

UX Research Report: Exploring Coffee Habits

Project Title:

Phase 1: Foundational Research for Coffee

Research Goal:

To understand how customers with varying caffeine needs and lifestyle preferences engage with coffee: what drives their choices, their routines, and their pain points.

Research Objectives:

1. Identify user behaviors and motivations related to coffee consumption.
2. Explore how sustainability and social context influence purchasing decisions.
3. Pinpoint common user pain points.

Personal Note:

Due to my caffeine sensitivity, which includes both the taste and smell of coffee, I designed this research to prioritize low exposure methods. I relied heavily on surveys, short field observations, and competitor analysis. This adaptation allowed me to gather meaningful insights while minimizing direct contact with coffee environments.

Methods:

Research Methods:

- **Surveys:** Collected data from 6 participants with varying caffeine habits, routines, and preferences.
- **Competitor Analysis:** Evaluated three Pittsburgh-area coffee shops (Standing Wave, 61B Cafe, Allegheny Coffee & Tea Exchange) through brief visits, public reviews, and environmental scanning.
- **Persona Development:** Created 3 personas to represent user types.
- **Journey Mapping:** Mapped Alice's day-to-day experience using coffee to aid focus.
- **Affinity Diagramming:** Grouped findings into themes based on behavior, emotion, and environment.

Participants & Profiles:

Name	Sarah	Micheal	Marcus	Ana	Cris	Lila
Age	32	38	42	38	56	24
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Non-Binary	Male	Female
Occupation	SW Engineer	SW Engineer	High School Teacher	Visual Artist	Graphics	Grad Student
Location	House Eleanor St	House Wagner Way	61B Cafe Braddock Ave	61B Cafe Braddock Ave	House Brentwood Ave	61B Cafe Braddock Ave

Research Locations:

- **Coffee Shops:**
 - 61B Cafe (Regent Square)
 - Standing Wave (Mobile Truck, Pitt Campus)
 - Allegheny Coffee & Tea Exchange (Strip District)
- **Private Residences:**
 - Eleanor St
 - Wagner Way
 - Brentwood Ave

Timeline:

- **Week 1:** Survey design
- **Week 2:** In-person surveys & cafe observations
- **Week 3:** Persona development and pain point
- **Week 4:** Journey map and power point
- **Week 5-7:** Presentation of findings

Deliverables:

- Notes and documentation
- Competitor research
- 1 detailed journey map
- Affinity diagram
- Final presentation

Next Steps:

- Broaden research to include more participants and varied regions.
- Prototype a decaf-forward specialty menu.
- Pilot a student loyalty or rewards program.
- Develop cafe-at-home starter kits.

This research lays the foundation for future design phases by surfacing actionable user insights and underrepresented needs in the coffee experience.