

***Fall 2021 Student Business analytics***

***D'amore McKim***

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***Boston***

## IDENTIFYING CUSTOMER NEEDS

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MKTG 6214

June 1, 2022

**Objective:**

Gathering functional/business and market requirements from backpackers in order to identify customer needs for a water purification device that is used for multiple-day backpacking activities. We will focus on outlining the various needs and capturing the features that are desired by the customer.

**Mission Statement:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Water Filtration Device** | |
| **Product Description** | Water filtration device remove pollutants including sediment, taste and odor, hardness, and germs from water, resulting in higher-quality water. |
| **Benefits Proposition** | Filters dirty water to remove harmful substances and provide clean drinking water. |
| **Key Business goals** | Gain a greater market share as compared to the existing one.  Working on securing 50 % gross margins or more. |
| **Primary Market** | Back Packers, Hikers, Alpinist. |
| **Secondary Market** | Casual Tourists, seasonal campers. |
| **Assumptions** | Handy, not bulky and could be used on the go. |
| **Stakeholders** | Consumers, investors, producers, customer service, legal team. |

**Step 1: Gather Raw Data from Customers**

**Interview Details**

**Interviewee Name:** Ashwin Unnikrishnan (Backpacker, Google Guide level 8, 25 states and 5 union territories covered)

**Interviewer Name:** Farhan Imam

**Date:** 23rd May 2022

**Eliciting customer needs:**

**Q1.** Where do you source water from when going on backpacking trip that lasts for multiple days?

**Ans.** WhenI go for trips that last for more than 2-3 days, I make sure to carry bottles that have an inbuilt filter, or I carry a filter which has the ability to perform reverse osmosis.

**Q2.** What method do you use to filter your water?

**Ans.** I drink from fresh water sources if available, if not, I rely on my water bottle’s built-in filter device, but it generally takes a while to filter it.

**Q3.** What is the size of the water bottle that you generally use?

**Ans.**  2 bottles of 1 Liter each.

**Q4.** What is one of the disadvantages of existing water filters?

**Ans.** They take too long to filter and makes it a very time-consuming process.

**Q5.** What issues do you think can be improved in the existing filters.

**Ans.** Increase the time it takes to filter the water and it should be instantaneous.

**Step 2: Interpret Raw Data in Terms of Customer Needs**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Customer:  Address: 16 Westland ave, Boston 02115 |  | | Interviewer: Farhan  Date: May 23,2022. | |  |
| **Telephone:** | 8573347071 | | **Currently Uses: Water filter in the bottle** | |  |
| **Willing to follow-up?** | Yes | | **Type of User:** **Backpacker** | |  |
| **Question/Prompt** | | **Customer Statement** | | **Interpreted Need** | |
| Typical Uses | | I need a water filtration device that filters water on the go. | | The water filter should filter water in minimum possible time. | |
| Should not remove essential minerals. | | The filter should not filter out essential minerals good for the body. | |
| Likes – Current Tool | | It is handy and can easily fit in a backpack. | | The filter should not take up a lot of space and easy to carry. | |
| I don’t have to separately carry the filter; it is already a part of the water bottle that I carry. | | Carrying the water bottle and the filter separately is hassle for the consumer, the filter can be part of the bottle. | |
| Dislikes – Current Tool | | Takes more than a minutes to filter one sip of clean water. | | Should filter water on the go as it would quench the traveler’s thirst and not prolong the process unnecessarily. | |
| Zinc, salt, potassium, magnesium, iron, calcium, and bicarbonate are some of the vital elements found in drinking water which get removed when filter does not filter correctly. | | Should not filter out important minerals like Zinc, salt, potassium, magnesium, iron, calcium, and bicarbonate. | |
| Suggested Improvements | | Make a detachable filter that instantly filters water in real time and can be removed from the bottle. | | The bottle will have a detachable water filter which comes off when there is fresh water available and there will be extra room for water in the bottle. | |
| Use thermal material to keep the water warm/cold for a longer time along with the detachable feature. | | Build the bottle/filter with thermal insulators so that the temperature of water is maintained. | |
|  | | Add a phone holder at the top of the bottle which will act as a tripod stand and can save a lot of space for the backpacker. | | Engineer a design at the top of the bottle/filter so that it can hold a phone and be used as a tripod stand when needed. | |

**Step 3: Establish the Relative Importance of the Needs**

**Hierarchical list of needs of the customer**

**The water filter has variety of features.**

\*\*\*The filter should not take too long to filter.

\*\*\*The water filter can filter out 2 liters of water under one minute.

\*\*The price point of the filter should be between $30-$50.

\*\*\*The filter does not discard important minerals like Zinc, salt, potassium, magnesium, iron, calcium, and bicarbonate.

\*\*\*The filter is not bulky and does not take a lot of space.

\*The filter performs reverse osmosis.

**Ease of Use**

**\*\*\***Should not have multiple parts and be easily portable

\*\*\* Should function for a good duration of time

\*\*Should work with stagnant water.

\*Should not remain wet for long after use.

**The filter should be at a convenient price point**

**\*\*\***Should be between $30-$50

\* Should not be less than $30

\*\*Should have material according to the prize point

\*\*\* Should include thermal insulation if price point is more than $45.

**Step 4: Establish the Relative Importance of the Needs.**

The following features were ranked in order of significance by the interviewee:

1. The Filter should filter in the shortest amount of time possible.

2. Thermal insulation is supported by the filter.

3. The essential minerals are retained by the filter.

4. The price of the filter bottle does not surpass $60.

5. The filter isn't too heavy to carry or has an odd form.

6. The top of the filter bottle features a tripod stand.

7. The filter can be detached from the bottle and attached to it.

Unique features that the interviewee desired:

1. The top of the filter bottle features a tripod stand.

2. A built in compass on the lid.

3.Filter could detach and attach to a bottle to save space.

# **Step 5: Reflect on the Results and Process**

Q1. Have we interacted with all of the important types of customers in our target market?

* Answer. The entire target market consists of [1]:
* [Long-Distance Hiking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#longDistanceHiking)
* [Thru-Hiking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#thruHiking)
* [Section Hiking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#sectionHiking)
* [Overnight Hiking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#overnightHiking)
* [Fastpacking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#fastpacking)
* [Ultralight Backpacking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#ultralightBackpacking)
* [Mountaineering](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#mountaineering)
* [Mountain Backpacking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#mountainBackpacking)
* [Travel Backpacking](https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#travelBackpacking)

We have just interviewed one segment and there is scope of improvement as we move ahead with insights from different kind of back packers and create a product that could be liked in the shared space of the back packers.

Q2. Are there areas of inquiry we should pursue in follow-up interviews or surveys?

We've only interviewed one sector, so there's room for development as we gather more information from other types of backpackers and develop a product that will be popular in the shared environment of backpackers.

Q3. Which of the customer(s) we spoke to would be good participant(s) in our ongoing development efforts?

When it comes time for product requirements, designing and testing, the interviewee in this case would be a terrific participant to use. We could use him/her as an essential component of the stage-gate process.

Q4. What do we know now that we didn't know when we started? Are we surprised by any of the needs?

It really caught my attention when the interviewee had the brilliant idea of adding a tripod stand at the top of the bottle which can be good for filming purposes for which backpackers have to carry extra equipment.

Q5. How might we improve the process in future efforts?

After getting initial insights, we may conduct interviews with various client groups to learn more about their specific needs and to understand if there are any problems with proposed filter with them. As a result, rather than fulfilling the needs of a single person, the proposed water bottle might cover the needs of a large group of people.

**References:**

**1.** “Types of Backpacking - Grasp Outdoors - Preparing Adventures.” *Grasp Outdoors*, 3 Mar. 2021, https://graspoutdoors.com/types-of-backpacking/#mountainBackpacking.