

Phase 2 - Validating Problems (User Research) and Setting a Direction

▼ Pre-Interview Prep

▼ Interview Questions Guide v1

Demographics-related question:

1. What do you do?
2. What is your age?
3. Are you married? How many people are there in your family?

App-related questions:

1. How did you come to know about Yuka?
2. Why did you start using it? How long have you been using it?
3. What kind of products do you usually scan?
4. Are you a paid member of the app?
5. When do you usually use the app? At home for online shopping or only in a grocery store?
6. When was the last time you used it?
7. What did you use it for?
8. Can you walk me through your shopping process?
9. How has your experience been so far?
10. What do you like the most about it?
11. Have you faced any challenges or issues with Yuka?
12. Is there anything you find confusing on yuka?

13. Has it ever happened that you scanned or searched a product and it had a bad rating? or how often does it happen?
14. What do you do if a product has a bad rating?
15. After you see recommendations in the app, what do you do?
16. What do you do if you can't find the alternative recommendations? How does that make you feel?
17. Do you end up buying poorly rated products? Or do you go to a different score?
18. Do you scan all the products on the shelf? How does that make you feel?
19. Do you struggle to find recommendations for cosmetics products more than food products?
20. Have you had any issues with beauty product recommendations?
21. What criteria do you consider while deciding which recommended product you should buy?
22. What are your criteria for evaluating beauty product recommendations?
23. Do you find any issues with recommendations?

▼ Interview questions guide v2

- Tell me about your typical grocery shopping routine.
- Does your beauty products shopping routine differ from grocery/food products?
- Who do you usually shop for?
- What matters to you when choosing food or beauty products?
- When do you feel unsure about a product?
- What makes you pick up your phone?
- What's usually going through your mind just before you scan?
- How did you make product decisions before you used Yuka?
- What would you do today if Yuka didn't exist?

- Walk me through your last shopping trip where you scanned something.
- What happened, step-by-step?
- What made you buy/not buy?
- After buying a product, how do you know if it was the right choice?
- Has your trust ever changed after using a product?
- Have you ever regretted relying on the app?
- How do you feel when a product you like scores poorly?
- How do you feel when the app doesn't have a product?
- What's a moment when you still felt uncertain even after using Yuka?
- Have you ever bought something even though the score wasn't ideal?
Tell me about that.
- What makes shopping decisions difficult for you?
- What do you wish Yuka understood about you personally?
- What gets in the way when choosing healthy or safe products?
- What prevents you from using Yuka more often?
- Do you ever check anything other than Yuka when you're unsure about a product?
- What do you do when Yuka can't find a product?
- What's something annoying about shopping that you've just...
accepted?
- If you could magically change one thing about how you shop, what
would it be?

▼ Interview Insights

Number of people interviewed: 5

Extracting Insights:

<https://www.figma.com/board/7Uu1okwb4eCFjfepiZqavu/AI-PM-Assignment?node-id=16-2306&t=jVqUK8TXdcCtgMoW-4>

1. All users are **long-term users** and have been using the app for **more than 6 months**.
2. Most of the users were **recommended this app by friends**, and most of them had **already recommended** this app to other friends.
3. All users are using the **free version**.
4. Many users didn't have the habit of checking ingredients (especially in beauty products) before using Yuka.
5. Some users used ChatGPT, Gemini, Google or YouTube to research alternatives to products and their nutritional content.
6. After using Yuka, they have **stopped eating/using their favourite products** because they were rated poorly and had harmful ingredients.
7. Yuka is now **part of their decision-making process** before purchasing a new product (maybe a new brand), as it provides a clear breakdown of ingredients, making it easy to decide.
8. If the product is rated poorly (poor or bad rating), then users **check the recommendations in the app** and other products on the shelf.
9. If the recommended product is not available in the store, they either buy the poorly rated product if it is immediately needed, or they check other stores.
10. While shopping in the store, they also **compare products even if the rating is good to find a better product** with the least amount of harmful ingredients or additives.
11. Users have their own personal criteria for making a final purchase decision depending on their immediate needs.
12. All users have different reasons for trusting the ratings provided by Yuka, but they trust Yuka to some extent.
13. All users had faced situations where they **weren't able to find the recommended products** in their regular store.

Unexpected Insight

1. Many users **forgot to try the app** after they received the recommendation.
2. All users were **unaware of the paid subscription** and didn't have knowledge of the features offered in the paid subscription.
3. All users didn't know **where to find the information** on subscription plans.
4. All users mentioned frustration with finding the store to purchase the product recommended by Yuka.
5. Most users mentioned that "supplements" are not rated on Yuka.
6. Most users expressed the need for more products in the database, especially international products manufactured within the country of residence (Canada, USA).

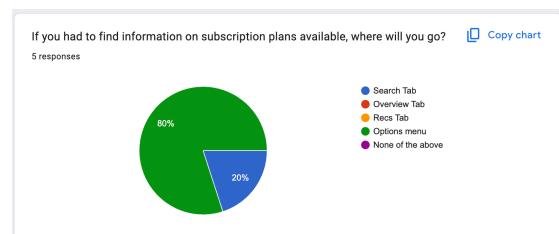
Hypothesis Check:

1. Hypothesis 1 checks out partially
2. Hypothesis 2 checks out partially

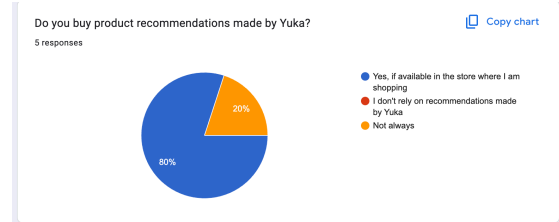
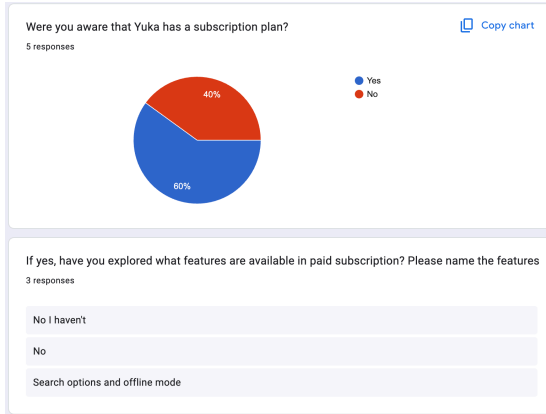
▼ Survey Insights

Even though users said that they are aware of paid subscription of Yuka, they weren't aware of the features offered in paid subscription.

Users don't know where to find the information on paid subscriptions

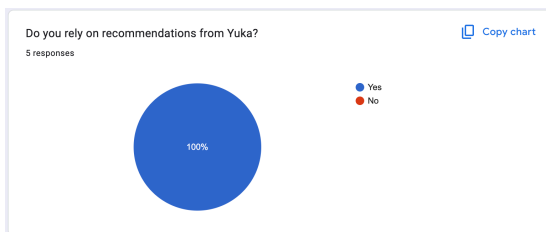


Most users said that they buy recommendations if available in the store of their choice

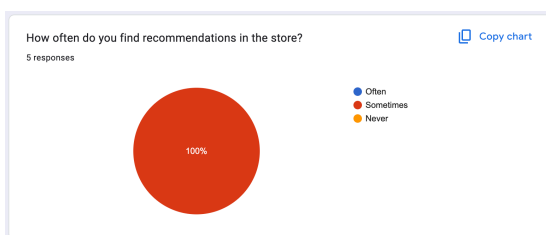


Users don't buy poorly rated products if recommendations are not available in the store.

All users said that they rely on recommendations from Yuka



Users don't find the recommendations often in the stores of their choice



▼ SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Users find the app very easy to use. This is supported by reviews on Play store.	4/5 users interviewed mentioned that they would like to get more personalized recommendations based on the usage and products scanned.

Users find it very easy to identify if a product is good/safe or bad/unsafe for them using the app. This is supported by reviews on Play store.

Users find it very easy to understand what kind of (safe/harmful) ingredients are present in the product and how safe/risky they are. This is supported by reviews on Play store. Compared to its competitors, the rating screen is very well designed allowing users to comprehend the complex information very easily.

Yuka is the market leader with 77 million users vs 7 million users of its biggest competitor (Think Dirty).

Overall it has 87% 5 star ratings on Play store
4.8 star ratings (83K ratings) on Appstore
4.7 star ratings (171K ratings) on Play store

85 products scanned per second
6 million products rated

Cheaper than competitor products
Yuka - \$20 to \$35 / year (freemium)
Think Dirty - \$39.99/year (free trial)
Olive - \$79.99/year (free trial)
Fooducate - \$26.99/year (Freemium + ads)
Open Food Facts - Free (Donation)

Many users in the reviews have expressed the need to filter the scanned products based on their preferences such as **avoid seed oils**, allergens, etc. This helps them clearly identify the unfavorable ingredients. These features are available for free in some competitors apps.

Many users in the reviews have also expressed the need to **filter the recommendations based on personal preferences**. This helps them select the products that meet their criteria. This also signals low awareness of paid features. Although Yuka doesn't offer comprehensive list of features, this functionality is available in paid version.

These features are available for free in some competitor products.

Fooducate in its free version allow its users to search for food items in using name and also filter products by various categories such as vegetables, fruits, breakfast, lunch, etc. without having to scan them.

5/5 users interviewed mentioned that they were **not aware** of paid versions and **didn't know the price** or features offered in paid version. Users said "I would like to be able to search for a product using its picture or name when I am shopping online" which shows that users weren't aware of features offered by the app.

User survey showed that 4/5 users would go to "**options menu**" to look for subscription information and not **Search tab** where the information is actually located. This shows that users won't be able to find the information on paid subscription even if prompted.

Opportunity	Threat
Yuka has 77 Million users, but it is generating \$7 million in revenue per year. There is a potential to generate more revenue. 3/5 users mentioned that Yuka doesn't provide information on where to find the recommendations (if not available in regular stores) and many users also mentioned the same in Appstore / Playstore reviews. This breaks the shopping workflow because users then need to look for the information either on Google or buy something else or not buy anything at all. This is also supported by the survey response where all the users said that they found recommendations only "sometimes" in their regular stores. ThinkDirty has partnered with Amazon and directly share the link to Amazon to buy recommended product which allows the app to keep its costs lower. Many users in the reviews mentioned the need for recipe suggestions using only healthy ingredients. This is an opportunity as Yuka generated \$137,893 in revenue through sales of its book "The healthy eating guide". 1/5 users interviewed mentioned that he would not mind paying if Yuka provided healthy recipe suggestions. Yuka can leverage this and offer it as virtual book in the paid version reaching a wider audience to generate additional income. Currently, only Fooducate offers such information in the form of a blog in its	Yuka generates 97% of its revenue only through its paid subscription which is mainly based on users' good will. Yuka won't be able to sustain its business if another competitor started offering better services and paid users decided to switch. There are many category of products not rated on Yuka yet some of which are rated on competitor apps. This could lead to users switching to competitor apps. However, currently such competitors are not offering the service for free.

app for free.

▼ Goal Setting

Identified problems

1. Poor rated product → recommendation not available in store → exit the app → lower engagement
2. Poor rated product → recommendation has ingredient that causes allergy not highlighted by Yuka → Manually check ingredients on packaging → exit the app → lower engagement
This could potentially lead to paid user cancelling subscription as Yuka doesn't highlight all the ingredients known to cause allergy such as nuts
3. Poor rated product → recommendation has ingredient not preferred by user → Manually check ingredients on packaging → exit the app → lower engagement
This could potentially lead to paid subscriber cancelling subscription as Yuka currently only alerts the presence of Palm oil, not the other oils and more such ingredients preferred by users.
4. Users not clicking on search tab → Low search feature usage → Low awareness of paid subscription & premium features → no new subscriptions → no increase in revenue

Selected Goal

Increase the number of paid subscribers in next 6 months

▼ User Personas

▼ Persona 1



Goals / Motivations

- Exercises regularly in gym and eats healthy to stay fit and healthy
- Wants to avoid products that contain harmful ingredients

Name: Prakriti

Age: 29 years

Marital status:

Married

Children: None

Family: 2 members

Role: Customer

Success Manager

Location: Canada

Behaviors

- Habitually scans new products in Yuka before making purchase decision and purchases grocery mostly in stores.
- Stopped using favorite products because they contained harmful ingredients.
- Always verifies nutrition information in Yuka to avoid foods high in sugar and sodium. Consumes sweet treats occasionally.
- Compares products based on Yuka score, price and personal preferences.

"I don't have any specific goals, but like, the only major goal is to use good products."

Pain points

- Has to rely on Google to find where to buy some recommended items that are not available in regular store
- Often buys beauty products based on Yuka recommendations without knowing if they will suit her
- Has to rely on Google to evaluate the supplements like protein powders and vitamins

▼ Persona 2



Goals / Motivations

- Cook fresh food every day for her family and her son and avoid packaged/ fast food.
- Maintain blood sugar level because she was diagnosed with diabetes (GDM) during pregnancy

Name: Archana

Age: 40 years

Marital status: Married

Children: 3 year old son

Family: 5 members

Role: Inside sales representative

Location: US

"I also love to understand about the products that we're using these days."

Behaviors

- Habitually scans new products in Yuka before making purchase decision and purchases specific items from specific stores.
- Compares products even if highly rated to find the one with least additives
- Always checks products in Yuka and verify each ingredient in the list if purchasing for her son
- Prefers buying grocery twice a week rather storing food in fridge for more than 2 days

Pain points

- Has to rely on walmart app or google to find where to buy some recommended items that are not available in regular store
- Finding safe personal care / food products that are suitable for her son

▼ Problem Prioritization

5/5 users interviewed weren't aware that Yuka has a paid subscription.

4/5 users gave wrong answer in the survey when asked where they would go to find the subscription information. They selected "Options menu" instead of "Search tab".

2/5 users interviewed mentioned not being able to use Yuka for online shopping and 1 of them requested search feature to be included in the app. Additionally, 4/5 users said during survey that they have never used "search" feature in the app.

Many users in Google play store reviews have mentioned that they would like to be able to filter products based on food preferences or specific ingredients. This feature is already present in the app. This again confirms lack of awareness of premium features.

Problem: *Since the visibility of premium features is low, free users are unaware of premium subscription and its low cost. Hence, number of paid subscribers are low, leading to loss of potential revenue.*