



VIRTUAL SHOPPING, REAL REWARDS

BrandCode was conceptualised as the “ultimate mobile grocery app” when it was launched by I.M Communications in late 2016. Packed with different features to appeal to shoppers, the app aims to connect shoppers and fast-moving consumer goods. As of March 2018, BrandCode has garnered 60,000 users in

Malaysia and 15,000 users in Singapore, with a monthly active usage of 30 per cent.

“With the digital revolution, brands must be able to deliver products or services to their customers in a more personalised and more timely manner,” shared BrandCode’s Co-Founder Don Tan. Confident that the app can continue to create value for brand owners and customers alike, I.M Communications participated in the Capstone Programme to “discover new pain points from stakeholders”, and to “raise awareness and adoption rates” for the app.

Team Get Fresh

Waste not, want not

Team Get Fresh used the business canvas model to chart its research as it proceeded from situation analysis through validation and prototype, implementation and feasibility. Tapping on scientific approaches through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, the team streamlined the problem definition – Packaged food brand owners are unable to tackle the issue of food wastage due to a gap in concerted efforts, and this has led to several missed opportunities to decrease social and economic costs. The objective of the project was to help brand owners reduce the amount of food wastage they face, and improve their brand reputation by providing a platform to make their corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts more visible to consumers.

The team conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis on BrandCode. Given its strong loyalty programme and big data base, and the growing consciousness towards sustainability practices, Team Get Fresh – using primary and secondary research – identified and crafted the value propositions for the brand owners and consumers.

In-depth interviews with the brand owners revealed their desire to be identified by consumers as good corporate citizens, and their willingness to invest in CSR initiatives that would bring value to their brands. For consumers, in-depth interviews and an online survey garnered salient information about their perceptions, preferences and spending habits. Primary and secondary research corroborated the findings at every stage, providing the team with the assurance that it was on the right track.

Joybox: An enduring gift

Applying design thinking, a creative problem-solving process that uses different elements like empathy and experimentation to arrive at new solutions, the team designed and proceeded to prototype Joybox – a “subscription box service”. Each box was envisioned to contain quality packaged food & beverage products, albeit with shorter expiry dates, from the brand owners. For every box subscribed, another would be donated to charity.

Team Get Fresh validated that Joybox would be the ideal multi-sided platform connecting the brand owners and consumers as it ticked all the boxes. For brand owners, this meant reducing food wastage, and being a good corporate citizen; for consumers, the Joybox translated into good value as well as doing good in terms of contributing to sustainability efforts and to charity. The team followed up with a detailed implementation plan, complete with marketing strategies, advertising and publicity plans, a budget breakdown and feasible timeline.

Team Buay Ming Giah

Who shops smart?

Like Team Get Fresh, Team Buay Ming Giah turned to the business canvas model to map its project as it progressed through the phases of mid-term presentation, customer segmentation, proposed solution, implementation plan and project analysis. With the problem definition – to attract real buyers for BrandCode by transforming the grocery shopping experience for the modern shopper in Singapore – the project objective was to enable BrandCode to better target its app offerings for the young smart shoppers on the online grocery market scene by coming up with a monetisation strategy.

A SWOT analysis established BrandCode's standing among its competitors, its strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats it was facing. Using an online Qualtrics survey, the team gained a better understanding of the online grocery landscape, and identified the key consumer behaviours and preferences. Three focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were also conducted. With the information gleaned from the primary and secondary research, Team Buay Ming Giah was able to develop initial insights into the problem, ascertain the target audience and later, test the prototype and obtain timely feedback.

Having determined the profile of the target customer as the “typical millennial” – a digital native with high mobile usage, low purchasing power, thrifty with everyday expenses, and price sensitive with the penchant to compare prices in order to get the best deals – the team believed BrandCode would appeal to the young smart shopper as a one-stop platform to discover and share products on promotion. A value proposition canvas was used to chart the team's next steps.

C'mon, share the good stuff

Team Buay Ming Giah created its business model around BrandCode as a multi-sided platform to synergistically connect the online retailers, young smart shoppers and brand owners. It proposed a three-phase implementation plan over a two-year period, with detailed activities spanning customer acquisition and engagement, digital promotions and partnerships with online retailers to increase conversion and initiate a monetisation plan, and partnership with brand owners for personalised and/or targeted marketing to individual customers and data selling. Detailed plans and goals at each step, and budgets and financial projections, were also included in the team's final report.

Practical, Fresh Insights

BrandCode's Co-Founder had only compliments for the teams' work. “They understood our challenges and aligned their perspectives with ours,” commented Mr Tan. “We are delighted by their keen sense of commitment, fresh insights, marketing knowledge and on-the-ground research.”

Not only were the teams' recommendations spot on and feasible, the team members left a lasting impression with the brand owners during their research interviews. To date, several brand owners have “come onboard and embarked on new initiatives with us,” revealed Mr Tan. The company will be implementing some of the recommendations in the near future.

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