

GR1: Needfinding

Daniil Novak, Ved Pradhan, Rishik Buneti

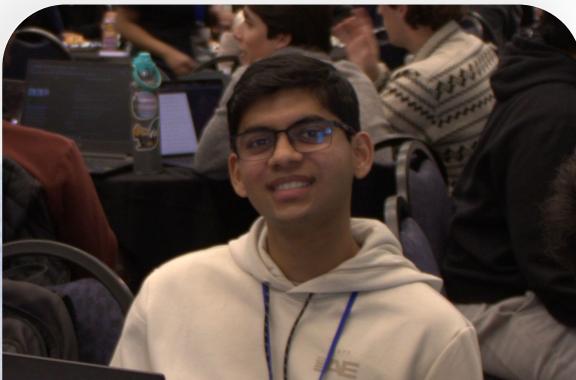


The Team



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Domain Selection: Shopping

1 Lack of Clarity

We wanted an area that people don't have much clarity on. We noticed that on

3 Technology Divide

While we do not know if we will focus on online shopping, in person shopping, or a mix of both, the fact that both experiences are starkly different makes bridging the gap an interesting challenge!

2 LLM Frontier

Despite LLMs revolutionizing the way many technologies work, we noticed that online sites have not yet really adopted LLMs apart from rudimentary chatbots. There is room for innovation!

4 Relatability

Everyone shops! We wanted to work in an area in which many people, including us, have a stake.

Finding Participants

Downtown Santa Barbara



Downtown SB provides a unique racial and socioeconomic demographic and also enables us to get opinions of vendors

Costco Food Court



All age ranges and all genders are present, and we are able to see what they have bought

Isla Vista



Younger students are typically better acquainted with technology and have unique shopping interests and habits

Our Participants



Black Widow

Senior citizen and homemaker who we met while at the Costco food court



Captain Marvel

Real estate agent and mother who we met while at Costco



Scarlet Witch

SBCC student from Los Angeles who we met in IV

Questions We Asked

Can you walk me through the last thing you bought, either online or in person?

How do you usually decide whether to shop online or go to a physical store for something?

What kinds of products do you almost always buy online? What about in person?

Can you tell me about a shopping experience you genuinely enjoyed?

Now think of a time when shopping felt frustrating or stressful—what happened?

Can you recall a time when technology either really helped you—or really got in the way—while shopping?

Walk us through how you'd shop on an actual online shopping website.

What are you looking for first when the page loads?

What tools or features are you relying on the most?

When you're deciding which product to click on, what are you paying attention to?

Interview with Black Widow

Homemaker, senior citizen, wife

At the Costco food court; 30 minutes

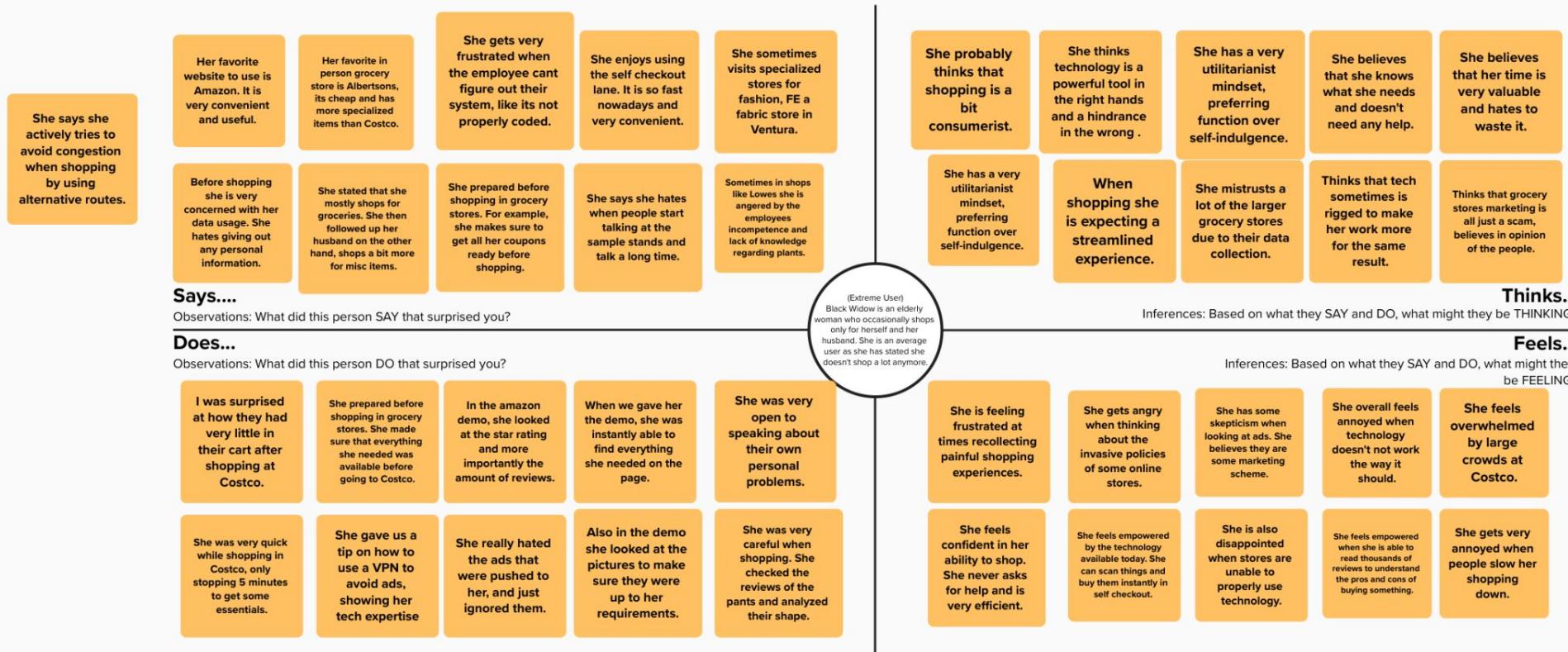
Extreme user: almost always shops online, only shops in person when unavailable online

Interviewed by Ved (interviewer) and Daniil (notetaker) using iPhone voice memos for transcription



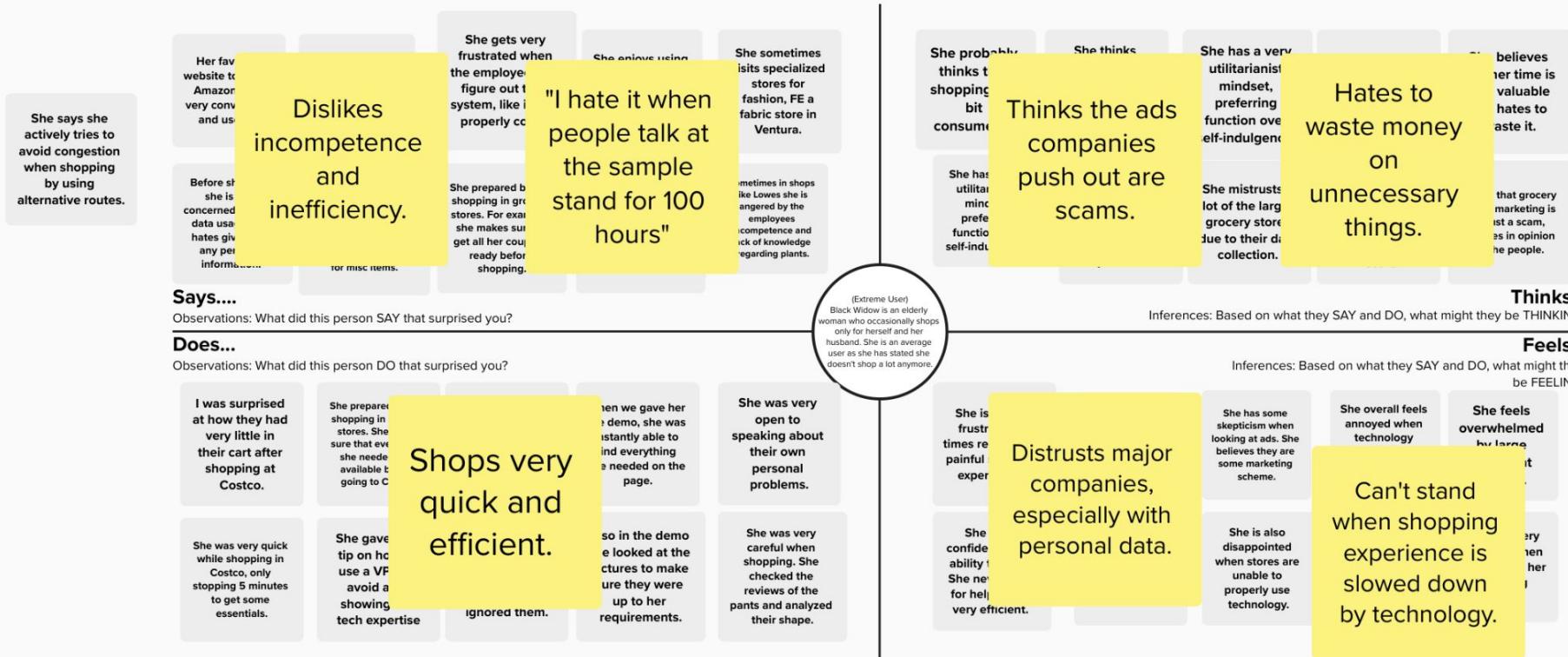
Empathy Map

Black Widow



Empathy Map

Black Widow



Insights and needs

Black Widow

Insight: Black Widow is someone who values time and effort over everything else. This reflects the attitude older people often have in supermarkets, as they are more likely to get frustrated with technology and extra steps.

Need: Shoppers want an easy and effortless shopping experience. They want to be aided by technology in a way they can use and understand it.



Interview with Captain Marvel

Real estate agent, middle-aged, mother

Met at the Costco food court, but the interview was conducted over Zoom due to time constraints; 30 minutes

Interviewed by Daniil (interviewer) and Ved (notetaker) using Zoom recording for transcription



Empathy Map

Captain Marvel

"Is this thing going to fit my needs?"

"Some of the customer service people are easier to work with than others."

"We looked at like, 3 or 4, different dishwashers in the budget."

"I hate ordering clothes online because nothing ever fits right."

"I've bought sheets at Pottery Barn before. I like their sheets. I might look online... and buy that."

"When I want to look at something, having more than one image is helpful."

"I bought a bunch of tile for our new house. I want to see it in person."

"I was happy when I found some fabric that was cute for making bull cozies."

"I want to get the brand reviews on the dishwasher I'm shopping for."

"The quantity and the price [at Amazon] are usually pretty good compared to shopping at another store."

Researches reputable brand review sites.

Sees and feels products in person before buying.

Takes her time and meanders when shopping in person.

Looks after her kids while shopping.

Frequents wholesale stores nearest to where she lives.

Clicks on products that has the desired quantity based on her family.

Does not scroll and examine other options when rebuying a product.

Shops for groceries at a regular schedule of one or twice weekly.

Immediately types on the Amazon search bar; does not spend time at the home page.

Looks at the dimensions of physical products before buying.

Say | Think

She expects certain departments to have higher customer service standards.

Products promoted on the Amazon home page are untrustworthy.

The visual appeal is as important as the price of a product.

Buying in bulk is the best way to equitably provide for all her kids.

Fast delivery and good return policies are signs of a good service.

After finding a product that fits her need, there is no reason to keep searching for a better option.

If a website shows a product, it should be in stock.

There is an ideal product in her mind, and she is trying to find it.

Amazon reviews are trying to get her to buy the product they sell, not tell if this product is good.

Frustrated when products bought online don't meet assumed expectations.

Loyal to stores with a track record of success.

Excited about finding something that relates to her hobby.

Stressed when shopping with time pressure.

Overwhelmed by too many options that don't match her needs.

Confident when rebuying a product.

Untrustworthy of potentially biased Amazon reviews.

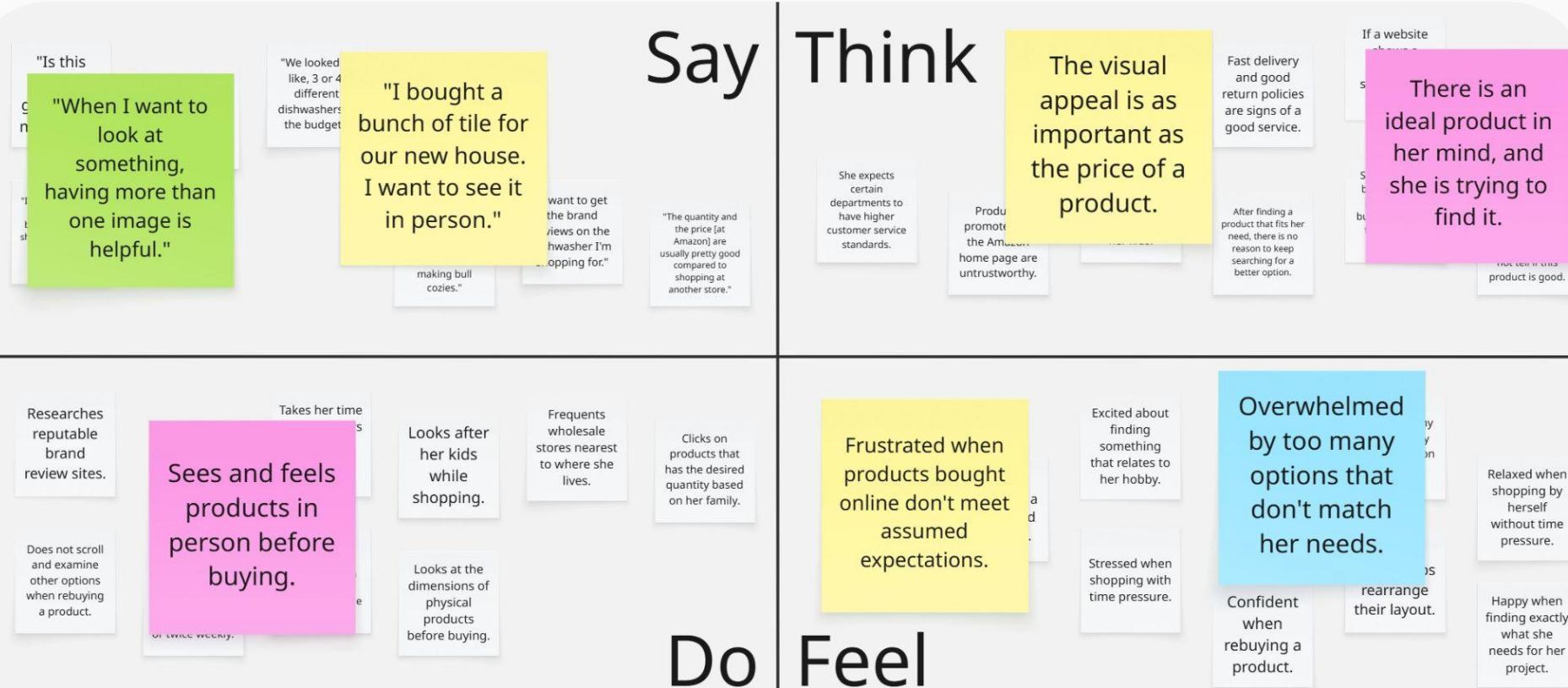
Relaxed when shopping by herself without time pressure.

Happy when finding exactly what she needs for her project.

Do | Feel

Empathy Map

Captain Marvel



Insights and needs

Captain Marvel

Insight: Although shoppers like Captain Marvel benefit from having options, too many options can detract from the experience if they do not match the preferences (especially visual and physical) and priorities of the user.

Need: Shoppers want to find the product that best fits their mental image of their ideal product, and they want to see this image realized rather than being bogged down by options that don't match this image.



Interview with Scarlet Witch

SBCC student living in Isla Vista

At Tropicana del Norte; 30 minutes

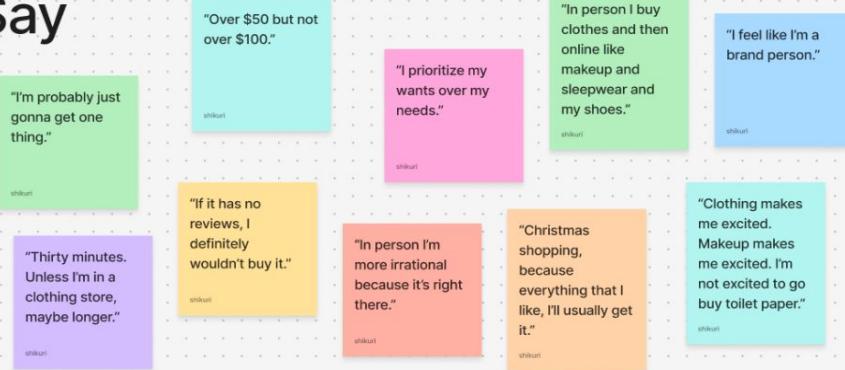
Interviewed by Rishik(interviewer) and
Ved (notetaker) using iPhone voice
memos for transcription and notes app
for written notes.



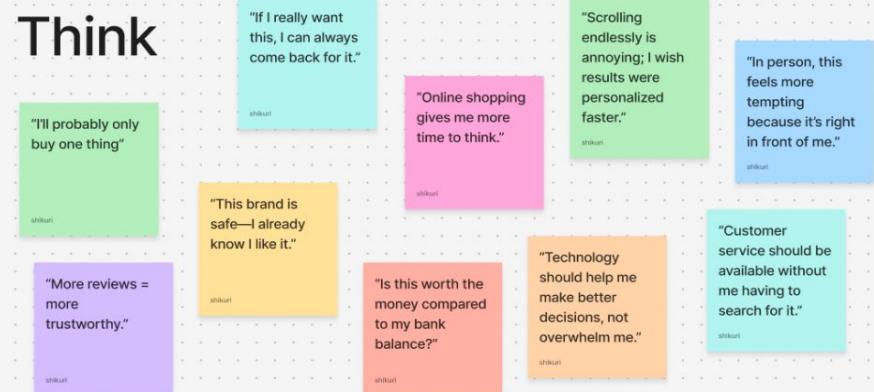
Empathy Map

Scarlet Witch

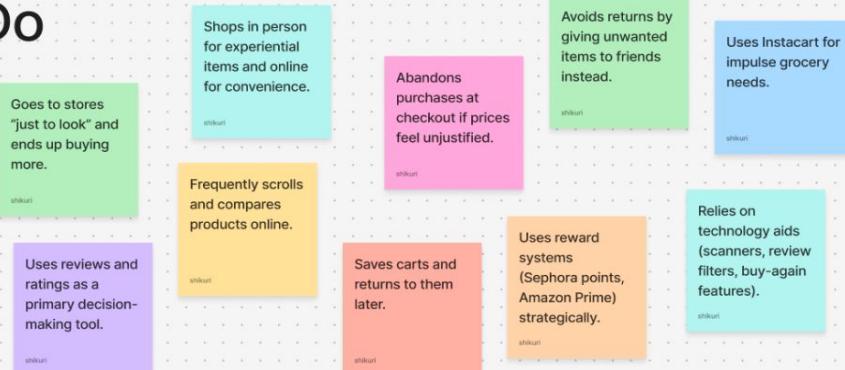
Say



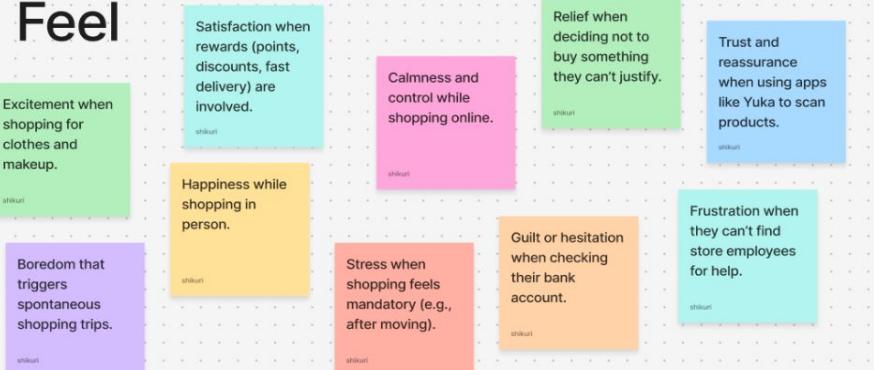
Think



Do



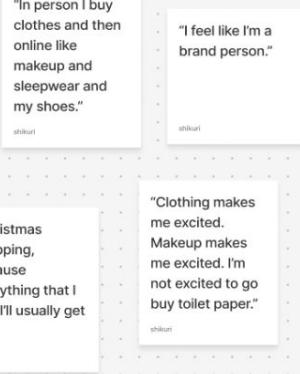
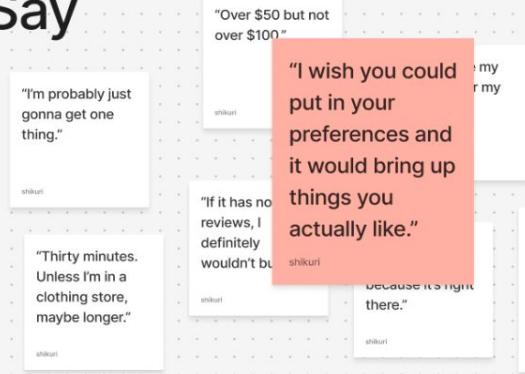
Feel



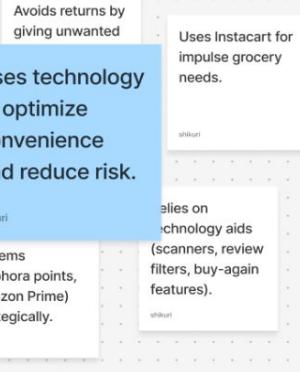
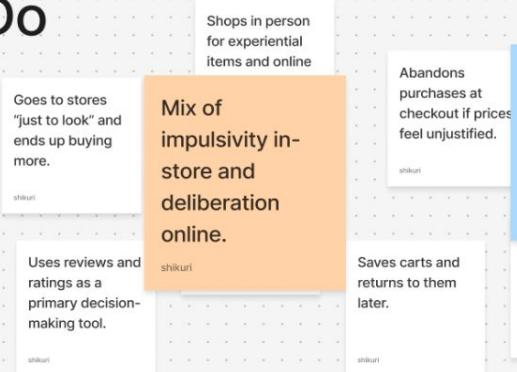
Empathy Map

Scarlet Witch

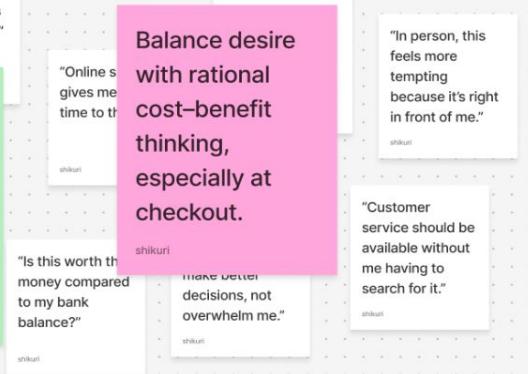
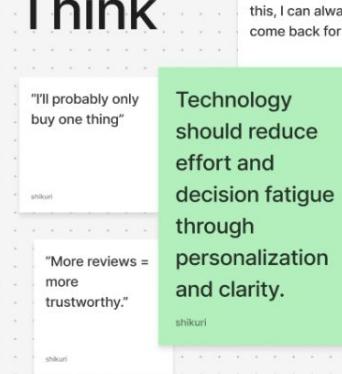
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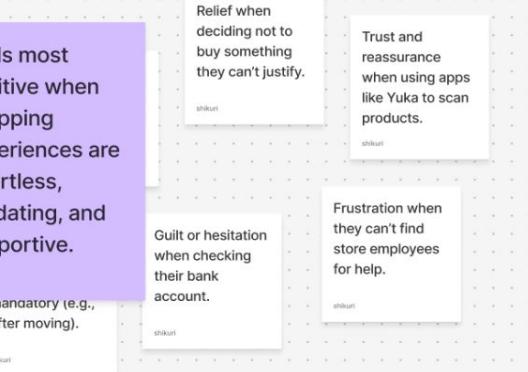
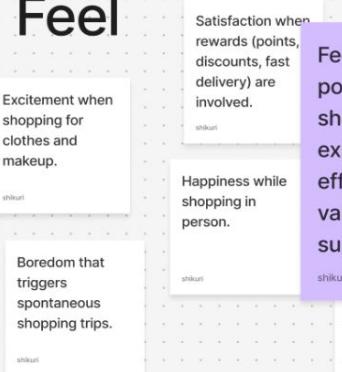
Do



Think



Feel



Insights and needs

Scarlet Witch

Insight: Although Scarlet Witch enjoys shopping as an exciting and exploratory experience, she often becomes overwhelmed or impulsive due to irrelevant options, delayed decision support, and a lack of timely guidance, which forces her to rely on last minute self-checks (reviews, budget checks, brand familiarity) to regain control.

Need: Shoppers like Scarlet Witch need a personalized, confidence-building shopping experience that balances excitement with clarity by surfacing relevant options early, offering trustworthy decision support at the right moment, and helping them make informed choices without diminishing the joy of shopping.





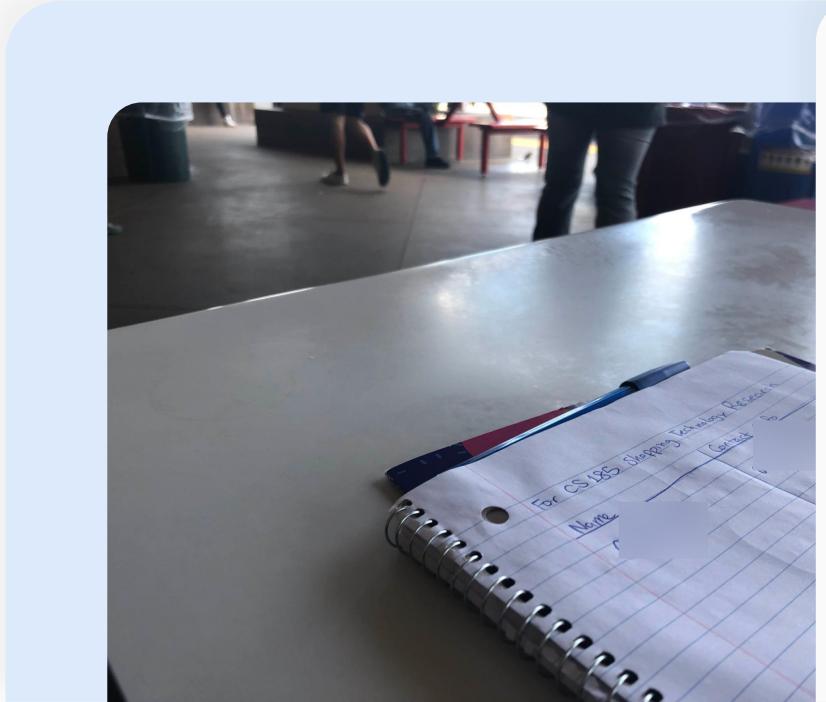
Overall Learnings

Various aspects of the shopping experience can affect customer's emotions. Websites having many options and showcasing brand comparisons makes the workflow seamless, but clutter and untrustworthy reviews can detract from the experience. Some issues are relatable to customers of all generations, but others are specific to a particular age group. Since younger consumers have the most unique taste, we believe that there is greatest room for innovation here, so younger consumers will be our target audience for GR2.



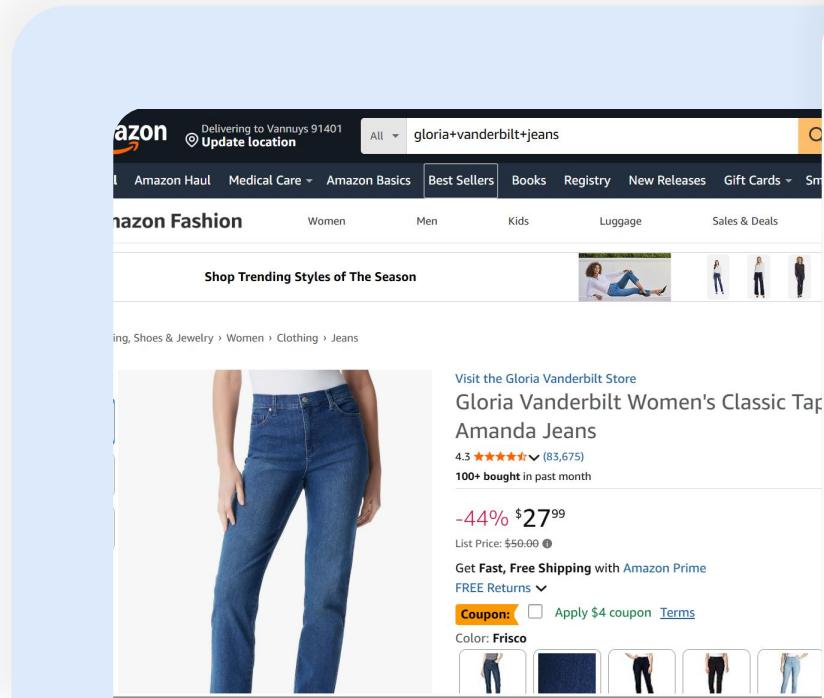
Appendix: Interview Pictures

We forgot to take a picture at our interview with Black Widow! However, we took this picture after the fact of where the interview was conducted.



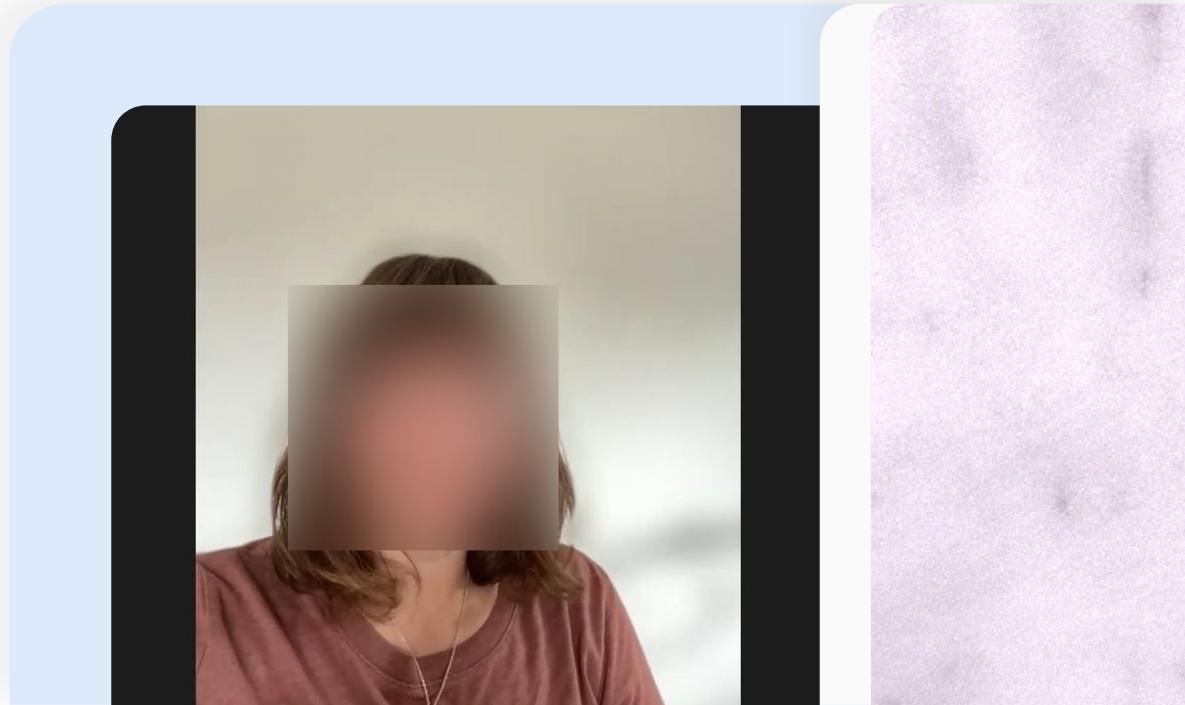
Appendix: Interview Pictures

Black Widow walked us through her experience shopping for jeans on Amazon.



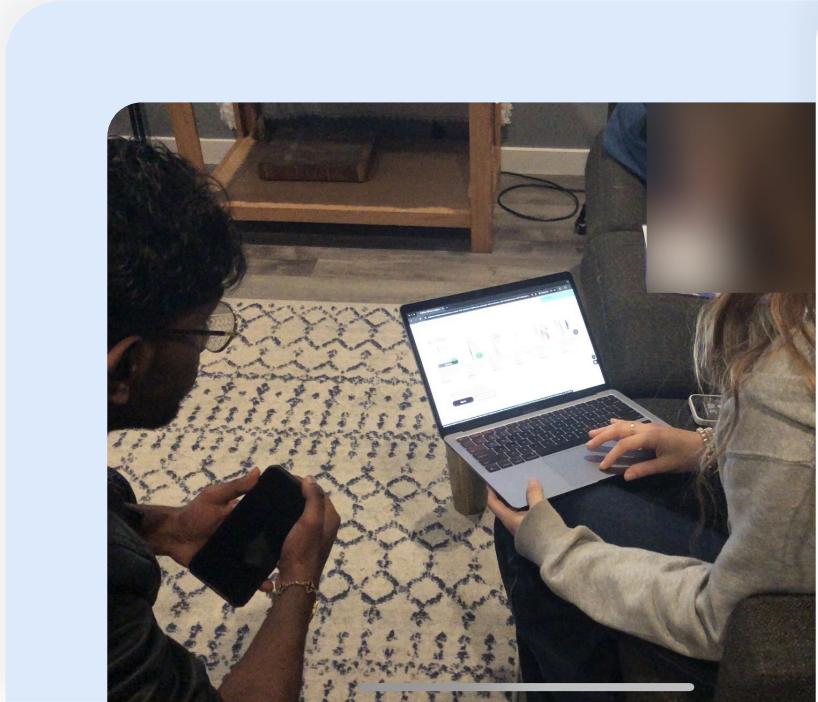
Appendix: Interview Pictures

Captain Marvel's interview was conducted over Zoom.



Appendix: Interview Pictures

At her apartment in Tropicana del Norte, Scarlet Witch showed us how she uses the Sephora website to find products.



Thank you!