

Assignment 1 – Phase 2 (HelloPM), Product Selected – Zalando

STEP 1: User Interviews & Survey Insights

Primary Segment

Utility Shoppers

(Need-based buyers who value speed, accuracy, and low return effort)

Secondary Segment (light)

Deal Hunters

(Size availability and returns during sales)

Screening Question Used for finding right participants for the interview

“Have you bought fashion items online in the last 3 months and returned at least one item due to size or fit issues?”

Interviews Conducted

- **8 informal user interviews** (Neighbors / colleagues fitting the Utility Shopper segment)
- Duration: ~10–15 minutes each
- Focus: Buying Journey and Experience, Friction Points, Trust & Confidence

Note: Due to time and travel constraints, insights are supplemented with desk research from public e-commerce reports and app reviews. Unfortunately I wasn't able to conduct surveys as people in Germany are not that open for filling random surveys and I did not have enough time.

Key Interview Insights (Patterns)

1. Physical shopping is still preferred for fit certainty

“I'd rather go to a store, try it once, and be done — returns are just extra work.”

Observations:

- Users shop offline mainly to avoid returns.
- Fit confidence matters more than discounts or speed.

2. Size & fit is the biggest friction in online fashion

“Buying online is easy, returning is not — especially when the size is wrong.”

Observations:

- Users order multiple sizes intentionally.
- Users avoid new brands due to size uncertainty.
- Returns are seen as time waste, not just inconvenience.

3. Reviews and ratings are trusted — but not available on platform

“If I could trust how it fits from reviews, I’d buy more confidently.”

Observations:

- Users trust peer validation more than size charts.
- Reviews are seen as highly valuable but missing from platform.

4. Return effort is as big a blocker as fit itself

“If I have to go and return it myself, I’d rather not order at all. Free pickup would make me more open to buying online.”

Observations:

- Users see returns as time and effort loss, not just logistics.
- The need to physically drop off returns discourages trial and repeat purchases.
- Free or doorstep pickup reduces the psychological cost of “trying online.”

5. Users trade fit risk only when the value is clearly higher

“If the online price is much cheaper than offline, I’m okay taking the risk.”

Observations:

- Users are willing to accept size/fit uncertainty only when compensated.
- Discounts act as a risk offset for poor fit confidence.
- Without strong value advantage, offline shopping feels safer.

6. Search time increases due to too many options and filters

"I know what I want, but I still spend too much time searching because there are just too many options."

Observations:

- Users feel overwhelmed by the breadth of choices, especially during search and filtering.
- Excessive options increase decision time rather than improving discovery.
- Users want faster narrowing, not more choices.

7. Finding the right size during offers is particularly difficult

"During sales, my size is either unavailable or hard to find quickly."

Observations:

- Size availability becomes more critical during discounts
- Users experience frustration when their size is not available or becomes more difficult to find during offers
- Size uncertainty combined with urgency increases abandonment

8. Offers and coupons are hard to discover and apply

"I don't always know which coupons would work."

Observations:

- Users struggle to identify relevant discounts for their cart.
- Coupon applicability and visibility are unclear.
- Missed discounts negatively affect purchase satisfaction.

Survey (Indicative / Desk Research)

To support interview themes, secondary data was referenced:

- **~30–40% of fashion returns** are due to size/fit issues (industry benchmarks: Shopify / McKinsey).
- About 1/3rd of returns on Zalando are because of the size/fit issues (Zalando Press Release, September 2025).
- App Store reviews for fashion apps frequently mention:
 - “Size not as expected”
 - “Fit different than described”
 - “Comparatively fewer known influencers”
 - “Not ideal for fast fashion search as it contains big assortment hence effort for search is high”

These findings align strongly with interview insights.

STEP 2: SWOT Analysis (Evidence-Based)

This SWOT is based on user interviews, competitor comparison (ASOS, About You, Shein), and desk research from public reviews.

Strengths

- Strong brand trust and large multi-brand assortment.
- Fast delivery and relatively easy returns.
- Users already rely on Zalando for need-based purchases.
- Best-in-class mobile app experience and UX maturity.
- Advanced technology capabilities and personalization features.

Weaknesses

- Lack of personalized size guidance on PDP.
- Too many features make the experience feel complex and less intuitive to navigate.
- High cognitive load when choosing size across brands.

Opportunities

- Introduce personalized sizing more prominent positioning & Intuitive + confidence signals.
- Reduce returns by solving fit before checkout.
- Differentiate vs competitors through trust-led sizing.

Threats

- Users choosing offline retail for fit certainty.
- Competitors investing in virtual try-on and personalization.
- Return costs impacting long-term profitability.

STEP 3: Goal Setting (User Pain → Business Impact)

Key User Problem

Size uncertainty causes hesitation, returns, and avoidance of online purchase.

User Behavior Chain

Size confusion → hesitation / multiple orders → returns → frustration → offline shift.

Business Metric Most Impacted

Conversion rate on Product Detail Page

Primary Goal

Improve Product Detail Page conversion rate by reducing size-related uncertainty for utility shoppers.

Secondary impact: lower return rates, improved trust, user retention and repeat orders.

STEP 4: Personas (Evidence-Based)

Persona 1: Utility Shopper (Primary)

Name: Marieke, 28, Munich

Tagline: “I just want it to fit right the first time.”

Goals

- Buy the right size quickly
- Avoid returns and wasted time

Behaviors

- Shops online for basics
- Avoids new brands unless confident about fit
- Reads reviews before buying

Frustrations

- Inconsistent sizing across brands
- Unclear fit guidance
- Hassle of returns

Quote

“If I’m unsure about size, I’d rather not buy.”

Persona 2: Deal Hunter (Secondary)

Name: Jonathan, 30, Munich

Tagline: “Deals are great — if my size is available.”

Goals

- Find discounts in the right size
- Avoid returns during sales

Frustrations

- Sizes go out of stock
- Hard to know fit during sales rush

STEP 5: Problem Prioritization (PIF)

Problems Identified

1. Size uncertainty across brands
2. General size recommendation not enough
3. Finding right offers / coupons
4. No size charts available
5. No reviews and size fit reviews available
6. Return hassle due to wrong fit
7. Lack of fit-specific trust signals
8. Discount availability by size

PIF Scoring (Primary Segment)

Problem	Population	Intensity	Frequency	Priority
Size uncertainty across brands	High	High	High	P0
Finding right offer / coupons	High	High	Medium	P1
Return hassle	High	Medium	Medium	P2

Final P0 Problem Statement

“Utility shoppers struggle to identify the correct size across different brands during search and product detail page exploration, leading to hesitation, lower conversion, and avoidable returns.”