📦 Case Study: Improving User Experience in Quick Commerce Apps

(Blinkit, Zepto, Instamart)

🔍 Background

While using **Blinkit, Zepto, and Instamart** for regular grocery orders 🛒, I noticed that all three applications offer very similar services — fast delivery 🚀, wide selection, and frequent offers 🎯. Since grocery ordering is a **high-frequency activity**, even small experience issues become noticeable over time.
This case study focuses on common user pain points that directly impact satisfaction, trust, and repeat usage.

❌ Problem 1: Stock inconsistency between product list and checkout

👀 Observation

Some items appear available while browsing, but after adding them to the cart and proceeding to checkout, they suddenly show **out of stock**, even though they are still visible in the product list.

💥 Impact

- Users waste time building carts that can't be completed ⏳
- Increased frustration and cart abandonment
- Loss of trust in the platform's 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 such experiences

✅ Proposed Solution

- Real-time inventory syncing across listing, cart, and checkout
- Lock inventory once an item is added to the cart
- Show clear "limited stock" or "running out" warnings

❌ Problem 2: No option to modify order after placement

👀 Observation

If a user forgets to add an item after placing an order, there is **no option to update the existing order**. The user must place a second order and pay extra charges like delivery fee, handling fee, and small cart fee 💸.

💥 Impact

- Users feel penalized for small mistakes
- Extra costs create frustration
- Reduces spontaneous and frequent ordering

📊 Assumptions & Metrics

- Impacts **high-frequency users (3–5 orders/week)** the most
- Increases perceived order cost by **₹50–₹100**
- Possible **3–5% churn** among price-sensitive users

✅ Proposed Solution

- Allow order edits within a short window (1–2 minutes)
- Enable changes until picking starts in the dark store
- Show a visible countdown timer ⏱️ for order modification

❌ Problem 3: Misleading cashback coupons

👀 Observation

Coupons often promise “up to ₹200 cashback,” but users usually receive only ₹1–₹5 💰, which does not match expectations.

💥 Impact

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

📊 Assumptions & Metrics

- Low satisfaction with cashback campaigns

- Drop in promo-driven repeat orders
- Higher skepticism toward future offers

✅ **Proposed Solution**

- Display guaranteed cashback clearly
- Show realistic cashback ranges
- Explain rules and probability transparently before checkout

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📉 **Overall Business Impact**

If these issues are not addressed:

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

Since quick commerce depends heavily on **habit-driven usage**, small daily frustrations can easily push users to 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 increase **user trust, retention, and long-term profitability** in a competitive quick commerce market.