

# Contextual Inquiry Notes

Session: 1

Observing Team Member: Anoop

Date: 9/23/25

Time: 7pm GST / 11am EDT

Setting: In person at participant's home

Participant Category: Young Professional

## Demographics:

1. **Age:**
  - a. 28
2. **Occupation:**
  - a. Data Analyst
3. **Highest Level of Education:**
  - a. Master's
4. **Gender (Self Identify):**
  - a. Female
5. **Typical Shopping Setting (online/in-store):**
  - a. Both, more online than in-store
6. **Annual Shopping Frequency (1-2/year, quarterly, monthly, weekly, intermittent, need-based):**
  - a. Intermittent, need-based
7. **Favorite Store:** Zara, Asos, Hollister, Nordstrom
8. **Patterns of Shopping (whole outfit, single pieces at a time, etc):** Depends on the need at the time, but usually single pieces at a time
9. **Type of device used for shopping:** 16" MacBook Pro and iPhone 14

## Notes:

### Raw:

- Opens laptop and types site URL directly.
- Skips homepage banners, clicks into **Trending section**.
  - "I always start by looking at the trending section—just to see what's popular right now."
- Scrolls through trending items quickly, doesn't click anything.

- Pauses briefly at a jacket but moves on without interaction.
- Opens filter sidebar, hovers over size and brand options, doesn't apply them.
  - "There are so many filters, I'm not sure which ones will actually narrow things down."
- Favorites three dresses in a row.
- Opens Favorites list; sighs, scrolls up and down.
  - "My saved list gets really cluttered."
- Glances at recommendations carousel; ignores and keeps scrolling.
  - "The recommendations feel hit-or-miss, sometimes they don't match my style at all."
- Clicks on a product just to check available colors.
  - "I wish I could see all the color options without clicking into each product."
- Returns to main feed and types "black dress" into search bar.
- 2,000+ results returned. Scrolls fast, skips multiple rows at once.
  - "When I search 'black dress,' the results are overwhelming."
- Stops at a product with customer-submitted photos, zooms in.
  - "I like when they show how other customers styled the product in real life photos."
- Scrolls further, filters by **under \$100** using price slider.
  - "The price filter is helpful—I usually set my budget right away."
- Clicks into one product, adds to cart.
- Opens cart, sees shipping cost.
  - "I often abandon my cart if I don't get free shipping."
- Leaves checkout, removes item.
- Opens another dress, clicks size guide.
- Reads size chart for ~5 seconds, shakes head.
  - "The size guide isn't very reassuring; I still check reviews to confirm fit."

- Scrolls to reviews section, reads 3 reviews in detail.
- Opens another browser tab with a competing brand.
  - “I compare the same product across different brands for price and style.”
- Keeps two tabs side by side, toggles between them.
- Returns to site, scrolls casually through tops category.
  - “Sometimes I just browse without knowing what I want.”
- Spots a discount banner, clicks it immediately.
  - “The discounts make me buy things I wasn’t even looking for.”
- Scrolls through sale items, adds two pieces to Wishlist.
- Notices “arrives by Friday” label under a dress thumbnail.
  - “I like seeing delivery estimates before I add something to my cart.”
- Mentions past experience:
  - “Returns are easy here, that’s why I keep coming back.”
- Goes back to Favorites, scrolls through 20+ items, struggles to find a particular jacket.
  - “I wish I could sort my favorites into categories, like ‘work’ or ‘casual.’”
- Reopens cart, frowns as one item is missing.
  - “Why do some items disappear from my cart if I wait too long?”
- Sighs at site loading delay, picks up phone.
  - “I get frustrated when the app is faster than the desktop—I switch devices sometimes.”
- Opens the same account on mobile app.
- Adds two sizes of same dress to cart.
  - “Sometimes I buy two sizes and return one, just to be safe.”
- Watches a 20-second product video showing dress movement.
  - “The product videos are super helpful—it’s easier to imagine how the clothes move.”

- Rewatches the same video once more.
- Switches back to desktop, continues browsing.
- Scrolls endlessly on “New In” category, no filters applied.
- Clicks into random sneakers, exits without interaction.
- Adds three different shirts to Wishlist, doesn’t open them.
- Returns to Favorites, scrolls again, visibly frustrated.
- Mentions annoyance at clutter.
- Opens cart again, uses it to compare items before removing them.
- Clicks into product with poor reviews, leaves quickly.
- Mentions that reviews are more important than ratings alone.
- Says delivery timelines often decide whether she buys.
- Scrolls while distracted, leaves site open in background for 2 minutes.
- Returns, adds item to cart, then abandons checkout again.
- Ends session by closing multiple tabs without purchase.

#### **Specific Questions Asked (Include Context):**

1. Do you always start by looking at the trending section?
2. Do you go back to your cart or “favorites” to look for items you added previously?
3. I noticed you sighed when you went to the favorites page. Can you tell me why?
4. What about it feels frustrating?
5. Can you tell me more about why you pressed down on that item? (when trying to look at the color options without selecting the item to go to a different page)
6. Why did you close out the cart without completing your purchase?

#### **Observation Summary:**

##### **Key Observations:**

1. User starts browsing via trending/popular section.
2. Price filter used early to define budget.
3. Favorites list used but becomes cluttered.
4. User frequently abandons cart if shipping isn’t free.
5. Size guides consulted but not trusted alone.
6. Product reviews play major role in fit confidence.

7. Multiple brands compared for similar items.
8. Discounts drive impulsive purchases.
9. Delivery estimates checked before cart additions.
10. Easy returns increase loyalty.
11. User switches between app and desktop.
12. Cart sometimes empties if user delays purchase.
13. Color options not easily visible without clicking in.
14. Overwhelmed by large search result sets.
15. User buys multiple sizes as a safeguard.

#### Direct User Quotes:

1. "I always start by looking at the trending section..."
2. "There are so many filters, I'm not sure which ones will actually narrow things down."
3. "I like that I can favorite items, but my saved list gets really cluttered."
4. "The recommendations feel hit-or-miss..."
5. "I wish I could see all the color options without clicking..."
6. "When I search 'black dress,' the results are overwhelming."
7. "I like when they show how other customers styled the product."
8. "I often abandon my cart if I don't get free shipping."
9. "The size guide isn't very reassuring..."
10. "I compare the same product across different brands..."
11. "The discounts make me buy things I wasn't even looking for."
12. "Returns are easy here, that's why I keep coming back."
13. "I wish I could sort my favorites into categories."
14. "Why do some items disappear from my cart if I wait too long?"

#### Behavioral Patterns:

1. Starts with inspiration before intent-driven search
2. · Sets constraints early with budget filters
3. · Favorites used as a primary curation tool
4. · Influenced by peer validation (reviews, customer photos)
5. · Value-conscious & compares across brands
6. · Opportunistic buying driven by discounts
7. · Risk management through returns & buying multiple sizes
8. · Switches platforms due to performance differences
9. · Returns & delivery estimates drive loyalty

#### Pain Points:

1. Uncertainty around sizing and fit
2. Shipping costs prevent checkout
3. Inconsistent performance across platforms
4. Recommendations often irrelevant

#### Inefficiencies:

1. Filters feel overwhelming
2. Search results create overload
3. Favorites list becomes cluttered and unorganized
4. Color options hidden inside product pages
5. Cart items disappear with delays

User Workarounds:

1. User buys two sizes to overcome sizing uncertainty.
2. Uses reviews instead of size guide for fit decisions.
3. Switches between app and desktop for faster experience.
4. Takes time to scroll through cluttered favorites list.
5. Abandons cart when shipping not free—waits for deals.
6. Manually clicks into each product to check color options.

Artifacts:

## Session: 2

Observing Team Member: Anoop

Date: 9/24/25

Time: 10pm GST

Setting: Online via video call

Participant Category: Informal personal stylist

## Demographics:

### 10. Age:

- a. 33

### 11. Occupation:

- a. Engineer

### 12. Highest Level of Education:

- a. Master's

### 13. Gender (Self Identify):

- a. Female

### 14. Typical Shopping Setting (online/in-store):

- a. Both, but usually online for efficiency

### 15. Annual Shopping Frequency (1-2/year, quarterly, monthly, weekly, intermittent, need-based):

- a. Weekly/regularly

### 16. Favorite Store: Nordstrom, Zalando, any multi-brand platforms

17. Patterns of Shopping (whole outfit, single pieces at a time, etc): Depends on whom I'm shopping for; single pieces for myself, usually whole outfits for others

18. Type of device used for shopping: Microsoft SurfacePro and iPhone 16 Pro

## Notes:

Opens site on desktop, logs into account.

- Navigates to "Women's Clothing," scrolls through **full looks**.
  - "I look for complete looks, not just single pieces."
- Clicks into product and immediately scrolls to "Styled with" suggestions.
- Opens linked shoes and bag from that section in new tabs.
- Favorites several items, then opens Wishlist.
  - "Wishlist works for me, but it's not organized enough."

- Keeps Wishlist open in one tab, product pages in others.
- Opens 10+ tabs at once, comparing across them.
  - “I often open 10+ tabs at once.”
- Briefly checks discounts but doesn’t prioritize.
  - “Discounts are good, but clients focus on style first.”
- Opens a product page, scans delivery estimate.
  - “Delivery times matter if I’m planning looks for an event.”
- Filters by “In stock” only.
  - “I check stock levels so I don’t recommend something about to sell out.”
- Notes brand options in filter. Appreciates variety.
- Switches tabs to compare different brands for similar outfits.
- Mentions needing to manage **different budgets** for clients.
  - “I compare multiple price points because each client has a different budget.”
- Adds four items to cart, does not check out.
- Says cart is useful for holding space.
- Scrolls far down product list, loses place, frustrated.
  - “I don’t like losing my place in the product feed.”
- Repeats scroll, finds lost product again.
- Opens size guide, reviews size info carefully.
- Double-checks reviews to confirm sizing accuracy.
- Mentions sizing credibility affects her professional trust.
- Opens visual gallery but says product photos feel incomplete.
- Wishes there were more styled inspiration shots.
- Applies generic category filters but finds them too broad.



- “The filters are useful, but I want more refined options.”
- Uses cart to group pieces for one client, Wishlist for another.
- Scrolls through cart, abandons it on purpose.
- Takes screenshots of grouped products.
  - “I’d love to share a curated list directly instead of sending screenshots.”
- Switches to external notes app to jot client-specific comments.
  - “I’d like a way to save notes with each product.”
- Mentions multiple clients prefer sustainable options.
- Spots eco-friendly label, saves item for later.
- Checks price comparisons between brands for a single blazer.
- Keeps tab with lower-priced option open for budget-conscious client.
- Adds same item in two colors for flexibility.
- Mentions she often has to track budgets manually.
- Wishes for a way to assign items per client inside platform.
- Mentions annoyance at toggling tabs constantly.
- Says cart is like a working board for her.
- Scrolls again, adds dress, coat, and shoes for a wedding client.
- Switches back to Wishlist, finds it too long and messy.
- Returns to cart, rearranges order by removing shoes.
- Mentions she doesn’t trust discounts because clients care about style first.
- Says sustainability filter is helpful for eco-focused clients.
- Scrolls through accessories, adds multiple earrings to cart.
- Leaves cart full, intending to show it later.
- Says she loses track when switching between clients.

- Pauses session, writes quick notes offline.
- Returns to site, reopens closed tab to recover lost look.
- Says inspiration is as important as sourcing.
- Looks at product with video, says it's more useful than stills.
- Ends session with 15+ tabs open and 2 full carts abandoned for reference.

### **Specific Questions Asked (Include Context):**

1. Do you like watching the product videos?
2. Do you get a better sense of sizing and fit from the videos than the images?
3. Can you tell me about why you're opening each item in a different tab?
4. I noticed you've been taking notes offline. Can you tell me more about that?
5. Do you go back to Favorites or the cart after you consult with the people you're shopping for or start from scratch?
6. How do you keep track of the outfits you're assembling?
7. I noticed you're taking a lot of screenshots as you select items. Can you tell me about that?
8. How do you keep track of the screenshots and offline notes you're taking?

### **Observation Summary:**

#### **Key Observations:**

1. User prioritizes building complete outfits rather than buying single pieces.
2. Wishlist is used for storage but lacks organization for multiple clients.
3. Cart is treated as a temporary workspace or "working board" rather than for actual checkout.
4. Tabs are heavily relied upon for comparisons across brands, budgets, and styling options.
5. Sustainability and eco-labels are considered when relevant to client needs.
6. Delivery times are important for event-driven styling.
7. Product photography and inspiration shots are highly influential in decision-making.
8. Size accuracy and trustworthiness of reviews are key for professional credibility.
9. User supplements platform functionality with external tools (notes app, screenshots).

#### **Direct User Quotes:**

1. "I look for complete looks, not just single pieces."
2. "Wishlist works for me, but it's not organized enough."
3. "I often open 10+ tabs at once."
4. "Discounts are good, but clients focus on style first."
5. "Delivery times matter if I'm planning looks for an event."
6. "I check stock levels so I don't recommend something about to sell out."
7. "I compare multiple price points because each client has a different budget."
8. "I don't like losing my place in the product feed."
9. "The filters are useful, but I want more refined options."

10. "I'd love to share a curated list directly instead of sending screenshots."
11. "I'd like a way to save notes with each product."
12. "Sustainability filter is helpful for eco-focused clients."
13. "Inspiration is as important as sourcing."

#### Behavioral Patterns:

1. Logs in on desktop and begins browsing in "Women's Clothing."
2. Scrolls through full looks and relies on "Styled with" suggestions.
3. Opens many product pages in separate tabs (10+ regularly).
4. Compares across multiple brands and price points for different clients.
5. Uses Wishlist for storage and cart as a working space.
6. Repeatedly scrolls through long product lists, sometimes losing place.
7. Double-checks size guides and reviews for credibility.
8. Examines visual galleries and prefers videos over stills.
9. Adds items in multiple colors for flexibility.
10. Groups products in cart per client, while Wishlist is used for broader storage.
11. Ends sessions with many open tabs and abandoned carts for later reference.

#### Pain Points:

1. Wishlist is cluttered and not suited for client-specific organization.
2. Filters are too broad, not refined enough for professional needs.
3. Easily loses place in long product feeds.
4. Has to manually track budgets across clients.
5. Cart lacks features for client-specific grouping beyond basic storage.
6. Product photos and galleries often feel incomplete, limiting inspiration.
7. Frustration with constant tab-switching to compare items.
8. Inability to attach notes or comments to products directly.

#### Inefficiencies:

1. Reliance on opening and juggling 10+ tabs simultaneously.
2. Repeated scrolling through product feeds after losing place.
3. Manual budget tracking outside the platform.
4. Using cart and Wishlist in ways they were not designed for
5. Frequent switching to external apps for notes and screenshots.
6. Time wasted recovering lost product tabs.
7. Over-reliance on screenshots for client communication.

#### User Workarounds:

2. Takes screenshots of grouped products to share externally.
3. Uses external notes app for client-specific comments.
4. Leaves carts full and abandoned on purpose as client-specific boards.
5. Adds same product in multiple colors to keep styling options flexible.
6. Keeps lower-priced alternatives open in tabs for budget-conscious clients.
7. Reopens closed tabs manually when a look is lost.

8. Writes offline notes mid-session when the platform cannot support the workflow.

Artifacts: