

Zwende - Case Study

Industry Design Project for Springboard's UX Design Career Track

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OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

The Problem: Zwende is an India-based platform that allows users to customize and personalize handcrafted lifestyle products. Zwende is currently in the process of entering the US market, and would like to identify user personas for the websites Etsy.com and Minted.com, two key players in the US market they seek to join. The second part of this project is to do a competitive benchmark study to see how their current site compares with similar players in the industry.

The Solution: To use my experience through Springboard's course to conduct research and analysis to create competitor personas, as well as collect competitor information and present in an informative presentation for the client.

My Role: I conducted all research for this project with some guidance from my mentor.



IDENTIFYING COMPETITOR PERSONAS

RESEARCH

RESEARCH

Primary Research

I was able to work on these two project parts in tandem due to the timing of finding participants to interview to begin research to find personas for Etsy.com and Minted.com. Instead of finding subjects through a screener survey, I reached out to friends on social media and members of special-interest social groups to find qualified participants to interview.

[Click here to view my interview script](#)

I conducted and recorded 5 interviews. Two were with acquaintances that I conducted in person at coffee shops, and the other three using either zoom or skype with participants I found online. I found it worthwhile to incentivise these participants with giftcards to starbucks to make sure they were timely and high quality.

I recorded each of the interviews and identified insights which I then used to create an affinity map.



ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS

Affinity Map:

Using notes and recordings from my interviews, I pulled numerous insights and grouped them into the following categories:

- Online Shopping Habits Choosing Where to Shop
- Narrowing Down Products
- Gifting
- Checkout
- Budgeting
- Crafting
- Navigation
- Motivations
- Positive Aspects
- Negative Aspects



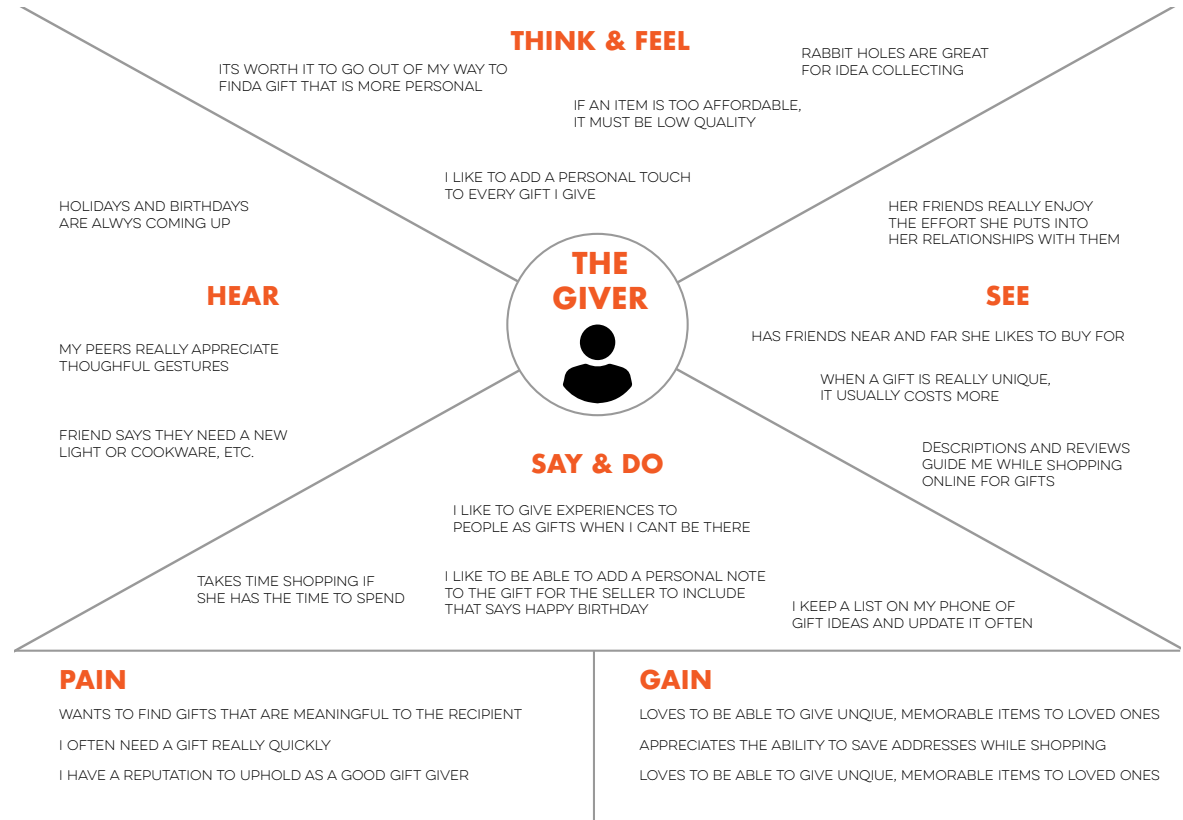
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ANALYSIS

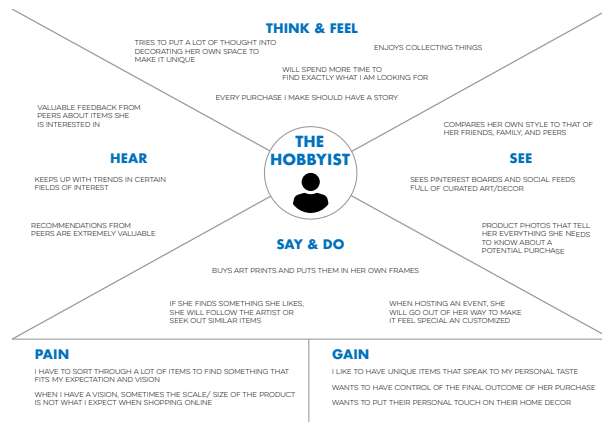
Empathy Maps:

With the insights I found I was able to identify three of the main user groups that stood out based on their motivations for shopping on the sites Etsy and Minted.

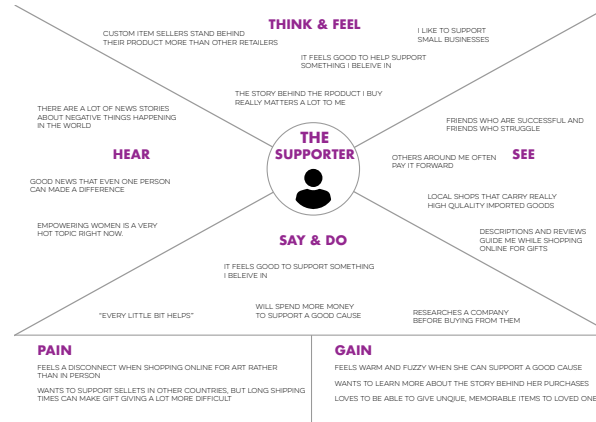
1. The Gift Giver
2. The Hobbyist
3. The Supporter



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ANALYSIS

Personas:

The primary persona is the gift giver.

Grace The Giver.

Age: 41

Education: Graduate Degree

Occupation: Project Manager

Family: Married w/ children

Location: Bakersfield, CA

Motivations

- Wants to impress loved ones with a well thought-out and personal gift
- To be seen as a caring and thoughtful person in the eyes of her peers
- Needs gifts for Holidays and Birthdays

Technology

Desktop:



Mobile:



Social Media:



Technical:

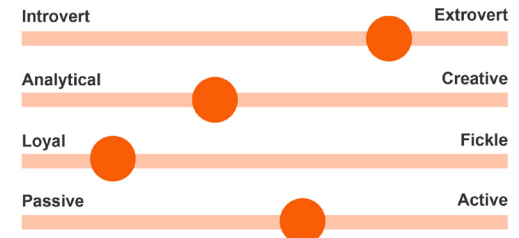


"It's worth the effort to find the perfect gift."

Frustrations

- It can take a long time to narrow down items to be able to find the perfect gift
- She is often shopping last-minute, and needs affordable and speedy shipping options.
- She is under a lot of pressure to uphold her reputation as a thoughtful gifter, and can be very picky

Personality



Goals/Needs

- Wants to add a personal touch to her gifting
- To show her gift recipients that she cares
- Needs to find items that meet her expectations in quality as well as substance and personality

Hobbies

Spending time with friends and family, Shopping, Book Club, Yoga, Baking, Traveling, Hosting Events

ANALYSIS

Personas

The second most common persona for Etsy.com and Minted.com is the hobbyist.

Hannah

The Hobbyist.

Age: 32
Education: Bachelor's Degree
Occupation: Teacher
Family: Married, no children
Location: Seattle, WA



"My taste is very unique."

Motivations

- Wants to impress her peers with her style
- To be an expert when it comes to her craft
- Wants to have unqie items that no one else has that fit her style
- Wants to look around her space and feel like everything she reflects her personal style

Frustrations

- Has trouble finding products that suit her vision for her current project(s)
- It can often be difficult to understand the scale of an object when shopping online
- She feels a lot of pressure when hosting events and wants to make them feel unqie

Goals/Needs

- She needs to feel like she played a part in creating things that she purchases
- To stay on top of the latest trends of her crafts and hobbies
- To keep things as affordable as possible while also feelig unique

Technology

Desktop:



Mobile:



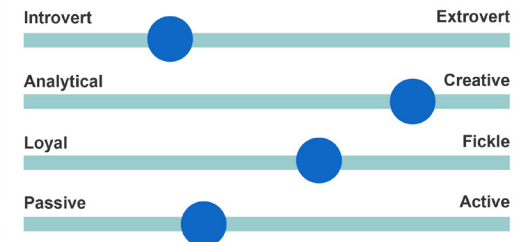
Social Media:



Technical:



Personality



Hobbies

Decorating, Gardening, Cross-Stitch, Cooking, Reading, Pinterest, Painting, Scrapbooking, Macrame

ANALYSIS

Personas

The final persona I discovered is the supporter.

Samantha The Supporter.

Age: 36
Education: Bachelor's Degree
Occupation: Stay-At-Home Mom
Family: Married w/ children
Location: St. Louis, MO



"I like to know the story behind my purchases."

Motivations

- Wants to make the world a better place so her children have a bright future
- To support small businesses, hardworking people, and causes she believes in
- To make purchases that have meaning as well as function and purpose

Frustrations

- Cannot always afford the money or time it takes to support causes around the world
- She is afraid of buying from a seller with poor customer service or poor quality
- She doesn't have a lot of time to research, so she wants information about the seller to be prominent

Goals/Needs

- To find high quality products that come from sellers she wants to support
- She needs to be able to find information about sellers before purchasing from them
- To feel like she is personally making a positive impact in the world when she spends her money

Technology

Desktop:



Mobile:



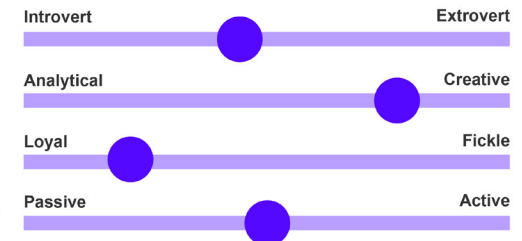
Social Media:



Technical:



Personality



Hobbies

Shopping, Cooking/Baking, Camping, Hiking, Volunteering, Meditating, Photography, Jogging

COMPETITIVE BENCHMARK STUDY

RESEARCH

RESEARCH

Secondary Research

The purpose of this part of the project is to identify strengths and weaknesses of several competitors in the US market that Zwende is looking to enter, and to use these findings to create suggestions and action steps for Zwende to consider that would help create success during this transition.

Since I was working alone and limited on time, I conducted all of the research for the competitive benchmark analysis alone. I decided to create a Competitive Analysis Matrix table to compare 7 competitors and then create an in-depth presentation deliverable to give to Zwende that focuses on user experience.

DIRECT

The logo for Etsy, featuring the word "Etsy" in a stylized, orange, serif font.The logo for minted., featuring the word "minted." in a bold, black, sans-serif font.The logo for PERSONALIZATION MALL, featuring the word "PERSONALIZATION" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, with "MALL" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it, flanked by two horizontal lines.The logo for uncommongoods, featuring the word "uncommongoods" in a blue, sans-serif font, with "un" in a lighter blue and "commongoods" in a darker blue.The logo for handmade, featuring the word "handmade" in a blue, sans-serif font, with a blue arrow pointing to the right below it.

INDIRECT

The logo for Shutterfly, featuring the word "Shutterfly" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font.The logo for wayfair, featuring the word "wayfair" in a purple, sans-serif font, with a colorful geometric logo above the "i" in "fair".

ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS

Competitive Analysis Matrix

I used google sheets to create a spreadsheet that compares 7 other e-commerce sites that I chose. I selected 5 direct competitors and 2 indirect competitors to make sure I have a large variety to compare. take when interacting with my product.

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS											
Competitor	URL	Purpose of site	Year Founded	Monthly Traffic	Primary Categories	Social Networks	Personalization	Customization/UGC Features	Competitive Advantage	Marketing Evaluation	General Notes
Diy	http://www.diy.com/	Diy is an e-commerce site and a smartphone application for buying and selling handmade and vintage items.	2005	264.31 Million	clothing and accessories, jewelry, craft supplies and tools, wedding, entertainment, home and living, kids and babies, vintage and more.	Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, Youtube	You can save items and shops as favorites, sign up for notifications for new items from certain sellers, keep an inbox for direct communication with sellers outside of email	Sells heavily on shops as favorites, sign up for notifications for new items from certain sellers, keep an inbox for direct communication with sellers outside of email	#1 Most popular marketplace for online sellers	Has a handmade crafty look and feel, is very centered around giving users access to information about their sellers. Keeps buying process simple, allows users to communicate directly with sellers through their site message system.	
Minted	http://www.minted.com/	Minted is an online marketplace of independent artists and designers.	2007	5.64 million	Stationery, wall art, and decor.	Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter	Save designs and addresses, get credit for friend referrals, create and manage online invitations, participate in design challenges as a creator, or vote on designs as a potential buyer and use different boards to save ideas and inspiration within the site.	The company celebrates art and graphic design through monthly design challenges. The public votes for the winning entries, and Minted works to identify and work with talented artists to create art, art decor, and change to make money from their work.	Since the artwork is manufactured, minted has a higher end target market. Allows users to create/purchase custom cards as well as custom artwork. Doesn't seem to have a lot of discounts and sales.	Keeps a simple and clean user interface. Has a higher end target market. Allows users to create/purchase custom cards as well as custom artwork. Doesn't seem to have a lot of discounts and sales.	
Uncommon Goods	http://www.uncommongoods.com/	A curating and online retailer of curiously designed, high-quality products. Uncommongoods works with a growing network of artists and makers to bring unique and special products to customers across the world.	1999	9.11 million	We carry thousands of unique and unusual gifts from fun jewelry and cool accessories to creative home decor and kitchen items.	Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter	Custom stationery, book items, use gift finder to find unique gifts for specific people	Share products and save them to favorites, find unique gifts for specific people	Curious free and fun for free goods, uses independent makers and designers to bring their products to market. The appeal seems to be "unique".	Content on offering unique gifts. Has custom cards, stationery, and home decor. The appeal seems to be "unique".	Promotes giving back and supporting those who need it.
Personalization Mall	http://www.personalizationmall.com/	Our goal is to serve our customers by making personalized gift buying quick and easy.	1998	8.27 million	Baby gifts, picture frames, coffee mugs, laptops, wedding and holiday gifts, all customized and personalized	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter	Save items, set reminders for gift buying, and manage your own product wishes.	None within the site	Increases free personalization and gift buying, and offers unique gifts, more ways to personalize than anyone else.	This site is overwhelmingly content with offers, discounts, and buying incentives. Too many unique things, and more ways to personalize than anyone else.	Gets the extra mile to make sure product reviews are prominent. Company is owned by Bed Bath & Beyond.
Amazon Handmade	https://www.amazon.com/handmade?ref=FB_Banner_1726_202018&pf_rd_p=1c1e1c1e-1c1e-1c1e-1c1e-1c1e1c1e1c1e	Amazon Handmade launched because of you - our Customers... We set a high bar for what it means to be handmade. We believe each artisan application and product production methods to ensure we're building a marketplace of genuinely handmade goods that Customers can trust and Artisans can be proud of.	2015	273 billion (entire amazon.com)	jewelry, home decor, home goods, kitchen & dining, beauty & grooming, toys & games, stationary and party supplies, clothing & accessories	Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest	Offers all the bells and whistles of Amazon, including wishlists, recommended items for you, team for later, registries, gift tags, etc.	Relies on user generated content, sellers apply to sell items and list on diy	Part of Amazon.com, the largest online retailer	Has amazon.com feel but with an element of uniqueness and offers. Customizations are quite minimal. But the items that are made by the maker for handmade gift buying.	
Indirect Competitors											
Shutterfly	http://www.shutterfly.com/	Shutterfly manufactures and distributes printed products primarily in the United States, Canada, and the European Community	1999	35.18 million	Photo Books, Holiday Cards, Birth Announcements, Photo Printing	Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest	Account holders can earn points, addresses, and saved projects	As they site features that lets users collaborate with invited friends/parents to share photos and create orders including calendars, journals, noters, and schedules	Shutterfly operates through direct, repeatable segments: LifeMouth, and Shutterfly Business Solutions	More of a competitor to online Customized paper goods and gift items. Offers a lot of discounts but not as many as personalization mall. Their personalization works best on desktop.	
Wayfair	http://www.wayfair.com/	Wayfair is an online retailer of home products for bedrooms, living rooms, kitchen and dining, home entertainment, bathroom, and more.	2002	\$9.88 million	Key categories for the company include furniture, decor, kitchen & dining products, home improvement, patio & garden, and baby.	Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest	Users can keep an account balance of gift cards and dollars earned from the company's rewards program.	Sellers can apply to sell on wayfair.	The digital platform branding gives the site from more than 10,000 global suppliers.	They offer some knowledge to help users see how new brands will look in their space by using the 3D room viewer on their website or in their app. Since most of the items are expensive they offer credit cards and ignore plans.	

Click to view in google sheets

ANALYSIS

Competitive Benchmark Analysis

I created a detailed slideshow to compare all 7 websites across 7 UX metrics which chose:

- Visual Appearance/Design
- Trust/Credibility
- Seller Information
- Ease of Tasks: Create an Account
- Ease of Tasks: Search/Browse
- Ease of Tasks: Customize a Product
- Ease of Tasks: Check Out

Competitive Benchmark Analysis



February, 2020

Click to view presentation in Google Slides

ANALYSIS

Competitive Benchmark Analysis

After every metric, I included takeaways and recommendations to help Zwende improve their UX. Here are a few of those screens. These can be found in the slideshow.

Search/Browse Takeaways for Zwende

- Large array of filters to apply when searching for products make sense on the left, this is what users expect
- “Sort By” abbreviations could potentially be confusing to users, using “high to low” is a more common practice



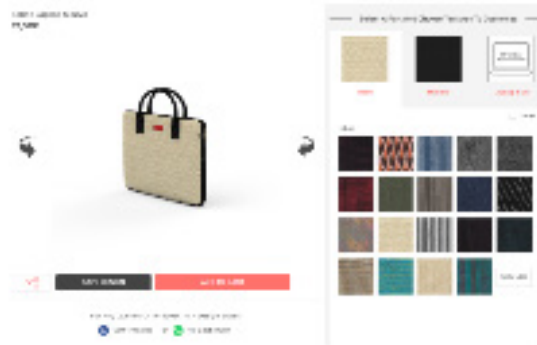
ANALYSIS

Competitive Benchmark Analysis

I praised the site for its unique features, but also pointed out some issues with loading times that could be contributing to higher bounce rates on these pages, found in the client's analytics information.

Customization Takeaways for Zwende

- Ability to save/store designs
- 360 product views go above and beyond user expectations
- Live preview is very helpful
- Long loading times could potentially be an issue for some, especially on mobile



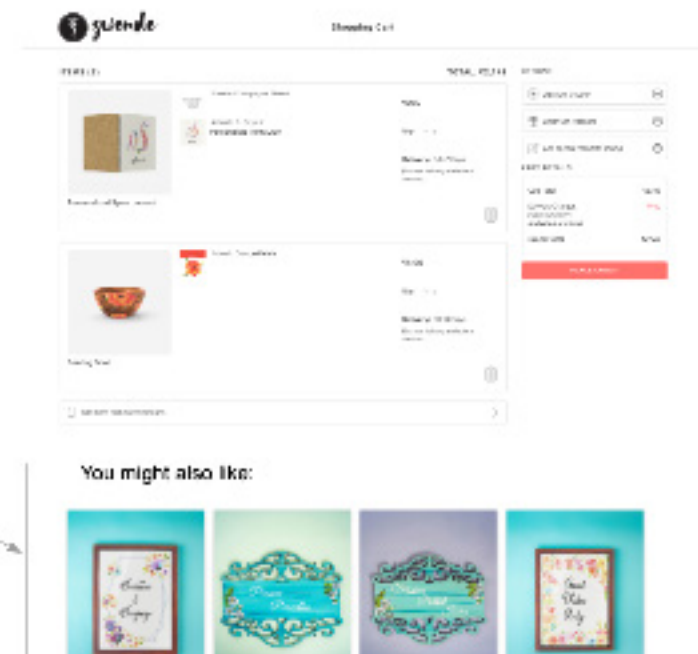
ANALYSIS

Competitive Benchmark Analysis

I recommend a suggestion to take the opportunity in checkout to upsell products to the user, much like several of the other competitors in the analysis..

Check Out Takeaways for Zwende

- The cart page could also be a chance to upsell and give users another opportunity to find something they would like to add to their purchase.



CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Lessons Learned:

This Industry Design Project match was definitely not what I expected since this was a research project and my experience is in graphic design, but I was delighted for the opportunity to get more experience working in research and to add more diversity to my portfolio.

- This was my second time to conduct interviews for a project. I found that I was better at thinking ahead and coming up with the right questions to ask to find the most valuable information to create excellent personas.
- The research I did for the Competitive Benchmark Analysis was very challenging at first, but ended up being fun. I was very intimidated by creating such a detailed slideshow that needed to speak for itself, but once I got going, it became a lot easier and I learned a lot along the way about the best things to focus on during this type of research.
- After completing this research project, I feel like I have a much better grasp on the part of UX that was the most unfamiliar to me. Coming up with this valuable information for the client feels very helpful and is something I am proud to say I can do!

