

PROJECT WRITEUP:

The problem:

Arc'teryx customers care for their garments in unconventional and potentially damaging ways, listening to advice from friends and family over official resources. For a senior design course at Simon Fraser University, our team was tasked with finding a local organization whose values we shared. Our challenge was to practice ethnography in depth, and find the best opportunity for design.

Your process:

To attain a nuanced and learned understanding of Arc'teryx customers, I sought people who were best able to shed light on my questions. My interviewees included athletes, outdoor enthusiasts, urban commuters, techwear fans, and casual shoppers. We conducted 8 qualitative interviews with Arc'teryx customers, seeking to understand motivations, behaviors, and rituals. Quickly, patterns began to surface.

Your solution:

Through iteration and continual feedback, we concluded that a post-purchase intervention, communicating the importance of product care, would renew trust in the garments lasting quality and help Arc'teryx achieve sustainable goals. We made two products; the Product Care Magnet, and the Trail Bandana. Each product equips customers with the ability, the motivation, and the necessary reminder - that longevity is achieved through a commitment to care.

Reflection:

Reaching out to Arc'teryx opened the door to an incredible experience. My greatest learning was in the importance of taking initiative, and believing in my abilities and process. Creating a mini sprint to be held in a professional environment with non-designers was initially daunting. I was always nervous that our collaboration would feel like a chore for our connections at Arc'teryx, and it increased when the sprint went virtual. Of course, they were eternally friendly and excited to be involved. Taking initiative and believing in ourselves fueled our communications with Arc'teryx, our professor, and our research participants. Through conversations and study methods, the greater initiative we took - the better our understanding became.