# 1. Organisation Title

Recyklik

# 2. Project Background

Recyklik is a company that aims to reduce plastic waste by gathering, breaking it down, and reusing plastic material in various forms to make furniture and other products. It sells its products to individuals and businesses with a focus on innovativeness and sustainability.

# 3. Problem Statement

The ultimate objective will be to decrease plastic waste through a comprehensive understanding of users' behaviours, motivations, and barriers that prevent them from trying to experiment with other products, which could be sustainable. This will be an opportunity to expand access to sustainable products beyond the eco-conscious crowd and give more people an opportunity to contribute toward the reduction of plastic waste.

# 4. Research Participants

Besides, the subjects in the research have been divided into various user groups assigned to each of the team members. Further research on needs by segments, attitudes, and behaviours will serve well to develop solutions for different demographics.

**User Group 1 (Teenagers):**

*Assigned to: Kaushik*
Characteristics: Educated, IT-savvy, socially aware, flexible, and interested in eco-friendly behaviour. The segments are willing to balance convenience with sustainability; it uses technology to support its choices.

**User Group 2 (Families with Young Children):**

*Assigned to: Anthea*
Characteristics: Can't address general wastes, interested in sustainability concerning

lifestyle and convenience, and priorities. They are after simple solutions which could help them reduce plastic waste without adding complications to their daily routines.

## User Group 3 (Small Businesses):

*Assigned to: Benjamin*
Characteristics: Office workers responsible for daily operations are the ones responsible for purchasing decisions and internally handling waste management. Changing the small ways they handle plastic waste would contribute much to their office's overall sustainability.

## User Group 4 (Seniors (55+)):

*Assigned to: Justin*
Characteristics: Less aware of environmental initiatives; changing their habits may be more difficult. They cannot consider switching to sustainable alternatives unless more information and incentives are available to clearly illustrate the benefits.

## User Group 5 (Business Competitors):

*Assigned to: Harold*
The characteristics will involve competitors operating in related industries that have over time explored and implemented various strategies for plastic waste reduction. This will be truly about how they understand issues of sustainability and best practices.

**5. Research Methods**

**Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with participants of each of the user groups will be conducted to allow qualitative insight into attitudes, behaviours, and any barriers linked with plastic waste.

**Surveys:** Quantitative data on plastic use, its driving factors, and willingness to adopt alternatives will also be gained through more participant online and paper-based surveys.

**Observation**: Observation would provide researchers with the opportunity to observe users in natural environments such as grocery stores and offices that will enable them to identify unconscious plastic use habits and find points at which improvements can be made.

**Competitive Analysis:** For this comprehensive analysis, the competitive research will be done to review its main competitors. Much emphasis will be given to the competitors' approach to sustainability and the usability of their websites. It would also include usability testing on how each competitor engages the user in the problem of plastic waste reduction.

# 6. Interview Questions

Diverse demographics of users:

Teenagers

- What provokes or motivates you to switch over to eco-friendly alternatives to plastic in your daily life?
- How would you balance the aspect of sustainability with that of convenience regarding the reduction in plastic waste?
- What do you perceive to be the barriers to living more sustainably, whether it be cost, availability, or even peer pressure?
- To what extent do social media and technology impact choices related to plastic waste and sustainability?

Families with young children

- What is the biggest challenge which your family has to face regarding the management of plastic waste at home?
- If some food or toy products are in plastic packages, how would you decide to buy them?
- In your daily household routine, how would you rate the importance of sustainability, and under what circumstances would you change your behaviour to minimize the use of plastic?
- If there is any kind of support or product that could help your family adopt more sustainable waste management.

Small Businesses

- On what operational level does your business address plastic waste?
- What are some of the biggest challenges to reducing plastic use without compromising efficiency and inflating costs?
- To what extent do you participate in choosing or managing environmentally friendly supplies, where such wastes are involved?
- What would make the adoption of those practices to reduce plastic waste easier for your business?

Older Adults (55+)

- How do you usually handle plastic waste at home?
- Would you use alternatives to plastic? What is stopping you from doing so?
- What would make you seriously introduce plastic-waste-reducing products into your daily life?
- Are the environmental problems at present, which involve plastic waste, a bother to you? Do they affect the way you act?

Staff in Small Businesses (Office Workers)

- How does your workplace handle plastic waste?
- To what extent, if at all, do you influence the purchasing decisions involving plastic products that include supplies and packaging?
- Do companies already have regulations on the reduction of plastic waste? In your opinion, will such a system work?

- What barriers exist in trying to reduce plastic waste at workplaces due to the lack of practical alternatives or budget constraints?
- What steps can be taken to minimize the use of plastic items in your office, or improve its waste management practices?

For Business Competitors

- What are some of the things your company has done to reduce plastic waste in your organization?
- What are some of the difficulties you face in popularizing sustainable alternatives with customers?
- How do you balance these kinds of sustainable alternatives with the need to ensure profitability?
- Are there any identifiable effects of plastic reduction at your initiative? What are some key lessons learned?
- What are your plans for sustainability relevant to the reduction of plastic waste?

## 7. Schedule

**Week 1 (October 21 - October 27): Selection of Participants and Finalization of Research Design**

- Notify participants and schedule interviews.
- Finalise the interview questions.
- Plan observation sessions for various user segments.

**Interviews & Questionnaires (October 28 - November 17):**

- Each team member conducts interviews for their assigned user group:
  - **Harold**: Business Competitors
  - **Kaushik**: Teens
  - **Justin**: Seniors
  - **Benjamin**: Small Businesses
  - **Anthea**: Families
- Distribute surveys to a broader audience for further data collection.

**Week 4 (November 11 - November 17): Data Analysis and Competitive Review**

- Analyse data collected from interviews and surveys.
- Conduct competitive analysis to identify common themes, competitor strategies, and insights.

**Week 5 (November 18 - November 24): Present Findings**

- Prepare a comprehensive report and presentation summarising key insights, user pain points, and solution opportunities.

## 8. Competitive Analysis

**MegaFurniture (Kaushik)**

**Target User/Market:**

Target Market: Middle-income people looking for affordable furniture in Singapore.

Target Users: Families, young professionals, and budget-conscious buyers.

**Product and Service Details:**

Offers a range of furniture for living rooms, bedrooms, and home offices. Focuses on affordability and fast delivery services. There are options for buy-now-pay-later plans.

**Website Features:**

Clear product categories, easy navigation, promotions, wishlist options, and multiple payment methods.

**Membership Fees & Benefits:**

MegaFurniture has no existing membership program. However, seasonal discounts and promotions are offered instead.

**Customer Ratings:**

MegaFurniture's products usually have high ratings -- 4 to 5 stars; reflecting positive reception.

The reviews come from a variety of age groups. Some notable age groups include younger adults (25 to 35 years old) who tend to emphasise the affordability and the modern design of furniture, or the middle-aged (35 to 50) who highlight the comfort, quality and competitive price. This shows that the feedback mainly focuses on aesthetics and practicality. There are also multiple comments on their fast delivery and good customer service. These positive comments boost their credibility and customer trust in their products

**Recent Innovations:**

There are no product innovations visible, however, there is a lot of emphasis on seasonal promotions.

**Heuristic Evaluation:**

MegaFurniture's website is very easy to navigate due to its clean layout and well-placed menus, which allow us to easily access the variety of product categories. Each product has detailed descriptions and user reviews, which allowed us to make informed decisions before making our purchase.

The website is also mobile-responsive, so the shopping experience can be done with mobile devices as well!

However, the website lacks any means to engage with the products, through 360° view or Augmented Reality (AR), which limits engagement. The filtering system is cluttered, where there are too many options to choose from; troublesome. There was also no indication present during the checkout process, leaving the user confused as they did not know what would happen next.

## Visibility of System Status

The website gives instantaneous feedback for pivotal actions like adding to the cart, thereby reassuring users that their action or interaction has been captured. On the other hand, there is always room for improvement in setting up a progress indicator once it proceeds for checkout, which is a lack of communication that could make the user feel uninformed or restless at a time of transaction.

## Match Between System and the Real World

This is a typical buying experience, since common shopping terminologies used in the navigation terms on this site - "cart" and "checkout" - make it simple to navigate the site easily because knowledge of familiar terms is used to understand the processes without any learning curve.

## User Control and Freedom

The website lets users go back and forth and remove things from the cart, allowing for a level of control. In contrast, there is no visible "undo" feature when items are taken away by accident, which may be a hassle for the users and interfere with their flow.

## Consistency and Standards

The website utilises consistency in universally accepted icons and labels that promote usability by guaranteeing the design meets the expectations of the users. The filtering options are somewhat cramped that reduces the navigation flow and slightly inconsistency in the entire experience.

## Error Prevention

Basic mechanisms for preventing errors, such as form validation for shipping details, will ensure that users fill out the needed fields correctly. Lacking confirmation dialogs for taking irreversible actions-meaning when a user is finishing up purchases-create possibilities of accidental submissions.

## Recognition Rather than Recall

Employment of dropdown menus and autocomplete reduces cognitive load since users would only have to choose from their options rather than remember specific terms. Therefore, this design treatment increases the usability of the product catalogue.

## Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

The website does not employ any enhanced usability features, like keyboard shortcuts or personalization based on a single user, that would enhance efficiency in its usability for advanced users. It is designed to cater primarily to novice users; hence, all its features allow for simplicity and ease in navigation.

## Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

Although the general look and feel of the website is clean, the product pages contain several filtering and sorting options that make it cluttered. This compromises on the minimalistic design that could overwhelm users.

## Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Error messages resulting from form submissions need to be provided to the user, allowing them to fix some of the mistakes they are making, but in easier terms and saying precisely what they need to do to get over that hitch as quickly as possible.

## Help and Documentation

Basic support exists in terms of the FAQ section, but users can benefit much more from in-depth help options such as elaborate guides or even live chat, which would facilitate easy access to help when needed.

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### Journey East (Justin)

Journey East is a furniture store from Singapore featuring curated selections of eco-friendly, vintage, and modern furniture. Their website showcases an eclectic mix of fine quality, sustainable pieces put together with craftsmanship and expressing unique design aesthetics.

### Target User/Market

Journey East is primarily targeted at either homeowners or designers looking for high-quality, eco-friendly, vintage, and modern furniture. Their market caters to increasingly eco-conscious people desiring unique design aesthetics that would generally appeal to their target segment of people who value craftsmanship and sustainability in home decor.

**Product and Service Details**

Journey East offers everything from large furniture to vintage pieces, eco-friendly items to ultra-modern contemporary designs. Their collections boast of using only sustainable materials and focus on solid wood, including reclaimed teak and mahogany.

**Website Features:**

Their product line is featured on Journey East's website, complete with comprehensive descriptions, materials used, and inspiration that might have been sought to develop each collection. The site includes a blog where the company shares knowledge regarding the brand's sustainable effort, product sourcing, and design philosophy. Visitors can browse deeper into their vintage and contemporary collections, book showroom visits, and access customer support.

**Membership fees/ benefits**

There is no information about any membership fee on their website. However, the brand is very much into personal engagement with the showroom where customers get to be in direct contact with the staff to understand the unique story behind each piece.

**Customer Rating**

Journey East enjoys an excellent reputation in regard to quality and uniqueness of products, while customers also commend the store on sustainable reasons. Ratings reflect customers' satisfaction with craft furniture and with shopping as a whole.

**Recent Innovation**

Journey East further innovates by implementing eco-friendly materials and designs into their work. The recent initiative is a collection called PLAYplay, developed to celebrate the 20th anniversary. It is a mix of sustainability combined with playful designs in mahogany wood, drawing inspiration from Southeast Asia's rich cultural heritage.

**Heuristic evaluation**

**Visibility of System Status**

The website provides adequate feedback to users, such as visual indicators when pages are loading and clear navigation highlighting the current page (e.g., when browsing furniture categories).

**Match Between System and the Real World**

The website uses clear language and terms familiar to its target audience. Product descriptions are detailed, and the eco-friendly focus is consistently emphasised. Information about materials and sustainability practices is presented in an easily understandable way, matching the real-world expectations of eco-conscious buyers.

**User Control and Freedom**

The Journey East website provides users with flexibility when navigating through its sections, allowing them to browse and return to previous pages easily. However, once users add an item to their cart, they are not prompted to "continue shopping" or offered an easy way to move between the cart and other parts of the website. Introducing features like a "back to shopping" button or a dynamic cart that remains accessible without leaving the current page would give users more control over their shopping experience, allowing them to freely explore the site while keeping track of selected items. This would improve overall navigation and create a smoother, more flexible user journey.

**Consistency and Standards**

The design is consistent across pages, and standard icons and navigation elements are used, making the site intuitive. One area of improvement could be in ensuring that the sustainability icons are uniformly placed across all product pages for consistency.

**Error Prevention**

The website seems to lack prominent preventive error mechanisms. For instance, when inputting incorrect form data (like in the contact form), more explicit error messages or suggestions for correcting the input would be helpful.

**Recognition Rather than Recall**

The website minimises cognitive load by offering product filters and search functions, making it easier for users to find what they need without remembering specific details. However, the product filter options could be expanded, allowing users to refine searches by more specific attributes (e.g., by eco-friendliness or type of material).

### Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

The site is straightforward, catering to both new and returning visitors with minimal customization or shortcuts. Adding features like saved searches or wishlists could improve the experience for repeat visitors.

### Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

The website has a clean, minimalist design that aligns well with the brand's eco-friendly ethos. It avoids clutter, ensuring that only essential product and brand information is displayed. However, there are areas where more visual hierarchy could be used to guide users' attention to important sections, like promotions or special collections.

### Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Error messages (e.g., for failed form submissions) are relatively generic. More user-friendly error messages that explain what went wrong and how to fix the problem would improve this aspect.

### Help and Documentation

While the site does provide product details and contact information, it lacks a dedicated help or FAQ section. Adding this would make it easier for users to find answers to common questions about shipping, returns, or sustainability certifications without needing to contact customer support directly.

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### IKEA (Benjamin)

For my analysis I will be doing IKEA. IKEA is a global furniture retailer which specialises in selling quality yet affordable furniture like beds and shelves.

**Target user/Market**

IKEA's target user/market is people who are looking for affordable quality furniture for an affordable price with a big name. They also reach eco-conscious consumers through their sustainability initiatives, which align with global trends in responsible consumerism.

**Details of Products and Services**

IKEA mainly specialises in selling stuff like bed frames, sofas, shelves, kid stuff and much much more. They also offer tips on how to make your house more aesthetically pleasing, or how to maximise the space in your home. They also have a newsletter consumers can subscribe to which has weekly news and highlights about different products and their events.

**Website features:**

IKEA Singapore's website is user-friendly and offers features like an online shopping platform, store locator, and AR-powered product visualisation tools (IKEA PLACE). The website also highlights seasonal promotions, home furnishing ideas, and sustainability efforts. Customers can easily book services such as kitchen consultations or use tools to design their rooms online.

**Membership fees/ benefits**

The IKEA Family membership is free and offers multiple benefits. Members earn points for every dollar spent, which can be redeemed for discounts on future purchases. Additionally, IKEA Family members enjoy exclusive product discounts, birthday rewards (3x points during the birthday month), and free hot drinks at IKEA's Swedish Restaurant.

**Customer Rating**

Reviews about IKEA are largely positive, with most people complementing the speed of delivery of their products, and the price point is affordable. They are also often complimented on their product quality. However, there are also complaints about the assembly process often being wrongly assembled by the workers, resulting in many nails and screws being put in wrong places.

**Recent Innovations**

IKEA has embraced augmented reality (AR) to enhance the shopping experience through its IKEA PLACE app, allowing customers to visualise how furniture would look in their homes before purchasing. The brand continues to innovate with eco-friendly product lines, smart home technologies, and their push toward sustainability goals.

**Heuristic evaluation**

**1.Visibility of System Status**

IKEA's website does not show a loading icon when it is loading, so during longer loading times users might not be sure if the website is loading as it just shows grey boxes. As a fix, when loading the website should have a loading icon so that customers know that the website is loading,

**Match Between System and the Real World**

When a user encounters a 404 error, instead of popping up with technical jargon like just showing error 404, IKEA responds with a Page Cannot Be Found message and gives the user a button to bring the user back to the homepage.

**User Control and Freedom**

For user control and freedom, IKEA does not meet the requirements. When I went to checkout and wanted to backout, there was no back arrow or option for me to go back to my previous step. They should have a clear option for users to go back to their last step.

**Consistency and Standards**

In IKEA's website, no matter which webpage you go to, the navbar at the top which has the search icon, different pages and sign in and art icons will still be there. The logo is also displayed on all the webpages. This is consistent and follows industry standards.

**Error Prevention**

When logging out, there is a confirmation pop up to confirm whether the user really wants to log out. When filling in your particulars, the website also has input validation,

not allowing empty fields and checking if your email is in the proper format. However, it can improve as if a user accidentally removes an item from their cart there is no confirmation pop up.

**Recognition Rather Than Recall**

If I have searched for the item or added it to my cart before, when I go to the search bar again, it will help autocomplete the user's search with related products.  Autocomplete reduces the user's memory burden by suggesting popular products or categories based on what's being typed. This feature makes it easier for customers to locate items without having to know precise search terms.

**Flexibility and Efficiency of Use**

Registered users can save their favourite items to a wishlist, which they can access quickly without searching for them again. This feature helps repeat customers by reducing the steps required to find previously viewed or favorited items, providing an efficient way for experienced users to navigate the site.

**Aesthetic and Minimalist Design**

IKEA's design is clean and visually simple, with white space used effectively to separate products and sections. The focus is on the products, with minimal distractions. This minimalism helps keep users focused on finding products without cluttering the page with excessive information. The clear, easy-to-read typography and simple layout reduce visual noise, making it easier for users to make decisions.

## Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

When users forget to fill in a required field during the checkout process, the site highlights the missing information in red, accompanied by a clear error message such as "Please enter your postal code."  Error messages are straightforward and guide users toward resolving issues. This helps users quickly identify and correct problems, preventing frustration and ensuring a smoother user experience.

**Help and Documentation**

IKEA provides a comprehensive FAQ section, along with a virtual assistant and customer service options like live chat. The FAQ includes information on shipping, product returns, and assembly instructions. While the site is designed for ease of use, IKEA still provides ample documentation to assist users when they have questions. The help sections are easily accessible and cover a broad range of potential customer inquiries, ensuring that users can find help when needed.

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**Originals (Harold)**

For my analysis, I will be choosing Originals. Originals is a global based furniture company that focuses on offering sustainable, eco-friendly, and high-quality home furnishings. Their collection includes a wide range of furniture and accessories made from reclaimed, repurposed, and sustainably sourced materials from around the world. Originals aims to blend aesthetic appeal with environmental responsibility, providing unique, handcrafted pieces that carry both functionality and character.

**Target user/Market**

Originals target user/market primarily consists of eco-conscious consumers, home decorators, and individuals seeking unique, high-quality, and sustainably made furniture. Their offerings are especially appealing to consumers such as Eco-conscious individuals, design-savvy customers, homeowners and decorators.

**Details of Products and Services**

Originals offers a variety of products and services focus on sustainability which includes:

- **Furniture**: sofas, dining chairs, benches, bed frames, coffee tables, desks, shelving, and lamps
- **Home Accessories:** rugs, tableware, decore
- **Sustainability focused:** reclaimed wood and sustainability materials to make the furniture
- **Services:** Customization and Consultation & Interior Styling.

**Website features:**

- clean and minimalist design that makes it easy to navigate
- blog where they share articles related to sustainable living, furniture care, design tips, and the latest news about their products and practices
- options for customer support, including live chat, in-store consultations, and interior styling services
- extensive range of products across various categories like living room, bedroom, dining room, and outdoor furniture.
- Customers can easily browse products with detailed filtering options based on size, material, and design style

**Membership fees/ benefits**

There is no information about any membership fee on their website. However, frequent promotional offers and curated advice are available to enhance the customer experience. For more personalised details, the customer can head down to their showroom where they can be in direct contact with the staff for more information about the products

**Customer Rating**

Originals has earned strong customer ratings and positive reviews for its unique furniture pieces and excellent customer service. They are also often praised for their high-quality, durable, and aesthetically appealing furniture, with special emphasis on their eco-conscious practices that are used to make their furniture.

**Recent Innovations**

Originals continue to evolve by focusing on the integration of contemporary design elements with sustainable materials. Their recent initiative introduced a few collections for their furniture lineup which displays their eco-friendly materials that are made using sustainable materials.

**Heuristic evaluation**

**Visibility of System Status**

Originals website products section does not have a loading indicator while the images are loading, as a result, the users are unsure of what the product looks like. A

recommendation can be adding a loading indicator on image heavy sections such as the products section so that the users will know that the images are still loading.

**Match Between System and the Real World**

When a user searches for an item and the item cannot be found, instead of showing a technical 404 error message, Originals will just display a message that the item that they searched cannot be found and then it will show a search bar for them to search again.

**User Control and Freedom**.

Originals do not meet the requirement for user control and freedom. When I add an item to the cart, there is no option for me to checkout. It is only when I create an account, then I can proceed to checkout. There should be an option or message saying that you need to create an account before adding anything to the cart for an easier checkout process.

**Consistency and Standards**

Originals has a consistent design across multiple pages. For example, the navbar and the navigation links are always there no matter which page I navigate to. The company's logo is also consistently displayed across the multiple pages which follows the industry standards.

**Error Prevention**

While there are error mechanisms in place, it can be improved by implementing real-time form validation, confirmation dialogs, and pre-filled fields for returning users. These preventative measures ensure that users don't encounter delays or frustrations, making for a smoother shopping experience from browsing to checkout.

**Recognition Rather Than Recall**

Originals website can be improved by having a "Recently viewed" section on product pages. For example, if i were to view some products, then i navigate to another new product page, the "Recently viewed" should show all the products that i recently viewed. This feature will help the users easily return to items they were previously interested in which will save them time to search for the product they were interested in.

**Flexibility and Efficiency of Use**

For users who are logged in, Originals could add a feature to save search preferences or favourite items, which streamline the process for repeat visits. These features help returning customers by allowing them to view recently viewed products or items saved to a wishlist, enabling efficient decision-making without needing to re-search for specific items.

**Aesthetic and Minimalist Design**

Originals clean and minimalist design allows users to focus on the unique qualities of each product without distraction.The clean layout, large visuals, and limited text create a relaxed, enjoyable browsing experience, which is well-suited to a brand that values quality and simplicity in its furniture, thus allowing the user to make an easier decision.

## Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

Originals helps users quickly recover from errors. For example, when the form is left blank when trying to submit the form, it will display an error message below the textbox telling the user that they must fill in the form before submission.

**Help and Documentation**

Originals has a detailed FAQ section, along with a virtual assistant and customer service options like live chat. The FAQ section provides information on delivery, product returns and faulty or incorrect goods. The help section is easily accessible which ensures that users can easily find the assistance they need, allowing them to resolve issues on their own.

**Crate and Barrel (Anthea)**

For my competitive analysis, I have chosen Crate and Barrel. Crate and Barrel is a prominent high-end home furnishings retailer known for its contemporary furniture, home decor, and kitchenware. Founded in 1962, the brand combines a modern aesthetic with functional design, catering to consumers who value style and quality in their home environments. Their product range includes everything from living room furniture and dining sets to bedding, kitchen essentials, and decorative accessories.

**Target user/Market**

Crate and Barrel primarily targets design-conscious consumers who value quality and contemporary design. Their demographic includes young professionals, couples setting up homes, and families looking for stylish yet practical furnishings. The brand appeals particularly to millennials and Gen Z consumers who are increasingly interested in home aesthetics and sustainability.

**Details of Products and Services**

Crate and Barrel offers a diverse range of products, including:

- Furniture: Sofas, chairs, tables, and beds.
- Home Decor: Rugs, lighting, and wall art.
- Kitchenware: Cookware, dining sets, and storage solutions.
- Bedding and Bath: High-quality linens, towels, and accessories.
- Children's Furniture: Stylish and durable options for kids

**Website features:**

- A user-friendly layout with easy navigation across various categories.
- Visual inspiration through curated collections and design tips.
- Product customization options for certain furniture items.
- Online shopping tools such as room planners and style guides

**Membership fees/ benefits**

Crate and Barrel offers a loyalty program known as "Crate & Barrel Rewards," which allows members to earn points on purchases, receive exclusive offers, and gain early access to sales. Membership is free, and customers can sign up to receive personalised rewards and updates.

## Customer Rating

Crate and Barrel generally receives mixed reviews regarding product quality, with an overall quality score of 2.9 out of 5. While many products receive high praise, particularly for aesthetics and functionality, some customers report issues with durability and value for money. Specific demographic ratings indicate that younger consumers (ages 18-25) tend to rate the brand higher than older customers.

## Recent Innovations

Crate and Barrel has focused on sustainability initiatives, including:

- A subscription rental model for furniture, aiming to reduce waste.
- Eco-friendly products made from responsibly sourced materials.
- Partnerships with organisations like One Tree Planted to promote environmental stewardship.

## Insights from usability testing

## Visibility of System Status

For the crate and barrel's website, there is limited feedback during loading or processing that can leave users uncertain. For example, item searches don't provide clear loading indicators, potentially causing users to feel unsure about site responsiveness.

## Match Between System and the Real World

For the website, they used the terms such as "Trade Program," which lacks sufficient explanation for unfamiliar or inexperienced users. Simplifying or elaborating these options could help users better understand them. Ideally, they should have an explanation for such terms or use a simplified version.

## User Control and Freedom

For the website, there are limited "back" options on certain popup windows and limited undo features when removing items from the cart or favourites may frustrate users, as they need to retrace steps manually. Such limitations can be solved by adding more back or return options to previous web pages.

**Consistency and Standards**

The navigation layout and terminology vary slightly across product categories. For example, filters and sorting options change layout inconsistently, making user orientation less intuitive.

**Error Prevention**

Some form fields lack validations, such as ZIP code entry. This could lead to input errors without user correction guidance, increasing user frustration during checkout.

**Recognition Rather than Recall**

The options on the website like filters and specifications could be more intuitive, as users must often navigate dropdowns to remember choices rather than viewing all options at once. For example, if I were to purchase a sofa, I would have to manually click on the depth, cushion options and fabric to see all of the options available instead of being able to see everything at once, which also consumes more time.

**Flexibility and Efficiency of Use**

For the website, there are no clear shortcuts provided for frequent users to navigate directly to account actions like orders and favourites  which could have benefitted experienced shoppers. To add on, keyboard shortcuts or accelerators for frequent users are lacking, and personalised navigation options are minimal.

**Aesthetic and Minimalist Design**

Even though the website is visually appealing, some pages are overly crowded with promotions, detracting from product search focus. For example, when I first open the website, I will see many promotions and even when I have selected my chosen product, there will still be promotions at the top of the screen which is very distracting.

**Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors**

Error messages are rare but vague. For example, the page timeouts don't specify causes or provide clear recovery instructions. It could be improved by specifying and giving more detailed feedback.

**Help and Documentation**

While there is customer service support, help content is not as visible or contextually relevant, which could hinder ease of finding assistance. For example, when I use the website, I would have to scroll all the way to find the customer service support instead of the website having a section labelled support on the top part of the home page.