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Let’s make a Fair Call

Strengthening Customer Relationships and Loyalty at Fairphone



fairphone

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Preface

This master's thesis explores how Fairphone can strengthen its relationship with existing customers by improving its post-purchase communication. The project focuses on how Fairphone can better address customer needs and problems through a more supportive and customer-centred approach. It was conducted as my final graduation project for the Master's programme in Strategic Product Design at Delft University of Technology (TU Delft).

Throughout my studies, I have had the opportunity to work on projects with various companies. However, the companies that have always inspired me the most are those that do things differently, driven not only by profit but by a genuine belief that they can make a positive difference in the world. This is what attracted me to Fairphone and motivated me to carry out my graduation project with them.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to contribute to a company that challenges the way the electronics industry operates by promoting sustainability, fairer production practices and longer-lasting products. What makes this project particularly meaningful to me is the opportunity to help Fairphone build stronger connections with its customers, ensuring that the company not only attracts people through its products but also continues to support them throughout their ownership experience.

Through this project, I hope to provide Fairphone with valuable insights and recommendations for improving its post-purchase communication, helping the company build stronger, more meaningful and lasting relationships with its customers.

In a world where almost everything is becoming digital and AI is playing an increasingly important role in both our work and daily lives, I wanted to give this thesis a personal touch. That is why some of the chapter introduction pages include photographs of my own sketches and handwritten notes made during the design process. Not all of these ideas made it into the final designs, and some may not directly relate to the current content of the chapters they introduce. However, I deliberately chose to include them because they show a more personal side of the process, including the ideas, thoughts and explorations that happened along the way. For me, they are a small reminder that behind this thesis are many hours of thinking, sketching, trying things out and putting personal care into the work.

Acknowledgements

Writing this thesis is something I could never have done on my own. Throughout this journey, I have been incredibly fortunate to have wonderful, caring people around me who supported me, encouraged me, and helped me through the moments when things became difficult. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been part of this journey.

First, I would like to thank my supervisor Arno van Leeuwen, who has supported me from the very beginning and has always been there when I needed help. Thank you for your endless creativity, fresh perspectives, and inspiring ideas that encouraged me to explore new directions whenever I felt stuck. Most of all, thank you for always making time for me, especially during the moments when I struggled to find my own way forward.

I would also like to acknowledge Lise Magnier. I appreciate the knowledge and insights I have gained from you throughout this process.

I would also like to thank my supervisor Bart Bluemink, who stepped in at a crucial moment in this project. Your insights and guidance helped me rediscover what designing is truly about. You reminded me of the value of the design process and helped me find my way back to the designer I want to be. Above all, thank you for helping me regain my confidence when I needed it most.

To my fellow students, thank you for your involvement in the brainstorming sessions, but even more for everything beyond them. Whether it was sharing ideas, offering a different perspective, giving advice, or simply having a conversation when I needed one, you were always willing to help. Having such supportive people around me made this journey so much more enjoyable.

A special thank you goes to Marjolein van Osch, my supervisor at Fairphone. Thank you for giving me this opportunity and for making my graduation project feel like something worth celebrating every single week, even during the times when it was difficult to see it that way myself. Your warmth, enthusiasm, and genuine care made an enormous difference. I always felt that I could come to you, whether I needed guidance, encouragement, or simply someone to talk to. I am incredibly grateful for the way you supported me throughout this project.

I would also like to thank the entire Fairphone team. Thank you for welcoming me, believing in me, and always being willing to contribute your creativity, knowledge, and ideas. More importantly, thank you for making me feel supported and part of the team.

To all the Fairphone users who participated in my research, thank you for your time, openness, and enthusiasm. Your willingness to share your experiences and thoughts has been invaluable. Getting to know you and hearing your stories gave this project a much deeper and more personal meaning. You have been a true source of inspiration, and being able to design something with your needs in mind has made this project especially rewarding.

I would also like to thank my parents, friends and family for supporting me during this journey.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my aunt. Thank you for being there for me every single day, for caring so deeply, and for experiencing every high and low of this journey alongside me. This has not always been an easy process and you have supported me in more ways than I can put into words. Because of you, I was able to keep going, make the most of this experience, and reach a point I can be proud of.

Thank you.

The use of AI in this thesis

During the development and writing of this thesis, artificial intelligence (AI) was used in various ways as a supporting tool throughout the research and design process.

As I have dyslexia, reading and writing can be challenging for me. AI was therefore particularly helpful in ensuring that I interpreted information correctly and communicated my own ideas clearly and as intended. Throughout the project, AI was used to support my work rather than to replace my own research, design decisions, or critical thinking.

Literature Research
During the literature review, I independently searched for and selected relevant academic sources using Google Scholar. Occasionally, I used AI chatbots to check whether I had correctly interpreted certain findings or to identify important information in a publication that I might have overlooked. This helped me improve my understanding of the literature while maintaining responsibility for the interpretation and selection of sources.

Research Preparation and Creative Sessions
AI was also used to support the preparation of interviews and creative sessions. For the interviews, I explained my research objectives and what I wanted to investigate, and asked an AI chatbot to suggest an interview guide. This served as an initial starting point, which I then extensively revised and refined with input from customer researchers at Fairphone.

Similarly, I consulted AI for suggestions on how to structure and facilitate creative sessions, including aspects to consider when preparing to host them. These suggestions helped me prepare and practise, while the final approach and execution remained my own responsibility.

Design Directions and Visual Communication
During the development of the design directions, with design systems and customer scenarios, AI was used to support visual communication. I independently developed the content, structure and sequence of these concepts before using AI to generate supporting visuals.

Using Lovable, I described the design directions and corresponding customer journeys to generate mock-ups of potential app screens. AI chatbots were also used to create illustrations of customer scenarios and visualise individual steps within the design systems. These visuals helped communicate the concepts more clearly and demonstrate how they could work in practice.

Through multiple iterations and detailed feedback, I refined the AI-generated visuals to ensure they accurately represented my ideas. I also used AI to suggest potential improvements or identify missing elements. However, these suggestions were critically evaluated, and I independently decided which, if any, to incorporate into the final designs.

Intervention Design and Prototyping
For the customer scenario, I first created my own drawings and iterated on the sequence of steps. Based on these drawings, I asked AI to generate clearer illustrations that would help readers understand the scenario. I then independently arranged, selected, and refined the illustrations until they communicated the intended story.

The intervention was initially designed independently through sketches of the different screens and their content. I also developed and refined the sequence of screens on paper before using Lovable to translate these sketches into an interactive prototype.

Through several prompts, I explored different layouts and selected the design that best matched my intentions. I then repeatedly tested the prototype myself to assess whether the interactions and navigation were logical, making further adjustments directly within Lovable where necessary. AI therefore supported the visualisation and prototyping process, while the underlying concept, structure, and final design decisions were determined by me.

Validation Preparation
AI was also used during the preparation of the validation sessions. I explained what I wanted to validate and how I intended to approach the validation, and asked an AI chatbot to refine my session structure. I independently reviewed and adjusted the structure, removed or added questions, and refined the session until it aligned with my validation objectives.

Writing, Translation, and Critical Reflection
Throughout the writing process, I frequently wrote initial texts in Dutch and used AI to translate them into English and improve their clarity, structure, and readability. AI was always asked to preserve the original content and meaning while just communicating more effectively without adjusting the content.

AI was also used as a sparring partner when I was unsure how to approach certain challenges. For example, I occasionally asked for suggestions on how to visually communicate specific ideas or structure certain parts of the report. These suggestions were used as inspiration and were not automatically adopted. In many cases, I ultimately developed my own solutions, although the interaction sometimes provided additional perspectives or insights.

When writing chapter conclusions, I occasionally asked AI to review whether the conclusions sufficiently reflected the information I had presented. This helped me check whether I had overlooked any relevant findings from my own research. The conclusions themselves remained based on my own analysis and interpretation.

Finally, Scribbr was used to support the formatting and management of references throughout the thesis.

Overall Responsibility

In conclusion, AI was used primarily to support reading comprehension, writing, translation, visualisation, preparation, and critical reflection. Although AI contributed with suggestions, structures, and visual materials, these outputs were consistently reviewed, evaluated, and refined by me. The research activities, analysis, development of concepts, and final design decisions remained my own work.

Abstract

This thesis was conducted for Fairphone with the aim of strengthening its relationship with existing customers by shifting post-purchase communication from a sales-driven approach towards a more supportive and customer-centred approach. The research addresses the mismatch between Fairphone's evolving target audience and its current post-purchase engagement strategy, which remains primarily focused on product sales rather than building long-term customer relationships.

The research combined customer interviews, internal and external analyses, and a literature review to understand customer needs, Fairphone's current communication strategy and the factors influencing customer loyalty. Four creative sessions were conducted to develop an overarching design direction, which was translated into a concrete intervention addressing a specific customer problem and validated with users.

The findings revealed that Fairphone's existing touchpoints offer considerable potential but are insufficiently aligned with the needs of its new target audience and lack consistency. Expectation management emerged as an important factor in building customer loyalty, reflected in customers' willingness to use their phones for longer and recommend Fairphone to others.

Based on these findings, Autonomous Informing was selected as the overarching communication strategy, emphasising proactive, transparent and accessible information. This direction was translated into an intervention addressing customers' uncertainty about identifying phone issues and deciding when and how to repair their devices. The intervention provides notifications about known bugs and insights into device status, enabling customers to better understand and manage their phones.

Validation indicated that the intervention was generally understandable and helped address the selected customer problem, although further refinements are needed. The intervention represents a first step towards a broader Autonomous Informing system, demonstrating how Fairphone can develop more consistent, customer-supportive post-purchase communication with the potential to strengthen long-term customer loyalty.

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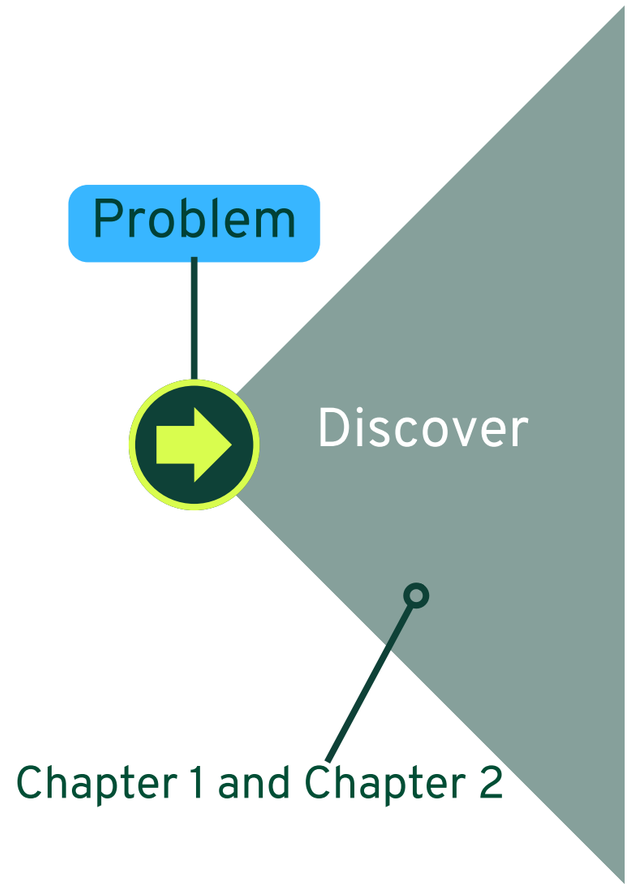
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction



1.1 Introduction
1.2 Fairphone
1.3 Why customer loyalty
1.4 How to define customer loyalty
1.5 Project brief
1.6 Project approach

This chapter serves as the general introduction to the thesis. It begins by providing essential background information about the company (Fairphone) and the original assignment they provided. This chapter focusses on explaining the current relevance of the project, key defenitions and the design approach thoughout this thesis.

1.1 Introduction

This thesis was written as an assignement for Fairphone. A smartphone company focussed on durability. As extending the product lifetime is central to Fairphone's mission, the relationship with customers after purchase plays an important role.

This thesis focuses on improving Fairphone's post-purchase customer experience by exploring how communication can better support customers in understanding, maintaining and extending the lifetime of their phones.

A new communication design direction is developed to strengthen customer loyalty and encourage longer product use. This direction is than developed into a design intervention related to a specific customer problem. The intervention is validated and based on the validation results, recommendations are provided for further development and implementation.

1.2 Fairphone

Fairphone is a Dutch smartphone manufacturer which started off as a project in 2010. The goal was to raise awareness on conflict minerals in electronics and their negative impact on Democratic Republic of the Congo (Fairphone, 2016). It began with a petition against conflict minerals and a meeting with miners in DR Congo to listen to their ideas for improvement in both the industry and their working conditions. This shows that Fairphone is not just a regular company but rather an initiative to make a change in the world. They aim to challenge the phone industry as it is harming the environment and the people working in the supply chain (Fairphone, 2024). In 2013 they became a social enterprise (Fairphone, 2016). The year 2013 also marked the year in which they started selling “fair” smartphones. The primary aim of a social enterprise is not to maximize profit, but to drive social impact (Social Enterprises, n.d.).

The Fairphone is a modular phone. This means that the product can be taken apart and repaired by the customers themselves (see figure 1.2). Fairphone has put 6 generations of Fairphones on the market with The Fairphone (gen. 6) being the latest model. Customers can either buy a Fairphone with the Android operating system or with Murena /e/OS (a system that is not connected to Google in order to provide extra data protection). Moreover they offer Fairbuds (earbuds) and Fairbuds XL (headset). The audio products are modular aswell. Besides that they sell accessories and of course spare parts (Fairphone, n.d)

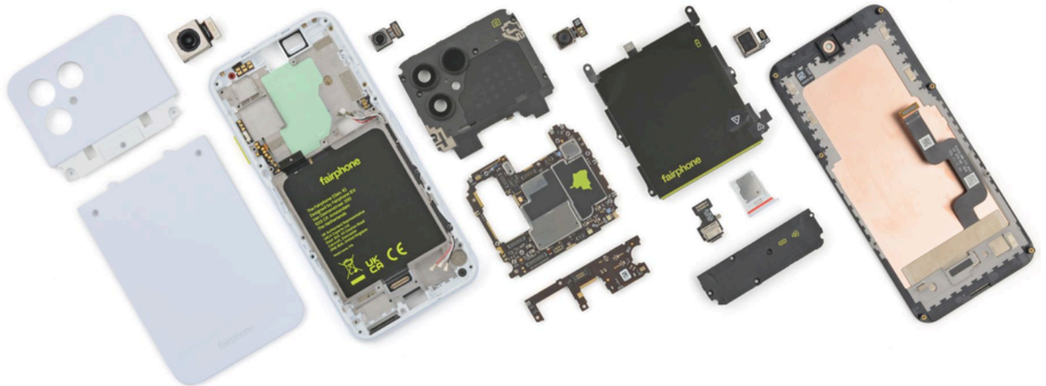


Figure 1.2: Fairphone modular phone (Chamberlain, 2026)

The repairability of the product extends the lifetime and reduces waste. Fairphone presents itself as “The one that lasts” as the repairability together with a 5 year warranty and 7 years of software support ensures the durability of the phone.

They are pioneers in an industry where the average lifespan of a smartphone is 2.5 years (Coolblue, 2025). The waste reduction as a result of this longevity is also highly significant to Fairphone, as one of their three main focuses is on sustainability.

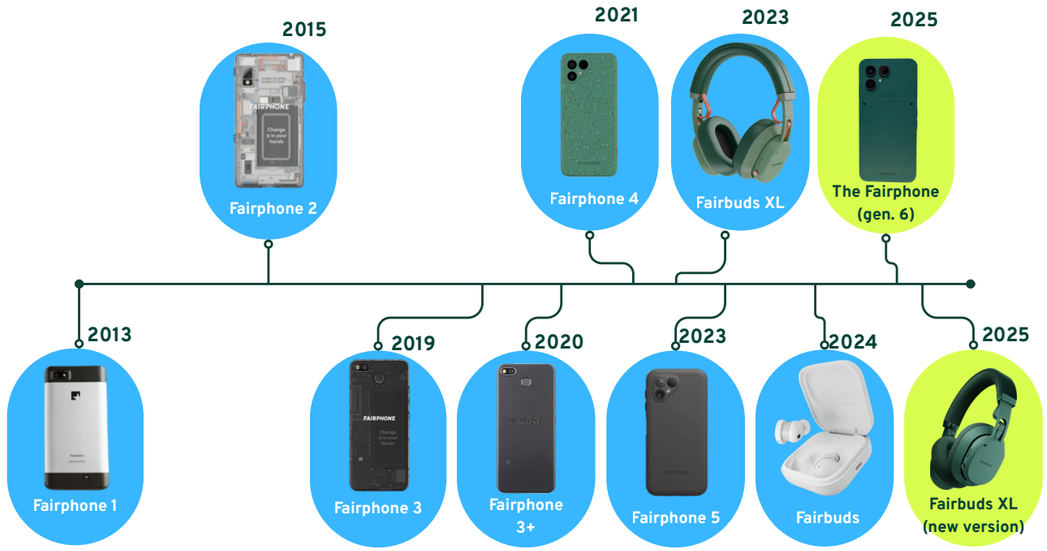


Figure 1.1: Fairphone timeline with products (Fairphone)



Figure 1.3: 3 Pillars making Fairphone unique

They strive for a circular economy with less waste (Fairphone, n.d.). They use fair and recycled materials and address climate change. Besides that, they are also focused on creating better working conditions at the factories and in mining. This makes them distinctly different from major brands such as Apple, Samsung, and Sony, as a report revealed that these companies do not monitor how their suppliers treat their employees or where they source their materials (Amnesty International, 2016). Lastly, they are very transparent about their products, how they are built, and where the materials come from. Through these values, they want to make a positive impact on the world with their innovations.

From 2013 to 2024, Fairphone's marketing strategy heavily focused on the three previously mentioned core values, emphasizing fair working conditions, sustainable materials, and repairability.

Their slogan during this period was "sustainable, long-lasting, and fair." (See Figure 1.4). However, the company noticed that this strategy was not so effective within the tech industry. Fairphone observed that consumers associated sustainability in technology with poor product performance. Consequently, they adopted a new marketing strategy in 2024, changing their slogan to "the one that lasts". From that point onward, their communication shifted to focus primarily on the product itself rather than their overarching mission.

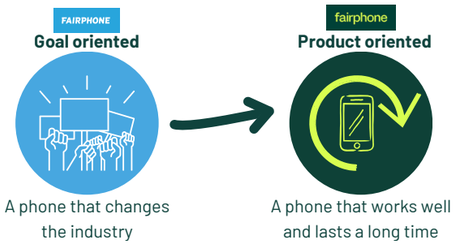


Figure 1.5: Fairphone's brand narrative rebranding

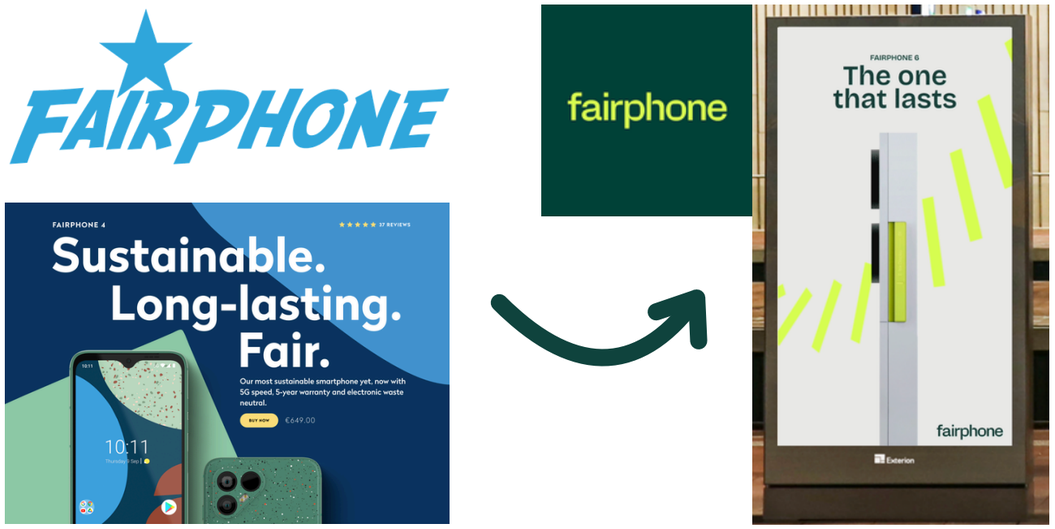


Figure 1.4: Fairphone's visual rebranding (Fairphone)

1.3 Why customer loyalty

As a result of the rebranding, the target audience has also shifted. Initially, the customer base consisted of sustainably motivated individuals who shared Fairphone's core values. Currently, however, the new target audience are consumers who prioritize high-quality products that offer value for money. This newly defined target audience will be analyzed in further detail in Chapter 2.

Consequently, this project's focus on customer loyalty is highly relevant for Fairphone at this time. Over the years, the company got used to a customer base with instant high loyalty, driven by a strong alignment in shared values. With the shift in the target audience, this natural loyalty can no longer be assumed. Nevertheless, Fairphone's approach toward its existing customers has remained unchanged, resulting in a mismatch.

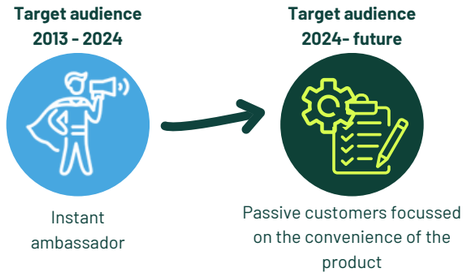


Figure 1.6: Fairphone's change in target audience

Resolving this strategic mismatch is critical for the company's future, as creating genuine customer loyalty is an important way for Fairphone to balance its financial viability with its overarching ethical mission.

For any company, it is highly important to focus on customer loyalty as keeping an existing customer costs the company five times less than gaining a new one (Gee et al., 2008).

They are also likely to help the company evolve by providing feedback, and they are more likely to recommend products and services to others. Loyal customers can therefore be brand ambassadors, bringing friends and family and other potential customers to the brand (McMullan & Gilmore, 2008). It is also proven that loyal customers purchase more frequently and are more likely to try new products than other customers (Khan, 2013).



Figure 1.7: Positive effects of customer loyalty

These last two are less relevant to a social enterprise like Fairphone as, they challenge the industry and want customers to use their phone for as long as possible, Fairphone (2019) states: “The most sustainable phone is the one you already own”. For them it is important to build loyalty in order to motivate the extenion of the lifetime of the products rather than pushing customers to buy new products. Without active building of customer relations, existing customers may not feel involved with the brand, which could lead to faster replacement of devices and thus to additional waste (Arslan, 2020). When a customer switches back to a less sustainable alternative, it results in both a loss of recurring revenue and a negative environmental impact, directly undermining the company's core objectives.

1.4 How to define customer loyalty

Customer loyalty does not have one standardised definition but can be defined in many different ways (Agrawal et al., 2012). For example, Khan (2013) states that “Customer loyalty means the intention of repurchasing products and services” (p. 163). On the other hand, Pinson and Brosdahl (2014) state that “Brand loyalty is not to be confused with repeat purchasing” (p. 2). They claim that loyal customers have an emotional attachment to the brand. Even though there is no one standardised definition of customer loyalty, there currently is a clear distinction between behavioural and attitudinal loyalty. Behavioral loyalty is more focused on the purchase behaviour of a customer, but attitudinal loyalty is about the emotional bond a customer has with the brand or product (Khan, 2013).

In this thesis loyalty is defined in the following ways; How likely customers are to recommend the product and what the expected lifetime of their product is.

For attitudinal loyalty, this is called the Net Promoter Score (NPS), which evaluates how likely customers are to recommend Fairphone. This is a metric Fairphone already uses.

And for behavioral loyalty in this thesis it is called expected lifetime. To define this customers are asked how many more years they intend to keep their current Fairphone product.

This opposes the traditional way of viewing loyalty with a focus on tracking repurchase frequency as repeat purchases as a primary objective would directly contradict Fairphone’s core mission of sustainability.



Figure 1.8: How Fairphone defines customer loyalty

1.5 Project Brief

Fairphone’s current focus is mainly on developing and selling new products, while less attention is given to building long-term post-purchase customer relationships. This creates a risk, as customer loyalty is essential to achieving the company's sustainability and commercial goals.

This graduation project therefore focuses on the following orriginal design assignment provided by Fairphone:

“Design and validate a digital intervention, which increases customer loyalty and involvement among existing Fairphone users.“

The intervention should be based on consumer research, and on defined loyalty metrics so that it can create both social and commercial impact.

1.6 Project approach

This project followed the Double Diamond method to move from the original assignment, introduced in subchapter 1.5, towards a final design solution. The method was used to first explore the problem broadly, then define a sharper design challenge, develop possible solutions, and finally select and validate one direction.

Chapters 1 and 2 form the Discover phase. This phase focused on understanding the current situation through three types of research: contextual research into Fairphone as a company and the environment it operates in, literature research on customer loyalty, and interviews with the new target audience. Together, these research activities created a broad understanding of Fairphone's context, loyalty challenges, and the needs, motivations, and barriers of the target audience.

Chapter 3 formed the Define phase and connected the research findings to the development of the solution. In this phase, insights from customer research were turned into four main Jobs To Be Done(JTBDs). The research together with the JTBDs lead to the redefined problem statement, presented in Chapter 3, together with the approach for the following Develop phase.

In Chapter 4, the Develop phase used creative sessions to generate ideas which were translated into three design directions. These directions were further developed and assessed for their relevance, value, and fit with Fairphone. In Chapter 5, the project entered the Deliver phase, where one final design direction was selected, further developed, and validated. This ensured that the final solution responded to the redefined problem, matched the target audience, and could realistically fit within Fairphone's context.

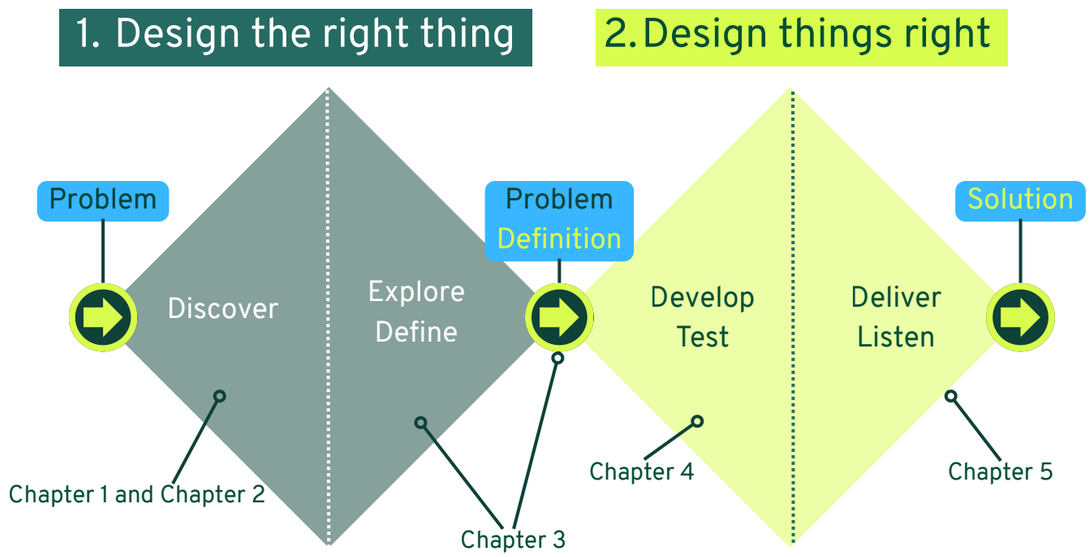
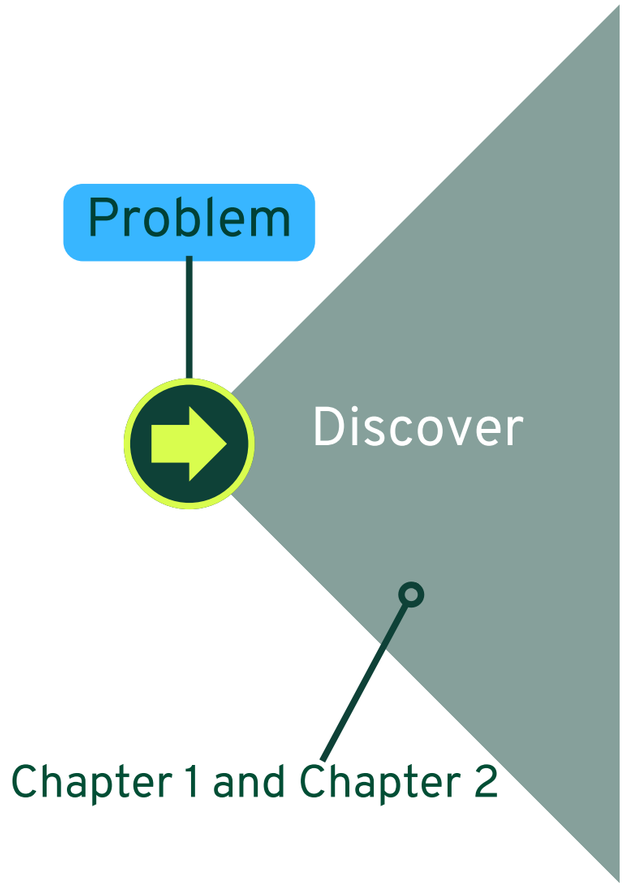


Figure 1.9: Dubble diamond approach

CHAPTER

2

Research



2.1 Research methods
2.2 Scope
2.3 Literature review
2.4 Contextual analysis
2.5 Customer interviews
2.6 Research insights

This chapter lays the foundation for the project by providing the relevant background information. It explains the research that was conducted and presents the key findings that emerged from this research. The conclusions drawn in this chapter form the basis for the design assignment and the next stages of the thesis.

2.1 Research methods

The research consisted of three main parts: literature review (literature research), contextual analysis (contextual research) (internal and external), and customer interviews (customer research).

First, literature research was conducted to understand the theory behind customer loyalty. This helped to clarify how loyalty can be built and strengthened over time.



Figure 2.1: Research methods

Second, contextual research was used to better understand Fairphone's current position. This included research into the Fairphone brand its customer base. It also included a competitor research to understand how other brands approach customer engagement and loyalty, as well as an analysis of Fairphone's current efforts to connect with its customers.

Finally, customer research was conducted to gain insight into the target audience. This research focused on understanding who the customers are, what they need, what motivates them, and what pain points they experience.

Together, these three research methods provide a strong foundation for defining the design challenge and developing a relevant solution.

2.2 Scope

To keep the project focused and manageable, clear boundaries were defined for what is included and excluded from this research and design trajectory. The scope ensures that the final solution can be developed within the available time, research access, and strategic direction of Fairphone.

In-Scope

This project focuses on designing a **digital solution** that strengthens the relationship between Fairphone and its existing customers. The solution should support customer engagement, long-term involvement, and customer loyalty after purchase.

The project is aimed at **existing Fairphone smartphone** users, rather than people who only own Fairphone audio products. More specifically, the research focuses on users of a Fairphone with the Android operating system, and does not include users of Fairphone Murena. This choice was made because Fairphone's current target audience definition is based on this customer group. There is not yet enough research to confirm whether Murena users or audio-only customers belong to the same target audience. Therefore, these groups are excluded to keep the research consistent.

The project also focuses on **the Dutch market**. Although Fairphone operates in multiple countries, the Netherlands was chosen because it is the most accessible market for this thesis. Fairphone is based in the Netherlands, the researcher is Dutch, and conducting research in this market avoids language barriers. This makes it possible to gather customer insights more efficiently within the timeframe of the project.

Finally, the solution should be suitable for the **near future**. It must be realistic, technically feasible, and possible to implement within Fairphone's short-term roadmap, rather than relying on speculative or far-future technologies.

Out-of-Scope

To maintain a clear project focus, **physical or non-digital solutions** are excluded from this thesis. The project does not focus on physical interventions outside the smartphone or website interface.

The project also does not include a **hardware redesign**.

In addition, customer acquisition is outside the scope of this project. The goal is not to attract new customers through marketing campaigns or sales strategies, but to strengthen the relationship with people who already use a Fairphone.

Lastly, Fairphone Murena users, audio-only customers, and customers outside the Dutch market are not included in the primary research scope. These groups may be relevant for future research, but they are not included in this thesis in order to keep the target audience consistent and the research manageable.

Project Deliverable

The project deliverable is a design direction that explains how the general communication form Fairphone towards the existing costumers should be in order to achieve constancy. Within this presented design direction an intervention will be designed to solve one of the identified customer problems.

2.3 Literature review

Subchapters 1.3 and 1.4 explained the importance of customer loyalty for Fairphone and provided a definition of customer loyalty. Building on this, this literature review explores how customer loyalty can be strengthened and which practices should be avoided. The findings serve as the theoretical foundation of this thesis, providing guidance on which factors should be considered and addressed throughout the design process.

Loyalty programs

The literature review first explored one of the most common approaches to building customer loyalty and strengthening customer relationships: loyalty programs. For many companies, introducing a loyalty program may seem like an obvious solution to encourage customers to remain loyal. However, it is very important to note that loyalty to a company is different from loyalty to a loyalty program. When the relevance of the program declines, the loyalty of the customer could also decline. Therefore, it is highly significant to make sure that a possible loyalty program serves as a support to the loyalty strategy and not as a main tool (Evanschitzky et al., 2011).

Achieving customer satisfaction

The connection between satisfaction and loyalty is clear: "loyalty is a direct result of customer satisfaction" (Khan, 2013, p. 175). For Fairphone, this means that building loyalty starts with understanding what different types of Fairphone customers value, expect, and struggle with after purchasing the phone. One way to gain this understanding is by conducting interviews with customers, as this helps reveal their different needs, motivations, and expectations. How satisfaction can be achieved depends on these specific customer needs. Therefore, it is important for Fairphone to understand what customers expect from the product, the service, and the communication around it, because customer satisfaction is created when expectations are met or even exceeded (Gee et al., 2008).

Value creation

In order to achieve customer satisfaction, Fairphone needs to create clear value for its customers. This value can be divided into five types; functional value, emotional value, conditional value, epistemic value and social value. Functional value is created by the product itself. For Fairphone, this means that the phone should be sustainable, easy to use, accessible, and ideally help customers save time or money. Emotional value is partly created through the bond between Fairphone and its customers. This happens when a company (Fairphone) makes customers feel important, appreciated, or cherished (Barnes, 2003). Emotional value can also come from the product itself, for example when using the phone creates positive emotions such as comfort (Sheth et al., 1991).

Conditional value depends on a specific social situation or context. For Fairphone, this could mean that the phone becomes more valuable in situations where sustainability, repairability, or ethical consumption are especially relevant. Epistemic value relates to curiosity and the need to gain new experiences. Fairphone can support this by helping customers learn more about their phone, repair, sustainability, and the impact of their choices. Social value is also important, because it influences the extent to which customers feel connected to a certain social group (Sheth et al., 1991). This social value can create social identity, which is related to how people represent themselves in order to belong to a certain group (Pinson & Brosdahl, 2014). For Fairphone, this means that the brand should not only offer a sustainable phone, but also help customers feel part of a group that shares similar values.

To deliver true value, Fairphone therefore needs to look beyond the practical use of the phone. It needs to understand the broader context of customers' lives, including both their joys and their challenges (Barnes, 2003). This means that Fairphone should use these values as a guide to understand what customers need after purchase: a phone that works well, communication that makes them feel supported, opportunities to learn, and a brand experience that strengthens their connection with Fairphone.

Customers look for brands they can relate to, because brands help them define who they are. For customers to understand whether they relate to Fairphone, the company needs a strong and recognisable brand identity. A strong brand identity gives customers confidence that the brand understands them and is able to meet their needs (Pinson & Brosdahl, 2014). For Fairphone, this means that its values should not only be visible in the product, but also in the way the company communicates, supports, and builds relationships with its customers.

Brand advocacy

As mentioned before, customer loyalty grows when they are satisfied. When they are satisfied, there is a big chance of them recruiting new customers by generating brand advocacy (File & Prince, 1992).

Wilder (2015) defines brand advocacy as: "a combination of customer-motivated behaviours, including proactively recommending the brand and defending the brand against detractors, intended to maintain the customer's relationship with the brand and promote it to others" (p. 7). Brand advocacy is highly important to a company as the general level of trust in brand-sponsored messages is very low amongst customers nowadays (Wilder, 2015). When customers are very passionate about a brand, advocacy will occur (Wilder, 2015). Therefor Fairphone measures this level of brand advocacy in order to test how commited customers are to the brand.

Key takeaways

1. Loyalty programs should support, not drive, customer loyalty. Fairphone should focus on building genuine customer relationships rather than relying on a loyalty program.
2. Customer satisfaction starts with understanding customer needs. Fairphone needs to understand customers' expectations, motivations and challenges to provide an experience that meets or exceeds their expectations.
3. Customer value goes beyond the product itself. Besides offering a functional and sustainable phone, Fairphone should create emotional and social value by making customers feel supported, appreciated and connected to the brand.
4. A strong and consistent brand identity strengthens customer relationships. Fairphone should communicate its values consistently and ensure that customers recognise these values in their interactions with the company.
5. Brand advocacy is an important indicator of customer loyalty. Customers who feel satisfied and connected to Fairphone are more likely to recommend and promote the brand to others.

2.4 Contextual analysis

Introduction

The contextual analysis is divided into two parts. The first part is the external analysis. This analysis explores the context in which Fairphone has developed over the past years, including relevant market developments, competitors, and the position Fairphone holds within the smartphone industry. Mapping the competitive landscape helps clarify what makes Fairphone unique compared to other brands. Understanding this uniqueness is important, because it also gives insight into why customers choose Fairphone and which values, needs, or product qualities should be strengthened in the customer loyalty strategy.

The second part is the internal analysis. This analysis focuses on Fairphone as a company and brand. As described in Chapter 1, Fairphone has gone through a rebranding process, which has influenced how the company presents itself and how it wants to connect with its customers. Therefore, it is important to understand the current brand identity, target audience, company values, and existing loyalty initiatives. These elements help clarify how Fairphone currently builds relationships with its customers and which aspects already support loyalty.

Together, the external and internal analyses provide a clear understanding of Fairphone's current position. This creates a basis for identifying opportunities to strengthen customer loyalty in a way that fits both the market context and Fairphone's own identity.

External analysis

Competitors

When examining loyalty, it is essential to understand the competitive landscape. A company can strengthen its position by understanding how competitors create value and where opportunities for competitive advantage exist. The two types of competitive advantage are differentiation advantage and cost advantage (Wang et al., 2011). Fairphone competes in the Android smartphone market. Its competitors include Samsung, Google Pixel, Caterpillar, Nothing, Motorola, Honor, and Xiaomi.

The Caterpillar phone and Google Pixel each share an important feature with Fairphone: a focus on durability and long-term use. However, they achieve this in different ways. The Caterpillar phone focuses on physical durability and is designed to be indestructible rather than modular (CAT Phones, 2025). Google Pixel is not focused on durable hardware or modular repairability, but, like Fairphone, it promises 7 years of software support (Pixel 10a, n.d.).

Fairphone has several key features that make it different from these competitors. In the competition grids in figures 2.2 and 2.3, the same companies as before are analyzed based on the features: price, longevity, transparency, and claimed sustainability. This analysis is grounded in data gathered from official corporate websites and user-generated reviews on Reddit. The placement of companies on the grid reflects a subjective interpretation, informed by these sources and personal professional judgment.

The axes of price and longevity were plotted against each other, as the interviews revealed that price is a decisive factor for consumers. Many users calculate the 'cost per year' to justify their purchase, making the relationship between initial investment and product lifespan essential to their decision-making process.

Transparency and sustainability go hand in hand; interview data showed that customers are often skeptical of environmental claims. Although large corporations in Europe are obligated to report sustainability impacts (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (RVO), n.d.), a lack of transparency regarding their actual impact frequently results in perceived greenwashing.

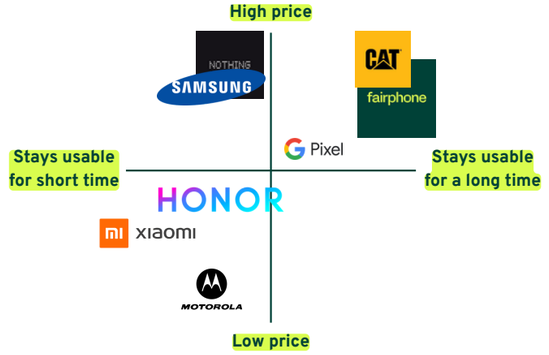


Figure 2.2: Competition grid, price to duribility

The competition grids in figures 2.2 and 2.3 show that Google Pixel is one of the strongest competitors to Fairphone. Google Pixel has a similar long-term proposition because it promises long software support and communicates about sustainability through reports. However, the main difference is that Google Pixel is not modular. This makes Fairphone's position fundamentally different. Fairphone differentiates itself from other brands through its modular design and the way people are treated fairly in its supply chain. These two elements are central to Fairphone's uniqueness because they turn sustainability into something practical, visible, and connected to the product itself. Fairphone is also unique in offering customers the autonomy to choose their own software. On the other hand, Google Pixel is a better-known brand and might therefore be more trusted.

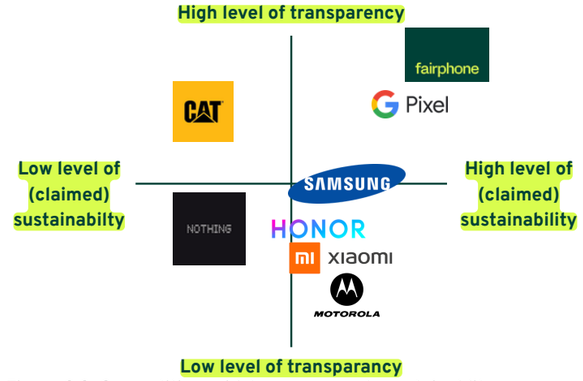


Figure 2.3: Competition grid, transparency to sustainablity

External analysis

Context

As mentioned in subchapter 1.2, Fairphone has three core brand pillars: repairability, sustainable materials, and fair working conditions.

However, the impact of their mission has evolved within the current global situation. They started as a company with an activist dream. They were the pioneers in a world where sustainability wasn't as big a topic as it is now. In 2012, the UN first established the Sustainable Development Goals (Sustainable Development Goals, n.d.), and from 2025, big companies in the EU are obligated to share a sustainability report (Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (RVO), n.d.). This shows that when Fairphone was launched in 2013, the focus on sustainability was just developing. Back then, they were radical pioneers; today, taking sustainability into account is an obligation. Fairphone still differentiates itself from other companies as its main focus is sustainability. But these developments did make the brand more mainstream.

The company also distinguishes itself as a Dutch firm, rather than an American or Asian one. However, from internal sources, it becomes clear that Fairphone has no interest in advertising its Dutch origins, as they have important partnerships in China and an office in Taiwan. Even if Fairphone doesn't advertise with their Dutch origin, the interviews have shown that this fact is always in the back of the mind of the customers.

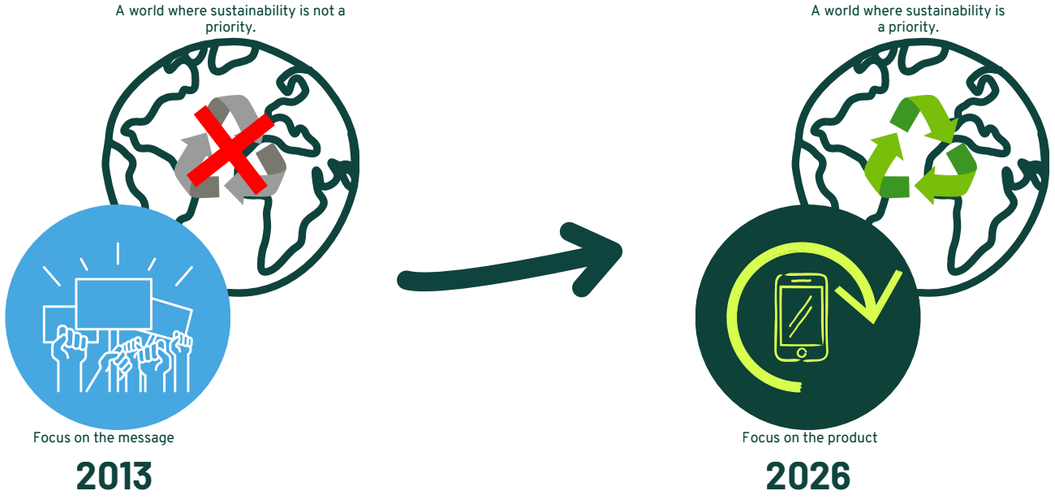


Figure 2.4: Contextual change

Internal analysis

Introduction to the brand

A brand analysis was done to provide a clear overview of the new identity and to ensure alignment across all brand components. It is essential that this new identity is understood internally to guarantee consistent external communication. When a brand remains consistent, customers develop greater trust and are more likely to become loyal (Peddisetty, 2024). The new brand DNA is illustrated in figure 2.5. This brand DNA is based on insights provided by internal sources. Since Fairphone has not formally formulated its brand DNA in this specific structure, the overview represents my own interpretation, rather than an official Fairphone framework.

Fairphone doesn't only have a new brand identity but also a new target audience. Both are in the final stages of development. Fairphone calls their target audience: pragmatic maximisers, what this means is explained later in this chapter. The target audience and brand identity are strongly related as brand choice is fundamentally driven by how the target audience aims to identify themselves (Beverland, 2018).

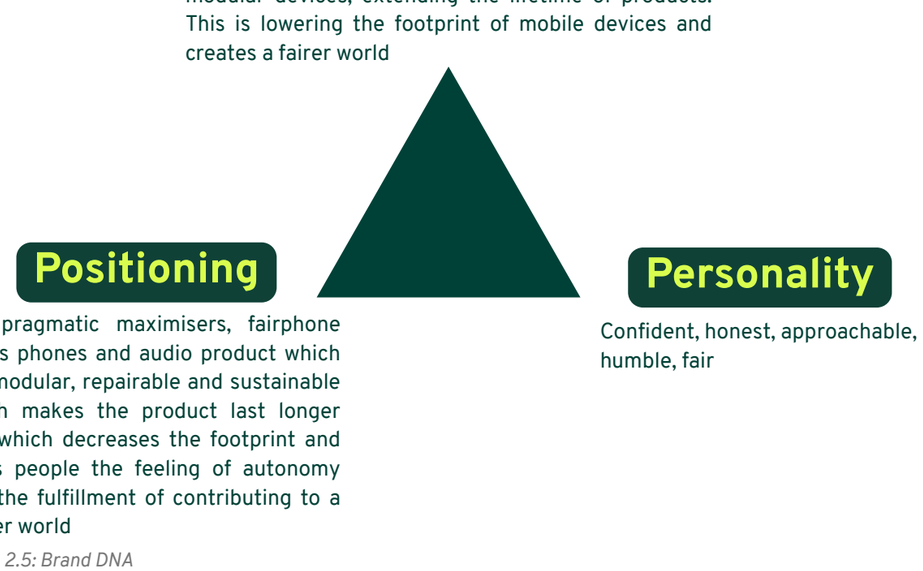


Figure 2.5: Brand DNA

Customers
Fairphone's customers are mainly located in Europe, particularly in the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, and France. However, with their expansion into the US market this year, they are set to grow their international community even further. As Fairphone went through a rebranding, its target audience also changed.

Bates (2025), Fairphone's internal UX researcher describes their (new) target audience as "Pragmatic Maximisers". These people are millennials who are not early adapters. They don't make impulse purchases but rather do thorough research before buying something. The products they buy should serve as convenient tools, and sustainability is a secondary concern. They will try their best to extend the lifetime of the products they buy. It is also important to note that they are suspicious of publicity stunts.

Seabrooke (2026), another internal UX researcher at Fairphone, concluded that this target audience consists of three customer segments:

1. The 'Buy-for-life' Pragmatist
   Needs long-term products that are reliable, so their hassle will be reduced
2. The value-aligned ambassador
   Needs a reduction of the feeling of guilt they get when buying products that aren't in line with their values. They instantly become brand advocates when the brand is in line with their values
3. The Sovereign tech-analyst
   Needs to have the feeling of control over his data and tech products. They also want to be independent.



Figure 2.6: Target audience

Existing loyalty initiatives
To better understand Fairphone's current customer loyalty ecosystem, all existing loyalty initiatives and communication touchpoints were analysed. A detailed analysis of each touchpoint can be found from pages 21 up til 25.

Each touchpoint exists on its own, without a shared goal or clear connection to the others. Communication feels company-led instead of cusomter focussed.

Siloed touchpoints
Isolated channels with little to no interaction

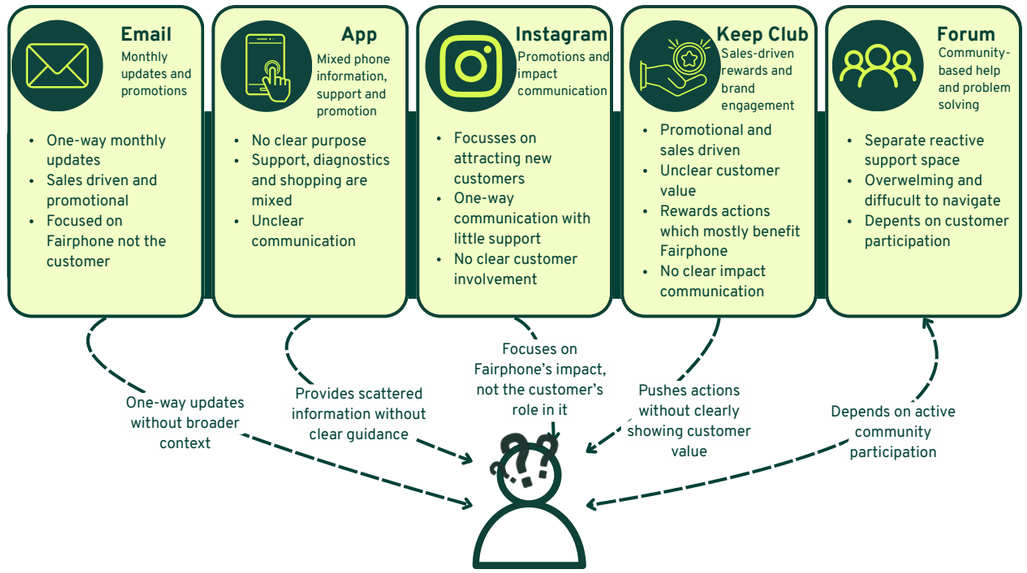


Figure 2.7: Current Fairphone communication system

Figure 2.7 illustrates how these touchpoints currently operate in isolation, without a shared goal or clear connection to one another. Rather than complementing and strengthening each other, this lack of coordination reduces their overall effectiveness and creates a fragmented and confusing experience for customers. As a result, Fairphone's communication feels more company-driven than customer-focused.

Email
From promotional monthly updates

Email
To customer-focused guidance that strengthens the relationship with the product and the brand

Fairphone sends monthly emails to its existing customers, but it comes across that the purpose of these emails is showing how great Fairphone is and encouraging more sales. Instead of involving customers or helping them get more value from their current phone, the communication remains mainly focused on Fairphone itself.

fairphone



Hello,

In May, we started the month with a shiny new iF Design Gold award for the Fairphone (Gen. 6). We received the trophy at a very glamorous ceremony in Berlin, alongside our design partners Above on stage. Honestly, the award set the tone for the rest of the month. Here's why.

1. iF Design Gold Award
The introduction of the email highlights external recognition for Fairphone. The focus is mainly on what Fairphone has achieved, rather than on what this means for the customer.



The Fairbuds XL scored a perfect 10

We're proud to announce that our recently refreshed Fairbuds XL has officially scored an industry-leading 10/10 repairability rating from iFixit. It's iFixit's first time ranking headphones on repairability, and we're proud to be the first-ever device to post a perfect score. With nine user-replaceable modular spare parts (including the battery), we continue to prove that premium audio can be built to last and easily maintained for years to come.

DISCOVER THE FAIRBUDS XL →

2. Fairbuds XL repairability score
Repairability is presented as proof of Fairphone's success, rather than as a practical benefit for users.



Get. Set. Race against e-waste.

In association with Race Against Waste, we kicked off our first e-waste race event of the year, the first of 10 such events planned through the year across the Netherlands and the UK. This educational project challenges local schools to collect as much electronic waste as possible, teaching children about resource scarcity, reuse, and recycling, and directly supports our commitment to a circular economy.

READ MORE →

3. Race Against E-Waste
This part of the email presents Fairphone's social and educational impact. The customer is positioned as an observer of Fairphone's good work, rather than as an active part of the impact.



What's REALLY inside your Fairphone?

Ever wonder what it takes to make a truly ethical smartphone? The latest episode in our Journey of the Fairphone (Gen. 6) series takes you behind the screens from the mines to your pocket. Explore what it takes to design a smartphone that is built to last a decade and challenge planned obsolescence. See how we factor in impact-related decisions from the very beginning and why we actively engage with high-risk mining regions instead of avoiding them.

WATCH NOW →

4. Device health screen
This part of the email focuses on Fairphone's ethical choices and responsible image. It explains what Fairphone does differently, but less clearly shows what direct value this creates for the customer.



Choose refurbished. It's better than new.

Talking about built to last, we just announced the launch of our refurbished Fairphone (Gen. 6) line almost a year to the day since we first launched the device. Buying one of our own refurbished phones is one of the most sustainable choices you can make, as they come with the same full warranty as a new device but at a more wallet-friendly price.

LEARN MORE →

5. Refurbished phone
This message promotes buying a refurbished Fairphone, even though existing customers already own one. This makes the communication less focused on their current phone and partly contradicts Fairphone's message of longevity.

fairphone



Hello,

Choosing fair now comes with extra protection and extra peace of mind. Buy the Fairphone (Gen. 6) before May 17, 2026, and get a free protective bundle worth €54.90.

BUY THE FAIRPHONE →

The Fairphone (Gen. 6) was always designed to keep going, no matter what life throws at it.

→ Software support till 2033. Five-year warranty.

→ Award-winning modularity. Industry-leading repairability.

→ And now, for a limited period, we're upping the longevity factor further, with a free phone case and screen protector of your choice.

BUY THE FAIRPHONE →

Switch to a smartphone that's protected inside and out. Switch to the Fairphone (Gen. 6).

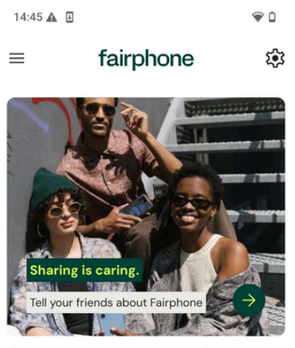
Stay fair,
The Fairphone team

Promotional Email
This email directly encourages existing customers to buy a new Fairphone by offering a free protective bundle. Interview insights suggest that this approach may have the opposite effect, as customers are not primarily looking for free extras or purchase incentives. Instead, such messages can create irritation because they feel sales-driven and disconnected from customers' main interests. Customers indicated that they value communication that helps them use, maintain, and keep their current phone for longer.

App
From monthly updates and promotions

App
To customer focused monthly guidance

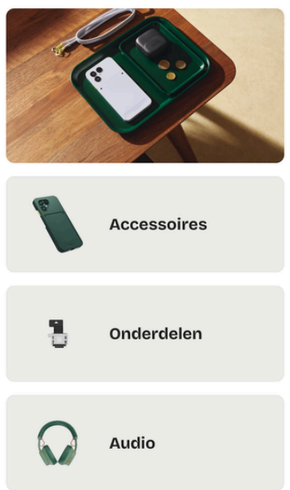
Overall, the app lacks one clear purpose. It combines promotion, shopping, diagnostics, device information and support, but these functions are not connected into one coherent customer journey. As a result, the app feels company-led rather than designed around the new target audince need for clarity, overview and informed action.



1. Start screen
The start screen combines sharing, warranty, device information and a performance widget. These elements are not clearly connected, making it unclear whether the app is meant for support, engagement, promotion or phone care.



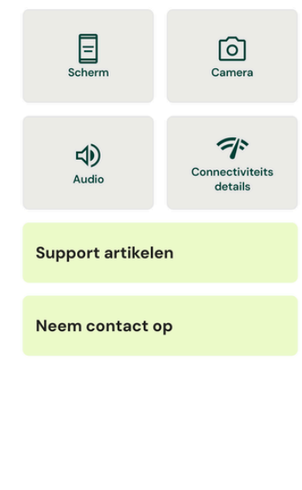
2. “Get started” screen
The “get started” button suggests practical guidance, but leads to a product-focused page. This shifts the app from support to promotion without a clear customer-centered reason.



3. Store tab
The store tab mainly directs customers to accessories, parts and products. Its value for keeping the current phone longer is not clearly explained.



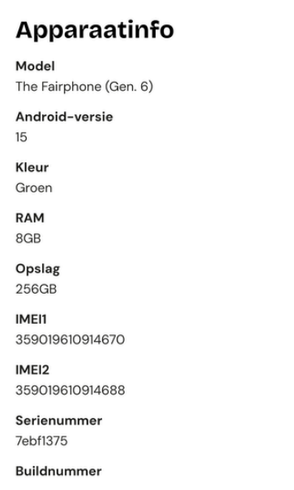
4. Device health screen
The device health screen shows useful indicators, but does not consistenlty explain what they mean, why they matter or what the customer should do with this information.



5. Diagnostics overview
The diagnostics overview offers different tests, but does not clearly explain whether these are for prevention, problem-solving or repair guidance.



6. Screen diagnosis page
The screen test page gives some explanation, but remains isolated and technical. It does not clearly help the customer interpret results or choose a next step.

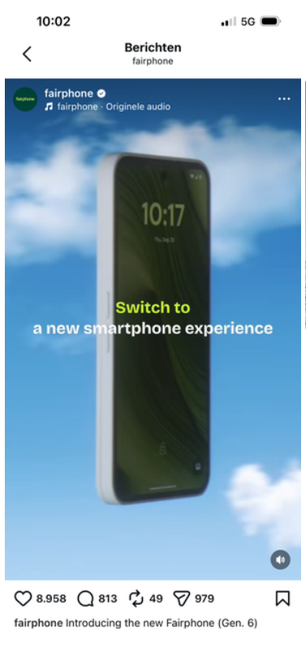


7. Device information page
The device information page shows technical specifications, but does not explain why this information is useful or how it supports care, repair or long-term use.

Instagram
From product and impact promotion

Instagram
To practical customer support and shared information.

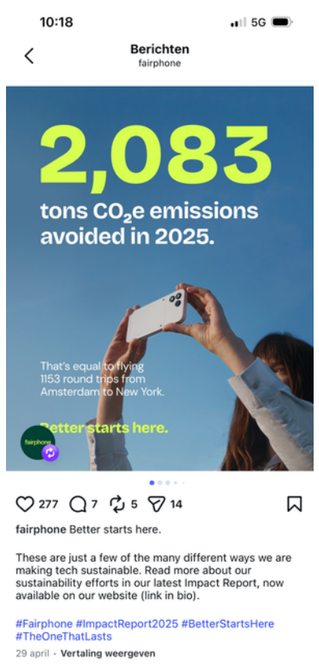
The current Instagram mainly seems focused on attracting new customers. Fairphone does this by promoting both its products and its impact, but the communication remains mostly one-way and does not actively involve or support existing customers.



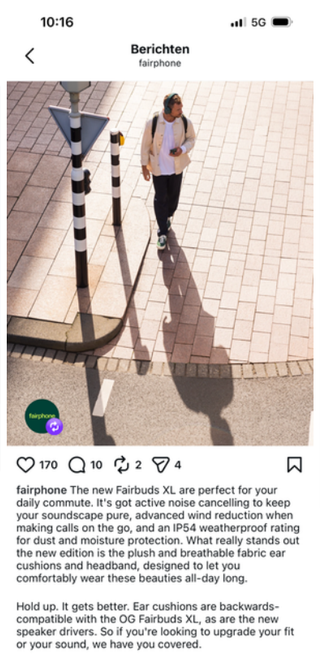
1. Promotional product launch
This post promotes the launch of a new phone. The message is focused on selling a new device, rather than helping the existing customer get more value from the phone they already own.



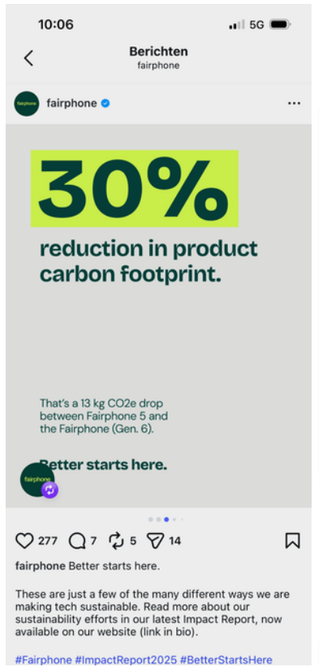
2. Lifestyle-based product promotion
This post presents Fairphone products in an attractive lifestyle context, but it still functions mainly as advertising. It does not give the customer useful information, guidance, or support after purchase.



3. Impact communication from Fairphone's perspective
This post shares impact-related information, but mainly from Fairphone's point of view. The customer is not actively included, so their role in this impact remains unclear.



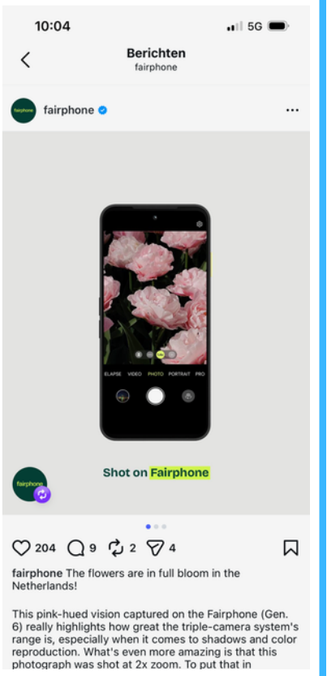
4. Promotion of Fairbuds XL
This post focuses on promoting the Fairbuds XL and its product features. It does not support existing customers in using, maintaining, or understanding their current Fairphone product.



5. Impact promotion without customer involvement
This post highlights Fairphone's sustainability achievements, but does not clearly show what this means for the customer or how they are part of the impact.



6. Brand impact message
This post again focuses on Fairphone's positive impact and ethical position. While this supports the brand image, it does not create a direct interaction with the customer or provide them with practical value.

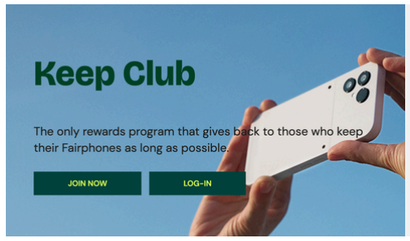


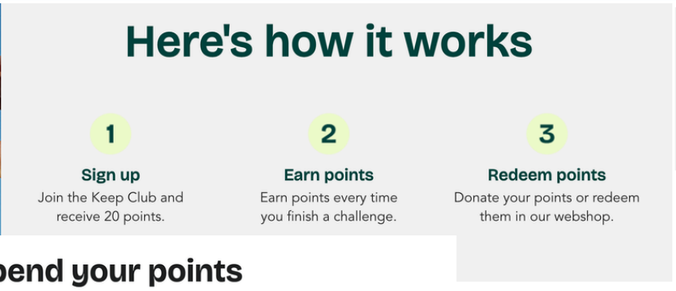
7. Product-focused camera promotion
This post highlights the camera quality of the Fairphone. The communication is mainly promotional and does not help the customer understand or use their own device better.

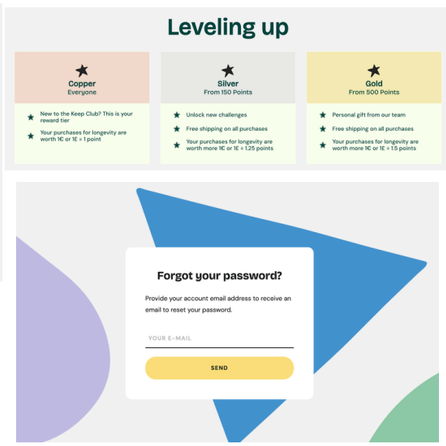
Keep Club
From a sales-driven reward system

Keep Club
To a customer-focused club that empowers meaningful phone care and visible impact

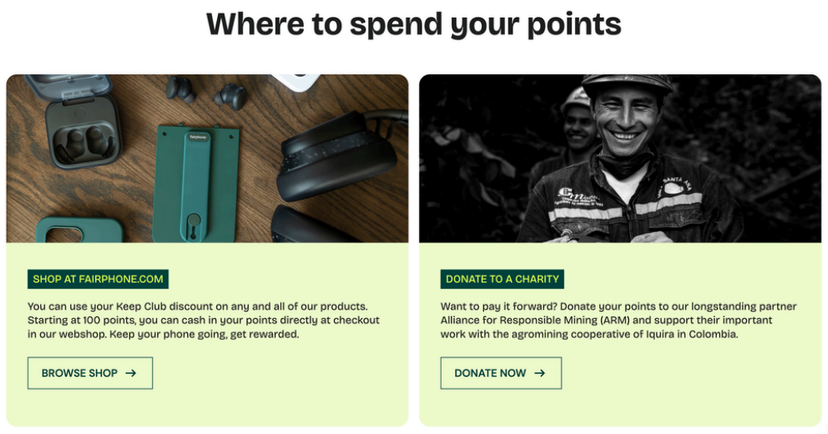
The current Keep Club feels more promotional and sales-driven than customer-focused. Instead of creating meaningful value for the customer, it pushes the customer to follow them on social media in exchange for some discount.

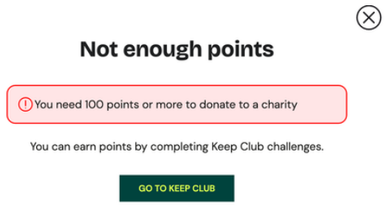












1. How it works focuses on customer actions
The explanation mainly shows what the customer has to do: sign up, earn points and redeem points. It does not clearly explain what the customer receives in return or why this is valuable for them.

2. Unclear value of spending points
The value for the customer is not clearly communicated. Discounts only help if the customer wants to buy more products, and the donation option gives little insight into what the points support or what impact the customer can create.

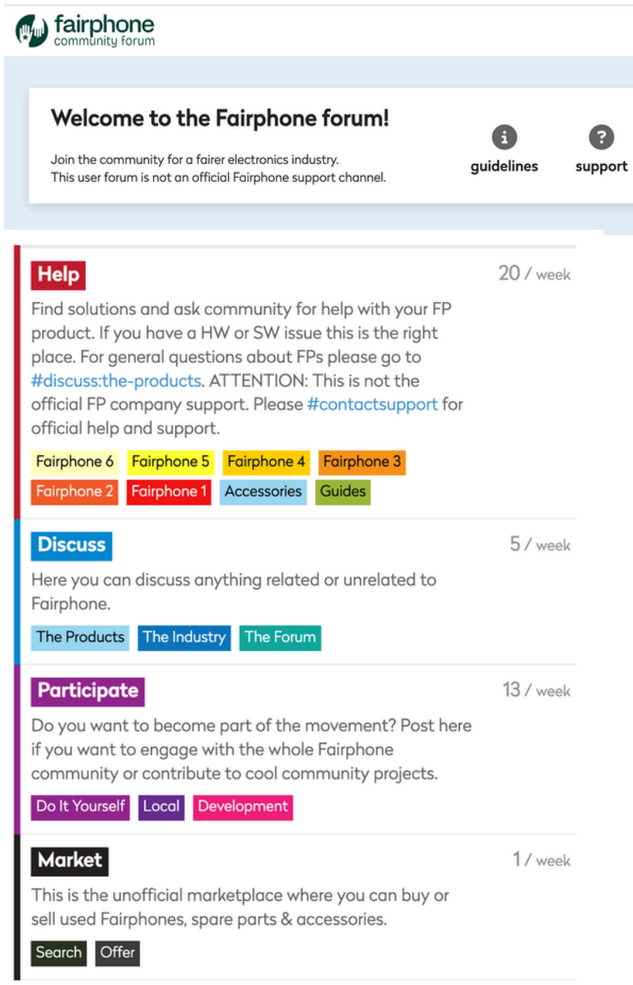
3. Inconsistent visual identity
The visual identity feels inconsistent and does not fully match the newer Fairphone brand direction. This makes the Keep Club feel less connected to the rest of the customer experience.

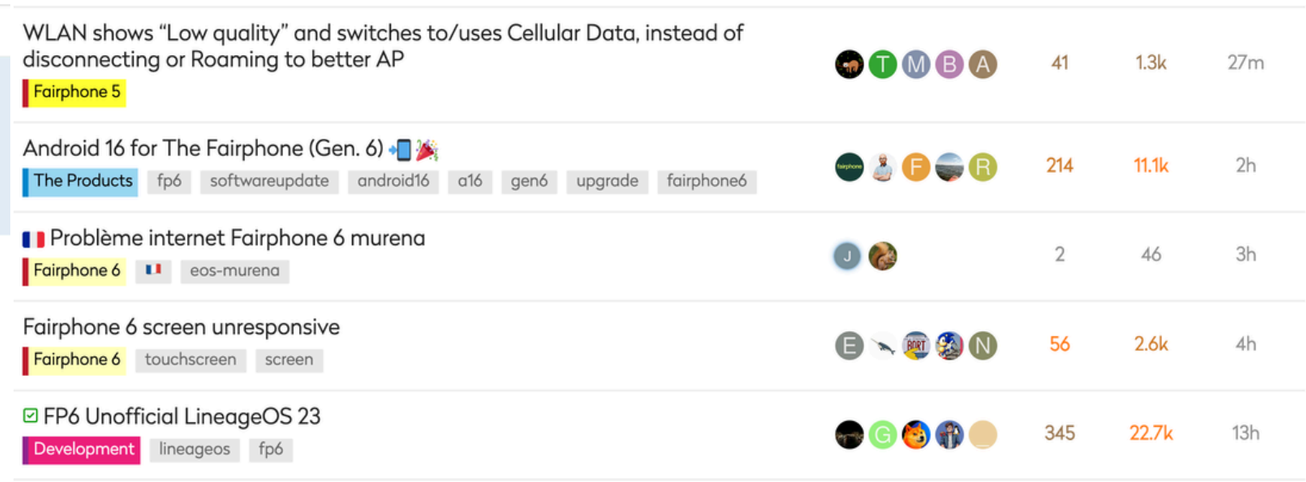
4. Leveling up feels limited
The level system suggests progression, but it does not offer much deeper value. It is unclear what customers gain from moving up, beyond collecting more points or completing basic actions.

Forum
From a separate, reactive support space

Forum
To a connected community platform that guides customers to the right information

The current forum is a valuable source of community knowledge, but it feels separate from the rest of the Fairphone system. It is mainly reactive, visually disconnected and strongly dependent on customer participation, which makes the support experience less consistent and harder to navigate.





1. Inconsistent visual identity
The forum has a very different visual identity from the other touchpoints. This makes it feel disconnected from the wider Fairphone system and less like part of one unified customer experience

2. Information feels overwhelming
The forum shows a lot of topics, tags and discussions at once. This can make it difficult for customers to quickly understand where to go or what information is most relevant to them.

3. Mainly problem-driven communication
The forum is mostly used when customers already have a problem or question. This makes the interaction feel reactive, instead of guiding customers earlier with clear and helpful information.

4. Limited customer guidance
Although the forum contains useful knowledge, it does not clearly guide the customer through the information. Customers have to search and interpret answers themselves, which can make the experience feel less supportive.

5. Fully dependent on customer engagement
The current forum depends heavily on customers actively participating and answering each other’s questions. This can be valuable, but it also means the quality and usefulness of the support experience depends on how engaged the community is.

2.5 Customer interviews

Key takeaways

1. Fairphone has shifted from an activist brand to a product-focused brand. As competitors increasingly focus on sustainability and longevity, Fairphone needs to offer additional value to remain competitive.
2. Fairphone's target audience has changed. The new target audience, Pragmatic Maximisers, values **reliability**, **convenience**, **shared values** and **control** over technology. Fairphone needs to address these different customer needs.
3. Fairphone's post-purchase communication no longer aligns with its brand and target audience. While Fairphone has become more product- and customer-focused, its communication remains largely promotional and reactive, rather than providing the practical guidance and support its new customers need.
4. Fairphone's communication touchpoints lack a shared purpose. Different channels operate independently, creating scattered information, inconsistent support and a fragmented customer experience.
5. Fairphone needs a more connected and customer-focused communication approach. Aligning post-purchase communication with its new brand and target audience can strengthen customer relationships and encourage longer product use.

Research opjectives

- Understand the relationship between Fairphone customers and the brand.
- Gain deeper insight into the role and effectiveness of Fairphone's current communication channels.
- Explore the needs, expectations, and motivations of the new target audience.
- Identify the main pains and gains experienced by Fairphone customers.
- Understand the customer experience from the customer's perspective.
- Gain insight into how customers use their Fairphone in daily life.

Research Methodology

Qualitative Approach: In-depth Interviews

To gain a deeper understanding of the "journey after sale", one-on-one semi-structured interviews with Fairphone users of approximately 45 minutes were conducted. These were online interviews via Google Meet.

Ten interviews were conducted with eleven different people.

The recruitment started in the week of the 2nd of February, and all eleven interviews were conducted between the 11th of February and the 24th of February.

Recruitements

Target Audience

To ensure the insights were relevant and representative, the following recruitment criteria were defined:

- **Nationality & Residency:** Participants must be Dutch speakers living in the Netherlands. Fairphone currently operates in four main markets: the UK, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. Since these markets differ slightly, focusing on a single market during qualitative research is ideal for obtaining homogeneous data. As the company is based in Amsterdam, the Dutch market was selected for this round of interviews. Conducting interviews in the participants' native language allows them to express themselves more clearly. Furthermore, since the interviewer is also Dutch, this ensures a deeper understanding of emotions and underlying values. Future quantitative research may be conducted to validate these insights across other markets.
- **Demographics:** Individuals within the **25 to 44-year-old** age bracket were interviewed. With 3 exceptions of participants who were over 44 years old.
- **Products owned:** Participants must be customers of Fairphone owning a smartphone of the brand.

Participant Sample

The interview sample consisted of eleven Fairphone users with slightly different customer profiles. The first eight participants fit within Fairphone's new target audience. These interviews were used to understand the needs, expectations, pain points, and daily experiences of the customer group this project mainly focuses on.

To broaden the perspective, three additional participants were interviewed who were closer to Fairphone's original target audience. This distinction is not completely fixed, as customer profiles can overlap. However, these participants had generally owned a Fairphone for a longer period of time and already considered themselves loyal to the brand. Including them helped to identify which aspects of Fairphone contribute to building a stronger customer-brand relationship over time.

Together, these interviews provided insight into both the needs of the new target audience and the factors that support long-term loyalty among existing Fairphone users.

The male-female distribution was 8-3 simply because more men signed up, this is not a problem as it fits the distribution within Fairphone as they have more male users.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed an the transcripts were analysed individually. Each transcript was carefully reviewed, and important quotes were coded. This process was repeated twice for each transcript to ensure that all relevant information was included.

After coding, the codes were grouped into clusters based on similarities in the topics they addressed. This was an iterative process. Initially, the clusters were very specific, resulting in a large number of clusters. By repeatedly reviewing and comparing the clusters, similar topics were combined, gradually reducing the number of clusters. This helped identify patterns in the interview data and draw meaningful conclusions from the findings (see Appendix B).

Interview insights
The interviews gave insights into the mindset of the new target audience (See Appendix B). While the original target audience was driven by the question, "How can I contribute to the mission?", the new target audience operates from a more pragmatic mindset: "What is in it for me?"

These new users still highly value Fairphone's core principles, such as sustainability and treating supply chain workers well, but they are only willing to commit if the product offers clear personal benefits. Many had known the brand for years but only transitioned around the Fairphone 6, as the hardware finally met their practical requirements. By exploring their daily habits, communication needs, and pain points, a clear picture emerges of how Fairphone must adapt its customer experience.

The cluster Need for longevity and control (Figure 2.8) was identified to better understand the user's practical needs. It shows that customers want to keep control over their device and their time. It combines financial benefits with the need for a simpler life.

- No need for newest products (Simple life): Customers accept that basic phone specifications are good enough for their daily use.
- Value for money is important: Customers believe a higher purchase price is justified if the phone lasts for many years.
- Fighting phone addiction: Customers consciously use their device just as a tool and try to reduce their screen time.
- Modularity: The ability to replace broken parts is seen as a practical way to reduce e-waste.
- Hates switching from phone: Customers have a strong dislike for the hassle of moving data and setting up a new phone.
- Autonomy: Customers feel free because they are not dependent on repair shops or the forced lifespans made by other manufacturers. They highly value this autonomy so they want to actively feel this troughout their entire Fairphone journey.

The cluster Looking for values and impact (Figure 2.9) was defined to highlight the core values of the target audience. It shows that abstract concepts like sustainability need to be turned into clear and honest results.

- Sustainability: Customers do have an interest in making sustainable choices but they want to see proof of their impact.
- Treating the workers in supply chain well: Customers are willing to pay more to ensure fair wages and good working conditions.
- Looking for european brands: Customers want to support European brands to be less dependent on large American tech companies.
- Tangible impact: Customers need to see visible results, to understand the impact of the complex supply chain.
- Dislikes physical rewards: Customers strongly reject free promotional gifts, because these create waste and go against the brand's sustainable mission and it feels like they are being bribed.

The cluster Need for proactive Partnership and communication (Figure 2.10) was established to outline the customer's expectations of Fairphone's communication. It focuses on the need for active support and complete honesty when things go wrong.

- Need for clear communication and information: Customers need easy access to answers so they do not have to do deep research themselves.
- Transparency: Customers want total honesty about software bugs and hardware limits, and they do not want "greenwashing."
- Need for fairphone to continuously actively show support for long-term use: Customers need constant reassurance that software updates and spare parts will stay available in the future.

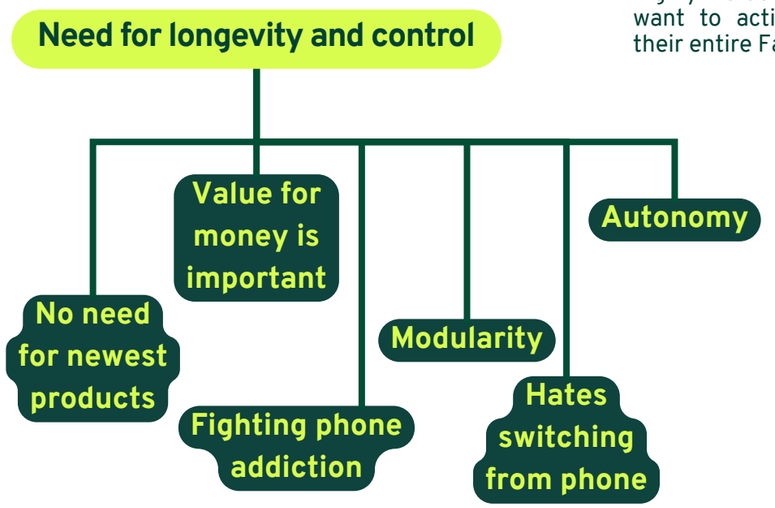


Figure 2.8: Interview cluster Need for longevity and control

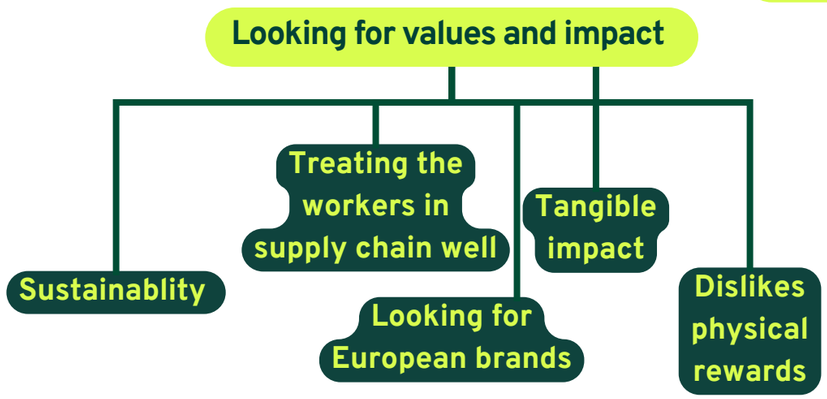


Figure 2.9: Interview cluster Looking for values and impact



Figure 2.10: Need for proactive partnership and communication

The three clusters give a clear picture of what the new target audience finds important. However, these themes do not stand on their own. In reality, the specific needs of the customer often overlap. For example, the practical option to repair a phone (Modularity) only works for the customer if Fairphone also provides clear instructions and long-term support (Need for fairphone to continuously actively show support for long-term use).

In chapter 3 these themes and interview insights will be further developed into customer Jobs to be done in order to clearly define what the customers need from Fairphone.

The Forgiveness buffer
It is important to note that Fairphone customers have something Fairphone calles: “The forgiveness buffer”. This means that Fairphone creates goodwill by being a small Dutch company with stong values. Therefor customers are more willing to let it slide when things go wrong. From this set of interviews it once again became clear that this “forgiveness buffer” is still something Fairphone has.

Product analysis
A product analysis was conducted to understand how Fairphone’s product characteristics contribute to customer value and loyalty (Figure 2.11). This analysis was based on a combination of insights from the interviews and an interpretation of the product by the researcher. The visual summarises this analysis by linking the product attributes of the Fairphone to the functional benefits, emotional benefits, and forms of self-expression they create for customers.

The smartphone is a product like no other; almost every person has one, and life is starting to become unimaginable without it. From the interviews, it emerged that people have developed a love-hate relationship with their phones. They use and need them for almost everything, but they also waste more time on their phones than they wish. The Fairphone Gen. 6 has a ‘moments’ button integrated for the purpose of helping people use their phones less. However, it emerged from the interviews that this does not work for people, as they really need their phones to be out of sight.

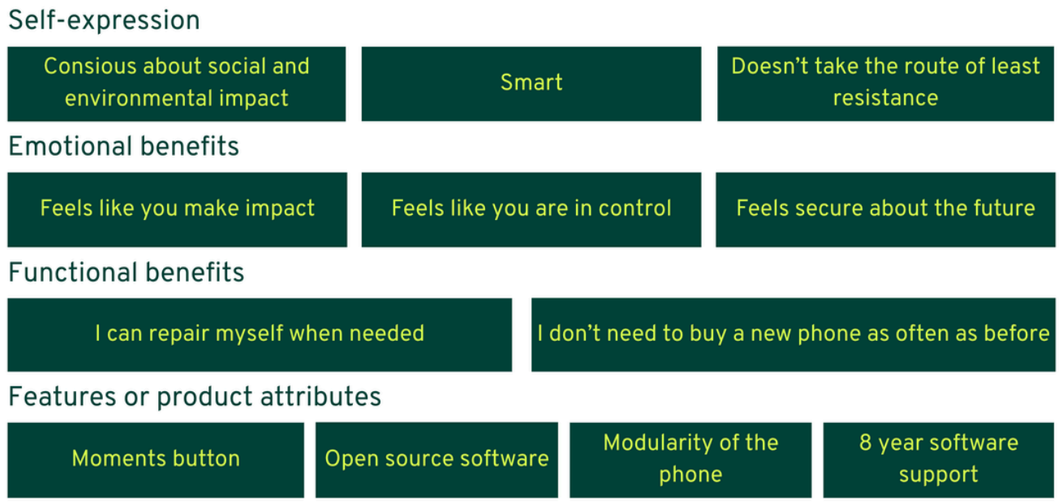


Figure 2.11: Product analysis

The reason for people to buy Fairphone is not necessarily that they want a smartphone. They feel like they need a smartphone to take part in modern society, and for them, Fairphone is the best option. From the interviews, it also became clear that people who buy a Fairphone are the type of people who try their absolute best to use their phone for as long as possible and will only replace the product when it is too broken or too old to use. The interviewees explained that they felt a lot of frustration in the past when they had to replace their phone because only a small part was broken. That is one of the reasons why they choose Fairphone: the modular and repairable phone.

As shown in the visual, these product attributes create different layers of value. Features such as the moments button, open-source software, modularity of the phone, and eight years of software support form the basis of the product. These features lead to functional benefits, such as being able to repair the phone when needed and not needing to buy a new phone as often as before. These functional benefits then create emotional benefits, such as feeling like you make an impact, feeling in control, and feeling secure about the future. Finally, these benefits contribute to self-expression. Owning a Fairphone allows customers to express that they are conscious about their social and environmental impact, smart in their choices, and unwilling to take the route of least resistance.

Company analysis
Fairphone has a differentiation advantage compared to its competitors. It sets itself apart as a technology company with its unique combination of values, including repairability, the use of sustainable materials, and fighting for fair working conditions.

It was mentioned before that the company has undergone a rebranding. From the interviews, it emerged that customers have had negative experiences with big companies making environmental claims. Consequently, they are concerned that as Fairphone grows, the temptation to compromise values for the sake of efficiency will increase. To remain unique and to maintain the trust of their customers, Fairphone must ensure that every decision remains in line with their core mission of fair materials, fair labor, and longevity, even with the new brand identity. Growth should never come at the expense of transparency; rather, a growing Fairphone should lead to a growing positive impact that is clearly communicated and proven to the customer.

Customer journey

To visualize the current gap between the user and the brand, the interview findings were translated into a customer journey. The conversations revealed a clear disconnect: customers often do not know which contact channels Fairphone currently offers. Furthermore, even when they are aware of these options, they do not see any personal added value in using them. This customer journey maps out that exact experience to highlight where the communication touchpoints are currently failing.

Additionally, participants explained their daily phone usage during the interview sessions. This daily behavior is explored further in Chapter 4.3.1, and a complete overview of these habits can be found in Appendix C.

	Onboarding	Personal setup	Support	Update & guidance	Repair
Customer Actions	Checks out how to find information about their new product	Walks tough the phone and guesses what setting would be best	Users rely on troubleshooting to figure out how to fix a smal problem in their device	When they need help, customers rely on Google, Reddit, or forums to find other users who share the same problem and explain how to fix it	When the device needs repair a customer turns to the website to order new part
Used touchpoints	Website; App; Keep Club	N.A.	N.A.	Forum	Website
Customer Experience	Anxious	Confused	Stressed	Unaware	Sad a part is broken
General pain points	Always a headache to install a new phone	No clear overview of information	Customer does not know if the problem is caused by a bug or by a problem in their phone, also not sure how to solve	Customer needs to take the time to search through the internet	Negative reason to get in touch with the brand as a part of the phone is broken
Touch point experience pain point	The touchpoints do not feel personal or customer-friendly	No touchpoint available to help out	Fairphone is not reaching out	Customer has to rely on community instead of Fairphone	

Figure 2.12: Current customer journey

Key takeways

1. Customers prioritise practical value over sustainability alone. Customers choose Fairphone because they want a reliable, repairable phone that lasts for years. Sustainability remains important, but practical benefits often drive their purchase decisions.
2. Customers value longevity and control in their devices. Repairability, modularity and long-term software support give customers independence and reduce the need to replace their phones. However, customers need clear guidance to make use of these benefits.
3. Customers want tangible proof of Fairphone's values and impact. Customers appreciate Fairphone's mission but expect transparency and visible results rather than promotional claims or physical rewards.
4. The current post-purchase journey leaves customers to find their own solutions. Customers often struggle to find relevant information, are unaware of existing support channels and rely on external sources when problems occur.
5. Customers need clear and accessible guidance throughout their phone's lifetime. From initial setup to troubleshooting and repair, customers want practical information that helps them understand their devices and take the right actions.
6. Customers expect proactive and transparent communication from Fairphone. Customers want honest updates about software bugs, product limitations and long-term support. They want Fairphone to actively support them rather than only respond when they ask for help.

2.6 Research insights

The research reveals a clear gap between Fairphone's evolving brand identity, its changing target audience and its current post-purchase customer experience. While Fairphone has shifted from an activist brand towards a more product-focused brand, its post-purchase approach has not evolved accordingly. The new target audience values reliability, convenience, control and long-term product use, yet the current communication remains largely reactive, fragmented and focused on promotion rather than customer support.

The findings show that customers value Fairphone's sustainable mission, but primarily expect a reliable product and practical support throughout its lifetime. Customer loyalty develops when expectations are met or exceeded, making clear communication and effective expectation management essential. Although repairability, modularity and long-term software support offer clear benefits, customers need accessible guidance to make full use of them. They expect proactive and transparent communication that helps them understand their phone, identify problems and take appropriate action. Customers also want tangible evidence of Fairphone's values and impact, rather than only brand promises. By meeting these needs, Fairphone can create value beyond the product itself and build stronger customer relationships.

The main challenge is not a lack of support initiatives, but the absence of a connected and consistent post-purchase experience.

Although Fairphone already offers multiple customer touchpoints, these do not yet work together to provide a coherent experience that reflects its brand values and meets customer needs. This highlights the opportunity to translate Fairphone's mission into practical, transparent and meaningful support throughout the customer's journey, from onboarding and software updates to troubleshooting and repair.

To translate these research findings into concrete design opportunities, the next chapter identifies the underlying customer needs and challenges through Jobs to Be Done (JTBD). These provide the foundation for defining the key customer problems, formulating a problem statement and establishing a design goal that aligns Fairphone's post-purchase experience with its new brand identity and target audience.

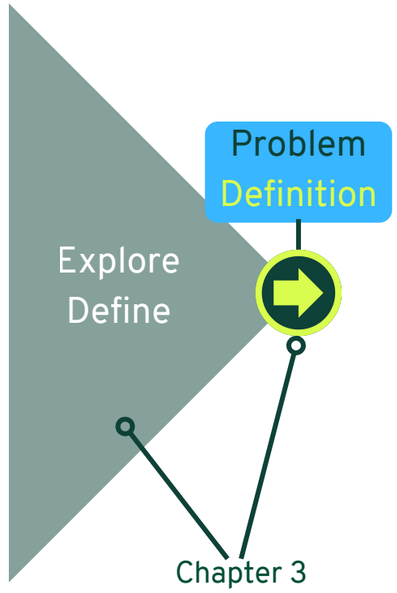


Figure 2.13: Research conclusion

CHAPTER

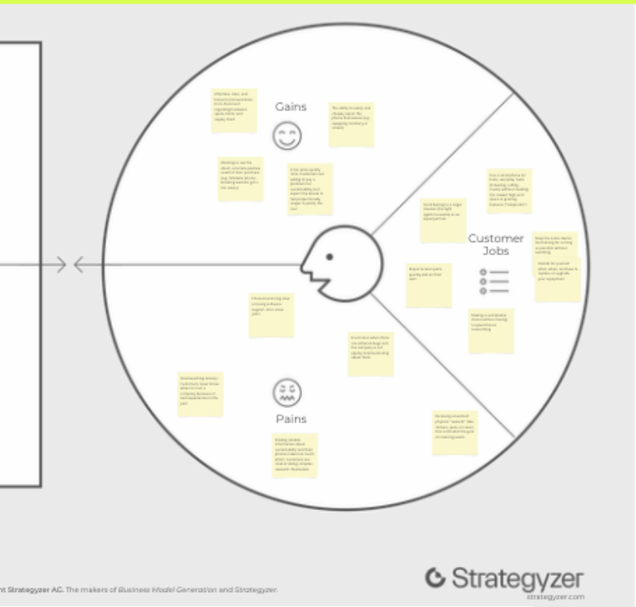
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Research outcomes



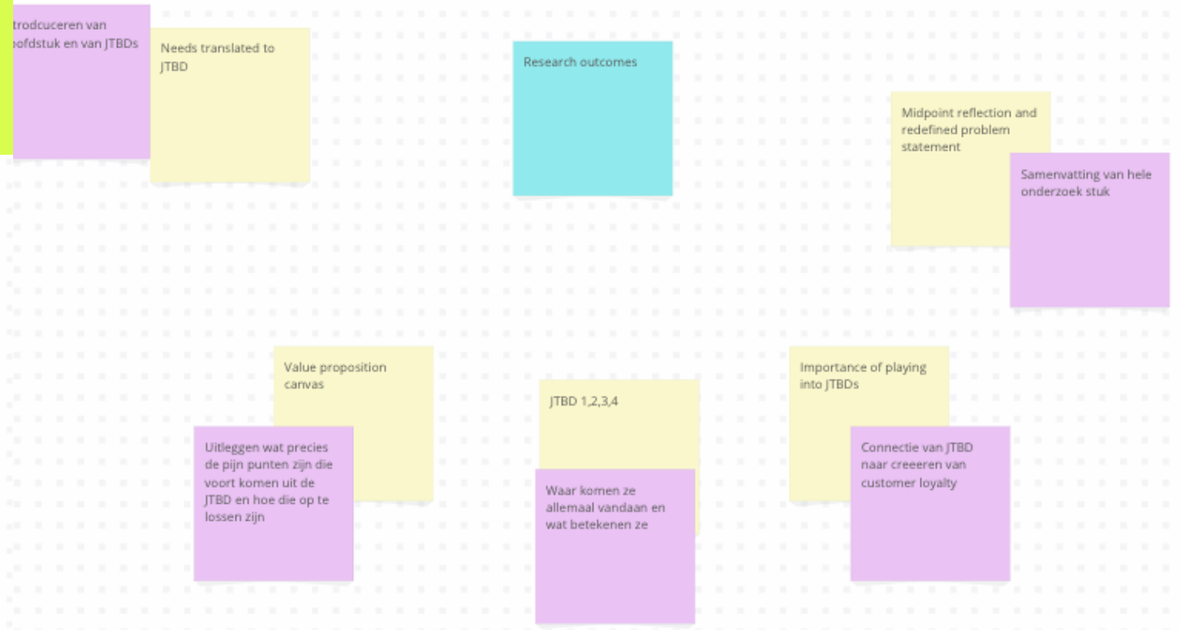
3.1 From research insights towards a design goal
3.2 Customer needs translated to JTBDs
3.3 Value proposition canvas
3.4 Explaination of the JTBDs
3.5 Importance of playing in to the JTBDs
3.6 Midpoint reflection and redefined problem statement

This chapter forms the bridge between the research and the design phase. It further explores the main conclusions from the research and translates these insights into clear next steps. These steps provide direction for the development and selection of an appropriate design direction.









3.1 From research insights towards a design goal

To structure the research findings, Jobs to Be Done (JTBD) and a Value Proposition Canvas were used to identify customer needs and define a redefined problem statement and design goal. The identified JTBDs also serve as a foundation for the creative sessions described in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, they are further translated into specific customer problems that guide the development of an intervention.

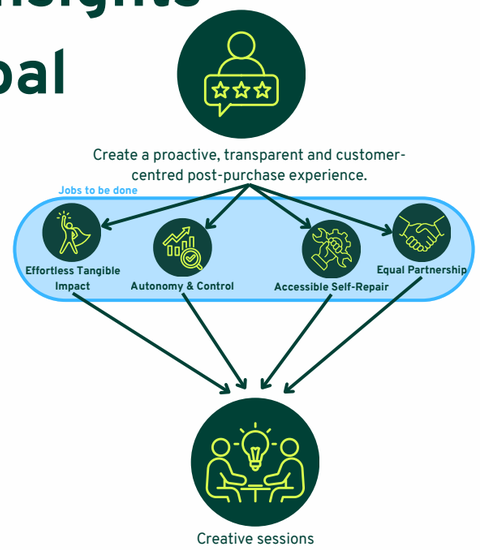


Figure 3.1: Function of the Jobs To Be Done

3.2 Customer needs translated to JTBDs

Based on the research insights from Chapter 2, four Jobs to Be Done (JTBDs) were identified: Effortless Tangible Impact, Autonomy & Control, Accessible Self-Repair, and Equal Partnership. These represent the underlying functional and psychological needs of Fairphone customers and are presented in Figure 3.2. The reasoning behind the formulation of each JTBD is explained in detail in subchapter 3.4.



Effortless Tangible Impact

When I purchase or use an essential daily device like a smartphone,
I want to make a choice that automatically contributes to a fairer supply chain and a better environment without requiring extra research or effort on my part,
So that I can immediately experience the positive, proud result of my decision and feel good about my impact, without sustainability feeling heavy or complex.



Autonomy & Control

When my device ages, stops working optimally, or no longer fits my current needs,
I want to have full freedom and control over what gets replaced, adjusted, or updated, and when I choose to do so,
So that I can dictate the lifespan and functionality of my technology on my own terms, rather than being passively forced into buying a completely new device by the manufacturer's timeline.



Accessible Self-Repair

When a specific component of my device wears out or breaks over time,
I want to have immediate access to the right spare parts and bite-sized, stress-free guidance,
So that I can effortlessly and quickly complete the repair on my own without wasting time deciphering endless forums, while still experiencing the satisfaction of having fixed it myself.



Equal Partnership

When I commit to using a sustainable device for the long term and accept its inevitable imperfections (like bugs or wear and tear),
I want to be treated by the brand as an ally in a shared mission through proactive, radical honesty and ongoing support,
So that I can feel valued as a partner in fighting e-waste and building a movement, rather than just feeling like an ordinary customer being pushed toward a new purchase

Figure 3.2: Jobs to be done

3.3 Value proposition canvas

Building directly on the Jobs to be Done (JTBDs) formulated in the previous chapter, a detailed Value Proposition Canvas has been developed. The first step in this process was translating these overarching JTBDs into specific, actionable Customer Jobs.

To maintain a clear and structured overview, the canvas uses a color-coded system that links each Customer Job directly to one of the four core JTBD themes:

- Orange: Equal Partnership
- Yellow: Autonomy & Control
- Green: Accessible Self-Repair
- Red: Effortless Tangible Impact

By clearly defining these Customer Jobs, it became possible to identify the user's specific Pains (the frustrations and obstacles they face) and Gains (the positive outcomes they desire).
To ensure the proposed solutions directly address the user's needs, these Pains and Gains are mirrored on the left side of the canvas by Pain Relievers and Gain Creators. The color-coding remains consistent throughout the entire canvas: every sticky note of the same color forms a complete, connected narrative from the initial Customer Job all the way to the proposed product feature or service.

The primary goal of this canvas is to generate targeted ideas that remain closely aligned with what the customer actually wants to achieve. The ideas generated in this phase will serve as the foundational building blocks for forming concrete concepts in Chapter 4.4.

Later in this chapter, the specific components of the Value Proposition Canvas will be explored in more depth, detailing exactly how these elements connect back to the foundational JTBDs.

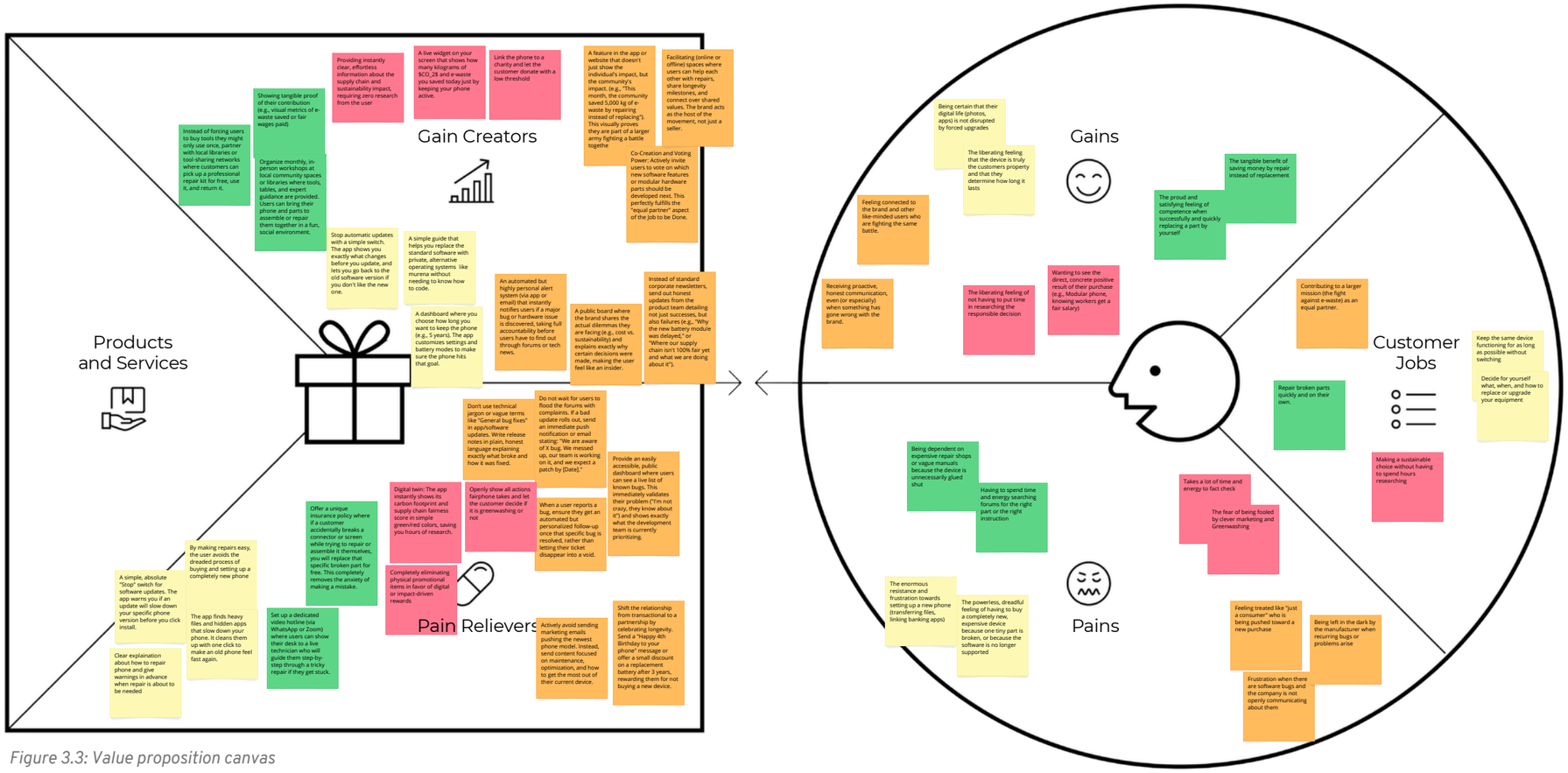


Figure 3.3: Value proposition canvas

3.4 Explaination of the JTBDs

Effortless Tangible Impact

When I purchase or use an essential daily device like a smartphone,
I want to make a choice that automatically contributes to a fairer supply chain and a better environment without requiring extra research or effort on my part,
So that I can immediately experience the positive, proud result of my decision and feel good about my impact, without sustainability feeling heavy or complex.

The Job To Be Done **“Effortless Tangible Impact”** was developed from interview clusters showing that participants valued sustainability and want to get the good feelding of making an impact, but did not want it to require extra effort, research, or constant attention. They wanted their phone choice to contribute to something positive, while still fitting easily into everyday life.

The cluster **“Need for Fairphone to continuously actively show support for long-term use”** (presented in subchapter 2.5) showed that information has to be instantly clear. Participants mentioned that they would not actively search for detailed information, and that making choices quickly became tiring when too much effort was needed.

The cluster **“Tangible impact”** (presented in subchapter 2.5) showed that participants want to see or feel the result of the choices they make. They mention that they make an effort to make sustainable choices when grocery shopping as it is small and tangible (e.g. Using less plastic, not eating meet), however the impact they make when buying sustainable tech is less tangible.

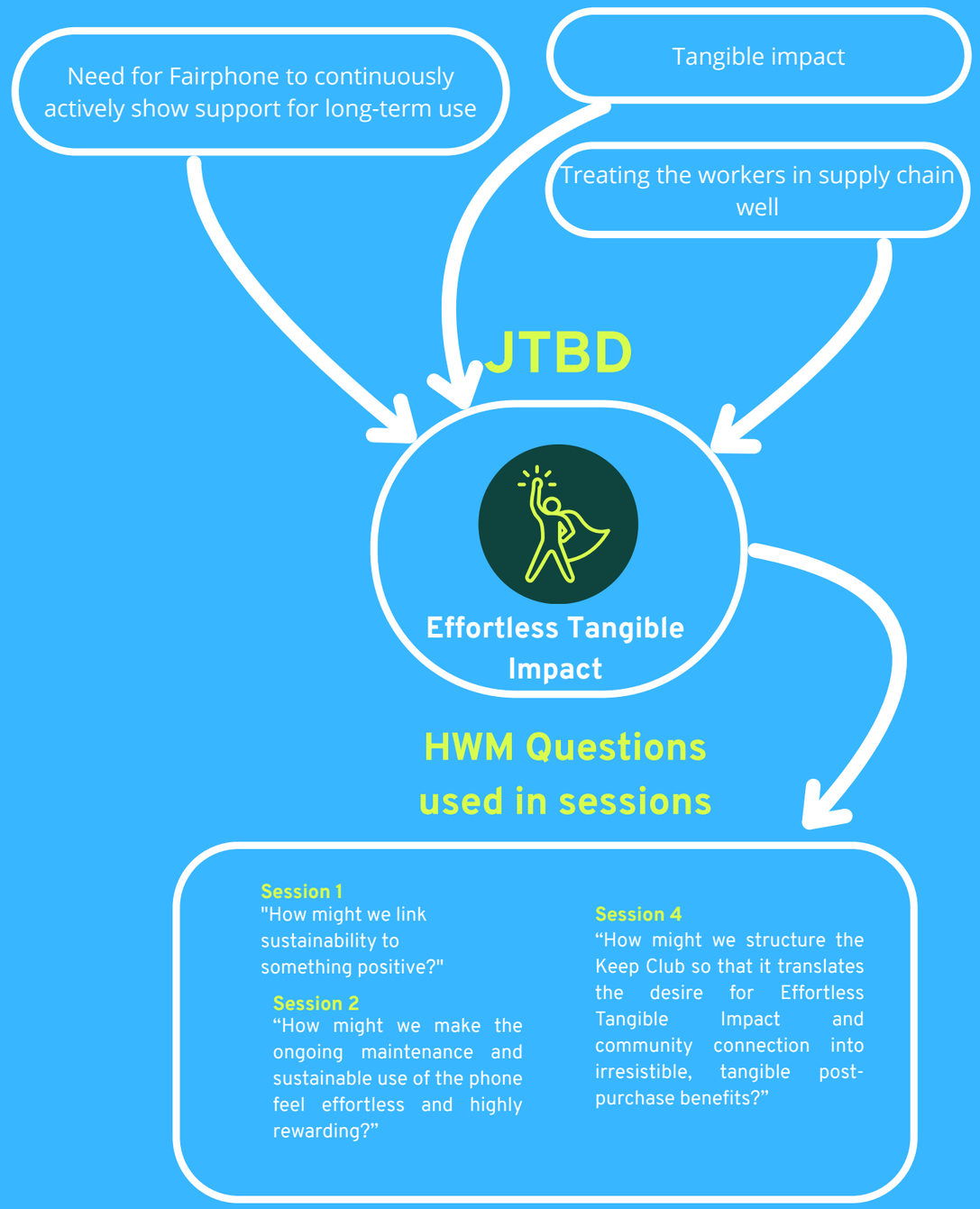
The cluster **“Treating workers in the supply chain well”** (presented in subchapter 2.5) showed that impact is not only environmental, but also social. Participants value fair wages, better working conditions, and companies that make ethical choices easier for consumers.

Together, these clusters showed that the main need was not simply more information, but a sustainable choice that felt easy, positive, and visibly meaningful. This led to the JTBD “Effortless Tangible Impact.”

The How Might We questions were then formulated to explore different layers of this need. These questions were used during the creative sessions presented in subchapter 4.4

- “How might sustainability be linked to something positive?” focused on making sustainability feel less heavy and more rewarding.
- “How might ongoing maintenance and sustainable use of the phone feel effortless and highly rewarding?” focused on repair, long-term use, and easy sustainable behaviour.
- “How might the Keep Club translate this desire into tangible post-purchase benefits?” focused on how Fairphone could continue to support and motivate customers after purchase.

Interview cluster themes



Autonomy & Control

When my device ages, stops working optimally, or no longer fits my current needs,
I want to have full freedom and control over what gets replaced, adjusted, or updated, and when I choose to do so,
So that I can dictate the lifespan and functionality of my technology on my own terms, rather than being passively forced into buying a completely new device by the manufacturer's timeline.

The Job To Be Done **"Autonomy & Control"** was developed from interview clusters showing that participants wanted to feel more ownership over their phone and the decisions connected to it. They valued the possibility to repair, update, replace parts, or keep using their device because it gave them practical freedom, confidence, and a stronger sense of control over something they use every day. This need was not only about avoiding unnecessary replacement, but also about being able to make informed choices without feeling dependent, pushed, or restricted by a company, system, or market timeline.

The cluster **"Autonomy"** (presented in subchapter 2.5) was central because participants clearly appreciated the idea of being able to act themselves when something happened to their phone. The quote "Sometimes I feel pushed by a company but I would prefer to be listened to instead" shows that customers want to feel the freedom of being able to make their own decisions. Quotes such as "I love that I can repair my phone myself" and "being able to replace it myself, that appealed to me" showed that repairability created a sense of independence. It made the phone feel less like a closed product and more like something users could understand, influence, and take care of themselves.

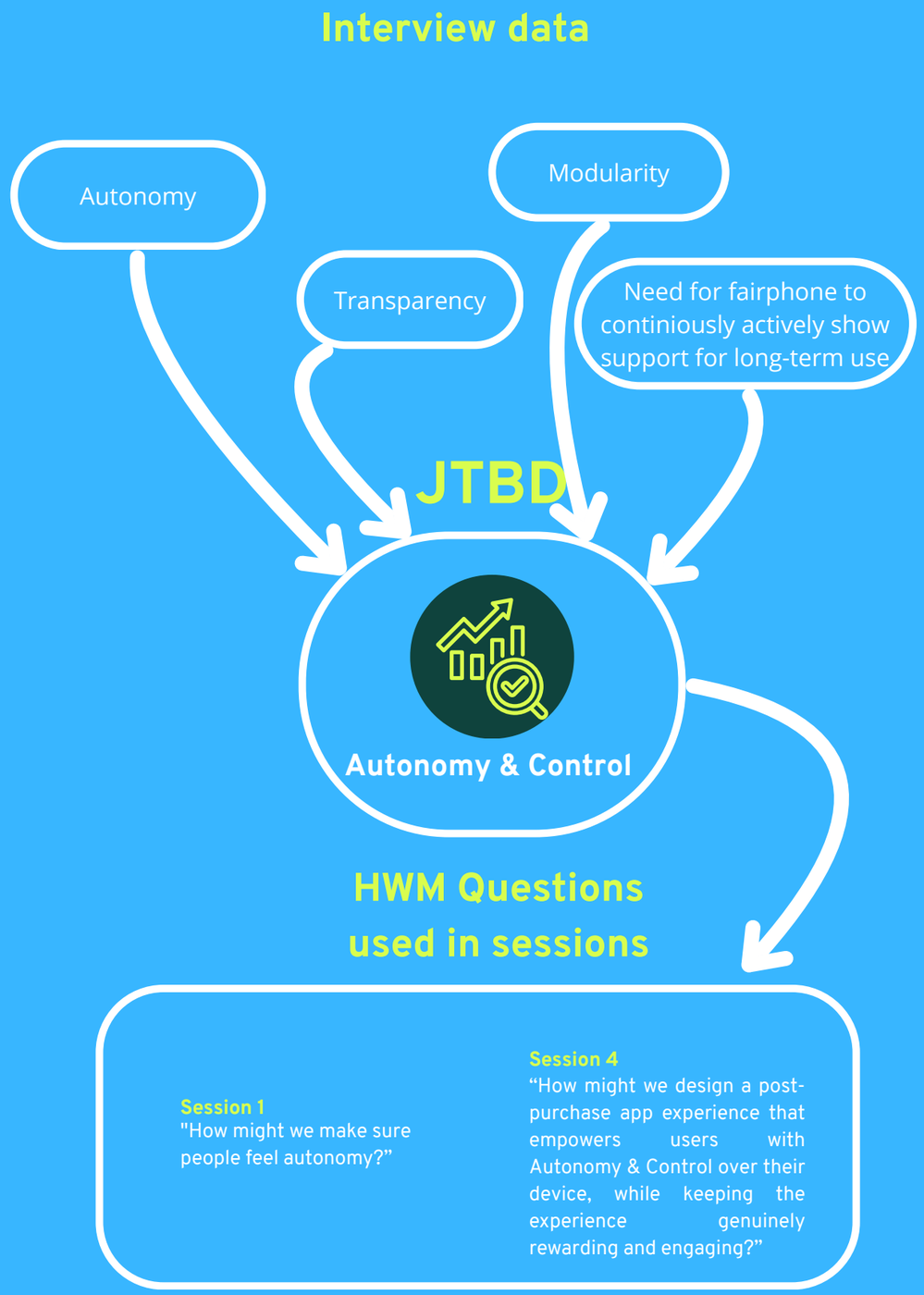
The cluster **"Modularity"** (presented in subchapter 2.5) strengthened this insight. Participants liked that individual parts, such as the battery or screen, could be replaced when needed. One participant explained that it was appealing when "one part could eventually be replaced instead of buying a whole new phone." This showed that modularity was not only valued for sustainability reasons, but also because it gave users more control over what they wanted to adjust, repair, or keep.

The clusters around **"Need for fairphone to continiously actively show support for long-term use"** and **"Transparency"** (presented in subchapter 2.5) added another important layer. Participants want Fairphone to keep supporting older devices with updates, spare parts, and they need clear communication about problems. Quotes about bugs, updates, and long-term Android support showed that autonomy also depended on trust. Users can only feel in control when they know what is happening with their device and what options are available to them.

Together, these clusters showed that the core need is broader than repairability alone. Repair, modularity, updates, spare parts, and transparent information all contributed to a larger desire for ownership and control. This led to the JTBD "Autonomy & Control."

The How Might We questions followed from this insight.

- "How might we make sure people feel autonomy?" focused on the emotional need for freedom, ownership, and self-direction.
- "How might we design a post-purchase app experience that empowers users with Autonomy & Control over their device, while keeping the experience genuinely rewarding and engaging?" translated this need into a broader post-purchase design opportunity. Autonomy does not come from one feature only, but from repair guidance, update information, spare-part availability, transparency, and support that helps users make confident choices throughout the lifetime of their phone.



Accessible Self-Repair

When a specific component of my device wears out or breaks over time,
I want to have immediate access to the right spare parts and bite-sized, stress-free guidance,
So that I can effortlessly and quickly complete the repair on my own without wasting time deciphering endless forums, while still experiencing the satisfaction of having fixed it myself.

The Job To Be Done "Accessible Self-Repair" was developed based on interview clusters showing that participants like the idea of repairing their phone themselves, but only when this process felt simple, clear, and low-effort. They value repairability, but do not want to spend a lot of time searching for information, comparing parts, or figuring out difficult repair steps on their own.

The cluster "**Modularity**" (presented in subchapter 2.5) was important because participants clearly appreciated that individual parts could be replaced instead of replacing the entire phone. Quotes such as "It is nice when one part can be replaced instead of buying a whole new phone" and "being able to replace the battery yourself makes the choice much easier" showed that modularity made repair feel practical and achievable.

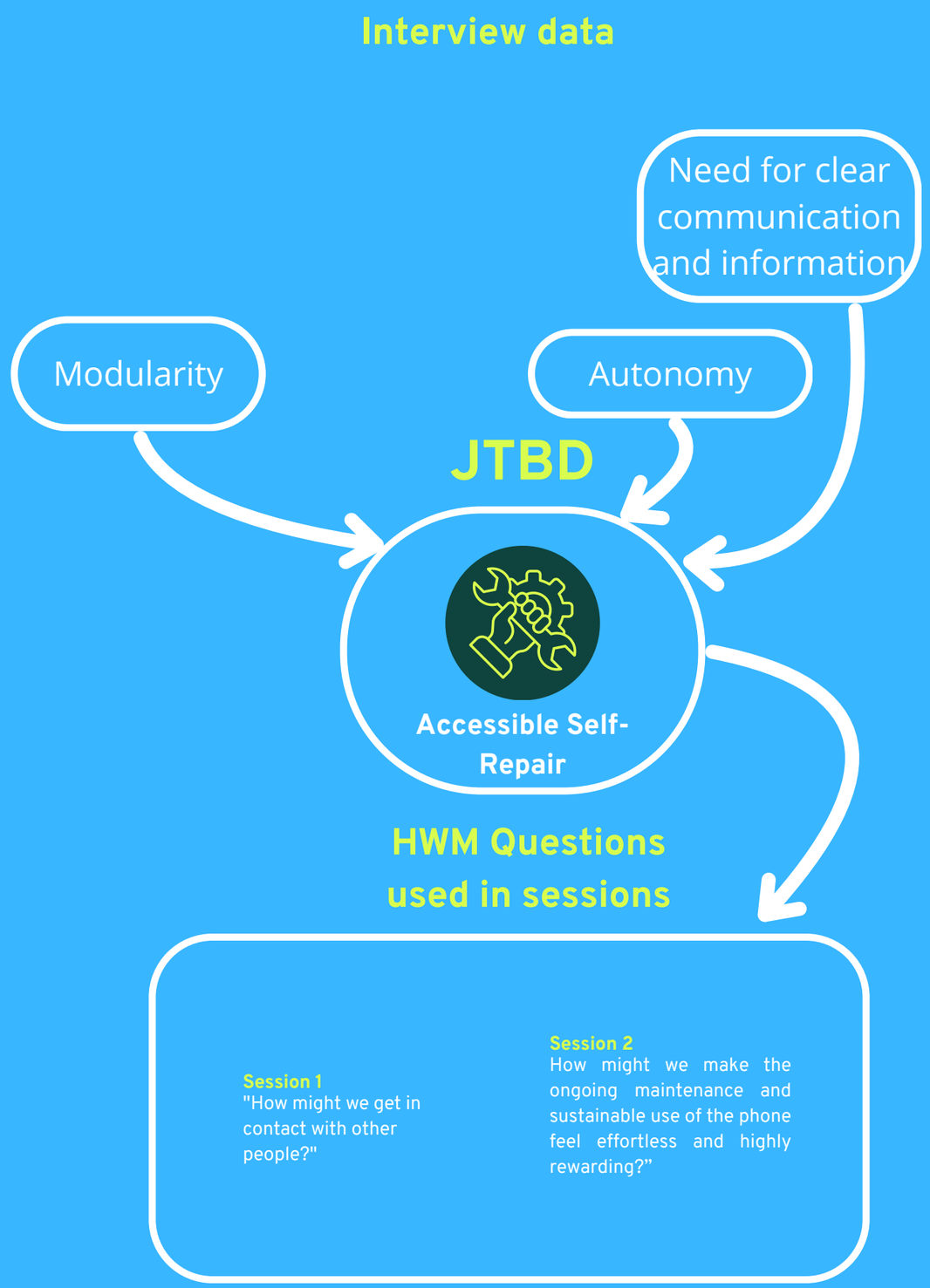
The cluster "**Autonomy**" (presented in subchapter 2.5) strengthened this insight. Participants liked the feeling of being able to act themselves when something happened to their device. Quotes such as "The fact that it is easy to repair yourself really appeals to me" showed that self-repair created a sense of independence and ownership.

At the same time, the cluster **"Need for clear communication and information"** (presented in subchapter 2.5) showed that this autonomy had limits. Participants did not want to search endlessly through forums or technical explanations. Repair only became attractive when the right guidance, parts, and steps were easy to find. Repair support had to be understandable, direct, and stress-free.

Together, these clusters showed that the core need was not just "being able to repair." The deeper need was to make self-repair accessible: users wanted the satisfaction and control of fixing something themselves, without the process becoming complicated or overwhelming. This led to the JTBD "Accessible Self-Repair."

The How Might We questions followed from this insight.

- "How might we get in contact with other people?" came from the need for support, reassurance, and shared knowledge during repair. If users felt unsure, contact with other users or the Fairphone community could make repair feel less intimidating.
- "How might we make the ongoing maintenance and sustainable use of the phone feel effortless and highly rewarding?" focused on making repair and maintenance feel easy, motivating, and worthwhile. Together, these questions explored how self-repair could become less technical and more accessible, social, and rewarding.



Equal Partnership

When I commit to using a sustainable device for the long term and accept its inevitable imperfections (like bugs or wear and tear),
I want to be treated by the brand as an ally in a shared mission through proactive, radical honesty and ongoing support,
So that I can feel valued as a partner in fighting e-waste and building a movement, rather than just feeling like an ordinary customer being pushed toward a new purchase

The Job To Be Done "Equal Partnership" was developed from interview clusters showing that participants did not only want to buy a sustainable phone, but also wanted to feel supported and respected by the brand after purchase. They accepted that a sustainable device could have imperfections, such as bugs, wear and tear, or slower updates, but only when the company stayed honest, responsive, and actively involved.

The cluster **"Transparency"** (presented in subchapter 2.5) was central because participants value open and honest communication. Quotes such as "It doesn't matter if there are bugs or problems, as long as they are just open and transparent about it" showed that users did not expect Fairphone to be perfect. Instead, they wanted the brand to clearly explain what was happening, what was being improved, and what users could expect. Participants mentioned that bugs were frustrating, especially when they had to search for answers themselves. One participant explained that it helped to see online that they were not the only one experiencing a problem. This showed that honest communication about issues could reduce frustration and make users feel taken seriously.

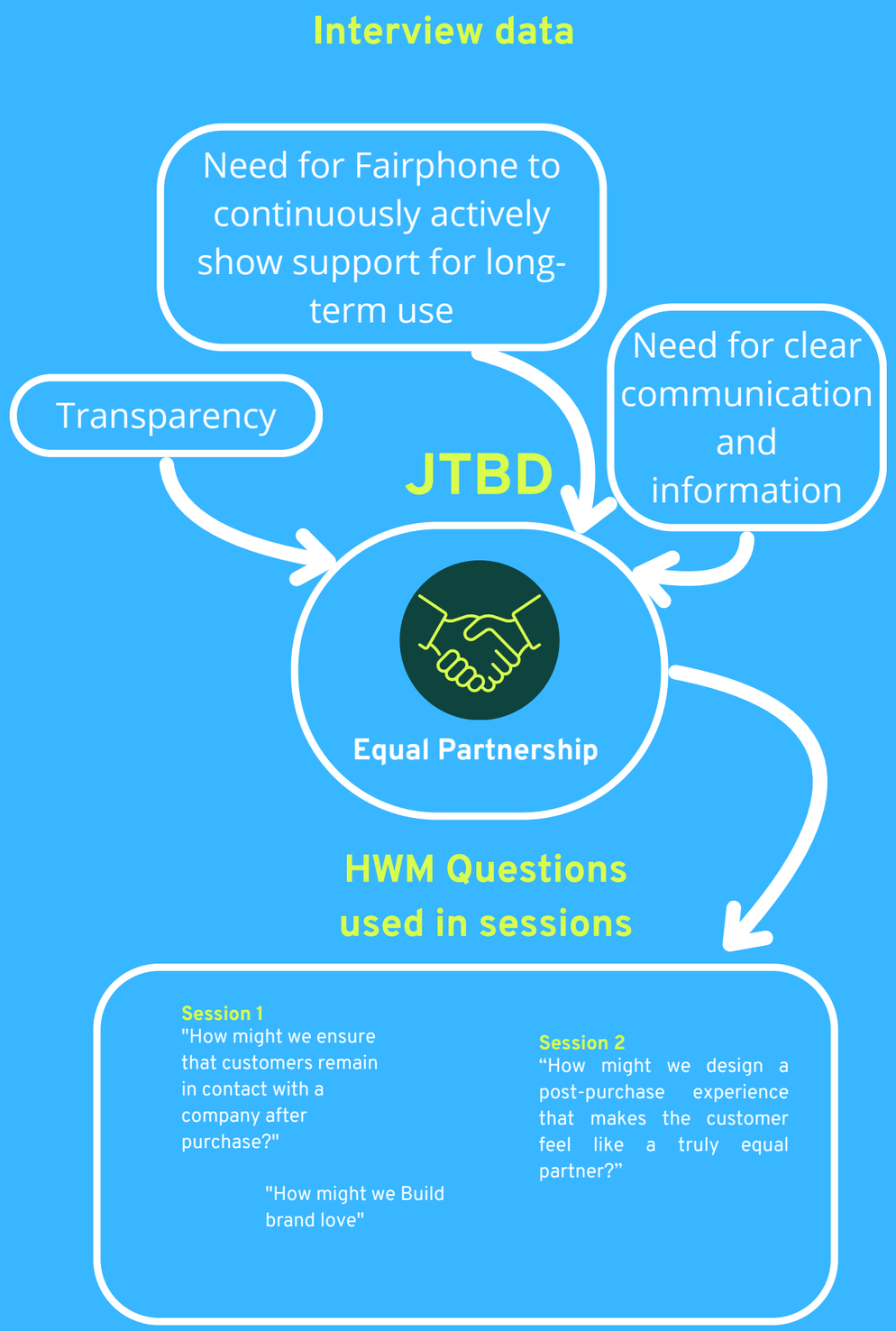
The cluster **"Need for Fairphone to continuously actively show support for long-term use"** (presented in subchapter 2.5) added another important layer. Participants wanted Fairphone to keep supporting older devices with updates, spare parts, and clear guidance. Quotes about long-term Android support and keeping a phone usable for as long as possible showed that partnership had to continue after the purchase moment and that the customers are currently unsure about how these things will work in the future.

The cluster **"Need for clear communication and information"** (presented in subchapter 2.5) also supported this JTBD. Participants wanted information to be easy to find and understand, without having to spend too much time searching. This showed that feeling like a partner also depended on accessible communication, not only on the content of the message.

Together, these clusters showed that the deeper need was not simply customer service. Participants wanted a more equal relationship with the brand, where Fairphone communicated honestly, listened actively, and supported users in the shared mission of reducing e-waste. This led to the JTBD "Equal Partnership."

The How Might We questions followed from this insight.

- "How might we ensure that customers remain in contact with a company after purchase?" came from the need for ongoing communication and support.
- "How might we build brand love?" focused on creating a stronger emotional relationship between Fairphone and its users.
- "How might we design a post-purchase experience that makes the customer feel like a truly equal partner?" translated the insight into a broader design opportunity. It explored how Fairphone could make users feel valued, informed, and included throughout the lifetime of their device.



3.5 Importance of playing in to the JTBDs

Addressing these Jobs To Be Done is important because they translate the interview findings into deeper customer needs. The clusters showed that participants did not simply want more sustainable products or more information. They want sustainability and making impact to feel understandable, rewarding, trustworthy, and easy to integrate into everyday life.

The JTBDs revealed where Fairphone's post-purchase value proposition could be strengthened. Customers value repairability, modularity, transparency, ethical production, and long-term use, but these values only become meaningful when they are experienced in a practical and personal way. Repairability becomes more valuable when users feel confident enough to repair something themselves, and transparency becomes more valuable when it makes users feel respected and informed.

Together, these JTBDs formed a strong foundation for the design direction because they connected customer motivation, practical barriers, Fairphone's mission, and customer loyalty. By responding to these needs, Fairphone could make product use feel less like an individual responsibility and more like a supported, positive, and empowering experience throughout the lifetime of the device.

By developing a design direction and intervention that directly address the JTBDs, this thesis aims to strengthen customer loyalty by creating an experience in which customers feel supported, understood and connected to Fairphone. This stronger relationship is expected to encourage customers to take better care of their devices, actively extend their lifetime and become more willing to recommend Fairphone to others.

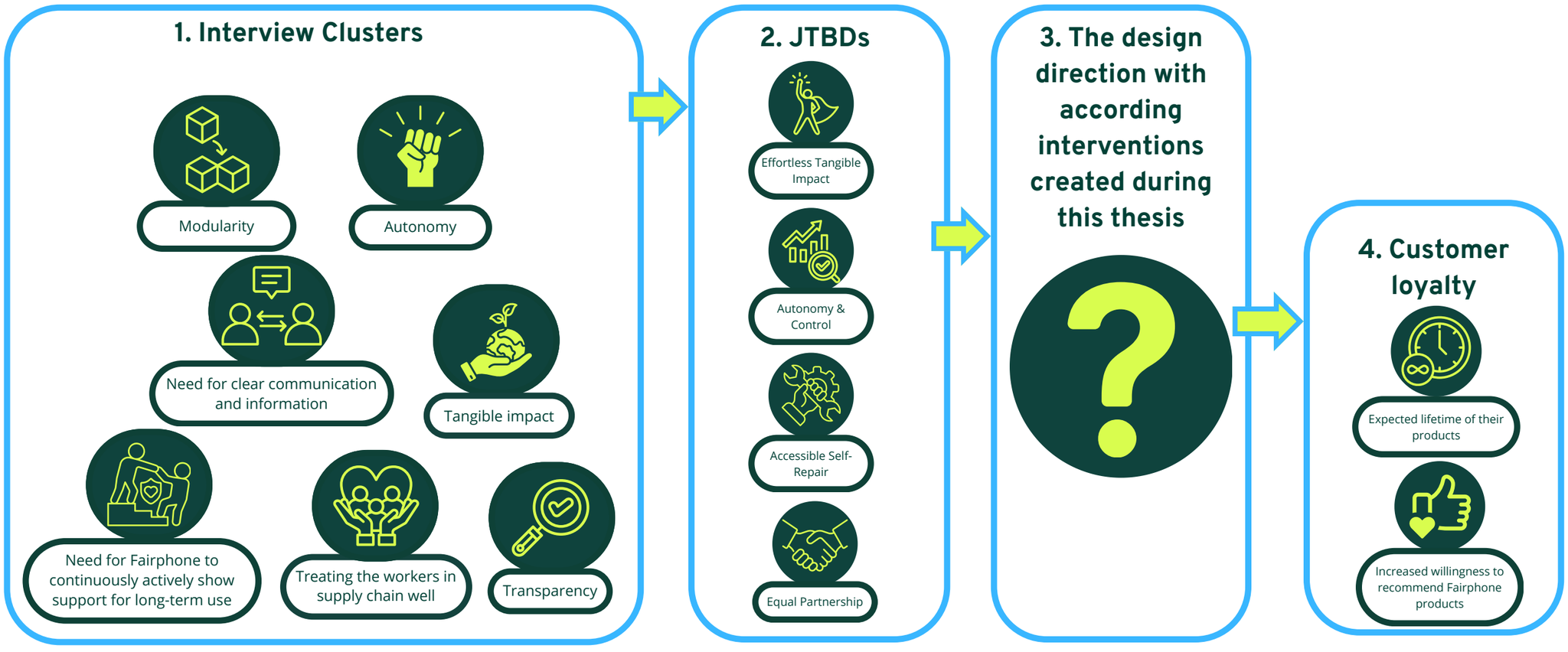


Figure 3.4: JTBDs creating customer loyalty

3.6 Midpoint reflection and redefined problem statement

The primary objective of the research phase was to evaluate the post-purchase experience of Fairphone customers. By mapping the current state of this customer journey, existing gaps and new opportunities were clearly identified.

The research highlighted several critical gaps in the current post-purchase journey, which were translated into four key Jobs To Be Done: Effortless Tangible Impact, Autonomy & Control, Accessible Self-Repair, and Equal Partnership. These JTBDs all derive from the same underlying issue: **after purchase, customers do not experience enough positive touchpoints.**

As a result, users are left to create value largely on their own. They have to search for information independently, interpret the impact of their purchase themselves, find out how to repair or maintain their device, and understand their role in Fairphone's mission without much ongoing interaction from the brand. This absence of supportive post-purchase moments creates uncertainty, distance, and missed opportunities for engagement. Therefore, the JTBDs reflect what customers need Fairphone to provide after purchase in order to feel informed, empowered, included, and connected to the impact they want to make.

Currently after purchasing a device, customers typically have no contact with the company unless a problem occurs, such as a broken part or the need for a replacement. Consequently, the current relationship is highly transactional and driven almost entirely by negative experiences. When issues do arise, the Fairphone community often steps in; the deeply loyal, "original" target audience assists one another. While this highly engaged community is a remarkable asset that must be cherished, the company cannot rely on it as a substitute for active engagement. Furthermore, while this self-sustaining community works well for early adopters, it highlights a critical gap in reaching Fairphone's growing, newer customer base.

"Fairphone currently prioritizes product sales over relationship building, which conflicts with its core brand values. While the original customer base is generally loyal, current engagement strategies fail to engage the new, less idealistic target audience. Tie strength remains superficial because the current strategy fails to foster brand love through consistent post-purchase interaction."

Moving forward into the design phase, the strategy will shift to a fundamentally customer-centric approach, prioritizing the user's ongoing experience rather than designing from a purely company-centric, sales-driven perspective. To achieve this, the insights and interviews collected during the research phase will serve as the central guiding thread. Future developments must bridge the identified gaps and proactively foster positive, lasting relationships between Fairphone and its new customer base. Based on the need for better customer engagement and the differences in interaction with the orriginal and new target audience, the main problem was summarized into the following **refined problem statement:**

This redefined problem statement together with al the interview insights concluded in the following **design goal:**

"Shift Fairphone's post-purchase communication from sales-driven to supportive and customer-centered, strengthening the long-term relationship with existing customers."

This means that the goal of this thesis is to design an intervention that will help Fairphone shift their interaction with their customers from selling to supporting, as shown in figure 3.5.

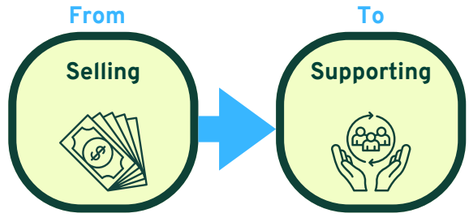


Figure 3.5: JTBDs creating customer loyalty

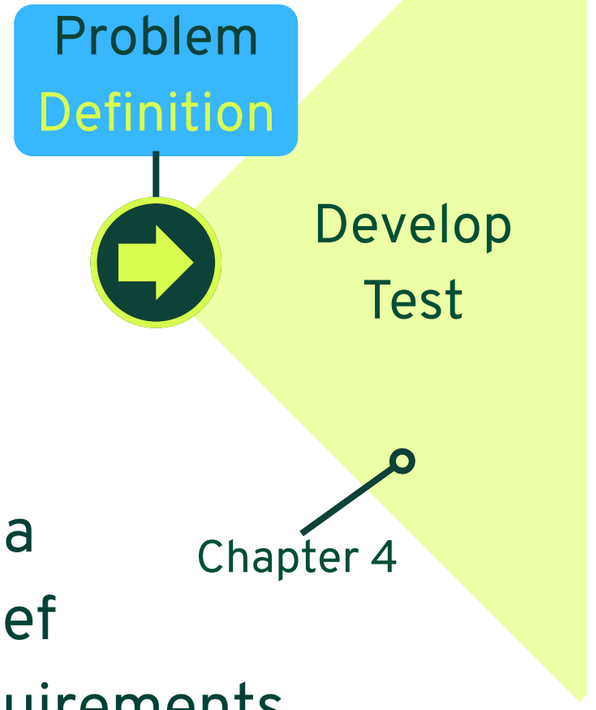
This design goal should be achieved by following these two design principles:

1. Creating consistency across touchpoints
2. Designing communication around customer needs and problems.

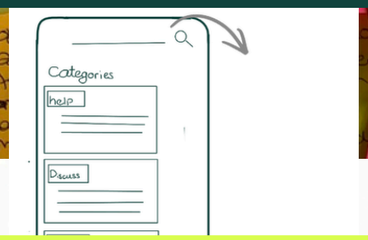
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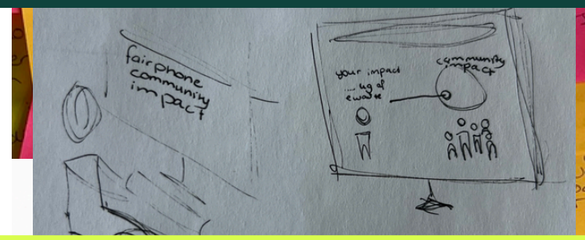
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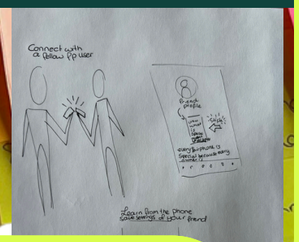
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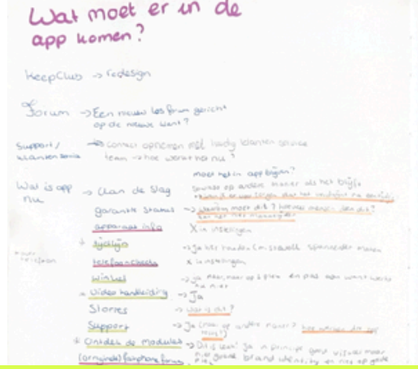
4.1 Design area
4.2 Design brief
4.3 List of requirements
4.4 Creative sessions
4.5 Ideation clustering
4.6 The three design directions
4.7 Comparing the design directions
4.8 Decision making validation
4.9 Final design direction

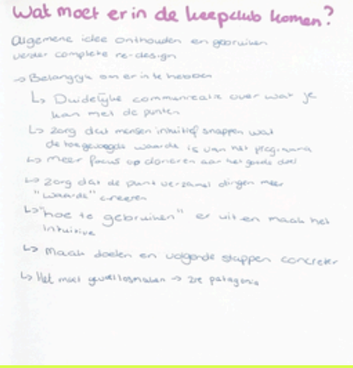




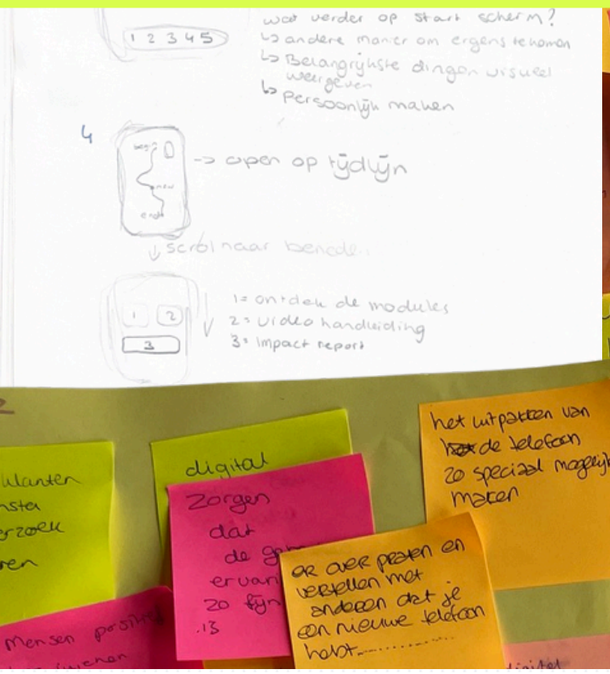








This chapter marks the start of the design phase. Based on the conclusions from the previous chapters, different possibilities for the design direction are explored. By asking a range of questions and involving different groups, the exploration is kept as broad as possible in order to identify clear opportunities for several potential design directions.











4.1 Design area

Chapters 2 and 3 showed that Fairphone needs to approach its new target audience differently to build stronger and more lasting customer relationships. The current mismatch between Fairphone's communication, its touchpoints, and the needs of this audience makes meaningful post-purchase engagement difficult.

This thesis therefore focuses on developing a more relevant, consistent, and customer-centred communication approach. Rather than increasing the amount of communication, Fairphone needs to communicate in a way that better reflects what its new target audience values, expects, and finds personally meaningful.

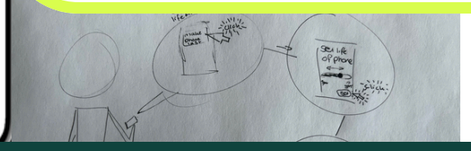
This new approach to communication is referred to as a **"design direction"** throughout this thesis. The goal is to develop a design direction that provides guidance for Fairphone's future post-purchase communication and to translate this direction into a concrete intervention. This intervention takes the form of a single customer touchpoint designed to address one specific customer problem, while reflecting the principles of the chosen design direction.

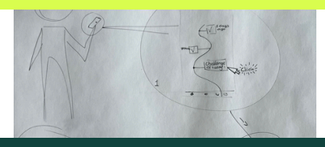
By validating this intervention, the thesis aims to evaluate whether the design direction and its practical application achieve the intended effect on the customer experience and indicators of customer loyalty. The findings will provide a basis for recommendations on how Fairphone can further develop and implement interventions that follow the same design direction.

The design direction should also be realistic to implement in the near future. Fairphone has already indicated that the insights from this thesis are valuable enough to continue working on this topic with a dedicated team later this year. Therefore, the design direction should not only respond to the research findings but also provide clear guidance for teams working to strengthen customer relationships.

A key takeway is that Fairphone's touchpoints should not function as separate communication moments, but as a connected system that supports one coherent brand experience. This principle is reflected in the customer journey developed around the final design direction.

Ultimately, the design direction provides both a strategic framework and a practical starting point for translating Fairphone's values and new brand identity into a more relevant, meaningful and valuable post-purchase customer experience.





4.2 Design brief

Assumptions
As described in subchapter 2.4, Fairphone's new target audience consists of three subgroups. However, because these groups have only recently been identified, Fairphone is still researching their relevance, size, and specific characteristics. At this stage, limited information is available about the differences between these groups.

Therefore, this design brief assumes that the three subgroups share the same core needs and can be approached as part of one broader target audience. The Jobs To Be Done formulated in Chapter 3.2 are therefore treated as generalisable across the full new target audience.

Scope
The design direction should focus on improving Fairphone's post-purchase communication with its new target audience. This scope follows directly from the research findings, which showed that the current communication is fragmented, not yet sufficiently aligned with the new target audience, and does not always make Fairphone's value personally relevant after purchase.

Within this scope, the intervention must:
- Align with Fairphone's core values and visual identity, as defined in the brand guidelines.
- Fit within Fairphone's wider post-purchase ecosystem and connect to relevant customer touchpoints.
- Align with the needs and expectations of Fairphone's new target audience.
- Be digital.

Out of scope
The design direction does not aim to develop separate strategies for each of the three newly identified subgroups. Since Fairphone is still researching these groups, this thesis focuses on the broader target audience and the needs they are currently assumed to share.

The design direction also does not focus on physical or non-functional promotional items. Therefore, the intervention should not include, offer, or distribute items such as stickers, pens, cheap accessories, printed merchandise, or other physical giveaways that do not directly support sustainability, repair, maintenance, or long-term product use.

Approach summary
The design process was built on the outcomes of the research phase. Based on these findings, four customer Jobs To Be Done were formulated, as explained in Chapter 3. These Jobs To Be Done clarified the main needs of the new target audience and formed the foundation for the next steps in the design process.

First, a value proposition canvas was developed based on the customer interviews. This helped translate the interview insights into possible directions for creating more value for the customer. The canvas was directly connected to the identified Jobs To Be Done and supported the formulation of the How Might We questions.

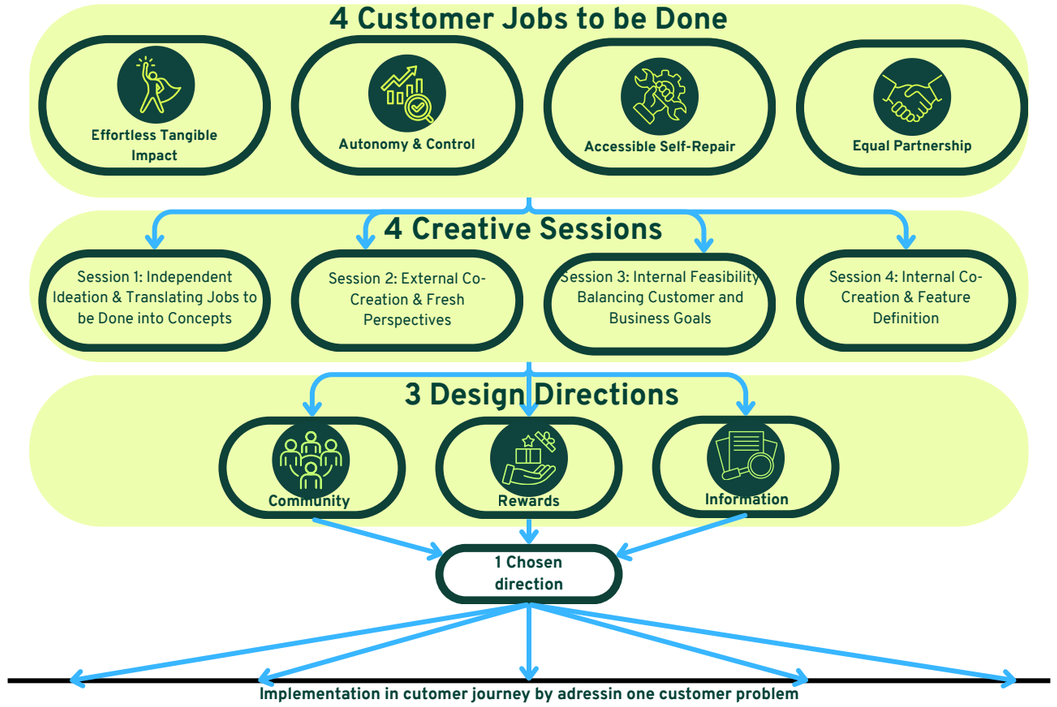


Figure 4.1: JTBDs creating customer loyalty

These How Might We questions were then used during the four creative sessions. During these sessions, ideas were generated for possible ways to improve Fairphone's communication and strengthen the connection with the new target audience.

After the creative sessions, all ideas were collected and clustered. From these clusters, three design directions were identified and further developed.

To select the most suitable direction, the three design directions were evaluated using the list of requirements and a Harris Profile. This choice was then validated through stakeholder research with Fairphone employees and Fairphone customers. Based on this evaluation and validation, one design direction was selected. The JTBDs were translated into customer problems and one of these customer problems was chosen. In line with the chosen design direction an intervention was created to solve the chosen customer problem. This intervention was than validated.

4.3 List of requirements

To ensure that the design direction and its corresponding intervention align with the research findings and meet the needs of Fairphone's new target audience, a list of requirements was developed.

These requirements were deliberately not shared during the creative sessions, allowing participants to explore ideas freely without being restricted by predefined criteria. However, the three design directions that emerged from these sessions were tested against the requirements.

The requirements are ordered based on my interpretation of their importance, informed by insights gained from the customer interviews. However, this ranking is not absolute, and differences in position do not necessarily indicate significant differences in importance.

For each requirement, its origin and relevance are explained to clarify why it should be considered when evaluating the design directions and developing the intervention. Additionally, each requirement is linked to its corresponding Job to Be Done (JTBD), establishing a clear connection between the identified customer needs and the design criteria.

	Requirement	Where does it come from?	Why is it in there?	Related to which JTBD?
1.	The intervention must reduce barriers to repairing and maintaining Fairphone devices.	This comes from the large **"Modularity"** cluster. Customers expressed their enthusiasm about being able to replace individual parts (*"Well, it just has a much smaller impact if I have to replace a part soon instead of an entire phone again"*).	Modularity is an empty promise if the customer doesn't know how to use it after the purchase. Post-purchase care must ensure that all barriers to DIY repair (such as the fear of breaking something or not being able to find the right manual) are completely removed.	**Accessible Self-Repair**
2.	The intervention must help customers understand relevant information clearly, so they can make informed decisions about their Fairphone.	This comes from the interview clusters **"Transparency"**, **"Need for fairphone to continiously actively show support for long-tem use".**	The open communication would fit Fairphones value proposition very well.	**Autonomy & Control**
3.	The intervention must support the autonomy of customers who want to independently use, maintain, and get more value out of their Fairphone.	This comes from the interview clusters **"Autonomy"**, **"Need for fairphone to continiously actively show support for long-tem use".**	From these clusters it became clear that customers need this guidance in in oder to keep their freedom. This is low effort for Fairphone but creates great value for the customer	**Autonomy & Control**

	Requirement	Where does it come from?	Why is it in there?	Related to which JTBD?
4.	The intervention must provide users with a direct and tangible benefit without requiring them to give something in return first.	This came from the analysis of the existing touchpoints.	This is something that currently occurs very regularly. It belongs to the sales driven communication and not to the supporting communication that should be achieved	 **Effortless Tangible Impact**
5.	The intervention must require minimal effort from the user and make key information easy to access or proactively available.	This comes from the title of the cluster **"Need for proactive partnership and communication"**.	This is a crucial prerequisite for the UX. While the target audience wants to know everything about sustainability and software updates, they are simultaneously impatient and don't want to put effort into finding it. Information in the post-purchase phase must never be hidden in long PDFs or complex emails; it needs to be 'snackable'.	 **Equal Partnership**
6.	The intervention must clearly communicate the financial and environmental value of repair compared to replacement.	This comes from the cluster "**Value for money is important**". Customers are doing the math here: it's an expensive phone, but if it lasts 3 times as long, it ultimately pays off ("If your phone suddenly lasts 3 times as long. Then you're basically paying nothing anymore").	The customer is willing to pay a premium, provided the promised lifespan is delivered. Any extra services or contact moments after the purchase must never feel like an 'upsell' or a sneaky way to get more money out of the customer's pocket. Everything must revolve around maximizing the value of their initial investment.	 **Accessible Self-Repair**

	Requirement	Where does it come from?	Why is it in there?	Related to which JTBD?
7.	Users must be transparently informed about known software issues, their status, and available solutions or workarounds.	This comes directly from the cluster **"The need for transparency regarding bugs"**. In the interviews, customers expressed frustration when an update didn't work properly, leaving them to search Google to see if they were the only ones with the issue (*"Then at some point I could also see that I wasn't the only one"*)	Customers understand that technology isn't perfect and that bugs happen. The pain lies in the lack of communication about them. By being proactive about software issues, you remove the user's uncertainty and search time, which fosters a fair and reliable post-purchase relationship.	 **Equal Partnership**
8.	The intervention must make the positive impact of owning and using a Fairphone visible, understandable, and personally relevant.	This is based on the cluster **"Tangible impact"** and the cluster **"Transparency"**. Customers indicated that they want to feel their impact in a tangible way. (*"something very tangible, like planting a forest on behalf of all customers"*).	Sustainability is often abstract. A customer buys a sustainable product to make a positive contribution. By making that impact visual and personal after the purchase, you give the customer continuous confirmation that they made the right, meaningful choice.	 **Effortless Tangible Impact**
9.	The communication must support long-term device use rather than encouraging unnecessary new purchases.	This originates from the clusters "Need for fairphone to continuously actively show support for long-term use" and "Hates switching from phone"	The customer buys this product with the mindset: "I want to use this for the next 6 years." If the company immediately starts communicating about new models or upgrades right after the purchase, the customer won't feel supported in their sustainable mission. All communication should be aimed at celebrating and maintaining the customer's current phone.	 **Equal Partnership**

4.4 Creative sessions

To translate the research and analysis findings into concrete design directions, four creative sessions were conducted. These sessions formed the bridge between understanding the problem space and developing possible communication strategies for Fairphone (see figure 4.2).

As explained in Chapter 2 the research showed that the new target audience is not yet being reached effectively. One important reason is that Fairphone's current messaging does not fully align with the way this customer audience needs to be approached. In addition, Fairphone has recently gone through a rebranding, but this new brand identity has not yet been consistently implemented across all touchpoints. As a result, the communication still feels fragmented and does not always support a clear and coherent customer experience.

From the research, four customer Jobs To Be Done were identified. These Jobs To Be Done represent the deeper needs of the new customer base and show what customers need in order to feel more connected to Fairphone. Based on these needs, the goal was to explore new ways of communicating that could strengthen the relationship between Fairphone and both new and existing customers.

For this reason, the Jobs To Be Done were translated into guiding questions for the creative sessions (as explained in Chapter 3.4). These questions were used to stimulate idea generation and to ensure that the creative process remained grounded in the research findings.

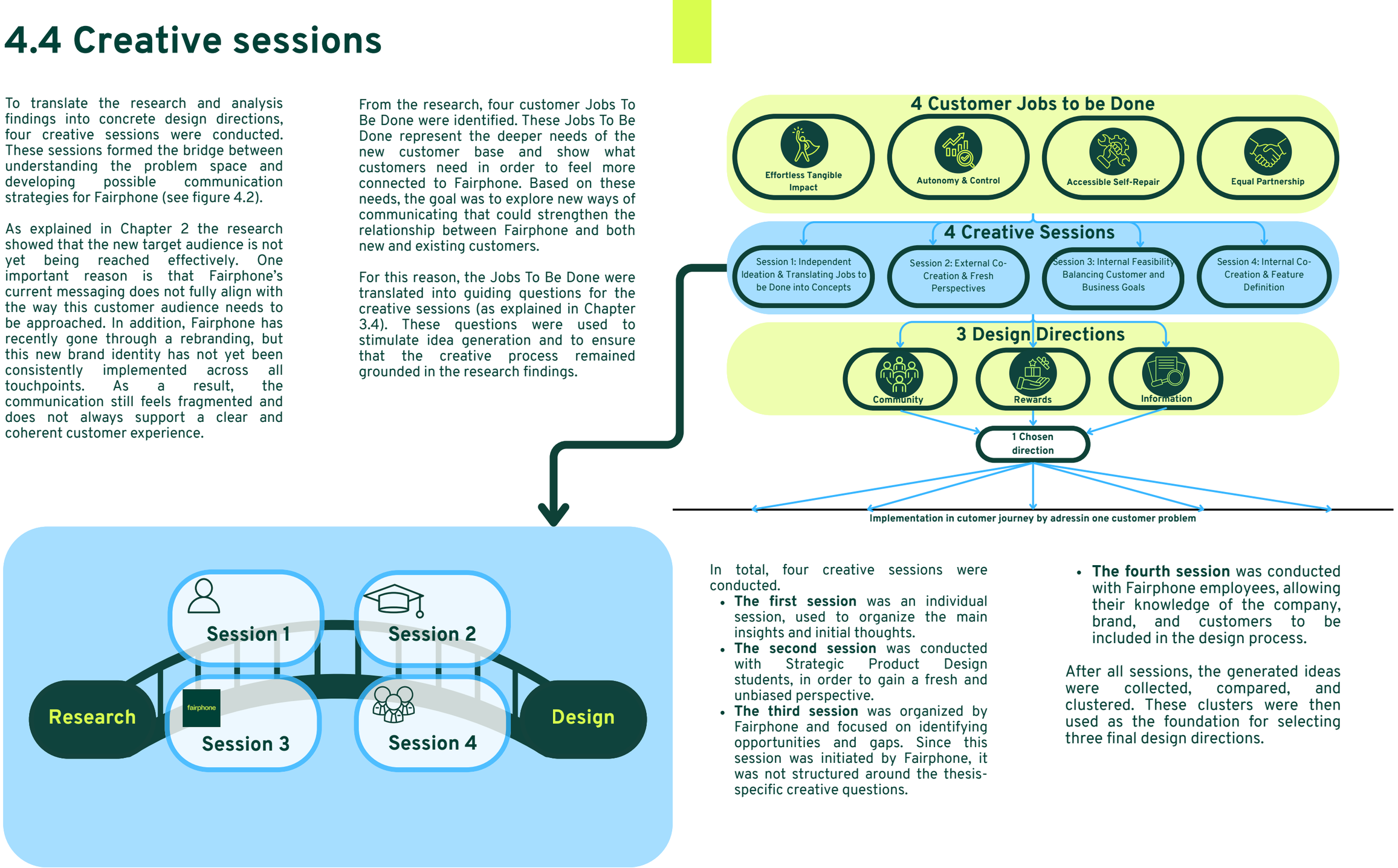


Figure 4.2: Creative sessions building a bridge between het research an the design

In total, four creative sessions were conducted.

- **The first session** was an individual session, used to organize the main insights and initial thoughts.
- **The second session** was conducted with Strategic Product Design students, in order to gain a fresh and unbiased perspective.
- **The third session** was organized by Fairphone and focused on identifying opportunities and gaps. Since this session was initiated by Fairphone, it was not structured around the thesis-specific creative questions.
- **The fourth session** was conducted with Fairphone employees, allowing their knowledge of the company, brand, and customers to be included in the design process.

After all sessions, the generated ideas were collected, compared, and clustered. These clusters were then used as the foundation for selecting three final design directions.

Session 1: Independent Ideation & Translating Jobs to be Done into Concepts

An independent creative brainstorm session (See image on the right) was conducted to explore practical ways to fulfill the four core user Jobs to be Done (JTBDs): Effortless Tangible Impact, Autonomy & Control, Accessible Self-Repair, and Equal Partnership. The primary goal of this session was to get all raw thoughts on paper before the group workshops began. There were no rules or limits during this phase; every idea was captured, as even impossible ideas can be vital stepping stones that lead to realistic, JTBD-driven solutions later on. This session was not just a creative session but more an analysis session where all thought about the project were structured and captured.

To bridge the gap between the JTBDs and concrete ideas, the session utilized five targeted "How Might We" (HMW) questions. These questions, captured on pink notes during the session, helped to find the user's desired outcomes:

- **"HMW link sustainability to something positive?"** Directly supporting the Effortless Tangible Impact JTBD, this question addressed the finding that users often feel like annoying "know-it-alls" when discussing the environment (subchapter 2.5). The brainstorm focused on shifting the narrative toward positive, personal impact, allowing users to feel proud without sustainability feeling heavy or negative.
- **"HMW make sure people feel autonomy?"** Tying into the Autonomy & Control JTBD, this question focused on the users' strong desire for independence. Ideas generated here explored how to ensure the brand validates their freedom to make their own choices, rather than pushing them into standard consumer behaviors.
- **"HMW ensure that customers remain in contact with a company after purchase?"** & **"HMW Building brand love"** These two questions were focussed on the Equal Partnership JTBD. Interviews revealed that after buying the phone, customers rarely interacted with Fairphone again. To build a true partnership and transition the user from an ordinary customer to a valued ally, the session brainstormed ways to maintain an ongoing, meaningful connection that fosters brand love.
- **"HMW get in contact with other people?"** This question supported both the Equal Partnership and Accessible Self-Repair JTBDs by exploring community building. Connecting users with each other can lower the barrier to self-repair (sharing knowledge rather than deciphering forums alone) while reinforcing the feeling of being part of a shared movement against e-waste.



Figure 4.3: HMW clusters creative session 1

The Daily Routine Timeline
To find natural, organic ways to implement the ideas generated by these HMWs and to generate more ideas which fit into the costumers life, a visual timeline of a user's daily routine was mapped out on the board. This daily routine was based on the discription the customers gave about their day to day life during the interviews (Chapter 2.5). The post its marked in green indicate the moments during their day in which customers use their Fairphone.

By analyzing this timeline, ideas (in the blue post its) were generated based on specific daily interactions customers had with their devices. The session successfully matched the core JTBDs with daily moments where users might still be missing support, autonomy, or inspiration from Fairphone.

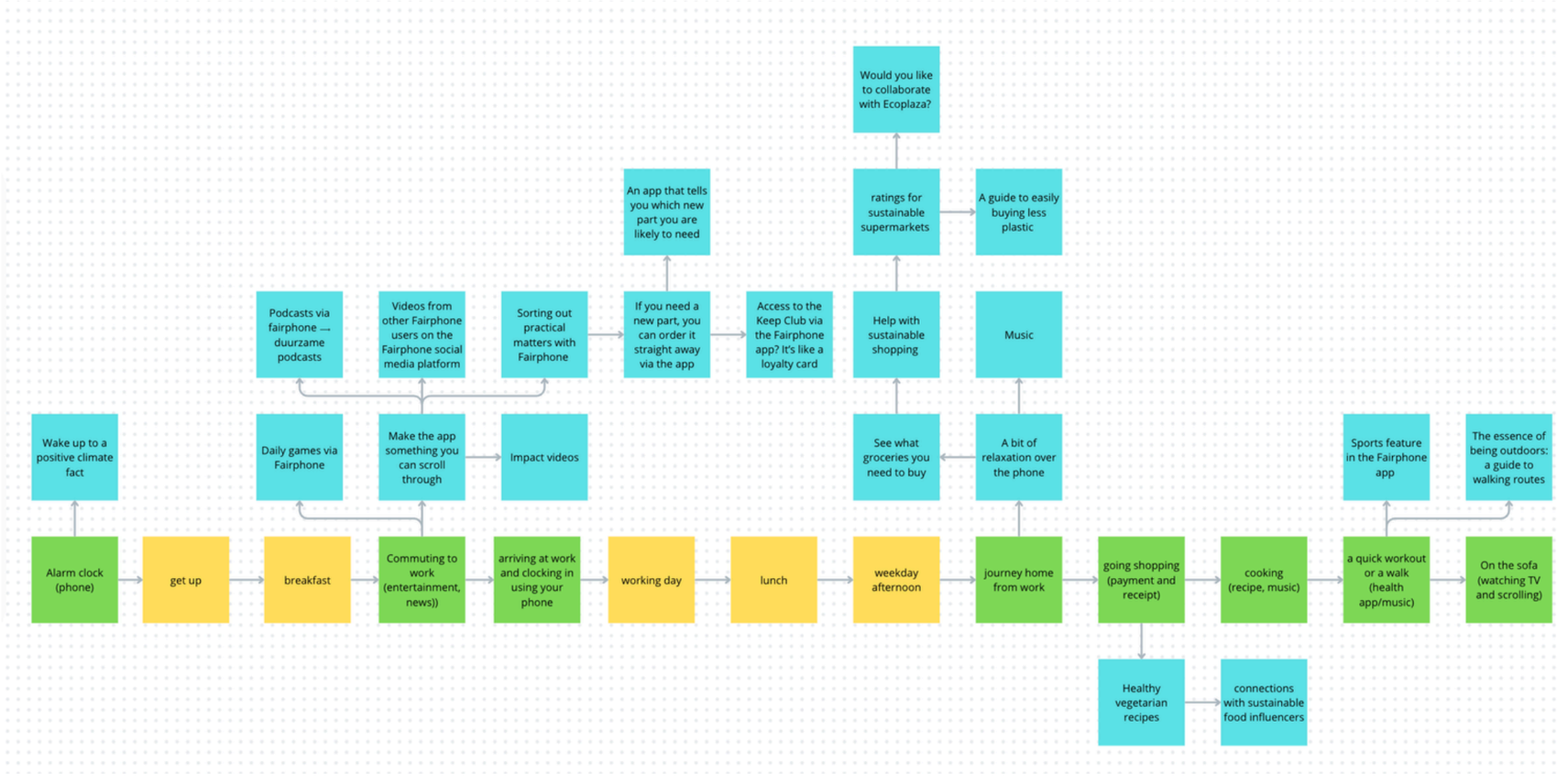


Figure 4.4: Dayly routine time line creative session 1

Key takeways

- Digital solutions are more suitable than physical ones. Although the assignment already focused on a digital solution, physical ideas were also explored during the brainstorm. These proved less suitable, as they are harder to develop within the project timeline and require more effort from users, while the goal is to keep interactions as low-barrier as possible.
- An app fits naturally into customers' daily routines. The daily routine timeline showed that customers interact with their Fairphones throughout the day. An app builds on this existing behaviour, making it a logical way to address post-purchase JTBDs without introducing additional steps or friction.
- An app creates opportunities to address multiple JTBDs. The timeline revealed several opportunities for useful app features. For example, sustainable shopping guides could support Effortless Tangible Impact, while directly ordering the right replacement parts could support Accessible Self-Repair.
- Integrating support into daily interactions strengthens Fairphone's role as a partner. By offering accessible, proactive solutions within customers' existing digital routines, Fairphone can move beyond simply selling a product and become the honest, supportive partner customers are looking for.

Session 2: External Co-Creation & Fresh Perspectives

To get fresh and open-minded ideas for keeping creating a more customer scentered post purchase experience, a brainstorm session was organized with three Strategic Product Design (SPD) students from TU Delft.

These students were chosen on purpose because they knew nothing about Fairphone beforehand. Because they didn't have any strong opinions about the brand, they could look at the challenge from a fresh perspective and come up with lots of creative ideas.

The session started with a short introduction to the brand, the problemstatement, and the four key Jobs to be Done (Effortless Tangible Impact, Autonomy & Control, Accessible Self-Repair, and Equal Partnership). This introduction was kept short on purpose. It gave the students just enough background to understand what the users need, while giving them total freedom to brainstorm.

Exercise 1: Finding the Baseline Through "The Worst Idea Ever"

The brainstorm consisted of three different exercises. The first exercise was called "The worst idea ever." The participants were asked to think of as many ideas as possible that would actively make the problem worse. Afterwards, the exact positive opposites of these bad ideas were written down (See figure 4.5).

Instead of generating concrete new concepts, this exercise established a clear baseline of requirements, perfectly reflecting the need for Autonomy & Control and the foundation of an Equal Partnership. The generated notes emphasized that the company should not be pushy, thereby respecting the user's autonomy. Furthermore, they highlighted the absolute necessity for open, honest communication without greenwashing, and the importance of having a well-functioning website and accessible customer service to facilitate a stress-free experience.



Original post its worst idea ever

Figure 4.5: Ideation post its session 2

Opposites worst idea ever

Exercise 2: Building Upon "How Might We"

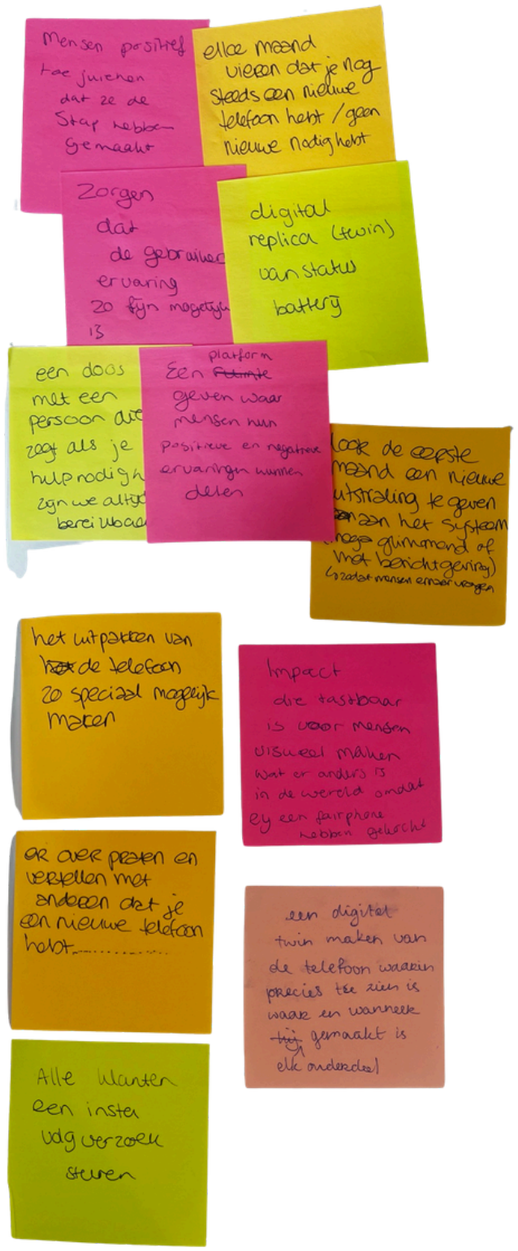
In the second exercise, the core customer JTBDs were translated into actionable two "How Might We" (HMW) questions. This ensured the brainstorm bridged the gap between actual user needs and the company's loyalty goals, allowing the group to openly build upon each other's thoughts:

1. **Derived from Effortless Tangible Impact & Accessible Self-Repair:** "*How might we make the ongoing maintenance and sustainable use of the phone feel effortless and highly rewarding?*"

- When exploring how to make sustainable behavior and repairs attractive rather than feeling like a chore, the students generated ideas heavily focused on gamification and tangible rewards. Concepts included earning credits when repairing a phone, implementing a savings plan to plant trees, offering discounts at sustainable stores, and even giving away free Fairtrade coffee when a user orders a repair part (see picture below).



2. **Derived from Equal Partnership:** "*How might we design a post-purchase experience that makes the customer feel like a truly equal partner?*" To fulfill the need for a genuinely equal relationship, where customers never feel tricked, kept in the dark, or pushed into buying new products, the ideas shifted toward creating absolute transparency and celebrating the user's choices. The students suggested making the unboxing experience special, proactively celebrating monthly milestones when a new phone isn't needed, and creating a "digital twin" of the device to transparently show exactly where and when each part was made. This provides the customer with all the necessary information, while leaving them the full autonomy to make their own informed choices.





Key takeaways

- Honest communication and transparency were identified as important foundations. The first exercise highlighted the importance of respecting customer autonomy, avoiding greenwashing, and providing accessible customer service to create a stress-free post-purchase experience.
- Practical guidance and rewards emerged as ways to encourage sustainable behaviour. To support Effortless Tangible Impact, students generated ideas involving practical tips, gamification, and sustainable rewards. Examples included savings programmes, discounts at sustainable stores, and rewards for repairing a phone.
- Equal Partnership was associated with transparency and celebrating long-term ownership. Ideas focused on treating customers as partners rather than simply encouraging new purchases. Examples included openly sharing information about the product, celebrating milestones in a phone's lifespan, and recognising customers' sustainable choices.
- The session generated a broad range of ideas rather than a single preferred solution. No concepts were selected at this stage. Instead, the generated ideas will be grouped and further developed into concrete concepts during the clustering session described in Chapter 4.4.

Session 3: Internal Feasibility Balancing Customer and Business Goals

The main focus of this research is firmly on the customer's perspective, specifically, finding ways to fulfill their core 'Jobs to be Done' (JTBDs). However, a concept can only truly succeed if it also makes sense for the company. As mentioned in subchapter 2.2 about the scope the concept should be implemented on the short term. An internal strategy session led by Fairphone UX researcher Max Seabroke provided a highly valuable extra insight into the business side of the challenge.

While the customer is looking for seamless support and an equal partnership, the primary business goal is to boost long-term customer engagement and loyalty. Comparing these two sides provided a strong reality check to see where the customer needs and business needs overlap.

The need to natively integrate the existing initiatives to create one central hub, was also identified during this internal session as a long-term "Big Bet" for the company.

The internal team also explored several 'Quick Wins' to reach their business goals, such as offering strong loyalty incentives like a future free battery. While this ideation was important for the company, these specific possible features are not the main focus moving forward in this research. The ideation session did not take the insights of this thesis report into account ant therefor are not in line with this report.

Key Takeaways

- Don't Add, Improve Instead. The most important conclusion from the business perspective is that Fairphone already has many different initiatives and platforms. Introducing completely new concepts or standalone features could lead to further fragmentation rather than improving the customer experience.
- The potential lies in improving and combining existing initiatives. The Fairphone App and Keep Club already exist and show great potential, but currently lack a clear, unified purpose. Optimising these existing platforms could be more effective than building something entirely new.
- The next step is to explore how these platforms can better fulfil the JTBDs. Based on these insights, the upcoming session will focus on how the Fairphone App and Keep Club can be redesigned and better utilised to meet customer needs while supporting Fairphone's business goals.

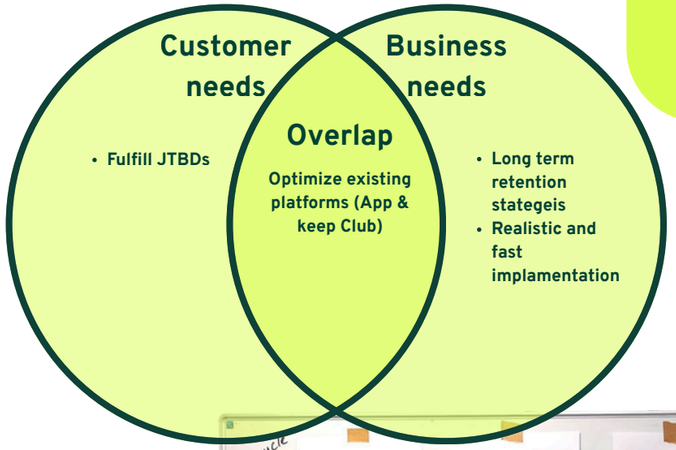


Figure 4.6: Customer needs combined with Fairphones needs





Session 4: Internal Co-Creation & Feature Definition

Following the strategic decision to optimize Fairphone's existing platforms, this next creative session aimed to translate that direction into concrete, actionable features for the App and Keep Club. To ensure these new concepts were both user-centric and technically viable, the session leveraged the internal expertise of eight Fairphone employees, including app developers, UX researchers, and e-commerce specialists.

The core objective was to use the established Jobs to be Done (JTBD) and the Value Proposition Canvas as a direct blueprint for designing post-purchase experiences. The goal was to create solutions that solve real customer frustrations, such as feeling treated as "just a consumer," while amplifying their motivations, like the pride of extending their device's lifespan.

To bridge these user needs with actionable product ideas, the session kicked off with a strategic deep-dive into the four core JTBDs, ensuring everyone had a unified, empathetic understanding of the user. Afterwards, the participants were split into two groups of four and were assigned targeted "How Might We" (HMW) questions.

To generate a high volume of ideas quickly, the "Crazy 8's" brainstorming method was used, sketching eight ideas in eight minutes. This fast-paced exercise successfully produced 32 unique ideas per group. In the final phase, participants formed pairs to select their strongest ideas, merging and developing them into detailed, viable concepts ready for further evaluation.

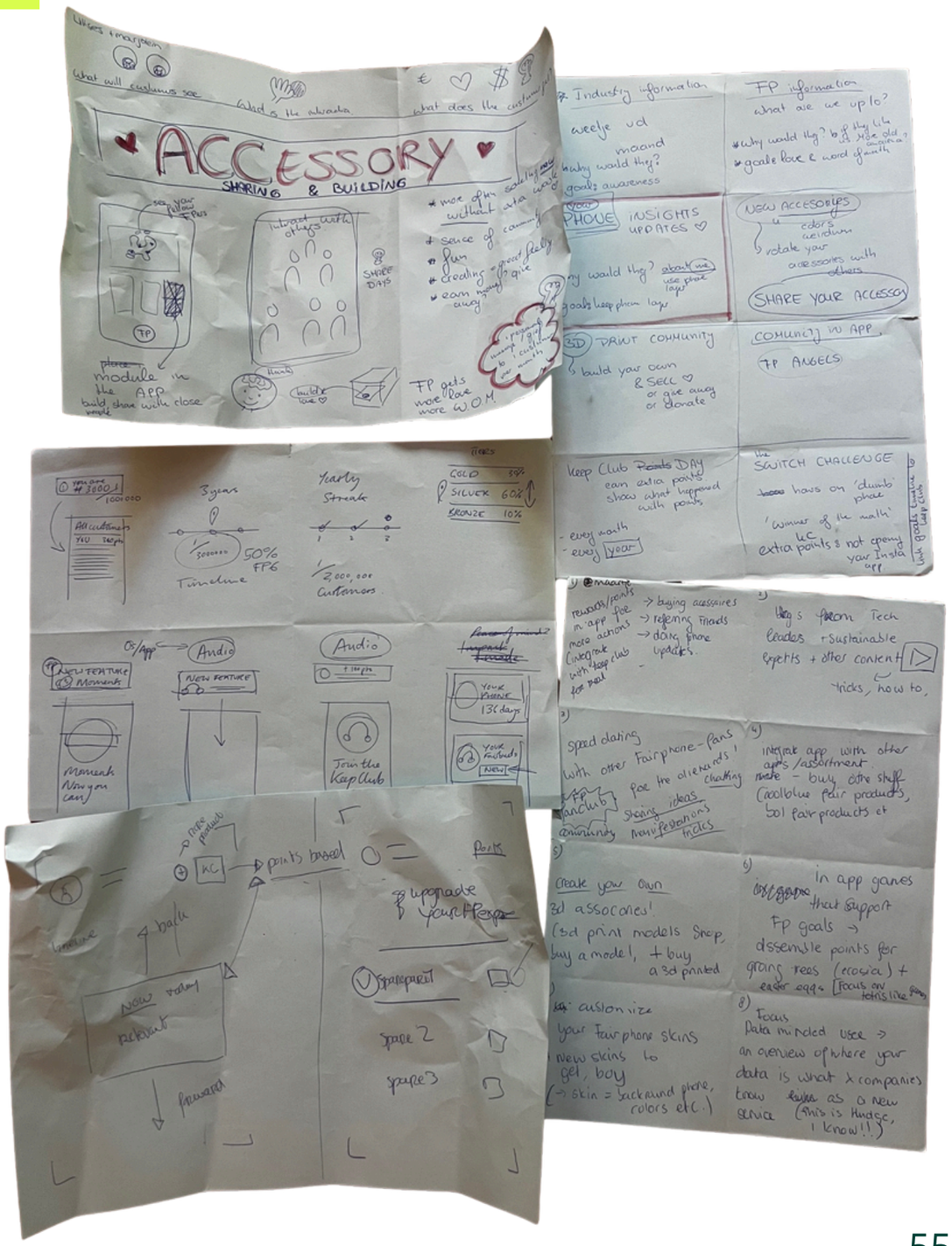






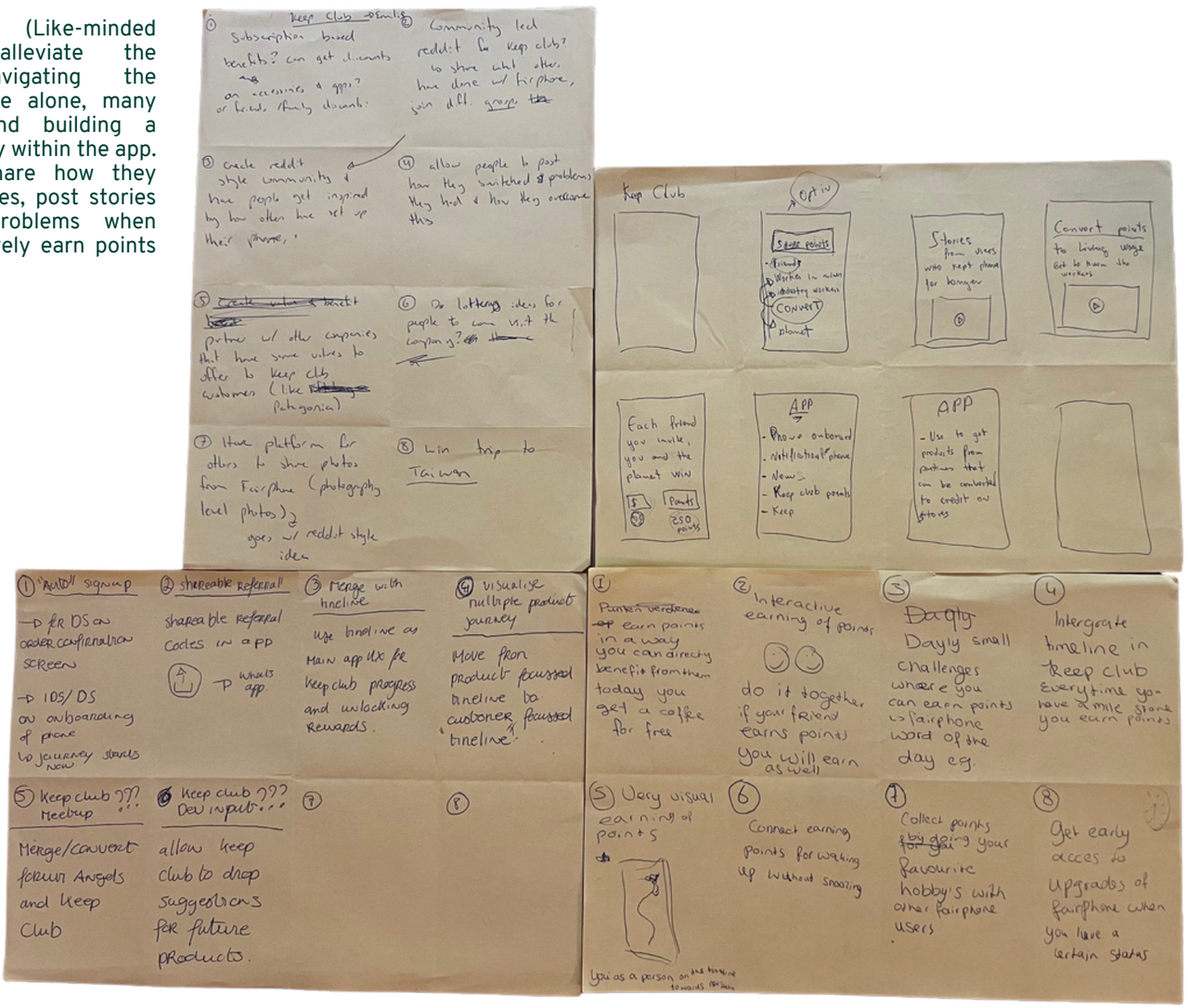
Group 1: Empowering the App Experience
The first group focused on the app itself. To address the user's core need for Autonomy & Control, while also ensuring the app is actually fun and engaging, they tackled the following question:
“How might we design a post-purchase app experience that empowers users with Autonomy & Control over their device, while keeping the experience genuinely rewarding and engaging?”
Their ideas in the picture on the right focused on a balance between valuable transparency, community support, and gamification:

- Valuable Insights (Autonomy & Control): To give users full control and transparency over their tech, ideas included providing data-minded users with an overview of what information companies know about them, and offering direct insight updates on how to keep their specific phone alive longer.
- Community Support (Accessible Self-Repair & Equal Partnership): To treat users as true allies and support them in keeping their phones functional, the group suggested linking users directly to "Fairphone angels" for accessible peer-to-peer repair help and letting them vote on favorite new accessories.
- Engagement & Customization (Making sustainability fun): To prevent the app from feeling too heavy or purely functional, participants suggested engaging mechanics. This included a "Switch challenge" (earning points for disconnecting from social media), rewarding users for maintaining "yearly streaks" of device usage, and allowing them to customize the app with movable skins.



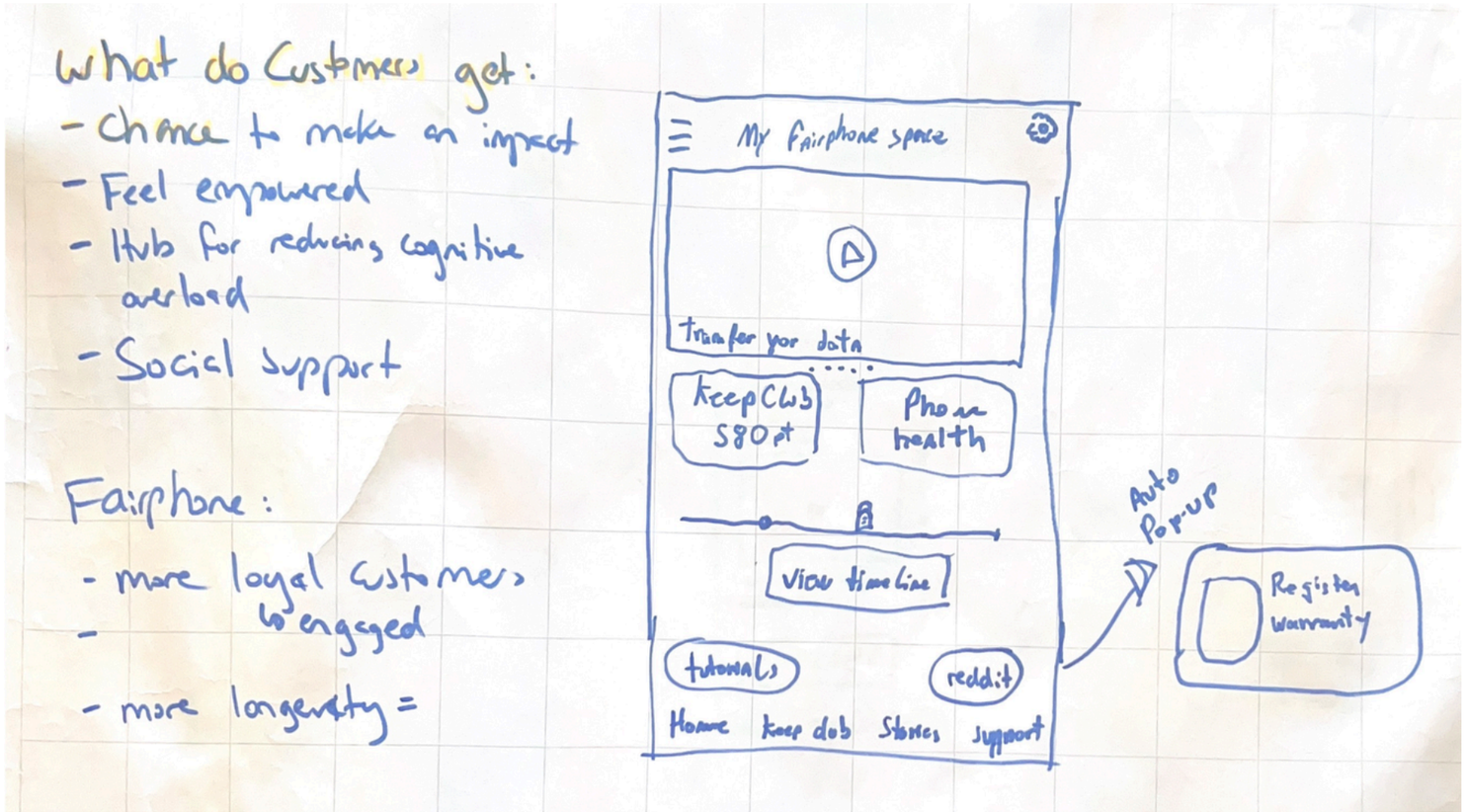
Group 2: Irresistible Keep Club Benefits
The second group focused on the loyalty program. To address the user's desire for Effortless Tangible Impact and the gain of feeling connected to like-minded users, they tackled the following question:
"How might we structure the Keep Club so that it translates the desire for Effortless Tangible Impact and community connection into irresistible, tangible post-purchase benefits?"
Their ideas (shown in the picture on the right) emphasized visual progress, high-impact rewards, and social sharing:

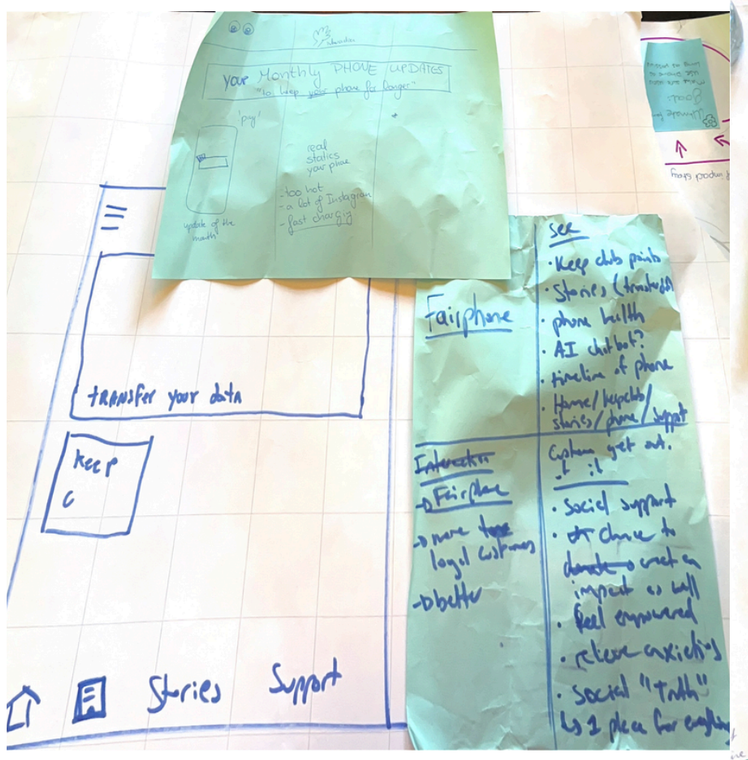
- Visual Timelines (Seeing Direct Positive Impact): A strong theme was, merging Keep Club points with a highly visual user timeline. Users could track their personal product journey and earn points every time they hit a milestone, directly linking their long-term usage to tangible progress.
- Meaningful Rewards (Effortless Tangible Impact): The group brainstormed benefits that make impact feel easy and rewarding. This ranged from high-impact rewards, like converting points to support a living wage for factory workers, to immediate perks like getting a free coffee, or even a lottery to win a trip to the Taiwan office.
- Social Connection (Like-minded Community): To alleviate the frustration of navigating the sustainable tech space alone, many ideas revolved around building a Reddit-style community within the app. Here, users could share how they customized their phones, post stories about overcoming problems when switching, or interactively earn points together with friends.

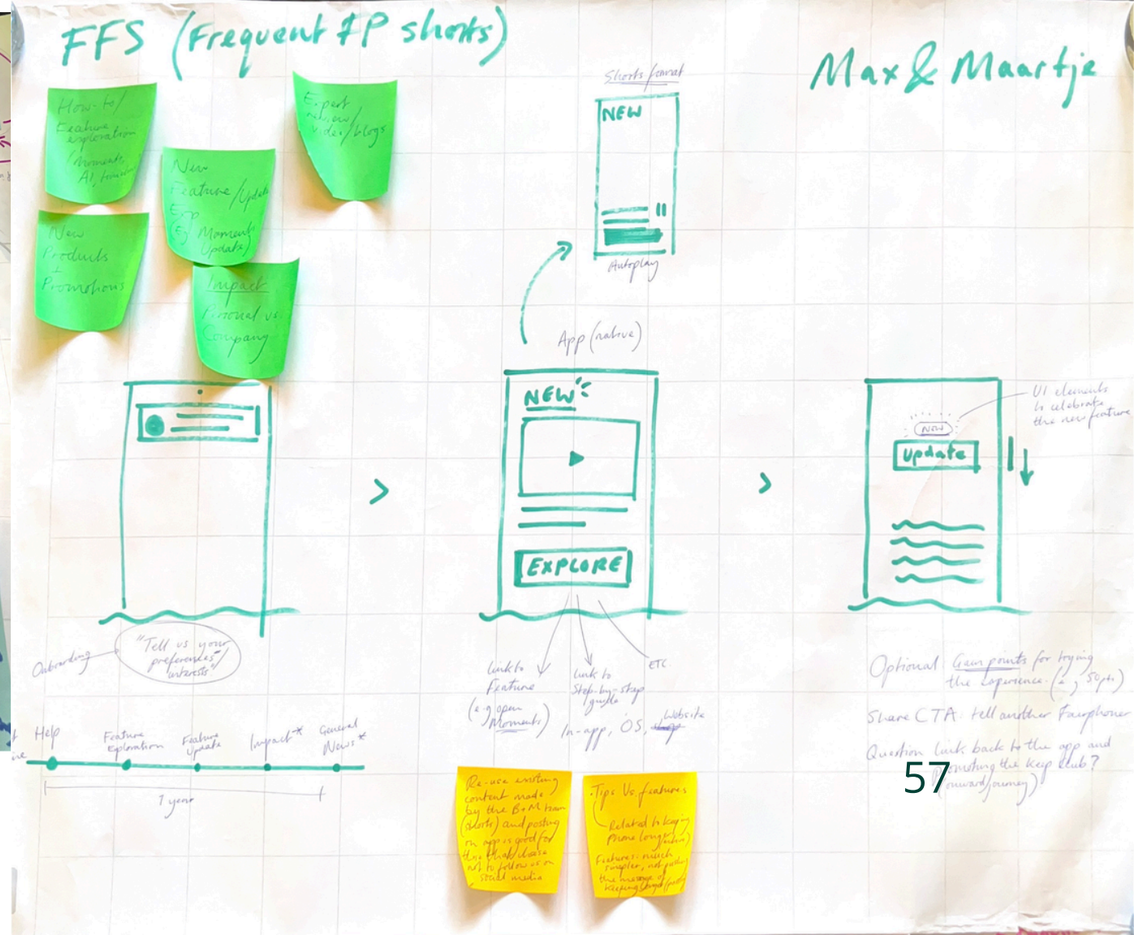


Key insights

Based on the Crazy 8s exercise, the best ideas were selected and turned into quick concepts, which can be seen in the images on this page. Instead of picking a final direction right away, these new concepts will be combined with all the ideas generated in the previous creative sessions. Everything will be gathered and used in the upcoming clustering session in Chapter 4.4. By grouping all these different ideas together, the strongest elements can be combined to start building the final, concrete design directions.





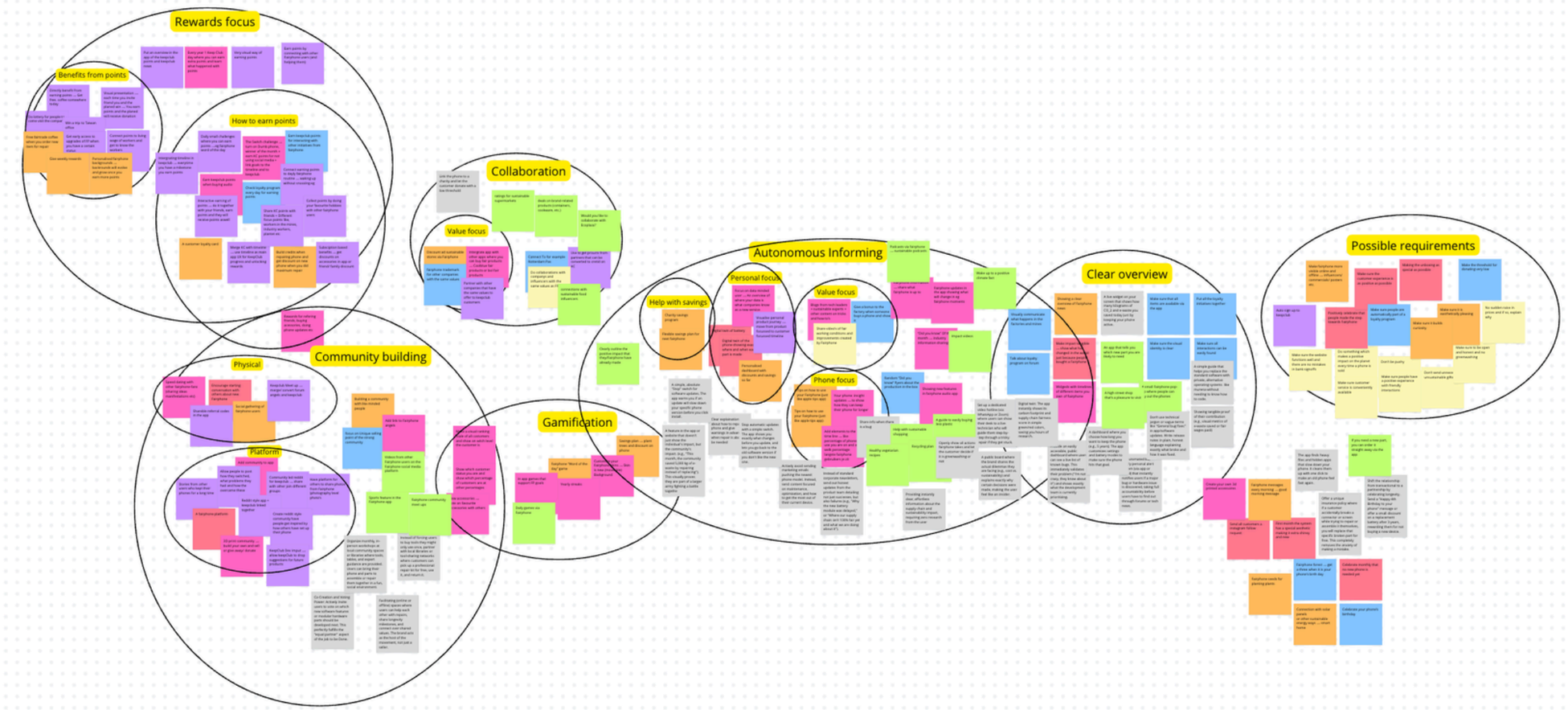


4.5 Ideation clustering

As explained in Chapter 4.3, during the ideation phase, three creative sessions were conducted especially for this thesis report (one individual and two group sessions), alongside the development of the Value Proposition Canvas. All ideas generated from these sessions, combined with the Pain Relievers and Gain Creators from the canvas, were clustered within this clustering session.

To allow for clear and objective comparison, every idea was stripped down to its absolute essence: a concise description of just one or two sentences (see readable overview in appendix D). These thematic clusters then served as the starting point for developing design direcitons. In Chapter 4.5 the development of these design direcitons will be explained.



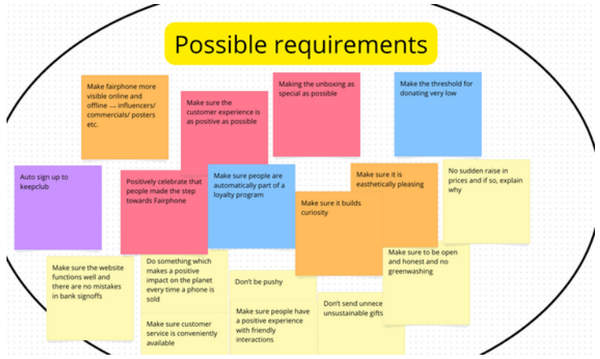


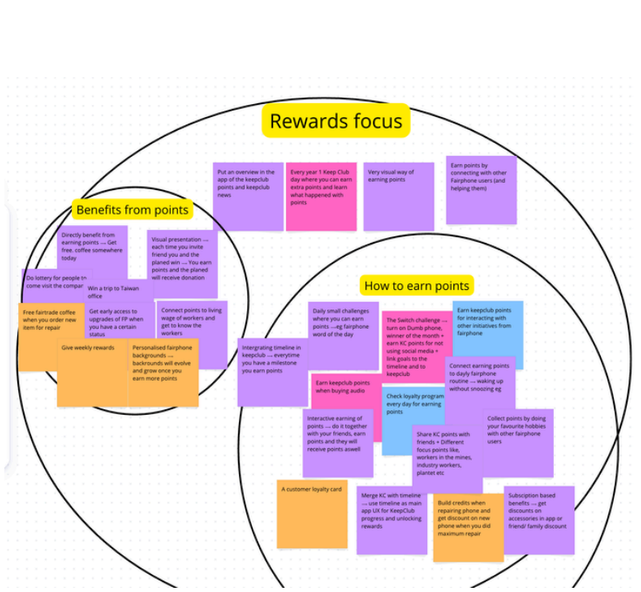
After methodically grouping all the synthesized ideas, it became clear that the vast majority naturally fell into three dominant clusters. While not initially intended as predefined strategic pillars, these three categories emerged organically as the main focal points for addressing the core Jobs to be Done (JTBD):

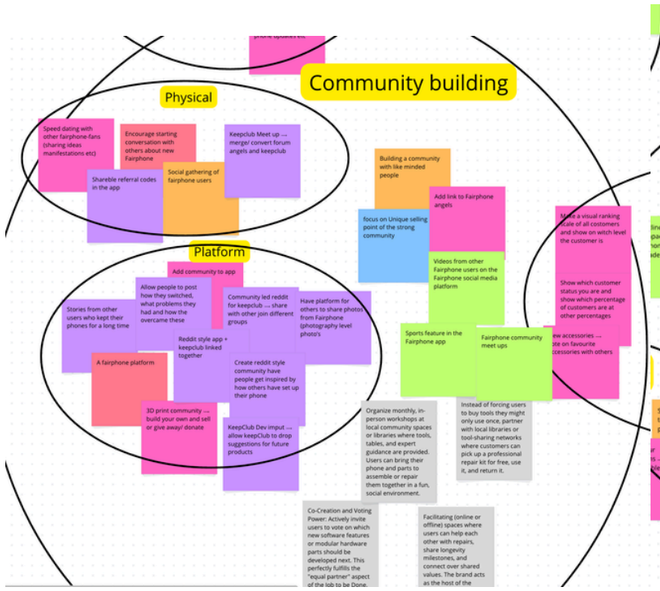
- **Autonomous informing:** A significant portion of the ideas focused on providing proactive insights and transparent data overviews. These ideas align directly with the need for **Autonomy & Control** by giving users the knowledge to dictate their device's lifespan on their own terms. they also support **Accessible Self-Repair** by offering the bite-sized, stress-free guidance needed to fix devices independently.
- **Community building:** Another major cluster revolved around connecting users and facilitating collaboration. These ideas directly answers the **Equal Partnership** JTBD by shifting the dynamic from a traditional buyer-seller relationship into an empowered, shared movement against e-waste.
- **Rewards focus:** A large volume of ideas centered on rewarding sustainable choices through points, benefits, and celebrating milestones. These ideas address the **Effortless Tangible Impact** JTBD by ensuring that sustainable actions are immediately rewarding, making the experience feel highly positive rather than heavy or complex.

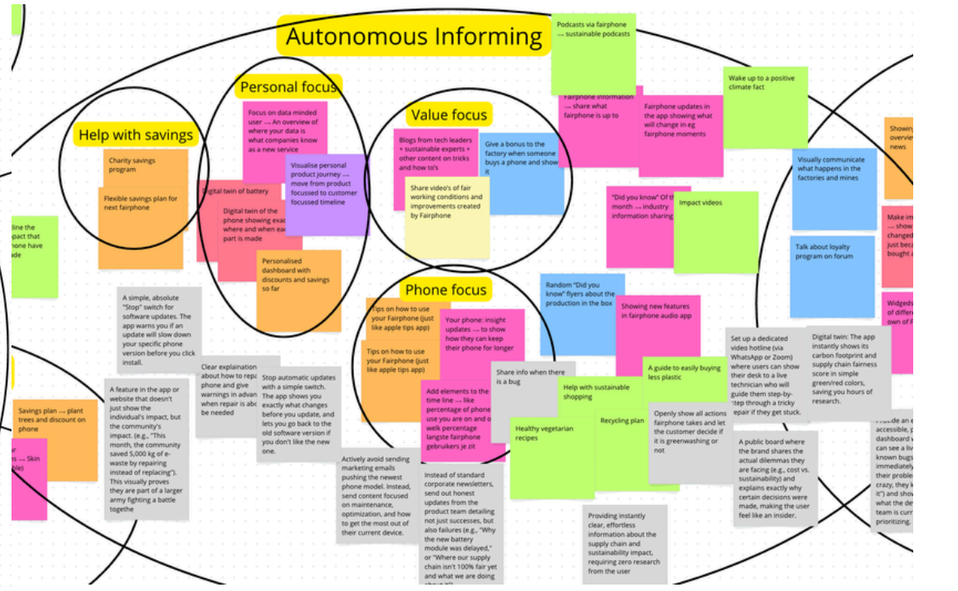
Not all clusters translated directly into active features; some formed a non-negotiable baseline. Ideas grouped under Possible requirements, such as eliminating greenwashing, maintaining a positive tone, and ensuring seamless usability, became the core design principles. These ensure that every developed concept fundamentally protects user trust and delivers a friction-free experience.

Ultimately, by building the concept sketches around these three largest ideation clusters and adhering to strict design principles, it is guaranteed that the final solutions remain deeply rooted in solving the overarching customer needs.









4.6 The three design directions

As explained in 4.4, the creative sessions generated a large number of ideas that were clustered into recurring themes, including community, collaboration, rewards, information, gamification and customer value.

The analysis in Chapter 2 showed that Fairphone needs to approach its customers differently, particularly as the company has expanded to a new target audience. The current communication strategy no longer fully matches the needs and expectations of this broader customer base.

Although the creative sessions resulted in several clusters, three themes stood out most clearly: Autonomous Informing, Community Building and Rewards Focus. These themes were selected for further development because many ideas converged around them, and because they directly addressed the key findings from the analysis and the customer jobs-to-be-done.

Autonomous Informing responds to the need for autonomy, control and clearer insight into the device. Community Building responds to the need for accessible support, shared knowledge and equal partnership. Rewards Focus responds to the need for tangible value and visible personal impact. Together, these directions offer three distinct ways to approach the customer and design the main touchpoints within the Fairphone ecosystem.

Across all three directions, the app is positioned as the central touchpoint. As the digital connection between Fairphone and its customers, it brings together information, support, community interaction and customer engagement. However, the chosen design direction should not remain limited to the app, but should be integrated across the broader Fairphone communication ecosystem.

On pages 61 til 69 these initial design directions that developed form the creative sessions are developed into complete design derections including systems and one pagers.

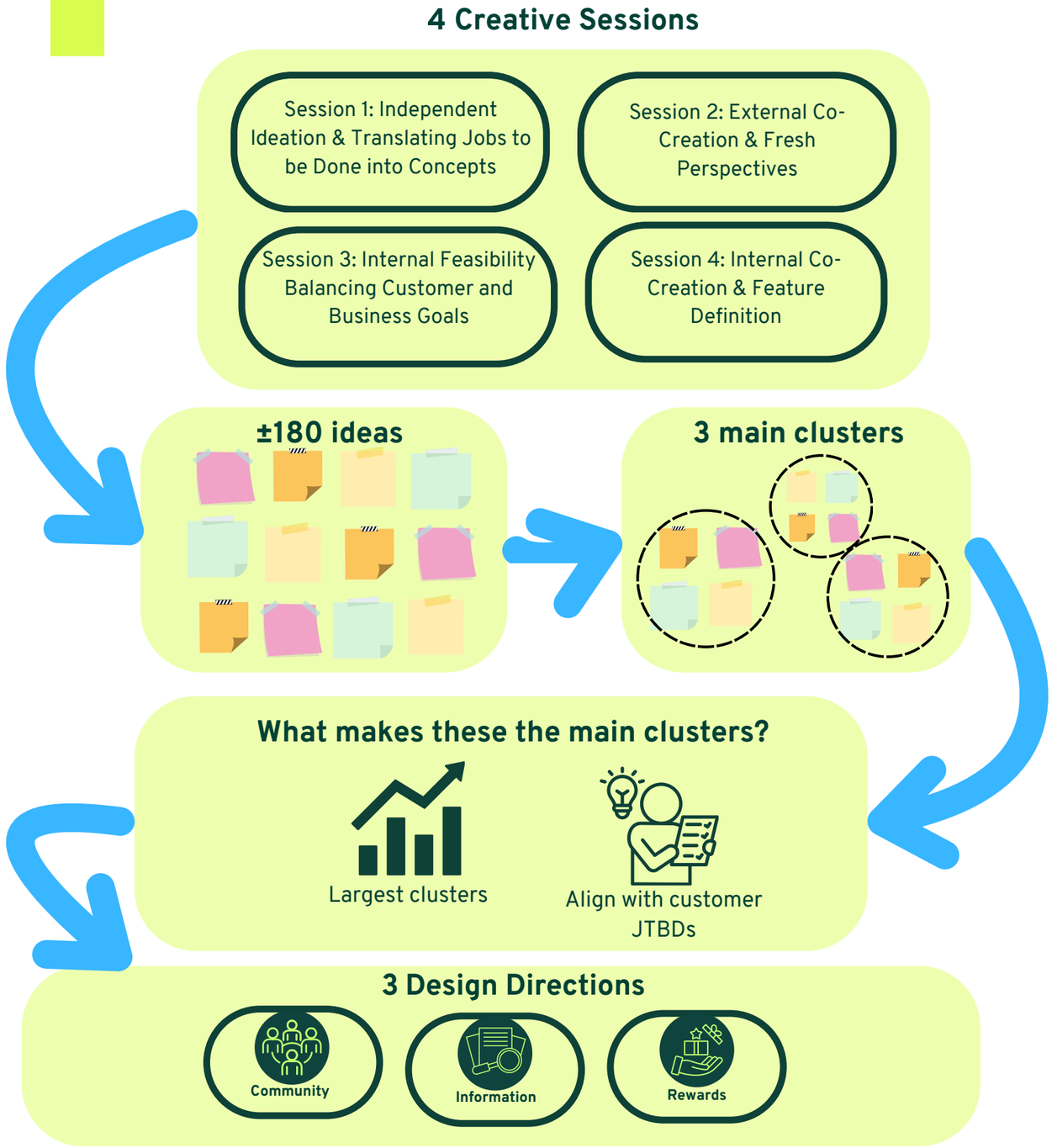
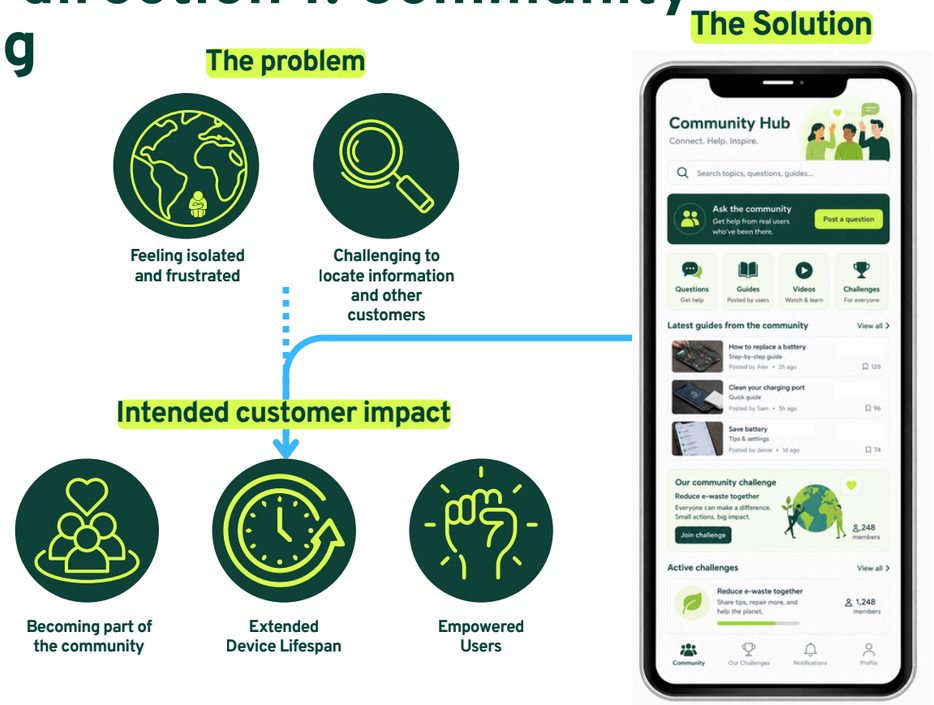


Figure 4.7: How the design directions were developed

Design direction 1: Community building



Learn from the Fairphone community and make an impact together

The problem: Isolated Troubleshooting

Customers feel isolated and frustrated because they have to independently search for scattered information and often struggle to even locate the forums needed to connect with others for help.

The Solution: An Interactive Community Hub

A Community Hub that brings users together through shared knowledge, guided support, challenges, and collaborative problem-solving.

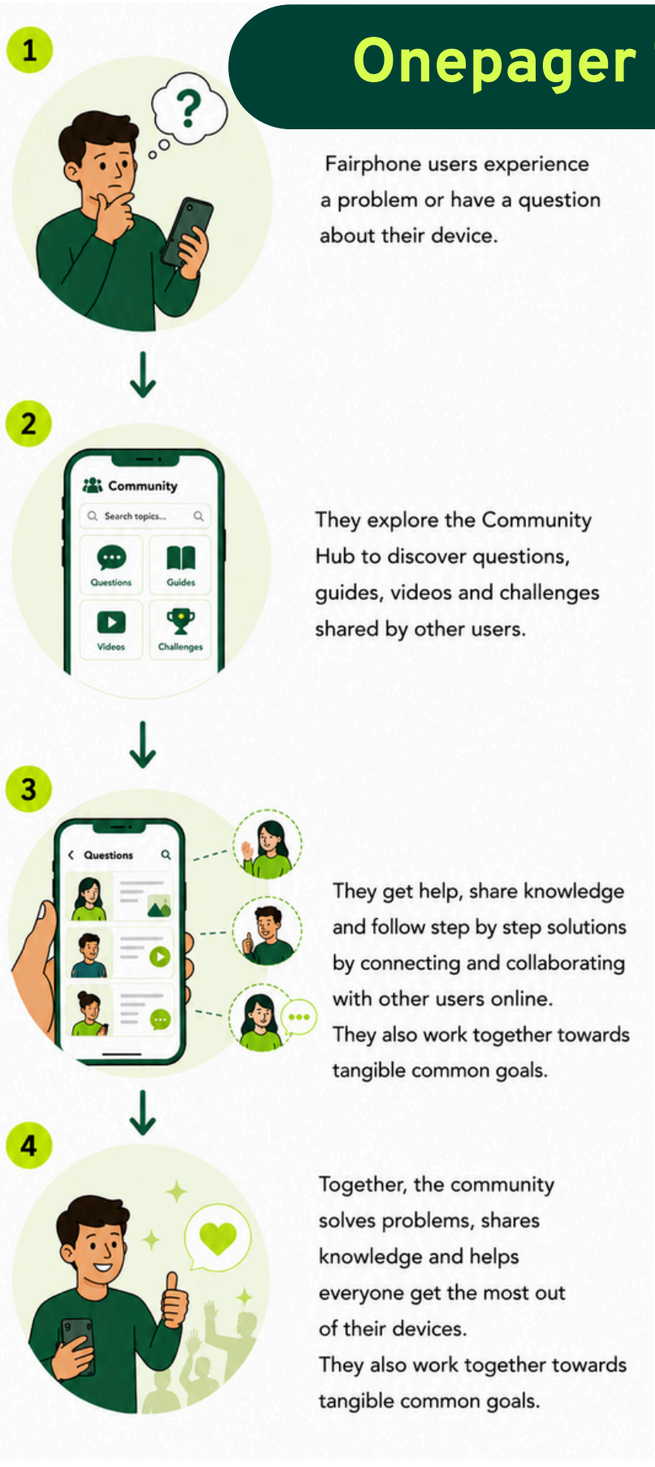
What is in it for users?

Users receive faster, easier, and more rewarding support while becoming part of a community that helps each other solve problems and achieve shared sustainability goals.

What is in it for Fairphone?

A stronger and more engaged community that reduces support pressure, extends product lifespans, and strengthens Fairphone's sustainability mission.

Onepager 1



Design system 1

Communicate to customer

Instagram

Best community video of the week shared on instagram

Mail

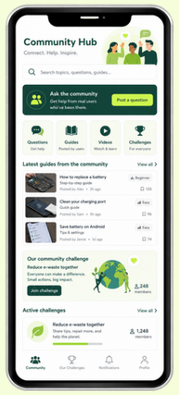
Email when collective challenge is completed

Actively participate in the community

Receive valuable information form the community

App

Main touchpoint



Community

Share photo's van video's of your Fairphone experience and check how friends are using their Fairphone

Collective challenges

Join shared challenges and work towards common goals

Guides

Create and explore customer repair guides

Posting questions

Ask specific questions, get anwers and share solutions

Receive valuable information form the community

Actively participate in the community

Follows the information streams

Monitor the forum

Design fun challeges that fit the community

Adjust the app based on customer needs

Community

Post photos and video's, answer questions and work towards common goals

Community manager

Moderates community, and supports users

Brand and marketing team

Make sure the platform fits to the new target audience

Product team

Monitors app performance and manages whole system

Provide insights on customers

Exchange information about the platform

- Connection
- Action
- Information
- Stakeholders
- Touchpoints
- App components

Design direction 1: Community building

Community Building is a design direction that helps Fairphone users feel supported after buying their phone by connecting them to other users, in order to gain from shared knowledge, and collective problem-solving. Instead of leaving customers to search for scattered information by themselves, the concept brings questions, guides, videos, challenges, and community support together in one clear environment. The goal is to make troubleshooting feel less isolated and to turn the post-purchase experience into something more social, helpful, and motivating. The direction is an addition to the existing Fairphone community forum were this old forum is just an answer-question space the new community hub is really a central space for collaboration.

The core problem behind this direction is that users can feel frustrated when they experience an issue with their device and do not immediately know where to find help. Information is often spread across different platforms, forums, manuals, and support pages. This makes it harder for users to solve problems independently and can create uncertainty about whether they are using or maintaining their Fairphone in the right way. At the same time, users may miss the feeling that they are part of a larger movement, even though Fairphone's mission is strongly connected to collective impact.

The solution is an interactive Community Hub within the Fairphone app. This hub becomes the main touchpoint where users can ask questions, find repair guides, watch helpful videos, join collective challenges, and learn from the experiences of other Fairphone users. The platform is not only focused on solving technical problems, but also on making users feel part of an active community that shares knowledge and works towards common sustainability goals.

This design direction works through an ecosystem of connected users, app components, and Fairphone teams. Users can post questions, answer each other, share photos and videos of their Fairphone experience, and participate in challenges. The community manager supports the platform by moderating conversations and helping users when needed. The brand and marketing team can use the hub to create challenges that fit the community, while the product team can monitor recurring needs and use customer insights to improve the app and future services.

For the user, the intended impact is a stronger feeling of autonomy, trust, and belonging. Users receive faster and more understandable help, but they also learn from others and become more confident in maintaining their phone. By seeing how other people solve problems, repair their devices, or participate in sustainability challenges, users are encouraged to keep using their Fairphone for longer and to feel more connected to the brand's mission.

For Fairphone, the direction creates a stronger and more engaged customer relationship. A well-functioning community can reduce pressure on customer support because users help each other with common questions. It can also increase product lifespan by making repair, maintenance, and responsible use more accessible. At the same time, the platform gives Fairphone valuable insights into customer needs, recurring problems, and opportunities for improvement.

Community Building turns the Fairphone app into a place where users do not only receive information, but also connect, contribute, and learn from each other. The phone becomes part of a shared community experience, where support is more accessible, users feel less alone, and Fairphone's sustainability mission becomes something customers can actively participate in.

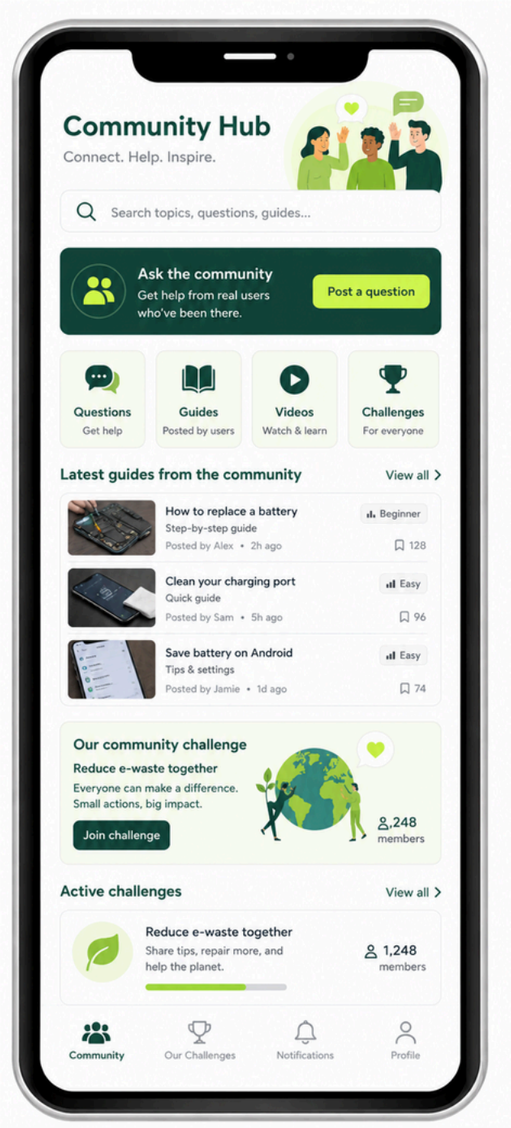
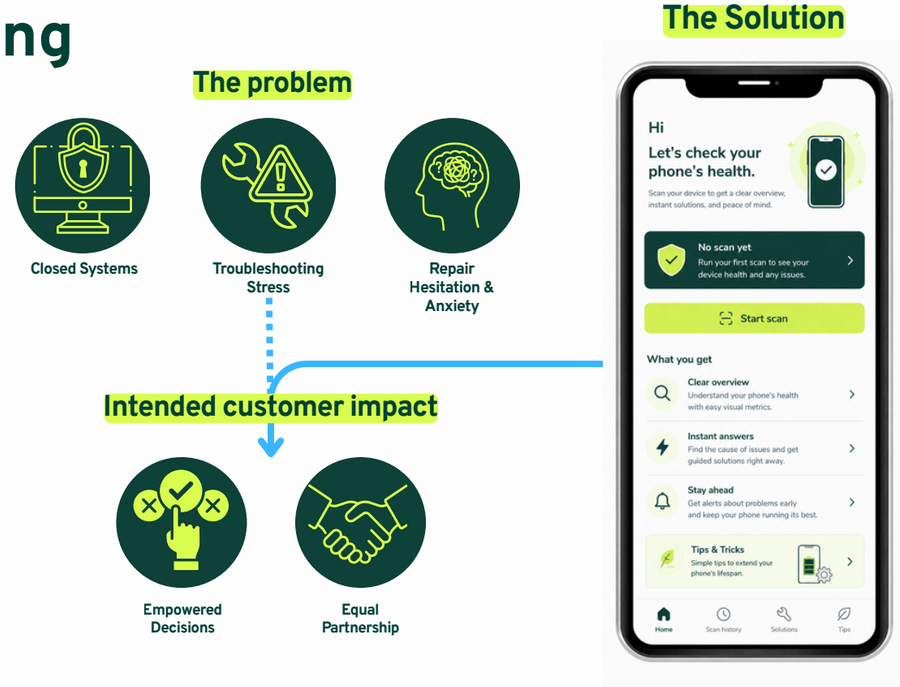


Figure 4.8: Mockup of what an intervention for Community building could look like

Design direction 2: Autonomous informing



Learn everything about your Fairphone and take control with confidence.

The problem: Device Transparency Gap

Users feel uncertain about what is happening inside their phone, turning technical issues into stressful experiences. Not knowing where they stand creates anxiety about the lifespan of their device.

The Solution: Full Transparency

A transparent diagnostic tool that explains device health, detects issues, and guides users toward clear next steps.

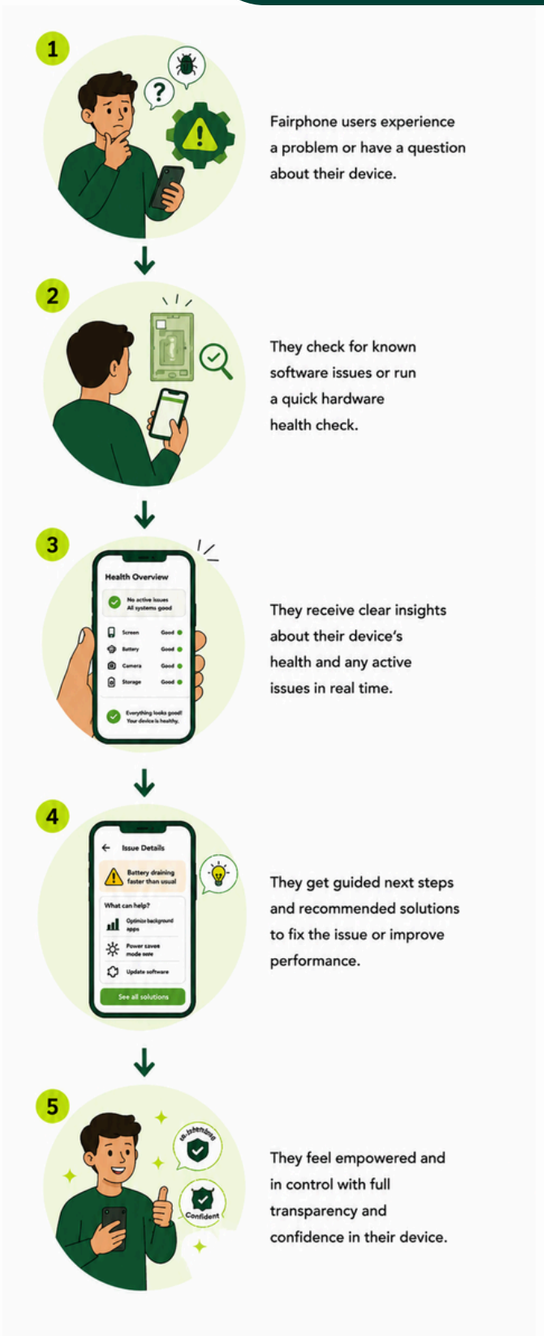
What is in it for users?

Users gain confidence, control, and clarity because they can understand, maintain, and repair their phone more easily.

What is in it for Fairphone?

Fairphone builds trust, reduces unnecessary support pressure, and encourages longer device use and repair.

Onepager 2



Design system 2

Communicate to customer

Communicate to customer

Instagram

Share tips and tricks on social media

Mail

Send device status updates to customer

Fairphone

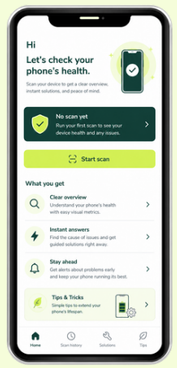
The product

Information about the device



App

Main touchpoint



Tips and tricks



General practical tips and tricks to

Known issues



Fairphone communicates known bugs

Device status



Shows personal device status

Health scan



Check current phone health

Manage and design other touch points

Receive customer information

Analyse app

Adjust the app based on use and customer needs

Customer research

Action

Information

Stakeholders

Touchpoints

App components

Brand and creative team



Create and communicate tips and tricks that resonate with the target audience

Customer support



In concact with customers and reachable via the app

Product team



Monitors app performance and manages whole system

Software engineering team



Builds and improves the app and communicates known software issues to the customer via the app

Customer support communication

Communicate brand guide lines and customer needs

Communicate software issues

Design direction 2: Autonomous informing

Autonomous Informing is a design direction that helps Fairphone users understand what is happening inside their device before problems become stressful, unclear, or expensive. Instead of expecting users to search for answers themselves, the phone actively explains its own condition, communicates known issues, and guides users toward clear next steps. The goal is to turn technical uncertainty into confidence, control, and trust.

The core problem behind this direction is the Device Transparency Gap. Users value Fairphone because their products are repairable, ethical, and designed to last, but they often do not have enough insight into information. When a phone becomes slower, a screen does not respond or the battery performs differently users may not know whether the issue is software- or hardware-related. This causes stess as users are not sure if their phone is malfunctioning or if everyone has this problem, and they also feel uncertain about the future because when it is a general problem they don't know if Fairphone is working on solving it or not

The solution is an more open way of communication which supports customers autonomy. The main touchpoint is a transparent diagnostic experience built into the Fairphone app. Users can check their phone health, understand known issues, receive maintenance advice, and get personal recommendations to improve performance or extend the lifespan of their phone. Instead of presenting technical data in a complex way, the system translates device information into simple, understandable guidance.

This design direction works through an ecosystem of connected touchpoints and teams. The app collects and communicates relevant device information to the user, while the product team monitors app performance and user needs. The software engineering team improves the app and shares known software issues, while customer support receives clearer information from users and can respond more efficiently. The brand and creative team translates this information into accessible communication through the app, email, and social media. In this way, Fairphone does not only provide repairable hardware, but also the knowledge and guidance users need to actually use that repairability with confidence.

For the user, the intended impact is empowered decision-making. Users no longer have to guess what is wrong with their phone or search through unclear information. They can understand whether an issue needs immediate action, a simple setting change, a software update, a spare part, or no action at all. This creates a stronger feeling of autonomy and makes phone maintenance feel manageable rather than intimidating.

For Fairphone, the direction creates a more efficient and trustworthy relationship with customers. Clearer device communication can reduce unnecessary support requests, improve the timing of repairs, encourage the sale of relevant spare parts, and strengthen the brand promise of long-lasting technology. It also allows Fairphone to use customer insights and app data to improve future communication, support, and product development.

Autonomous Informing makes Fairphone's sustainability promise more practical and personal. It helps users learn about their device, take control of its lifespan, and feel supported without becoming dependent. The phone does not remain a closed technical system, but becomes a transparent product that communicates clearly, guides action, and builds long-term trust between Fairphone and its use.

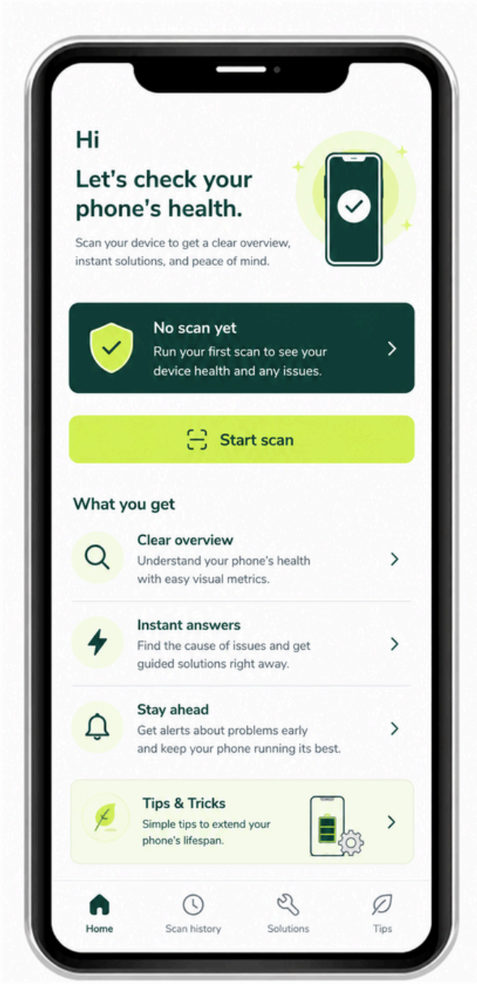
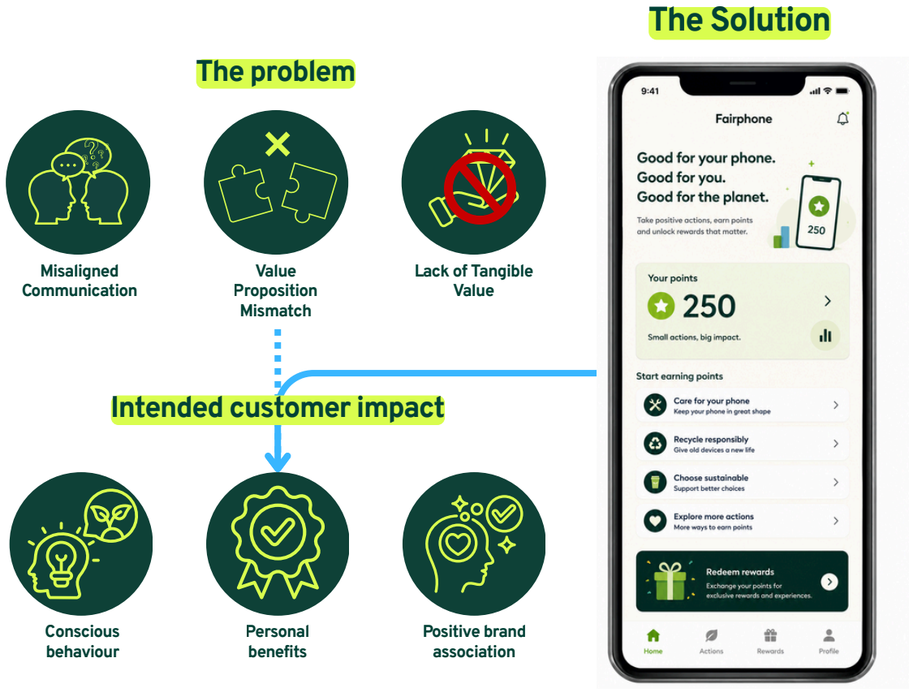


Figure 4.9: Mockup of what an intervention for Autonomous informing could look like

Design direction 3: Rewards focus



Turn sustainable Fairphone actions into tangible rewards and visible personal impact.

The problem: Messaging Disconnect

While pre-purchase messaging has evolved, Fairphone's post-purchase communication fails to resonate with a new, practical audience that expects immediate, tangible personal benefits

The Solution: A Value-Driven Reward System

A reward system that connects sustainable actions to meaningful personal benefits and tangible rewards.

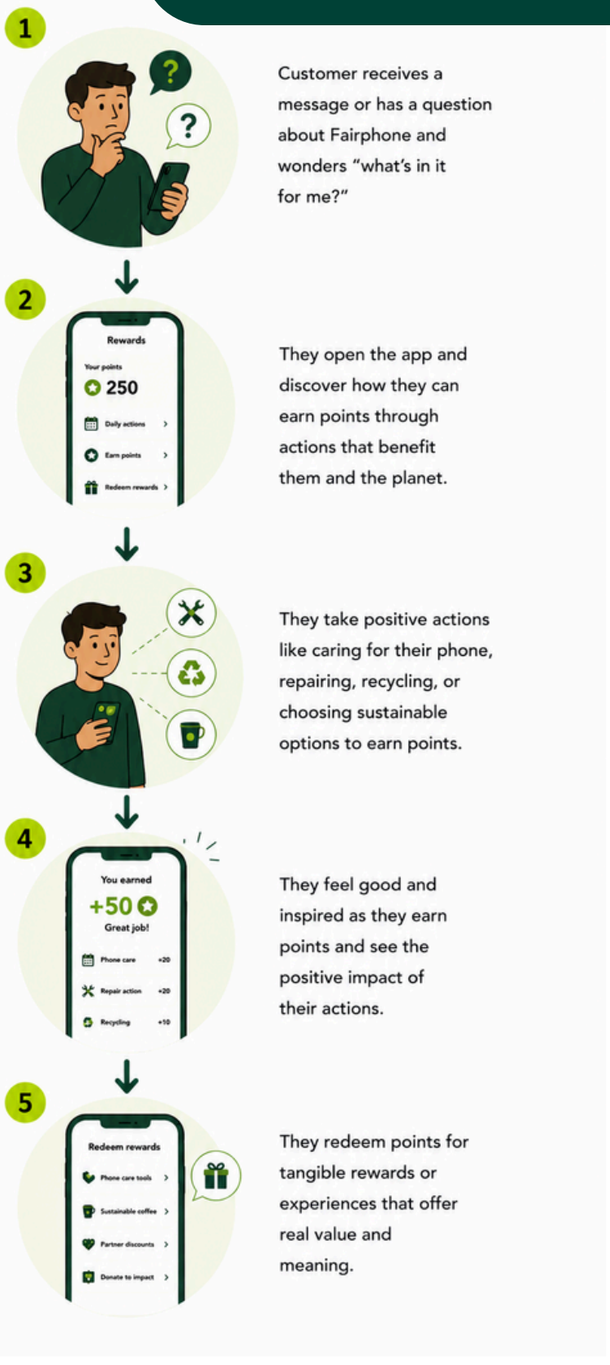
What is in it for users?

Users receive immediate value, recognition, and rewards for actions that benefit both themselves and the planet.

What is in it for Fairphone?

Fairphone increases user engagement, and encourages sustainable behaviors that support their mission.

Onepager 3



Design system 3

Connection
Action
Information
Stakeholders
Touchpoints
App components

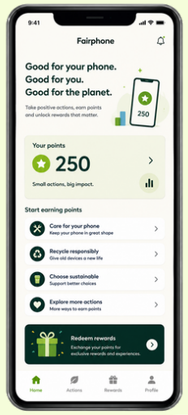
Instagram
Posts about new rewards and collaborations

Mail
Email when new rewards can be collected

Communicate to customer



App
Main touchpoint



Positive actions

Customers can take sustainable actions and unlock rewards

Earned points

Collect points for positive actions

Trading in points

Redeem points for rewards or donations

Rewards system

View available rewards and your reward progress

Sustainability guide
Tips for more sustainable phone use

Recycle guide
Tips for recycling of (parts of) the device

Care for phone guide
Tips for maintaining, repairing and extenging phone's life time

Points are traded and rewards are redeemed

Customer research

Brand and creative team

Makes sure the platform speaks to the new target audience

Product team


Monitors app performance and manages whole system

Indirect sales team

Builds and manages external rewards partnerships

Local shops

Provide sustainable rewards

Charity

Will use donations to make positive impact

Fairphone hard ware team

Provide accessry-based rewards and offers

Share customer insights and brand guidelines

Share opportunities for new collaborations

Design direction 3: Rewards focus

Rewards Focus is a design direction that makes sustainable Fairphone behaviour more visible, personal, and rewarding. Instead of only communicating Fairphone's mission from a brand perspective, this direction focuses on what users personally gain when they take positive actions. The goal is to turn sustainable behaviour into a more engaging experience by connecting everyday actions to points, rewards, and a visible sense of impact.

The core problem behind this direction is the Messaging Disconnect. Fairphone's current communication strongly explains why the brand matters and how Fairphone contributes to a fairer and more sustainable electronics industry. However, for a broader and more practical customer group, this message may feel too abstract or distant. Users may support Fairphone's values, but they also want to understand what these values mean for them personally. When the benefits of sustainable actions are not made tangible, users may be less motivated to actively repair, maintain, recycle, or extend the life of their phone.

The solution is a value-driven reward system built into the Fairphone app. This system connects positive user actions to points and meaningful rewards. Users can earn points by taking actions that benefit both themselves and the planet, such as caring for their phone, following repair or maintenance guidance, recycling old parts, choosing sustainable food options, or engaging with Fairphone initiatives. These points can then be redeemed for tangible benefits, such as spare parts, accessories, discounts, local sustainable rewards, or donations to a charity. In this way, sustainable behaviour becomes more immediate, visible, and personally meaningful.

The app functions as the central touchpoint in this system. It shows users which actions they can take, how many points they have earned, and which rewards are available. It also provides practical guides, such as sustainability tips, recycling guidance, and care advice for extending the lifespan of the phone. Around the app, other touchpoints and stakeholders support the system. Email and Instagram can communicate new rewards, collaborations, and challenges. The product team monitors the app and improves the system based on customer insights. The brand and creative team ensures that the communication feels accessible and relevant to the target audience. The indirect sales team can create reward partnerships with local shops, while charities and the Fairphone hardware team help make rewards meaningful and connected to Fairphone's mission.

For users, the intended impact is empowered awareness. They do not only hear that sustainable behaviour is important, but they can see and feel the value of their own actions. A repair, recycling action, or maintenance step becomes more than a responsible choice. It becomes something that is recognized, rewarded, and connected to a positive personal outcome. This can make sustainable behaviour feel easier, more enjoyable, and more worth repeating.

For Fairphone, this design direction creates a stronger relationship with customers after purchase. By rewarding positive actions, Fairphone can increase engagement, encourage longer device use, promote repair and maintenance, and strengthen brand loyalty. It also helps Fairphone communicate its values in a more practical and customer-centred way. Instead of only asking users to believe in the mission, Fairphone shows them how participating in that mission can create direct value.

Rewards Focus turns Fairphone's sustainability message into an active and rewarding customer experience. It helps users move from passive awareness to positive action by making sustainable choices visible, beneficial, and emotionally satisfying. The result is a system where users feel rewarded for doing good, while Fairphone strengthens its mission, customer relationship, and long-term impact.

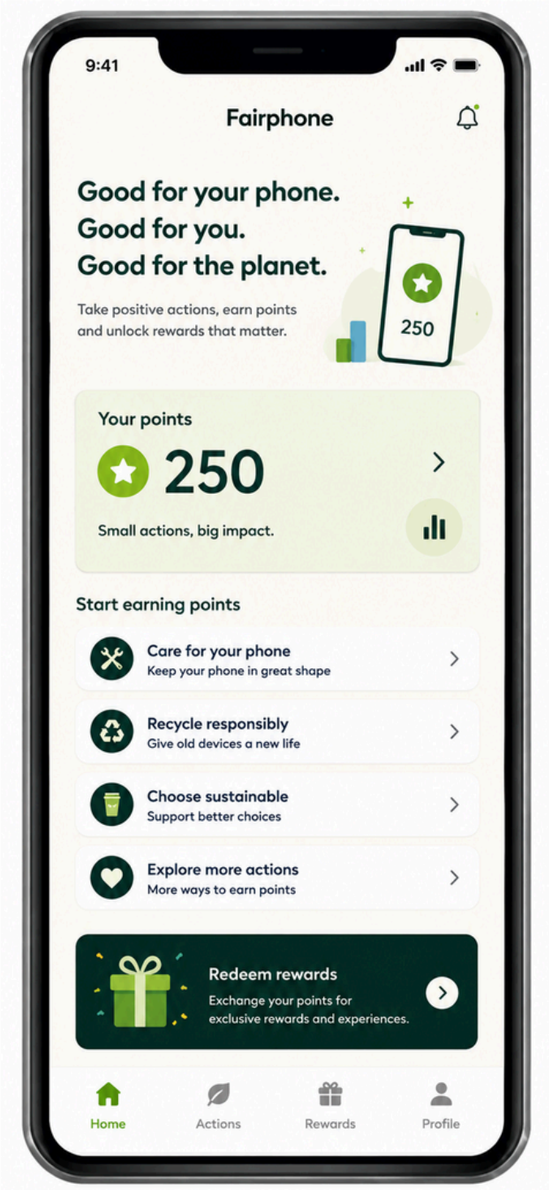


Figure 4.10: Mockup of what an intervention for Autonomous informing could look like

4.7 Comparing the design directions

The purpose of this subchapter is to evaluate the three design directions presented in subchapter 4.5 and determine which design direction will be selected for further development.

This decision-making process is fundamentally grounded in the insights gathered throughout the research phase. These findings were translated into a comprehensive List of Requirements, detailed in Chapter 4.3, which served as the primary framework for evaluating the three potential directions.

To ensure the viability and strength of the chosen path, the initial chosen design direction was validated by key stakeholders presented in subchapter 4.7. These stakeholders included Fairphone customers and employees.

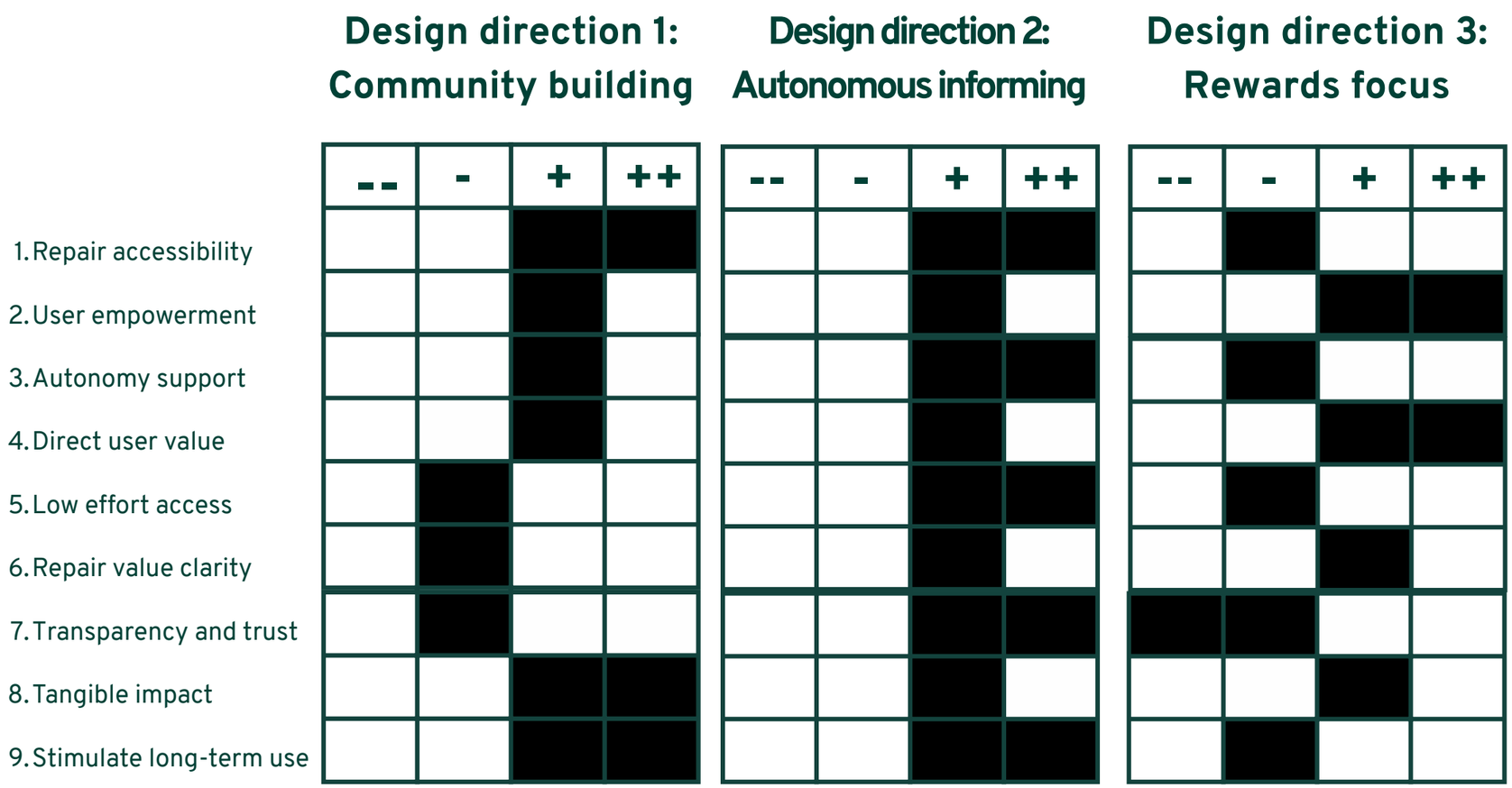


Figure 4.11: Harris profile

To compare the three design directions and guide the selection process, a Harris profile was used to weigh them against the established criteria (see figure 4.11). Based on the specific requirements of this project, 'Design direction 2: Autonomous informing' is the chosen design direction. However, it is important to note that the decision-making process is not black and white, meaning the other directions could still be suitable.

4.8 Decision making validation

To validate the outcomes of the Harris Profile and to assess whether the proposed design directions could realistically be implemented within Fairphone, a Google Forms survey was shared with two stakeholder groups: Fairphone employees and Fairphone customers (See Appendix E).

Ten Participants ranked the three design directions based on expected customer impact and explained the reasoning behind their ranking. This made it possible to compare customers' post-purchase experiences with employees' internal knowledge of Fairphone, its customers, implementation risks, and strategic feasibility.

The results showed a clear difference between the two stakeholder groups. Among Fairphone employees, the three directions were chosen almost equally often as a first choice. Employees did not point to one single winning direction, but mainly stressed that the final concept should combine the strengths of the different directions in a realistic and carefully managed way. Their feedback was valuable because they have experience with Fairphone's internal processes, existing customer touchpoints, and possible implementation challenges.

Employee feedback also helped sharpen the value framing and risks of the concept. The solution should not become too technical, exclusive, or only useful for highly engaged customers. It should be accessible to the broader Fairphone customer base and make the benefit tangible on three levels: "good for your phone, good for you, and good for the planet". Employees also warned that Fairphone should avoid relying too heavily on unmoderated community solutions for complex hardware problems, because this could lead to misinformation. Reward-based elements should also be used carefully, since they may mainly attract users who are sensitive to promotions. For support, repair, or problem diagnosis, the experience must work reliably before implementation, because unclear or incorrect guidance could damage trust instead of building loyalty.

Customers, in contrast, ranked Autonomous informing as the most preferred direction on average. Their explanations showed that this preference came from their own experiences in the post-purchase journey, especially in moments where they had felt uncertain about bugs, updates, repairs, or device issues. They did not necessarily want Fairphone to make decisions for them. Instead, they wanted communication that helps them understand what is happening, compare options, and make their own choices without feeling pushed in a certain direction by the company or by other users. This was a confirmation of the customer insights gained in earlier research.

This customer feedback was particularly relevant to the beginning of the customer journey, where participants indicated that clearer information and a better overview would have helped them feel more confident and reassured after their purchase. Later in the journey, participants suggested that community interaction and reward-based engagement could become more relevant.

The validation supported the findings of the Harris Profile, in which Autonomous Informing had already emerged as the strongest design direction based on the previous research. At the same time, the survey provided further insights into how this direction should be developed.

All future interventions designed to address customer problems should follow the principles of Autonomous Informing to ensure a consistent approach across Fairphone's post-purchase experience. However, this does not mean that interventions cannot include elements of Community building or Rewards focus. The validation showed that customers also value these elements, particularly at later stages of their journey. Therefore, such elements can still be incorporated, as long as they are designed and communicated in line with the principles of Autonomous Informing, maintaining consistency throughout the customer experience.

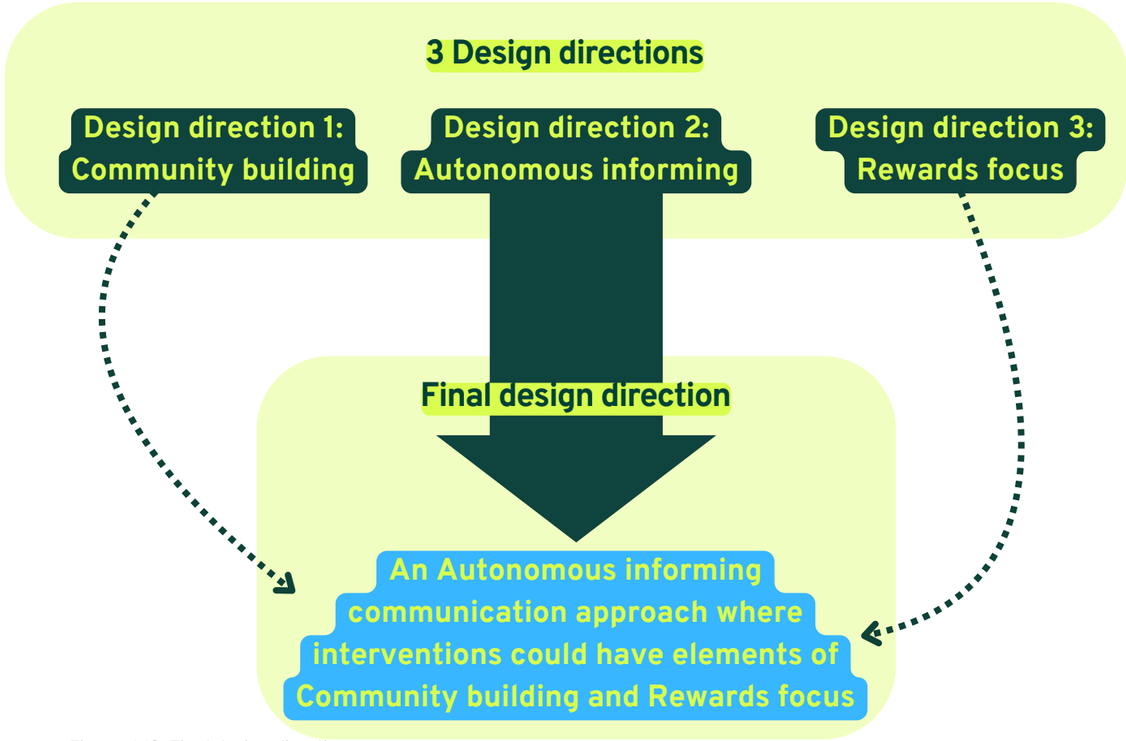


Figure 4.12: Final design direction

4.9 Final design direction

In this chapter, three design directions were developed based on the outcomes of the creative sessions. From these, Autonomous Informing was selected as the final design direction, forming the foundation for Fairphone's future post-purchase communication.

Autonomous Informing is not intended to be a single intervention, but rather a consistent approach that should guide all post-purchase communication and future interventions. By following this direction, Fairphone can ensure that solutions to different customer problems remain consistent and aligned with the needs and expectations of its target audience.

The core principle of Autonomous Informing is that Fairphone takes a proactive role in informing its customers. Instead of expecting customers to actively search for information, Fairphone should bring relevant information to them, making it clear, understandable, and easily accessible. Communication should also be honest and transparent, giving customers insight into their device, potential issues, and available solutions without leaving them feeling that information is being withheld.

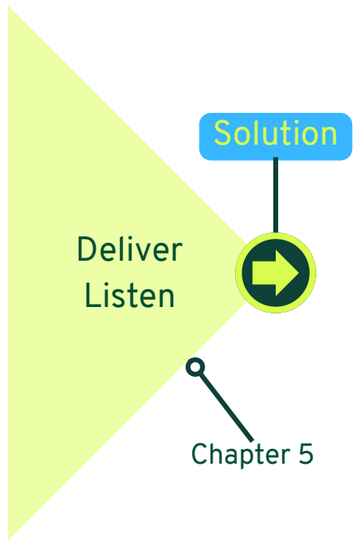
Ultimately, Autonomous Informing aims to transform the relationship between Fairphone and its customers into a more open and trustworthy partnership. By consistently communicating proactively and transparently, Fairphone can reduce uncertainty, build confidence, and reassure customers that the brand delivers on its promises. All future interventions should therefore follow this design direction, ensuring that Fairphone's post-purchase experience reflects both its brand values and the needs of its customers.

In the following chapter (Chapter 5) one of the customer problems will be selected in oder to create an intervention based on Autonomous informing.

CHAPTER

5

Iteration & Validation



5.1 Translating a design direction into a problem solution
5.2 Translating JTBDs to customer problems
5.3 Playing into the customer problems
5.4 Problem decision making
5.5 Customer scenario
5.6 The intervention
5.7 Validation

This chapter applies the chosen design direction, Autonomous Informing, to solve one selected customer problem. The proposed solution is then validated to evaluate how well it addresses this problem and how it builds customer loyalty. Based on the validation results, this chapter provides recommendations to Fairphone on how the design can be improved and how the Autonomous Informing design direction can be further applied within the company.

5.1 Translating the design direction into a problem solution

In the previous chapter, a design direction was developed and selected based on the outcomes of the research and the creative sessions. This design direction, Autonomous informing, defines a new way for Fairphone to communicate with its customers in order to build stronger customer loyalty.

Because consistency is important within this new approach, the first step was to define how the system should work on a general level. Now that the overall design direction has been established, this chapter focuses on how it can be translated into specific solutions for the different problems customers experience.

Within this chapter, one specific customer problem is selected for further development. A solution is designed based on the chosen design direction and is then tested with customers. The outcomes of this test are used to evaluate the design and to formulate a recommendation for Fairphone.

5.2 Translating JTBDs to customer problems

The Jobs to Be Done (JTBDs) presented in the chapter 3 were al translated to a customer problem they represent. Now that the design direction has been established (Autonomous informing) the next step is to determine what this direction means for the actual design of the system.

This subchapter therefore focusses on the customer problems. For each problem, the research findings are used to identify what customers need in order for that problem to be addressed. These customer needs are then translated into a set of guidelines describing what the communication system should include.

These system guidelines form an intermediate step between the customer problems and the final design. They do not yet define exactly what the system will look like, but provide clear guidelines for its content, functionality, and communication approach. In the following subchapter, these requirements are further developed and combined into concrete flowscharts, showing how the proposed communication system could work in practice.



Effortless Tangible Impact

Problem	What does the customer want/ need	What does the system have to include
Making a positive impact is hard work and not always rewarding	• Impact they make being tangible • Feel a personal connection to the impact Fairphone makes • Being acknowledged	• A personalized dashboard where customer acitons are translated into tangible impact • Communication about Fairphones impact connected to the cusomter



Autonomy & Control

Problem	What does the customer want/ need	What does the system have to include
I don't have a clear overview of how to take care of my phone and to extend the life time	• A clear overview of the phone's status • Updates when the phone's condition declines and how to resolve this • A clear overview of how to best handle and maintain the phone • Personal control over how long the device lasts (access to repair and maintenance)	• A health dashboard displaying the phone's current status • A notification system that alerts the user to any decline in the phone's condition, together with steps or repair suggestions. • Tips and tricks on maintenance and repair for optimal device care. • A page that clearly organizes and displays all relevant device information and history in one accessible location.



Accessible Self-Repair

Problem	What does the customer want/ need	What does the system have to include
I am unsure when and how to repair my phone because I cannot easily identify what is wrong with it.	• A clearly easier way to identify where a problem lies • Direct links to repairs • Clear communication from Fairphone regarding known bugs and the specific issues users might experience as a result	• A scanner to easily test the phone's components. • Clear links to relevant repair guides, support pages, or spare parts based on the identified issue. • Live notifications by Fairphone about known software bugs and their specific symptoms. • An interactive a decision-tree structure (yes/no questions) to guide users through diagnosing their specific problems.



Equal Partnership

Problem	What does the customer want/ need	What does the system have to include
After sales I don't feel like a partner but more as a customer	• Good communication regarding bugs • The feeling that they have access to the same information as Fairphone • Personalized treatment • No sales pitches • Fair and honest communication (no greenwashing) • Being able to communicate with Fairphone	• A notification system or overview page that actively informs users about known bugs. • Open and clear communication about what Fairphone is working on, and also on what they can't share • A personal approach in communication connecting Fairphone information to cusotmers

Figure 5.1: JTBDs translated into customer problems

5.3 Playing into the customer problems

In the previous subchapter, the customer problems that the system should address were explored, together with guidelines of what should be included to solve them. To further develop the system, the design process is approached from the customer's perspective. This means trying to understand how the customer would experience the problem, what information they would need and which steps they would take to reach a solution.

Based on the knowledge gathered throughout this thesis, customer-centred flowcharts were created for each problem (figure 5.2). Within these flowcharts, two different types of problems can be distinguished. The first type consists of problems that should be addressed through a different way of communicating with the customer. The second type consists of problems for which Fairphone can provide a tangible solution that the customer can use.

Because these problems require different approaches, the flowcharts are also structured differently. The flowchart related to communication problems mainly focuses on what Fairphone should do differently in its communication to address the problem. The flowchart for problems where Fairphone can provide a solution focuses more on the customer journey and on what this solution should contain.

In this way, the flowcharts show the possible journey a customer could go through within the new system, starting from the problem. They help identify what the system should contain and provide a clear basis for the design.

Many of the elements included in these flows also originate from ideas generated during the earlier brainstorm and creative sessions. These sessions therefore form an important foundation for the further development and structure of the system.

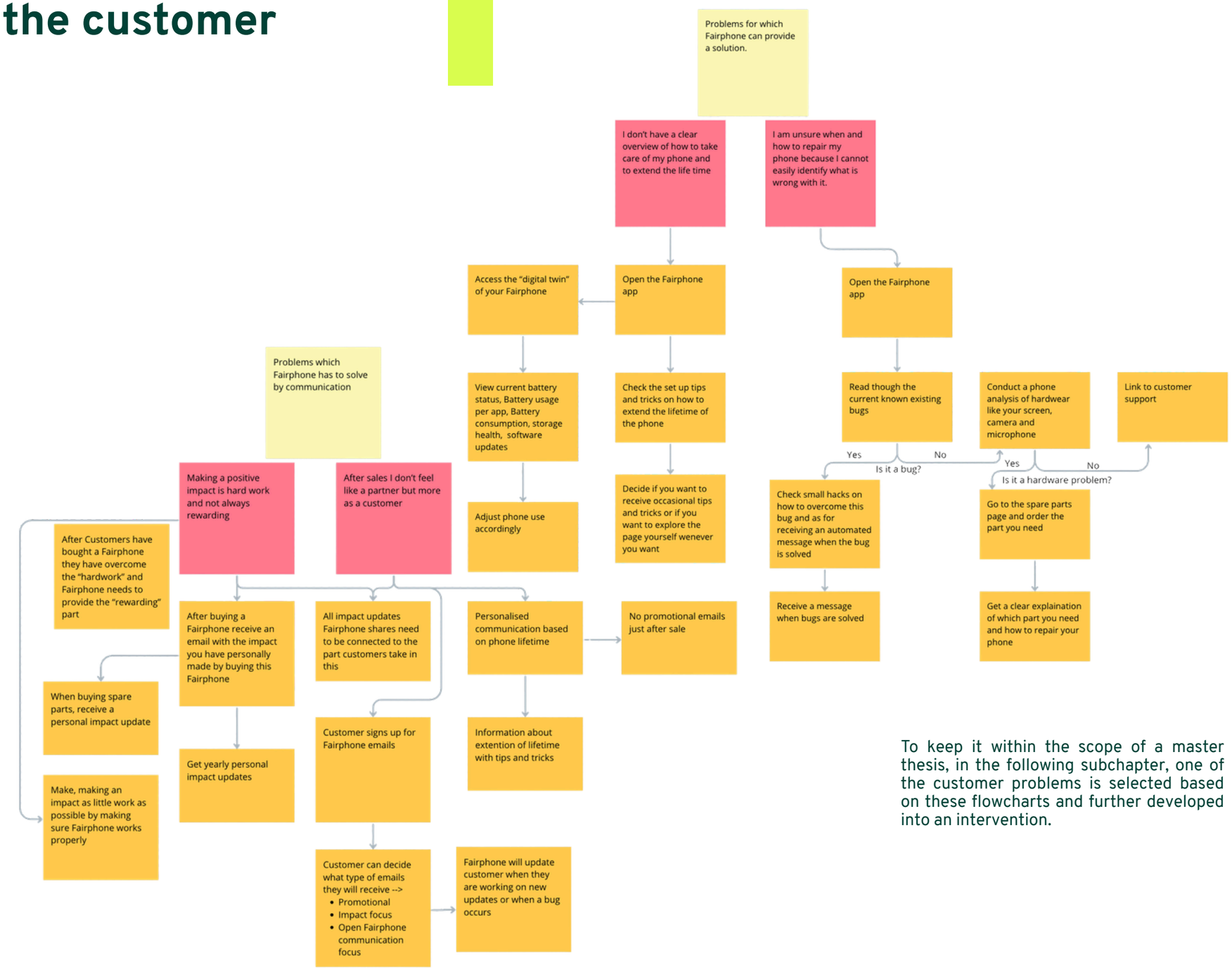


Figure 5.2: Flowcharts

To keep it within the scope of a master thesis, in the following subchapter, one of the customer problems is selected based on these flowcharts and further developed into an intervention.

5.4 Problem decision making

The decision was made to focus on the problem: “I am unsure when and how to repair my phone because I cannot easily identify what is wrong with it.” related to the JTBD of Accesible self-repair. This problem was one of the problems for which Fairphone can provide a direct solution. This type of problem was chosen because it is more concrete and tangible, making it possible to develop and design a clear intervention point within the scope of this thesis.

This problem is closely related to the forgiveness buffer introduced in Chapter 2. Fairphone customers are generally more willing to forgive bugs and malfunctions because Fairphone is a relatively small company with strong values. However, when customers approach Fairphone with this understanding, there is an opportunity for Fairphone to meet them halfway and make sure they are not left to solve these problems on their own

From Chapter 2, it became clear that customers currently have to put effort into identifying bugs, finding the right information and figuring out what to do next. While some solutions already exist, they are often difficult to find, unclear or require the customer to actively search for them.

This creates a clear design opportunity. By combining existing solutions with new and redesigned elements, Fairphone can support customers more proactively. This could become an important first step towards a stronger collaboration between Fairphone and its existing customers, while also directly improving their experience with the product.

Adressing this problem is directly related to the product and therefore does not only help the customer but also helps fairphone achieve its goal of extending phone life time.



Accessible Self-Repair

I am unsure when and how to repair my phone because I cannot easily identify what is wrong with it.

Figure 5.3: Selected customer problem

5.5 Customer scenario

In the previous subchapter, one customer problem was selected for further development. The flowchart created for this problem showed the possible solution space and provided a basis for exploring how the interaction between the customer and the intervention could take place.

Based on this flowchart, a customer scenario was developed. The scenario was created by making several small post-it sketches that represented different steps in the interaction.

These sketches could easily be rearranged, which made it possible to experiment with different sequences until a logical flow was found. This flow then formed the basis for the design of the intervention. Based on the situation the steps the customer takes are different.

Finally, the customer journey was visually refined with the help of AI. This was done to present the scenario in a clearer and more understandable way for the reader.

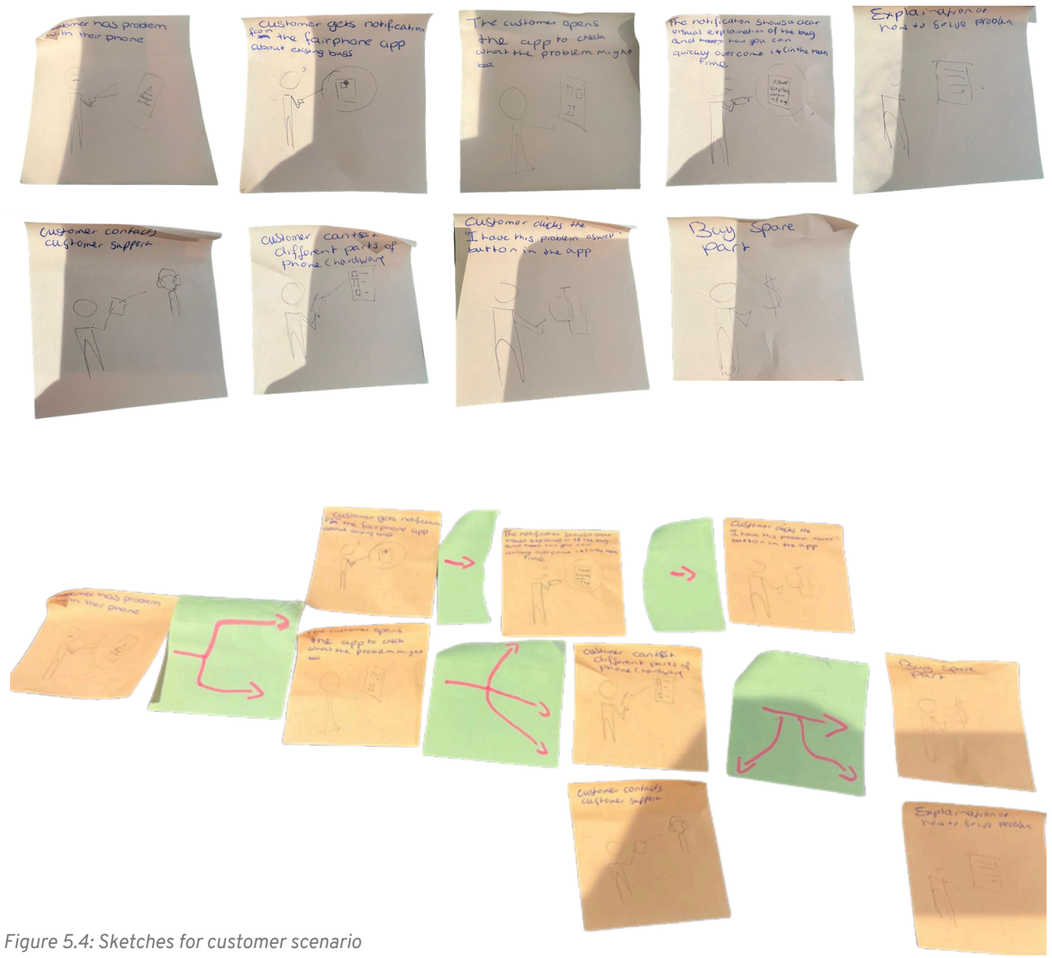


Figure 5.4: Sketches for customer scenario

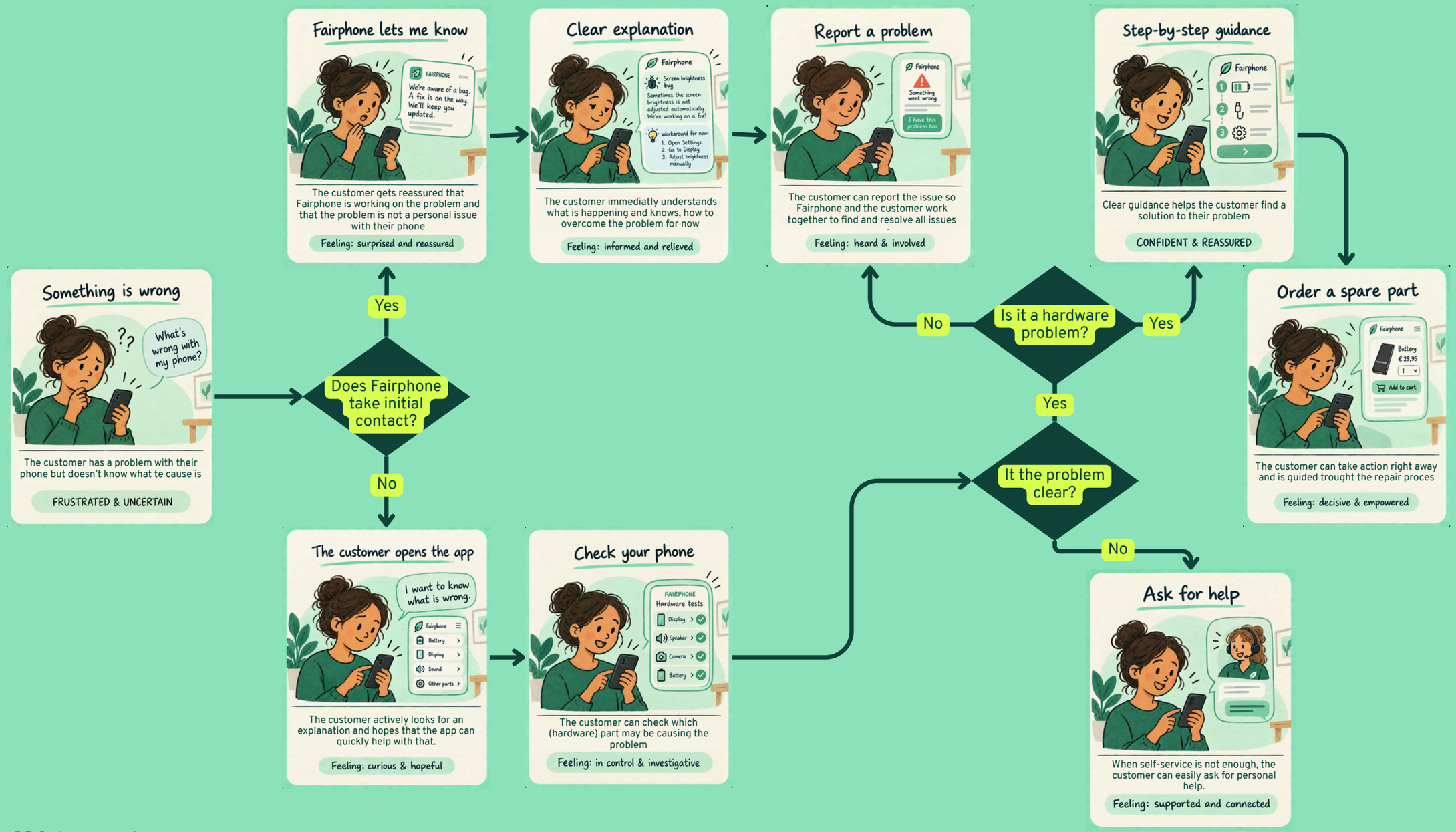


Figure 5.5: Customer scenario

5.6 The intervention

In the previous subchapter, the scenario was developed to show how the customer would interact with the intervention. This provided a clear overview of the intended customer journey, but not yet of how the touchpoint should look and work in practice. Therefore, this subchapter focuses on translating the scenario into a design that can be validated.

The design process started by turning the interaction steps from the scenario and flowchart into simple screen sketches (See figure 5.6). These sketches were used to explore how the different functions could be presented and connected within the intervention. This also helped to check whether the full interaction was covered and whether any important elements were still missing.

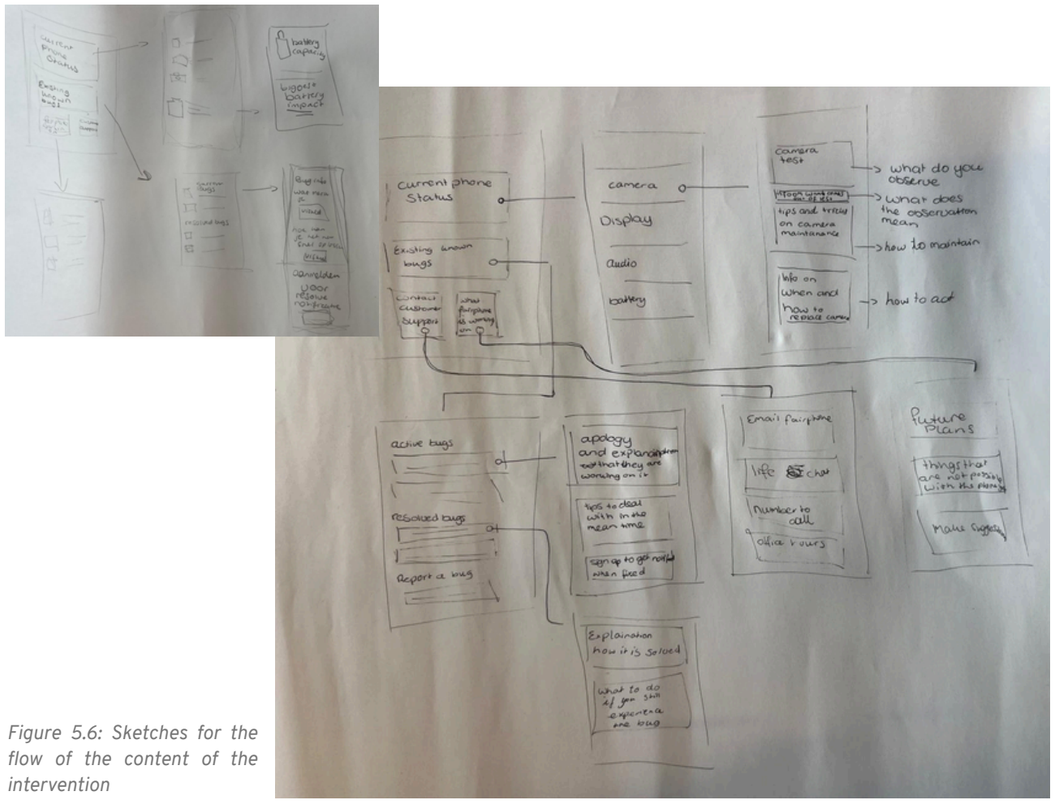


Figure 5.6: Sketches for the flow of the content of the intervention

After the sketches were made, they were used as input for an AI tool that can create interactive applications. This made it possible to quickly turn the sketches into realistic and clickable prototypes. Three different versions were explored, some based directly on the scenario and others on the individual screen sketches (See figure 5.7). By testing these prototypes myself, it became easier to identify which information was still missing, what a customer might be looking for and which steps did not yet feel logical.

The prototypes were developed through an iterative process. Insights from each version were used to adjust the structure and interaction, gradually developing the prototype into a more complete and logical design.

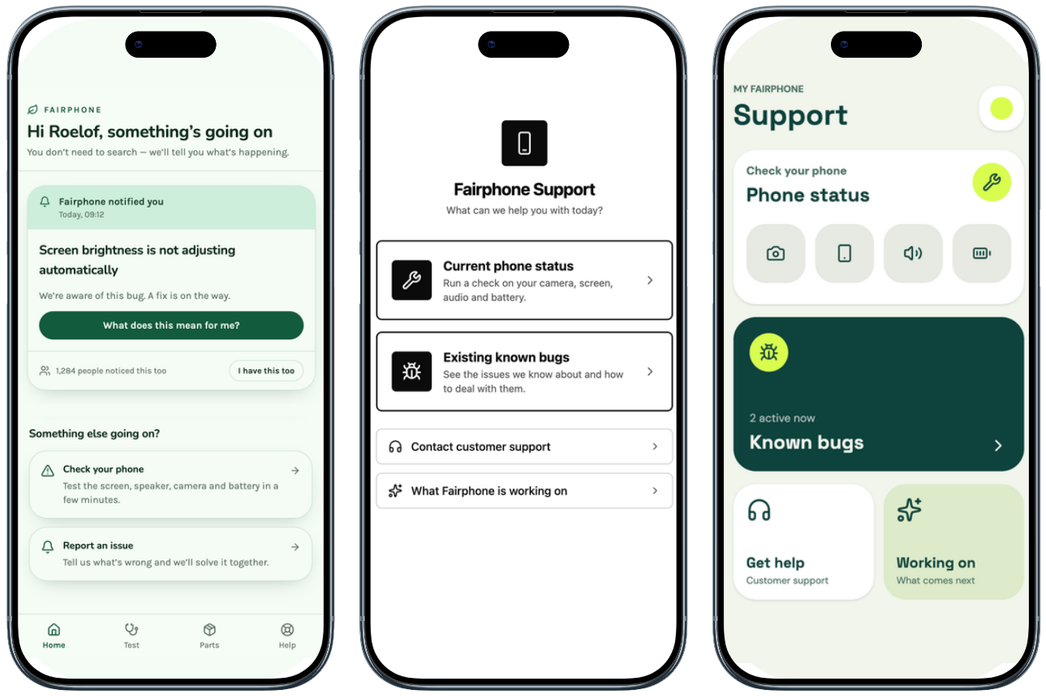


Figure 5.7: Three prototypes of the intervention

Prototype 1 took a personal approach and mainly focused on current problems and notifications, with a known bug presented as the central element. Prototype 2 used a more functional and basic menu structure, in which the different features were presented with little visual hierarchy. Prototype 3 used a more visual dashboard structure, giving both the phone component checks and the known bugs a clear and prominent place within the app.

Prototype 3 made it most clear what the app was meant for and which functions it contained. The visual hierarchy also made the different types of support easier to distinguish. Therefore, this layout was chosen as the basis for the final intervention. The rest of the app was further developed using the same structure and visual style.

After the visual style was selected, the different parts of the intervention were developed in more detail. The intervention consists of four main sections (Phone status, Known bugs, Get help and Working on) of which two form the core of the design(Phone status and Known bugs).

The Phone Status section gives the customer the possibility to check specific hardware components and better understand the current condition of their phone.

As shown in Figure 5.8, the customer can perform self-checks for the camera, screen, audio system (including the microphone and speakers), and the battery. These checks help the customer understand whether action is needed and whether a component may need attention or replacement. Instead of having to make this decision alone, the customer is guided through the process with clear information about when replacement might be necessary.

The Phone Status section also provides tips on how to extend the lifetime of each component and how replacement can potentially be postponed. When a component does need to be replaced, the customer is given clear information about what the next steps are and how the replacement process works. In this way, the customer gets more insight into the condition of the different hardware components and is supported in making well-informed decisions that can help extend the lifetime of the phone.

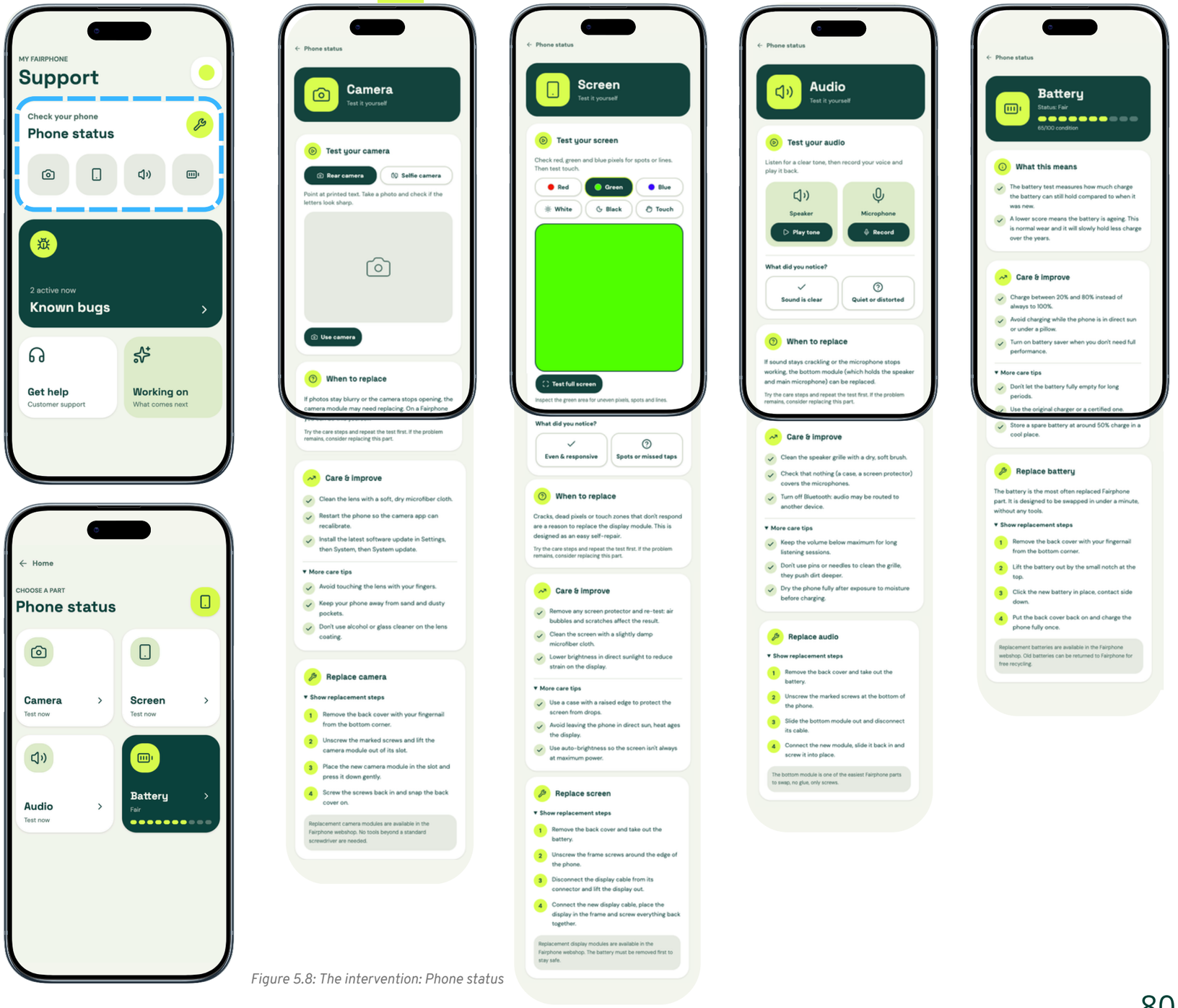


Figure 5.8: The intervention: Phone status

The Known Bugs section is connected to notifications that customers receive directly on their phone when Fairphone becomes aware of a software bug (figure 5.9). When the customer opens the notification, the Fairphone app opens directly in the Known Bugs section. Here, the customer can see an overview of active bugs, resolved bugs and they have the option to report a new issue. This creates a shared overview for both Fairphone and the customer and makes it clear which problems are already known.

In the Active Now section, the customer can see the symptoms of a known bug and what can be done temporarily to reduce its impact. This allows the customer to continue using the phone as normally as possible while Fairphone works on a solution. At the same time, the customer knows that Fairphone is already aware of the issue and that a fix is being developed. Customers can also subscribe to updates, so they are informed when the bug has been resolved and can install the software update as soon as it becomes available.

Once a bug has been solved, it moves to the Resolved Bugs section. Here, customers can see which issues have already been fixed and what they can still do if they continue to experience the same problem. If a customer experiences an issue that is not yet listed, they can use the Report a Bug option to inform Fairphone.

This section is designed to reduce uncertainty and prevent customers from being surprised by problems they do not understand. By informing customers early, explaining what is happening and showing what Fairphone is doing to solve it, the touchpoint helps manage expectations and keeps customers informed throughout the process.

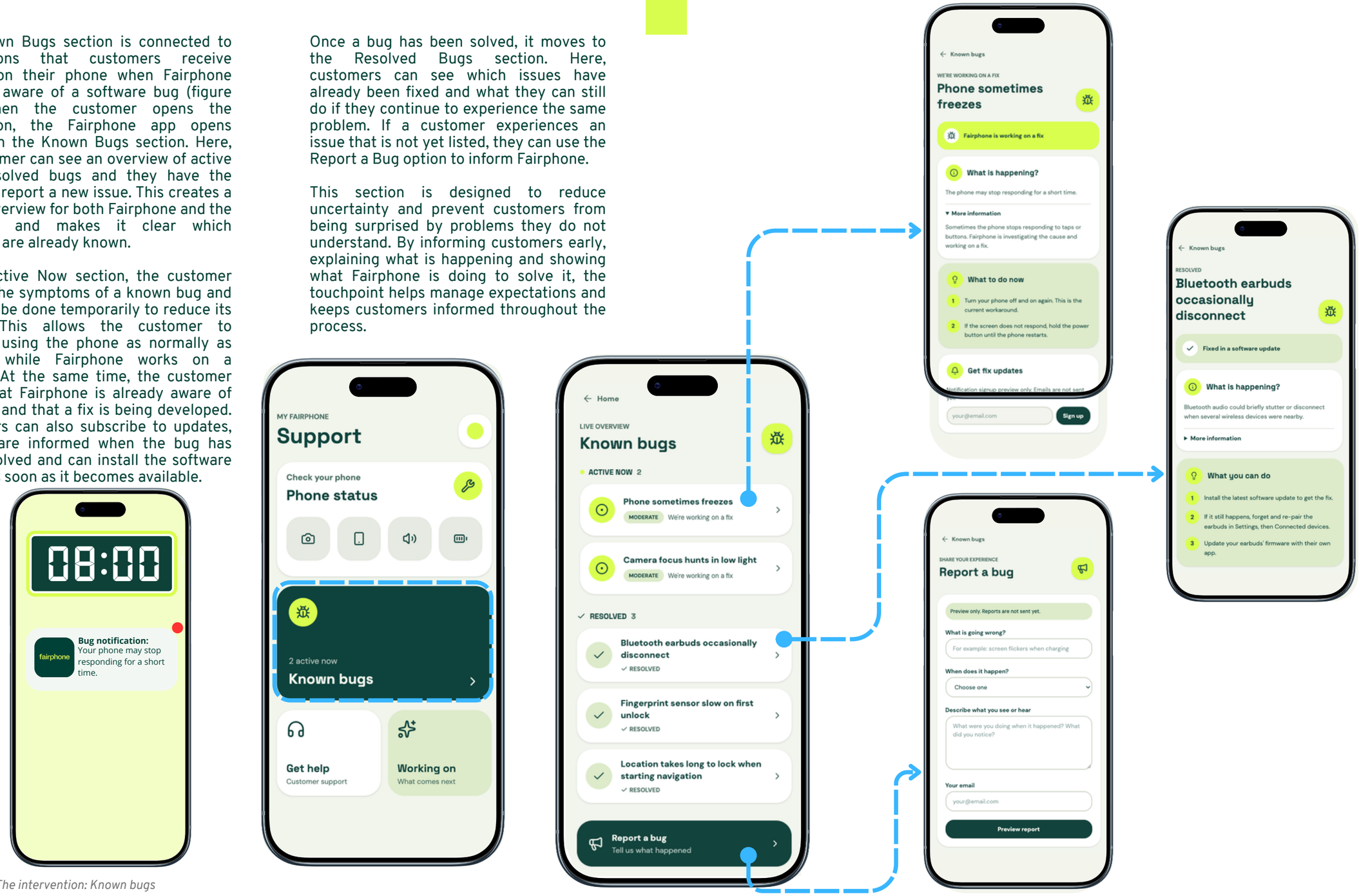


Figure 5.9: The intervention: Known bugs

Finally, the new Fairphone app also includes a Get Help section and an overview of what Fairphone is currently working on. The Get Help section gives customers an additional way to receive support when the information in the app is not enough. They can contact customer service by email or use an AI chat to ask for further explanation. This makes the support more direct and allows customers to choose the type of help that best fits their needs.

The Working On section provides customers with an overview of the topics Fairphone is currently focusing on. This includes known bugs, software updates and other developments that aim to improve the product and make it easier to use. By showing this information openly, customers can better understand what Fairphone is working on and stay informed about the same developments that are relevant within the company.

Together, all these elements form an intervention that supports customers in understanding the condition of their phone, dealing with known software issues and finding help when needed. At the same time, the design gives more insight into what Fairphone is working on and what customers can expect. The final prototype brings these functions together in one clear structure and will be used in the next step to validate whether this way of informing and supporting customers has the intended effect of building customer loyalty.



Figure 5.10: The intervention: Get help and Working on

5.7 Validation

Validation Objectives
The aim of the validation session is to find out whether the designed intervention improves Fairphone's post-purchase customer experience and contributes to stronger customer loyalty. The validation focuses on the effect of the intervention by validating whether the intervention:

- Helps customers solve or better deal with the chosen customer problem: "I am unsure when and how to repair my phone because I cannot easily identify what is wrong with it" by:
  - Providing customers with more clarity about the status of their phone and the possible problems it might have.
  - Helping them make well-informed decisions.
- Strengthens customer loyalty towards Fairphone, which means that it helps them:
  - Actively extend the lifetime of their Fairphone.
  - Increase their willingness to recommend Fairphone to others.

The usability of the intervention itself is also tested by assessing whether customers:

- Understand the intervention.
- Can easily navigate through it.
- Can find the information and features they need.
- Perceive the intervention as complete.

Together, these objectives provide a clear basis for evaluating both the impact of the intervention on the customer experience and the usability of the intervention.

validation methodology
The concept was validated through the use of scenario-based interviews with 6 participants. A qualitative approach was used because the goal was not only to determine whether customers respond positively to the intervention, but also to understand why the intervention helps them and how it influences their perception of Fairphone.

During the validation, participants were presented with two realistic scenarios based on the customer problems identified earlier in the research.

Everyone was presented with scenario 1:

Imagine you are using your Fairphone as usual. You have not noticed a major problem yet, but Fairphone sends you a notification explaining that they have discovered a software bug that may cause the phone to occasionally freeze.

And for the second scenario people would either be presented with scenario 2A, 2B, 2C or 2D being:

***2A:** Imagine that you notice that part of your Fairphone's touchscreen sometimes stops responding. For example, the lower part of the screen does not always register your touch. You are unsure whether the screen is damaged, whether it is a software issue, or whether a component needs to be replaced.*

***2B:** Imagine that you notice that your camera has difficulty focusing. You are unsure whether the camera is damaged, whether it is a software issue, or whether a component needs to be replaced.*

***2C:** Imagine that you notice that the sound is sometimes difficult to hear clearly. You are unsure whether the speaker is damaged, whether it is a software issue, or whether a component needs to be replaced.*

2D: *Imagine that you notice that your battery starts draining faster than usual. You are unsure whether this is caused by a software issue or whether the battery needs to be replaced.*

This was done to make sure that all different hardware tests are understandable for the customer.

The participant was first asked how they would normally experience and approach this situation. Afterwards, they were asked how they would find the solution when the intervention was presented to them. This allowed the participant to experience how Fairphone would support them within the redesigned post-purchase communication.

After the scenario based interview all participants were asked to fill out a form where they had to rate the following questions on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from **1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.** The statements they had to answer were:

- This would help me better understand what is wrong with my phone.
- This would help me better understand when and how I should repair my phone.
- This type of communication would make me feel that Fairphone treats me as a partner rather than just as a customer.
- This would give me more control over the condition of my phone and how I can extend its lifetime.
- This would help me use my Fairphone for longer.
- This type of support would make me more likely to recommend Fairphone to others.

Combining these ratings with follow-up questions makes it possible to identify patterns between participants while still understanding the reasoning behind their answers.

Analysing the results

The validation results were analysed by combining the qualitative interview findings with the 1–5 scale ratings. The analysis focused on two main aspects: the effect of the intervention on the customer and how well participants understood and interacted with the proposed solution.

First, the effect of the intervention was mainly assessed through the 1–5 scale questions. These ratings were used to identify general patterns in whether the intervention increased perceived clarity, confidence, the ability to take care of the phone, and indicators related to customer loyalty. Due to the small number of participants, the ratings were not treated as statistically meaningful quantitative results. Instead, they were used as an indication of participants' overall perceptions and as a way to compare responses across the different validation objectives.

Second, the qualitative interview responses and participants' behaviour during the scenarios were analysed to understand how they interpreted and interacted with the intervention. Attention was paid to which elements participants understood immediately, where they hesitated or became confused, how they responded to the different scenarios, and which parts of the app they considered useful or unclear. Direct follow-up questions were also used to identify specific misunderstandings, missing information, and opportunities for improvement.

By combining these two forms of analysis, the scale ratings provided an indication of the perceived effect of the intervention, while the qualitative observations and interview responses helped explain why participants responded in this way and which elements of the concept should be improved.

Validation outcomes

The validation assessed the intervention in two ways: its understandability and its impact on the customer. Understandability was evaluated by observing how participants responded to the scenarios and navigated through the app. The impact was evaluated through seven statements rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Findings

Regarding understandability, all six participants successfully navigated through the app and completed the tasks presented in the scenarios as intended. The Known Bugs section attracted the most attention on the opening page, followed by the Phone Status section. However, one participant overlooked the Phone Status section entirely because the Known Bugs section attracted so much attention.

Several visual elements caused confusion. Some indicators had no clear function, leading participants to question their meaning or expect them to be clickable. The inconsistent use of colours on the Phone Status page also created uncertainty about the condition of different components. However, the component icons themselves were immediately understood, and participants naturally clicked on the components they wanted to inspect. They also appreciated the explanations of why certain components deteriorate over time.

The Known Bugs section raised the most questions. Some participants were unsure whether the reported bugs affected only their own device or all Fairphone users. The severity levels and certain explanations were not always clear. Participants also wanted more information about what the suggested actions would achieve and, particularly, how long resolving a bug might take. Although the Resolved Bugs section was appreciated, the suggested actions sometimes created confusion about whether further action was required. The purpose of the Working On section was also unclear, as participants did not immediately understand how it differed from the bug-related information.

The interviews also revealed how participants currently deal with phone problems. Several described experiencing stress when something does not work properly. Some mentioned ignoring problems because of potential repair costs, while searching Google for answers was a common first response. In this context, participants appreciated that Fairphone would proactively provide information and acknowledge existing issues. All six participants indicated that knowing Fairphone was aware of a problem and working on a solution was reassuring. They also appreciated the possibility of checking minor issues without immediately having to contact customer support.

Opinions about notifications differed. While some participants appreciated being proactively informed, others preferred not to receive notifications. Some also experienced the notification as too alarming, making the problem seem more serious than it actually was.

Finally, participants suggested several practical improvements. One participant wanted the Report a Bug option to be more visible. Participants also expressed a need for links to order replacement parts and access repair instructions on another device, since these cannot easily be followed on a phone while repairing it. As searching Google was a common first step, making the same information available through Fairphone's website was also considered valuable. Regarding additional support, four out of six participants mentioned preferring human support over an AI chatbot.

Besides these observations, the ratings regarding the impact of the intervention were consistently positive. All six participants rated every statement with either a 4 or 5.

The strongest results concerned clarity and control. All participants strongly agreed (5/5) that the intervention provided more clarity about what was happening with their phone. Five out of six also strongly agreed that it would give them more control over their phone's condition and how to extend its lifetime. Participants were similarly positive about understanding what was wrong with their phone and knowing when and how to repair it.

The statements related to customer loyalty also received positive ratings. All participants agreed or strongly agreed that the intervention would help them use their Fairphone longer and make them more likely to recommend Fairphone to others. Furthermore, five participants agreed and one strongly agreed that this communication would make them feel treated as a partner rather than just a customer.

Interpretation

The results suggest that the overall structure and navigation of the app are intuitive. Since all participants successfully completed the scenarios, the current structure provides a suitable foundation for further development. However, the findings also show that being able to navigate the app does not necessarily mean that users fully understand the information presented. The main improvements should therefore focus on clearer explanations, consistent visual elements and better communication about what actions users can take and what they can expect from Fairphone.

Particularly, customers want to understand how serious a problem is, what Fairphone is doing about it and how long resolving it might take. The findings also highlight the importance of giving customers control over how they receive information. Notifications should therefore be optional and communicate issues without causing unnecessary concern. Furthermore, information should be accessible through different channels, including Fairphone's website, while repair instructions should remain available when the phone itself cannot be used.

Despite these areas for improvement, the positive ratings suggest that the intervention has the potential to achieve its intended effect. The high ratings for clarity, understanding and control indicate that proactive communication could help customers feel better informed and more capable of taking care of their phones. The interviews provide further insight into why this matters. By acknowledging problems and showing that Fairphone is actively working on solutions, the intervention could reduce uncertainty and make customers feel recognised and supported rather than left to solve problems themselves.

Furthermore, the positive responses regarding product lifetime, recommendations and the customer relationship suggest that the intervention could contribute to stronger customer loyalty. However, these results reflect the perceptions and intentions of six participants rather than demonstrated behavioural changes.

Overall, the validation provides encouraging initial support for the design direction. The results suggest that the intervention could improve the post-purchase customer experience by providing clarity, reassurance and a greater sense of control. While the overall approach appears promising, the observations provide concrete directions for refining the design. Further validation would be needed to determine whether these positive perceptions translate into long-term customer loyalty.

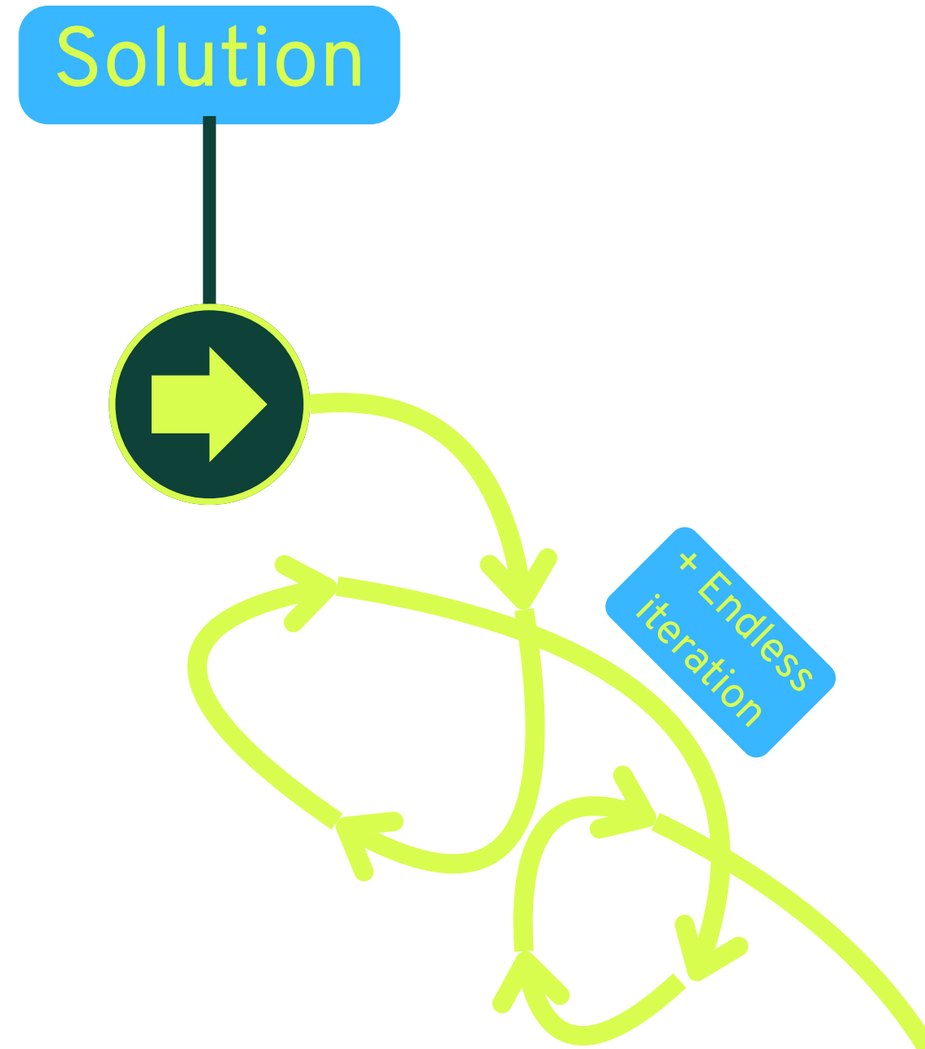
Key takeaways

- Intuitive navigation, but communication needs refinement. All six participants successfully completed the scenarios, confirming that the app structure is understandable. However, unclear visual indicators, inconsistent colours and missing explanations caused confusion.
- Proactive transparency creates reassurance. Customers appreciated being informed about known issues and seeing that Fairphone acknowledges problems and is working on solutions. This helped reduce uncertainty and made customers feel supported.
- Clear information increases customer confidence and control. Participants valued understanding their phone's condition and being able to make informed decisions about maintenance and repairs. All six participants strongly agreed that the intervention improved clarity.
- Information must be actionable and accessible. Customers need clear explanations of problem severity, expected resolution times and possible next steps. Repair instructions and relevant support should also be easy to access.
- Notifications should be optional and carefully designed. While some participants appreciated proactive notifications, others found them unnecessary or alarming. Customers should have control over how and when they receive information.
- Positive potential for customer loyalty, but further validation is needed. All participants gave positive ratings regarding the intervention's impact. The results suggest potential for longer phone use, stronger customer relationships and increased recommendations, but actual behavioural changes have not yet been demonstrated.

CHAPTER

6

Conclusion, Discussion & Recommendations



6.1 Conclusion
6.2 Discussion and Limitations
6.3 Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The initial aim of this thesis was to strengthen the relationship between Fairphone and its existing customers, resulting in the design goal of shifting its post-purchase communication from a sales-driven towards a more supportive and customer-centred approach.

The following problem statement guided this design goal: “Fairphone currently prioritizes product sales over relationship building, which conflicts with its core brand values. While the original customer base is generally loyal, current engagement strategies fail to engage the new, less idealistic target audience. Tie strength remains superficial because the current strategy fails to foster brand love through consistent post-purchase interaction.”

The research revealed that Fairphone’s target audience has changed significantly. Although Fairphone has rebranded and adapted its sales communication to attract this new audience, its post-purchase communication remains focused on its original customer base. Furthermore, existing touchpoints are often designed from a business perspective rather than around customer needs. They lack clear purposes and consistency, sometimes even working against each other.

These findings highlighted two key design principles: creating consistency across touchpoints and designing communication around customer needs and problems.

To address these principles, the design direction Autonomous Informing was developed as a consistent approach across post-purchase touchpoints. It encourages Fairphone to proactively provide clear, open and transparent information, ensuring customers have access to what they need without actively searching for it.

To translate this direction into a customer-centred solution, an intervention was designed around the problem: “I am unsure when and how to repair my phone because I cannot easily identify what is wrong with it.” The intervention provides an overview of known Fairphone bugs and the status of the customer’s device, helping them understand issues and make informed decisions.

The validation showed that participants generally understood and navigated the intervention as intended. The findings also indicated its potential to improve clarity, confidence and control over their phone experience. Although some elements require refinement, the results support further development.

This intervention represents a first step towards the design goal. However, transforming Fairphone’s post-purchase communication requires applying Autonomous Informing consistently across all touchpoints, with each intervention addressing specific customer needs while contributing to a coherent customer experience.

Ultimately, this thesis provides Fairphone with a strategic design direction and its first concrete application towards more supportive post-purchase communication. This approach has the potential to strengthen customer relationships, encourage longer phone use and increase customers’ willingness to recommend Fairphone. However, achieving these outcomes requires further development, implementation and evaluation across the post-purchase ecosystem.

6.2 Discussion and Limitations

Discussion

The research insights presented in Chapter 2 revealed that Fairphone's new target audience primarily values reliability, convenience, control and practical support throughout the product's lifetime. Although customers appreciate Fairphone's sustainable mission, they expect more than a sustainable product alone. They need clear guidance and support to make full use of their phone's capabilities and extend its lifetime. The validation findings are consistent with these earlier insights, as participants particularly appreciated receiving clear information about their phone's condition and being able to make informed decisions about potential problems.

The literature review highlighted the importance of setting and meeting customer expectations in building customer loyalty. This was reflected in the validation, where participants valued knowing that Fairphone was aware of existing issues and working on solutions. This suggests that proactive and transparent communication can contribute to expectation management by reducing uncertainty and providing reassurance. However, whether this ultimately leads to customers using their phones for longer or recommending Fairphone more frequently remains uncertain.

An important additional insight from the validation is that proactive communication is not automatically experienced as supportive. While some participants appreciated receiving notifications, others found them unnecessary or alarming. This indicates that Autonomous Informing should not simply focus on providing more information, but on delivering relevant information at the right moment while allowing customers to control how they receive it. Furthermore, participants wanted clearer explanations of problem severity, possible solutions and expected resolution times. This reinforces the earlier research finding that customers need practical and actionable support rather than information alone.

The initial research also revealed that Fairphone's main challenge is not a lack of existing support initiatives, but the absence of a connected and consistent post-purchase experience. The developed intervention demonstrates how Autonomous Informing can address a specific customer problem through clearer and more proactive communication. However, one intervention cannot resolve the broader lack of consistency between Fairphone's touchpoints. This highlights the importance of developing Autonomous Informing as an overarching communication approach rather than as a solution for one isolated customer problem.

Overall, the validation findings are largely consistent with the earlier research insights and support the potential of Autonomous Informing to improve Fairphone's post-purchase experience. They also refine the direction by demonstrating that effective customer support requires not only transparency and proactivity, but also relevance, clarity and customer control. While these findings suggest that the approach could contribute to stronger customer relationships, its actual impact on long-term customer loyalty remains to be demonstrated.

Limitations

One of the main limitations of this research is the difficulty of measuring the actual impact on customer loyalty. During the validation, participants were asked whether they expected the intervention to encourage them to use their phones for longer and make them more likely to recommend Fairphone. Although the responses were positive, these ratings reflect perceived intentions rather than actual behaviour. Participants may also have been inclined to respond positively or overestimate how much the intervention would influence their future decisions.

Determining whether the intervention actually strengthens customer loyalty would require long-term testing in practice. This is particularly challenging when measuring extended product use, as it may take several years to establish whether customers keep their phones for longer. Furthermore, the decision to replace a phone is influenced by many factors beyond post-purchase communication, making it difficult to attribute behavioural changes directly to the intervention.

Another limitation concerns the scale of the validation. The intervention was tested with only six participants, meaning the results provide valuable qualitative insights but cannot be considered representative of Fairphone's broader target audience. The five-point Likert scale helped identify patterns in participants' perceptions, but the sample size was too small to draw statistically meaningful conclusions. Further validation with a larger and more representative sample, particularly including existing Fairphone customers from the new target audience, would therefore be necessary.

An additional limitation concerns the validation method. Participants evaluated the intervention through predefined scenarios rather than using it in real-life situations over an extended period. Their responses may therefore differ from how they would interact with the intervention during everyday phone use. Although combining observations, interviews and rating questions provided insights from different perspectives, further testing in realistic situations would be needed to assess how effectively the intervention supports customers in practice.

The limited scope of the thesis is another important consideration. The research identified several customer problems, but within the available timeframe, only one could be addressed through a concrete intervention. As a result, the proposed solution addresses only part of the broader challenge of improving Fairphone's post-purchase experience. Addressing the remaining customer problems would be necessary to develop a more complete and supportive communication system.

Furthermore, while Autonomous Informing was established as an overarching design direction, it requires further development before it can be consistently applied across different touchpoints. Although this thesis established a list of requirements, more specific design guidelines are needed to define how the direction should be translated into future interventions.

Finally, the intervention was only evaluated through an initial validation session. Although the results were promising, several usability issues were identified, and the design requires further refinement and testing in real-life situations. Its effectiveness in supporting customers over time, as well as its contribution to long-term customer loyalty, therefore remains unproven.

These limitations mean that the findings should be interpreted as an initial indication of the approach's potential rather than evidence of its long-term effectiveness. Further development, implementation and validation are needed to determine whether Autonomous Informing can achieve the intended impact across Fairphone's post-purchase experience.

6.3 Recommendations

In order to give clear and actionable recommendations to Fairphone, this subchapter presents an eight-step roadmap. The goal is to guide Fairphone in improving its post-purchase experience and strengthening long-term customer relationships. The roadmap builds on the research, insights and proposed intervention developed during this thesis.

The roadmap is divided into three phases: Organise, Develop and Implement, and is preseneted in figure 6.1. All these steps will be thoroughly explained in the rest of this subchapter. Although the steps within these phases are presented in a linear sequence for clarity, design is not a linear process. Activities may overlap, and continuous iteration, feedback and adjustments are essential throughout the process.

The foundation of the entire roadmap is the design direction Autonomous Informing. All solutions should follow its three key design principles presented in figure 6.2. Moreover he List of Requirements presented in subchapter 4.3 should always be taken into account.

This thesis provides the foundation for building customer relations and it is now up to Fairphone to turn these recommendations into action.

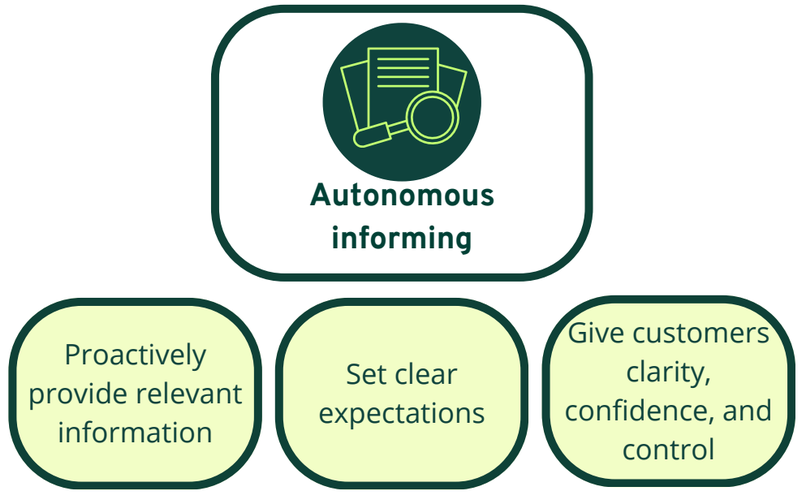


Figure 6.2: Autonomous informing as the basis of post purchase design

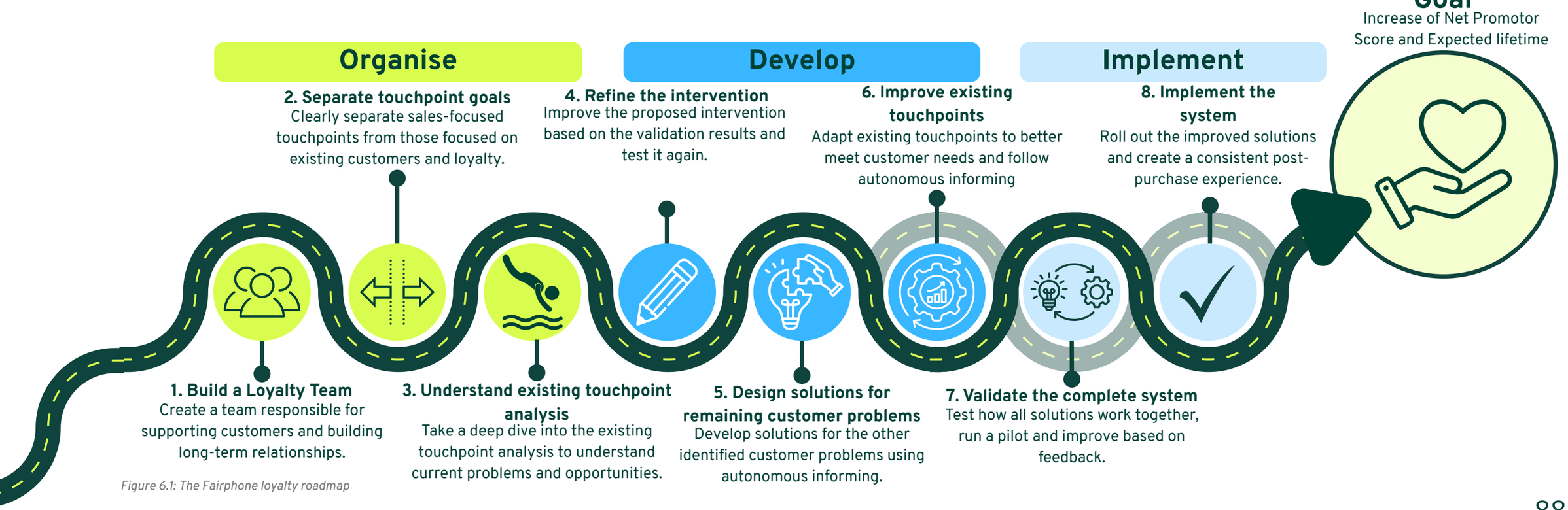


Figure 6.1: The Fairphone loyalty roadmap

Organise

Step 1. Build a Loyalty Team

Create a team responsible for supporting customers and building long-term relationships.

What?
Establish a Loyalty Team focused on improving the post-purchase experience and solving customer problems, without involvement in sales or promotions.

Why?
To establish clear responsibilities, ensure dedicated time and attention for customer loyalty, and make it easier to coordinate activities and set goals.

Who?
The Loyalty Team should operate under the Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) and report to the Head of E-commerce, who has been closely involved in this project and understands its development, approach, and goals.

The team should include the following members:

- Product Owner OS & App: Provides a direct link to the software development team and ensures that software-related information can be effectively translated into customer communication.
- Customer Experience Manager: Brings a broad understanding of customer needs and experiences, supported by ongoing customer research. Ensures that the team considers the entire customer journey.
- Product Owner Website: Provides insight into existing digital customer communication.
- UX Researcher: Brings direct insights from customer research and helps the team understand how customer needs, expectations, and perspectives develop over time.

Together, these members combine technical knowledge, customer insights, and an understanding of existing communication channels to develop a consistent and customer-centred approach to loyalty.

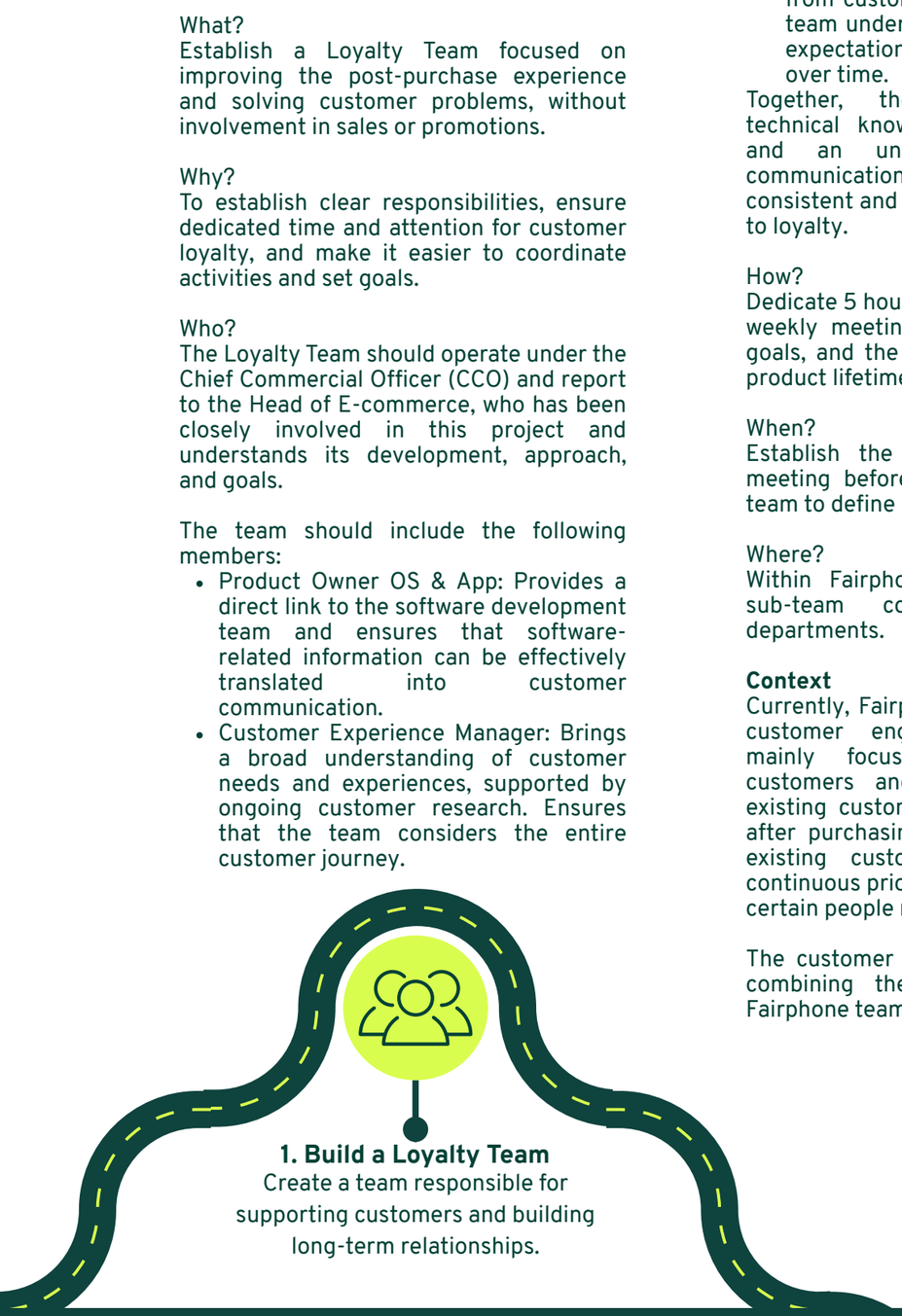
How?
Dedicate 5 hours per person per week, hold weekly meetings and report monthly on goals, and the metrics NPS and expected product lifetime.

When?
Establish the team and have its first meeting before 17-12-2026, allowing the team to define its 2027 goals.

Where?
Within Fairphone, as a cross-functional sub-team connecting the relevant departments.

Context
Currently, Fairphone's communication and customer engagement strategies are mainly focused on attracting new customers and selling products, while existing customers receive less attention after purchasing their phone. Supporting existing customers should become a continuous priority, in order to reach these, certain people need to be responsible.

The customer needs can be adressed by combining the knowledge of different Fairphone teams.



To determine the succes of the team Net Promotor Score and expected product lifetime should be the metrics on which the team has to report. They are indicators of long-term progress.

Key actions for Fairphone

1. Select team members
2. Allocate five hours per week per member for Loyalty Team responsibilities.
3. Define the team's scope, focusing on customer support and problem-solving rather than sales or promotions.
4. Establish the team before 17-12-2026 and organise its first meeting to define the 2027 goals.
5. Schedule weekly meetings to coordinate activities and review progress.
6. Report monthly on the team's goals, roadmap progress, NPS and expected product lifetime.

Expected outcome
A dedicated, cross-functional Loyalty Team with clear leadership, shared responsibilities, dedicated working time and measurable goals for improving the post-purchase experience.

Step 2. Separate touchpoint goals

Clearly separate sales-focused touchpoints from those focused on existing customers and loyalty.
What?
Define separate communication goals and responsibilities for the Loyalty team and the other teams communicating with customers.

Why?
To ensure a clear distinction between communication aimed at acquiring new customers and communication aimed at supporting existing customers.

Who?
The Loyalty Team, the eCommerce team, the Product team, the Sales team and Marketing Team.

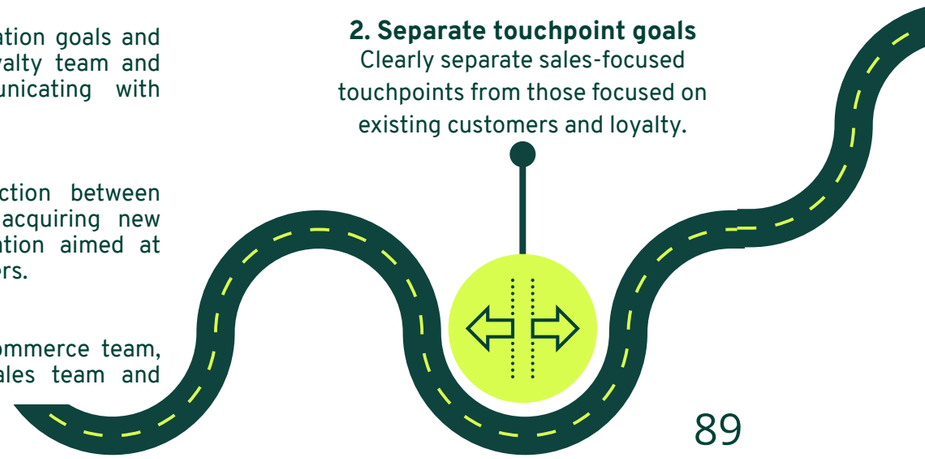
How?
Organise a joint meeting to define all team objectives, identify which touchpoints serve which purpose and agree on how shared touchpoints should be managed.

When?
Immediately after establishing the Loyalty Team and defining its goals, before making further changes to existing touchpoints. This is the second meeting the loyalty team will have.

Where?
Across all Fairphone's customer communication channels and touchpoints.

Context
Currently, Fairphone does not clearly distinguish between communication aimed at acquiring new customers and communication aimed at existing customers. As a result, sales-focused communication dominates, leaving existing customers exposed to promotional messages when they actually need support.

While the focus of this thesis is on supporting, attracting new customers remains essential for Fairphone, but communication aimed at existing customers should primarily focus on their needs rather than encouraging additional purchases.



Key Actions for Fairphone

1. Organise a joint meeting with all the customer focussed teams.
2. Define and align team objectives, clearly distinguishing between acquiring new customers and supporting existing customers.
3. Identify the purpose of existing touchpoints, determining which are intended for sales, support or both.
4. Establish guidelines for shared touchpoints, ensuring that sales and support communication remain clearly distinguishable while both teams can use the channels they need.
5. Document and communicate the agreements so that both teams understand their responsibilities and can apply them during the next steps of the roadmap.

Expected Outcome

A clear and documented division between sales-focused and support-focused communication, with aligned team objectives, defined touchpoint responsibilities and agreements on shared channels. Both teams understand their roles and can work towards their goals without compromising the existing positive points of the experience.

Step 3. Understand existing touchpoint analysis

Take a deep dive into the existing touchpoint analysis to understand current problems and opportunities.

What?
Review the existing touchpoint analysis, understand current pain points and identify what needs to be considered when designing future solutions.

Why?
To ensure that the Loyalty Team understands the problems within existing touchpoints and can design solutions that fit into a consistent post-purchase experience. It is also important for them to get into a critical designer mindset.

Who?
The Loyalty Team.

How?
Study the existing analysis, discuss the identified pain points and continuously consider how new solutions will interact with, replace or improve existing touchpoints.

When?
Before starting the design process, while continuing to consider existing touchpoints throughout the following design and implementation stages.

Where?
Across Fairphone's existing post-purchase touchpoints, with particular attention to the Fairphone app.

Context

The analysis of Fairphone's existing loyalty initiatives has already been conducted during this thesis and provides a foundation for the next steps. There is no need to repeat this research, but it is important to use the insights it provides, this analyses is presented in subchapter 2.4.

It is very important to note that going trough this analysis of existing touchpoints should provide context, not determine the design direction. Otherwise, there is a risk of focusing on improving existing features rather than solving the actual customer problems.

This is especially relevant for the Fairphone app, which will play a central role in the first proposed intervention. Rather than simply adding new features, the challenge is to ensure that the app remains focused and useful. Don't be hasistant to remove (items from) existing touchpoints if they don't have a clear connection to customer needs.

Key Actions for Fairphone

1. Review the existing touchpoint analysis conducted during this thesis, focusing on identified pain points and opportunities.
2. Discuss the findings within the Loyalty Team to establish a shared understanding of the current post-purchase experience.
3. Keep customer problems as the starting point for future design activities, rather than designing around existing touchpoints.
4. Consider the existing touchpoint system throughout the design process, evaluating how new solutions will interact with current channels and features. Or how current channels need to change in order to overcom the customer problems
5. Evaluate which existing touchpoints should be maintained, improved, replaced or removed as new solutions are developed.
6. Critically review the Fairphone app, identifying unnecessary features and content that could distract from its future support-focused purpose.

Expected Outcome

A shared understanding of the existing post-purchase touchpoint system and its pain points, enabling the Loyalty Team to design customer-centred solutions that integrate with, improve or replace existing touchpoints where necessary.



Develop

Step 4. Refine the intervention

Improve the proposed intervention based on the validation results and test it again.

What?
Refine the existing intervention based on validation findings, and evaluate its impact through an early pilot.

Why?
To turn the validated concept into a functional solution that reaches the goal.

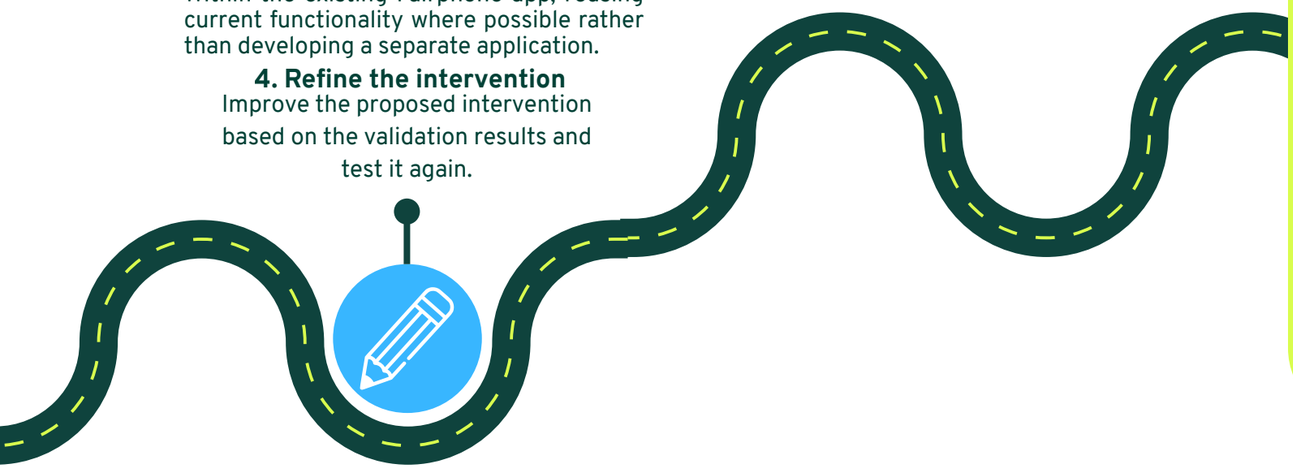
Who?
The Loyalty Team, mainly the product manager of the app and OS and Software Development to develop, integrate and validate the intervention.

How?
Follow an iterative process: improve the prototype, validate changes, develop the supporting functionality and conduct an early pilot to evaluate effects.

When?
After reviewing the existing touchpoints. Start with the prototype improvements and conduct a pilot as early as possible, before a full rollout. The design process should be quick, designing and validating along side each other within the time frame of a month. The actual development behind the system might take longer.

Where?
Within the existing Fairphone app, reusing current functionality where possible rather than developing a separate application.

4. Refine the intervention
Improve the proposed intervention based on the validation results and test it again.



Context
The foundation for this intervention has already been developed and tested during this thesis, making it a potential quick win for Fairphone. All six participants successfully completed the validation scenarios and responded positively to the concept. However, the findings also revealed that there is room for improvement.

Besides from the design improvements, the system behind the intervention should also be developed. Delivering reliable and up-to-date information requires a supporting system that connects customer support processes with software development. Some existing phone-scanning functionality which is already implemented in the Fairphone app, may be reusable, reducing the need to build everything from scratch.

Finally, although participants expressed positive expectations regarding customer loyalty and longer product use, the initial validation measured perceptions rather than actual behavioural changes. Further real-world testing is therefore needed to determine whether these expected benefits occur in practice.

Key Actions for Fairphone

1. Refine the existing prototype based on the validation findings with main focus on making the information clearer and more understanble:
   - Improve colour consistency, visual indicators, especially the visibility of Phone Status.
   - Clarify bug severity, affected devices, expected resolution times and available customer actions.
   - Clearly distinguish between Known Bugs, Resolved Bugs and Working On.
   - Make Report a Bug, repair instructions, replacement parts and human support easier to access.
   - Make notifications optional, and make sure they are clearly informative without causing unnecessary concern.
2. Validate the improved prototype with existing Fairphone customers.
3. Iterate based on validation results, repeating testing and improvements until the main usability and communication issues have been addressed.
4. Integrate existing phone-scanning functionality into the intervention, reusing current technical capabilities while improving how diagnostic results and recommended actions are communicated.
5. Develop the supporting system with Customer Support and Software Development, defining how bugs are reported, processed, resolved and communicated through the app.
6. Make sure the intervention functions well and the system behind it works.
7. Launch an early pilot with real Fairphone customers to test the effect of the intervention.
8. Evaluate the pilot and refine the system based on customer feedback and observed behaviour before implementation.

Expected Outcome
A functional, customer-validated intervention integrated into the existing Fairphone app, supported by clear internal processes and tested through an early pilot.

The pilot should provide evidence of whether customers better understand their phone's condition, feel more confident making repair decisions and can solve more problems independently. These results will help Fairphone determine whether the intervention is ready for wider implementation and how it may contribute to stronger customer loyalty and longer product use.

Step 5. Design solutions for remaining customer problems

Develop solutions for the other identified customer problems using autonomous informing.

What?
Design and validate solutions for the three remaining customer problems, following the autonomous informing design direction and the List of Requirements established in this thesis.

Why?
To address the three remaining customer problems and create a complete post-purchase experience that proactively supports customers throughout their journey.

Who?
The Loyalty Team, involving other departments when needed.

How?
Follow an iterative, customer-centred design process. Start from customer problems, develop scenarios and concepts, create prototypes, validate them with customers and improve them based on feedback.

When?
Initial design exploration can run parallel to Step 4. Further development should follow once the first intervention has been sufficiently developed and its early pilot shows promising results.

Where?
Across Fairphone's post-purchase touchpoints, using the most suitable channels for each solution while ensuring consistency with the existing intervention and communication platforms.

Context
The intervention developed in Step 4 addresses only one of the four customer problems identified during this thesis. While this is an important starting point, solving one problem alone is not enough to create a complete post-purchase experience.

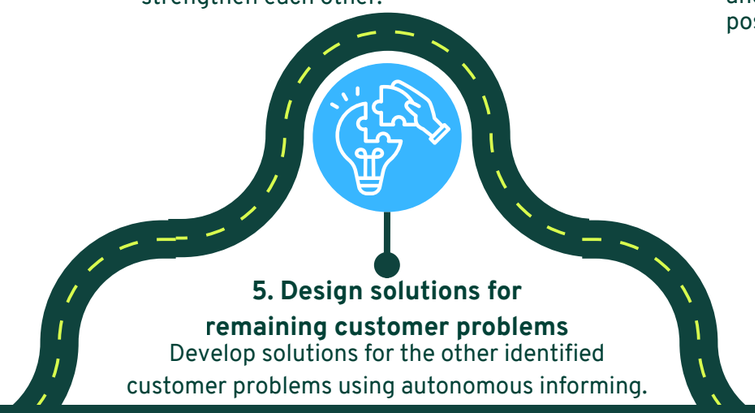
An important principle is that autonomous informing should connect all solutions into one consistent approach, rather than becoming a collection of separate features. This means that Fairphone should take the initiative to provide customers with relevant information and support, instead of waiting for them to search for help themselves.

Furthermore, one solution may address multiple customer problems. Therefore, the remaining problems do not necessarily require three completely separate interventions. The focus should be on creating a connected experience in which different solutions complement and strengthen each other.

Key Actions for Fairphone
1. Review the three remaining customer problems identified during this thesis, including the underlying customer needs and the List of Requirements.
2. Determine which the order of priority of the problems.
3. Evaluate how the intervention from Step 4 already contributes to solving these problems, identifying which customer needs are not yet addressed.
4. Develop customer scenarios for the remaining problems, starting from the customer's situation and needs rather than from existing touchpoints or features.
5. Design solutions using autonomous informing.
6. Develop prototypes and validate them with existing customers.
7. Iterate based on validation results, improving the concepts and repeating validation where necessary until the main customer problems and usability issues are adequately addressed.

Expected Outcome
A set of customer-validated, connected solution concepts addressing the three remaining customer problems, all following the autonomous informing design direction and the List of Requirements.

The solutions should complement the intervention from Step 4, avoid unnecessary duplication and provide a clear foundation for further development and integration into Fairphone's existing post-purchase experience.



5. Design solutions for remaining customer problems
Develop solutions for the other identified customer problems using autonomous informing.

Step 6. Improve existing touchpoints

Adapt existing touchpoints to better meet customer needs and follow autonomous informing

What?
Adapt, combine or remove existing loyalty-focused touchpoints based on the four customer problems, the newly developed interventions and the autonomous informing design direction.

Why?
To create a consistent post-purchase experience in which existing touchpoints and new interventions complement each other, rather than creating confusion and to make sure the whole system is designed based on customer needs rather than from a company perspective.

Who?
The Loyalty Team in collaboration with other departments when necessary.

How?
Evaluate how each touchpoint fits into the overall system, determine its value for customers and decide whether it should be maintained, improved, combined or removed. Use the proposed touchpoint improvements from this thesis as a starting point.

When?
Continuously alongside Steps 4 and 5. This is an itterative proces that will continue on the entire journey of this team.

Where?
Across Fairphone's existing loyalty-focused touchpoints, while maintaining the distinction between support-focused and sales-focused communication established in Step 2.

Context
Fairphone's existing post-purchase touchpoints currently function too much as separate elements rather than as parts of one connected experience. Simply adding new interventions could increase this fragmentation instead of improving the customer experience.

The goal should not be to preserve every existing touchpoint, but to ensure that each one adds value to the customer. A touchpoint should have a clear purpose and contribute to addressing customer needs. Otherwise, it risks creating unnecessary complexity or distracting customers from the support they actually need.

An initial proposal for improving the existing touchpoints has already been developed during this thesis (see Appendix I). However, these proposals were developed before the complete set of customer-centred interventions. They should therefore be treated as an inspiration of a starting point, not as a final design. Fairphone should critically reconsider these proposals in light of the new solutions and should not hesitate to remove existing features or touchpoints if they no longer serve a clear purpose.

6. Improve existing touchpoints
Adapt existing touchpoints to better meet customer needs and follow autonomous informing

Key Actions for Fairphone

1. Review the existing loyalty-focused touchpoints identified in Step 2, using the findings from Step 3 and the newly developed interventions to understand how they fit into the complete post-purchase experience.
2. Evaluate the customer value of each touchpoint, identifying which customer needs or problems it addresses and whether its functionality is still relevant.
3. Decide which touchpoints should be maintained, improved, combined or removed, eliminating unnecessary duplication and features that do not contribute to the customer experience.
4. Prioritise the touchpoints and determine the order in which they should be addressed.
5. Redesign the touchpoints and use the proposed touchpoint improvements presented in this thesis (see Appendix I) as an inspiration if still relevant.
6. Align all loyalty-focused touchpoints with autonomous informing.
7. Continuously review the complete touchpoint system as new solutions are developed, checking whether all elements still serve a clear purpose, work together and provide a consistent customer experience. It is an itterative ongoing process.

Expected Outcome

A consistent and integrated post-purchase touchpoint system in which existing touchpoints and new interventions complement each other, provide clear value to customers and follow the autonomous informing design direction.

Unnecessary or overlapping elements have been identified for removal, and the remaining touchpoints have clear purposes. The resulting system is itterated over the entire journey.

Implement

Step 7. Validate the complete system

Test how all solutions work together, run a pilot and improve based on feedback.

What?
Validate the complete post-purchase system through a final pilot and improve it based on the results.

Why?
To ensure that all solutions work together effectively and provide a consistent, customer-centred post-purchase experience.

Who?
The Loyalty Team, involving existing Fairphone customers in the pilot.

How?
Test the complete customer journey, collect feedback and measure the effects on customer experience. Refine the system where necessary.

When?
This is an ongoint itterative process where validation is a part of developing the interventions.

Where?
Across all redesigned loyalty-focused touchpoints and interventions.

Context

Although the individual interventions have already been validated and improved, this does not guarantee that they work effectively as one complete system. Customers interact with multiple touchpoints throughout their post-purchase journey, making it important to evaluate the overall experience rather than individual solutions.

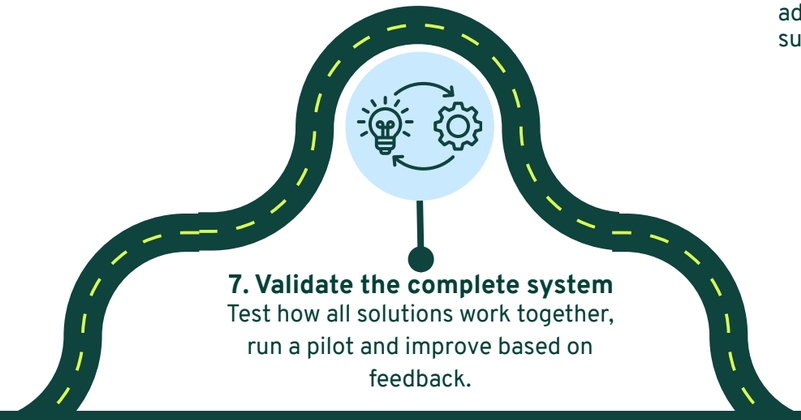
Depending on the development timeline, the system should be introduced and tested in smaller stages. When these steps are validated it is also important to validate the whole system working together.

Key Actions for Fairphone

1. Prepare a pilot involving existing Fairphone customers and covering the complete post-purchase experience.
2. Test how all interventions and touchpoints work together, focusing on consistency, usability and the customer journey.
3. Refine the complete system based on pilot findings, repeating tests where necessary.
4. Implement interventions when ready
5. Repeat validation and development over and over again.

Expected Outcome

A fully integrated and validated post-purchase system that provides a consistent customer experience, with the main usability and integration issues addressed and sufficient evidence to support a wider rollout.



Step 8. Implement the system

Roll out the improved solutions and create a consistent post-purchase experience.

What?
Implement (parts of) the integrated post-purchase system.

Why?
To create a consistent post-purchase experience that continuously supports customers and strengthens long-term loyalty.

Who?
The Loyalty Team.

How?
Gradually implement validated solutions as they become ready, measure their impact and integrate them into the complete system.

When?
Continuously alongside the previous roadmap steps. It is an itterative process.

Where?
Across Fairphone's post-purchase touchpoints.

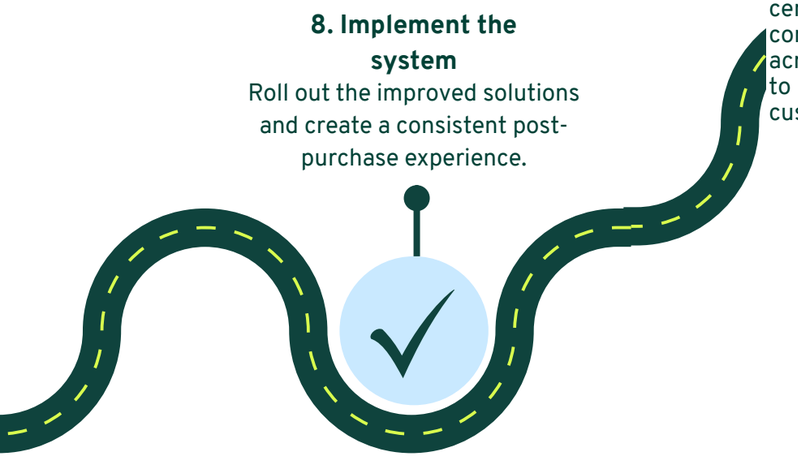
Context
Implementation should not be treated as a single final activity. By gradually introducing validated solutions, Fairphone can start creating value for customers while the remaining interventions are still being developed. This also provides opportunities to measure their impact and learn from real customer behaviour.

Although the goal is to launch one integrated system, the system should never be considered completely finished. Customer needs and technology will continue to evolve, requiring ongoing improvements and innovation.

Key Actions for Fairphone

1. Implement validated solutions gradually as they become ready, rather than waiting for the complete system.
2. Monitor the impact of each implementation.
3. Integrate new solutions into the existing system, ensuring consistency as additional functionality becomes available.
4. Continue monitoring and improving the system, adapting to changing customer needs and new opportunities.

Expected Outcome
A fully integrated post-purchase system centred around My Fairphone, providing consistent, proactive customer support across touchpoints. The system continues to evolve through ongoing monitoring, customer feedback and improvements.



Conclusion

This roadmap provides Fairphone with a structured yet flexible approach to transforming its post-purchase experience into one consistent, customer-centred system. By applying Autonomous Informing throughout the different phases, Fairphone can move from sales-driven communication towards proactive and continuous customer support.

Ultimately, stronger customer relationships cannot be created through a design alone. Fairphone must take responsibility for understanding its customers, addressing their problems and continuously improving their experience. Only by putting these principles into practice can Fairphone demonstrate its commitment to existing customers and build stronger, long-term relationships. It is an ongoing process which is never finished, for which this thesis is only the start.

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Appendix A: Consent form interviews

Consent form

You are being invited to participate in a research study titled "Enhancing customer loyalty and building customer relations at Fairphone". This study is being done by Guusje Huijsmans from the TU Delft, in colleboration with Fairphone.
The purpose of this research study is to find out more about the needs and wants of Fairphones existing customers in order to achieve a higher level of customer satisfaction, and will take you approximately *45* minutes to complete. The data will be used for writing a master Thesis which will be published in the TU Delft repository. We will be asking you to explain about your experience with Fairphone and the up- and down- sides of long lasting technology products.

As with any online activity the risk of a breach is always possible. To the best of our ability your answers in this study will remain confidential. We will minimize any risks by extracting personal data like, name, contact information and location will not be used or shared.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time. You are free to omit any questions.

For any further questions you can get in touch via Guusje.huijsmans@fairphone.com

PLEASE TICK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES	Yes	No
A: GENERAL AGREEMENT – RESEARCH GOALS, PARTICPANT TASKS AND VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION		
1. I have read and understood the study information dated [*DD/MM/YYYY*], or it has been read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.	□	□
2. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.	□	□
3. I understand that taking part in the study involves: an audio-recorded interview, which will be stranscibeted as text.	□	□
4. I understand that I will be compensated for my participation by […]	□	□
B: POTENTIAL RISKS OF PARTICIPATING (INCLUDING DATA PROTECTION)		
5. I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as my name or email adres, will not be shared beyond the study team.	□	□
C: RESEARCH PUBLICATION, DISSEMINATION AND APPLICATION		
6. I understand that after the research study the de-identified information I provide will be used for writing a thesis report which will be published in the TU Delft repository.	□	□

Interview enhancing customer relations / Fairphone
Graduation Project Guusje Huijsmans / TU-Delft
Date: XX/XX//26

7. I agree that my responses, views or other input can be quoted anonymously in research outputs	□	□

Signatures

With my signature I acknowledge that I have read the provided information about the project and understand the nature of my participation as well as being in agreement with the requirements given for participation in this project.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant [printed]	Signature	Date

I, as researcher, have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant and, to the best of my ability, ensured that the participant understands to what they are freely consenting.

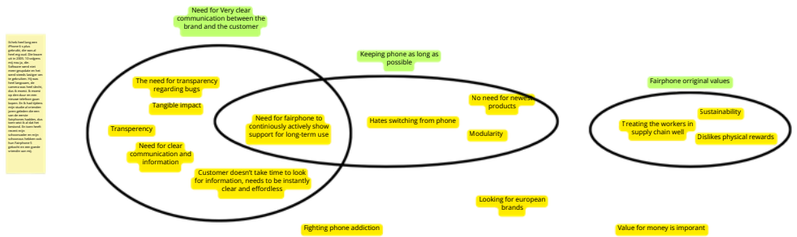
_____	_____	_____
Researcher name [printed]	Signature	Date

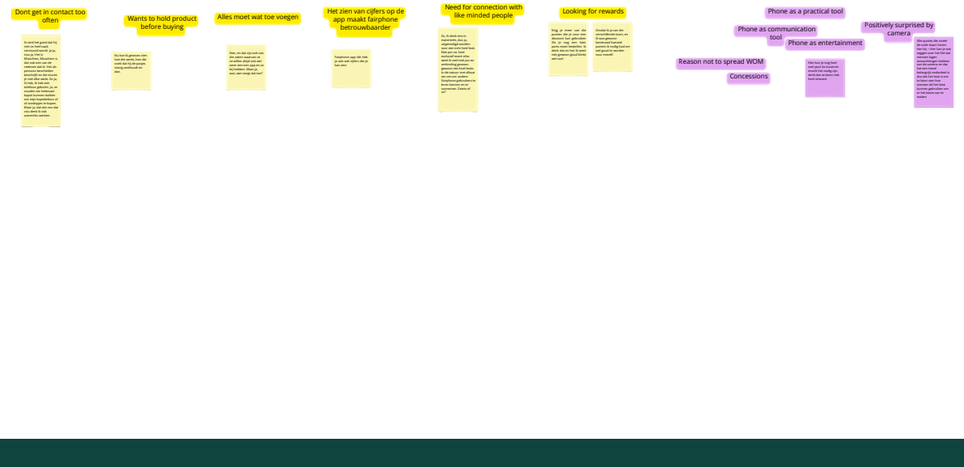
Appendix B: Interview analysis

Quotes are clustered



Clustered quotes are clustered again





Appendix C: Session 1: Independent Ideation & Translating Jobs to be Done into Concepts



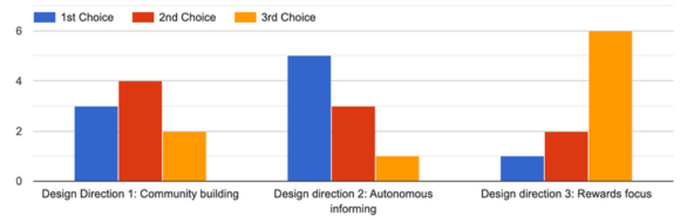
Appendix D: Clustering Ideas sessions



Appendix E: Validation Forms

Please rank the design directions from most preferred to implement to least preferred based on your personal opinion.

Diagram kopiëren



Why did you decide on this order?

9 antwoorden

1 and 2 are close and 3 is a bit further behind, but the ideas proposed in 1 are a bit closer to my current needs.

This order is based on my current needs from fairphone

All directions have the potential to help the user to be more connected to the brand but in my eyes this is the order of the magnitudes of the potential.

The first place was clear to me. The community thing is in my opinion more ecological than the reward so therefore this order.

Even though all implementations would be good, I would really like autonomous informing

Although it is difficult to see which of these problems are most problematic for users (and in what way) It feels like problem one covers more users then other problems. It is also about optimizing what is allready there(fora, loyality programm) , instead of introducing yet another tool (device health)

I decided based on what I believe is closest to what our customers can benefit from (is there really

Why did you decide on this order?

9 antwoorden

Although it is difficult to see which of these problems are most problematic for users (and in what way) It feels like problem one covers more users then other problems. It is also about optimizing what is allready there(fora, loyality programm) , instead of introducing yet another tool (device health)

I decided based on what I believe is closest to what our customers can benefit from (is there really something in it for them?), and second: what fits Fairphone's most important promise (longevity).

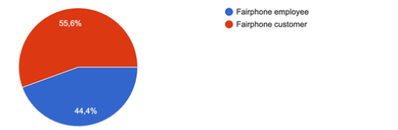
I think the 1st choice tackles more of the original problem of customer loyalty in the sense that it's more a bottom up approach. With loyalty comes trust and I think customers trust more other people than maybe an organisation but that's just my opinion. The second and third I feel like could work but are quite niche and are more top down driven. Because it's top down driven, we as a company would need to be on top of our game to provide the best experience within these solutions and if we slip or make a mistake and a customer gets a bad experience, that could mean a lost customer that is no longer loyal.

This order prioritises engagement and reach first, since with a rewards program we can cover a larger portion of our customer. Then, with direction two, we empower users to solve problems by themselves. Finally, the community building direction is valuable but relies on user engagement and how willing our users are to interact with us.

Are you a Fairphone employee or a customer?

9 antwoorden

Diagram kopiëren



Why did you choose to rank **your selected design direction** first, and what makes it (in your opinion) the best one to implement?

9 antwoorden

The reason why I chose fairphone is because of the environmental and societal impact i can make. Sharing this with a community would be even greater.

I am still getting to know fairphone and sometimes I feel like i am not informed well enough of bugs or fixed bugs. Or maybe even the cause of bugs. Autonomous informing would help me with this.

Autonomous informing creates a (very rare compared to the traditional phone brands) insight in apparatus status. This would forge a connection between the user and the phone where the user does everything to take care of his precious phone. He would make sure battery lifetime is extended for example. This will form the basis of the connection between rhe user and the brand.

I feel like gaining insights into the phone hardware status will allow me to make informed decisions regarding replacements of specific parts. This is in line with why i wanted a fairphone in the first place.

I feel like I could use some autonomous informing to help me guide through the use of fairphone

As mentioned, I would favor a solution that impact the most users. Fairphone allready has a great active community, but finding the right information is crucial to users being in charge of their device and in

Why did you choose to rank **your selected design direction** first, and what makes it (in your opinion) the best one to implement?

9 antwoorden

their own actions.

The one-pager talks about a problem, however I remember that a very important NEED from our customer is 'longevity' and more concretely: Fairphone really staying true to that (doing everything we can to live up to that promise). We are different because we really care that you use your phone longer. This is also a very clear difference between us and our competitors (who want you to buy a new phone every year).

Giving people rewards is also beneficial for the customer, but 'easier' and 'shorter dopamine shot'. It builds likelyness, but no deeper bond.

I selected it first because it was the most bottom up approach and I do see it adding customer loyalty the most compared to the other options. It allows users to feel supported not just by us as a company but by the whole community and links back to where Fairphone started as an NGO. Since we are not that big of a company it helps us as well since we can also rely on the community to help us. Although this can also backfire (users leaving bad comments on the site or getting unwanted negative discussions about the phone, this is a drawback and we would definitely need some sort of moderation).

Because this brings a tangible benefit to our users, creates engagement with the brand and make our users more likely to participate in future initiatives.

Did you find any good features in the other two design directions that could be added to Direction 1 to make it even stronger?

8 antwoorden

The community design would also help me getting to know fairphone as I could maybe have a place where I can ask questions on my fairphone.

Yes in my view the community direction also has great potential to improve the connection between the user and the brand. A community where fellow users help eachother out will have a huge effect on brand loyalty.

I like the community part. Maybe you could haven an app with both?

Yes the communit part

I would love to see what honest, genuine AI solutions would bring here. So making the fora really well for finding specific information. Also combining it with customer support. There is so much knowledge that we do no share effectively with our users (but in FAQ's, or when you call customer support).
Key would be that Fairphone actively manages this. So, its moderated, and the information shared by users is factchecked. Also, if you look at for example tweakers, it could be used to share tech-topics, data-sensitivity topics, and support connections in subgroups (e.g. Fairphone 3 users must really be loyal, so what can we give them in terms of attention, recognition (expert badges) and more.)

Did you find any good features in the other two design directions that could be added to Direction 1 to make it even stronger?

8 antwoorden

conversations between customers and provide links to step by step guides. From direction 3: I like the recognition part: providing badges to expert community menbers might be a way to do this, or reward activeness on the forum, or even just give confetti when people answer a question from someone

I liked in the 3rd direction that it stated: good for your phone, good for you, food for the planet.

It shows really well the challenge we have, where we want to talk about a great product, but also let you know that whilst you benefit from this long lasting, great product, you are doing good, without any extra effort.

This can also work for the 2nd direction.

Also: getting rewards could be added to the 2nd direction to a certain extend.

I think option 2 and 3 have great features but I'm worried that if we add too much to direction one it becomes overly complicated and also becomes a long project. I would start with option 1 with always the possibility down to the line to add to it

The automated troubleshooting and device health checks could be integrated into the community forum.

Are there any aspects that you would not like to see included in the design direction? If so, please explain why

9 antwoorden

It should really be not 'another forum' but substituting forum, blog and frontportal for CS. yet another touchpoint with allready various apps, website makes it hard to get customers connected.

For direction 2 I believe we need to be careful it will not sound too much for the happy few, very techy customers. It should really be for us all.

Not that I would not like to see but more risks that I would take into account. I would love to know what are the team and company risks within each design and what sort of maintenance needs to be done to make these happen? For the first option for example like was stated before. we would have to think about who would moderate the community to make sure nothing is said that shouldn't be said. Also where would this design lie? Would it be on the phone on the website , everywhere etc. What would the user flow look like and where would it have the most impact. Am also curious to see what exactly can be found there. (you mention guides, videos, etc) are these from both the company and customers or just customers?
I also would be interested to know who gets access to the community? Is it open source or would it only be for people who have bought a fairphone product?

We should avoid over relying on unmoderated community solutions for complex hardware troubleshooting. If users are left entirely to independent troubleshooting without official verification it can lead to misinformation.

Do you have any other feedback on the design directions?

9 antwoorden

Feedback on the directions themselves:
No negative feedback I can think off. I think they are very logical directions from your research. With direction 1 I do feel unsure on what the benefit is on top of the already existing community, but maybe I miss some of the context for that. Also direction 3 now looks like an explanation of the Keep Club, but I bet you explain in your research what is lacking with Keep Club now.

Feedback on how they are explained:
I know the background of your research so I understood the directions very well. But I think they could be explained better also including user needs and not only problems. And also more explanation on how this would gain customers loyalty (what is the proof to back them up?)

Nope! I gave it already above hehe great job! You got this!

All three directions have big potential, but they shouldn't live completely in silos. The ideal long term roadmap would use Direction 2 to identify a device issue, Direction 1 to help the user learn how to fix their phone, and Direction 3 to give them points or recognition for successfully repairing their phone instead of replacing it.

Appendix F: Validation session guide

Validatiesessie – ongeveer 20 minuten

Introductie

Tijdens deze validatie sessie ga ik een paar scenario's voorstellen. Ik wil je graag vragen om je in deze scenario's in te leven en hardop na te denken. Als je straks een scherm te zien krijgt wil ik graag dat je hard op vertelt waar je op klikt en waarom. Ik ben echt benieuwd naar jouw mening en ervaring en er zijn dus geen foute antwoorden.

Voordat het concept wordt getoond:

1. Wat doe je normaal gesproken wanneer iets op je telefoon niet goed werkt?
2. Hoe zeker voel je je er over het algemeen over dat je begrijpt wat er aan de hand is wanneer je telefoon een probleem heeft?

Scenario 1 – Fairphone informeert de klant over een softwarebug

Situatie

Stel je voor dat je je Fairphone zoals gewoonlijk gebruikt maar hij loopt af en toe vast. Stel je voor dat je deze melding van Fairphone ontvangt: **(Toon melding).** *Als je de meldig aan klinkt opent deze fairphone app:* **(Toon interventie).**

1. Wat is je eerste reactie op het feit dat Fairphone je op deze manier over de bug informeert?
2. Zou je stappen ondernemen om meer informatie te krijgen?
3. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat je kunt doen totdat het probleem is opgelost?
4. Begrijp je wat er mis is met je telefoon?
5. Verandert het feit dat je weet dat Fairphone al op de hoogte is van het probleem hoe je je over het probleem voelt?
4. Zou je liever hebben dat Fairphone je op deze manier proactief informeert, of zoek je deze informatie liever zelf op? Waarom?

Scenario 2A – Een probleem met het scherm van de telefoon

Situatie

Stel je voor dat je merkt dat een deel van het touchscreen van je Fairphone soms niet meer reageert. Bijvoorbeeld: het onderste gedeelte van het scherm registreert je aanraking niet altijd.

Je weet niet of het scherm kapot is, of het om een softwareprobleem gaat of dat er een onderdeel vervangen moet worden.

Voordat het concept wordt getoond

1. Wat zou je denken als je dit probleem voor het eerst opmerkt?
2. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is?
3. Zou je je zeker genoeg voelen om te bepalen of je telefoon gerepareerd moet worden?

Toon nu de interventie waarin de Fairphone-app de klant helpt om het probleem te diagnosticeren, mogelijke oorzaken uitlegt en een passende volgende stap voorstelt.

Nadat het concept is getoond

5. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is met je telefoon? Denk hierbij hardop.
6. Welke stappen zou je daarna nemen?
7. Geeft dit je meer vertrouwen om te beslissen of de telefoon wel of niet gerepareerd moet worden?
8. Zou dit ervoor zorgen dat je eerder zou proberen de telefoon te repareren, in plaats van het probleem te negeren of een nieuwe telefoon te overwegen?
9. Is er nog informatie die je nodig zou hebben voordat je actie onderneemt?
10. Zijn er dingen die je tegenkomt die je niet helemaal begrijpt?

Scenario 2A – Een probleem met het scherm van de telefoon

Situatie

Stel je voor dat je merkt dat een deel van het touchscreen van je Fairphone soms niet meer reageert. Bijvoorbeeld: het onderste gedeelte van het scherm registreert je aanraking niet altijd.

Je weet niet of het scherm kapot is, of het om een softwareprobleem gaat of dat er een onderdeel vervangen moet worden.

Voordat het concept wordt getoond

1. Wat zou je denken als je dit probleem voor het eerst opmerkt?
2. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is?
3. Zou je je zeker genoeg voelen om te bepalen of je telefoon gerepareerd moet worden?

Toon nu de interventie waarin de Fairphone-app de klant helpt om het probleem te diagnosticeren, mogelijke oorzaken uitlegt en een passende volgende stap voorstelt.

Nadat het concept is getoond

4. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is met je telefoon? Denk hierbij hardop.
5. Welke stappen zou je daarna nemen?
6. Geeft dit je meer vertrouwen om te beslissen of de telefoon wel of niet gerepareerd moet worden?
7. Zou dit ervoor zorgen dat je eerder zou proberen de telefoon te repareren, in plaats van het probleem te negeren of een nieuwe telefoon te overwegen?
8. Is er nog informatie die je nodig zou hebben voordat je actie onderneemt?
9. Zijn er dingen die je tegenkomt die je niet helemaal begrijpt?

Scenario 2B – Een probleem met het scherm van de telefoon

Situatie

Stel je voor dat je merkt dat je camera moeite heeft met scherpstellen.

Je weet niet of de camera kapot is, of het om een softwareprobleem gaat of dat er een onderdeel vervangen moet worden.

Voordat het concept wordt getoond

1. Wat zou je denken als je dit probleem voor het eerst opmerkt?
2. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is?
3. Zou je je zeker genoeg voelen om te bepalen of je telefoon gerepareerd moet worden?

Toon nu de interventie waarin de Fairphone-app de klant helpt om het probleem te diagnosticeren, mogelijke oorzaken uitlegt en een passende volgende stap voorstelt.

Nadat het concept is getoond

4. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is met je telefoon? Denk hierbij hardop.
5. Welke stappen zou je daarna nemen?
6. Geeft dit je meer vertrouwen om te beslissen of de telefoon wel of niet gerepareerd moet worden?
7. Zou dit ervoor zorgen dat je eerder zou proberen de telefoon te repareren, in plaats van het probleem te negeren of een nieuwe telefoon te overwegen?
8. Is er nog informatie die je nodig zou hebben voordat je actie onderneemt?
9. Zijn er dingen die je tegenkomt die je niet helemaal begrijpt?

Scenario 2C – Een probleem met het scherm van de telefoon

Situatie

Stel je voor dat je merkt dat het geluid soms niet goed te verstaan is.

Je weet niet of de speaker kapot is, of het om een softwareprobleem gaat of dat er een onderdeel vervangen moet worden.

Voordat het concept wordt getoond

1. Wat zou je denken als je dit probleem voor het eerst opmerkt?
2. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is?
3. Zou je je zeker genoeg voelen om te bepalen of je telefoon gerepareerd moet worden?

Toon nu de interventie waarin de Fairphone-app de klant helpt om het probleem te diagnosticeren, mogelijke oorzaken uitlegt en een passende volgende stap voorstelt.

Nadat het concept is getoond

4. Wat zou je doen om erachter te komen wat er mis is met je telefoon? Denk hierbij hardop.
5. Welke stappen zou je daarna nemen?
6. Geeft dit je meer vertrouwen om te beslissen of de telefoon wel of niet gerepareerd moet worden?
7. Zou dit ervoor zorgen dat je eerder zou proberen de telefoon te repareren, in plaats van het probleem te negeren of een nieuwe telefoon te overwegen?
8. Is er nog informatie die je nodig zou hebben voordat je actie onderneemt?
9. Zijn er dingen die je tegenkomt die je niet helemaal begrijpt?

Algemene evaluatie – 4–5 minuten

Vraag de deelnemer na de twee scenario's om de stellingen te beoordelen die gegeven zijn via de google forms link (appendix G) op een schaal van **1 = helemaal mee oneens tot 5 = helemaal mee eens**.

Appendix G: Validation Forms

Validation Fairphone

Formulierbeschrijving

Dit soort communicatie geeft mij meer duidelijkheid over wat er met mijn telefoon aan de hand is.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Zeer oneens	○	○	○	○	○	Zeer eens

Dit zou mij meer controle geven over de staat van mijn telefoon en hoe ik de levensduur ervan kan verlengen.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Zeer oneens	○	○	○	○	○	Zeer eens

Dit zou mij helpen beter te begrijpen wat er mis is met mijn telefoon.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Zeer oneens	○	○	○	○	○	Zeer eens

Dit zou mij helpen mijn Fairphone langer te gebruiken.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Zeer oneens	○	○	○	○	○	Zeer eens

Dit zou mij helpen beter te begrijpen wanneer en hoe ik mijn telefoon moet repareren.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Zeer oneens	○	○	○	○	○	Zeer eens

Dit soort ondersteuning zou ervoor zorgen dat ik Fairphone eerder aan anderen zou aanbevelen.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Zeer oneens	○	○	○	○	○	Zeer eens

Dit soort communicatie zou mij het gevoel geven dat Fairphone mij als partner behandelt, in plaats van alleen als klant.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Zeer oneens	○	○	○	○	○	Zeer eens

Appendix H: Outcomes validation Forms

Diagram kopiëren

Dit soort communicatie geeft mij meer duidelijkheid over wat er met mijn telefoon aan de hand is.

6 antwoorden

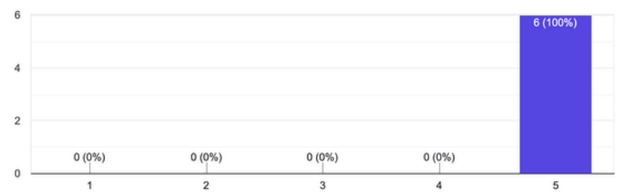


Diagram kopiëren

Dit zou mij meer controle geven over de staat van mijn telefoon en hoe ik de levensduur ervan kan verlengen.

6 antwoorden

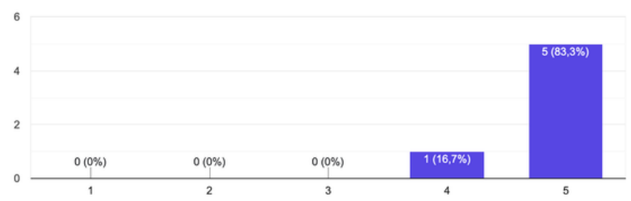


Diagram kopiëren

Dit zou mij helpen beter te begrijpen wat er mis is met mijn telefoon.

6 antwoorden

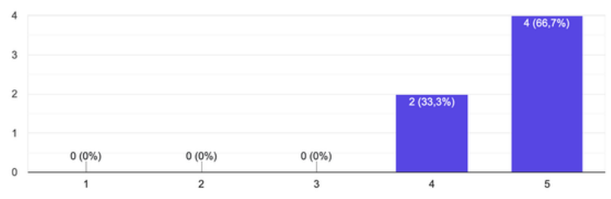


Diagram kopiëren

Dit zou mij helpen mijn Fairphone langer te gebruiken.

6 antwoorden

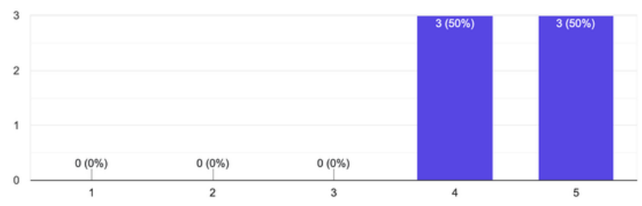


Diagram kopiëren

Dit zou mij helpen beter te begrijpen wanneer en hoe ik mijn telefoon moet repareren.

6 antwoorden

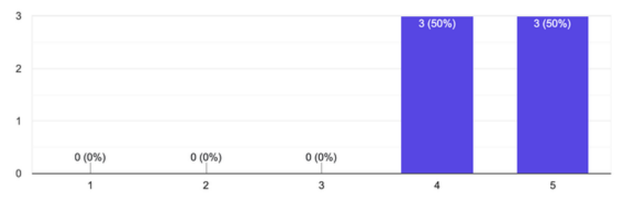


Diagram kopiëren

Dit soort ondersteuning zou ervoor zorgen dat ik Fairphone eerder aan anderen zou aanbevelen.

6 antwoorden

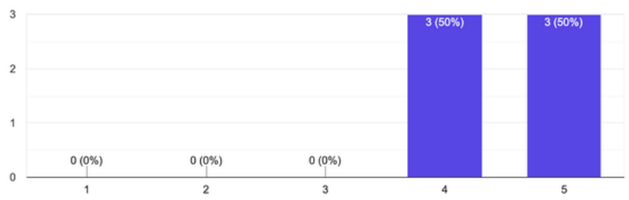
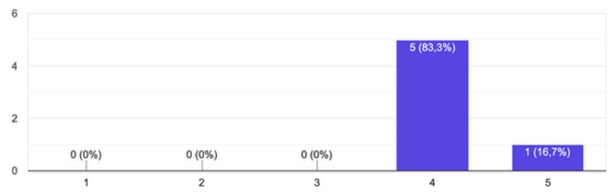


Diagram kopiëren

Dit soort communicatie zou mij het gevoel geven dat Fairphone mij als partner behandelt, in plaats van alleen als klant.

6 antwoorden

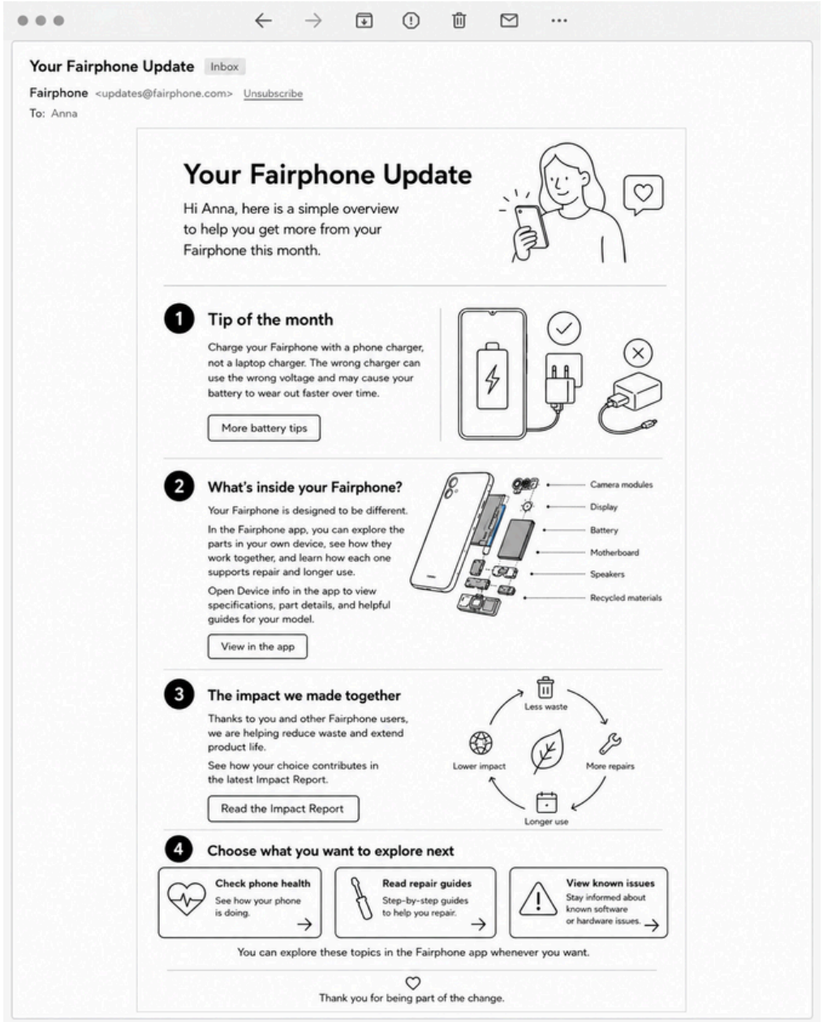


Appendix I: Sketches and suggestions for improving existing touchpoints

Email
From promotional monthly updates

Email
To customer-focused guidance that strengthens the relationship with the product and the brand

The monthly newsletter will still be used, but its focus changes from promotion to customer support. Instead of encouraging new purchases, the email strengthens the relationship between Fairphone and the customer, and between the customer and their own product, by sharing useful, personal and actionable information.



Informative customer support email

This email is designed to inform and support existing customers in a practical and personal way. Instead of focusing on promotion, it helps customers get more value from their Fairphone through useful tips, app-linked information, and updates they can act on themselves. It also makes the customer part of the impact story by showing how their choices contribute to longer product use and lower impact. In this way, the email supports an autonomous informing approach, where customers receive relevant guidance while remaining free to explore more in the app when they want to.

Appendix I: Sketches and suggestions for improving existing touchpoints

Instagram
From product and impact promotion

Instagram
To practical customer support and shared information.

The new goal of Instagram is to support existing customers in using and maintaining their phone. Weekly tips, bug updates and app reminders make information easier to receive in small steps. Customers who want a full overview can use the app, while Instagram offers a lighter and more gradual way to stay informed.



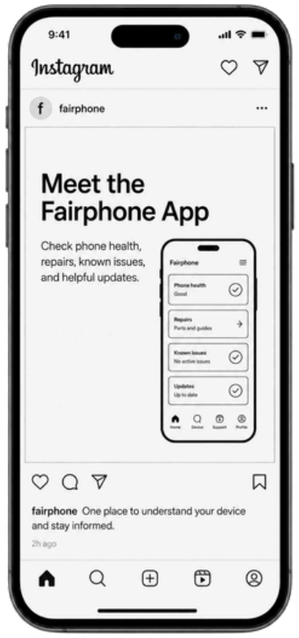
1. Practical tip for longer phone use
This post gives the customer a simple and useful tip that can help extend the life of their phone. It supports existing customers by offering practical guidance they can directly apply.



2. Impact shown through the customer's contribution
This post communicates impact in a way that makes the customer part of the story. It shows that their own behaviour contributes to Fairphone's mission, which makes the message more personal and engaging.



3. Introduction to the Fairphone App
This post introduces the app as a helpful tool for existing customers. It clearly shows the value of the app by explaining how it helps users understand, maintain, and manage their device.



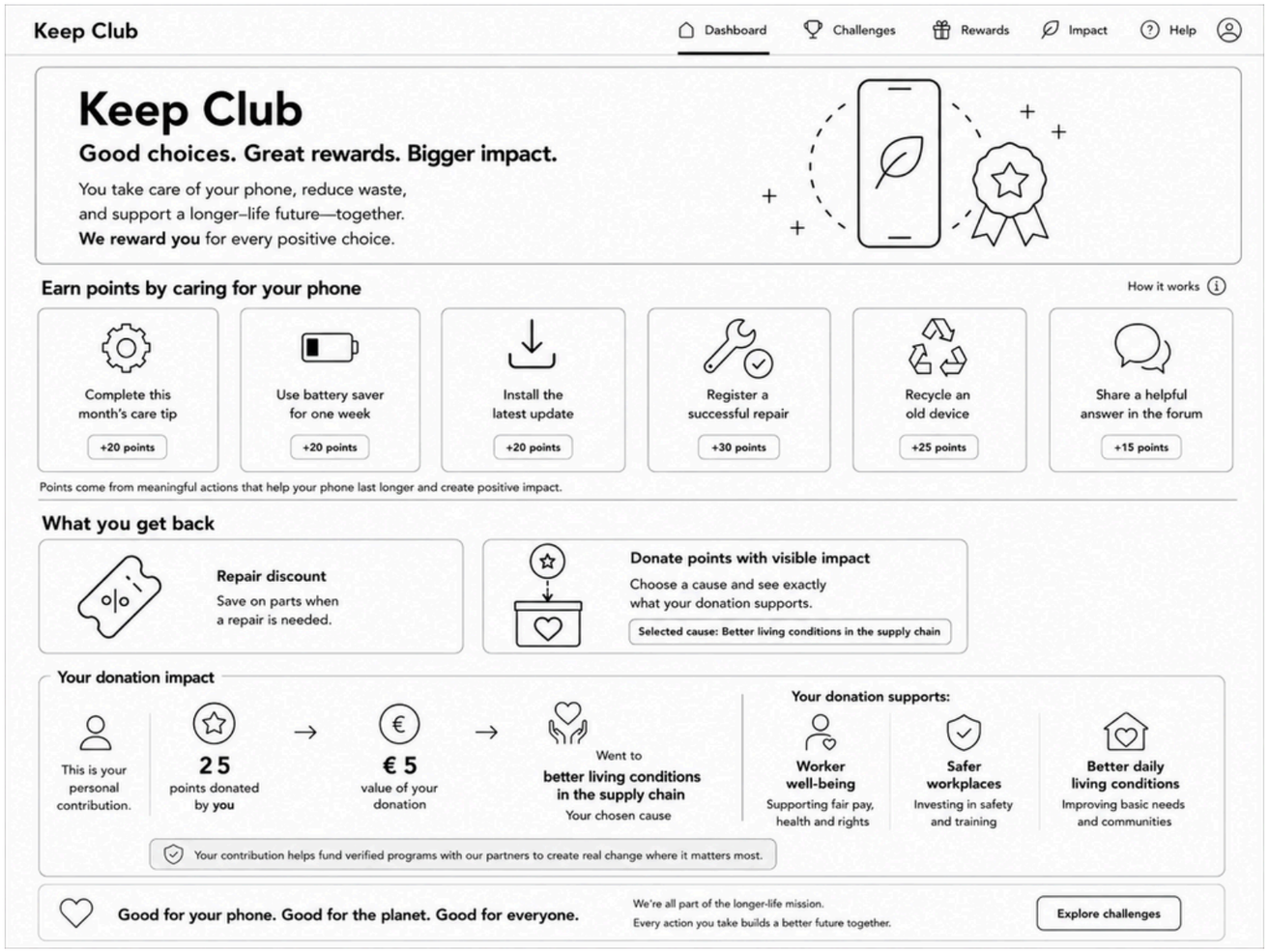
4. Bug fix update
This post informs customers about a resolved issue in a clear and relevant way. It provides useful support information and shows that Fairphone keeps customers updated about problems and solutions.

Appendix I: Sketches and suggestions for improving existing touchpoints

Keep Club
From a sales-driven reward system

Keep Club
To a customer-focused club that empowers meaningful phone care and visible impact

The new Keep Club empowers customers to care for their phone and create visible impact. It shifts from a sales-driven reward system to a customer-focused tool, where Fairphone rewards meaningful choices and frames the customer as part of a shared longer-life mission.



1. Points for meaningful actions
Customers earn points through actions that help them take better care of their phone or create positive impact. This makes the system feel more useful and relevant, because points are linked to behaviour that supports longer product use.

2. Clearer value of spending points
The ways to spend points stay mostly the same, but the value is communicated more clearly. The repair discount is linked to keeping the current phone in use, while the donation option shows what the customer's contribution supports and why it matters.

3. Donation with visible impact
The donation option becomes more transparent by showing exactly where the contribution goes. Customers can see that their points are converted into a concrete value and connected to a specific cause, such as better living conditions in the supply chain.

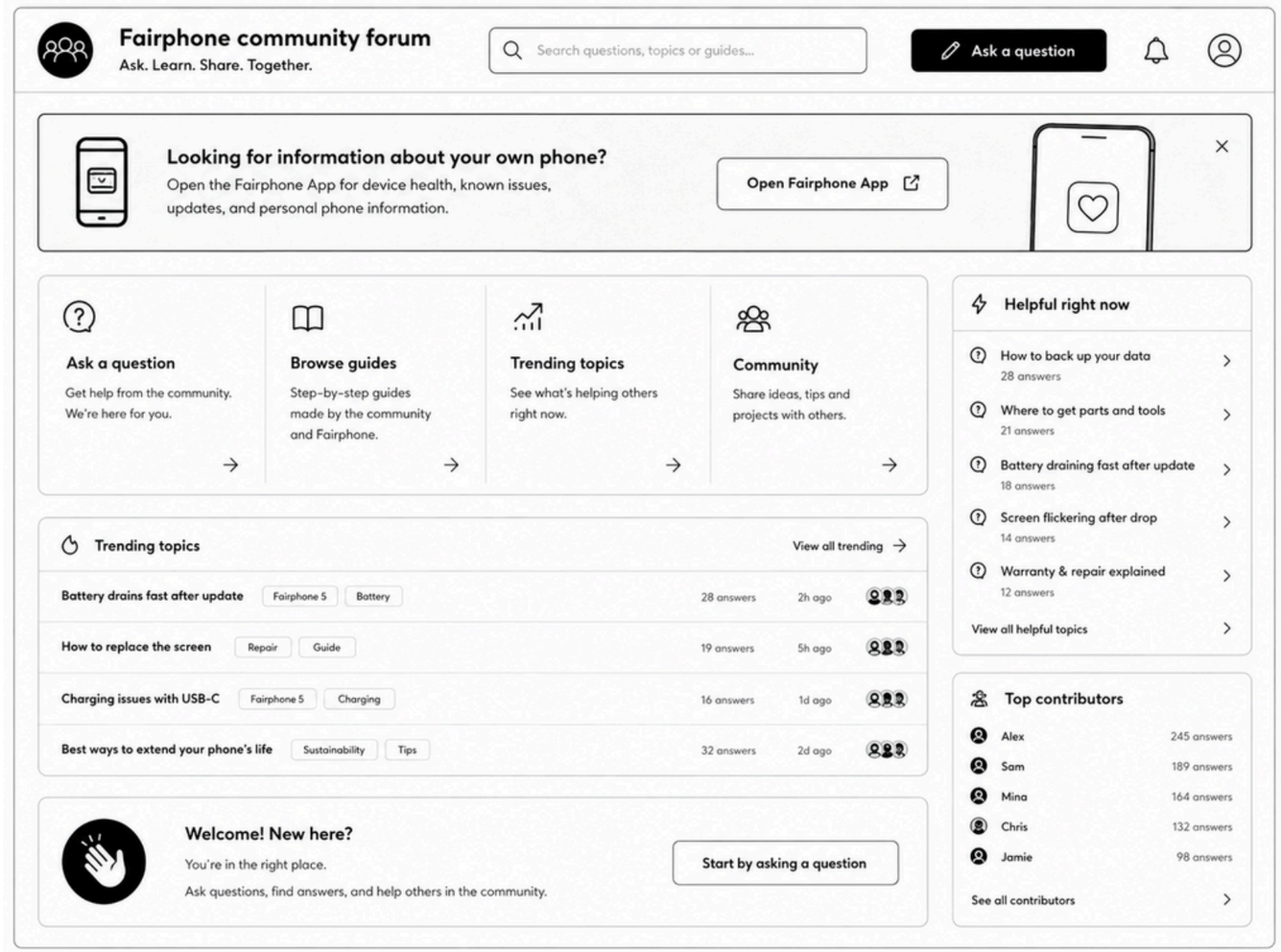
4. Personal donation impact
The impact section makes the customer's own contribution easy to understand. It shows how many points they donated, what this is worth, and what kind of impact their donation supports, making the customer feel more personally involved.

Appendix I: Sketches and suggestions for improving existing touchpoints

Forum
From a separate, reactive support space

Forum
To a connected community platform that guides customers to the right information

The new forum becomes a clearer and more supportive community space. It helps customers ask questions, find reliable answers and learn from other users, while personal device information is redirected to the Fairphone App. This gives the forum a more focused role within the wider communication system.



1. Clearer connection to the app
The forum now clearly redirects customers to the Fairphone App when they need information about their own phone. This makes the forum part of the wider system, instead of a separate place where customers have to search for everything themselves.

2. Easier navigation
The forum is structured around clear actions, such as asking a question, browsing guides, viewing trending topics and joining the community. This helps customers quickly understand where to go and what they can use the forum for.

3. More supportive customer experience
The communication feels more welcoming and helpful. Instead of only showing many discussions at once, the forum guides customers toward the type of support or information they need.

4. Better use of community knowledge
The forum still uses the value of the community, but in a more organised way. Trending topics, helpful topics and top contributors make it easier for customers to find reliable and relevant answers.

5. Part of one connected information system
By linking personal device information to the app and community knowledge to the forum, each touchpoint gets a clearer role. This makes the overall customer experience more consistent and easier to navigate.