Shoptronics | Cart Abandonment

Problem & Setting

Shoptronics is an online store specializing in consumer electronics, offering a curated selection of gadgets, accessories, and home tech — including headphones, smart devices, chargers, and more. The website receives approximately 15,000 page visits per month across both desktop and mobile platforms.

Revenue comes primarily from direct product sales, with additional income from ad-generated traffic and affiliate links. Of these, product sales are the dominant source of revenue, with each item generating an average profit of around $15.00.

Recently, the team noticed a troubling trend: While many users browse the site and add products to their carts, a significant number of these sessions do not result in completed purchases. Shoptronics is now seeking to understand the factors contributing to cart abandonment and to develop targeted UX strategies aimed at improving the conversion rate and optimizing the online shopping experience.

Sampling, Methodology & Results

To understand why customers did not complete purchases after having the item in their carts, we prescreened 500 customers within 48 hours and later recruited 50 customers for focus groups and interviews. We filtered and invited potential customers through a pop-up screen when they returned to their basket later after not checking out the first time. The pop-up screen offered an opportunity to complete a 5-minute questionnaire as prescreening and offered a 5% discount at the checkout for participation.

Prescreening Questionnaire	4 Focus Groups (6-8 people per group)	Usability Studies (4 customers)
The prescreening questionnaire included questions about demographics, shopping behaviors, and reasons for not completing a purchase, plus an agreement to be contacted for further studies. We invited customers who consented to be contacted. Based on our volunteer sampling, analysis of the prescreening and a need for identifying potential pain points for different customer groups, we divided our sample into 4 age groups: *emerging adults (18 – 25), early adults (26-40), middle adults (40-59), and older adults (60+).*	We used stratified sampling to recruit customers from each age group to participate in a total of four moderated focus groups, one for each age cohort. Focus groups and prompts were selected to gain in-depth, qualitative insight into consumer behavior, enabling open discussion, peer validation, and the emergence of shared frustrations or attitudes that might not surface in individual interviews. We discovered 3 main reasons for customers' cart abandonment: 1- **Shipping issues** (delays, high costs, no fast option when needed). 2- **Mandatory account creation** or lengthy checkout, slowing down the process. 3- **Poor navigation when modifying products**, especially losing custom options after using the back button.	We randomly contacted 4 participants (each representing an age group) from prescreening questionnaire responses (excluding focus group participants) to participate in usability studies. Participants came to the office to complete think-aloud tasks while navigating the website, particularly the checkout page. Results confirmed the three main pain points, and recommended solutions were made based on behavioral and qualitative data.

Personas

We created 3 personas whose pain points reflect the main reasons for cart abandonment that emerged from the focus group interviews and usability studies. The personas also capture the demographic diversity of the customer base by representing 3 different age groups:

- **Cost-conscious student:** A 21-year-old college student with a limited budget who hates cost surprises, including **unexpected shipping fees**, at the end of the checkout process.
- **Overloaded online shopper**: A 33-year-old working mother who already has multiple online shopping accounts and does not want to **create another account** to make a simple purchase.

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- **Low-tech retiree:** A 61-year-old retired schoolteacher who struggles with site navigation and accessibility issues.

Recommended Solutions

1. **Optimize Shipping Options:**
   - Provide free shipping on orders over a certain amount (e.g., $100)
   - Offer affordable express shipping options (e.g., $5.99 for 2-3 days)
   - Introduce overnight shipping (e.g., $12.99 for next-day) to accommodate urgent needs
2. **Enhance sign-in flexibility:**
   - Allow guest checkout, with an option to create an account post-purchase via a single click
   - Support one-tap sign-in options with third-party services like Google, Apple, and Facebook
3. **Improve modification experience and site navigation:**
   - Add an "Edit Selection" feature within the shopping cart
   - Retain user selections when navigating back to modify items

Storyboard (account creation)

The Busy Mom

Monique loves online shopping - it helps her manage her busy lifestyle. But she dislike creating new accounts to make a simple purchase.

Hair Dryer Incident

One day, Monique's daughter accidentally dropped and broke their hair dryer. A replacement was urgently needed.

A Great Find

Monique discovered a stylish, well-priced hair dryer on Shoptronics. She added it to her cart and headed to checkout.

Frustration Hits

Then came the roadblock - mandatory account creation. Just like that, her excitement faded. She abandoned her cart and returned to a familiar platform with easier clicks.

A Perfect Solution

Now, with Shoptronics' improved sign-in system, Monique can use guest checkout or sign in instantly with Google or Apple. No more hurdles.

Seamless Success

Thanks to the new system, Monique quickly bought the hair dryer - no hassle, no wasted time. Just, how online shopping should be.