

**Customer Insights & Experiences**

**Research Participant Description:** Madhu GB - an MS in Computer Science student from Arizona State University, currently interning with Amazon in Seattle. Madhu and I worked together before we both decided to pursue higher studies. Madhu is the kind of person who thrives under the influence of nature and is an adventure freak who likes to hike and take long swims in lakes. He enjoys blowing off some steam by going on trips.

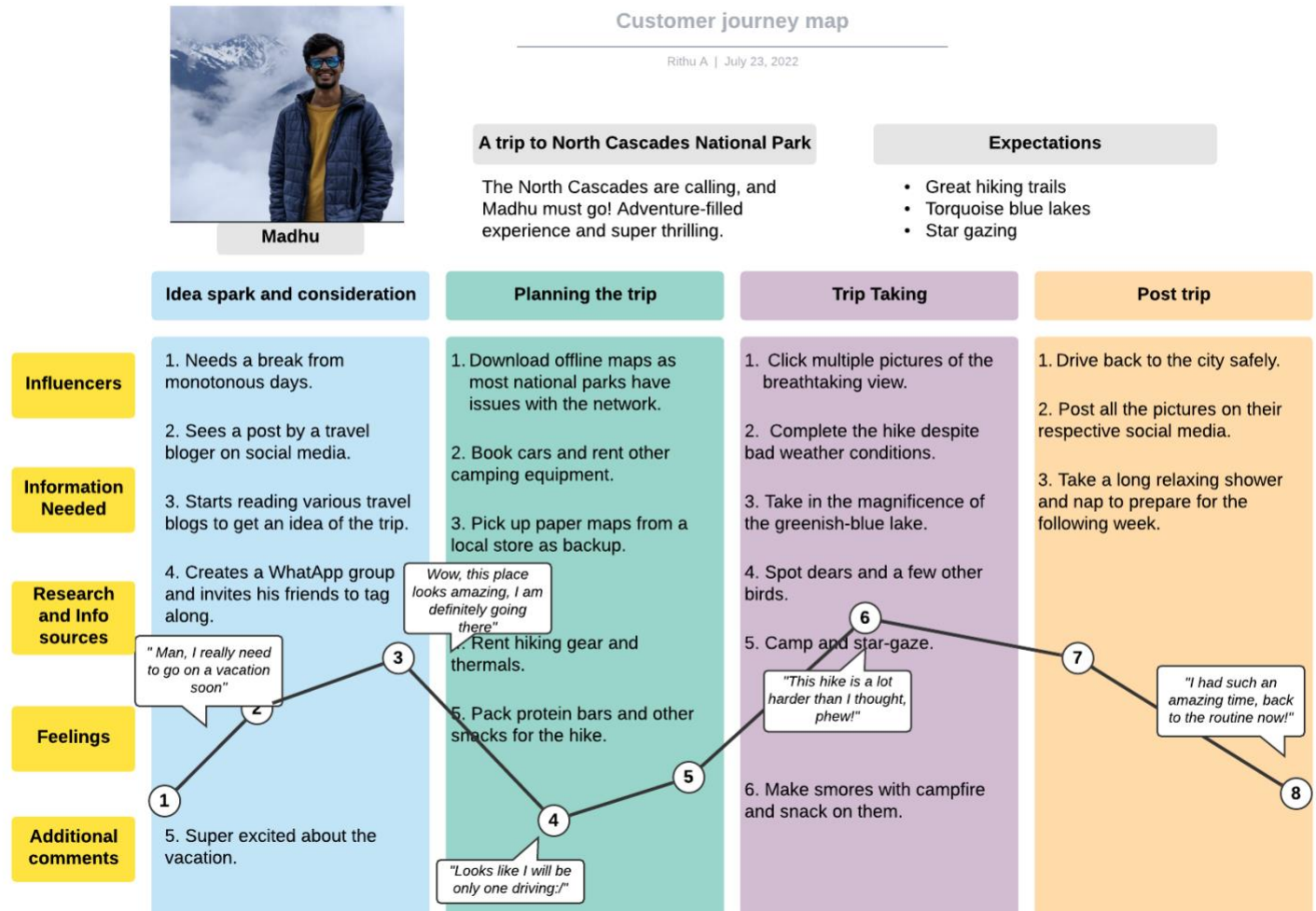
**Original Goal for the Trip:** Madhu mentions his trip to North Cascades National Park in northern Washington State. He looks forward to weekends so he can chill and catch up with friends by going on these adventures. For him, days tend to get monotonous back in the city, and the sole reason for this trip was to break the routine.

Journey Milestone	Primary Influence	Emotional Response	Notes (Why, why, why?)
First Step:	<p>He was bored at work and in day-to-day life.</p> <p>Loves to hike – He was missing some physical activity.</p>	<p>He was frustrated with coming home and getting up the next day and going back to work. This was his routine for almost a month.</p> <p>Seattle is a vast city, and Madhu felt too suffocated everywhere he went; he needed to be in a place with fewer people, if not none.</p>	<p>Madhu tends to feel he has lost his sense of privacy. Even though the city of Seattle has multiple parks, these parks usually tend to be extremely crowded.</p>
	<p>Social media: Madhu is a photographer, so he tends to follow multiple bloggers on Instagram. These bloggers post stories on national parks, to which Madhu pays close attention.</p>	<p>Madhu was thrilled about all the picturesque spots and was looking forward to getting some great shots of the place.</p>	<p>Photography has always influenced Madhu in a significant way. He actively looks forward to his next trip to be in his element.</p>
Inviting Companions	<p>Madhu created a WhatsApp chat group where he added most of his college friends who are currently in Seattle. He also added couple of his colleagues from work.</p>	<p>Madhu tends to have a better time with people he has already been on trips. He gravitates toward the kind of people he is more comfortable with because this doesn't make him anxious.</p>	<p>Madhu has been on previous trips where he didn't get along with another person and ended up having a bad time. Ever since Madhu has been very cautious about the people he invites on trips.</p>
	<p>Initially, the WhatsApp group consisted of 12 people. Out of which 5 of them responded to his invitation and showed interest. But one person had to drop out just the day before the trip to bring down the final count to 4.</p>	<p>Madhu was irked with this whole situation of one person dropping out, which meant Madhu was the only designated driver as the other folks didn't know how to drive. Madhu was counting on his friend to take turns while on the road.</p>	<p>The drive was for 3 hours, and they had to make pit stops along the way. Even though Madhu enjoys driving, having an emergency backup driver is always beneficial.</p>
Location Decision	<p>Madhu and his friends looked up several places to travel to that weekend. They weren't hell bound on one particular spot. They were ready to explore new</p>	<p>This step amused Madhu. Looking at all the possible travel destinations gave him a thrill.</p>	

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	places, which opened up many possibilities.		
	They chose North Cascades National Park because it tends to be less crowded than other parks. It has snowcap mountains and tranquil lakes.	He was nervous about potential grizzly bear encounters.	
Lodging & Transportation	They rented a car from Abis. The car they picked was a Toyota Tacoma, which was an ideal choice because they had to carry camping equipment.	Madhu took ownership of the whole process of booking a car and contacting the agency. He likes to stay on top of things because he feels more secure and confident about the entire plan.	Since Madhu was the only person among the others on the trip who could drive, it felt natural that he took up the part of arranging transport.
	The plan was to camp on one of the campgrounds, but unfortunately, most were already reserved. They drove up to the ones that allowed a first-come, first serve basis. They also had a few motels as a backup option.	This uncertainty of where they'd stay made Madhu a little anxious.	Camping was one of the activities they were looking forward to. They were hopeful that they would find a spot to pitch their tent.
Activities	Hiking: North Cascades' hike trail is one of the most recommended, with 3000ft elevation, and it was an eight-mile trek. Most parts of the course were covered in snow.	They packed the needed gear but didn't anticipate the snow level.	
	Swims at turquoise blue lakes.	They didn't end up doing this as the water was icy, and they weren't comfortable swimming in freezing water.	
	Stargazing – Clear skies with good view of stars.	They are trying to find a perfect location to pitch their tent to make the best of it.	
	Smores	They had a tiny campfire and ate smores.	

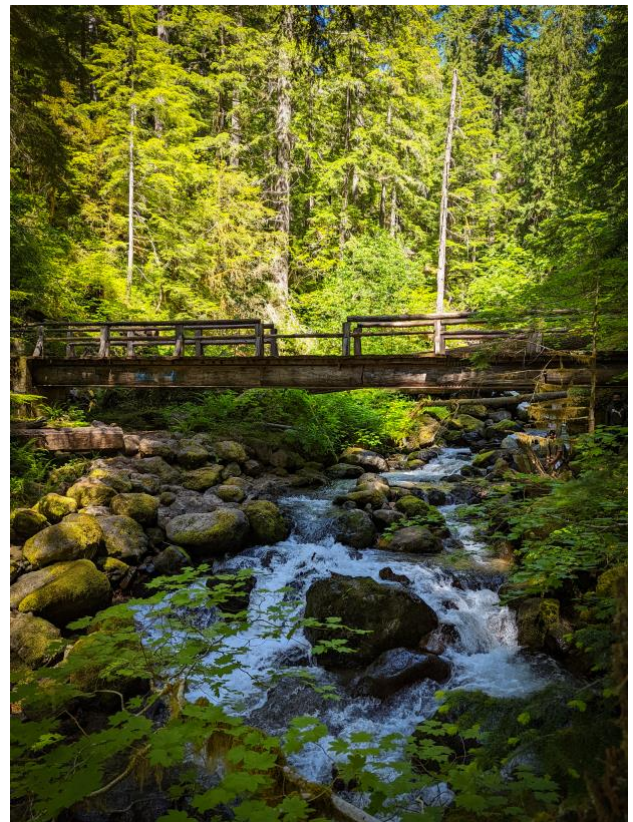
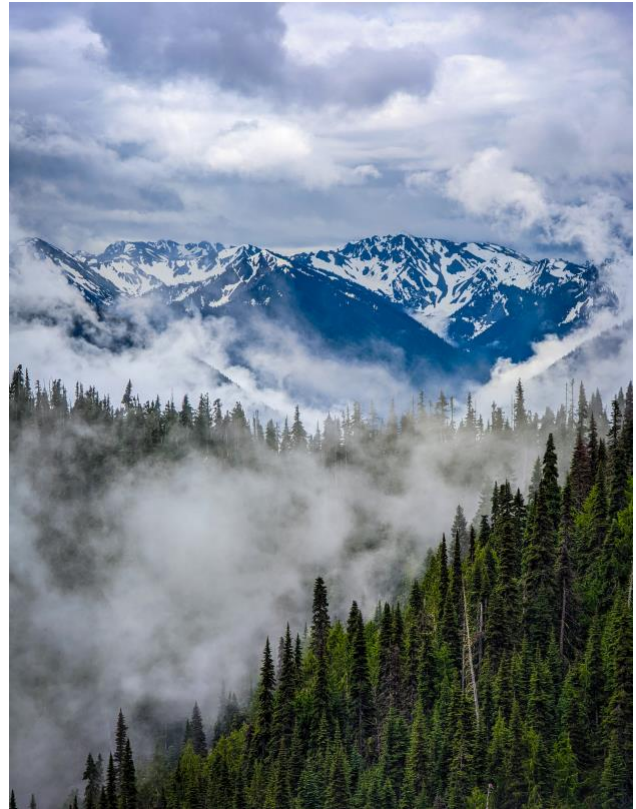
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Here are a few pictures that Madhu clicked on his trip:



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## My observations:

Feeling burnt out when working a 9-5 job is typical. Every so often, one needs to step out and have their adventures. I am glad I picked my subject or target persona as someone who falls into this same category. This study also shows us how one needs to be prepared beforehand. Since most national parks don't have network coverage, it's ideal for downloading offline maps. I feel like being cautious about the choices you make is an essential aspect of this particular case. Exploring new places and finding ways to make time for your hobbies are of utmost importance.

I enjoyed interviewing my subject on this topic. Since I also love to go on hikes and treks, I could relate to his excitement and the frustrations and a bunch of other feelings that come as part of it.

Here is a snapshot of my notes:

