Case Study: Improving User Experience in Quick Commerce Apps

(Blinkit, Zepto, Instamart)

Background

While regularly using Blinkit, Zepto, and Instamart for grocery orders, I observed that all three applications offer similar core value propositions: fast delivery, broad selection, and frequent promotional offers. Since grocery ordering is a high-frequency activity, even small experience issues become noticeable and frustrating over time.

This case study focuses on recurring user pain points that directly affect satisfaction, trust, and repeat usage.

Problem 1: Stock Inconsistency Between Product List and Checkout

Observation

Some products appear available while browsing. However, after adding them to the cart and proceeding to checkout, the same items suddenly show as out of stock, even though they continue to appear available in the product listing.

Impact

- Users spend time building carts that cannot be completed
- Increased frustration and cart abandonment
- Loss of trust in platform reliability

Assumptions & Metrics

- Estimated 5–10% cart drop-off due to stock mismatch
- Higher abandonment during peak hours
- Repeat users may switch apps after 2–3 similar experiences

Proposed Solution

- Enable real-time inventory sync across product listing, cart, and checkout
- Lock inventory once an item is added to the cart
- Show clear “limited stock” or “running out” indicators

Problem 2: No Option to Modify Orders After Placement

Observation

If users forget to add an item after placing an order, they cannot modify the existing order. Instead, they must place a separate order and pay additional fees such as delivery, handling, or small-cart charges.

Impact

- Users feel penalized for minor mistakes
- Extra costs increase frustration
- Reduces spontaneous and frequent ordering behavior

Assumptions & Metrics

- Disproportionately affects high-frequency users (3–5 orders per week)
- Increases perceived order cost by ₹50–₹100
- Potential 3–5% churn among price-sensitive users

Proposed Solution

- Allow order edits within a short window (1–2 minutes)
- Permit changes until picking begins at the dark store
- Display a visible countdown timer indicating the edit window

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Problem 3: Misleading Cashback Coupons

Observation

Promotional coupons often promise “up to ₹200 cashback,” but users typically receive only ₹1–₹5. The actual reward does not align with user expectations created by the messaging.

Impact

- Users feel misled
- Reduced trust in promotional offers
- Lower coupon engagement over time

Assumptions & Metrics

- Low satisfaction with cashback campaigns
- Decline in promotion-driven repeat orders
- Increased skepticism toward future offers

Proposed Solution

- Clearly display guaranteed cashback amounts
- Show realistic cashback ranges before applying the coupon
- Explain rules and probability transparently before checkout

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Overall Business Impact

If these issues remain unresolved:

- Cart abandonment may increase
- Repeat usage can decline
- Customer acquisition costs may rise due to churn

In quick commerce, where user habits drive success, small daily frictions can quickly push users toward competitors.

Product Manager Takeaway

This case study highlights that execution details matter more than speed claims. Improving inventory accuracy, order flexibility, and promotion transparency can significantly enhance user trust, retention, and long-term profitability in a highly competitive quick commerce market