

Assignment 1
Phase 2
User Research

Sharif Mehedi Tanmay

1. User Interviews + Surveys

Interview #1: Shahed A., 34, DIY Enthusiast

Vehicle: 2016 Ford F-150, 2008 Honda Civic **Usage:** Monthly parts purchases

Key Insights:

- *"I spend more time on YouTube than in the app figuring out if I can actually install the part"*
- Abandoned cart 3x last month because unsure about difficulty
- Wants to see "DIY-friendly" tags on products
- Frustrated by generic search results: "I search brake pads and get 200 options"
- **Pain Point:** Installation uncertainty causes research paralysis

Interview #2: Imran U., 42, Emergency User

Vehicle: 2019 Toyota RAV4 **Usage:** 2-3x per year, only when something breaks

Key Insights:

- *"My check engine light came on Friday, I needed the part by Saturday morning."*
- Called the store instead of using app because "faster to talk to someone"
- Didn't trust inventory checker: "It said in stock but I wanted to be sure"
- Would pay extra for same-day delivery but didn't see option
- **Pain Point:** Time pressure + lack of trust in app accuracy

Interview #3: Saif T., 29, Professional Mobile Mechanic

Vehicle: Work van + customer vehicles **Usage:** 5-10x per week

Key Insights:

- *"I need parts in 30 minutes, not 30 clicks"*
- Uses AutoZone Pro website, not app - "app is too slow for my workflow"
- Needs bulk ordering and invoice history for tax purposes
- Wants saved shopping lists for common jobs
- **Pain Point:** App not optimized for professional speed/efficiency

2. Survey Results (24 Responses)

Survey: AutoZone App User Experience

Q1: How often do you use the AutoZone app?

- Weekly: 8% (2)
- Monthly: 33% (8)

- Every few months: 42% (10)
- Rarely/Only emergencies: 17% (4)

Q2: What is your PRIMARY reason for using the app?

- Check if part is in stock: 46% (11)
- Compare prices: 21% (5)
- Order for pickup: 17% (4)
- Browse/research parts: 16% (4)

Q3: How often do you abandon your cart without purchasing?

- Never: 12% (3)
- Sometimes (1-2 times): 38% (9)
- Often (3-5 times): 33% (8)
- Always browse only: 17% (4)

Q4: Why do you abandon purchases? (Select all that apply)

- Unsure if part fits my car: 67% (16)
- Too many options, can't decide: 54% (13)
- Don't know if I can install it: 46% (11)
- Price too high: 38% (9)
- Unclear warranty/return policy: 25% (6)
- App too slow/crashes: 21% (5)

Q5: Rate the app's search experience (1-5)

- Average: 2.8/5
- Comments: "Too many results," "Can't filter easily," "Generic results"

Q6: Would you use an "Emergency Mode" for urgent repairs?

- Definitely yes: 58% (14)
- Maybe: 29% (7)
- No: 13% (3)

Q7: Most valuable feature improvement?

- Installation difficulty ratings: 42% (10)
- Better search filters: 29% (7)
- Same-day delivery: 17% (4)
- Price alerts: 12% (3)

3. SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- **Largest store network** - 7,500+ locations enables fast pickup
- **Mega-hub distribution** - 110,000 SKU availability within 24 hours
- **Strong brand recognition** - Top-of-mind for DIY auto parts
- **Duralast private label** - Trusted house brand with lifetime warranties
- **Vehicle profile system** - Reduces repeat data entry
- **Real-time inventory** - Accurate stock checking across locations

WEAKNESSES

- **Generic user experience** - Same flow for all user types (emergency vs. casual)
- **Search overwhelm** - 100+ results with poor filtering/guidance
- **No installation guidance** - Users uncertain about DIY capability
- **App performance issues** - Slow loading, frequent logouts
- **Limited personalization** - Doesn't learn user preferences/skill level
- **Commercial features lacking** - Pro users prefer website over app
- **No project management** - Can't save multi-part shopping lists

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Emergency user premium services** - Same-day delivery, mobile mechanics
- **Installation confidence tools** - Video guides, difficulty ratings, time estimates
- **AI-powered recommendations** - "You might also need..." based on job type
- **Subscription model** - Maintenance reminders + discounts for regular users
- **Professional tier app** - Streamlined experience for mechanics
- **Integration with diagnostic tools** - OBD scanner compatibility suggestions
- **Social features** - Community advice, project showcases

THREATS

- **Amazon automotive expansion** - Fast delivery, competitive pricing
- **O'Reilly's superior service reputation** - Better in-store expertise
- **Rock Auto's pricing advantage** - Significantly cheaper for online shoppers
- **Mobile mechanics/on-demand services** - YourMechanic, Wrench bypass retail
- **Electric vehicle adoption** - Fewer maintenance parts needed long-term
- **Economic downturn** - DIY declines when budgets tighten further
- **Supply chain disruptions** - Inventory accuracy becomes critical

4. Clear Business Goal

Primary Business Goal: Increase AutoZone app conversion rate from 12% to 18% within 6 months by reducing cart abandonment through improved search relevance and installation confidence features.

Supporting Metrics:

- Reduce cart abandonment rate from 67% to 45%
- Increase average order value by 15% through cross-sell recommendations
- Improve app store rating from 3.2 to 4.2 stars
- Drive 25% more in-store pickups from app reservations

Business Impact:

- Projected additional revenue: \$85M annually (6% conversion lift x \$1.4B app-influenced sales)
- Reduced return costs: \$12M annually (fewer wrong-part purchases)
- Improved customer lifetime value through better experience

5. Two Research-Backed Personas

PERSONA 1: "Emergency AAA"

Demographics:

- Age: 35
- Occupation: Sales Manager
- Location: Suburban Tennessee
- Income: \$65K/year
- Vehicles: 2017 Honda Accord (daily driver)

Automotive Knowledge: Beginner (knows basic maintenance, nothing complex)

Behavioral Patterns:

- Uses app 2-3x per year, only when car problems arise
- Peak usage: Monday mornings, Friday afternoons before weekend
- Mobile-first (uses app while at work or in parking lot)
- Prefers pickup over delivery (needs parts immediately)
- Calls customer service 40% of the time instead of completing app purchase

Goals:

- Get car fixed ASAP with minimal disruption
- Avoid buying wrong parts and wasting time
- Know exactly when parts will be ready for pickup

- Understand if repair is DIY-able or needs professional

Pain Points:

- *"I don't have time to research 50 different options"*
- High anxiety about compatibility - can't risk wrong part
- Unclear if store has part in stock RIGHT NOW
- Doesn't know if he should attempt DIY or call a mechanic
- Needs car working by tomorrow morning for commute

Frustrations with Current App:

- Too many search results, no "recommended" option
- No urgency indicator or fast-track checkout
- Can't quickly connect with store for advice
- Uncertain about installation difficulty

Success Scenario: App recognizes urgency → Shows single "most likely" part → Installation difficulty displayed → Reserve for pickup in 30 min → SMS when ready

PERSONA 2: "DIY BBB"

Demographics:

- Age: 29
- Occupation: Software Developer
- Location: Memphis suburbs
- Income: \$85K/year
- Vehicles: 2015 Subaru WRX (modified), 2005 Toyota Tacoma (project truck)

Automotive Knowledge: Advanced (does own repairs, modifications, enjoys learning)

Behavioral Patterns:

- Uses app 2-3x per month, often just browsing
- Researches extensively before purchasing
- Compares prices with Rock Auto, Amazon
- Watches YouTube videos for installation guidance
- Loyal to specific brands (prefers OEM or premium aftermarket)

Goals:

- Find quality parts at competitive prices
- Verify compatibility for modifications
- Plan multi-part projects efficiently
- Learn new repair skills through clear guides
- Track maintenance history across vehicles

Pain Points:

- *"I know what I need, but the app makes me click through too much"*
- Can't save project shopping lists
- No installation difficulty ratings or time estimates
- Limited technical specifications on product pages
- Can't filter by brand preference or quality tier
- Rewards program benefits unclear/underutilized

Frustrations with Current App:

- Search returns beginner-focused results
- No "power user" mode for faster checkout
- Can't create and save custom parts lists for projects
- Limited cross-reference for OEM part numbers
- No integration with maintenance tracking

Success Scenario: App allows project creation → Save all 15 parts to list → Check availability across all stores → Reserve entire order → Get notified when ready → Earn double rewards for bulk purchase

6. P0 Problem Definition

P0 PROBLEM: Search Overwhelm & Compatibility Anxiety

Problem Statement: Users abandon purchases because search results are overwhelming and lack clear compatibility/quality guidance, causing decision paralysis and fear of buying the wrong parts.

Evidence:

- **Survey:** 67% abandon carts due to compatibility uncertainty
- **Survey:** 54% can't decide between too many options
- **Interviews:** All 3 users mentioned search/decision friction
- **App Store Reviews:** "Too many options," "Which one fits my car?" (recurring themes)

Impact:

- **67% cart abandonment rate** (industry average: 45%)
- High return rates for wrong-part purchases
- Lost revenue from users going to competitors or calling stores
- Poor app store ratings (3.2/5) due to frustration

Affected User Segments:

- **PRIMARY:** Emergency AAA (needs quick decision, low knowledge)
- **SECONDARY:** DIY BBB (overwhelmed by generic results, wants expert filtering)
- **TERTIARY:** Cost-Conscious CCC (paralyzed by price/quality tradeoffs)

Root Causes:

1. Search returns 100-200 results with minimal filtering
2. No clear "recommended" or "most popular" indicators
3. Product pages lack installation difficulty ratings
4. Quality/tier differences unclear (economy vs. premium)
5. No personalization based on user skill level or urgency

Success Metrics:

- Reduce cart abandonment from 67% to 45% (-22 points)
- Increase search-to-purchase conversion from 12% to 18% (+6 points)
- Reduce average time-to-purchase from 8 minutes to 4 minutes
- Decrease wrong-part returns by 30%
- Improve app rating from 3.2 to 4.0+ stars

Why P0: This problem affects **ALL user segments**, directly impacts **revenue conversion**, and is the **most frequently mentioned pain point** across interviews, surveys, and reviews. Solving search overwhelm has the highest ROI potential of all identified problems.