

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
JINDAL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

MIS 6396 USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN
PROF. ANGELA A. NEAL

Marshall

USER RESEARCH – CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY

A REPORT BY
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Date
11 march, 2025

Participant
Shivani — speaker user

Location
Shivani's home

Project drivers

- **Purpose:** improve user experience with the **Marshall Emberton II**
- **Stakeholders:** Marshall design and product teams, users
- **Goals of stakeholders:** better product quality, enhanced connectivity, higher customer satisfaction

Project constraints

- **Budget:** N/A (unless discussing product cost constraints)
- **Timeline:** 1 hour
- **Technology:** bluetooth connectivity, battery life



Photographed by Sysha
The Marshall Emberton II at Shivani's home

Goals

- Understand how Shivani interacts with the Marshall Emberton II in a real-life setting.
- Identify functional and non-functional requirements.
- Uncover any constraints or frustrations.
- Capture user feedback and behavior directly through observation and quotes.

Requirements

Functional:

- Clear and multiple Bluetooth pairing
- Strong audio output at all volume levels
- Consistent connectivity

Non-Functional:

- Portable and lightweight
- High durability and water resistance
- Design and aesthetics

Constraints

- Bluetooth connectivity limitations (number of devices)
- Accessories to aid experience should be included

Scenarios

- Using the speaker at home while cooking
- Pairing the speaker with multiple devices
- Carrying it outdoors for a relaxed evening

User Feedback Quotes

"IT'S SUPER EASY TO CONNECT."

"THE BATTERY LASTS REALLY LONG — I DON'T NEED TO CHARGE IT OFTEN."

"IT SOUNDS AMAZING INDOORS AND IS GOOD WITH BASS-HEAVY OUTPUT."

Introductory Questions

1. Can you tell me a bit about how often you use the Marshall Emberton II?

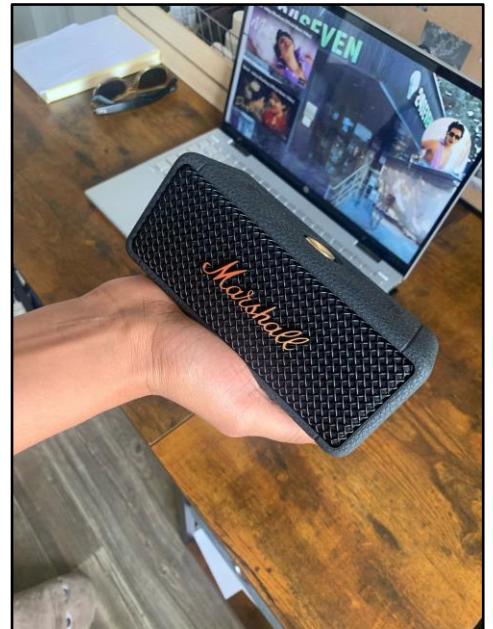
Sure, I use it on a daily basis, usually I just play music to either entertain myself or calm down after a stressful day...

2. How long have you had it?

It's been over 2 years.

3. What made you choose this speaker over others?

Honestly, the design. I love the classic gold on black grill.



Left: Front view;

Right: Proportions of the Emberton II while compared to Shivani's hand

Product Interaction & Usage (Functional + Non-Functional)

1. How do you typically use the speaker? (e.g., for music, podcasts, calls)

Like I said, listening to music mostly. I also do take calls, and the default setting is that the voice gets disconnected from the speaker and the output is transferred to the phone speaker and I quite like that actually.

2. Can you walk me through the process of connecting it to your phone or other devices?

Long press to power it on > Bluetooth button > pair; it's so simple.

3. What's the most important feature for you when using it?

Definitely the sound quality. All bass-heavy music sounds real good too.

4. Are there any particular features you don't use or find unnecessary?

Not really. I love that it has minimal functions. It has exactly what one needs, no extra stuff.

5. Do you use it indoors or outdoors more often? Why?

Usually indoors while cooking! I don't mind taking it outdoors sometimes for a relaxed evening. I'm comfortable because it's weather resistant.

6. How do you feel about the battery life?

I'm happy with it. The battery lasts really long, I don't need to charge it often. 1 charge (takes 2-3 hours) lasts me 30 hours and I only use the speaker for 1-2 hours at a stretch.

7. How loud do you usually play it? Does the sound quality change at higher volumes?

Medium usually, higher volume is also good.

8. How well does the Bluetooth connection hold up when you move around?

I'd say it's strong. I read that the range is 30 Ft. I'm still connected while roaming in the house so I'm good with that.

Problem Areas & Constraints

1. Have you ever faced any issues with the speaker? (e.g., connectivity, charging, sound quality)

Sometimes I wish I could connect more than 2 devices at once.

2. Does the speaker meet your expectations in terms of portability and durability?

Yes!

3. Are there any situations where you wish the speaker performed differently?

Maybe if it had AI integration in the form of a voice assistant, that'd be a bonus.

4. If you could change one thing about the speaker, what would it be?

I wish it came with a pouch for storing the charger and speaker in while travelling.



Left: Top view;
Middle: Setting up;
Right: Back view

Emotional + Psychological Connection

1. How does the speaker make you feel when you use it?

It's comfortable to use. Handy, feels good, travel-sized, satisfied.

2. Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not?

Yes, definitely. 2 things I'd say to them: battery life, sound quality.

Competitive Insights

1. Have you used any other Bluetooth speakers? How does this compare?

I prefer this, over Boat and JBL. I'd say it's at par with the Beats Pill. They both have amazing audio output but the Marshall has more variety and character in terms of the finishes, texture, and overall aesthetic compared to the Pill.

2. Would you consider upgrading to a newer model in the future?

If the price is reasonable, definitely. Also it has to have those extra features I was talking about.

Closing

1. Is there anything else you'd like to add about your experience with the speaker?

It's been my companion, figuring out life in a new country can be challenging and my music and my Marshall have always been there for me.

2. Thank you for your time!

Of course, my pleasure!

Marshall Emberton II – User Research Summary

Key Takeaways:

Bought for design, stayed for performance – Shivani initially purchased the Marshall Emberton II for its iconic design and vintage aesthetic but was pleasantly surprised by its impressive sound quality and long battery life.

Ease of Use – She appreciates how intuitive the speaker is, with minimal functions that make it easy to set up and use right out of the box.

Portability Enhancement Request – Shivani wishes the product included a pouch to store the speaker and charger while traveling, as it would make transportation easier and more organized.

Potential for Upgrades – She would consider upgrading to a new version at a reasonable price, especially if it includes modern features like an AI voice assistant.

Design and Functionality Balance – Shivani values the balance between aesthetic appeal and performance, highlighting that the speaker delivers on both fronts without overcomplicating its use.