**ASSIGNMENT – 4A**

**REDEFINING SHOPPING CART EXPERIENCE**

With the rise in the use of digital technology in the 21st century and the pace with which the technology is evolving, eCommerce is one such field which has completely changed shopping experience for customers. Now purchasing products is made possible within the comfort of homes with a few clicks on any device. Whilst shopping has never been as convenient and efficient as it is at present, there are still some challenges that still plague the eCommerce experience for users, one of such challenge being shopping cart abandonment.

Shopping cart abandonment is an ecommerce challenge where customers add their product to shopping carts for purchase, but they do not complete the transaction process for the same and end up not making the purchase. Not only this challenge leads to major revenue losses, but this also leads to businesses losing out on potential customers and it also adversely affects customer retention in their respective businesses over long operational term. The customers are left unsatisfied with the ecommerce experience and therefore it is a UI/UX challenge for businesses to deal with.

There are various reasons that leads up to customers or users to eventually ‘abandon their shopping carts’ and not making the purchase. While there is very little that can be done by UI/UX team to tackle reasons such as users only intending to browse or research products for comparing products at different ecommerce sites, which eventually makes this challenge ever present and inevitable in the first place. There are other reasons for shopping cart abandonment that can be dealt with through redesigning and redefining the UI/UX aspect of ecommerce. These reasons include but are not limited to:

* Lack of transparency regarding shipping: Shipping costs are one of the major contributing factors for users to abandon their shopping carts even after they are very close to completing the transactional process. Users may either be unaware of the shipping cost, the shipping cost itself might be expensive, or the lack of shipping options based on user’s mode of delivery needs (whether to expedite the delivery process or not) might influence their decision to abandon their shopping carts.
* Poor UI/UX design: Poorly planned UI/UX design leads to an experience for customers that is confusing, complex, and inefficient which tempts user to resort to alternative ecommerce solutions to fulfill their purchase requirements. One such example of poor UI/UX design could include the lack of optionality for guest checkout suited for users who do not wish to create an account with the ecommerce website.
* Security Issues with ecommerce site: The use of untrusted third-party payment gateway methods or complex transactional process leads to users/ customers losing their trust and confidence on an ecommerce service.

SOLUTIONS:

* One such solution regarding the lack of transparency in ecommerce applications, especially involving shipping costs can be implemented by providing a shipping cost estimate next to products catalog itself which is dictated by the delivery and shipping details provided by the user during account creation or while entering an email address and the addresses associated with it, for guest check in for a quick purchase. This will give user better estimate beforehand regarding shipping before the users add product to cart which will save customers/users from the frustration of discarding the product they wanted to purchase.
* Users can also be provided with an option to check in as guest without having to enforce the creation of an account to further proceed with the purchase to streamline user experience.
* Another solution pertaining to the UI/UX design would involve the use of a progress bar to help users navigate through the ecommerce process from creating an account or checking in as guest to adding products to cart and completing the transaction process to purchase the product. Providing visual cues of the entire process will provide a more intuitive and interactive experience to users, it will remove the hesitation gap for users since the entire process of browsing and purchasing will become more impulsive, making the user experience more seamless.
* Providing a more seamless, intuitive sign in options with the adoption of password less login tools and single sign on (SSO) systems will tempt users to use the ecommerce service more often for consistent, quick shopping experience. Adoption of such tools will further streamline the user’s shopping experience.
* Users must also be clearly and explicitly informed of the transactional process especially when an external payment processor is in use for an ecommerce application. This will help instill confidence and trust in users for using the service. Disclaiming users beforehand of the process will help clear any uncertainty and hesitance amongst users/customers. The payment processing features whether external or integrated within the ecommerce application itself must have authentication and encryption features to assure users that the business has taken the necessary steps from their end to address all the security concerns that comes with using any form of digital technology.