
Meet Fresh Need-Finding: Uncovering Customer Needs for Guiding Product Design

Motivation

Crafting fresh dessert ingredients following traditional Taiwanese dessert-making processes, Meet Fresh delights customers with the best-tasting desserts while adhering to authenticity and high quality.

As Meet Fresh continues its ambitious expansion, the need for understanding its market and customers is more critical than ever. We would like to conduct a series of need-finding exercises in order to identify areas with the greatest business opportunity. We hope to use the outcome of the need-finding exercises to guide the subsequent stages of product design in an iterative manner.

In this report, we will define the steps within the initial iteration of the need-finding process, the methodologies to be considered, and results and findings from conducting need-finding exercises.

Problem Space

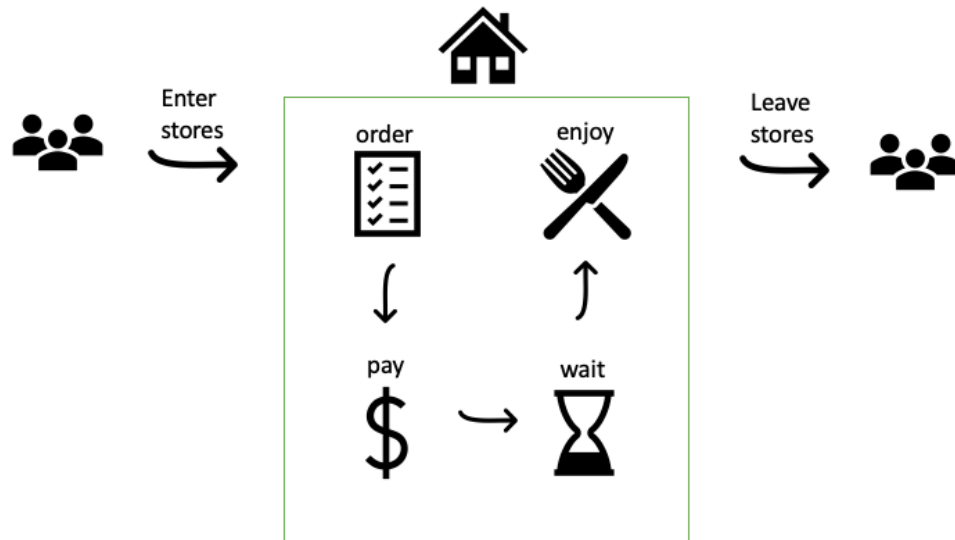
Established in 2007, Meet Fresh has achieved rapid expansion in domestic markets and gained high market penetration throughout the years in international markets as well. After examining Meet Fresh's market expansion strategies, its share of market within the dessert industry and competitors within the same industry, we are able to see that Meet Fresh is now faced with a high level of market saturation within the dessert industry.

In order to **overcome market saturation**, Meet Fresh could consider strategies such as creative marketing, rolling out new and exciting products, and trying out niche products within the existing saturated markets. By taking over existing market share from its competitors, Meet Fresh is then able to achieve continuous and further growth.

Winning over the hearts of shallow customers and converting uncommitted customers into loyal customers of Meet Fresh requires us to closely examine the lukewarm attitudes and opinions of the customers and possible frictions during their Meet Fresh experience. For example, shallow customers may feel uncomfortable or unsatisfied about their Meet Fresh experience. As a result, they choose to consider ordering from Meet Fresh competitors, coming to Meet Fresh less frequently, and ordering fewer items overall. Thus, we would like to focus on the scenarios that reveal the biggest gap between the experience of a committed customer, and that of a shallow customer.

Specifically, the customer journey we would like to dive into is the following: enter store -> order -> pay -> wait -> eat & drink -> leave store, both online and offline.

Below (**Fig. A.0**) is a graph that demonstrates the customer flows:



(Fig. A.0)

During this customer journey, potential problems could include:

- customers find existing products boring
- customers intentionally avoid some products (i.e. due to dietary restrictions)
- customers keep ordering the same products
- customers struggle to pick from menu
- customers become frustrated with the waiting time

Customers may struggle to pick items from the menu that contains a wide product assortment. They may end up ordering something they are not a big fan of, leading to potential frictions and frustrations that prevent future customer conversion.

We hope the need-finding process addresses these potential problems by helping us locate customer pain points with the biggest business impact to guide us in our subsequent product design stages.

User Type

Taking into consideration Meet Fresh's current market position and its long-term growth strategy described in the previous section, we propose need-finding exercises for Meet Fresh with **existing customers with low share of wallet (SOW)** in mind, as winning

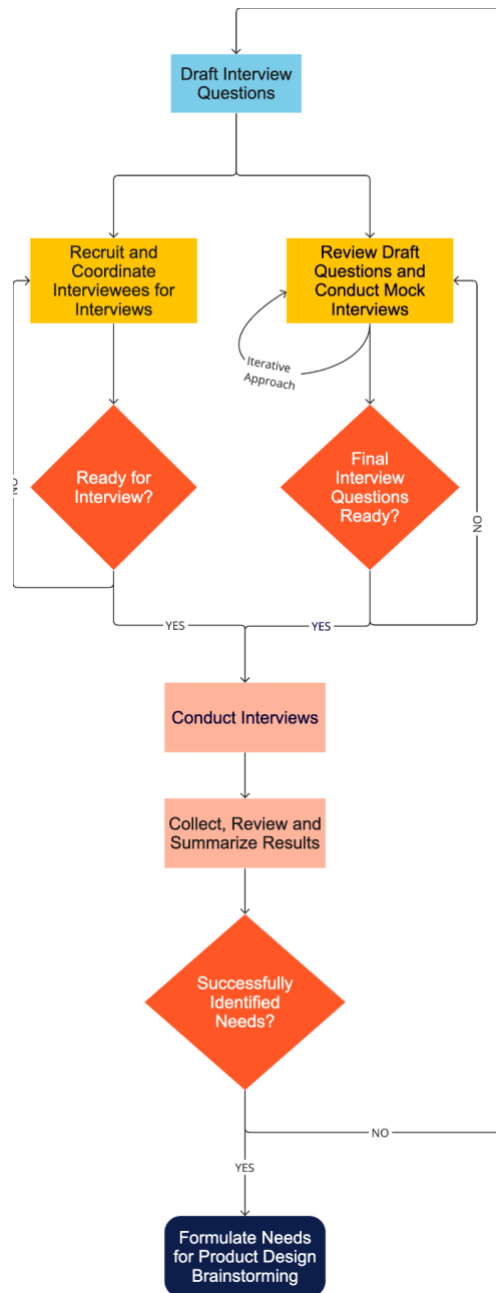
over these customers and increasing their SOW with Meet Fresh is key to fueling sustainable growth.

	Online Channel	Offline Channel
Existing Customers	√	√
New Customers		

Need-Finding Method 1 - Interviews

Conducting interviews with targeted user types has been widely used as an effective technique for gathering qualitative and quantitative insights from users. From engaging in direct conversations with potential users, we hope to develop a good understanding of the needs, wants, preferences, expectations of our users, so that we could identify existing challenges, missed opportunities, as well as untapped business potentials for guiding the design, development and evaluation of our products and services.

We would like to recruit 4-5 interviewees for this need-finding exercise, with a set of interview questions specifically designed to uncover insights from general to specific. A flow chart diagram for this process (**Fig. A.1**) and a list of potential interview questions (**Fig. A.2**) could look as follows:



(Fig. A.1)

The flow chart diagram (**Fig. A.1**) outlines an iterative process for planning, conducting and summarizing the interviews for user need-finding. We adopt an iterative approach for this method, so that:

1. We identify opportunities for improvements throughout the entire process
2. We make incremental improvements from our previous learnings whenever possible

3. We promote greater collaboration and ideation among team members and with our users that lead to better products and services

Potential Interview Script for Need-Finding

Background and Context

1. Let's avoid saying Meetfresh, even though we're right in the store. IF the customers mentioned Meetfresh, we can ask questions about Meetfresh.
2. Greetings and introduction, confirm consent for an interview
 - a. Scheduled interview: Hi, thank you for coming with us. My name is XXX, we'll have a brief conversation about your eating habits. I'm wondering if I could record our conversation with my phone. -Yes or -No -OK, I'll use a pen.
 - b. Random interview: Hi, My name is XXX, I'm doing research to understand people's eating habits in desserts. Can I ask you a few questions? -Yes -No, -OK bye
3. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? For example, your name, your job, your gender, your eating habits etc, or anything you want to highlight.
 - a. If dessert is mentioned: You just mentioned you like to eat desserts, I'm pretty interested in that part. Could you tell me more about it? Like what kind of desserts do you like, where do you usually go to get some?
 - b. If dessert is not mentioned: Do you eat desserts? -If no, why not? If yes, go to #b.
4. How did you first hear about (Meet Fresh)?
 - a. If we are in the Meetfresh store, we can ask this question, otherwise don't.
 - b. Alternatively, we can ask how they heard about other brands/stores.

Task and Behavior

1. How often do you purchase dessert? Once a few days? Once a week? Once a month? Or just rarely? Why?
2. How do you prefer placing an order at dessert shops? Why?
3. What do you usually order?
4. How many items do you usually order?
5. Why do you order the aforementioned item?
6. Tell me about the experience when you order from Meetfresh.

Pain Points and Challenges

1. Are there any items that you have never tried at Meet Fresh? (don't assume there are such items)
2. Why have you never given them a try?
3. What are the challenges that you encounter when ordering/eating at dessert shops?
4. Is there anything you feel unsatisfied or uncomfortable at the shop?
5. Why is improving the challenges important to you?
 - a. Why is it important to you?
 - b. Why does it make you unsatisfied?

Needs and Expectations

1. What do you think is the most important thing to have a good eating experience at a dessert shop?
2. Have you ever ordered online?
 - a. If yes:
 - i. What do you think are the most important features for an online platform?
 - ii. What other features would you like to add?
 - b. If no:
 - i. Why?
 - ii. Suppose you do online ordering, what do you think are the most important features for an online platform?
3. You just talked about xxx, given the drawbacks you mentioned, do you have any workarounds?

Feedback and Suggestions

1. Do you have any suggestions for Meetfresh to improve customer experience?
2. Is there anything else you would like to share or add?
3. Do you have any questions for me?

(Fig. A.2)

The initial list of potential questions for interviewing (**Fig. A.2**) gives us a place to start with types of questions from general to specific that we would like to focus on exploring. Following the iterative approach, we will add or remove questions as we start uncovering insights from our interviewees.

In order to collect meaningful and actionable data and insights from our interviewees, we would like to adhere to the following best practices when it comes to interview preparations:

1. Recruit interviewees who represent the target user type and who are willing to participate in the interviews. We should be 100% transparent with the purpose, format and duration of the interviews and how the data will be used.
2. Develop interview questions that focus on users and user experience, and avoid questions that provide little to no value, such as yes/no questions, and questions with flaws and biases.
 - a. Sample questions:
 - i. What platform, if any, do you order from?
 - ii. How often do you order from Meet Fresh?
 - b. Avoid: Confirmation bias, leading bias, social desirability bias, recall bias
 - c. Make sure: the question is accurate, effective, specific, clear and concise

3. Design the interview so that interviewees are doing the majority of the talking with plenty of space for possible answers.
4. Thoughtfully plan and structure the interviews following an organized format and framework.
5. Carefully discuss the option and feasibility of conducting a focus group interview, keeping in mind the major flaws of a focus group including group dynamics, social desirability bias and cost.

During the interviews, we would like to be mindful of social cues that may have a significant impact on the responses from interviewees. Trying to make the interview itself as enjoyable as possible with as little bias as possible, we need to look out for the following:

1. Create a comfortable and safe space for conducting the interview, physically and mentally.
2. Be empathetic and respectful. We would like to show genuine interest and empathy for the interviewee's experiences and needs, and respect their time, privacy, and perspective.
3. Listen actively and ask follow-up questions. We will pay close attention and avoid taking too many notes during the interview as it prevents building a healthy rapport with the interviewee.
4. It's okay to be flexible and digress a little from the main questions, as long as we redirect the conversation back on track.
5. Use clear language and avoid technical jargons and acronyms.
6. Respect the interviewee's time and make sure to end the interview on time with room for questions from interviewees.

After the interviews, we will gather the information with the following principles:

1. Design data table structure/schema ahead of time
2. Record the data as is
3. Classify the data by data types: categorical, numerical, ordinal, text
4. No data combination, nor mixture

Need-Finding Method 2 - Think Aloud

The second method we choose is the Think Aloud method. We choose it because it captures the users' thoughts instantly while they perform the task. By asking them to think aloud during the task, we obtain the most fresh opinions, feelings from users.

The think aloud method is a type of qualitative research that involves verbalizing thoughts and reasoning processes as they occur during a task or conversation. It is

typically used in needfinding, to gather information and insights to identify customer needs and preferences.

This method has some limitations. Asking users to express what they think or why they do something may make them more rational than they usually are, or they simply act differently with what they think, which could lead to bias in the results. However this method is also very robust and useful because it allows researchers to get an inside look into how people think, feel, and make decisions while they are interacting with a product, service, or environment. Users are not required to recall something anymore, which they are bad at, so that they are more likely to provide accurate information. Researchers can observe and record participants' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as they are happening. This accurate and instant information can then be used to inform product design and development.

We plan to follow the below steps:

- Recruit representative users. We plan to have 2 users for a think aloud.
- During the sessions, we will take detailed notes or record the participants' verbalizations (with their consent) to ensure that no valuable insights are missed.
- Before starting the session, we can explain the Think Aloud process to the participants, ensuring they understand the purpose and their role in the activity.
- Ask them to visit a Meet Fresh store and verbalize their thoughts as they interact with the product and service.

I will keep in mind to let the users lead the process, ask as few as I can because this is not an interview. If the participants become silent or hesitant during the session, we can gently prompt them to continue thinking aloud to maintain a steady flow of information. If they find it hard to think aloud, I am about to ask them questions while they do different tasks:

1. Approaching the store: Have you heard of Meet Fresh before? How do you feel about the brand? Why are you going to the store? Have you used the online APP before? How do you feel about the APP and Meet Fresh's website? Will you consider the distance to visit the store? How often would you like to purchase?
 - a. What brings you to the store today?
2. Ordering: Why do you order this? Why not the other similar ones? Will you consider "Chef recommended" on the menu? Are you willing to try new items on the menu? How do you feel about the design of the menu? Do you prefer paper menus or electronic menus?
 - a. If the customer has not selected anything yet:
 - i. Can you describe your thought process as you are selecting this particular dessert item from the menu?

- b. If the customer has selected an item:
 - i. What factors are influencing your decision to choose this item?
- 3. Paying: How much money are you going to pay on this order? Do you use coupons if you have one? How do you feel about the price range on the menu? Any payment method you would like the store to add, such as apple pay, etc?
- 4. Waiting: How long do you expect it'll take? Are you happy with the waiting experience? Any recommendations for the waiting area?
- 5. Eating: How do you feel physically and mentally? Do you prefer hot or cold (reasons)? Do you change the ordering items accordingly to weather/season? Sweet or salty? Sweetness level? Your favorite order and why? Do you like the eating environment and why?
- 6. Finishing: How do you like the overall experience? Any recommendations?
- 7. Leaving the store: Do you want to give feedback? Will you come again? Does this trip make any impact on your impression toward the brand of "Meet Fresh" ?
 - a. Would you recommend Meet Fresh to others, and why or why not?
- 8. After the Think Aloud session, we will conduct a brief debriefing with the participants to gather any additional insights or feedback they might not have shared during the session.

Need-Finding Method 3 - Participant Observation

The purpose of this section is to outline a participant observation method for the Meet Fresh project with an aim to understand the needs, goals, and tasks of both online and offline users. By observing users in their natural environment, we hope to gain valuable insights into their experiences and identify areas for improvement in the overall user experience. We will focus on the following aspects when we conduct the participant observation:

1. **Who:** in the participant observation method for the Meet Fresh project, we will actively participate in the Meet Fresh user experience alongside other users. We will immerse ourselves in various aspects of the Meet Fresh experience as both online and offline customers in order to better understand their perspectives. The user group we'll be focusing on will be diverse, including individuals from different age groups, genders, and dessert preferences, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the user base.
2. **Where:** The participant observation will take place in both physical Meet Fresh locations and on online platforms. At the physical locations, we will observe and participate in the process of ordering and consuming desserts, interacting with staff, and navigating the store environment. For the online platforms, we will

explore the website or mobile app, browsing the menu, placing orders, and providing feedback to better understand the digital user experience.

3. **Context:** The participant observation will take place in both physical Meet Fresh locations and on online platforms. At the physical locations, we will observe and participate in the process of ordering and consuming desserts, interacting with staff, and navigating the store environment. For the online platforms, we will explore the website or mobile app, browsing the menu, placing orders, and providing feedback to better understand the digital user experience.
4. **Goals:** The primary goals of our participant observation study are to gain a deeper understanding of user behaviors, preferences, and motivations, as well as to identify user needs, pain points, and areas for improvement in the Meet Fresh experience. By actively participating in the user experience and observing others, we will be better equipped to develop design alternatives or improvements that cater to user needs and preferences more effectively.
5. **Needs:** We will focus on understanding the factors that influence users' decision-making and dessert choices, identifying any challenges or difficulties users face when navigating the Meet Fresh menu or placing orders, and recognizing areas where the Meet Fresh experience can be optimized for greater customer satisfaction. Uncovering these user needs will help inform future design decisions and improvements for the Meet Fresh brand.
6. **Tasks/subtasks:**
 - Actively participating in the Meet Fresh experience:
 - Ordering and consuming desserts in-store
 - Trying various menu items to cover a range of dessert types and preferences
 - Observing the preparation and presentation of desserts
 - Navigating the online ordering process
 - Exploring the website or app interface, focusing on user-friendliness and clarity
 - Placing orders for delivery or pickup, assessing the ease of the process
 - Observing other users during their interactions with the Meet Fresh menu, staff, and desserts:
 - Taking note of how users approach the menu and make decisions
 - Watching for any difficulties or confusion during the ordering process

- Observing user reactions to the taste, presentation, and overall experience of the desserts
- Engaging in Conversations with users to gather their perspectives and feedback on the Meet Fresh experience:
 - Asking open-ended questions about their likes and dislikes
 - Discussing any challenges they faced during their visit or online experience
 - Gathering suggestions for improvements or changes they would like to see
- Analyzing the collected data:
 - Organizing and categorizing the notes and observations from the participant observation sessions
 - Identifying trends or patterns among different user groups (e.g., age, gender, dessert preferences)
 - Drawing conclusions and making recommendations for design improvements based on the analysis

Conclusion & Summary

In this report we analyzed our motivations, users and problems from the business level. To better find users' needs, we planned to implement three methods of needfinding. We took into consideration the differences, features and costs each method casts, to decide which ones to choose. Then we simulated and iterated the end-to-end processes to find the best specific practices. We hope this plan gives us a profound understanding of needfinding, and will provide us with accurate and meaningful data after the exercise.