclusive:

The game should include options for boys, like tuxedos or other clothing choices, and more unisex designs.

5. Add a leaderboard:

A scoring system that rewards eco-friendly decisions and smart budget management would make the game more competitive and engaging.

6. Highlight sustainable choices:

Use color-coded labels or animations to show which choices are eco-friendly and which ones harm the environment.

Implementation plan

To ensure the effective enhancement of the game, a phased implementation plan has been developed. This plan outlines the necessary steps, prioritization, and resources required to address the identified weaknesses, integrate unimplemented features, and capitalize on opportunities.

Phase 1: Fix the biggest problems

- Add durability feedback and adjust the budget.
- Test these changes with teens to ensure they work well.

Phase 2: Add new features

- Develop options for repairing and selling clothes.
- Make the storyline more inclusive with choices for boys and unisex clothing.

Phase 3: Improve the user interface (UI)

- Add a leaderboard to encourage competition.
- Use color-coded labels and animations to emphasize sustainability.

Risks

Implementing the proposed changes and enhancements to the game involves certain risks. Below is an analysis of potential risks and how to deal with them:

1. Limited time:

If time runs out, focus on the most important features, like fixing unclear mechanics.

2. Not enough resources:

If the team is too small, outsource tasks like graphics or animations to speed up development.

3. Complicated features:

Test new features with teens to ensure they are easy to understand and don't overwhelm players.

4. Weak educational message:

Work closely with players during testing to ensure the game teaches its message clearly.

Abstract

This report evaluates a choice-based game created to teach teens about sustainable shopping. The game encourages players to make thoughtful decisions about their budget and shopping habits while aiming for their dream prom outfit.

Through a SWOT analysis, we identified strengths (relatable story, research-based concept), weaknesses (unclear mechanics, missing features), and opportunities for improvement. Recommendations include adding feedback on clothing durability, more realistic budgets, repair/sell mechanics, and a leaderboard to make the game more engaging and impactful.

By addressing these areas, the game can better inspire teens to make sustainable shopping choices and raise awareness about the environmental harm of fast fashion.

Conclusion

The choice-based game is a good way to teach teens about sustainable shopping and the effects of fast fashion. However, it can be improved by making the gameplay easier to understand, adding more inclusive options, and making the messages clearer. Fixing the problems and using feedback from players can make the game more fun and effective. To do this, it's important to focus on the most important changes and use resources wisely to finish on time. The game has the potential to help teens change their shopping habits and shows how games can tackle important social and environmental issues.

Sources

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