

Louvain School of Management

Building Engagement and Overcoming Barriers: A User Journey Approach to a specific Mutualized Product-Service System – the Library of Things

User journey-based design features and business
model adoptions to boost user engagement for
Library of Things

Author: Trinquet Lucas

Supervisor: Professor Marichal Xavier

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Daytime schedule

Declaration

In this thesis supervised by Prof. Xavier Marichal, I declare that I used **critical evaluation**, **transparency**, and **ethical considerations**. Particularly,:

- I critically assessed the AI-generated output, ensuring its alignment with my research objectives.
- Any modifications or corrections were made based on my expertise and domain knowledge.
- I acknowledge the use of ChatGPT transparently, emphasizing that it contributed to my work but did not replace human judgment.
- My commitment to transparency ensures the integrity of this thesis.
- I actively monitored for biases or unintended consequences introduced by the AI tool.
- My ethical responsibility guided my decisions throughout the research process.

During the preparation of this master's thesis, I utilized ChatGPT for the following purpose:

1. First of all, in order to quickly sweep through the mass of available scientific papers, I prompted ChatGPT to identify the articles most relevant to my research that are available on the web.
2. Secondly, I used ChatGPT's functions to generate ideas and brainstorm on ways to structure the outline of my thesis.
3. Thirdly, I also used ChatGPT to clean the transcripts, translate accurately to English, and format to LaTeX the multiple appendices that are at the end of this document.
4. Finally, since GPT is adept at summarizing and keeping only the essential, I used it to shorten and rephrase some sentences.

After using ChatGPT, I diligently reviewed and edited the content produced by the tool. I take full responsibility for the final content presented in this thesis.

By signing this declaration, I declare that the content of this master's thesis is the result of an original and personal work, augmented by the responsible use of AI. In particular, any use whatsoever of the ideas or statements of a third party is clearly identified and referenced as such.



Wednesday 6th August, 2025

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Abstract

Product-Service Systems (PSS), and more specifically Libraries of Things (LoTs), offer a compelling alternative to traditional consumption by extending the life of underused goods, thereby reducing waste, fostering community, and enabling affordable, ecological lifestyles. Yet, despite their potential, user engagement with LoTs remains low. Why? And more importantly, what can be done about it?

This thesis explores which user design features based on the user journey could boost engagement in mutualized PSS, with LoTs as a focal case. While existing literature often centers on provider-focused barriers, this research shifts the lens to users, their needs, motivations, as well as the functional and psychological frictions they face.

Based on a design thinking methodology, the study is both exploratory and action-oriented. Through 11 semi-structured interviews, user personas, and a co-created ideal journey, it identifies both the core cognitive and practical barriers hindering adoption, as well as design opportunities to overcome them. Key themes include limited awareness, trust issues, decision-making processes, different contextual uses, and the enduring preference for ownership. Four personas and a comparative user journey illustrate how diverse users bring to life the diverse ways potential users relate and could engage with shared items and services.

The findings offer a set of user-centered features and business model directions that can spark user adoption. Rather than offering a one-size-fits-all answer, the thesis proposes a flexible toolbox of ideas that practitioners can pick from and adapt to their local initiatives through seven adoption levers, such as ease of access, emotional experience, and contextual fit. It concludes with actionable design recommendations for LoT designers.

Ultimately, this thesis contributes a user-centered lens to the research on mutualized PSS engagement and delivers a tangible roadmap for making shared consumption not only viable, but genuinely desirable.

Keywords: Product-Service Systems, Library of Things, Service Design, User Engagement, Service Adoption, Sustainability, Design Thinking

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Why shared consumption needs better design?

Why shared consumption is the way forward... and the problem with it

In a more and more finite world, faced with volatile trade relations, rising living costs, and geopolitical tensions, managing raw material resources is both urgent and strategic. Climate change, cracks in the global supply chain, and protectionist policies increasingly challenge traditional consumption and economic models. At the same time, urbanization, shrinking living spaces, and digital platforms are already reshaping how people consume. In response, alternative models that point towards different paths of consumption, resource allocation, or even societal organizations are gaining traction (Bobba et al., 2020; Jackson, 2009).

In this context, Product-Service Systems (PSS) are gaining attention to help build a sustainable modern world (Manzini & Vezzoli, 2003; Tukker, 2004). These models offer access to goods through service-based solutions instead of ownership. When combined with mutualization, which is the shared use of goods and services among multiple users, this model promises significant environmental and economic benefits. By renting, borrowing, or sharing instead of buying, individuals can help reduce the extraction of raw materials, as well as production emissions, and limit waste, all while still meeting their needs efficiently (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2019).

Not all PSS are similar. One specific use-case intrigued me for its broad, but still nascent, application: the Libraries of Things (referred to as “LoT”). These libraries work like traditional ones, but instead of books, they provide a wide range of items at low cost and minimal environmental impact.

However, as practitioners try to open this model to the majority, they are faced with multiple barriers, including psychological and functional ones. As a result, user engagement remains low, and ownership continues to be the default. A review of the literature reveals a clear trend: most research focuses on supply-side challenges. A gap is thus visible, and further research could be developed not based on the system providers’ needs, but rather on the users’ ones.

While benefits and general barriers of mutualized PSS are documented, there is little insight into how design and business strategies can change user behavior practically.

This thesis aims to fill that gap. It explores which user journey-based design features can boost engagement and adoption for mutualized Product-Service Systems, with a focus on LoTs.

Mainly designed for Library of Things designers and researchers in sustainable business models, it is also suitable for entrepreneurs, public service professionals and everyone interested in learning more about engagement in mutualized Product-Service Systems.

How this thesis is structured

This text contains five main sections.

First, it reviews the literature on PSS and LoTs, including user motivations and barriers. It explains what defines a PSS, its pros and cons, and highlights key drivers as well as obstacles to adoption.

Second, it presents the research design and different methodologies used to obtain the final results. In this section, the exploratory and action-oriented nature of the thesis will be explained. It explains how qualitative data from in-depth interviews were used to understand user needs and pain points.

Third, it presents the findings. Seven key themes are identified. Additionally, four personas and a comparative user journey illustrate different ways users interact with shared services.

Fourth, it interprets what these insights mean for LoT designers and offers actionable recommendations.

Finally, the thesis concludes with the identification of limitations and suggestions for future research in this field.

A summary of the research approach, based on Maxwell's Interactive Model of Research Design, can be found in Appendix A. It outlines the goals, conceptual framework, methods, and research question (Maxwell, 2005).

In the section following this introduction, the theoretical framework will be developed to understand what a PSS exactly is, why it is an interesting model for society as a whole, and the intriguing model that is the Library of Things. It will then continue to explain what can help, or hinder its adoption.

Chapter 1

Product-Service System, key insights from theory

Although the Product-Service System (PSS) model has existed for over two decades, it remains in an early stage of adoption. The first major paper was written by Goedkoop et al. (1999) and commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Environment. It introduced a new business model based on servitization, aiming to decouple resource use from value creation. Shortly after, prominent authors such as Mont, Manzini, Vezzoli, and Tukker expanded the field by refining definitions, applications, and benefits of PSS. However, even after 26 years, many PSS initiatives have failed or remain marginal. Adoption remains low, and widespread diffusion is still rare (Tukker, 2004). In fact, a multitude of articles mention that use-oriented PSS adoption is still low, with consumer acceptance being a significant barrier that needs further investigation (D'Agostin et al., 2020; Piscicelli et al., 2015; Tukker, 2015).

PSS is a significant broad field and contains a myriad of different facets. Therefore, this thesis assembles notions from behavioural psychology, sociology, social norms, marketing and innovation design, business modeling, service design and user experience.

The focus is on understanding how to boost user adoption through desirable design features. In doing so, the research responds to calls from Marichal, Tukker, and others to focus more on user-side frictions rather than technical barriers (Marichal, 2026; Tukker, 2004). This contrasts with an already covered research area, PSS's technical difficulties. Indeed, geographical differences (for example between cities and rural areas), institutional power and geopolitical landscape, among others, have already been previously studied (Tukker, 2004).

This chapter adopts a systemic approach, starting with a general overview of PSS, its definition, benefits, and types, before narrowing in on adoption drivers, barriers, and finally, the underexplored but promising use case of a use-oriented model: the sharing of tools and items (referred to as “Library of Things” or “LoT”) (Tukker, 2015). In doing so, it will also answer the calls from Akbar & Hoffman alongside Tukker, and Marichal to research narrower industry-specific use cases (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Marichal, 2026; Tukker, 2015).

1.1 Understanding Product-Service Systems (PSS)

Even decades after knowing that climate change is no longer a looming threat, but a reality linked to the way we consume, society's paradigm has not changed much. Neo-liberal economies continue to link value creation and happiness to material and energy-intensive consumption

(Jackson, 2009). Two major responses are often proposed. The first is technological innovation: solutions that promise to decouple economic growth from environmental harm. While appealing, these approaches often ignore rebound effects or induce new unintended problems (Eastin et al., 2011; Nørgård & Xue, 2016). The second approach is deeper: a reorientation of public values toward reducing energy and resource use altogether (IPPC, 2022). This is where PSS comes in.

1.1.1 What makes a PSS

PSS models are introduced in this paradigm shift as a different approach to fulfilling one's needs. They use the logic that people do not necessarily want a physical product, composed of natural resources, but rather just its delivered value, function, or experience without transferring ownership (Mont, 2004). The logic is simple: people do not necessarily want a drill. They want a hole in the wall. Manzini and Vezzoli (2003) define a PSS as “an innovation strategy that shifts business from *only* selling physical products to a *system of products and services* which are *jointly* capable of fulfilling specific client demands. This explains why innovation diffusion theories are relevant when analyzing its success. PSS gained attention in EU programs that support research on sustainable development and innovation strategies, such as FP5, and remains on the agenda in Horizon Europe (FP8 and FP9) (European Commission, 2024). Still, despite growing support, large-scale adoption remains elusive (Tukker, 2015).

The term “selling” in this definition indicates a difference from the sharing community model where there is no financial transaction. A PSS is also different from P2P (peer-to-peer) services in which the shared resource is owned by private individuals and is directly shared from one person to the other. Rather, it is a C2P (consumer-to-product) service, in which the shared resource is owned and maintained by the PSS provider whilst given access to multiple consumers at different times (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020). For instance, Zipcar (C2P) owns the car fleet and rents them out, while Airbnb (P2P) provides access to individuals' houses between them. C2P models often bring more reliability through trust and offer a “neutral” place. However, it is still partially physical and, therefore, requires a greater infrastructure and upfront investment (i-Puk, 2023).

There are four key elements to consider when analyzing and building a PSS (Mont, 2004; Tukker, 2015).

The first is the product itself. The second is the service. The third is the infrastructure, which entails all systems and media to deliver the function of the PSS (such as roads, communication lines, etc.). The fourth is a network of stakeholders to provide the PSS, which includes volunteers, employees, or partners for repairing, advising, and delivering, but also the users themselves as well as potential partners, be they public or private. A useful note is that the number of stakeholders should be monitored to help keep a balance between efficiency and expertise (Mont, 2004).

From an innovation perspective, as explained by Mont (2004), PSS should find a sweet spot between desirability, viability, and feasibility, a principle echoed in design thinking. Moreover, environmental impact must be minimized across all four elements. Mont (2004) also explains that the business feasibility depends on the viability and desirability (also described as customer satisfaction here) of a PSS. In her terms, “a PSS is a system of products, services, supporting networks, and infrastructure that is designed to be competitive, satisfy customers' needs, and have a lower environmental impact than traditional business models”.

Does PSS actually create value? And if so, does it more than ownership? Akbar and Hoffmann (2020) argue that it can, if it is the right model and under the right conditions. Access-based PSS, for instance, creates more customer value than ownership if executed well. De facto, when an emphasis on drivers and the elimination of barriers are present.

The created customer value in a PSS is contextual and co-created. It is not embedded in the product, but realized through use (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020). Akbar and Hoffmann (2020) base their logic on Adam Smith's definition of value. The value of a solution is "the satisfaction a person obtains from the use of a said good or service". Therefore, each user creates their own value depending on their *unique* goals for their *unique* needs, contexts, and expectations. The value is heterogeneous by users and that of a PSS model is not embedded in the product or service itself (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020). As such, a user-centered approaches is not optional, it is essential. They further stress this by writing that "PSS research has often adopted a PSS provider-centric case study approach to analyze how companies can create value to be successful. However, successful value creation in services also requires customer orientation" (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020).

Five key value dimensions are identified in a PSS model: ease of access, tangible value (i.e., the practical solution), intangible value (e.g., the emotions from using the service), context-dependent use, and community engagement (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020). Those said values can either be drivers or barriers. For example, users usually attach less intangible values to a PSS than to owned products, since brand value, sense of control, and emotional bonds are less present in PSS models (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020). This shows the requirement to offset the psychological (intangible) advantages of ownership over PSS with other advantages (e.g., flexibility, sense of belonging, etc.) and eventually behavioural nudges which is also identified by Marichal (2026). Ultimately, the core value of PSS is substitutability. It creates an array of options for consumers to choose from and the ability to replace ownership. Therefore, all other values (especially tangible ones) derive from this (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020). However, substitution only happens if the user experience is strong enough to justify the switch.

In sum, PSS models are a way for users to consume a function or outcome, rather than a physical product. It offers a compelling alternative to ownership by focusing on access, utility, and context-specific value creation. It is a C2P model, meaning that the provider owns and maintains the products attached to a service that they sell. It is composed of four elements: the products, service, infrastructure, and stakeholders. However, its success depends on overcoming strong psychological and practical barriers due to users attaching fewer intangible values. The ultimate value of PSS lies in its ability to substitute ownership. This is only possible if the experience is compelling enough.

Next, the advantages and disadvantages of PSS will be discussed.

1.1.2 Pros and Cons of PSS

PSS models allow for more intensive uses from a single resource, changes the mentality from simply consuming to offering a desired value, and shifts the business profit from the manufacturing, and sales of products to the use of a "product-service mix" (Tukker, 2015). This, in turn, leads to positive outcome in three areas.

From an ecological perspective, it first decreases the demand for new products as people need less of them (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2019). Therefore, it also reduces the use of resources

and direct CO₂ emissions related to the production of more products. This, thus, incites to rethink product design and create more long-lasting products, as this leads to additional business revenue and reduces maintenance needs (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2019). Thus, a positive correlation and reinforcement is present between all of these benefits, as it creates a positive reinforcement loop.

From a socio-economic perspective, it contributes to four areas (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2019).

First, it reduces access barriers to essential products and services. To do so, it offers more affordability through resale, rental, and donation-based models as well as different low-entry pricing models (e.g., pay-per-use, leases, performance cost, buy-back, etc.). The overall quality of users' lives is thus positively affected.

Second, it develops business opportunities by creating new innovative ways and possibilities to mix the different features of PSS.

Third, it enhances economic resilience by fostering service-based economies.

Finally, it contributes to local communities by increasing community interactions and collective responsibility.

From a personal perspective, it unclutters home spaces by reducing storage needs. The Toronto Tool Library, for example, reports that users donate unused devices even if no cash incentive is proposed Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2021).

On top of that, it helps value-sensitive citizens by giving those said citizens different options to act accordingly to their said values.

However, PSS also has some disadvantages (Tukker, 2015).

First, there is a risk of a rebound effect. Indeed, making products more “serviceable” could lead to higher usages, and thus to more environmental impact rather than less. PSS propositions need to be properly planned and managed in order to be sustainable.

Secondly, it is difficult to implement and scale. Their success also relies on ongoing services, staff, initial investments, logistics, and maintenance, which are more needed to start and maintain operations than traditional businesses. This makes it an uncertain business model.

Thirdly, it is hard to explain to customers due to its complex value proposition. This is one of the factors leading to a struggle in getting customer traction.

Overall, PSS models provide ecological, socio-economic, and personal benefits by reducing consumption, improving access, and fostering community. However, their success depends on overcoming rebound effects, operational complexity, and user comprehension challenges. To scale sustainably, they must be carefully designed and clearly communicated.

1.1.3 Different types for different needs

There can be multiple ways to classify PSS models. In this subsection, we will look at both the “traditional” way, as it is done in studies, and an industry-specific classification.

First, PSS models are usually classified into three main categories (Tukker, 2015):

1. Product-oriented services: A traditional business model of selling a product, but with an added service attached to it. For example, a complete car warranty when selling a car.

2. Use-oriented services: The sale of a use via the leasing, renting, or sharing of a product. This category is particularly relevant for this thesis. The ownership of the product remains with the provider and, most of the time, a number of users can use it by paying an access fee. They can reduce the ecological impact up to 50% by intensifying the use of the product, especially when the products are used in production phases. However, the current market value is still lower than that of traditional business models due to some tangible and intangible user sacrifices. Tukker (2015) argues that products that drive user engagement are typically expensive, technically advanced, require maintenance, are hard to transport, used infrequently by customers, and not heavily influenced by trends. This theoretically limits the scope of use-oriented PSS contribution, since only certain types of products drive adoption.

Three sub-categories of user-oriented services can be distinguished as per Tukker (2004).

- (a) Product leasing used by a single user. For example the monthly leasing of a bicycle or car.
 - (b) Product renting or product sharing by multiple users in a sequential way. For example, the renting of tools.
 - (c) Product pooling used by multiple users simultaneously. For example, a pool-sharing car for four users.
3. Result-oriented services: A business model enabling a desired result through whichever undetermined product. Usually in a pay-per-unit pricing model.

Another way to classify PSS is by industry. This approach could address a gap in current research, which is often criticized as too broad and lacking industry-specific studies or tests (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Silva & Mont, 2025; Tukker, 2015). Use-oriented services could be applied to a variety of industries, such as transportation (with cars, scooters, bicycles, etc.), clothing and accessories, tools and items (e.g., home-specific, niche equipment, outdoor, sport, electronics, entertainment, etc.), furniture, accommodation, spaces, luxury items, and much more.

This list is non-exhaustive and, as seen in this classification, PSS can be applied to many types of industries. Each of those categories answers different consumer needs. They require different approaches both on the back-end (e.g., supply chain, inventory, infrastructure) and front-end sides (e.g., marketing and communication, UX, UI).

This thesis answers the identified literature gap and focuses specifically on a precise PSS solution, the “Library of Things” (LoT). A developing use-oriented product renting PSS. In the next section, the concept, its advantages and challenges, as well as the context around it will be explained.

1.1.4 An introduction to the Library of Things (LoT)

Libraries of Things act just as traditional libraries, but instead of books, lend a variety of different items, often at low cost or no cost at all. This model aligns with the principles of circular economy by optimizing resource use and reducing unnecessary consumption. Indeed, 80% of household items are used less than once a month (Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, 2015), and a power drill, for example, is used on average just for 18 minutes during its lifetime (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2017). According to recent research by European non-profits and C40 Cities, consumer product is the sector of the urban economy that has one of the,

if not the, largest environmental impacts when considering the entire life cycle of products (C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Arup, University of Leeds, 2019). What's more, the expansion of self-storage facilities by 1,000% over the past three decades highlights the over-accumulation of underutilized goods (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2021). By offering access to shared items, LoTs directly counter these inefficiencies, decluttering spaces, all while contributing to the community. The annual report from Shareable (2024), describing the state of LoTs, explains that the best LoTs are "built based on mutual aid, trust and solidarity in the community with everyone helping each other". In the words of Ryan Dymont from the Toronto Tool Library, "we encourage members to think of LoTs as 'their own garage'" (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2021).

LoTs have seen growing popularity, particularly in North America and, more recently, in Europe. University campuses like Stanford and the University of North Carolina have adopted them, while local smart-building agglomerations and city-wide projects such as the Edinburgh Tool Library, Oodi Library in Helsinki, and the Reykjavik-based CLN initiative work on the scalability of the model (Arrival Platform, 2022; Usher, 2019). A range of information on how to start a LoT can gradually be accessed via blog posts, Google groups, and Facebook groups.

Gene Homicki, the CEO of "myTurn", a software that facilitates LoTs' inventory management, raised some of its benefits (Llewellyn, 2019). One of them is that LoTs provide a safe and reliable place to pick-up and drop-off items with reduced risk and trust issues. Furthermore, their items are typically used 10 to 100 times more compared to products owned by individuals. These libraries can also support in crisis management, for example in disaster preparation. In fact, some of the most popular tools in the Phinney Tool Library are often borrowed to be used for earthquake retrofits, and the Oakland Tool Library even has earthquake retrofit kits. This helps to build community resilience at low costs. In addition, they can increase entrepreneurship, economic development, and social innovation by providing products and new skills to entrepreneurs building new circular businesses.

LoTs operate under a variety of models, including fully volunteer-run initiatives with limited budgets, larger independent LoTs with storefronts and paid managers, or even municipal LoTs integrated into public library systems. These libraries rely on a mix of funding sources, such as membership fees, donations, and public or private grants. This ensures financial sustainability while maintaining overall easy accessibility (Shareable, 2024). However, a general lack of resource (e.g., money, volunteers, etc.) is common and many projects are still not self-sufficient financially (Silva & Mont, 2025).

Items in successful LoTs are decided based on individual donations, membership surveys, community needs assessments, or simply the volunteers' choices. Some even choose the products based on a democratic process with all the community members. The main aspect here is to constantly gather feedback on the utility of an item, the experience with it, as well as to track the inventory preferably through structured means (Jones et al., 2023). The inventories of LoTs vary greatly from one case to another, with some providing a large range of items (e.g., sewing machines, pressure washers, sports equipment, instruments, entertainment, etc.), while others specialize in a single niche of items. Although "full range" LoTs can attract more users thanks to the opportunity of choice, they increase the complexity and staff workload, affecting the time and energy available for other tasks (Silva & Mont, 2025). The most popular categories of items for LoTs are usually either to learn new skills or to avoid purchasing rarely used ones. The first can be useful for users to try an item before considering a potential purchase. The latter includes

items that are novel, expensive, difficult to store, and/or often used seasonally (Jones et al., 2023). Verified empirically by Marichal (2026), LoTs perform well with “ordinary” objects that clutter spaces and/or with low usage rates.

LoTs usually acquire their inventory through purchases and donations. Although donations enable organizations to acquire objects at low costs, users are more inclined to donate lower quality items and expect to borrow ones of high quality. However, for environmental reasons, LoTs should strive to use existing goods and their remaining useful life for most categories of goods rather than purchasing new items (Silva & Mont, 2025).

The core social and environmental values of LoTs often clash with more immediate concerns (such as the need to generate revenue and survive). As explained by Silva and Mont (2025), they do not necessarily create “visible” value per say, but rather in-use, social, and environmental value. Hence, providers often find it challenging to compete with for-profit companies in traditional financial markets. The OECD and European Commission (2022) acknowledged these challenges and suggested that social enterprises use alternative growth strategies such as actively supporting the replication of similar organizations in other locations and diversification of the inventory rather than scaling. Silva and Mont (2025) support this with a suggestion for LoTs to fill a niche of sharing items that cannot be found in rental shops instead of directly competing with them. Differentiation and alternative growth are already being implemented in practice. Indeed, beyond lending, 91% of LoTs surveyed by Shareable (2024) provide additional services such as repair workshops, workshops and classes, makerspaces, community gardens, seedbanks, and recycling/upcycling programs. These initiatives contribute to a stronger sense of community and reinforce the core principles of sustainability as well as accessibility. Classes and workshops can also generate a significant amount of income. For example, one established Tool Library in the United States brought in \$200K in 2023 solely from workshops (Shareable, 2024).

Regarding the infrastructure and network of stakeholders, out of the 82 surveyed LoTs, 44% of them are opened three to five days a week and only one is operating only on a self-service model. (Shareable, 2024). An opportunity to further expand the self-service model with the use of new technology is present. Indeed, common successful practical cases include organizations that use both self-service kiosks and volunteers-run counters, also enabling users to borrow and return items independently. Volunteers are still very much needed, especially for inventory maintenance, as well as to bring a touch of humanity and personalized guidance, aspects that some users still value (Silva & Mont, 2025). Those volunteers are usually compensated with free memberships or credits that can be used at their workplace. Users prefer to find LoTs in central areas and within a short commuting time, which is a challenge currently faced by many of the organizations due to the price of rent in city centers. That is why the most popular places for LoTs globally are in business hubs, community centers, co-working spaces, university campuses, and council-owned rent-a-space (Shareable, 2024).

During the empirical study conducted by Silva and Mont (2025) on 90 LoTs worldwide, a morphological framework of four different LoT models has been developed. It is used to map and describe operations, value creation, delivery, and value capture. It summarizes some of this section well, and can be found in Appendix B.

Many PSS lack formal user research and segmentation to target them more in tailored ways (D’Agostin et al., 2020). LoTs are definitely not an exception and a lot of providers have never conducted a formal needs assessment of their current (and potential) user base. Additionally, many are unsure of the different user profiles that use their solution. Surveys of members should

be conducted to help in decision making concerning user attraction, product offerings, and more Shareable (2024). This thesis answers the clear research gap that understanding user profiles and their journeys is essential for boosting user adoption. The next section builds the foundations for it by finding PSS adoption drivers.

1.2 Why people say yes to mutualized use

The aim of finding the adoption drivers is twofold.

The first is to find which deciding factors play a positive role in the adoption and diffusion use of PSS in general, and to carefully compare these to LoTs.

The second is to determine important factors for a favorable user profile, and establishing preliminary user personas. Indeed, Catulli et al. (2017) state that use-oriented PSS consumption increases directly when symbolic and functional values are positioned appropriately to different user groups. This indicates that segmentation by behavioral, personal, and other relevant factors directly interferes with adoption rates. This is also empirically verified by D'Agostin et al. (2020) with the general conclusion that “communication must be tailored to those user factors”. A general academic call to learn about PSS customers is present (Moro et al., 2020).

Although this thesis is more focused on a specific use of PSS, the Library of Things, a very limited amount of information and literature is available on their barriers and drivers. A broader scope for general PSS drivers and barriers can therefore be investigated while still being applicable to LoTs through critical thinking and primary data verification.

In this section, the drivers for user adoption and diffusion will be analyzed. First, the perspective on user adoption from the field of innovation theory will be explained. The drivers will then be classified from most to least impactful. This can already point towards potential design features to increase user engagement.

1.2.1 How to spread the concept

Roger's *Diffusion of Innovations* offers a useful lens for understanding user adoption. It divides users into five categories, from innovators to laggards, and shows that people are more likely to adopt a new solution if others in their own group have done so before. Indeed, the popular technology adoption life cycle identifies a common diffusion gap located between early adopters and the early majority, called the “credibility gap”. It is present because consumers prefer to listen to references from people that belong to their own adopter group. This shows the importance of user segmentation and social influence in gaining adoption. What's more, adoption spreads more easily within groups of similar users (a concept called homophily), but reaching new segments requires some degree of heterophily (connections between different types of users) (García-Alvés, 2020). This is essential to break out of early-user circles, grow, and attract the majority.

Innovation design and network theory add that each user (considered a node) adopts a solution only when a certain portion of their direct connections has adopted it, a concept known as the adoption threshold. Therefore, to spread diffusion and bridge different user groups, networks must include both strong internal homophilious ties and enough weak heterophilious ties (usually 15–25% of connections) (Granovetter, 1973). Of course, the more nodes (i.e., users) there are in the network, the faster the diffusion.

Concretely, there is a need for users to be segmented into user types, to niche down into one relatively large segment (here, large means with enough connections between the nodes), and when the need arises to add another similar niche segment, with somewhat similar users and common attributes between already convinced users and potential ones. This is how diffusion spreads widely and how PSS could be adopted.

1.2.2 What can help: from most impactful to least impactful

Even though comparing drivers across different studies presents some methodological limitations, general trends can still be identified from the existing literature. These recurring patterns allow for a tentative exploratory and deductive ranking of drivers, based on both their frequency and the emphasis they receive in the literature. Consistency across sources is used as the main criterion to infer relative importance.

1. **Most Impactful Factors** Most impactful factors are factors that often serve as key motivators and are consistently strong drivers of adoption across different contexts.

- Ease of non-ownership and flexibility (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Marichal, 2026): PSS need to be flexible and available, as well as to provide a reliable and seamless service. The user is always comparing the ease of owning against the ease of using a PSS service. For instance, the facts that risk associated with the item is not held by the user, and that using a PSS also unclutters spaces (especially in urban areas) both contribute to its adoption.
- Hedonistic needs (D'Agostin et al., 2020): PSS must feel like an upgrade to their life (and not a downgrade nor status quo). Therefore, it must be enjoyable, convenient, and must add value beyond necessities. An emotional desire must be even more present than a solution fulfilling utilitarian needs. Those emotions attached to the *experience and process* must overcome the “we are what we own” psychological aspects of ownership (in other words, the construction of one's identity around the owned products).
- Economic benefits and financially accessible products (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Jones et al., 2023; Marichal, 2026): A wide range of users can benefit from economic benefits and financially accessible goods. For instance, when moving to a new city, occasionally fixing a house, or trying a new object through a PSS can be cheaper than owning. Memberships, pay-per-use, and other pricing models can bring a combination of affordability and access based on the users' own current predicaments. However, there must be a clear and transparent economic benefit to using PSS models, and good communication is crucial for this factor to drive adoption.
- Access to unique or high-quality products (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020): Another driver is the access to high-quality products. Furthermore, the access to exclusive or superior products can also drive adoption. For instance, one might rent designer clothes or have access to a brand new car model which they wouldn't be able to access without the PSS. This plays on the theory of envy, that will be developed in the next section.

- Access to guidance (Jones et al., 2023): This factor is also what differentiates ownership and PSS solutions (most specifically LoTs). When buying a product, only a written manual is provided with it, and the buyer often needs to do their own research on how to use the said product for their specific goal and project. Sometimes it can be straightforward (for instance, using a bicycle), but sometimes it can be more complicated as the item can be used for a broader project (for example, a power drill can be used for a lot of different projects). PSS solutions can differentiate from ownership by offering specialized guidance on how to use items for the user's specific and underlying needs (e.g., "I don't need a power drill to only drill a hole, but to build a shelf"). For LoTs, this can be translated by humans at the counter teaching individuals how to use specific items, associated in-app videos to use for a common context, a maker space with peer-to-peer advice, and more.

2. **Moderate Impact Factors**

In this tier, direct factors influencing PSS adoption are present. However, they are usually context-dependent and not directly tied to the PSS, but rather to the environment in which it operates.

- Lifestyle fit (D'Agostin et al., 2020): A person's lifestyle (e.g., minimalism, fitness, urban mobility, etc.) determines whether PSS makes sense for them. As explained before, PSS value is created with a context-dependent in use-value different to each individual. If the model doesn't integrate well into an individual's lifestyle choices, adoption will remain low for this person. For instance, shared bicycles are very popular in the Netherlands where fitness and bicycle uses are considerably high.
- Situational factors (Piscicelli et al., 2015): PSS adoption also depends on government incentives, present infrastructure and everything that constitutes the external environment. For instance, taking again the example of shared bicycles in the Netherlands, bicycle infrastructures are perfect drivers of bicycle uses, which increases the uses of shared bicycles. Also, the fact that cities are divided in multiple "smaller cities" makes shorter commuting trips possible and drives shared bicycle adoption.
- Self-transcendence values (Jones et al., 2023; Piscicelli et al., 2015): Values such as benevolence and universalism are drivers of PSS adoption. Those community-focused values are opposed to self-centered and self-enhancement values (i.e., achievement, power, control, etc.). Users need to see the solution as one part of a greater movement towards sharing and, preferably, shift their mindsets from ownership to sharing with a wider community. Even though, those values are drivers of PSS adoption and diffusion, they are not enough as standalone drivers to push user adoption. Indeed, they work best combined with convenience, accessibility, (i.e., ease of non-ownership and flexibility), and affordability (economic benefits).
- Social influence and community (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020): Community is a crucial aspect of a PSS, since some of the added values (the value-in-use propositions) are made possible by a large number of people. Sustainability and cost-saving factors, for example, are made possible by sharing enough resource to induce economies of scale. This also creates a positive network effect since more value is created the more people use the PSS. However, in some cases customer uncertainty can increase due to the similarities of users composing the community (for example, all users could commute the same one-way route with bicycles in the morning, which creates a lack of bicycles at the starting point). Community is an important aspect for continued

use of a PSS, but less for a first adoption per say. What's more, it mostly works in dense urban areas where shared resource could be abundant.

- Information and awareness (D'Agostin et al., 2020; Jones et al., 2023): Clear education and marketing improve adoption rates by helping people understand the offering, price structure, and advantages of a PSS. Although information alone is not enough to drive adoption, it can directly positively influence other drivers such as self-transcendence values or lifestyle habits. One must first be aware of a solution before even considering using it, and visibility is often the first challenge faced by LoT providers. Constant effort and time are needed to penetrate communities (via news articles, social media, and connecting with like-minded organizations).
- Environmental concern (D'Agostin et al., 2020; Marichal, 2026): Considered as a secondary motivator since few users adopt PSS purely for sustainability. Eco-benefits are appreciated, but users still choose PSS mainly for convenience and savings. It is therefore not required as a driver for PSS adoption, but could be interesting to use for a segmentation into niche profiles. Environmental concern is related to social, altruistic, and biospheric values. It is different from pure knowledge, awareness, or education since it does not always come from rational facts. It is also tied to ethics and an anxiety coming from the consequences of an environmental change to our world.

Other than these, less impactful factors are also present. They are factors indirectly influencing PSS adoption. They can either influence users' behaviour or other more impactful factors in one way or another to increase adoption. Since they are not crucial, they can be found in Appendix C.

In summary, adoption of mutualized Product-Service Systems (PSS) is primarily driven by ease of use, good experiences, economic logic, higher-quality products, and contextual relevance, while values, awareness, and social norms play supporting roles. To scale effectively, PSS design must prioritize flexibility, enjoyment, affordability, and access to guidance while also tailoring solutions to specific lifestyles and use contexts.

1.3 Why the user journey breaks down

Contrary to drivers, barriers are factors influencing a non-adoption. They can be inherent in the nature of PSS solutions or tied to the individual using them (i.e., psychological barriers). Those factors are found, just like drivers, in an exploratory and deductive manner by comparing the different literature to observe patterns in standing out factors.

This section will be divided into two. First, functional barriers will be laid out. Functional in the sense of the user. They are tied to the characteristics of the PSS system itself (for example, its price, infrastructure, features, etc.). Secondly, psychological barriers linked to personal and situational factors will be explained. These are dependent on the user themselves and the context in which they act and grow (such as the structure of societies for example).

1.3.1 Functional Barriers

- Access and Proximity (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Marichal, 2026): The main difficulty in PSS solutions is their access and proximity. Users often complain about having a hard time finding services near them and easily accessing them. Since those factors directly influence

the users' personal organization and time schedules, they are the biggest barriers to PSS adoption (from a rational standpoint). What's more, since the arrival of instant deliveries in the market, users take access for granted, and thus, will be extremely dissatisfied if the PSS provider fails to fulfill this. Ease of access is a must-have attribute (Tukker, 2004).

- Complexity (Marichal, 2026): Systems too hard to understand or to use are also a barrier in the adoption of PSS models. Users need to be able to understand the whole concept of the solution as well as the user journey in a relatively short time and without too much effort. What they are getting into, the pricing, how to access the product, etc. are all information to clearly state and make sure that the user gets them. Marketing segmentation, messaging, and position are all relevant and useful for this barrier (D'Agostin et al., 2020)
- Price (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; D'Agostin et al., 2020): The user constantly compares the price of a PSS solution with the price of owning a product. This price is composed of two types – an absolute and a subjective price. The absolute price is the actual price of a PSS solution. The PSS price (usually based either on a subscription or a pay-per-use model) is compared to buying a product. The absolute price is said to be lower for PSS solutions than for owning, if the product is an object that clutters space and/or with low usage rates and looking at the long-term usage. However, some users still persist to think that owning is cheaper. This may be due to a lack of education and correct messaging, or because the second type of price is taken into account: the subjective costs. Indeed, the subjective costs to users lower the value in use of a PSS solution. Costs such as (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Tukker, 2004):
 - Search cost: the efforts and personal resources required to identify and access the PSS. For example, finding the next available bicycle or the next deposit station in the case of bicycles PSS.
 - Transaction cost from ownership to PSS: this cost is incurred when a person decides to change its habits from owning a product to using a PSS model.
 - Technical cost: other non-monetary costs, such as learning how to use unfamiliar products and adjusting them to one's own needs (for example, adjusting the seat and steering wheel of a car, ...).
 - Sunk and opportunity cost: the incurred cost of not using any resource that won't be used in the future (be it energy, time, money, etc.). For example, using a bike sharing solution although the user already has taken the time to research new bicycle models before.

Akbar and Hoffmann (2020) recommend investigating how digital applications and technological advancements can reduce those subjective costs (mostly the search, technical, and transaction costs).

- Trust issues (D'Agostin et al., 2020): Users are sometimes wary of using products previously used by anonymous individuals for different personal reasons (hygiene, negative connotation, product breakdown possibilities, etc.). Common solutions are often brought through financial charges, incentives, or product quality checks, but different solutions should be more in line with the psychological factors that influence this (Marichal, 2026).
- Utilitarian needs (D'Agostin et al., 2020): Closely related to access and proximity barriers, utilitarian needs entail the comfort, performance, speed, and energy needed compared

to owning a product bought from big corporations (for example, quick deliveries with Amazon Prime). Those are rational reasons that are currently blocking the adoption of PSS models.

- Lack of (sustainable) knowledge (D'Agostin et al., 2020): Less impactful, but still relevant, the general lack of sustainable knowledge can hinder the adoption of PSS solutions. PSS models are first and foremost designed with environmental conditions taken into account and, therefore, a big “selling point” to the users is their environmentally friendly impact. If the user is unaware of this, PSS solutions can lose their overall appeal due to the other barriers mentioned in this section. Right communication to educate the users on this point is therefore appreciated.

1.3.2 Psychological Barriers

Marichal (2026) mentioned the existence of further barriers even when some utilitarian frictions were solved by different features to offer bookable, low-cost, and delivered objects. He pointed to yet uncovered psychological aspects and the need to solve them by eventually offering positive feelings of possession, dopamine satisfaction, and else. Therefore, answering this identified gaps in the literature, a list of the main psychological barriers to PSS solutions is established:

- Perceived scarcity and customer uncertainty (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020): The fear of the product not being available when needed is a big barrier to users. Scarcity decreases the value-in-use of a PSS. But *perceived scarcity* risk is more relevant than the actual scarcity of a product. Perceived scarcity risk refers to the perceived “likelihood that a product or product-related resource will be unavailable when a consumer desires access” (Lamberton & Rose, 2012). In situations where the customers have information about the supply, the perceived stockout risk can either decrease (because the user is certain that there is an available product) or, in the contrary, arise because the stock is already low and the product may be unavailable when they desire or need access.
- Theory of envy (Mont, 2004): Developed by multiple researchers throughout the ages (such as Veblen, or Duesenberry) it states that people have two types of needs— absolute needs and relative needs. The first one can be found in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and are necessary for one’s survival. They depend mostly on the individual situation and can be changed by the individuals themselves. This makes them satiable. The latter, however, refers to insatiable needs which are felt in relation to other people and depend greatly on external factors. They create a comparisons between status, wealth, and other relative external validation, which pushes individuals to always consume more.
- Habits of consumerism and convenience (Marichal, 2026; Mont, 2004): The consumption habits shaped up over time by prolonged consumption patterns are obvious barriers to PSS solutions. Habits of consumption reflect the idea that the acquisition of material products lead to happiness. This has made the more comfortable but non-environmentally friendly approaches the go-to solutions.
- Loss aversion:
 - Loss of control (Piscicelli et al., 2015): The feeling of control and power over one’s own products is lost by using PSS since the user does not own it anymore. This could

eventually be mitigated by making the users co-own the catalog of objects. As the catalog expands, the users' amount of co-owned products will also expand and a feeling of abundance and control will be present.

- Loss of emotional bond to the product and brand (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Marichal, 2026): Introduced by Don Norman, a pioneer in human-centered design, people develop emotional attachments to objects, which are a critical part of how and why people value what they own. It goes beyond rational thinking, utilitarian needs and functionalities. It is about the meaning, memories, and one's identity linked to personal ownership. The object can be seen as an extension of an individual (Norman, 2004). In a PSS, users cannot really form memories, emotional connections and link their identities to the products.
- Individualization trends and individual societies (Mont, 2004): As societies become more and more individualistic, our identities are shaped by capitalistic ideologies (such as the number of goods possessed instead of the community bonds or traditions). This reflects the common values of a society. However, helped by Covid19 lockdowns, a rebound effect towards communities can be seen recently with increased collaboration, volunteering, and social activities in some areas (McDonald, 2025; Tamburin & Fitzpatrick, 2024).
- Social norm deviation: The phenomena that people do not tend to deviate from the norm as it would be seen as abnormal by the majority, and therefore lead the individual into a bad situation.
- Dopamine addictions (Marichal, 2026): Buying is an easy way of getting dopamine rushes. By making up excuses a buyer reduces the cognitive dissonance that arises when the values (financial, environmental, etc.) are in opposition to the actual action. Renting from a company offers less dopamine as it is a “neutral” object. Different features could be put in place to mitigate that dopamine withdrawal. For example, features from gamification design or a co-ownership of the catalog.
- The intention-behaviour gap (Marichal, 2026): A gap between people's intentions, attitude, values, and verbal statements compared to their actual behaviour when choosing to use a PSS service or not. The attitude to support theoretically PSS is taken to reduce cognitive dissonance between one's identity (the image of oneself) and external image. But actually acting based on this intention requires too much energy. People usually use sentences such as ‘We should all do that’, ‘I totally agree with this’ or ‘I will try it when I have time’, but do not change their behaviors.

To summarize, the adoption of PSS is still hindered by numerous, deeply rooted barriers. On one hand, functional limitations such as limited access, perceived costs, complexity, and overall convenience reduce the practicality and attractiveness of these models. On the other, psychological and societal barriers, including fear of scarcity, loss aversion, emotional attachment to ownership, consumerist habits, and social norm pressures, further complicate user engagement. Revealed in the literature is also an individualization trend, a want for dopamine-inducing actions, and a strong intention-behavior gap fueled by convenience and habit.

Even though addressing these psychological and functional frictions require deep structural changes in the society for some, others could be solved by well-thought-out design features to increase the PSS experience based on user needs. The next section will explore what methodology could be used to craft such features and discover adoption-winning recommendations.

Chapter 2

Observing, co-creating, developing & testing: the research design

After reviewing the present literature, it is clear that a gap to develop adoption-driving design features in an exploratory and user-centered approach is present (Moro et al., 2020; Manzini & Vezzoli, 2003; Tukker, 2015). Hence, this thesis aims to fill that gap by making these solutions more desirable than traditional ownership, reducing environmental strains, and fostering greater societal cohesion. This involves uncovering the barriers and frictions that users face (such as emotional, psychological, and practical barriers), as well as exploring how a human-centered design approach could mitigate them. Therefore, this section delves deeper into the methodological framework used to obtain the final results of this thesis. It describes the overall research and design methodology, as well as the qualitative and exploratory approach used throughout this thesis. It also details the rational method behind the data selection and the tools used for both data collection and analysis.

2.1 Designing for engagement: a way forward for the sharing economy

To address that identified gap, a user-centric lens, adaptable to the users' needs, was necessary. Drawing from design thinking principles, two key characteristics were adopted: co-creativity and user-centricity.

According to Tim Brown, a renowned industrial designer, design thinking is “a discipline that uses the designer’s sensibility and methods to match people’s needs and expectations with what is technologically feasible, and viable business strategies that can convert into customer value”. The definition also states that design thinking places special emphasis on customer understanding and observation. It can therefore provide a deeper understanding of user challenges through their active participation in the process compared to traditional surveys or case studies (Fehér & Varga, 2019). The Insitute of Design Stanford (2019) identified five main stages: empathizing with the users, defining pain points and emotional gaps along the journey, collaboratively ideating on solutions, prototyping concepts, and testing through iterative feedback. In this thesis, the two first stages are conducted through the literature review, while the third and fourth are executed through interviews and their results. The last stage, testing, is unfortunately left out, as it requires more time than is provided.

At the heart of this methodology are two tools: personas and customer journey maps. The first are symbolic representations of “typical” users-archetypes that represent different user patterns and behaviours. They can be designed via pattern recognition after in-depth interviews. They include (at least) the needs of the represented users, their pain-points, actions, and emotions in order to also anticipate and empathize with the users’ needs in the future (Prorok & Kosicka, 2021).

The second is a visual and analytical map of the user’s experience through different ordered stages of interaction, called touchpoints. Each touchpoint is examined for potential barriers and opportunities to enhance the service (Prorok & Kosicka, 2021). User journeys are the most widely used diagrams that illustrate a representation of individuals’ experiences. Since they can still be beneficial if non-users are also targeted in the study, it is a particularly relevant tool for this thesis (Prorok & Kosicka, 2021).

In our case, a future state user journey will be developed. It is essentially the same as a user journey, but for a non-existent or new version of a service. It maps out the ideal and envisioned experience that a user would have when using a service.

2.2 Exploratory by nature, user-design by intent

Given that this research question has not previously been extensively researched, this study is exploratory by nature and is in line with action research principles. De facto, this thesis not only observes, but also intervenes with co-creative sessions by applying the aforementioned design thinking processes. This naturally led to choosing a qualitative data collection in order to find in-depth insights into users’ perceptions, motivations, behaviors, and preferred solutions for a PSS model.

To do so, 11 semi-structured interviews were conducted both offline and online via video conference tools. All of them lasted around an hour and can be found in Section I of the Appendices. Their purpose was threefold. First, to verify the theoretical barriers from the literature review. Second, to brainstorm ideas *together* with the interviewees to improve the touchpoints and reduce their identified barriers. This point answers the calls to co-create services with the users and to include them in the design process. Third, to compare initial solutions from other users by iteratively including them in the interviews and collecting user feedback.

The end goal was to detect recurring behavioral patterns to then turn into recommendations and personas, as well as to better understand outlier or dissonant cases.

Semi-structured interviews are, according to Blandford (2013), “best suited for understanding people’s perceptions and experiences” since flexibility is given to the conductor to poke more into emerging interesting information.

This led to first create a preliminary survey to gather interview respondents (see Appendix D), and data on their profile as well as their perspectives on mutualized services. The survey allowed me to target individuals representing specific profiles in order to ensure that a sufficiently broad range of experiences, values, and demographics were taken into account. Included in it, an introduction text informed of all relevant information to comply with the GDPR. It also contained a range of questions to profile users and observe their relevance to this study. Shared through social media posts and word of mouth, it collected 67 responses in the span of three weeks, with 23 respondents approving to be interviewed.

Since contextual factors are very important in semi-structured interviews, theoretical profiles were considered independently of survey respondents. The aim was to compare them with potential interviewees and to have a heterogeneous target sample to ensure a diversity of perspectives for potential LoT users (as required by Valencia et al., 2015). These profiles span from a spectrum of readiness and openness to use. Each of them are shortly described in Appendix E.

After reviewing the survey results, 14 respondents with different interesting characteristics were selected to be interviewed, from which three people did not show up or answer. This approach is called theoretical sampling and developed by Glaser and Strauss (1999), the forefathers of the Grounded Theory methodology. As explained by them, it involves “selecting a number of groups, cases, and events considered promising for studying a given situation or phenomenon and for advancing ongoing theoretical development”. The same relevant criteria used in creating the theoretical profiles were thus considered to segment potential interviewees.

During the 11 interviews, all aspects of the user journey were touched upon, but for some, different subjects were discussed more than others depending on the ideas and experience of the interviewee. For instance, the model for accessing the items was discussed more in the interview with Marie-Françoise (I.3), while the business model itself was discussed in depth during the interview with Alexandre (I.7).

2.3 From raw data to design levers

The interviews were then transcribed using verbatim transcription and translated from French to English with the help of a Generative AI.

Rather than testing predefined hypotheses, the research was about uncovering underlying user values and needs. It used, therefore, a reflexive and inductive thematic analysis, which is particularly appropriate for semi-structured interviews (Braun et al., 2019). Indeed, themes in the form of codes were derived from the data itself by manually labeling the interviews line by line. This helped maintain a deep and context-rich interpretation, particularly useful for crafting recommendations and personas.

After this, a visual map of the interviewees was created to help group them based on behavioral and preferential patterns. Four personas were then created to tailor those recommendations in a more practical way. Finally, one-and-only user journey was created and analyzed. This journey is built based on the personas and includes opportunities to tailor the service to their needs. The choice of creating one and not four journeys is to make it easier to compare the common and different preferences as well as opportunities between the personas. Since it is harder to generalize to other contexts, this thesis does not focus on presenting the specific user journey. Instead, it explains the lessons and remarks that arose from creating it. These can be generalized and extended to different practitioners and contexts.

In brief, this methodology combines qualitative, user-centered design principles, and an exploratory research. This is done through semi-structured interviews (that act as co-creation and brainstorming sessions), thematic analysis, and line-by-line coding. The goal is to find deep-rooted emotional and practical user barriers and needs, as well as opportunities to tailor design features to different user types.

Chapter 3

Unlocking Adoption: 7 key themes

During the codification of the interviews, nine main themes emerged: Discovery, Barriers, Trust & Communication Style, Evaluation & Decision-making, Object Type & Use Context, Drivers, Comparison with Alternative Models, Persona Characteristics, and Business Model Components. The themes from one to seven will be discussed in the first part of this section. The last two themes, Persona Characteristics and Business Model Components, will guide me in crafting relevant user personas as well as a customer journey tailored to each said persona. The goal of this section is to summarize the main patterns across them, and highlight interesting ideas to develop for LoTs. The interview snippets and quotes will be integrated within these said patterns, letting the voices of respondents to speak for themselves. Issues and potential solutions will be explored in each subsections.

Furthermore, a lot of interviewees tied the concept of mutualization with the new car sharing platforms such as Poppy or Cambio. The rise of those platforms is very recent and faced many challenges comparable to the ones that item rentals are facing today. For this reason, this section will also sometimes look at the solutions that those platforms have implemented to face comparable challenges.

Before diving in each theme, I find it useful to present the result of the preliminary survey from the interviewees, as it points to general trends in user sentiment. This helps frame the context and maintain an objective lens on the results. All interviewees' answers can be found in Appendix J.

From the interviewees (n=11), 54,5% said to have already tried object-sharing services (such as bikes, cars, tools, etc.). Out of them, half were still using such services occasionally, a third had stopped altogether, and only a sixth was still using them frequently. Generally, when asked what prevented them from using these services, the respondents answered first and foremost a lack of availability (29%), an inability to match with their lifestyle (29%), hygiene (14,3%), price (9,5%), and complexity of use (9,5%). Lack of trust was answered by only 4,8% respondents. However, while conducting the interviews, what emerged the most were, indeed, an unavailability (of the service), and a difficulty of use due to the service not being very convenient yet, but also mainly (perceived) price, and a lack of trust (since the concept is unknown/new). This can already show a mismatch between real core user problems and what potential users first say when prompted about barriers. To further keep an objective lens, it is also important to know that most interviewees claimed that their choices are indeed influenced by environmental impact, and that they trust digital platforms to manage this type of service (except for one outlier).

3.1 Theme 1: Discovery Barriers & Awareness Gaps

“It doesn’t really cross my mind in the moment. I don’t necessarily imagine that a certain item could be rented.”

One of the most consistent findings across interviews highlights a basic, yet often overlooked problem: most non-users had never heard of these services. Although the general principle of sharing resonated with many participants, these alternatives rarely came to mind at the moment of need. As one participant simply put it: “I don’t even know if that exists around here, and I’ve never really thought about it”. This clearly highlights the absence of mutualization in their mental decision processes. Even though the first reflex of most interviewees for borrowing an item was to turn to their social circles, if the small network did not have it, the search stopped there, and consumerism took over.

The items themselves also make the process harder. Indeed, we usually only ever see the same types of items available for sharing, which frames our concept of “shared items” to be tied only to those particular objects. As explained by one interviewee: “I don’t even know if it exists for this kind of product”. Therefore, two first barriers can be identified in the discovery: people do not even know the concept exists in the first place, and if they do, they do not know the types of items. Therefore, they are not reminded enough of the LoT’s existence.

Another recurring pattern emerged across all participants: a constant trade-off between energy, time, money, and personal values. For example, an environmentally conscious person might initially seek out sustainable alternatives for completing a task. However, if the effort and time required to find and implement that alternative outweigh the importance they assign to sustainability in that specific context, they are likely to abandon the idea altogether. This suggests that the barrier is not just motivational, but also cognitive and contextual.

For solutions, regular marketing can help. Awareness of a service comes from seeing it where potential users spend their time and look for solutions.

For most interviewees, it is online, be it via Google searches, Facebook, and mostly Instagram (ads as well as reels). As an interviewee bluntly stated: “I do like Instagram ads because they’re more tailored and they actually show me stuff I might want”. Interviewees also watched Youtube videos to get ideas. Organic content is still more trusted than paid influencers.

In terms of offline channels, word of mouth is the most reliable source (from friends, family, neighborhood, clubs, etc.). Newspaper (e.g., *Test-achat*) and local mailers did come up in some interviews, but not regularly. Moreover, some interviewees just discover solutions by walking around and “spot something in a display window or regular places”. Said perfectly: “Partnerships could help too, like with malls, farms, or vacation spots where people are already passing through. That way, you get traffic without forcing people out of their routine”. In short and although this might seem obvious, services may exist, but if they are not embedded in everyday spaces, social feeds, or routines at the right place and time, they are simply overlooked. Word of mouth remains powerful, but it should be supported by simple, contextual campaigns in neighborhoods, stores, or digital spaces that people already use.

3.2 Theme 2: Frictions & Barriers to Use

“The flexibility to use something when you need it, without relying on an outside organization or waiting days, that’s what I like”

Beyond awareness, participants frequently voiced a set of psychological and practical frictions that prevented them from engaging with mutualized services. These barriers were not rooted in opposition to the model itself, but rather in (perceived) effort, fears (of access, breaking, complexity), and habits changes.

The main identified barrier is perceived effort. Since access to items is less direct than when owning, interviewees complained about losing spontaneity and flexibility. “If I suddenly need it again because I’ve got another project that means I need to rent it again and don’t have it right away... that’s annoying. You need to plan ahead” expressed someone. Some said they would not even accept deliveries if it took more than a day or two. Sometimes, speed mattered more than convenience. This points to a constant analysis of friction-to-value ratio that usually leans in favor of ownership, especially for low-cost, easily accessible, or high-frequency items. As one interviewee put it: “I try to imagine myself renting it, and I’d already be paying a quarter of the price of buying it. I’d also need to clean it and to pick it up far away or only at very specific hours that don’t fit my work schedule”.

Another major obstacle is the availability of both the service and the item. Fear of not being able to access the item when needed and the fact that there is a relatively long(er) trip to access the item are common barriers.

On top of those main barriers, other psychological ones remained such as the fear of breaking or being wrongfully accused of breaking the item. “You wouldn’t want to rent something and worry about hidden damages”. Moreover, negative past experiences with unclear terms shape current choices. One interviewee recalled: “the contracts weren’t clear, they asked for a lot more than expected”, which now affects how he approaches similar services. Fear of complexity as well as a dislike of commercial companies were also expressed. Statements such as “What bothers me is the financial side, when big companies take a cut from individuals” were present for some people. This shows the role of emotional frictions, which are often harder to identify but equally impactful in shaping behavior. Note that hygiene did not constitute a large enough barrier to be generalized.

Drivers should be emphasized to offset the effort produced to get the item. Considering the most important factors, such as price and flexibility, is crucial.

To counter these frictions, several solutions were proposed.

A simple, responsive online booking system was the most cited, ideally with real-time availability, pre-booking, notifications, and flexible cancellation within a certain time range as well as a progressive refund. This system reduces the fear of unavailability for the items. As explained by an interviewee: “I want to book it in advance. If someone says they’ll bring the item back tomorrow, I pre-block it for nine a.m., and if someone else returns something you want earlier, notify me and I’ll go today”.

Multiple locations should be available to counter the lack of availability. Locker-based pick-up points were popular in solving this. Inspired by parcel delivery systems (e.g., B-post, Amazon), these could show real-time availability of items on an interactive map and be accessible beyond regular business hours. Technology such as RFID tags, NFC, or QR codes could facilitate access and returns. The drop-off points would be the same lockers, with the exact location and process clearly explained by instructions on the website.

To implement this idea and expand the availability, partnerships with local shops to host lockers were usually thought about. As an interviewee explained: “small, local shops could benefit from increased visibility. It could be a win-win. They offer space for the boxes, and the LoT brings them traffic. Especially if the small shops don’t already have strong digital platforms. They could see it as marketing more than sales”. Locations like malls, supermarkets, universities, gyms, or community centers were seen as ideal. Local farms were also mentioned for bulkier items. This would secure the items during the night and allow for an access not dependent on the LoT’s employees or volunteers. The items would be displayed behind a thick glass or plastic. As mentioned by an interviewee “If it’s at Carrefour, for example, that could work. Just being able to see the item beforehand is also key”. Suggestions to find locations where people are already grouped emerged. For instance, “in student residences, residential buildings, or community centers. It’s more localized, people feel safer, and everything is nearby. If people are grouped by lifestyle or area, it’s easier to implement”. An interviewee proposed that in the future, local shops could pay a small subscription or commission to be listed on the platform to gain more exposure. They could also rent out their extra unused items in exchange.

Delivery was another recurrent suggestion. Some users said they would gladly pay a small fee for home delivery in a specific time frame. “If it’s delivered, I’d really consider it, because it’s super convenient. But it would need to be delivered to my house, not the post office” explained an interviewee. A creative and verified idea, was peer-to-peer deliveries: users picking up others’ items nearby in exchange for credits or discounts in a “Uber-style”. As described by a respondent: “at the moment I make a rental, I could tick a box and I could say ‘I agree to pick up other neighbors’ items.’ Then if someone nearby rents something the same day, the app notifies me to bring it to them on the way for the last-mile. I’d get a small discount or a credit on my account for making that little detour, even if I don’t really know the people”. Those deliveries would be available only if the user added an insurance so that there is no fear of breaking the item on the way.

That said, some (more sociable and community-driven) interviewees still valued human presence. A few preferred a local space where they could meet, get advice, or use items together, “a local physical point, but modernized, with an integrated space where people can meet to use or repair the objects together. Kind of like a shared workshop”. This reveals the need for a hybrid and decentralized model: a central location with employees, supported by autonomous lockers and optional last-mile P2P delivery to create a web of access points and increase availability. The physical place could be open only during certain hours as this would reduce some costs, complemented by pick-up points’ almost constant availability. The Library of Things in London is one example of this hybrid approach (Library of Things, 2025).

Finally, other design levers could help reduce psychological barriers. Deposits, insurances, clear rules, transparent verification means, on top of a local and fair brand design could potentially counter them.

Deposits (e.g. cleaning and damage fees) could be locked and flexible based on the item’s price or waived with a small insurance fee, as in car rentals. It should not be too high not to

create any more fiction, but could still be present as this also signals quality in the items and “make people respect the system more. That way they feel more engaged and take better care”

In terms of verification, interviewees are mixed. Some users are fine with self-checks and automatic photo uploads on a website, while others valued human verification at return because “if you’re returning it face-to-face, you’d probably feel bad if it’s dirty or broken. That pressure doesn’t exist with automated systems” and “only the human eye can do that properly”.

To counter and user barriers, LoTs could take example on car sharing platforms. Those platforms made the process of accessing a car as simple as unlocking a phone: a user can just open an app, see that a car is available just a block away, walk there, tap their phone, and pick it up in seconds. Apps, Qr codes, and NFC reduce barriers and allow for a spontaneous access. A help button in the app directly connects the users with a call center and FAQ section to answer any question or issue. Paying is effortless, automatic, and relatively cheap. The fear of damage is removed via an insurance that can be added for a small fee (Ponteville, 2022). In short, the smoother the experience, the lower the resistance.

3.3 Theme 3: Trust, Communication & Transparency

“I prefer supporting someone I know rather than a company whose only goal is to make money”

A resonating brand can communicate more in a short amount of time than any explanation could possibly ever achieve. Trust is a cornerstone of adoption. Whether or not someone tries the service and return to it depends largely on how credible and safe it feels. Across interviews, participants pointed to both practical and psychological drivers of trust: clear insurance policies, damage deposits, and a responsive helpdesk, but also psychological characteristics with design cues, brand tone, credibility, and transparency, as well as values.

Brand perception matters from the very first contact. Participants noted that trust begins before the first use: in how the platform is seen in the street, recommended by peers, or presented online. The brand should be present along the entire user journey. At the decision stage, users want transparency and comparison tools on the website, even listing alternatives. “I like to compare multiple options. I want to understand the trade-offs, even if they’re small”. An unfiltered user review, with both positive and negative feedback “like it’s done on Vinted”, should be accessible since “trust based on others’ experiences plays a big role. It reassures about the reliability of the product”. Regular information (in the form of emails or notifications) and clear instructions should be provided at every step of the journey. The user should always know what to expect next.

Visual identity also shapes trust. Participants mentioned that a strong brand should signal professionalism, quality, honesty, and reliability, but still feel local, warm, and grounded. Sleek and professional design “like Apple with its ‘less is more’ philosophy” was often mentioned. The tone of voice should be reassuring, relatable, and even humorous. It should be just like talking to a close friend. Video stories with real employees explaining how quality checks are done, or users showing how insurance claims were handled, were seen as highly effective for building trust.

Transparency was another key value. People want to know all there is to know about the organization itself and the offered items. “I want to know everything first: who’s behind the service, how it works, who’s responsible if something goes wrong, where products come from, their features, etc.” voiced an interviewee. To understand. It is the key aspect of the first contact with the organization and this need for clarity extends to the physical experience too: “[the service] has to be local and visually clear. Show me real people and transparent boxes with items, so I understand immediately” explained a respondent. This ties into transparency and fairness which should be guiding values throughout all processes. “The idea wouldn’t be to make money off others, but to share and reduce waste”.

Car sharing platforms are, here again, a valuable benchmark. First, they re-framed renting from a constraint to lifestyle choice built on smart flexibility. Their brands promote freedom, and minimalism with a philosophy of “Own less, do more”. The pricing echoes this with flexible option (per minutes and day passes without any subscription), clear cancellation policies, and flexible cancellation options.

In summary, trust is essential for adopting LoTs and depends on practical elements (like insurance, clear policies, and support), but also perceived credibility (design, tone, and transparency). A clear, human, and transparent brand, present throughout the user journey, can help overcome some psychological barriers.

3.4 Theme 4: Evaluation & Decision-Making

“I spend almost as much time researching the product as I do using it”

Interviewees approached the decision to use a LoT (and most services) with a rational and comparative mindset. Their evaluation process included factors such as price, efforts, flexibility, availability of the service, quality, and features of the proposed items.

First, the search behavior is typically triggered by a specific need. At that point, users said that they prioritize quality, features, and time over price. However, this can be part of the intention-behavior gap and should be further verified in real-case settings. Interviewees reported taking their time to carefully analyze the value proposition and compare it with other alternatives. “I’ll dig into what’s being said, maybe find some benchmarks, or at least try to get a feel for how reliable it seems” explained a respondent.

Second, all previously discussed factors come together and are examined during the decision-making process. Pricing must be clear, fair, and within budget; the process, easy to follow, trusted through external sources, and predictable with familiar design elements particularly minimizing unnecessary steps; items, reliable and preferably from known brands; and timing, flexible in terms of availability (24h access, specific time range for deliveries, at the right time and place) as well as cancellation. Values like sustainability were appreciated but rarely decisive. This, of course, also depends on the persona type.

Some interviewees said that visible displays (be it clearly online or physically), helpful and kind employees, as well as official brand videos of the items in the website, could increase their

willingness to try the service. This would show features, use, and credibility.

To gather information, the interviewees used a mix of channels: the official website (for details), external platforms (Google, Tripadvisor, Trustpilot), social media (mainly Instagram and a bit Facebook), YouTube reviews, public authorities websites or consumer protection site (i.e. Test-achat), and most importantly word-of-mouth (e.g., direct social circle, Reddit, Facebook, etc.).

This extensive search aimed to establish a clear cost-to-benefit ratio and shows a need for clarity as well as perceived control at every step of the research process.

Thirdly, interviewees favored clear, predictable and progressive pricing models. Most interviewees did not like per minute model because “it feels very rushed”. Instead, they suggested “something progressive. For example: up to six hours, it’s a short-term rate by the hour; beyond that, it’s a full day; then you could go up to multiple days or a week”. Some even proposed a yearly subscription. Deliveries were usually tied to longer rental periods (i.e., daily rates or more). Cancellation fees were seen as fair if based on timing and clear from the beginning with, again, a progressive model (“just like with Booking.com”). This said cancellation fee could then be transferred as a discount to a user borrowing unused item (in last minute). For late returns, flexible extensions should be possible and interviewees supported a simple system: “just a small extra fee should be paid to indicate that the item was borrowed longer than expected”.

Finally, most interviewees preferred digital options for browsing and booking. The use of an app was supported for its responsiveness, but interviewees did find a website more convenient at first to lower the initial investment. Usual features such as a simple search bar, filters and categories based on distance, need, or context are useful. A suggestion was made to use an anonymous connection for the first test before eventually creating an account. Integrations with other familiar services (Apple Wallet, Google Maps, Payconiq, etc.) should be put in place to make the process as quick and simple as possible. As stated, “[users] should be able to do everything on it: book, browse the catalog, have video tutorials, pay, track everything, etc.”. Still, in-person support and phone access remained essential for less tech-savvy users. As one said “the digital divide is real and it is frustrating to only use digital tools”.

In summary, simplicity, adaptive solutions, access to information via full transparency of all aspects, and sufficient exposure in multiple channels are all crucial for a smooth and pleasant decision-making process. However, information overload should still be considered and only the most important information for the user should be developed. In addition, flexibility is crucial: users do not want to be stuck in strict contracts anymore. They want services that adapt to their lives, not the other way around.

3.5 Theme 5: Object Types & Use Context

“A shared item would be something not very important to me, and probably expensive to buy”

The types of object proposed in LoTs greatly influence the decision-making process of potential users. Since people constantly compare with the cost of new items (usually from Amazon or other low-cost bulk producers), LoTs should position themselves differently. Competing on price

alone would make little sense socially, environmentally, and economically. Instead, interviewees agreed that the items should meet different kinds of needs.

First, low frequency use was the most common criterion among participants. They mentioned renting items they need only occasionally or that serve a temporary, context-specific purpose. For example, some referred to tools and cleaning appliances used “for a month and then never again” or “for one-time projects”. These items are perceived as fitting rental because they offer little value in ownership, especially given storage constraints. low frequency is considered by interviewees as a monthly usage or less. The items should therefore be non-urgent, and this also explains why interviewees can afford to take time when considering renting.

Second, expensive and high-value items (usually above 100–150 euros) were often mentioned as good rental candidates because, then, users “really think when buying it”. They should also be high quality and from well-known brands. In contrast, “if it’s something cheap like a hammer, I’m not going to bother for 20 or 30 euros” explained an interviewee. Popular examples included tech items such as drones and cameras, as well as cargo bikes (for children or dogs), and bike car racks. This also shows that all factors mentioned are not mutually exclusive, and that high value and low frequency often overlap.

Third, leisure and travel items were mentioned. “A good camera for a hiking weekend” or “skiing equipment when the season comes” drove rental interest. Those involve a short-term seasonal demand and demonstrate how temporal contexts influence the rental demand. While hygiene concerns were mentioned for clothing, most dismissed them if proper cleaning protocols were visible and trusted.

Fourth, space-consuming items were frequently cited. “Those are items that can be rented all year round and are really a pain to store” explained an interviewee. This is particularly relevant with a growing demand for smaller homes and urban residencies. An interviewee also highlighted the fact that “possessing is also a mental burden because you have to take care of the item, remember where it is, etc.”.

Fifth, renting was also seen as a way to test products before buying. Whether trying out kitchen appliances, board games, or sport equipment, interviewees did not want to invest in items they would not use in the future but needed to store. “Having several ranges: from low-end to high-end” also mattered to correctly test some items so “that it matches the quality level you want to try”. A participant noted that “it would be better if the items were up-to-date”. However, this raised a sustainability concern: using rentals only as a pre-buying strategy may not align with LoTs’ values and should be questioned.

Finally, interviewees also suggested event-specific or decorative items. Items “for a birthday party in the garden, big heaters, or standing tables” and “seasonal small decorations for when you need to decorate the house or a table say, for Halloween”. However, one condition remained clear for all items, an emotional bond should not be possible, otherwise people will prefer to buy.

In short, items that are of low frequency use (monthly or less), expensive (more than 150 euros), tied to very occasional leisure times, bulky, allow testing, and/or event-based will undoubtedly perform better than routine-needed and cheaper items.

To better align with users' needs, participants suggested including on-paper surveys in physical locations and "a 'looking for' feature, like a request feature form. When you search and don't find it, a little icon could pop up letting you request that item be added to the catalog. And if enough people ask for it, then the platform adds it". "Ideally, the platform shows how many other users have requested the same item, for example with a section showing 'most requested items that aren't in the catalog yet' and a system of upvotes". This indicates the desire for a democratic, user-driven catalog.

3.6 Theme 6: Positive Triggers

"The goal is for people to test not just the product, but the solution itself"

Positive triggers can help with two stages: promoting first adoption and supporting long-term use of the service.

To encourage trial, interviewees emphasized the need to minimize effort and commitment while trust-building mechanisms are essential. Here again, traditional marketing can offer insights.

First, free trials were broadly wanted, provided the service delivers value down the line. "The goal would be to let people try it out, and if the solution is good enough, then they might continue" said a reluctant interviewee.

Second, referral programs were also suggested to amplify word-of-mouth and reach through the network effect. However, some remained skeptical toward aggressive tactics: "I don't trust big sales or deals because I often end up getting tricked" explained an interviewee.

Third, participants supported the idea of having credits in the system to reward them for wanted actions, such as deliveries, offering their items, and more. They could then redeem them for free rentals or other services proposed by the LoT (e.g., deliveries, workshops, etc.). Credits leverage the loss-aversion bias and keep users in the platform since users do not want to leave out unspent credits.

Fourth, communication and framings play a big role in adoption. Framings such as "Does paying 10 instead of 300 euros for your hike sounds better to you?" clearly highlight the upsides of LoTs. These messages should reflect the types of items and contexts users care about (e.g., testing, leisure, one-time need, sustainability) and emphasize immediacy. "The simpler it is to go from searching to booking, the better". A brand and campaigns could be launched on this premise.

Other mechanisms can drive long-term engagement.

First, messages on the sustainability aspects of LoTs could regularly be communicated to psychologically encourage use. Sustainability, while not a primary driver, can reinforce habits post-use. Relevant key social and environmental public KPIs should show one or multiple tangible goals. CO2 footprint, the number of items saved, and euros saved are commonly used KPIs. LoTs could, therefore, send brief follow-ups notifications with the personal impact of a user. This technique is already used by Poppy, the car sharing platform by highlighting environmental impact. For instance "each shared car replaces up to 10 private vehicles and reduces mobility CO2 footprint". A narrative built around it and the progress made in its direction (think a progression

bar when you enter the website) could also be implemented. Ecosia, the search engine, does this well and can offer some benchmarking.

Second, loyalty programs are an efficient way to promote long-term engagement. An interviewee suggested that “after a certain number of rentals, you can earn credits”.

What’s more, for the community-driven persona, a community-feeling and social interactions are important. This can be implemented through forums, posts, comments, etc.

Interestingly, gamification features did not appear to be strong enough drivers as no interviewee supported any of them. However, without any real-life experiment, this is difficult to verify since it plays on the subconscious part of the brain.

Finally combining the two stages, physical partnerships build trust and reach. One interviewee suggested to “go through local networks such as student communities, municipalities, and social media groups”. Pedestrian cities with dense concentrations of people like Louvain-la-Neuve and Leuven offer promising launchpads. Poppy’s growth strategy is again relevant: by partnering with the city of Antwerp and local hubs, they gained visibility, policy support, and parking exemptions. These advantages later helped them expand to Liège and major airports often offering mixed fleets (cars, vans, e-scooters) within Belgian public policy frameworks (Mobilité Liège, 2023).

3.7 Theme 7: P2P vs Centralized Preferences

“Peer-to-peer can be cool too. But with individuals, trust is key. Someone might lend you something broken, claim it was brand new, or try to scam you”

When designing an item sharing service like a LoT, the question to go down the path of the peer-to-peer (P2P) model is bound to come up. For instance, Poppins, a developing platform for sharing items from one person to another, surely asked itself the question and chose P2P.

Thus, what did potential users have to say about it? The answer is that, although P2P ideas were also suggested, the overall trend showed that a professional platform in the middle is still preferred.

The advantages mentioned for P2P are that it keeps a community and personal feel to the interaction, while a platform that would act as a middleman makes users think of the unfair practices of Uber and AirBnB. For some, this made the dynamic more business-oriented and not very local. This really showcases the need to build a consistent local and open brand via marketing, process transparency, and eventually local partnerships, as explained in Theme 2 (section 3.2) and Theme 3 (section 3.3). However, during our discussions, P2P was quickly identified as problematic due to trust and quality issues. At least with a company, “you know you won’t run into someone creepy” admitted an interviewee. She even suggested that P2P platforms could be access paid to verify users and complete extensively their profiles. Yet, this would alienate certain users with less means and therefore, not align with the whole societal purpose of LoTs.

All in all, P2P still remains an interesting model, but with some issues of its own. To counter this, as we ideate and experiment deeper into hybrids models, a LoT could offer some useful P2P

solutions with the safeguards and credibility of the organization. The suggestion of last-mile deliveries is an example of this.

3.8 Meet the users: Four personas and their user journeys

All of those ideas and features were found together with the interviewees themselves. The interviews were used as brainstorming sessions as well as deep dives into the interviewee's barriers and wants. However, some solutions are better suited to certain types of people with certain behaviors. They can be represented through personas. This, in turn, allows us to tailor the user journey to specific mindsets and needs.

Two main elements are presented in this section. First, the four personas will be presented. They are segmented by behavior, preferences, and priorities relative to LoTs. Second, key lessons in crafting a potential user journey to tailor the experience to the four personas will be presented.

3.8.1 Personas

After codifying all user interviewees, patterns were identified. They helped me find relevant characteristics to group interviewees in a matrix-like map with two axes: offline/online preference and individualistic/community driven. This was used to map all differentiating user characteristics and preference. It can be found in Appendix K.

Based on this and more identified behaviors, four personas were created with different behaviors, perspectives on LoTs, pains, and needs. The first is a more practical and utilitarian thinking persona. The second is a tech-savvy value-and-community-driven persona. The third is an internet avoider, but very social persona. The fourth is a curious and tester by nature persona.

Hereunder is a table summarizing the most important differentiating characteristics between them. These are ranked on a scale from one (not at all) to five (completely) which reflects how strongly each persona aligns with the corresponding characteristic.

For more-in depth analyses of each persona, including a biography, and relevant information (such as their motivations, values, attitudes towards LoTs, etc.), refer also to Appendix K.

	The Utilitarian Modernist	The Community-driven Creative	The Offline Explorer	The Urban Wanderer
Independent (<Team-player)	5	1	2	3
Analytical (<Creative)	5	2	3	3
Online Digital Preference	5	3	1	2
Needs and Priorities	Rent quickly, efficiently and easily	Contribute to new ways of consuming while helping out the local shops	Help out the community and have access to quality items	Try new items easily
Need to convince (to use the service)	4	1	2	3

Table 3.1: Main differentiation characteristics between the personas

3.8.2 User Journey

For clarity, the complete journey map is available as Appendix K.5, while the following reflection focuses on high-level insights drawn from creating it. Rather than detailing each step, this reflection highlights meaningful patterns, divergences, and design implications that can be generalized.

The specific choice of not designing a user journey for each persona, but rather one regrouping all, is intentional. By not committing to a single optimized journey per persona, this thesis aims to maintain flexibility for future designers and practitioners. It offers a set of specific persona features as a modular toolkit and visual comparison. I encourage practitioners to select or adapt the design to their unique context, user base, and resource constraints.

In doing so, this research answers the research question, “Which user journey features could boost engagement and attractiveness?”, not with one universal solution, but by offering inspiration, structure, and guidance for contextual customization.

One key insight is that different user journeys can be intertwined at some stages and differ at some others. This offers strategic opportunities for both standardization and personalization.

For example, during the awareness stage, there are overlaps between the offline explorer and the urban wanderer, as both may discover the service through offline means either by walking on the street or by direct word of mouth. However, in the activation stage, their paths diverge: the urban wanderer might use digital tools to onboard (such as QR code, the official website, etc.), while the offline explorer still prefers human interaction, asking questions directly at the LoT location and talking to real humans. This divergence continues in the payment stage, where digital-savvy personas (urban wanderer, utilitarian modernist, and community-driven creative) rely on online tools and third-party integrations, while the offline explorer prefers in-person cash payment. However, despite these differences, a reconvergence happens at the collection stage, where the two personas pick up items in person, interacting with staff, and browsing the space.

These patterns show that the decision to tailor for one or several personas depends on where user paths align or diverge most, but also on different contextual factors, including:

- User preferences
- The complexity and cost of implementing multiple journeys
- The LoT’s resources, including money, the staff, existing infrastructure and digital maturity of its service
- The dominant user types in the target region
- The LoT’s brand identity and values (e.g., inclusivity, digital innovation, community bonding, etc.)
- The LoT’s strategic goal(s) (e.g., growth, inclusivity, efficiency, depth of engagement, etc.). As seen in subsection 1.2.1, diffusion is possible when focusing on a core persona and design around their needs, while carefully integrating overlapping features that also resonate with another persona whose behaviors are relatively similar. However, doing so will inevitably decrease inclusivity since not all personas will be included.
- Risk tolerance and experimentation culture

Among all stages, the activation stage stands out as the point where divergence is most pronounced. The utilitarian modernist and urban wanderer can smoothly onboard online by watching video explainers, using self-service features, or paying via integrations. However, the offline explorer, by contrast, avoids screens altogether. This suggests that while a digital-first onboarding system is efficient and preferred, humanized processes in parallel remain essential.

In the usage stage, anxieties are common across all personas: “I’m afraid I’ll break it” and “Am I doing this right?” appear across profiles. This suggests the need for common UX improvements, regardless of tech affinity. Features such as simple, universal usage checklists, community tips on product pages, and optional human coaching (either by video call, phone call, or in-person) are recommended. These implementations not only reduce friction, but build trust, increasing the likelihood of retention and repeat usage.

Finally, offering visible feedback, even in automated systems (e.g., “Your return was successfully verified”), can increase confidence and reduce uncertainty across users.

In short, two principles emerge. First, standardization is possible at shared touchpoints (such as retrieval and return), but UX should offer multiple modes of interaction or experiences to accommodate different levels of comfort with technology. Second, personalization is crucial at high-friction points. Onboarding, rules and policies, payment, and initial usage can offer different persona-specific features.

Chapter 4

What these findings mean for Library of Things designers

Some of these findings, such as the types of objects and different barriers, were expected since studies already cover these areas. However, the interviewees' resourcefulness to come up with innovative solutions to their own barriers particularly surprised me. In this section, the results are analyzed to broaden our view on the current state of LoTs. First, a contrast to the literature will be discussed. Second, the main takeaways of the results will be objectively analyzed. Finally, nine actionable managerial insights from this thesis will be listed and explained.

4.1 A contrast to the literature

While some of the findings validate many known drivers and barriers explained in the literature review (see sections 1.2.2 and 1.3), they also force us to nuance the existing theory, especially when considering different user profiles. Although much of the literature offers a generalist view of barriers to mutualization, these results reveal that they are highly context-dependent. Interviewees often asked "What for? Because it depends on a lot of things". And indeed, it depends on the object, the service, the context, etc. The complexity of such a field, and of social sciences in general, is that it always depends on numerous factors.

4.1.1 Barriers and drivers

Hence, the psychological barrier most present is the intention-behavior gap, which was also identified in the literature. During interviews, I often asked myself whether users would actually follow through on what they said. This is a real problem that only real-life experiments could try to solve.

Another ever present psychological barrier was customer uncertainty. What I realized was that uncertainty did not come only in the form of availability. It comes in all forms and throughout the whole user journey. Damaged items? Fair price for a rental? Ethical practices of the organization? These are just a few of the countless questions that a user is faced with. In a sense, all steps of the user journey are defined by uncertainty. And our role as business strategists, managers, service designers, and marketers is to replace those uncertainties with clarity and emotions.

Guidance emerged as a key driver and is well classified in the most impactful ones. It concerns not only how to use an item, but also how to navigate the system itself: booking (online or not), picking up in lockers, reporting issues, etc. These elements must be clarified and reminded at each step of the journey.

On the other hand, information overload ended up being an unanticipated barrier. It is also strongly tied to guidance. A chaotic and dense interface can hinder understanding and detriment clear instructions. Simplicity is essential. In design, communication, and every aspect of the LoT.

Loss of control, in this case, is not a real problem because this only applies to one's own items (though it would apply to P2P models). However, many feared losing flexibility and spontaneity. Changing our consumption model also requires changing habits. People have a hard time accepting that changing our relationship with limited resources means also changing the way we consume. "We're too old for that" said an interviewee, an excuse which further indicates that habits of consumerism and convenience take over.

Some psychological barriers mentioned in the literature, such as dopamine addiction, envy, and loss of emotional bond, were rarely observed. Although fairly difficult to discern in a discussion, signs of dopamine addiction were rare in interviews. And when they did appear, familiar marketing solutions are available: display glasses, tailored framing, and exclusive offers. The theory of envy and the loss of emotional bonds are simply not present if the right items are sold. This aligns with Silva and Mont (2025)'s proposal to offer items that cannot be found in rental shops instead of directly competing with them.

Finally, all functional barriers and drivers were confirmed: price, item quality, accessibility, trust, and utilitarian needs were constantly cited. However, "moderate impact" factors like awareness, lifestyle fit, and situational context (e.g., infrastructure, policies, etc.) appeared more critical than expected. Identified by Jones et al. (2023) and D'Agostin et al. (2020), the lack of information and awareness is, in fact, a significant problem. Interviewees often explained that they would test out LoTs if only they knew that they existed nearby in habitual places. Only then can the lifestyle fit be considered and molded around the users.

4.1.2 The importance of personalization

The interviews confirm that user needs vary significantly. This indicates that the current literature on PSS barriers and drivers is just not specific enough. For example, community-driven people value forums and group features, while the utilitarian modernist persona clearly thinks that "community features are not the main driver. It will not make me use the service more".

This diversity justifies the personas developed in this thesis. They help identify which features to prioritize and for whom. At the same time, some similarities between personas can support broader diffusion. As discovered in subsection 1.2.1 - "How to spread the concept", there is a need to design for some common attributes between personas in order for the solution to spread in multiple social groups. For instance, both the offline explorer and the urban wanderer prefer physical touchpoints. A feature developed for one may also benefit the other.

LoT designers must therefore balance customization with scalability. Tailoring the service to specific personas while also allowing for natural diffusion between social groups is key to adoption.

4.1.3 Designing with scope in mind

The results confirms the trade-off identified in subsection 1.1.4 - “An introduction to Library of Things (LoT)”: full-range LoTs attract more users. A larger item catalog increases the chances of matching varied types and needs. Potential users would use LoTs’ items to learn new skills or to avoid purchasing rarely used ones as written in the literature.

In line with the OECD and European Commission (2022)’s recommendations, growth strategies should focus on geographic expansion and diversification, rather than scale alone. Interviewees consistently mentioned the need for more locations and better object availability as one of their biggest barriers. Whether it be through automated lockers, deliveries, partnerships with local actors, or a mix of everything, this problem has to be solved to gain popularity and attractiveness. A challenge identified in the literature is high rent prices in city centers, which hinders LoTs’ geographical expansion. The hybrid model suggested in this thesis, including lockers and partner-based pick-up points, can reduce fixed costs through smaller initial costs and win-win situations.

Diversification also comes in the form of a strong brand identity. A coherent communication, in line with the personas, the model, and the different features, can offset many psychological barriers by reassuring the (potential) user. What’s more, the loss of emotional bond identified by first Akbar and Hoffmann (2020) and then Marichal (2026) could very well be mitigated by a sufficiently strong brand. The users would create an emotional bond with the brand and experience themselves, instead of with the products. Shared goals and KPIs associated to the brand, used by many car rental platforms, is also differentiating element. On top of it, they could induce self-transcendence values (i.e., thinking about the bigger picture), a driver identified by Piscicelli et al. (2015) and Jones et al. (2023).

4.2 Taking a step back

The main takeaways of the results are that we should not force the design of LoTs into traditional boxes. Three principles should guide LoT designers. First, attracting potential users with relevant features. Second, maintaining financial sustainability. Third, maximizing positive social and environmental impact. Everything else should be flexible. LoTs should let their imagination run free, brainstorm, verify by co-creating with users, and test. They should not fear combining ideas from different models and technology if it improves user experience. The idea is to have a model that can morph and evolve based on user needs. In short, it is all about finding a balance between the best combinations that fit the needs of the (potential) users.

4.2.1 A hybrid access model

In my opinion, a hybrid system of humans (i.e., volunteers, employees, etc.), automatic lockers, and last-mile deliveries is an interesting system and could increase availability. Partnerships, be they with small local shops or municipalities, should be explored. In addition, drawing inspiration from P2P models for efficiency and social aspects is equally a good idea. Last-mile P2P delivery is just one option among many.

In cases of limited resources, using self-service lockers and niching down could work, particularly for the utilitarian modernist persona. In case of stronger community needs, staff

or volunteers at strategic locations could support the creative community builder or the offline explorer personas. This highlights the adaptability and modularity of a hybrid system. However, design should always consider the local user base, available resources, and broader values. Overly narrow targeting could exclude people interested in sustainable consumption. The digital divide is real, and it is not the only factor that designers have to be careful of. Inclusivity needs to be by design, and not a by-product. Color blinds, disabled, seniors, and many more should also feel at home while using a LoT. In our current world, design holds a tremendous amount of power and should lead the way forward in inclusivity as well as sustainability.

4.2.2 The role of technology

Identified by Akbar and Hoffmann (2020) and verified in this thesis, technology can reduce subjective psychological costs. It can simplify interfaces, improve guidance, and support flexible access. There is an opportunity to further expand current models with the use of new technology. However, it should not be at the expense of the elements that make LoTs such culturally rich experiences. The human and social values, the trust, the low cost access, the solidarity, to cite some. In short, the core social and environmental values that the model is built on. Technology should enhance, not replace, the core experience.

4.2.3 A success case: London Library of Things

While exploring real-life implementations of the features suggested by interviewees, I came across the London Library of Things. It is a concrete example that successfully integrates many of the findings from this thesis, and offers a glimpse into what effective design can achieve. Through a mixed licensing model and an extensive network, it has significantly improved accessibility across the UK. Since its launch in 2014, it has attracted over 36,000 members, enabled more than 68,000 rentals, saved 440 tonnes of waste, and helped residents save approximately £9.7 million (Library of Things, 2025).

Their website is sober, clear, and visually appealing, while highlighting the most important features. The brand design is professional yet approachable, and fosters a sense of social connection through testimonials, illustrations, and authentic images of users. A blog and regular workshops help build community and trust. The platform clearly communicates its mission, offers easy-to-understand instructions, and highlights key benefits. It also tracks and shares transparent, relevant KPIs, such as CO2 emissions saved, and money saved by users. Most importantly, the organization has placed convenience at the heart of its model. It partners with reputable brands for item repairs and operates self-service lockers in over 22 locations across the UK (Library of Things, 2025). Overall, it is a strong example worth exploring for anyone interested in building an effective and user-centered LoT. It can be discovered here.

4.3 Designing better mutualized systems for Libraries of Things: Actionable managerial takeaways

To conclude, what do you have to keep in mind when designing a Library of Things? Based on this thesis' findings, nine key points can be extrapolated.

1. Segment users: Build tailored experiences for your present user types and future personas. Common means and features can arise (it is even wanted), but you should know what each

user needs, wants, and does not want. Staying close to the users, listening and co-creating with them can guide you to include their needs and wants.

2. Make first-use delightful: Onboarding and first object pickup should be pleasant and memorable. This is your biggest lever to reduce the first hesitation. This translates into designing for onboarding and not just usage. Give incentives, make it feel low-risk, flexible, and supported. Ask yourself, what would make the onboarding so good that it would be stupid to not go for it?
3. Do not be afraid to explore new alternative ways, models, and features: A hybrid model which blends automated systems (e.g., self-service lockers) with human touchpoints (such as employees who provide guidance at a regular counter, local partnerships, or P2P last-mile deliveries) is preferred to accommodate for multiple personas.
4. Do not shy away from using technologies if it improves the journey: Leverage digital tools and connected hardware where it reduces barriers through smart interfaces, real-time availability, integrated tutorials, and more. As seen in this thesis, the biggest barriers can sometimes be mitigated by already available digital tools. It is all about integrating them seamlessly in the journey.
5. Design for simplicity: Even if you could include technology in your journey, it should not be at the expense of clarity. The system should feel lighter than buying, not morally heavier. Use knowledge in behavioral psychology such as the default choices and information overload to reduce the needed number of steps as much as possible to go from discovering to being a lifelong user.
6. Adopt an ecosystem view: Consider partnerships with present local shops such as farms, malls, hobby centers, co-ops, municipalities, etc. These are local spaces people already trust and visit in their daily routine. This can bring the ecosystem closer together, and create win-win situations for everyone.
7. Trust is not just about safety, it is also about predictability: You should reduce uncertainty through proactive communication at each stage of the journey. Users need to know what comes next. Testimonials, social media posts, and open unfiltered review systems can help with that. A consistent professional and local branding is also something to consider. Use close and emotional words that you would want to hear in those instructions with a reassuring, context-rich, and even humorous tone.
8. Be mindful of excluding users: Alienating users should be by-design and not just a result of your business model. Digitalization, geographical factors, disabilities, etc. can all alienate if not accounted for. Therefore, every feature has to be thought about extensively. A core value of Libraries of Things is to include as many people as possible and to make it a safe and open place.
9. Keep the cultural layer alive: While digital touchpoints, convenience-first, and efficient features are definitely needed, they should not be an over-kill. A balance should be found between efficiency through automation and local human contact. Over-digitalization will flatten local richness which comes from their community roots and unique cultural context.

Those nine takeaways are what I will personally remember the most from this thesis. Although they are specific to Libraries of Things, they could eventually apply to other business strategies and models if it is sound to do so.

Chapter 5

Limitations and Further Research

Although the results are interesting, this thesis still contains some limitations that I can identify.

First, generalizing completely to other regions and all individuals should not be done since a sample bias and limited diversity is present. Indeed, most interviewees came from Wallonia, mainly the province of Luxembourg, leaving out much of the Belgian population. Some groups, such as NEETs, immigrants, and lower-income individuals, were unintentionally excluded. Despite efforts to select diverse profiles, the coverage of my sample was as good as my theoretical profiles, and survey respondents leaving their contact details. Therefore, some unexplored behaviors might be missing.

Second, the intention-action gap still remains. While interviewees expressed interest, the study did not track actual behaviors over time, meaning self-reported data may not reflect real-life engagement. Many interviewees may have over- or underestimated their willingness to try such a service.

Third, recommendations and user interviews are very context-dependent. Cultural, demographic, individual differences (like marital status), and so many factors influence how users perceive and adopt services, which is impossible to generalize. Touchpoints also influence one another differently depending on the context. The exploration phase for instance is influenced by so many deciding factors and varies greatly from person to person.

Fourth, while this study offers a user journey and adoption features, these have not yet been tested in real-life settings. Data, both offline and online should be analyzed where some, if not all, design features from this user journey are implemented.

Finally, no iteration loop was present. Design thinking typically needs cycles of testing and refining with new input data. However, this was intentionally left for future work due to limited time.

Future studies should involve larger, more diverse samples supported by quantitative data and statistical methods. Other contexts with different cultural or income settings should be analyzed to broaden the available data for potential extrapolations.

A real-life implementation of the user journey and separate recommendations from this thesis should also be conducted. Besides this, financial and detailed feasibility studies would strengthen the findings.

Lastly, since this study mainly explored design features to increase adoption, future research could further explore the design features that influence repeated usage of LoTs.

Designing for engagement: a way forward for the sharing economy

All in all, making potential users aware of sustainability issues is one key to the problem, but still not enough to drive adoption. User-centric features that address both functional and psychological barriers in existing Libraries of Things models should be prioritized. The specific context based on different user needs in which a PSS is used brings its unique value to it. Therefore, it needs to be at the center of the user journey with tailored and adaptable features.

“Which user journey-based design features can boost user engagement for mutualized PSS, specifically Libraries of Things, to make them more attractive than ownership?”

To briefly answer, simple, trustworthy, transparent, and convenient features must be implemented at every stage of the user journey to be integrated seamlessly into users' daily lives. While some features can serve multiple personas, others must be customized. Suggested strategies to increase awareness, transparency, and trust include increasing local visibility through partnerships, creating a brand framed around flexibility, that feels human, relatable, and professional, nurturing content and ads on social media, as well as providing clear information about the organization, the products, and user reviews. A key element is to use a multi-channel strategy as trust anchor. Convenience can be implemented through progressive, but simple pricing, a website with side-by-side brands comparisons, real-time inventory on maps, and distance filters. Many more tech features (QR codes, NFC, etc.) can also be implemented to increase user experience. Deposits, insurances, optional in-person support, free trials, referral, and loyalty programs can drive first-time adoption. What's more, the type of items, high-quality, high-value, low-frequency, is very important to differentiate. Hybrid models with in-person and self-service points, as well as adopting an ecosystem view, and inclusivity should be considered.

In conclusion, this thesis bridges theory and practice by identifying actionable design features tailored for hesitant and potential users, a less explored area in the literature. Mutualized models like Libraries of Things hold strong potential to reduce environmental impact and foster social cohesion. But to scale, they must be designed around human behavior, habits, and needs. If we want people to choose sharing over owning, we must meet them where they are, with the right objects and the right experiences.

As Steve Jobs brilliantly put it: “You have got to start with the customer experience and work backwards to the technology”.

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Appendix

A Interactive Model of Research Design

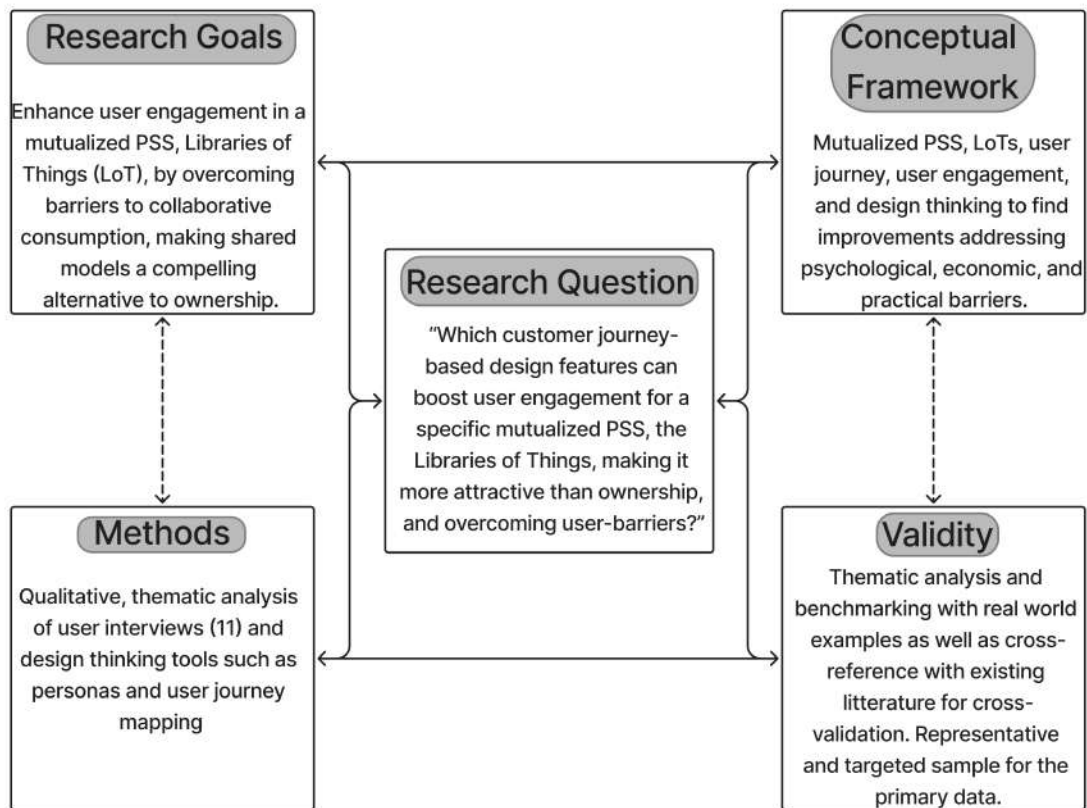


Figure 1: This thesis' interactive model of research design based on (Maxwell, 2005)

Back to the main text.

B Business Model Framework for LoTs

	Attribute	Attribute Types	Configuration Option			
Value Creation	Key Activities		Short-term sharing goods	Long-term sharing goods	Sharing consumables	Sharing knowledge & skills
	Marketplace Type		Public-to-user		Business-to-consumer	
	Governance Model		Cooperative	Collaborative	Formal	
	Value Orientation		Social	Environmental	Societal	
	Inventory management	<i>Content</i> <i>Sourcing</i>	Quantity	Categories	Lost & damaged items	
Value Delivery	Value Proposition		Reduction of transaction costs in sharing	Knowledge & cultural exchange	Save space & money	Try before you buy
	Venue		Physical space	Opening hours	Exchange options	Lending system
	Geographical scale		Local	Regional	Nodes	
	Staffing		Fully volunteer- or member-run	Managers & volunteers	Paid staff from another organisation	Mainly run by paid staff
Value Capture	Membership model		Pay-as-you-go	Hybrid	All-access	
	Funding model	<i>Type</i>	Monetary: grants, donations, crowdfunding, sponsorship, taxpayer funding		In-kind: inventory, space, professional services, training & monitoring, publicity	
		<i>Provider</i>	Government: local, national regional	Individual	Funding body	Companies
		<i>Frequency</i>	One-time		Recurring	
		<i>Restrictions</i>	Unrestricted		Restricted	
	Other Revenues	<i>Received benefits</i>	Public recognition	Usage data	None	
			Late fees	Cleaning & damage fees	Deposits	Non-collection fees
			Convenience fees	Delivery fees	Franchise fees	Gift certificates
			Sale of donated inventory	Space rental fee	Tours & group visits	'Shop for good' donations
	Sustainability Performance		Non-pecuniary motivation for ownership of goods	Leverage idling capacity of an existing stock of goods	Green procurement criteria if goods purchased new	
	Impact Reporting	<i>Item level</i>	Storage space saved	Financial savings for users	Waste avoided	
		<i>LoT level</i>	Financial savings for members	Inventory	Volunteer hours	
			Donations received	Loans	Members	
			Partnerships	Workshops / events	Financial reporting	
			Local job creation	Waste / emissions avoided	-	

Figure 2: Business model framework for Libraries of Things (Silva & Mont, 2025)

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C Less Impactful Factors

- Open-to-change values (Piscicelli et al., 2015): An important characteristic to have as an early adopter, this factor helps at the early stages of a PSS. However, mass adoption depends on mainstream factors afore-explained. Being open to change is opposed to security, traditions and conformity. It also greatly depends on cultural background, upbringing, and personal factors of an individual.
- Personal factors (D'Agostin et al., 2020): Those factors (such as the age, upbringing) do play a role in the adoption, but is not a behavioral driver. It is rather a demographic correlation with other more influential drivers. Indeed, depending on personal factors, a certain lifestyle or different values that might be PSS drivers might be present. This facilitates the adoption when specific drivers are showcased or activated.
- Behavioral nudges and incentive systems (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020; Tukker, 2015): Considered to improve adoption, they act as reinforcement mechanisms and levers for top-tier adoption drivers. They do not create demand by itself but enhance existing motivations by pushing users to see non-ownership as easier than ownership, making economic benefits more engaging, and lowering psychological barriers (with social proof, gamification, default biases, etc.).
- UI design considerations (Tukker, 2015): The user experience with UI implementations is a driver during the use of an already adopted solution, but alone does not drive adoption. Bad design can be a frustrating point for a user, but many can push through the inconvenience if the price and flexibility are good enough.
- Anti-consumption and minimalism mindsets (Akbar & Hoffmann, 2020): Those ideological mindsets support adoption for early adopters, but are still niche motivations. This factor is interesting when targeting and segmenting user profiles though.
- Guilt and social pressure (D'Agostin et al., 2020): Ranked last in articles, these factors can push adoption, but they rarely sustain long-term engagement. Users stay if the service is useful, not just because of guilt.

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D Preliminary Survey

Translated English version of the preliminary survey meant to collect user profiles for the interviews.

In bold is how I formatted the original survey to attract attention.

What if individual ownership were no longer the norm?

In response to ecological and economic challenges, new models are emerging: sharing, mutualizing, consuming differently, etc.

But for these models to work, we need to understand what truly holds people back or draws them in.

That's why, as part of my thesis, I'm investigating the mutual use of objects to reduce their environmental impact and make them accessible to everyone.

So, please take a moment to fill out this short survey (3 to 4 minutes max) and help me design services that are more eco-friendly, practical, engaging, and tailored to *your* needs!

<https://tally.so/r/mJXZgY>

Thank you in advance for your help, and feel free to share it with others!

Characteristics (1 min)

- **Age:**

- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 54+

- **Gender:**

- Woman
- Man
- Other
- Prefer not to say

- **Place of residence:**

- Province of Luxembourg
- Province of Walloon Brabant
- Province of Liège
- Province of Hainaut
- Province of Namur

- **Living environment:**

-
- Urban
 - Suburban
 - Rural

- **Professional situation:**

- Student
- Employee
- Self-employed
- Retired
- Other

Shared Consumption Habits (1.5 min)

- Do you sometimes use **sharing or rental services** (e.g., bike/car sharing, tool rental, clothing rental, coworking, etc.)?
 - Never
 - Rarely
 - Occasionally
 - Frequently
 - If yes, which ones? *(multiple answers possible)*
 - Shared bikes/scooters
 - Car sharing
 - Tools/objects
 - Clothing rental
 - Coworking spaces
 - Libraries
 - Other: _____
 - What **holds you back the most** from using these services? *(multiple choices)*
 - Hygiene
 - Complexity of use
 - Lack of availability
 - Lack of trust
 - Price
 - Not practical for my lifestyle
 - Other: _____
 - What would **motivate you** to use this type of service (more often)? *(optional open-ended response)*

 - For which items do you **prefer sharing or renting**, and why?

-

Attitudes and Values (1 min)

On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree):

- I prefer sharing to owning.
- I worry about the hygiene of shared objects.
- I would be willing to use a shared service if it were simple and fun.
- Environmental impact influences my choices.
- I'm afraid I won't have access to the item when I need it.
- I trust digital platforms to manage this kind of service.
- Sharing sometimes makes me feel like I'm losing control.

DIY

Do you usually **repair, build, or make things yourself** (e.g., at home)?

- Yes, often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

If yes, what kind of objects do you use most often? *(Please name one or two)*

Do you think sharing these tools or machines would be a good idea?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Going Further (0.5 min)

Would you be willing to help further by taking part in a **short interview (around 30 minutes)** to better understand your needs and behaviors?

- Yes
- No
- If yes, please leave your email or contact info: _____

If yes:

Would you also be open to participating in a **second step** (a short survey or follow-up interview) a few weeks later? This would help me collect longer-term insights.

- Yes
 - No
-

E Theoretical User Profiles

A comparison between survey respondents and theoretical profiles allowed me to see if any type of respondent was potentially missing from my interviews. Five theoretical profiles were developed based on the combination of identified user barriers, drivers, behaviors, and mindsets from the present literature (rather than demographic data).

These profiles helped me to compare the selected interviewees and a theoretical representation of all the potential users I could think of. They include current experience with PSS and LoTs, personal values (e.g., environmental concern, hygiene preferences, availability), personal motivations (e.g., sustainability, affordability, convenience), perceived control, and socio-demographic context (age, occupation, and type of residence), which can provide clues about lifestyle and service relevance.

The five profiles are:

- The explorers: Pro-sharing advocates and current users of LoTs, typically living in or around larger cities and strongly motivated by sustainable values as well as the functional economy. They help identify drivers of long-term engagement and best practices (a typical example would be the eco-urban resident).
 - The community innovators: Makers, DIYers, local activists, or members of community workshops and hackspaces who are open to trying new solutions in line with their values and projects. An example could be an engaged woman in her thirties and active in local associations. These profiles often bring creative ideas, highlight underused potentials, and can co-design future services.
 - The curious pragmatists: Potential users with little to no previous experience but open-minded and receptive if the service proves to be convenient and beneficial. A typical example might be a student with limited income but a strong awareness of his/her environmental impact. These users can provide insights into what triggers behavioral shifts (i.e., inflection actions) and under which conditions a solution becomes engaging and viable.
 - The rational skeptics: Potential users sensitive to complexity, perceived risks, and lack of control. They tend to prioritize reliability, safety, and predictability. For example, a cautious parent or retiree living in a suburban area. These participants can help uncover logical or practical barriers (comfort, compatibility, risk) that may hinder adoption.
 - The habits fervents: Individuals unlikely to adopt sharing-based systems due to strong attachment to ownership, resistance to change, or low receptiveness to environmental arguments. For instance, a rural senior who values personal belongings or a materialistic consumer profile.
-

F Preliminary Survey Answers

All answers from the preliminary survey in French.

Submission ID	Quel âge avez-vous?	Comment vous identifiez-vous?	Où résidez-vous?	Respondent's country	Dans quel cadre habitez-vous?	Quelle est votre situation professionnelle ?	Avez-vous déjà utilisé des services de partage d'objets (par exemple vélo, voiture, outils, vêtements, coworking,...) ?	Lesquels avez-vous déjà utilisé (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Lesquels seriez-vous intéressé(e) à tester (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Utilisez-vous parfois encore ces services ?
5Bx77JP	25-34	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Périphérie de ville	Indépendant(e)	Non		Livres, Outils/objets	
A7vgEAW	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Non		Outils/objets, Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Coworking, Livres	
obGPqkM	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Semi-rural	Étudiant(e)	Non		Coworking	
Y5a62Xz	25-34	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Outils/objets	
eqRJb10	54+	Homme	France	France	Rural	Autre (merci de pr	Non		Outils/objets, Voiture partagées (Carsharing)	
PdOxVpV	25-34	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Coworking	
RGPNFj	54+	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Outils/objets	
aQdL8r9	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Semi-rural	Étudiant(e)	Non		Voiture partagées (Carsharing), Outils/objets, Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Livres, Coworking	
81xX1N5	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Non		Coworking, Outils/objets, Tech (drones/appareil photo/camera)	
VLJKLav	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Livres, Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Jamais
0QOKZPA	54+	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Semi-rural	Retraité(e)	Non		Outils/objets	

Figure 3: Survey Answers - 1

Submission ID	En général, qu'est-ce qui vous freine le plus à utiliser ces services ? (plusieurs réponses possibles)	Qu'est-ce qui vous motiverait à utiliser ce type de services (plus souvent)?	Je préfère partager que posséder	Je m'inquiète de l'hygiène des objets partagés	Je serais prêt(e) à utiliser un service partagé s'il était simple et amusant	L'impact environnemental influence mes choix	J'ai peur de ne pas avoir accès à l'objet quand j'en ai besoin	Je fais confiance aux plateformes numériques pour gérer ce type de services	Partager me donne parfois un sentiment de perte de contrôle	Avez-vous l'habitude de réparer, bricoler, ou fabriquer vous-même (dans votre maison, par exemple) ?	Seriez-vous d'accord de participer à un deuxième entretien plus tard ?
5Bx77JP	Je ne me renseigne pas à ce sujet	Plus de visibilité	3	5	4	3	5	5	3	Rarement	Oui, bien sûr!
A7vgEAW	Manque de disponibilité, Manque de confiance, Complexité d'utilisation		2	4	4	4	4	3	4	Parfois	
obGPqkM	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Manque de disponibilité		2	4	4	3	4	2	3	Parfois	
Y5a62Xz	Je ne sais pas où m'en procurer et je ne pense pas car peu présent.	Avoir plus d'informations concernant l'existence et la disponibilité de ce genre de services	3	2	5	2	2	4	2	Rarement	
eqRJb10	Manque de disponibilité, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		2	4	4	4	5	2	4	Parfois	
PdOxVpV	Manque de confiance, Hygiène, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Manque de disponibilité		2	4	3	4	4	4	2	Rarement	
RGPNErj	Hygiène, Manque de disponibilité	Hygiène / accessibilité rapide	3	5	4	4	5	5	2	Rarement	Oui, bien sûr!
aQdL8r9	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Complexité d'utilisation	Simplicité	3	3	5	4	4	4	4	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
81xX1N5	Manque de disponibilité		3	1	5	4	1	3	2	Parfois	Oui, bien sûr!
VLJKLav	pas de besoin	créer du besoin	2	5	4	4	5	5	3	Rarement	Oui, bien sûr!
0QOKZPA	Hygiène, Manque de confiance, Préfère posséder mes objets et ne dépendre de personne.	Des travaux occasionnels si j'étais bricoleur.	1	5	4	1	4	2	4	Parfois	Oui, bien sûr!

Figure 4: Survey Answers - 1

Submission ID	Quel âge avez-vous?	Comment vous identifiez-vous?	Où résidez-vous?	Respondent's country	Dans quel cadre habitez-vous?	Quelle est votre situation professionnelle ?	Avez-vous déjà utilisé des services de partage d'objets (par exemple vélo, voiture, outils, vêtements, coworking,...) ?	Lesquels avez-vous déjà utilisé (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Lesquels seriez-vous intéressé(e) à tester (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Utilisez-vous parfois encore ces services ?
xXYA6jG	25-34	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Coworking, Outils/objets, Livres	
aQdRglq	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Semi-rural	Étudiant(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Livres, Voiture partagées (Carsharing)	Occasionnellem	
2EPppvM	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Périphérie de ville	Étudiant(e)	Non		Livres, Outils/objets	
5BxJ6QE	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Urbain	Étudiant(e)	Non		Outils/objets, Voiture partagées (Carsharing)	
ZjaxJgA	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province de Namur	Belgium	Périphérie de ville	Étudiant(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Rarement
5BxNie6	45-54	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Outils/objets	
riPXG1R	54+	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Spain	Semi-rural	Retraité(e)	Oui	Outils/objets, Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Rarement
MeRoPb8	25-34	Femme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Non		Voiture partagées (Carsharing)	
VLJ2BPi	54+	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Semi-rural	Retraité(e)	Non		Outils/objets	
Gxi8jpQ	54+	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Périphérie de ville	Retraité(e)	Non		Livres, Outils/objets	
A7v1NJo	54+	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Retraité(e)	Oui	Livres, Outils/objets, Coworking		Occasionnellem
WOzx4lv	54+	Homme	FR	France	Rural	Retraité(e)	Non		Vélos/trottinettes partagés	
WOzv5Aa	45-54	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Livres	
RGP70Q4	35-44	Homme	France	France	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Voiture partagées (Carsharing), Vélos/trottinettes partagés	

Figure 5: Survey Answers - 2

Submission ID	En général, qu'est-ce qui vous freine le plus à utiliser ces services ? (plusieurs réponses possibles)	Qu'est-ce qui vous motiverait à utiliser ce type de services (plus souvent)?	Je préfère partager que posséder	Je m'inquiète de l'hygiène des objets partagés	Je serais prêt(e) à utiliser un service partagé s'il était simple et amusant	L'impact environnemental influence mes choix	J'ai peur de ne pas avoir accès à l'objet quand j'en ai besoin	Je fais confiance aux plateformes numériques pour gérer ce type de services	Partager me donne parfois un sentiment de perte de contrôle	Avez-vous l'habitude de réparer, bricoler, ou fabriquer vous-même (dans votre maison, par exemple) ?	Seriez-vous d'accord de participer à un deuxième entretien plus tard ?
xXYA6jG	Hygiène, Prix, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Manque de disponibilité	Prix attractif par rapport à un achat (ex: si en 4 fois c'est rentabilisé alors au temps acheter), livraison à domicile pour les gens qui n'ont pas le temps		1	4	3	2	2	4	4 Rarement	Oui, bien sûr!
aQdRglq	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Manque de disponibilité		3	2	5	5	5	4	2	Oui, souvent	
2EPppvM	Hygiène, Manque de confiance		3	4	4	5	4	3	1	Jamais	
5BxJ6QE	Complexité d'utilisation, Manque de confiance		2	4	4	3	4	2	3	Rarement	
ZjaxJgA	Pas d'utilité encore	Proximité, prix et qualité	2	4	5	4	4	4	2	Rarement	
5BxNle6	Hygiène, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		1	4	3	3	5	3	4	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
rjPXG1R	Pas réellement besoin	En ville : pour location de voiture , auto ,	1	1	4	1	4	4	2	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
MeRoPb8	Manque de confiance, Hygiène, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie	Le prix	1	5	3	4	5	3	5	Rarement	
VLJ2BPI	Manque de confiance, Complexité d'utilisation		3	4	3	3	4	3	3	Oui, souvent	
Gxl8jpQ	Hygiène, Manque de confiance, Complexité en cas de problème (panne, déchirure,...)		3	5	5	5	4	2	5	Oui, souvent	
A7v1NJo	Manque de confiance		5	3	5	5	4	1	1	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
WOzx4lv	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		2	2	3	3	4	3	2	Oui, souvent	
WOzv5Aa	Manque de confiance, Hygiène, Peur de l'abîmer		1	1	5	1	5	3	1	Oui, souvent	
RGP70Q4	Hygiène, Prix, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		2	1	3	2	3	3	3	Oui, souvent	

Figure 6: Survey Answers - 2

Submission ID	Quel âge avez-vous?	Comment vous identifiez-vous?	Où résidez-vous?	Respondent's country	Dans quel cadre habitez-vous?	Quelle est votre situation professionnelle ?	Avez-vous déjà utilisé des services de partage d'objets (par exemple vélo, voiture, outils, vêtements, coworking....) ?	Lesquels avez-vous déjà utilisé (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Lesquels seriez-vous intéressé(e) à tester (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Utilisez-vous parfois encore ces services ?
ODGWdy8	25-34	Homme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Non		Location de vêtements, Coworking, Livres, Voiture partagées (Carsharing), Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Outils/objets	
zxDXVz0	Entre 18-24 ans	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Livres, Vélos/trottinettes partagés	
44xX5Qb	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Outils/objets, Vélos/trottinettes partagés	
44xX51Y	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Suisse - Genève	Germany	Urbain	Étudiant(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Rarement
5B1X0GP	45-54	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Livres, Outils/objets		Rarement
Gxd6Pae	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Livres, Outils/objets, Voiture partagées (Carsharing)		Rarement
VL5GeNv	Entre 18-24 ans	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Rural	Étudiant(e)	Non		Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Livres, Voiture partagées (Carsharing), Outils/objets	
KYIVeA7	54+	Homme	Province de Namur	Spain	Rural	Retraité(e)	Non		Outils/objets	
VL5zQkE	Entre 18-24 ans	Femme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Périphérie de ville	Étudiant(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Livres, Coworking		Occasionnellement
9qD7MbQ	54+	Homme	Province du Hainaut	Belgium	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Outils/objets	

Figure 7: Survey Answers - 3

Submission ID	En général, qu'est-ce qui vous freine le plus à utiliser ces services ? (plusieurs réponses possibles)	Qu'est-ce qui vous motiverait à utiliser ce type de services (plus souvent)?	Je préfère partager que posséder	Je m'inquiète de l'hygiène des objets partagés	Je serais prêt(e) à utiliser un service partagé s'il était simple et amusant	L'impact environnemental influence mes choix	J'ai peur de ne pas avoir accès à l'objet quand j'en ai besoin	Je fais confiance aux plateformes numériques pour gérer ce type de services	Partager me donne parfois un sentiment de perte de contrôle	Avez-vous l'habitude de réparer, bricoler, ou fabriquer vous-même (dans votre maison, par exemple) ?	Seriez-vous d'accord de participer à un deuxième entretien plus tard ?
ODGWdy8	Prix, Manque de disponibilité, Complexité d'utilisation	Que ces services soient faciles d'accès (parking, transports en commun) et gérés par du personnel physique avec qui il est possible d'interagir si besoin sans devoir passer par une app ou un chat en ligne.	3	3	4	5	3	2	4	Jamais	
zxDXVz0	Hygiène, Manque de confiance	Économiser de l'argent et tester avant d'acheter	2	4	4	3	3	5	3	Jamais	Oui, bien sûr!
44xX5Qb	Manque de disponibilité		2	4	4	3	4	4	3	Rarement	
44xX51Y	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Prix	Pour vélos et trottinettes partagées rien. Pour objets et outils, disponibilité et système plus pratique	2	2	3	3	4	3	3	Jamais	
5B1X0GP	Complexité d'utilisation, Manque de disponibilité, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie	Meilleure information	5	3	5	5	4	3	1	Oui, souvent	
Gxd6Pae	Hygiène, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		2	5	4	2	5	5	3	Oui, souvent	
VL5GeNv	Manque de disponibilité, Complexité d'utilisation		4	2	4	5	4	4	2	Jamais	
KYIVeA7	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		3	1	5	4	3	4	3	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
VL5zQkE	Je n'ai peut être pas encore assez de besoin qui puissent être répondu par une solution mutualisée ? (En tant qu'étudiante je résumerais ma consommation encore bcp par la récupération de ce que mes parents utilisent, partage avec mes frères et sœurs, transports en commun)	Un accès très simple et une disponibilité géographique stratégique et importante	4	2	5	5	3	4	1	Parfois	
9qD7MbQ	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		2	2	1	3	5	1	4	Parfois	

Figure 8: Survey Answers - 3

Submission ID	Quel âge avez-vous?	Comment vous identifiez-vous?	Où résidez-vous?	Respondent's country	Dans quel cadre habitez-vous?	Quelle est votre situation professionnelle ?	Avez-vous déjà utilisé des services de partage d'objets (par exemple vélo, voiture, outils, vêtements, coworking, ...) ?	Lesquels avez-vous déjà utilisé (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Lesquels seriez-vous intéressé(e) à tester (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Utilisez-vous parfois encore ces services ?
0Q6eaNy	54+	Femme	Province du Hainaut	Belgium	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Livres, Voiture partagées (Carsharing)	
BzkxVN7	25-34	Femme	Province du Hainaut	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Coworking	
zxD1eZ0	25-34	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgium	Semi-rural	Indépendant(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Occasionnellement
XxWz2AY	25-34	Femme	Province de Liège	Belgium	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Oui	Outils/objets		Occasionnellement
gDMv19d	25-34	Homme	Province de Liège	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Coworking, Livres	
rjAvblv	25-34	Homme	Bruxelles	Belgium	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Oui	Voiture partagées (Carsharing), Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Occasionnellement
EkQMoaB	25-34	Homme	Bruxelles	Belgium	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Non		Livres	
OD5kxN8	25-34	Femme	Bruxelles	Belgium	Urbain	Chômage	Oui	Livres, Voiture partagées (Carsharing), Outils/objets		Rarement
9qDxX1E	54+	Femme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Rural	Indépendant(e)	Oui	Outils/objets		Fréquemment
W05QzaR	54+	Femme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Rural	Retraité(e)	Non		Livres, Outils/objets	
1A7O7gM	54+	Homme	Allemagne	Germany	Périphérie de ville	Salarié(e)	Oui	Coworking, Livres, Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Outils/objets		Occasionnellement
kd8gRkR	25-34	Femme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Semi-rural	Demandeuse d'emploi	Oui	Coworking, Livres, Voiture partagées (Carsharing)		Fréquemment

Figure 9: Survey Answers - 4

Submission ID	En général, qu'est-ce qui vous freine le plus à utiliser ces services ? (plusieurs réponses possibles)	Qu'est-ce qui vous motiverait à utiliser ce type de services (plus souvent)?	Je préfère partager que posséder	Je m'inquiète de l'hygiène des objets partagés	Je serais prêt(e) à utiliser un service partagé s'il était simple et amusant	L'impact environnemental influence mes choix	J'ai peur de ne pas avoir accès à l'objet quand j'en ai besoin	Je fais confiance aux plateformes numériques pour gérer ce type de services	Partager me donne parfois un sentiment de perte de contrôle	Avez-vous l'habitude de réparer, bricoler, ou fabriquer vous-même (dans votre maison, par exemple) ?	Seriez-vous d'accord de participer à un deuxième entretien plus tard ?
0Q6eaNy	Manque de disponibilité, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie	Plus de disponibilité, facilité	3	1	4	4	5	4	1	Parfois	Oui, bien sûr!
BzkxVN7	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie	Que ce soit plus accessible hors des villes	2	4	3	3	4	2	2	Parfois	
zxD1eZ0	Manque de confiance, Complexité d'utilisation, Manque de disponibilité, Velib, vël'oh plutôt simple d'utilisation car ne dépend pas de particuliers. Via marketplace, 2ememain.be, leboncoin pas pratique de trouver près de chez soi. Pas pratique pour mon style de vie	Application qui rendrait la location/le prêt d'appareils beaucoup plus facile :)	3	4	5	5	5	3	5	Parfois	Oui, bien sûr!
XxWz2AY	Manque de disponibilité		3	1	4	4	4	3	2	Oui, souvent	
gDMv19d	Manque de confiance, Hygiène		1	5	5	5	5	1	5	Oui, souvent	
rjAvblv	Hygiène, Je possède une alternative (autrement dit, je prends une carsharing si j'ai pas de voiture à ma disposition	Si j'en ai besoin et que je ne possède pas d'alternative	3	4	4	5	4	5	4	Parfois	
EkQMoaB	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Hygiène, Prix		2	5	3	4	5	2	4	Jamais	
OD5kxN8	Manque de confiance, Hygiène	Prix pas cher, beaucoup hygiène	1	5	1	2	2	1	3	Parfois	Oui, bien sûr!
9qDxX1E	Manque de disponibilité		4	2	4	5	2	4	2	Oui, souvent	
W05QzaR	Manque de disponibilité	Etre au courant via réseau social de ce qui est dispo/demandé	4	1	5	5	3	5	3	Parfois	Oui, bien sûr!
1A7O7gM	Manque de disponibilité, Qualité des services connexes à la plateforme	Eduquer les utilisateurs à mieux utiliser ces "services"	3	4	3	5	4	2	1	Oui, souvent	
kd6gRkR	Complexité d'utilisation, Prix	Que ce soit accessible plus proche de chez moi (voiture partagée par exemple)	4	1	4	5	2	4	1	Rarement	

Figure 10: Survey Answers - 4

Submission ID	Quel âge avez-vous?	Comment vous identifiez-vous?	Où résidez-vous?	Respondent's country	Dans quel cadre habitez-vous?	Quelle est votre situation professionnelle ?	Avez-vous déjà utilisé des services de partage d'objets (par exemple vélo, voiture, outils, vêtements, coworking,...) ?	Lesquels avez-vous déjà utilisé (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Lesquels seriez-vous intéressé(e) à tester (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Utilisez-vous parfois encore ces services ?
jaQgGVx	35-44	Homme	Province de Namur	Belgium	Périphérie de ville	Salarié(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Coworking, Outils/objets, Livres		Rarement
b5xgXxo	54+	Femme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Outils/objets		Jamais
QK5j648	45-54	Homme	Province du Luxembourg	Luxembourg	Rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Livres		Jamais
jaQpeV'i	25-34	Homme	Bruxelles	Belgium	Urbain	Salarié(e)	Oui	Vélos/trottinettes partagés, Voiture partagées (Carsharing)		Rarement
A7L0ldN	35-44	Homme	Province de Namur	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Outils/objets, Livres		Rarement
5B15A6d	45-54	Homme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Semi-rural	Indépendant(e)	Oui	Livres, Outils/objets, Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Rarement
kd6x2b1	35-44	Homme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Livres, Outils/objets		Occasionnellement
5B1DzJQ	25-34	Femme	Province de Namur	Belgium	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Outils/objets		Jamais
Zj6L4Y0	54+	Femme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Urbain	Étudiant(e)	Oui	Livres, Outils/objets		Rarement
A7LNbLy	54+	Homme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Belgium	Semi-rural	Retraité(e)	Oui	Livres, Outils/objets		Occasionnellement
WO5Xg5J	25-34	Homme	Province de Namur	Belgium	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Oui	Coworking, Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Fréquemment

Figure 11: Survey Answers - 5

Submission ID	En général, qu'est-ce qui vous freine le plus à utiliser ces services ? (plusieurs réponses possibles)	Qu'est-ce qui vous motiverait à utiliser ce type de services (plus souvent)?	Je préfère partager que posséder	Je m'inquiète de l'hygiène des objets partagés	Je serais prêt(e) à utiliser un service partagé s'il était simple et amusant	L'impact environnemental influence mes choix	J'ai peur de ne pas avoir accès à l'objet quand j'en ai besoin	Je fais confiance aux plateformes numériques pour gérer ce type de services	Partager me donne parfois un sentiment de perte de contrôle	Avez-vous l'habitude de réparer, bricoler, ou fabriquer vous-même (dans votre maison, par exemple) ?	Seriez-vous d'accord de participer à un deuxième entretien plus tard ?
jaQgGVx	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		4	2	3	3	4	4	2	Jamais	
b5xgXxo	Manque de disponibilité, Proximité pour le retrait	Proximité	3	1	1	3	5	3	3	Oui, souvent	
QK5j648	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie		5	2	3	2	4	4	4	Rarement	Oui, bien sûr!
jaQpeV1	Complexité d'utilisation, Prix	fonctionnement coopératif avec des gens que je connais	5	1	5	5	4	4	2	Oui, souvent	
A7L0ldN	Manque de disponibilité	l'accessibilité	4	2	4	4	3	3	2	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
5B15A8d	absence de besoins	empreinte matérielle et environnementale	3	5	2	5	3	2	3	Rarement	
kd6x2b1	Manque de disponibilité, Complexité d'utilisation, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie	Proximité de l'offre	2	4	5	3	5	4	5	Parfois	
5B1DzJQ	Manque de disponibilité, Prix, Complexité d'utilisation	Points de dépôt proches de chez moi et facilement accessibles. Tarifs intéressants. Délai rapide pour récupérer les objets loués. Durée de location flexible.	3	2	5	5	5	4	3	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
Zj6L4Y0	Usitoo a arrêté ses activités, malheureusement.	Un service à proximité, atteignable à vélo.	4	2	5	5	2	3	1	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
A7LNbLy	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Manque de disponibilité	Plus de disponibilité: par exemple je dois faire +/-3 km à pied pour accéder à une voiture partagée	4	2	5	4	4	3	2	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
W05Xg5J	Manque de disponibilité		5	3	5	5	4	5	4	Rarement	Oui, bien sûr!

Figure 12: Survey Answers - 5

Submission ID	Quel âge avez-vous?	Comment vous identifiez-vous?	Où résidez-vous?	Respondent's country	Dans quel cadre habitez-vous?	Quelle est votre situation professionnelle ?	Avez-vous déjà utilisé des services de partage d'objets (par exemple vélo, voiture, outils, vêtements, coworking,...) ?	Lesquels avez-vous déjà utilisé (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Lesquels seriez-vous intéressé(e) à tester (plusieurs réponses possibles) ?	Utilisez-vous parfois encore ces services ?
A7LMp5N	45-54	Homme	Province du Brabant Wallon	Pays-bas	Semi-rural	Salarié(e)	Non		Livres, Outils/objets	
jayDGIJ	Entre 18-24 ans	Femme	Province du Luxembourg	Belgique	Rural	Étudiant(e)	Non		Voiture partagées (Carsharing), Location de vêtements, Vélos/trottinettes partagés	
obyeeekP	Entre 18-24 ans	Femme	Province de Namur	Belgique	Périphérie de ville	Étudiant(e)	Oui	Livres, Vélos/trottinettes partagés		Occasionnellement

Figure 13: Survey Answers - 6

Submission ID	En général, qu'est-ce qui vous freine le plus à utiliser ces services ? (plusieurs réponses possibles)	Qu'est-ce qui vous motiverait à utiliser ce type de services (plus souvent)?	Je préfère partager que posséder	Je m'inquiète de l'hygiène des objets partagés	Je serais prêt(e) à utiliser un service partagé s'il était simple et amusant	L'impact environnemental influence mes choix	J'ai peur de ne pas avoir accès à l'objet quand j'en ai besoin	Je fais confiance aux plateformes numériques pour gérer ce type de services	Partager me donne parfois un sentiment de perte de contrôle	Avez-vous l'habitude de réparer, bricoler, ou fabriquer vous-même (dans votre maison, par exemple) ?	Seriez-vous d'accord de participer à un deuxième entretien plus tard ?
A7LMp5N	Pas pratique pour mon style de vie, Manque de confiance		3	4	4	4	5	3	5	Oui, souvent	Oui, bien sûr!
jayDGIJ	Prix, Manque de disponibilité, Pas pratique pour mon style de vie	Des applications facilitant l'utilisation	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	Parfois	
obyeeekP	Complexité d'utilisation, Manque de disponibilité		4	2	5	5	2	5	1	Rarement	

Figure 14: Survey Answers - 6

G Semi-Structured Interview Guide - Experienced

Translated version of the semi-structured interview guide for experienced users of shared services.

In bold are the points of attention and most relevant as well as useful questions to ask.

Estimated duration: +-35 minutes

Introduction Script

"Hello, and thank you again for your time.

This interview is part of my master's thesis research. I'm exploring how to make **mutualized product-service systems** (like bike-sharing, tool libraries, etc.) more **attractive and engaging**.

The idea is to have an **informal discussion**, there are no right or wrong answers. I'm simply trying to better understand your **habits, preferences, and perceptions**, whether or not you've already used this type of service.

Everything you say will remain **anonymous** and used solely for academic purposes.

Are you okay with starting?"

Section 1 – Personal Context & Experience (+-5 min)

Objective: Understand the respondent's mindset, lifestyle, and personal motivations.

1. **Can you describe a typical day or week? What are your priorities? How do you feel?**
2. **If you had to describe yourself with 3 core values that matter in your daily life, which ones would you choose and why?**
3. **How do you usually discover new services or products?**
4. **When deciding whether to use a product or service, how do you approach it? What matters most to you (control, convenience, simplicity, enjoyment, ownership, independence, etc.) and why?**

Section 2 – Perceptions on Mutualized Services, Values, and Barriers (+-5 min)

1. **What do you think about sharing or renting instead of buying?**
 - What are the **advantages** in your opinion?
 - And the **disadvantages or limitations**?
 2. **Have you ever considered using such a service but decided not to? What made you change your mind?**
 3. **When you need to fix or build something at home, do you sometimes lack tools? What do you do in those cases?**
-

-
- What are the **advantages**?
 - And the **disadvantages or limitations**?

4. Is owning an item important to you?

- What are the advantages of owning vs. renting?
- And the drawbacks?

5. If you were interested in renting tools or everyday objects but ended up not using the service, what could hold you back?

- Fear of damaged items?
- Unwillingness to register?
- Hesitation to bother someone?
- Fear of damaging something, lack of trust, habits, desire to own?

Follow-up questions:

- Was it lack of opportunity or lack of interest?
- Do you have doubts about how the service works, reliability, rules?
- Is it about comfort, trust, habits, values, or something else?
- Would it feel too complicated?

Section 3 – User journey Walkthrough (+7 min)

1. Imagine you were going to use a shared service for the first time — like borrowing a bike, a drill, or renting clothes.

Discovery:

- What type of situation or need would make you consider it?
- **Where do you think you would hear about it?**
- **What would likely convince you to give it a try?**
- Would a recommendation from a friend help?
- What expectations would you have?
- **Would it feel like a practical, economic, or ethical choice?**
- Do you think it would align with your values?

Usage:

- If you had to register or install an app, would that be a barrier?
 - What would you expect the user journey to be like?
 - Would anything likely confuse or concern you?
 - What would help you feel confident or well-guided?
 - **What would make you trust the service?**
-

After use (imagined):

- What would make the experience feel successful or positive?
- What might leave you with a bad impression?
- Why do you think some people hesitate to try this kind of service?

Looking forward:

- **If it went well, do you think you would use it again?**
- Would you recommend it to someone else?
- Are there types of products or services you would never want to share? Why?
- **What would you pay attention to when testing a service like this for the first time?**

Section 4 – Ideal Experience & Prototype Feedback (+-13 min)

Let's imagine a local platform where you can easily reserve and borrow items: drill, raclette machine, tent, stepladder, etc.

1. **What would make you want to use this platform?** (e.g., an app, website, physical location?)
2. What might hold you back?
3. What would make the service **fun, useful, or rewarding**?
4. **Would you be more motivated if the platform offered:**
 - Loyalty points or rewards?
 - A community function (reviews, help, events)?
 - A very simple interface, 24/7 lockers, or a playful app?

Perfect Service

"If you had to imagine a mutualized service that would really interest you, your ideal service, what would it be like? What would make it unique?"

- What type of items or services would it offer?
- How would it work?
- Would you prefer a practical and functional model, or one with a warm, community spirit? Why?
- What should it avoid at all costs?
- How should you discover it to be convinced?
- What would motivate you to try it for the first time?

Follow-up questions:

-
- Would price play a role?
 - Is it about simplicity?
 - Should it be highly accessible and well explained?
 - Would a friend's recommendation influence you?
 - What would build your trust? An app? A well-known brand? A community?
 - Would you prefer pay-per-use or a subscription? Why?

Prototype Presentation

Eventually, and mostly for 2nd round of interview!

"I'll show you a sample user journey for such a service. Imagine you want to borrow an item. I'll walk you through each step, and you can share your thoughts."

At each step, ask:

- How do you feel about it?
- Can you picture yourself doing this? Why?
- Is it convenient for you?
- What might block you?
- Do you feel confident? Comfortable?
- Do you truly see yourself using it? Why or why not?
- How would you improve this step?

Section 5 – Conclusion & Openness

- Is there anything we didn't talk about that you think is important?
 - If such a service existed near you, would you try it?
 - Under what conditions? What would make you say: "Okay, I'm going for it"?
 - Would you be willing to **give feedback on a prototype later?** (reconfirm)
-

H Semi-Structured Interview Guide - No Experience

Translated version of the semi-structured interview guide for interviewees having no experience regarding shared services.

In bold are the points of attention and most relevant as well as useful questions to ask.

Estimated Duration: +-35 minutes

Introduction Script

"Hello and thank you again for your time.

This interview is part of my Master's thesis. I'm interested in how to make **mutualized product-service systems** (such as bike-sharing, tool libraries, etc.) **more attractive and engaging**.

The idea is to have an **informal conversation**, with no right or wrong answers. I'm simply trying to better understand your **habits, preferences, and perceptions**, whether or not you've used this type of service before.

Everything you say will remain **anonymous** and used only for academic purposes.

Do you agree to begin?"

Section 1 – Personal Context and Experience (+-5 min)

Objective: Understand the respondent's mindset, learn more about their lifestyle and personal motivations.

1. **Can you describe a typical day or week for you? What are your priorities? How do you feel overall?**
2. **If you had to describe yourself using 3 values that matter in your everyday life, which would you choose and why?**
3. **How do you usually discover new products or services?**
4. **When deciding whether to use a service or product, how do you go about it? What's your thought process? What matters most to you (control, convenience, simplicity, pleasure, ownership, independence, etc.) and *why*?**

Section 2 – Perceptions of Shared Services, Values, and Barriers (+-13 min)

1. **When you hear 'shared service' (e.g., services where you borrow rather than buy), or 'sharing', what comes to mind?**

Follow-ups:

- Any specific examples come to mind?
- Have you seen these in your surroundings?
- Ever discussed it with someone?
- What image do you have of it: positive, neutral, skeptical?

2. **What do you think about the idea of sharing or renting instead of owning?**
-

-
- What do you see as the **advantages**?
 - And the **disadvantages or limitations**?

3. **Have you ever considered using such a service but changed your mind? What made you decide not to?**

Follow-ups:

- Lack of opportunity or interest?
- Doubts about how it works, reliability, rules?
- Is it about comfort, trust, habit, values?
- Fear it might be complicated?

4. **When doing DIY or repairs at home, do you ever lack tools? What do you do in that case?**

- What are the benefits of your current approach?
- What are the drawbacks or limitations?

5. **If you were interested in renting tools or objects but didn't go through with it, what might hold you back?**

- Fear that the item is damaged?
- Reluctance to sign up?
- Not wanting to bother someone?
- Fear of damaging it, lack of trust, habit of buying?

6. **Is owning an object important to you?**

- What are the benefits of owning instead of renting?
- And the downsides or limitations?

7. **Can you name an object or need that you'd be willing to share or rent instead of buying?**

8. **What would make you want to try such a service?**

Examples:

- Free trial,
 - Word-of-mouth recommendation,
 - Simple and intuitive app design.
-

Section 3 – Gaps Between Intentions and Actions (+-5 min)

1. To what extent do these kinds of services align with your personal values (e.g., ecology, simplicity, cost...)?
2. Have you ever wanted to adopt a more sustainable behavior (in consumption, mobility, etc.) but didn't? Why not?
3. Why do you think some people don't use these services, even though the concept appeals to them?

Section 4 – Ideal Experience and Feedback on Prototype (+-12 min)

Let's imagine there's a local platform where you can easily reserve and borrow items: a drill, raclette machine, tent, ladder, etc.

1. What would make you want to use this platform? (e.g., app, website, physical location...)?
2. And what would hold you back?
3. What would make the service *fun, useful, or rewarding*?
4. Would you be more motivated if the platform offered:
 - Loyalty points or rewards?
 - A community feature (reviews, mutual help, events...)?
 - A very simple interface, 24/7 lockers, or a playful app?

Your Ideal Service

If you could imagine a mutualized service that truly interested you and was perfect for you, what would it look like? What would make it unique?

- What kind of objects or services would it offer?
- How would it work?
- Would you prefer something highly practical and functional, or more warm and community-oriented? Why?
- What should it definitely NOT be?
- How would you need to discover it to be convinced?
- What would make you want to try it for the first time?

Follow-ups:

- Would price matter?
 - Is simplicity key?
-

-
- Should it be extremely accessible and well explained?
 - Would a recommendation from a friend influence you?
 - What would build your trust? An app? A well-known brand? A community?
 - Would you prefer pay-per-use or a subscription? Why?

User Journey / Prototype Presentation

Eventually, and mostly for 2nd round of interview!

I'll now show you an example of a user journey for this type of service. Imagine you want to borrow an item. I'll present it step by step, and you can tell me how you feel about it.

Questions for each step:

- How do you feel about it?
- Can you imagine yourself doing this? Why?
- Would it be practical for you?
- What might block you?
- Do you feel confident? Comfortable?
- Can you see yourself really doing this? Why or why not?
- How would you improve this step?

Section 5 – Conclusion and Wrap-up

- Is there anything important we didn't cover that you'd like to mention?
 - If such a service existed near you, would you try it?
 - Under what conditions? What would make you say: “okay, I'm trying this”?
 - Would you be willing to give feedback on a future prototype? (confirm)
-

I Interviews

I.1 Interview - Anthony

- **Lucas:** Could you describe a typical day or week? What are your priorities? How do you feel, etc.?

- **Anthony:** So, my typical weekday starts with getting up and going to work. I try to manage my time so I can do sports at the end of the day. Sometimes it's not possible, but I try.

I organize my week: I have a specific day for grocery shopping, and I also have planned activities like tennis.

Basically, my free time is only in the evening. So during the day, I just work until at least 5 PM.

- **Lucas:** If you had to describe yourself with three values that define you in your daily life, which would you choose?

- **Anthony:** Three values: honest, curious, and courageous.

- **Lucas:** Why those?

- **Anthony:** Honest, because I like to say what I think, no matter the consequences — sometimes a bit too much.

Curious, because I always want to learn lots of new things, especially in areas I'm interested in. And courageous, because I like challenges and facing situations where I have to step out of my comfort zone.

- **Lucas:** How do you usually discover services or products?

- **Anthony:** Either through word of mouth — I'd say that's most of the time — or through marketing, especially on social media.

I don't really listen to the radio or watch TV, so I'd say the best way to reach me is through social media.

- **Lucas:** What types of social media?

- **Anthony:** I mainly use Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

- **Lucas:** Why those?

- **Anthony:** Those are just the three I use. I don't use many others. I'd say the one that could have the most impact... I'm not really sure.

I think they're all kind of the same, because I try not to pay much attention to ads in any case.

- **Lucas:** And when it comes time to decide whether you'll use a service or product, what's your process?

Let's say you discover a product on social media or through someone you know — what do you do next to make a decision?

- **Anthony:** I don't buy it right away, unless I need it immediately — and in that case, it's probably not something I discovered on social media, but something I searched for.

But if I'm reached through marketing, I first look into the product.

I check whether there's another brand that offers the same thing for cheaper or better quality.

I might also talk to people around me to get feedback.

Then I make a decision based on my budget and how much I need it.

- **Lucas:** How do you set a budget for a product or service?

- **Anthony:** It depends. Everyone has their own preferences.

For example, I really like sports, so I spend more money on that than on parties or other things. If it's something I absolutely need, I don't really have a choice — I have to buy it, no matter the budget.

If it's not necessary, I compare prices and offers.

For example, on Amazon, I look for the cheapest one and check if it has the same features as the more expensive one.

If it's the same, I go with the cheaper one.

- **Lucas:** What's most important to you in a service or product?

It could be independence, control, simplicity, ease of use, etc.

- **Anthony:** First of all, quality. I don't like buying things that don't last or are low quality.

Even if it means saving up longer to buy a better product.

After quality, I'd say price.

And then everything else is a bonus — if it's ESG, sustainable, etc. That's great, but it's not a main criterion.

- **Lucas:** How do you judge whether a product or service you saw on social media is good quality?

- **Anthony:** By looking at reviews. I really like reading reviews.

That said, I admit marketing probably influences me indirectly, even if I don't always realize it.

For example, an ad poster in the street — you might not consciously pay attention to it, but it sticks in your mind.

- **Lucas:** What do you mean by marketing?

- **Anthony:** Mostly advertisements — things we see but don't immediately trust.

But there are also quality indicators.

For example, when it comes to cars, I tend to prefer German over French cars, because they're known to be higher quality, easier to maintain, etc.

So the product's origin, features, whether it lasts, whether others have tried it — that all matters.

- **Lucas:** When you hear "shared service" or "mutualized service," what comes to mind?

- **Anthony:** The first thing that comes to mind is a non-essential item.

Something that can be borrowed. Because anything essential to me, I need to own it.

So I don't place much value on those kinds of items.

For example, a car — I like having my own, taking care of it, driving around with it.

So a shared item would be something not very important to me, and probably expensive to buy — so there's a price barrier.

- **Lucas:** Have you ever used this type of shared service?

- **Anthony:** No, because I don't even know if that exists around here.

Except for shared cars — I know that exists. But for other things, like tools, I don't know if stores offer that.

And I've never really thought about it.

- **Lucas:** Why not? Because you don't need it, or because you buy directly?

- **Anthony:** I'd say if I don't want to buy an object but still need it, I turn to people around me first.

Often someone I know has it.

For example, I'll ask my dad to lend me something. And then I give it back.

So I've never really needed to use an external service.

- **Lucas:** If you had to rent or share instead of buying, why would you do it? What are the pros and cons?

- **Anthony:** The advantages — price, first of all.

If something is expensive and I only use it once a year, I ask myself if it's worth buying.

Then there's the ecological side too — it fits with circular economy thinking.

But price is still the main advantage.

On the other hand, if I have to rent it three times and it ends up costing as much as buying, I'd rather just buy it.

That way I spread the cost over three years and can still use it ten years later.

- **Lucas:** And the disadvantages?

- **Anthony:** First, the object isn't mine. There's probably a return deadline, you have to book it in advance, it's not always available right away.

It takes time, you need to check which stores offer it, what the prices are.

You have to return it, maybe pay a deposit, and you're likely held responsible for its condition.

Also, I think a lot of people just like owning their stuff — and I'm one of them.

Even just for hygiene reasons.

Knowing several people used an object can be off-putting.

Some things are just too personal to share.

- **Lucas:** Let's go back to your hedge trimmer example. When do you decide "I'll buy it" instead of renting? What's your limit?

- **Anthony:** It depends on how often I'll use it...

If I use it, say, twice a year and it costs €100, I'd rather buy it and have it forever.

But if it costs €500, then I think I'll rent it, especially if I know I won't use it much.

- **Lucas:** So it's a matter of frequency and price?

- **Anthony:** Yes, exactly.

And also space.

If it's a big item and I don't have space at home, that can stop me from buying it.

- **Lucas:** Do you ever consider co-owning an object with others? Have you ever thought, "I could buy this with someone"?

- **Anthony:** Yes, but that's pretty rare.

I've thought about it with a friend or neighbor, but the problem is always availability.

If the other person is using it when I need it, that's an issue.

And then you have to agree on storage, maintenance, etc.

So it's complicated — unless it's someone really close, like a brother.

- **Lucas:** And if there were a service that managed all of that for you — storage, maintenance, cleaning — and let you reserve and get things delivered easily, would you be interested?

- **Anthony:** Yeah, that would be cool.

Honestly, if it saves me time and it's not too expensive, I'm in.

But it has to be done well — clear, simple.

I don't want to deal with a complicated app or have to call someone every time I rent.

- **Lucas:** Roughly how much would you be willing to pay for that kind of service? Say, to rent a €100 item you only use once a year?

- **Anthony:** I'd say if I can rent it for €10 to €20, that seems reasonable.

More than that, I start thinking I'd rather just buy it or borrow it from someone.

But it all depends on convenience.

If the service delivers to my home, is fast, clean, and I don't have to do anything — then I'd be willing to pay a bit more.

- **Lucas:** And if there were several options for accessing the service — for example: home delivery, self-service pick-up point, or with an employee — what would you prefer?

- **Anthony:** The best would be delivery.

Honestly, if I can get the item delivered to my place without moving, that's perfect.

A self-service pick-up point works too. Like Amazon lockers — that's fine.

But having to interact with someone each time, that could be a turn-off.

I prefer when things are automated.

- **Lucas:** Would you need an app for this? Or would you use a website?

- **Anthony:** An app is more convenient.

If it's well designed, I can do everything on it: book, browse the catalog, pay, track everything, etc. But it should be simple and quick to use. If it's too complicated, I would give up directly.

- **Lucas:** Would you want to try that kind of service if it existed in your city?

- **Anthony:** Yeah, I think so. But I'd need to have a real need. I'm not going to use it just to check it out—I need to have a real use for it. But if the service is good and it saves me time and money, I'm in.

- **Lucas:** What might stop you from trying it?

- **Anthony:** The price, for starters. And if it's complicated to use or if I need to plan too much. Also, if I doubt the quality or cleanliness of the item. But otherwise, I'm open to it.

- **Lucas:** At what point do you tell yourself: "I'll just buy one" or "I could rent one"? I'm mostly trying to understand the boundary. Here, for example, you mentioned three years—after that, you'd buy. But in your opinion, how many years, more or less, would it take?

- **Anthony:** That depends on how many times you use it per year. In my case, let's say I use it once a year—which may not even be true, I could use it twice. I'd say it would need to be... quite a few years before I'd consider buying. At least six years, I'd say, before I even think about it. Before I'd even think about renting it out.

- **Lucas:** And at that point, when you discover the rental service, do you think it would make sense to present it in terms of years? Like, "Instead of buying this product, you can rent it and save yourself 7 or 8 years of ownership"? Or would it be better to frame it differently?

- **Anthony:** Depends. I think talking in years could work for products that cost hundreds or even thousands of euros. Yeah, it might make sense. But for cheaper items that cost a few dozen euros, talking in years... I don't know, it might put people off, honestly, especially if the rental price isn't super low. Unless the price is just ridiculously cheap compared to the cost of owning—then yeah, maybe.

But there are also big downsides. For example, when renting—let's say I rent it once a year and then return it—if I suddenly need it again because I've got another project or it lasts longer than planned, and I need to go rent it again and don't have it right away... that's annoying.

On the other hand, that's both a downside and a benefit: it doesn't take up space in your house. I mean, if you don't have much room—living in an apartment or a small home—tools and items take up space fast.

- **Lucas:** Totally. Alright, we'll come back to price later. Now, if you had to compare renting an item from someone close to you—like a friend or family member—to renting from a company, what would you say are the pros and cons? Because there's also the issue of coordinating, checking if the item is returned in good condition, etc.

What would be the main difference for you between renting from someone you know versus a business?

- **Anthony:** The benefit with someone close is the ease: no fixed date, no contract. It's pretty fast, you just agree on a time that works. It's based on trust. The only thing is, you have to trust the person you're lending to, since there's no contract, no deposit, nothing like that.

The advantage with a company... well, honestly, it's more of a downside for me. Usually, someone close would do it for free, whereas a business obviously won't.

So yeah, to be honest, there are more disadvantages with a business than with a close contact. Because I'll have to pay, there's a deposit, strict return times, and I'll need to go during opening hours. Whereas with someone I know, I can go after work, outside of business hours—it's easier. But if the company is only open 9 to 5, that's hard to manage.

- **Lucas:** Yeah, for sure—no comparison. It's clearly more convenient with someone you know.

Now, if we removed those disadvantages—so no time constraints, no need to travel—you'd still have to pay of course, but you could get the item 24/7, even have it delivered to your home...

In that case, would you still go to a friend, or what would it take to make you switch?

- **Anthony:** Honestly, if it's delivered, I'd really consider it, because delivery is super convenient. But it would need to be delivered to my house—not the post office. It gets tricky with large items. Small ones that fit in the mailbox are fine, but a big item left outside the door? Not ideal. But yeah, if there's a way the item could be at my place even when I'm not home—because I'm rarely there—and I don't have to move a finger, then yeah, I'd be ready to pay for that. And for the return, maybe a 24/7 drop-off point where I can just leave it and be done in five minutes—that would be perfect.

- **Lucas:** And what if instead of home delivery, the item was available at a 24/7 pick-up point? Do you think that's a viable solution?

- **Anthony:** Yeah, 24/7 access would still be pretty good. The advantage compared to borrowing from someone is that you can go whenever—even spontaneously. If you borrow from a friend, you have to call them, they might not be home. If you need it right away and they're not there, too bad. Whereas with a 24/7 spot, you just go grab it—that's already really interesting.

- **Lucas:** Right, I see.

- **Anthony:** Even if you're paying for it, it's a service in the end. It would be a more complete service than just a classic rental. The fact that you can access the item any time, that it's fast—yeah, that's when it gets interesting. But yeah... would need to see if it makes sense financially.

- **Lucas:** So let's say we want you to try this kind of solution. In your opinion, what would be the key things? What works? And ideally, what would make you actually test it? What would it take for you to rent something tomorrow?

- **Anthony:** Well, like any product, it needs to be promoted. But that's true for everything. Let's say you know about it—maybe you saw it on social media, or someone told you—and you know it's trustworthy... Then, what makes the difference...

- **Lucas:** Let me give you some examples: a friend's recommendation, tons of reviews, a simple app, no sign-up required, a trial offer, free credits to try it for two months...

- **Anthony:** Yeah, definitely—trial periods could be a great start. A friend's recommendation? Not necessarily. But an app—yeah, for sure. That helps a lot.

With all the products, being able to easily search, see prices, check for delivery fees, know when it's arriving—that's all important. Honestly, it could work just like ordering a pizza—except it's a product.

- **Lucas:** So you'd say: simple app, free trial, and convenient delivery?

- **Anthony:** Yeah, exactly. Simple app + free session + clear info. Also: 24/7 pick-up points.

- **Lucas:** Let's imagine there are three ways to get the item:

- a self-service pick-up point
- a staffed counter
- home delivery

Would you keep one, two, or all three? Which would you prefer?

- **Anthony:** For me, delivery is essential. If I had to keep only one, that's the one. Then I'd say: choose between a human or a self-service station.

As long as it's fast, I don't mind if it's a person or a machine. So not necessarily all three, but two would be good: delivery + self-service or delivery + human.

- **Lucas:** Do you have any brands or services you like using daily? And if so, why?

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- **Anthony:** For sports: Nike. For clothes, I have several brands, but no favorite. Why Nike? Honestly, the marketing plays a role, but I like the designs. The logo is cool, the clothes look good—it's really an aesthetic thing. And it stands for quality, even if sometimes I'm a bit disappointed.
- **Lucas:** And in terms of services?
- **Anthony:** Amazon—I consider that a service. I'm definitely a fan: I can order easily from the app, it gets delivered, I don't have time to go shopping. Except on weekends when I'm back home, the stores are always closed—so it's convenient. I don't use it daily, but regularly, yeah. Besides that, I'm not someone who needs a lot of stuff...
- **Lucas:** Have you used a product or service recently and thought: "I love this, it's efficient and practical"?
- **Anthony:** Does AI count? The first time I tried it, it was amazing. Again, what really impresses me—whatever the product—is anything that makes things easy and fast. Nowadays, most people don't have time. And they want more time for fun, so they try to cut down on everything else: work, shopping, etc. So services that save time—that's what impresses me most.
- **Lucas:** And if we go back to a shared service model for mutualized objects, what kinds of items would you suggest?
- **Anthony:** Items you don't use often and that are expensive. For example:
- A lawnmower, no, because I use it every week
 - But specific tools that are only used occasionally, or for one-time projects
 - A trekking bag, for a trip
 - Or when you want to try a new sport and don't yet have the equipment. Typically, a good bike costs several thousand euros. Instead of buying one just to test it once, it's better to rent.
- **Lucas:** So would it have to be the exact bike model?
- **Anthony:** Not necessarily. What's more important is having several ranges: from low-end to high-end. The brand doesn't matter much—just that it matches the quality level you want to try.
- **Anthony:** Hmm for example also, scuba diving gear would be a great addition but hygiene comes into play there. Even washed, I'd have trouble with a diving suit. It's personal, but I'd have a mental block.
- **Lucas:** So in your ideal solution:

- 24/7 drop-off and pick-up
- Delivery
- Items that are rarely used or expensive to test

And now, when choosing the items: would you prefer to suggest them yourself via a survey, or browse an existing catalog?

- **Anthony:** I think I'd browse the catalog. If it's something I really want to rent, I'd first check if it's available. But if it's not, that doesn't mean I'll go buy it straight away either. If I want to rent, it's precisely because I want to avoid buying. Maybe I'd buy it secondhand, but well... you still need to find a seller.
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- **Lucas:** Are there any items “in between,” that you could either rent or buy?
- **Anthony:** Yes, probably. But right now, since there aren’t many rental alternatives, I don’t really have a choice. So often, I try to rent, don’t find it, and end up buying.
- **Lucas:** Did you have any examples in mind?
- **Anthony:** Yes! Board games, books—those are things you use once and then store. I’ve already heard that some services offer that, but yes, clearly it would be good to include that in the offer. Books are just like board games: you read them once and then leave them on a shelf... so it’s annoying.
- **Lucas:** And regarding pricing, if you were to rent a board game, for example: Would you prefer a fixed rental price, a subscription, or a per-minute charge... or something else? What seems the fairest, gives you confidence, or is most attractive?
- **Anthony:** First off, per-minute billing—no, I really wouldn’t like that. Because that puts pressure on you to return the item as fast as possible and so on. That’s really horrible for me, I’d say. I’d rather have a fixed price, with a set number of days. I think that works best for me—it gives clarity in advance about the commitment, how much you’ll pay, etc.
- **Lucas:** And let’s say you take the item for two days, but you want to use it for three. What would you do?
- **Anthony:** In that case, I’d say, in agreement with the shop—if they agree and don’t need to rent it out the next day, for example—why not allow for a short extension? Obviously, if they don’t need it the next day, it would be fine to charge a small fee—but not much. It shouldn’t become a huge surcharge, because that would scare people. Just a small extra to indicate that the item was borrowed longer than expected. So yes, to me, those are things that can be done.
- By the way, I just thought of another thing that could really be worth renting: decorations. Decorations for all kinds of things. I mean for birthdays, where you need to decorate the house. Instead of buying, you could rent. Or say, for Halloween—you want to decorate a table with a bunch of Halloween stuff, and afterwards, you’re not stuck with it all. Clearly, for me, that’s pretty useful. Costumes too, but well, that already exists.
- **Lucas:** Ah yeah, good idea. Well, I think we’ll wrap up the interview here, but thank you so much for your time and your opinions! If you have any more ideas that come to mind, don’t hesitate to send me an email—and if you agree, we can meet again for a second interview later so I can show you what I’ve developed.
- **Anthony:** Sounds good to me! I look forward to seeing it. Goodbye then!
- **Lucas:** Goodbye!
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I.2 Interview - Philippe

- **Lucas:**

So first of all, can you describe a typical day or week for you? What are your priorities? How do you feel throughout the week depending on what happens to you—or rather, your habits?

- **Philippe:**

Well, I’m retired, married. My wife has quite a few activities. We have seven grandchildren that we mainly take care of on Wednesdays. Mainly Wednesdays, but sometimes we help out at the last minute—like, “Help, my car broke down, we need someone to pick the kids up from school.” Or the parents go away for the weekend, and we look after the kids Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. That happens from time to time.

When my wife has her activities, I try to do mine, particularly volunteering at the Red Cross. I work—well, I serve—in what we call *reliaje*, formerly called "Estia", which is support for people suffering from loneliness.

At the Red Cross, I also help out when a booth needs to be set up or taken down, or when there's a shift to fill. There are trainings here and there, like this afternoon in Louvain-la-Neuve.

When my wife does her activities, I also read or enjoy watching TV, because she doesn't like certain action films. She doesn't like them.

Wait, I'm having a little issue here. The app keeps deactivating. This thing drives me crazy. I need to remove it from the screen.

We also really enjoy hiking. Can you hear me?

- Lucas:

Yes, yes. I see the mic's not muted?

- Philippe:

No, no. You can hear me?

- Lucas:

Yes, yes.

- Philippe:

So, we hike a lot. We've had a dog for a long time. One of them passed away in 2019.

Still working?

- Lucas:

Yes, yes.

- Philippe:

Wait, it's because right now I'm in the middle of something. Ah, this thing annoys me... Ah, there we go, OK.

I had some windows pop up and block everything.

So, we adopted a female dog in 2020, just before COVID. She's very energetic, so we walk a lot with her.

Sometimes it's a chore, but mostly it's a pleasure to take her out and see her run around like crazy. And for us, it's also a way to stay in shape because we're 66 or 67 and 70 years old.

For errands, I love grocery shopping. So when there's a long list, I'm the one who does it, gladly. I'll go to two or three different stores because you can't find all the same products or prices in one place.

Recently, I also started volunteering at Quatre-Quarts. So when there are events, I take part or try to—either to help or just to enjoy myself.

We really love the mountains, so we go regularly, especially in July. We're leaving at the end of July until almost early October, going to different places: Savoie, the Dolomites, Slovenia—maybe Austria too, since we have family there. It's a chance to go see the newest addition to the cousins.

As I said, I like watching action movies when my wife's not around—I take the opportunity.

I also like reading. I read a lot of current affairs, politics, economics, etc., more than novels. I've had books on hold for a while now—especially comic books, which I really enjoy—but I can't keep up with all the series; there are just too many.

And recently I discovered the Red Cross bookstore where they have comics. Basically, you buy one, read it, bring it back, and you can exchange it for free. We just discovered the concept recently.

But it's nice, yeah.

- Lucas:

So really community-focused—Red Cross, your family—and sports too, with the mountains.

- Philippe:

One last thing: we live in Limoges and we're part of the local neighborhood committee, my wife and I. We're part of the old team. Some members resigned, others passed away. COVID really took a toll on the committee.

So that also keeps us busy. There are planning meetings. Soon we'll have a debrief of the flea market. We organize the bonfire too.

Being one of the veterans, I have a lot of contact with the long-time contributors who help us out. There are also young people who help, and they connect more with the youth in the committee.

- Lucas:

Right, so you're kind of the bridge between them.

And if you had to describe yourself with three values, which ones would you pick?

- Philippe:

Three values?

Well, even though I divorced and cheated on my first wife, I consider myself faithful.

I was faithful to the first until the day she turned 18 [note: possible joke or confusion], and I'm faithful to my second wife—I won't say "my second," but rather "my last."

The "last" wife, not "second," because there won't be another one.

I'm not hyperactive, but I am very active.

Honesty: I can't lie.

I can tell tall tales for fun or amusement, but never to hurt anyone.

And one last value or way I live: as my father used to say—and I agree—I'm not rich enough to buy cheap stuff.

Meaning when I want to get something, I save up.

I live within my means, I have no ongoing loans. I save and then buy good quality so it lasts.

I don't buy junk from Action or random websites that break after one use.

I have tools that are 40 years old and still work great. Quality, really.

- Lucas:

And when you're looking for services or products, do you look for those values too? Honesty, clarity, quality, that kind of thing?

- Philippe:

Yes, definitely. For example, since we hike a lot, I've stopped wearing suits since I retired—I only kept one or two—and we now buy mostly technical, sporty clothes.

We often buy Jack Wolfskin, which is completely ethical and traceable. Patagonia too—it's expensive, but it really lasts.

For food though, since we don't always know what's in it: the first store near us is Lidl. We shop there first, then go to Greenpeace (a bulk organic store).

When there's organic in the aisles, we buy it—even if it's more expensive. Not always, but often.

- Lucas:

So you're really mindful of ecology and quality, and then price comes after?

- Philippe:

For certain things, yes. We can afford to. For example, I often read or hear on the radio that people sacrifice their health to buy other things.

Me, I'm not interested in buying a €1500 iPhone or a €3000 PC. I'm talking to you right now from a device that's 15 years old—super slow, but still works.

- Lucas:

OK, good.

I haven't decided yet [about a product], but it doesn't matter. Don't worry, it's still really interesting.

How do you usually discover services or products? For example, how did you find out about Jack Wolfskin? What made you decide to buy it?

- Philippe:

At the time, I think the first thing I bought was an anorak and a fleece. I'm subscribed to Test-Achat, and I read nearly all the sections.

One day there was a comparative study on the ethics of clothing brands.

And it turned out Jack Wolfskin answered all of Test-Achat's questions and was fully transparent about the origin of its products, the working conditions of its suppliers, etc.

So from that point on, I told myself, "If there's Jack Wolfskin that fits my needs, I'll go with that."

I even wore their shoes, but they broke after 25 months—just past warranty. We walk a lot.

Even Vibram soles end up completely smooth from how much we wear them.

So yes, Test-Achat is one of my sources.

Then there's word of mouth from friends, kids, etc., which is also important.

And then some stores really pay attention to the products they offer—it's not just random stuff.

It's worth paying a bit more for that.

- Lucas:

So mainly friends and family, word of mouth. And then you also read articles—Test-Achat, maybe newspapers?

- Philippe:

I'm not subscribed to any newspapers.

Not even online. I read the beginning of articles, but I don't pay for subscriptions.

There are so many cross-sources that I usually end up figuring out what it's about.

- Lucas:

And for example, Useito—how did you first hear about the concept or brand?

- Philippe:

It was through the neighborhood committee. At one point, we needed some equipment, and one member said, "Useito—they have stuff."

I rented glasses once.

Another time, I rented a hedge trimmer before deciding to buy one myself—on battery, because I didn't want electric cords anymore.

So we borrowed a few times from Useito for the committee.

But I only really got to know it when Xavier told me, "Hey, we're stopping the activity because it's not profitable."

- Lucas: So now, let's say you know a brand or a product. How do you go from there to deciding, "Okay, now I'm going to buy it"? What's your thought process in between? Do you compare? Do you buy immediately if it seems to be good quality?

- Philippe: I do comparisons. For example, for years I used only manual gardening tools: shears, a push lawnmower, the reel mower, the compost, but well, with age and time, I've started to mechanize a bit. For example, for gardening equipment, there was a Test-Achats study.

Test-Achats – the best buy was products from Brico, etc., but the top product... was from Stihl, so I bought from Stihl. That's how I equipped myself. For example, small electric mowers used to be Viking, if I'm not mistaken – which Stihl bought out because it was high quality. My small mower is now 7 or 8 years old and still runs. And there you go. In the neighborhood too, some neighbors have different tools, so they borrow my mower or my hedge trimmer, and I borrow their pressure washer or ladder. I try to avoid buying things that would duplicate what neighbors already have and use occasionally, just like me.

- **Lucas:** How do you know that your neighbors have certain items, for example if you wanted to borrow a hedge trimmer you didn't have?

- **Philippe:** It's a village, so we see the neighbor using their pressure washer on their driveway, and we ask if we can borrow it. My neighbor who lent me the pressure washer sees me mowing the lawn, his machine is broken, and he borrows mine. He sees me trimming the hedge – he had to trim a hedge, but his hedge trimmer was abroad in a second home, so he borrowed mine. And we talk a lot – I live in a cul-de-sac, it's a village, we all know each other. There are people you get along with and share things with, and others you talk to little or not at all. But around us, I'd say there's a lot of equipment sharing and lending.

- **Lucas:** And when you borrow tools like that, do you sometimes see any downsides compared to buying?

- **Philippe:** Downsides to borrowing tools? Yes. When I receive something that's not in good condition, it bothers me because the tool isn't perfect. When I can, I fix or sharpen it myself before using it, and when I return it, it's... in better condition than when I got it. That doesn't bother me. And when I lend something, I have a rule – I say “you break it, you fix it.” I give you a tool in perfect condition, clean and everything, and you return it the same. If you break it, it's your responsibility to buy a new one or get it fixed.

- **Lucas:** Yes, that's logical. So would you say that aside from these drawbacks – and there aren't many – the main one is quality? Are there any barriers to renting that might hold you back? For example, if you had to register on a platform, would that be a barrier? Or going somewhere to speak with someone at a counter to get access to a product – would that be a problem or a barrier?

- **Philippe:** That I go borrow a tool? Yes, so if you wanted to borrow something, can you imagine any kind of barrier you wouldn't want – something that shouldn't be there? For example, if it's a digital platform, maybe you don't like that. Maybe you'd prefer a human. Or maybe if it's a human, you just don't want to take the time to talk to someone and would rather get the item directly. It depends how you feel.

- **Philippe:** It depends. When I borrowed glasses from Usitu, doing it online was practical and simple. They were glasses. It's a format I know. There are X number of pieces, and it costs X per piece, and that's it. But for more sophisticated products, I wouldn't say I'm anti-internet, but it's really my last resort. For example, with health insurance, I prefer to go to the counter. I know how to do everything online, but I don't like it – mainly because... I believe in human contact, and also because it gives jobs to the people working at those counters. A barrier for me would be if it's too far away. Imagine I have to go all the way to Liège to pick up an electric pruner – I'm not going.

- **Lucas:** And with Usitu, was it delivered? Did they offer delivery?

- **Philippe:** Actually, I don't know, because the depot was in the village, close by, and depending on the size or volume, I'd just walk or drive over to pick it up.

- **Lucas:** And so that worked well because it wasn't far, and there was a human you could talk to?

- **Philippe:** Exactly.

- **Lucas:** So that was really the ideal model then?

- **Philippe:** For me, yes. I'm thinking of the Red Cross model – they lend out medical equipment. For small stuff, people come and pick it up. For bigger items, they deliver. It's a chance to have contact with people, to explain technically how it works – for example, a hospital bed. It takes time, it's bulky and heavy. We go with at least two people. There's human contact. I can't imagine people going to a vending machine to get their hospital bed.

- **Lucas:** And if we go back to the moment when you return an object – if it's a large one, there might be a deposit, of course.

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- **Philippe:** That doesn't bother me at all. It's normal – "you break it, you pay." The deposit is a guarantee for the lender that there will be a way to repair. I'm not saying replace.
- **Lucas:** And in terms of reliability – do you trust the brand right away?
- **Philippe:** The brand, yes. There's still word of mouth and personal contact that builds or breaks trust. When I read Test-Achats or hear from neighbors or even family getting scammed because they ordered something online that never arrived but was paid for... These exchange or shopping platforms – Marketplace, Vinted, and others – there are a lot of good things, but a lot of scams too. People hide behind a screen or a profile, and you don't see their face. You don't know where they live – nothing. Whereas going to pick something up in person, having direct contact – that's much more... That's how we operate. It's more reassuring. Our kids buy a lot online. Sometimes they're disappointed. Sometimes they're really happy. Generally, they're happy, but now and then they're disappointed – they open the package, and what they get doesn't look like the photo. That makes me smile.
- **Lucas:** And when you return an object, how do you ensure it's in good condition? And when you return it, does the person at the counter check if it's in good condition, or do you just drop it off?
- **Philippe:** I don't remember, because for the glasses I borrowed from Usitu, it was a neighbor who returned them, so I don't know if the person who received them opened every box to check if the glasses were clean and not broken, etc. I once returned a hedge trimmer and said, "I cleaned it because it was a bit dirty." There's always sap from... the plants that sticks to the blades. I scraped it off, sanded it, wiped it down with Gex, etc. And I re-sharpened the blade – which wasn't sharpened when I received it. I've also borrowed equipment from Brico. There, they would check too. They checked if it worked.
- **Lucas:** And if someone else returned it for you, there wasn't a specific ID number for the item or anything – you just gave the item and your neighbor returned it?
- **Philippe:** Yes, but I think there was a document with an inventory of what was lent and what had to be returned. Same with the Red Cross. A copy for the borrower, and you had to bring it back with the document to get your deposit back, after checks, etc.
- **Lucas:** And that's the optimal way to operate in your opinion?
- **Philippe:** I don't see a machine being able to check an electric tool or a... How do I say this – like a trimmer. I once borrowed a shredder. Only the human eye can do that properly. Same thing when renting a car – it's happened when we were traveling far. We do a walkaround before and after, check the mileage, start the engine to go park the car – all human checks.
- **Lucas:** And then – wait, I had a question but I just forgot it. Never mind. Maybe I'll move on to another question.
- **Lucas:** So maybe – did you have specific expectations when you said, "I'm going to rent this or that product – it'll go like this," and then when you actually borrowed it, it was different? Or was it exactly as expected?
- **Philippe:** My experiences have always been positive. I don't have any bad memories of renting or borrowing equipment.
- **Lucas:** And it was always you – you understood exactly how the process would work. You told yourself, "It's going to be like this," and that's how it went?
- **Philippe:** Yes, yes, yes. I've never been disappointed.
- **Lucas:** And what type of object did you rent the most? For example, I hear that you go to the mountains. Would mountain equipment sometimes interest you, or would you rather buy that instead?
- **Philippe:** That is to say, given my age, I bought my skis and my wife's skis in 2007 or 2008. Well maintained—except mine broke once and I had to buy used ones. My wife still uses the
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same skis. At that time, snowshoes weren't available for rent. We bought a pair of snowshoes that are now 17 or 18 years old. The poles, yes. When we go skiing with the grandchildren, we rent the equipment—yes, because we can't have a collection of skis. We bought a few pairs of skis at flea markets, but it's not enough. The kids grow. Every year, you need bigger boots and skis. So, we rent. Not from the big stores like Decathlon or supermarkets, but there's a small artisan in the mountains who has a great collection of equipment, and we always trust him. And he checks the gear when it's returned.

- **Lucas:** And if there are objects you don't really know how to use, or say, it's the first time you're using that kind of object—how do you learn how to use it? Does someone at the store show you? Or do you rather look up tutorials somewhere?

- **Philippe:** They explain. For example, one day my wife rented touring skis—which we don't own. That kind of gear we won't buy. If we decide to do it, we rent the equipment. There's an introduction done on-site.

- **Lucas:** And that's the best option then, having someone show you live?

- **Philippe:** Yes, yes, yes. Like to repair a device—the Waterpik, for cleaning teeth. You know, the water jet, a kind of pressure washer for your teeth. It broke. I searched the Internet, I admit, I looked for a tutorial and followed the instructions. I repaired my Waterpik myself.

- **Lucas:** Okay, so sometimes you do look up tutorials online if there's no one available to help you?

- **Philippe:** If no one's available. In France, for the Waterpik, you have to buy the whole piece even if only one of the seven elements is broken. And in Belgium, you have to send it to Verviers because there's a specialist who handles the repair. It costs as much as a new one. A Waterpik costs 30–40 euros, and they were asking 50 or 60 to fix it.

- **Lucas:** And if the place where you could rent objects became more than just a place to rent—say, there were workshops to repair things you already have, meet people, etc.—would you go? To have a sense of community, I mean? Or is it really just about renting the item and once you're done, you return it and that's it?

- **Philippe:** I don't quite understand the question.

- **Lucas:** Yes, so instead of only having a place where you rent an item, use it, and return it, this place would be more like a community hub where you could bring your own items, repair them with others who can help, and also take part in other activities—like a Repair Café, for example. Are you familiar with those?

- **Philippe:** Yes, I had already considered going for one or two broken appliances. But the dates didn't really work for me. As I said, my wife and I are quite active. And sometimes, between going to the Repair Café or going for a hike with our dog, we prefer the hike.

- **Philippe:** So what happened with two or three devices—I brought them to the Genappe reuse center. They know how to repair them. I talked to them and said, here's the issue—but I don't have the tool, or the time, or I no longer need the tool. That's it. One more thing I wanted to say about borrowing, etc. Given our age, as I said for the skis, we bought quality gear a long time ago. There's not much we still need to buy. What bothers me is planned obsolescence—of computers, phones, etc.

- **Philippe:** I had a Mac I bought in 2005. Then one day it said it no longer supported Yahoo, Google, etc. My computer became trash—unusable, at least with the internet. For word processing, I still use my small PC, and it works fine.

- **Lucas:** I see. So when you rent, it's really to avoid buying products that you wouldn't need in the future.

- **Philippe:** Yes, yes. But over the years, I still accumulated a lot of tools and equipment. For example, we had a microwave—we've had microwaves since they came out. It broke five or six

years ago. We brought it to the dump and never bought another one. And we'll never buy a microwave again.

- **Philippe:** Much to the dismay of our kids.

- **Lucas:** And now, since you do a lot of activities—do opening hours for a rental service like Usitool or others ever pose a problem? Or is it fine since it's during the day?

- **Philippe:** Aside from my activities—volunteering, babysitting the grandkids—it's not an issue. Like I told you, I'm inactive. I no longer work. It used to be a constraint. I worked from 7:30 AM to 7:30 PM. It was complicated to pick up or drop off equipment. I had demanding schedules. Now, I can adapt.

- **Lucas:** That covers most of my questions.

- **Philippe:** Also, when I was working, I relied on evening openings of local services—until 6 or 8 PM. That's when I would go, because during the day it was impossible for me.

- **Lucas:** And if, instead of being open all day, it opened only from 5 PM to 10 PM—would that bother you now, as a retiree?

- **Philippe:** Not really. But you know, like with shops that open at 8 AM, it's retirees—and I won't say the unemployed—but people without work who are already queuing at 7:50. Then at 4–5 PM, working people rush in to shop.

- **Philippe:** For example, on Friday nights, we avoid shopping. We leave that time for workers who only have that window. 5 to 10 PM wouldn't bother me—but if it's crowded, I'd rather go at 5 than at 10.

- **Lucas:** Makes sense. And regarding the rental process—of course, you probably sign a contract. If someone asks for your ID or a lot of paperwork, does that bother you?

- **Philippe:** Not really. I have nothing to hide. If I borrow or rent something, that's part of the deal, the conditions. I always read the terms—or ask for them to be repeated in English or French when possible. It's normal to share my identity. Otherwise, it would be a different story.

- **Lucas:** And when paying, do you prefer cash or card?

- **Philippe:** I'd say either. What bothers me is when you can only pay with cash or only with card. There should be both options. But for example, when I go to a restaurant, I often pay cash because I worked in hospitality as a student.

- **Philippe:** I know how hard it is, and cash is always appreciated by owners—they can do what they want with it. When I can, I pay cash. In supermarkets, I don't care—the fees are included in their prices. For small businesses, I carry cash.

- **Lucas:** And regarding the payment model—not the method—do you prefer paying by the day, the hour, or even the minute?

- **Philippe:** It depends on the usage. If I need something for three days, I prefer to pay per day. If I only need it for an hour but have to pay for a whole weekend, then paying by the hour would interest me more, although I think that's a bit harder to manage.

- **Lucas:**

And if you were paying by the minute, how would that make you feel?

Because, for example, some people might feel a bit stressed because the minutes are ticking away, even before you've left the store, for instance.

- **Philippe:**

Yeah, I don't know. If I calculate it over 24 hours, that's like 3600 minutes, or something like that, roughly.

If I do the math and it ends up more expensive than renting by the day, that might stress me out a bit. But if I only need it for two days—or say just to unscrew some bolts on my car and return it—then I can't pay a whole day for just 30 seconds of use.

- **Lucas:**

Exactly, because if you pay by the hour but only need it for 30 minutes, you're still kind of losing out.

- Philippe:

Right, it's the usual deal: once the hour has started, it's paid. You've got to be a bit logical too. So charging by the minute is maybe going a bit too far.

Except, I suppose, in internet cafés. I've been to them abroad when I didn't have internet access. And there, yes, it's by the minute or half-hour or quarter-hour. That doesn't particularly stress me out. As long as the price is reasonable, there's always a balance to find between value and the service offered.

- Lucas:

Yes, of course.

- Philippe:

For example, I volunteered at a festival in Brussels, in Jette. I parked my car and paid 22 euros for 7 or 8 hours. That's robbery.

- Lucas:

Yeah, that's Brussels pricing—they tend to go overboard.

- Philippe:

But when I go to conferences in Nivelles, I use another app, "Oubric," and that one charges by the minute.

- Lucas:

And that's better, then?

- Philippe:

Yes, because when you have to feed coins into the parking machine and you're one minute late, it's stressful. If you come back half an hour before your time's up, it's frustrating.

So maybe, yes, it would be better to charge by the minute—if the rate is the same as hourly or daily pricing.

- Lucas:

Yes. OK.

Now, I'm also looking at the answers you gave to the survey. There was a question about hygiene. And you indicated that hygiene with shared items doesn't really scare you?

- Philippe:

It depends. A Waterpik, for instance, I'd never rent.

I used to work in the medical field. When we rented out equipment, anything that touched the person—like a mask, mouthpiece, or electrode—those were things the client had to buy.

Using the machine itself was no problem. We sterilized the surfaces, and also the tubing that carried air.

For kits—everything involving infusion or feeding tubes (not transfusion), like for enteral feeding—we always used disposables. The patient had to pay for that, because it's a hygiene and health issue. You wouldn't use the same feeding set for two different patients.

- Philippe:

But the machines themselves were cleaned, sterilized, wires disinfected and checked, etc.

Now, if it's something like a trekking backpack for the mountains, that's kind of in-between. It goes on your back, but not in your mouth. If it looks properly used and doesn't stink, then I don't mind.

I just lent my 5- or 6-year-old backpack to one of my stepsons. It's lost its color from the sun, but he needed that volume and mine was much bigger than his. So there you go.

- Lucas:

So yes, now if we compare lending to family or neighbors versus renting from a service, what would you say are the pros and cons of each?

Because for example, with a rental service you have to pay, but if you lend to your family, I assume you don't. Or maybe it's the opposite?

- Philippe:

No, you're right. There are two things.

First, if the neighbors or family don't have the item, then you have to go for a rental service.

Second, rental services generally provide gear that's top-notch, in good condition.

Whereas a neighbor might hand you something that's falling apart.

- Lucas:

Right, but at that point, maybe you trust your neighbor a bit more—but maybe less than if you signed something, for example?

- Philippe:

About the equipment's quality—I wouldn't say I trust them less, but...

I do have neighbors who don't maintain their gear, and it deteriorates over time.

I've seen it with the pressure washer. It doesn't work like it used to. It's all crusted up. I have to clean it, scrub it, unclog the nozzles before I can use it.

With rental gear, yeah, it would for sure be quality stuff, ready to use.

But hey, I'm not helpless. So it doesn't bother me to get a tool back into shape before using it.

- Philippe:

But I would be pissed if I had to pay and received something that didn't work. That would make me angry.

- Lucas:

Yes, totally understandable—especially if you're paying for the time you spend getting it to work.

Just maybe one last question—

I may have already asked this in another way:

Let's say the rental service explained to you how to use the item. You go home, but there's still something you don't understand, or maybe you forgot. That happens too.

What do you do? Would you rather call the service, or look for a tutorial online?

- Philippe:

Definitely not an online tutorial—I would call.

And if needed, I'd go back and say, "Look, it won't start."

- Lucas:

And if there was a manual—manual versus calling—you'd still prefer to call?

- Philippe:

I'd look at the manual first. I always read manuals for anything I buy or borrow.

I once had a case working in medical equipment:

People from Liège called me while I was at the seaside. They had just arrived and said, "The device isn't working."

I said, "That's weird, I delivered it last night and now it's not working? That's strange."

I asked, "Are you sure it's plugged in?"

"Yes, it's plugged in."

"Does the socket work?"

"Yes, it does."

I said, "Could you plug in something else, like a bedside lamp?"

They got annoyed, but finally tried it. The lamp worked in the bedroom socket, but not in the one they were using for the machine.

“Ah no, this one doesn’t work.”

I said, “Try plugging the device into a different socket.”

They did, and it worked.

I told them, “See? There was no need for me to come over.”

In that case, a manual wouldn’t have helped them.

- Lucas:

Yes, I see. So ideally both options should be available. But it depends too.

- Philippe:

Yes. When I have a tool that doesn’t start, I change the socket. I test if there’s a connection in the extension cord.

Sometimes the extension cord is broken inside. There’s no contact anymore.

So that’s basic stuff. I don’t need a manual or to call anyone.

I’m quite handy. I think before asking for help. I always try to figure out if the problem’s on my end before blaming the machine.

- Lucas:

Perfect.

Thank you very much for your time Philippe.

- Philippe:

It’s been a pleasure, if it can help move things forward.

- Lucas:

Yes, I hope so, I really do.

My goal is to create the best model—let’s say, the best experience—for people like you to rent something easily, based on everything you told me today.

- Philippe:

Well, just between us—

Something I couldn’t do a few years ago when I was working:

If a system like Usitoo is set up where there’s a kind of “permanence,” just like the Red Cross has for lending equipment...

But I wouldn’t be into managing wheelchairs and that kind of thing—because I already do enough for the Red Cross.

But if there’s a permanent system in place—

As long as it’s flexible, I could get involved, be at the front desk, lend out equipment, receive it, check it, fix it. That’s right up my alley, and now I have time—I’m willing to do it.

- Lucas:

As a volunteer, then?

- Philippe:

Yes, yes. When I say flexible, for example,

I take care of a beneficiary for the Red Cross within the framework of “Reliage.” I say, “Look, madam, I really like hiking. I often go to the mountains with my wife. When I’m away, I don’t come. If you accept that, I come. When I’m here, I’m present, I accompany you.

I do my volunteering. If I’m not here, either you accept not seeing anyone, or you accept that there is a replacement. Because we always offer a replacement during vacations. But often

people say, ‘No, no, I prefer that it’s you. I’m used to you. I’ll wait for your return.’ So that’s it. What sometimes bothers me in volunteering is being told, ‘Here, every day, every week, at such and such time, from this hour to that hour, I have to be there.’

Sometimes, it’s not possible for me. It’s not supposed to be a job. It’s supposed to be giving time, it’s normal.

- Lucas:

Ah yes I totally understand. OK, that's nice. If you have anything else to add or if at some point you think of something or some information that you maybe didn't say because I didn't ask, you can of course send me an email too. I'm available for that. And so now I'm going to continue my research and at the end of my research, normally, I will have created a rental system, or at least improved it. And maybe I will come back to you then to ask if it suits you perfectly or not. Would you be ready after that?

- Philippe:

Yes, I'm interested to have some results of your thinking.

- Lucas:

Ok, perfect. I'll do that then.

- Philippe:

There is, however, for example, one thing, a very sensitive topic, which is that there are some people of all ages who experience what is called the digital divide. So if you don't have a smartphone or a computer, you don't have access to anything at all.

And that is really very, very, very frustrating. Just like the dematerialization of money, etc. For some people, it's very frustrating because you need to be able to handle a phone. You need fingertip sensitivity. You need good eyesight. You need to understand how it works. And that, you have to be careful about. There needs to be an alternative. It depends on the audience you want to address.

- Lucas:

Yes, of course, the digital divide exists. So in that case, it might be better to have the catalog on site or to have the catalog in your mailbox?

- Philippe:

Maybe a catalog on site with a box that says 'here it is, come see' or on request we can send it to you or lend it to you.

I remember the times when IKEA used to distribute cubic meters of catalogs in mailboxes.

- Lucas:

Ok, thanks a lot anyway.

- Philippe:

There you go, Lucas, good work, good luck.

- Lucas:

Thank you. Have a good day, thanks again for your time. And if you have any questions or whatever, don't hesitate to send an email. Have a good day.

I.3 Interview - Marie-Françoise

- **Lucas** Hello, and thank you again for your time.

This interview is part of my master's thesis. I'm exploring how we can make mutualized product-service systems (like bike-sharing, tool libraries, etc.) more attractive and engaging. The idea is to have a casual conversation, with no right or wrong answers. I'm simply trying to better understand your habits, preferences, and impressions, whether or not you've already used this type of service.

Everything you say will remain anonymous and used solely for academic purposes.

First of all, could you describe a typical day or week in your life?

- **Marie-Françoise:** So, we live—let's say—in the countryside. Semi-rural, more or less. We've been here for five years, and we have two young children. A typical week: my husband works every day except Wednesday, I work every day. We try to coordinate our schedules around the kids. They're now both in preschool. So, we get up around 6 a.m. On some days it's 4:30 if I need to go to Brussels, or 7 a.m. if I'm teleworking—so let's say on average, it's 6. We prepare breakfast, pack the school bags, take them to school, then we work during the day. In the evening, it's the same routine again—kids, dinner, bedtime. Like many people, I suppose. We don't do regular sports activities, and my husband and I aren't part of clubs that meet weekly or anything like that. He's involved in the school's parent association. Our kids are still a bit too young for extracurricular activities.

- **Lucas:** Actually, the level of detail depends on you—it's just an introductory question, really.

- **Marie-Françoise:** Okay, like that then.

- **Lucas:** And if you had to describe yourself with three values, what would they be?

- **Marie-Françoise:** Family, honesty... I guess five or six years ago, we would've said ecology. But since having kids, it's been much harder to keep up with all of that. So we've taken a few steps back on those values, unfortunately. It's the same when chatting with a neighbor—like: "I bought this thing, it's really great."

- **Lucas:** And how do you usually discover services or products?

- **Marie-Françoise:** Mostly online, I'd say. But also via word of mouth.

- **Lucas:** And online—more through social media, or do you Google things yourself?

- **Marie-Françoise:** If we have a need, we'll do a proper search. We'll search thoroughly, and we tend to invest in quality items that last, even if it's something like a waffle maker we use only twice a year. We went for a good-quality one—not something from Aldi—because we wanted something durable. We also look at whether it's repairable.

- **Lucas:** Do you often repair things yourself?

- **Marie-Françoise:** We try to tinker a bit. We don't know much about electronics, neither of us. But there's a repair café where we live, so that's sometimes an option. I sew a bit, so when I have time, I fix up pants or other slightly damaged clothes. As much as possible, but we can't spend four days a month just fixing things. We try to maintain equipment properly—like the lawn mower—so we don't have to replace it too soon.

- **Lucas:** Have you ever actually gone to the repair café?

- **Marie-Françoise:** Yes, twice I think. I don't remember exactly what for—once maybe for my husband's bike, or just to get information. I can't recall exactly.

- **Lucas:** And your goal there was mainly to repair something quickly, right?

- **Marie-Françoise:** Yes. Mostly to get help with things we don't have the skills for. Because honestly, if I can fix something myself at home, I'd rather do that than carry it all the way there. So yes, if we have the skills, we do it ourselves.

- **Lucas:** And when you don't actively search for things online, where else do you usually come across services or products?

- **Marie-Françoise:** Sometimes you just stumble upon things—ads on social media, for example, or on Marketplace. Maybe we're searching for something specific and then discover something else unexpectedly. Right now, for instance, we're looking for an outdoor table. So we're browsing Marketplace, comparing prices with DIY stores, especially those that accept eco-vouchers. And while browsing tables, we might see parasols and think, "Hey, that one looks good." It gets us thinking—should we get one like that or something different?

- **Lucas:** That makes sense. So once you've decided to get a product or a service—like that parasol, for example—but you don't yet know which brand, how do you approach that decision process?

- **Marie-Françoise:** We first look at the maximum budget we're willing to spend. I'm more budget-conscious than my husband—he'll say, "I'd rather get something I really like, even if it's a bit more expensive," and wait a bit longer if needed. Me, I'm like: "We're not going to spend €150 on a parasol—that's insane." But then again, if we spend €80 on something that breaks with the first gust of wind and needs replacing every year, it's not worth it. So we'd rather invest in something sturdier, with a protective cover, better fabric quality—especially for UV protection. Some fabrics wear out super fast, while others last longer, even in Belgian weather.

- **Lucas:** And how do you set the budget—do you compare prices, or just fix a price in your head?

- **Marie-Françoise:** We usually check a few DIY stores to see the price range—what's out there, what's the market like. Then we look for second-hand options to see if there's something we like that still feels like a good deal compared to new. We're not looking for something used just once and still in its box for half the price—but we try to find the right balance. It depends on the object. Some things are harder to buy second-hand. But we always check second-hand first. If we don't find anything, we then ask: do we buy it new, or can we wait a bit? That depends on how urgent the purchase is.

- **Lucas:** So if it's not super urgent, but would still be nice to have—you just wait for a second-hand deal?

- **Marie-Françoise:** Yes, we wait and keep an eye on it. If after two or three months there's still nothing—well, in two or three months it'll be winter, so it'll be for next year. But yes, if there's no urgency, we wait. For the outdoor table, we thought we'd wait for end-of-season sales on display models.

- **Lucas:** Okay, perfect. Now switching gears—when it comes to renting or sharing things in general, what comes to mind?

- **Marie-Françoise:** What I liked with a service like Usitoo was the idea of accessing good-quality items—equal to or better than what we'd buy new—but for things we only use twice a year. It doesn't make sense to own those, so being able to rent them when needed is great. Now, as for shared transport services—we don't use them at all. There's no Cambio or similar options in our area. We have one car and one bike, and we manage everything with those. I remember when we moved in, we suggested to the neighbors that we share a garden shed between our two properties. Something with shared access and gardening tools—because it's silly that every house on the street owns a lawn mower. But those kinds of items are really annoying to transport. With Usitoo, for instance, the nearest pickup point was in Gembloux, and the equipment had to be delivered from Brussels. That takes a few days. So if we suddenly feel like making waffles the next afternoon, well—it's too late. That kind of system doesn't allow for last-minute spontaneity. But then again, we don't make waffles every day. Owning certain appliances with a few neighbors, stored locally—that felt like a good idea.

- **Lucas:** Okay, okay, perfect. And now, if we move to the topic of renting or sharing in general, what do you think when you hear the idea of sharing or renting?

- Marie-Françoise: What I liked with the idea of Usitoo, for example, was having access to good-quality items — either superior or at least equal to what we would have bought new — but for something we only use twice a year, it's not really worth buying it. So being able to rent a quality item that lasts over time, and just use it when needed, that made sense to me.

As for transport-related sharing, we don't use that at all. We live in a municipality where there's no Cambio or anything like that. We just have one car and one bike — that's how we do everything.

Also, I remember when we moved in, we suggested to our neighbors that we could put up a shared garden shed between our properties. Something with a shared key, just for storing gardening tools. It doesn't make sense for everyone on the street to own their own lawnmower. But those kinds of items are really annoying to transport. If I have to go pick one up at a drop-off point, it's tricky.

That was also an issue with Usitoo — the drop-off points in our area weren't very convenient. There was one in Gembloux, and that was it. And waiting for it to be shipped from Brussels to Gembloux took a few days.

Sometimes, you just spontaneously think, "Oh, we could make waffles tomorrow afternoon," but it's too late to organize it via a rental system. So it doesn't offer that flexibility. But then again, we don't make waffles every day.

So now we mostly look on Marketplace for second hand items.

- Lucas:

What are the advantages of renting versus buying second-hand? Because in the long run, it might end up costing the same.

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, that's true. The advantage of buying second-hand is that you have the item, and there's flexibility. You can use it when you want — like, "Oh, the sun is out this afternoon, let's do some gardening!" You don't have to book in advance, wait several days, and then realize it's raining when the item is finally available. That would be frustrating.

We're not at home every weekend — we have activities here and there — so it's about catching the right moment, especially for outdoor tools. That's why we like second-hand: it gives us access to a decent range of quality tools without having to invest €5,000 into a full workshop. And the tools are there when we need them.

- Lucas:

So it's really about having the freedom to use things that belong to you.

- Marie-Françoise:

Exactly. The flexibility to use something when you need it, without relying on an outside organization or waiting days.

- Lucas:

Of course.

- Marie-Françoise:

There are some downsides too, like storage. If we were still living in our apartment in Louvain-la-Neuve, we wouldn't need gardening tools. And even with kitchen appliances — like waffle makers — you don't want to buy a ton of stuff if you're only going to use it twice a year and don't have the space. In that case, renting makes more sense.

But now that we live in a house, we have more space, so our possibilities have changed.

- Lucas:

So you see that your need for certain objects has changed. For example, before, you might have rented a waffle maker, and now you own one?

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, exactly. We bought a waffle maker when I was pregnant — we had this nice image of making waffles on weekends with the kids. That's what appealed to us. If we were still in your apartment, we probably wouldn't have bought one. The space it takes up would have outweighed the flexibility it gives. But now, the space is no longer a constraint, and the flexibility is more important, especially with two kids and nap schedules. So owning it makes more sense.

- Lucas:

And hygiene — is that a concern for you at all? For example, if you rent a waffle maker, are you comfortable with that?

- Marie-Françoise:

I actually rented a waffle maker and a steam floor cleaner through a platform. It came with instructions, and for me, the idea was to try it out before possibly buying one. I'm not going to rent something every week to clean the house — that's just not practical. If I need it that often, it's better to own it.

So yeah, the rental was more about testing the product to see if it worked well and if we liked the system. As for hygiene — whether renting or buying second-hand — it's the same question for me. It doesn't worry me that much.

- Lucas:

But if the item arrives and it's not clean, how do you feel?

- Marie-Françoise:

That would be annoying, because it wastes my time — I have to clean it before using it. I think cleaning and checking should be included in the rental service. I believe there was even a deposit involved, but I don't remember exactly.

That's the advantage of going through a platform instead of borrowing from a friend — there's someone responsible for checking and cleaning the item before it's rented out again. That way, you don't end up with something that only half works or is dirty.

- Lucas:

So ideally, each time the item should go back to someone who checks and cleans it?

- Marie-Françoise:

At least a basic check. Take it out of the box, open it, and see if the previous renter cleaned it. I'm not saying it has to go through a full wash every time, but if it's dirty, then the platform should keep the deposit and clean it before giving it out again.

- Lucas:

So the cleaning cost would be taken from the deposit, like if you break the item?

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, I think it could be. Just like Airbnb: if you break a vase, the cost is deducted. If you leave the place messy, they also take €50 for cleaning. Same principle here.

- Lucas:

But some people have different standards of cleanliness. What if someone says, "It was clean when I returned it," but you feel it wasn't up to your standards?

- Marie-Françoise:

Maybe they could include a photo of the item cleaned, in the state they expect it to be returned. Then the platform can compare the "before" and "after" photos. If there's a clear difference, they can deduct a fee. But yes, that means the item has to go through someone's hands again each time. I don't remember if that was the case with the platform I used, but it seems logical to me. And checking if it works also lets you check if it's clean — it doesn't take much more time.

- Lucas:

The Usitooo platform had a centralized system — objects returned to a warehouse and then redistributed, which caused delivery delays, right?

- Marie-Françoise:

Right.

- Lucas:

Now I'm also looking into other models — including delivery-based systems, but also ones without any human checks. Users would just drop off and pick up items from lockers, for example.

- Marie-Françoise:

Ah okay, I see.

- Lucas:

That could be one solution — and of course, there are others. I'm exploring all the options.

- Marie-Françoise:

In that case, maybe there should be a centralized support service (online). The next user could send a photo and report if the item was dirty. The platform would then trace the previous user. I don't know exactly how that would work, but it's an idea.

- Lucas:

Exactly. If everything is done via a smartphone, there could be photos, and even reviews — just like Airbnb.

- Marie-Françoise:

With an app, yes.

- Lucas:

Ratings, hygiene notes, all that. A sort of community where people help set expectations. So when you rent something, what concerns you the most?

- Marie-Françoise:

Do you mean before deciding to rent, or once I've already decided?

- Lucas:

In general — for example, you might not want to sign up on a platform, or you might not want human contact, or you might not trust a brand you don't know. It can be anything.

- Marie-Françoise:

Right, I see.

- Lucas: For example, could the deposit also be a barrier?

- Marie-Françoise: I'd say yes. It's true, you shouldn't have to put down, say, a €100 deposit. That would bother me. It would be a deterrent if, for example, I saw a waffle maker I could buy for €15 on Amazon from some unknown Chinese brand, and I had to rent it for €5 for the weekend. That would be a deal-breaker. I wouldn't really see the benefit. I'd think, "Okay, if the plates aren't removable, I won't be able to clean it properly, it'll be hard to use, and it's not a model I would've chosen because it's less practical." You see what I mean? If the plates are removable, I can clean them more easily. It's the same with those all-in-one sandwich makers — they're awful to clean, so I avoid them.

So yeah, that kind of thing matters because I try to imagine myself renting it, and I'd already be paying a quarter of the price of buying it, but then cleaning it would be a hassle, and I'd have to pick it up far away or only at very specific hours that don't fit my work schedule. All of that becomes a serious barrier.

- Lucas: OK, so now we have the example of the waffle maker in mind, but maybe—

- Marie-Françoise: Yeah, that's not always the case though.

- Lucas: Right, maybe the waffle maker isn't the best example, because you'd probably use it weekly. But what if it were something for the garden? You have a house now, so you might not use it every week — maybe that would also be a constraint?

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- **Marie-Françoise:** Let me think. The lawnmower or the edge trimmer – we use those weekly, so we own them. But hedge trimmers – that’s twice a year. So we rent that. That’s what I meant. The thing is, everyone trims their hedges at the same time. So it’s super annoying because the platform or rental company needs to have lots of hedge trimmers in stock to meet demand. Otherwise, I might not be able to rent one if I didn’t plan far enough ahead. Then too bad for me, right? But that also makes me think, “Fine, I’ll just buy one so I don’t run into the same issue next year.” Then I have to store it the rest of the year, and no one rents during those months. So for these seasonal items, I think it’s hard to have a profitable business model. As a user, I’d love to rent the hedge trimmer twice a year and not have it cluttering the shed the rest of the time, but as a platform, it’s a pain if everyone does the same and you’re stuck storing them all year.
- **Lucas:** Yes, of course. And it depends on the hedge growth too – it’s seasonal. If prices varied by season, with dynamic pricing, do you think that would make sense? How would you feel about that?
- **Marie-Françoise:** That would be cool. That would make sense. It’s supply and demand – we all understand the basics of economics. So yeah, I’d understand that. But if that means that when I need it, I have to rent it for a third of the new price, I’ll probably just buy it. Usually, you have two or three weekends in September or October to do the trimming, so it really depends on when it’s available and how the price lines up with the timing that suits me.
- **Lucas:** Yes, of course.
- **Marie-Françoise:** Maybe “aligned” isn’t the right word, but you get the idea.
- **Lucas:** And if you could book it in advance, would that help?
- **Marie-Françoise:** Yes, then I’d work around it – I wouldn’t trim when I’m free, I’d plan six months ahead and say, “That weekend, I’ll trim,” and plan other stuff with friends around that. That could work.
- **Lucas:** Or say, a month ahead, when you already know your schedule – “OK, I’m free the third weekend, so I’ll book it.”
- **Marie-Françoise:** I’d still worry about the weather. In September or October, if I wait until a week or ten days before to check the forecast, is that too late to book? Could I cancel three days ahead based on the weather? Maybe there could be last-minute reservations like flights. I’d totally be the type to say, “I booked it, but this weekend it’s not going to work – the weather’s awful or we don’t have time, so I’ll cancel.” I’m not going to go through the trouble of picking it up and paying for it. Maybe with a small cancellation fee. And maybe someone else will still rent it – maybe they’re fine with a bit of rain or it’s the only weekend they have time. Maybe they even get a last-minute discount depending on the season.
- **Lucas:** Right, and perhaps the cancellation fee you paid could be transferred.
- **Marie-Françoise:** Exactly. Also, we’ve been talking about tools used occasionally throughout the year – even if not weekly. But for bigger jobs, like a rototiller to turn over soil or a roller to level the lawn – we’re talking gardening now – those are things you don’t do every year. These are already available for rent in hardware stores like Brico. In my mind, that’s more “construction” than gardening. When you redo a lawn, it’s more like renovation. So instinctively, I’d go straight to Brico. But maybe I’d also compare it with what’s available on a platform, if those kinds of machines are rentable there too. Some machines are already rentable in DIY stores for those rare tasks.
- **Lucas:** That makes sense. And they’re large machines too, so—
- **Marie-Françoise:** Exactly.
- **Lucas:** You only need them maybe three times in your life.
- **Marie-Françoise:** Right.
- **Lucas:** Now, one idea could be – I know Brico struggles to attract renters for their equipment,
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so—

- **Marie-Françoise:** Honestly, they're expensive, and then you have to transport the thing yourself.

- **Lucas:** Yes, exactly.

- **Marie-Françoise:** If they at least included a free van to bring it home and back, that would be great.

- **Lucas:** Right, and I'm not sure they have an online platform either. I've never done it, but I don't think you can book online today.

- **Marie-Françoise:** Exactly – why not make it easier? Then if people think of renting, they can go to the platform.

- **Lucas:** Exactly, the idea would be to have a Brico section in the app, through a partnership. You could book directly on the platform.

- **Marie-Françoise:** Yes, that way everything is centralized, you find the partners directly and don't have to compare or do more searching.

- **Lucas:** And speaking of platforms or apps, how do you feel about using them – are you comfortable or maybe not so confident?

- **Marie-Françoise:** No, I'm comfortable with digital tools. It doesn't scare me. But I wonder if someone who only wants to rent once, maybe once a year or even less, would bother installing the app, using up storage on their phone, etc. Some people might find that off-putting. Personally, it wouldn't stop me – I'd still be hopeful and willing to change how we do things and give it a try.

- **Lucas:** So maybe having an app makes sense, but also a centralized spot – like a physical helpdesk for those who don't want to download the app.

- **Marie-Françoise:**

Well, it's not necessarily — maybe there's also a website? Because then people could simply log in through the site without downloading anything or creating an account. Personally, if it's for one-time use and I need to create an account, sign up for a newsletter and all that... I often give up. It feels like too much hassle. So it depends. If there's a way to rent something once using a guest account, or without needing a full profile, that would be preferable.

- **Lucas:**

Let's say you use the platform more or less regularly — maybe five times a year. Would you then create an account, or would you still go with a guest account?

- **Marie-Françoise:**

If I'm using it five times a year, I'd definitely create an account. It's easier — all my info is saved. You can even store your preferred payment method. That kind of thing.

- **Lucas:**

Alright. But for a guest account, the security might not be optimal. So, if you had to create an account, how would you feel about being asked to upload an ID at the start?

- **Marie-Françoise:**

How would I upload my ID?

- **Lucas:**

With a photo.

- **Marie-Françoise:**

Ah, okay. Yes, like what online banks sometimes do.

- **Lucas:**

Exactly.

- **Marie-Françoise:**

I don't think it would bother me too much. Though it's not the usual process — usually you just fill in your info, email, password, and so on.

- Lucas:

And if there's no ID required, but you add your bank details and a deposit is automatically taken from your account?

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, I think that should just appear on the final invoice. Like, once you've added the rental to your cart — you see the rental price, the deposit, and then you pay via the app, through Bancontact or a transfer, something like that.

- Lucas:

And afterwards?

- Marie-Françoise:

It should be very clearly explained. The rental price, the deposit — clearly separated. That way, you know the deposit is, say, €50. And I imagine you get it back within 10 working days after returning the product, through a transfer or something similar.

- Marie-Françoise:

I remember once you had to load credit in advance. That, I think, is a barrier for someone just testing the service or using it once a year. There are so many easy payment methods now, like Bancontact. But I understand — maybe if users don't pay upfront, the company can't order or reserve the product in time. I don't know the business model behind it.

- Lucas:

And in terms of pricing, would you prefer paying by day, hour, or minute?

- Marie-Françoise:

By day. If I rent something on a Tuesday at 5pm to use on Wednesday, I wouldn't want to pay for three full days when I return it Thursday evening. It depends on the cost — three times €2 or three times €15 makes a big difference. For me, I'd use it once, pick it up Tuesday night, return it Thursday night because I only have Wednesday off. So daily pricing makes more sense.

- Lucas:

And if you only needed it for, say, 5 hours during the day?

- Marie-Françoise:

Sure, that could work. You could offer hourly pricing. But personally, I wouldn't choose that option. It would stress me out — having to rush home, use the item quickly, avoid any delays, and return it on time. With kids and everything, I'd rather just book it from Saturday morning to Sunday morning and use it when it suits us.

So, hourly pricing is less practical for our lifestyle. It's not what I'd go for — though it could still be an option.

- Lucas:

Or it could be something like: up to 3 hours is hourly, and beyond that, it switches to a 24-hour flat rate?

- Marie-Françoise:

Exactly. That makes sense.

- Lucas:

So let's imagine the ideal service. You book something via a website or app. You provide your name, contact details — maybe not your ID — and your bank info.

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, basic contact and payment info.

- Lucas:

Then, would you expect the product to be delivered, or would you prefer picking it up nearby?

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, picking it up nearby makes more sense. Delivery might take a few days unless it's managed in-house — but then the cost would be high, which makes it feel like a luxury service. So I'd rather pick it up at a relay point or a local "object bank."

I don't think it's worth having 250 hedge trimmers stored in one central location in Brussels. Better to have five locations with 50 each — one in Brabant Wallon, one in Namur, etc. That way, people can pick up from the closest location.

- Lucas:

Of course.

- Marie-Françoise:

Because I imagine it's hard to find partners for relay points. Just having locations a bit closer would already help. If it's urgent, I'm willing to drive 30 km to pick something up and save two days in the process.

- Lucas:

Let's go back to the idea of large pickup boxes. Not a staffed location, but like a big secure locker system.

- Marie-Françoise:

Like those Mondial Relay or bpost lockers, but bigger. You go there, scan your phone, access the locker, take your item. Of course, it would need to be secure, to ensure people only take what they rented.

- Lucas:

There could be scanners or maybe even sensors like in supermarkets.

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes. That would work for decentralized "object banks" in different areas like Brabant Wallon. They could be autonomous.

- Lucas:

Okay.

- Marie-Françoise:

And maybe even smaller relay points linked to the bigger object banks, depending on the logistics.

- Lucas:

That's pure logistics.

- Marie-Françoise:

Last weekend I drove 30 km to pick up something from Marketplace — a pool ladder in Court-Saint-Étienne. It was 18 km one way. But I only do that once. These are one-off actions, not something I do every weekend. So for rentals, three or four times a year, it's fine.

- Lucas:

To make the platform more attractive — whether it's an app or website — would you like a loyalty system, or maybe the ability to see what your neighbors are renting?

- Marie-Françoise:

Loyalty points definitely work. Even if I like to think I'm not influenced by marketing, it still works. And if I have to go to an object bank, I'll try to optimize my trip. Like asking myself: "Do I need a second item this weekend too?" And pick up everything at once instead of doing multiple trips and rentals on different weekends.

- Lucas:

Right — and now that I think about it, what if your neighbors also wanted to rent something from the platform or the same relay point?

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, I imagine we'd all go to the same relay point, since it's the closest one, and each one has a standard selection of items.

- Lucas:

At that moment, for example, would you take their item yourself, or is it their job to pick the item up? Would you both go by separate cars? Because I don't know how close you are to your neighbors.

- Marie-Françoise:

Yeah, well, we get along well with our neighbors, very well actually. But I don't know if we would talk about that... Our kids are in the same school, we see each other regularly, but would we say, "Hey, in two days I'll pick up a lawnmower for you, or do you need something from over there?" I'm not sure it would be an automatic reflex in a shared housing situation. But it would be nice to have the possibility to know that. I'm not sure how exactly, but that would be useful.

- Lucas:

And here, for example, when renting, at least choosing a pickup point — your name would be linked to that pickup point, and if someone checks, they could see your name and say, "Ah, she also goes there on Saturdays around 10 a.m." Would that be bad for privacy? Or would it be more about creating a sense of community?

- Marie-Françoise:

Well, maybe at the moment I make a rental, I could tick a box — this is a weird idea, but I could say "I agree to pick up other neighbors' items." Then the app could notify me: "Hey, someone nearby is also renting something for this Saturday, do you want to bring it to them?" And maybe I'd get a small discount or a credit on my account for making that little detour to deliver to someone in my village, even if I don't really know them. That would be nice.

- Lucas:

Yeah, sure. Though the person would have to be available at that time as well.

- Marie-Françoise: Exactly, they'd have to be home so I could drop the item off.

- Lucas:

So the idea would be that deliveries are done by individuals rather than professionals?

- Marie-Françoise:

For the last mile, why not? It's conceivable. I don't mind if I have space in my car.

- Lucas:

Okay, I'm really just brainstorming here. I'm looking at everything, and based on ideas, I'll decide what works or not. But that's good. Maybe just one question about ecology — how would you prioritize price, quality, ecology, or other values like community between neighbors? Is ecology just a nice-to-have or essential?

- Marie-Françoise:

We're convinced it's better for the environment to do this. So for me, that can be used as a selling point, like advertising, because it's true. Sorry, can you rephrase the question?

- Lucas:

Sure. So, give an order of importance for values: is price the most important, then practicality, then quality, then ecology? Or is ecology first before price?

- Marie-Françoise:

For me, practicality comes first. If it's practical, if the item is available locally and it makes sense to rent it, then for ecological reasons I'd go for it. So I'd say first practicality, then ecology, then price.

- Lucas:

Okay, and by practical you mean flexibility? Easy to get or use?

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, maybe even delivery between neighbors.

- Lucas:

Not too far either, and easy to pick up. Okay, perfect. I have about ten questions, we covered everything. Would it be useful to have something general about renting, not just objects?

- Marie-Françoise:

Yeah, we mostly talked about transport, but honestly, that's not really relevant for us. Renting a car for the kids' stuff — seats and all — is complicated. So, I'm more interested in renting objects so I don't clutter up or create new stuff. I think we covered a lot.

- Lucas:

If you had to name a brand or product you really like because it's useful or easy to use, what would be an example?

- Marie-Françoise:

A favorite product?

- Lucas:

Yeah, or something you use often or not, but the experience is great when you use it. More like, which brand do you really love?

- Marie-Françoise:

We try to pick brands with good ranges. For the waffle maker, it's Frifri. For tools, we use a lot of Makita.

- Lucas:

Okay, so quality is the reason.

- Marie-Françoise:

Yes, because they last a long time.

- Lucas: Okay.

- Marie-Françoise: For kitchen appliances, we don't stick to one brand; we pick the best from each — like the dishwasher from one brand, the fridge from another — because each brand excels at something.

- Lucas: I see, so it really depends on the object.

- Marie-Françoise: We didn't talk much about this, but I think about renting event equipment — like for a birthday party in the garden, needing big heaters or standing tables. Those are items that can be rented all year and are really a pain to store.

- Lucas: I get it. Another user mentioned decoration — you could decorate your house with rented stuff.

- Marie-Françoise: Yeah, good idea. But for seasonal stuff like Halloween or Christmas decorations, it's the same problem as hedge trimmers — very seasonal and have to be stored all year.

- Lucas: Yeah, but decorations are smaller, so maybe easier to manage.

- Marie-Françoise: A big storage place where you can drop off seasonal items would be good.

- Lucas: Okay, perfect. Well thanks a lot for your time, it really helped!

- Marie-Françoise: Thank you very much, great.

- Lucas: Now I'll transcribe everything, continue my interviews, then put all the ideas together. I'll create the user journey and see if an app is needed or something like that. I might get back to you for a second round of feedback on what I write at the end.

- Marie-Françoise: Okay, no problem.

- Lucas: Great, if you're up for that, it would be awesome. Thanks so much for your time.

- Marie-Françoise: Thank you and good luck.

I.4 Interview - Ariane

- **Lucas:** Hello, and thank you again for your time.

This interview is part of my master's thesis. I'm exploring how we can make mutualized product-service systems (like bike-sharing, tool libraries, etc.) more attractive and engaging. The idea is to have a casual conversation, with no right or wrong answers. I'm simply trying to better understand your habits, preferences, and impressions, whether or not you've already used this type of service.

Everything you say will remain anonymous and used solely for academic purposes.

Could you describe what a typical week looks like for you these days?

- **Ariane:** So, at the moment, I'm semi-retired, so I spend most of my time at home.

In a typical week—what exactly do you want to know? What I do during the day?

Well, I have some health issues, so I have quite a few medical appointments: physiotherapy, various check-ups here and there.

Now, I enjoy painting and pottery. I try to dedicate at least half a day or even a full day each week to those hobbies.

I also do a bit of sport—once a week I go swimming, and over the weekend, I try to go biking.

We have a camper van, so we often go away for the weekend, not too far—often across the border into France.

We had a lot of children at one point because we have a blended family. At one time, there were six kids living with us, so our life was very active.

Now it's much calmer, much more relaxed.

- **Lucas:** What values are important to you in your daily life?

- **Ariane:** One key value for me is sincerity. Caring about others is also very important—being kind and considerate.

There are others too—mutual help, being of service to others, that's something that really matters to me.

And optimism. Yes, optimism is important.

- **Lucas:** How do you usually find out about new services or activities?

- **Ariane:** Mostly online. On Facebook, since that's the social media I'm comfortable with. Not Instagram—I don't know how to use that—but I know how to navigate Facebook.

So I often see posts or advertisements for pottery workshops or other kinds of services. That's how I get interested.

Sometimes it's just something that pops up in my feed, and if it catches my eye, I'll dig deeper.

I also search directly online if I'm looking for something specific. And if I want more information, I might use AI tools too.

- **Lucas:** Do you trust online reviews? Or do you prefer word-of-mouth recommendations?

- **Ariane:** Definitely more trust in word-of-mouth. There's a human side to it.

If someone I know recommends a brand or an organization, that has more weight than a random Facebook post.

But I still look at reviews online—like on Amazon if I'm thinking of buying a product.

For example, if I want a new kitchen appliance, I'll look on Amazon, compare descriptions, check the pros and cons, and see what others are saying.

Depending on the item's value, I'll sometimes check comparison charts or go to physical stores like Coolblue or Krëfel to get a better idea.

I'll even check the brand's official website—not necessarily for objectivity, but to understand the full product range.

Price matters at the end, but first I want to know if it really fits my needs.

- **Lucas:** And for services, like home maintenance or repairs—how do you go about that?

- **Ariane:** It's not always the same. For example, we recently had to deal with our water tank—it needed to be emptied and refilled with sand.

So I googled companies that could do it. I found four or five names, visited their websites, and sent emails asking about their services and recommendations.

In parallel, I checked official websites like the Walloon region's site to see what the regulations were.

So I don't just rely on the service providers, I also look for guidance from public authorities.

- **Lucas:** How do you evaluate the reliability of online reviews?

- **Ariane:** I take them with a grain of salt. I'm careful, especially with overly negative reviews. Sometimes someone gives only one star, but then you read their comment and it's just because the item arrived broken or they're just being grumpy.

So I look at both the good and the bad reviews, but I try to understand the reasons behind them. It's the same for service providers. Even on Google, you get people who leave really harsh reviews, and I think, "Wow, that's a bit much."

Also, people are more likely to leave a review when they're unhappy. So I try to interpret things for myself.

- **Lucas:** When booking a service online, what makes the process easier for you?

- **Ariane:** I find it very convenient to book online—for example, appointments with my pedicurist.

I can see my schedule and choose a time that suits me without having to call during working hours.

For medical specialists, it depends a bit—sometimes there's a wait, but I still prefer booking online if possible.

Ease of access definitely matters—the simpler it is to go from searching to booking, the better. But if it's a more personal service, like choosing between two painting classes, the human contact makes a difference.

A phone call can give me a better sense of the person and help me decide where I feel more comfortable.

I usually book online, but if the next available slot is too far away, I'll call to see if they can squeeze me in earlier.

Being able to book any time of day—like at 11 p.m.—is something I really appreciate. It means I don't have to remember to do it the next day.

- **Lucas:** What makes an online booking system feel smooth or frustrating to use?

- **Ariane:** For my doctor, it's very simple now. I choose the type of consultation, the doctor, the location, and I see the available slots immediately.

It's quick and straightforward.

But with other services—like the hairdresser or beautician—it's often more complicated.

You have to specify what kind of treatment you want: a haircut, a shampoo, a color... There are too many steps before you even get to see the schedule.

So the number of steps before booking is really what makes the process feel easy or not.

I think the design of the site is important too. If I have to book an appointment and both options are available, but one interface is more pleasant than the other, I might go for the one that's more user-friendly. The ease of use really makes a difference. For example, I think my doctor's website is called Mediprin, and for the hairdresser, it's "Salon Kee." It's also really simple to use.

- **Lucas:** What are some reasons that might make you rent or share an object instead of buying it?

- **Ariane:** I think sharing or renting lets you test things out. You can try a tool before committing to a big investment. If you realize you don't like it, at least you haven't spent too much. Also,

for things you'll only use once—like when we did some work on the house and had to bend pipes—we checked the price of the tool, and it was quite high. Renting it made more sense. I don't remember exactly how much we paid, but it was definitely cheaper.

- **Lucas:** So for rare or one-off needs, rental seems like a good option?

- **Ariane:** Yes, clearly. There was a time, quite a while ago, when I had carpets, and I used to rent a cleaning machine. I could've bought a steam cleaner, but renting was just easier. I did it once a year or so. Now I don't have carpets anymore, but back then it made sense.

- **Lucas:** Could you give another example where renting would have made sense for you?

- **Ariane:** Right now, I'm setting up a small pottery workshop. I ended up buying a kiln second-hand, but I could have rented one or gone to someone else's place to fire my ceramics. That would have made sense since it's just a hobby. The one I bought was under €1,000, but new ones go for €3,000–€4,000. So before making that kind of investment, I thought carefully. The usage frequency just didn't justify a new one.

- **Lucas:** Do you think you sometimes forget that renting is even an option?

- **Ariane:** Yes, honestly, it's more that I don't even think about it. It doesn't cross my mind in the moment. I don't necessarily imagine that a certain item could be rented.

- **Lucas:** So if you don't see rental options directly when searching, you might not go further?

- **Ariane:** Exactly. Unless I specifically search for "second-hand" or "rental," it doesn't show up. But if I did, maybe I'd find platforms offering the item I need.

- **Lucas:** Have you recently had a situation where renting would have been ideal?

- **Ariane:** Yes. I have some old VHS tapes I want to digitize. I looked into buying a VHS player and devices to convert them. But that's exactly the kind of thing that would be perfect to rent—something I'd use for a month and then never again. In the end, I went to a second-hand store to find an old player, but I didn't even think about renting. I probably should have.

- **Lucas:** Do you think you'd be more likely to rent if it was through someone in your community?

- **Ariane:** Definitely. I might post on Facebook, like in my local group, asking if someone could lend or rent the equipment. But I'm not sure I would've turned to a formal company. I don't think it's really a habit yet, and I might not know the platforms that exist.

- **Lucas:** What about your motivation—if something was only available in a few weeks, would that discourage you?

- **Ariane:** It depends on the urgency. For example, digitizing those old films is something I've been meaning to do for years. I can wait a week or two, no problem. But if it were two months, maybe I'd reconsider.

- **Lucas:** Do you have other examples where you bought something and then rarely used it?

- **Ariane:** Yes, recently I cleaned out my pantry and found a juicer I had bought to make strawberry jelly. I used it once and it's been collecting dust ever since. I ended up offering it to my son. If I had known at the time that I could rent one, I probably would have done that instead.

- **Lucas:**

So is visibility the main barrier to renting instead of buying?

- **Ariane:**

Yes.

- **Lucas:**

Or is it just not yet part of our habits?

- **Ariane:**

Yes, it could be both. For example, right now my daughter lent me her kitchen appliance—what is it called again? It's fantastic. Then I asked if I should buy one, and she told me they cost

around €1,000 or even more. So investing €1,000 in a household item—I'm not sure I'd use it long-term.

If there had been a rental option, I would have definitely rented it for a month or two, to see if I'd actually use it. Then maybe I'd buy it, or maybe I'd wait until I need it again and rent it at that time.

So for me, it's not about ownership—it's about having something useful when I need it. It doesn't have to be available immediately—it can take time, that's not a problem. It just needs to be clean and well-maintained.

- **Lucas:** Do you have a price threshold where renting stops making sense?

- **Ariane:** Well if an item costs under €100 new, or even under €200, I'd just buy it. But above that, I consider renting. So around €100 seems like the tipping point.

- **Lucas:** What could be an example of this?

- **Ariane:** For instance, we have an old dog, and when we travel in our van for two or three weeks in a foreign country, it's risky to leave her inside. So we considered renting a bike trailer for the dog. If that costs €50–100 for those few weeks, that makes sense, since we won't need it all year.

- **Lucas:** And larger equipment—how does renting feel for those?

- **Ariane:** It really depends. If it's a small task like putting up a window, I'd rent for instance, a scaffolding for a weekend—just enough time to install, work, and return it. Renting for a few days is perfect. Renting a single-use tool for two days is very different from renting a kitchen appliance for a month.

- **Lucas:** Would a rental platform with a website be better than an app?

- **Ariane:** I prefer websites. I don't like apps because I have a big screen at home—it's easier to see product details on a laptop or desktop. I'm fine with creating an online account; ease-of-use is important. I don't mind installing an app if I can also use it on my computer.

- **Lucas:** How do you feel about delivery service versus picking up items?

- **Ariane:** Delivery is very convenient—even if it's less eco-friendly, I like it. Having a service bring the equipment to my door saves me a car trip. If it's delivered, that suits me well.

- **Lucas:** Would having local pickup/drop-off points help?

- **Ariane:** Absolutely. If there are nearby locations—like within 30–40 km—it's very helpful. I live near places like Namur or Nivelles; having local access makes renting much more appealing.

- **Lucas:** Beyond logistics, what would encourage you to rent more?

- **Ariane:** Two things:

1. Awareness: I need to know that rental platforms exist.

2. The human side:

First, I'd appreciate forums or reviews from real users, not just commercial ads. I like seeing a genuine discussion, maybe even a chat support or community group where people share tips ("I used this equipment for a terrace cleaning and here's how it went..."). That feel would make me more likely to use it. If I see a platform with active user reviews ("I rented this machine and it didn't work well; avoid it," or "It worked great!"), that would motivate me to rent.

And also humour would work very much. It's down to earth and brings a sense of reliability and relatability into things. For example I never click on accepting the cookies on a website but if you see an image of two cookies talking to each other like "oh I'd love so much to help tailor everything to you! - oh yes but we won't spy on you don't worry!", I'd click on that.

- **Lucas:** Do you worry about commitment or scheduling conflicts—like someone else needing the same item when you do?

-
- **Ariane:** Yes, that's a concern. In a community model, if someone else reserves the item before me, I might have to change my plans. But if there's a clear system—showing availability near me—I'd accept that. Maybe a gentle reservation system or reminders would help me commit.
- **Lucas:** Would you be comfortable renting out your own items to help the community?
- **Ariane:** Honestly, I wouldn't do it for money. But for community spirit—I might lend something for a small symbolic fee. My husband feels differently—he'd do it for money. I told him he could contact you for more details; I think he'd have good ideas. Personally, I wouldn't expect big profits—just €2 for the community would be fine. I'd do it more as a gesture.
- **Lucas:** What about user identity—should profiles show first names, last names or pseudonyms?
- **Ariane:** Real names or pseudonyms are both fine...just not maybe the last name. I think some people might not want to share their real identity. I like a bit of human connection—knowing who helped or reviewed something adds trust.
- **Lucas:** What social features would enhance the experience?
- **Ariane:** As said, having a chat or a forum. For example, when I travel, I use Facebook groups to ask questions (“What's good to do in this country?”). I find those human interactions very helpful. In pottery, I join groups where people share tips. A rental platform that includes that social interaction—like “here's how I cleaned my terrace with this tool”—would be valuable. That sense of community would encourage me to rent more.
- **Lucas:** And what would drive you away—what would make it feel too commercial?
- **Ariane:** If the platform feels like too much of an advertisement—like frequent pop-ups or too many promotional messages—it would annoy me and make me leave. It should be tasteful—not overly commercial.
- **Lucas:**
I see, I see. Alright well it's already been an hour so we can stop here but thanks again for your time! If you have any question or recommendation in the future, feel free to send me an email. And would it be okay if I come back to you once I developed the user journey?
- **Ariane:**
Sure thing! I'd love to see it. Thanks to you and goodbye!
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I.5 Interview - Sandra

- **Lucas:**

Hello, and thank you again for your time.

This interview is part of my master's thesis. I'm exploring how we can make mutualized product-service systems (like bike-sharing, tool libraries, etc.) more attractive and engaging. The idea is to have a casual conversation, with no right or wrong answers. I'm simply trying to better understand your habits, preferences, and impressions, whether or not you've already used this type of service.

Everything you say will remain anonymous and used solely for academic purposes.

- **Lucas:**

Could you describe a typical week for you — your priorities, habits, and general rhythm?

- **Sandra:**

A typical week in my life? Well, I work during the week. I get up early and usually get home early too — I condense my working hours. When I get back, I cook, tidy up a bit, walk the dog, and if I still have time, I do laundry. And if there's still time left, I sew. I try to squeeze in what I can whenever I have a moment. I go to bed fairly early and enjoy watching TV.

I work part-time every other week and have Wednesdays off — like today. On Wednesday mornings, I usually have sewing classes, except during certain times of the year like now. So this morning, since I had free time, I helped a friend who's a teacher. I spent the morning helping young children in kindergarten, especially those who are struggling a bit, to help them make progress.

Weekends vary. They can be completely restful, or include outings when we're invited somewhere. I usually have sewing again on Saturday mornings and dance around midday. Saturday afternoons are for going out. And the rest of the time, I find something to do. So, that's basically a typical week. It often follows the same rhythm.

When we have more free time, we organize walks with my brother-in-law and sister-in-law, or bike rides. If something comes up, we plan it. So yes, I do try to stay active. It's rare for me to just lie around doing nothing. That's why I told you earlier — today I actually lay down in the bedroom to enjoy the cool air. That doesn't happen often.

- Lucas:

That's important too. Especially with the heat lately — it's not easy.

How do you usually discover new services or products?

- Sandra:

It could be ads, word of mouth... but most of the time, it's online — Facebook, or ads that pop up there. I also read local mailers that come in the mailbox.

If I need something, I usually ask around — in my circles from dance, sewing, or friends. I'll ask: "Have you tried this?" or "Do you know something like it?" — from colleagues or friends. That's quite common for me.

Now, for things I didn't go looking for, it's mostly ads on Facebook or the internet in general.

- Lucas:

Are these ads more effective, or is it more when people you know share things?

- Sandra:

I'm not really into influencers or that kind of content. I don't trust it — people have something to gain, so they promote things even if they're not genuinely happy with them.

But if a friend shares a post — yes, then I'll think they must believe in it. Otherwise, why would they bother sharing it?

Still, ads do work on me, I'll admit that. Not always, but when something looks tempting, I might give it a try.

- Lucas:

So when you discover a service, say on Facebook, what makes you decide to try it?

- Sandra:

If I have a real need for it, first of all.

Most of what I've tried was not really services, but clothes or similar items.

When it comes to services, if it's something useful, I won't just try it blindly. I'll ask around first to see if someone I know has experience with it. And now, because I've already been scammed before, I tend to check online reviews first.

I'll usually retype the product name in a search engine instead of clicking the direct ad link, to find more independent reviews.

- Lucas:

Do you check review websites specifically, or are reviews on the product's own site good enough for you?

- Sandra:

Reviews on the site work too. Like on TripAdvisor, for example — even though some people say it's not trustworthy, I personally contribute reviews there, so I find it reliable. I look at

Amazon the same way.

If I see only positive reviews, I dig a bit to see if there's any criticism. If there is, I trust it more because it shows they publish everything.

Negative reviews don't necessarily stop me — sometimes people just have different expectations. But if both good and bad reviews are shown, I feel like I can trust the site.

- Lucas:

So if you see a Facebook ad, search for the product, land on the official website and see both good and bad reviews, that works for you?

- Sandra:

Yes, if I see all kinds of reviews, I'll trust them more. I'll still read a few before deciding. But I'll also compare with other options — look for competitors, compare prices.

I rarely go straight to buying. Even with something small I saw recently — like a special nail polish — I remembered the name and looked it up elsewhere to see if others offered it. I didn't end up buying it, but I always look around first.

- Lucas:

But when it's something new you don't understand right away, do you check the website first?

- Sandra:

Yes, if I need to understand what it is. I watch the video ads, then go to the website to get more info. That's fine with me.

- Lucas:

And when you're on the website and see reviews, you stay there?

- Sandra:

Yes, but before deciding, I still like to double-check reviews on other sites or compare prices. I don't just buy immediately, even if the offer is convincing.

Sometimes I spend too much time comparing similar services or products.

- Lucas:

Which other sites do you use? TripAdvisor, you mentioned, but not for everything.

- Sandra:

Not necessarily review sites. Let's say I see a technique or product I don't know — I might type "Technique XYZ" into Google just to see if other sellers offer it.

I often end up on Amazon, because they have everything. But I don't necessarily buy from the original site, and it's not just for the reviews.

I check prices, see who else offers the same service. Sometimes an ad is convincing, but it's rare that I buy on the spot. Unless the price is really low — like €20 — then I might take a chance.

But for anything big, like home renovations, it has to feel secure.

I've also been scammed by cheap Chinese clothing sites recently.

- Lucas:

So in general, what's most important for you when deciding whether to buy?

- Sandra:

It really depends on what I'm buying. For clothes, it's more about style and price. The price definitely matters, because we rarely **need** something.

If it's cheap and looks good, I'll buy it right away.

I'll admit I haven't always looked at reviews for clothes, but I think I'll start doing that more now.

For example, I needed a trailer for the dog. At first, I thought, "I won't spend much on it, whatever." But then the ads were well targeted. Once they see you start looking, you get more and more ads. I started comparing, and in the end, I didn't necessarily go with the cheapest option.

I looked at other criteria, like weight, depending on the use.

- Lucas:

Yes, that makes sense. It depends. Alright, let's move on to second-hand or shared services, and maybe we'll come back to this later. When you hear "shared services" or "mutualized services," what comes to mind?

- Sandra:

Right away, I think of cars. That's what comes to mind first. I even know someone who uses Colmio and is very happy with it. But for me, it's mostly cars.

When I hear "shared services," I don't think of a shop sharing things. I understand it more like everyday people lending out their stuff.

- Lucas:

Is that a positive, negative, or neutral idea for you?

- Sandra:

It depends on the object. If it's a car, I find it positive — not for me personally, because it wouldn't suit my needs, but my friend who uses it is really happy. You don't need to store your car in front of your house, and you don't have all the related expenses.

But for me, it would be a negative experience because I can't plan ahead when I'll need the car.

- Lucas:

Let's talk more generally about renting, not just cars. What do you see as the advantages or disadvantages compared to buying?

- Sandra:

The biggest advantage I see is saving space. When you buy everything, like we did here, you end up storing a lot. Our closets are overflowing with tools, with everything — even the lawnmower. Sure, everyone wants to use tools at the same time sometimes, but for me, it's not really about saving money. If you rent often, it adds up.

But the key benefit is not needing to store everything.

Then there's the ecological aspect — fewer tools in circulation.

But the major downside for me is that you need to plan in advance. If I suddenly decide I want to drill a hole in the wall or hang a picture, and I don't have a drill, I have to start searching, go pick it up, waste time...

You're not sure if one will be available. You might plan to rent it for an hour, but then decide to do more. I want to use the tool immediately, whenever I want, as long as I want. Renting or borrowing would slow me down.

- Lucas:

That's also what came up in the survey — the fear that the object won't be available.

And from what I'm hearing, convenience is a big factor too — how easy it is to get access to the item.

- Sandra:

Yes, clearly. If it were delivered to your home, then sure — but I imagine that would be more expensive.

If it were delivered, I'd consider it — but again, you'd need to see the price. I imagine that kind of service would be more expensive.

And for people like us — already living in a house — I honestly don't think I'd ever go for that.

- Lucas:

Is it because there are too many barriers or because it's not well promoted?

- Sandra:

Maybe both. Maybe it's not promoted enough. But also, we're already used to owning everything.

For younger people just moving in, who haven't bought anything yet, they'd be a better target. We already own our tools. Sure, we've rented things — like a mini-excavator for the garden — because buying it would've cost €1000–1500 and renting was just €200. That made sense.

- Lucas:

Right. And this logic could apply to more than just tools — to any object used occasionally. Like if you go on vacation somewhere specific — say in Asia — and need a particular item for just a week or two, you could rent it and return it afterward.

- Sandra:

Yes, but the challenge is knowing what's available for rent. And often, it's not very practical. Maybe there are things I haven't thought of, and the day it's offered, I'll say, "Oh yeah, that makes sense."

But for now, like with the trailer example — I like having my own trailer, because I need it to be available immediately.

I'm not in the habit of making reservations. I can't think of a specific object I'd rent.

Unless it's something non-urgent. Like if I needed a trailer for a repair, and I could do it anytime that week, then maybe.

It would need to be something I use rarely.

- Lucas:

Funny — just before our call, I had someone tell me the same thing about a dog trailer.

She said it would be great to rent that kind of thing. What's your take?

- Sandra:

Well, I paid €500 — or maybe €200 — I don't remember exactly. But I imagine the rental price would be a few euros per day. Over a week, you've already covered a big part of the cost.

And I have space to store it. So for me, it didn't raise a question.

- Lucas:

Do you use it every day?

- Sandra:

No, maybe once every two months. But the idea was to use it for vacations.

We'll probably use it again. I didn't buy it just for one time — more for the long term.

I also go to sewing classes nearby and plan to carry my sewing machines by bike in the trailer — so it won't just be for the dog.

If it had only been for a one-week dog vacation, and I knew I wouldn't use it again, I probably would've rented.

Maybe even at the vacation location, to avoid carrying it.

- Lucas:

So, would you have had the reflex to rent first? Or do you first think about buying?

- Sandra:

If I hadn't needed it here at home, I would have looked into renting at my vacation spot — maybe asked at the campsite if they rented those.

But since I also need it here — and we weren't even sure the dog would use it — if it had only been for the dog, I might not have bought it. I might've borrowed one just to test.

That could be a good idea — renting to try before buying. Just to see if it's worth it. That's something that could be useful.

And if after renting something three times, it becomes really useful, then you buy it. That would actually fit more with my habits. It could also be a way to let people try out the solution. To test new products, that would be great, actually. Because the real challenge is getting those initial users.

The problem is that people often think, “Why rent if I can just buy it?” That’s a common barrier. So the goal would be to let people try it out first. And once it’s been tested, if the platform or the solution is good enough, then it might continue. I think it could work, but you’d really need to target young people who are just moving into their first apartment.

In an apartment, no matter the size, you can’t store much. Whether it’s a trailer, a lawnmower, tools, or something else, I think targeting that audience would be smarter. People our age, we’re still okay, but once you go to older generations... I’m thinking of Lucien’s dad — his workbench, the number of tools he had in the basement!

We still manage to get rid of things we don’t use, but it has to become a social norm too, right? And if you start with young people moving in, their kids will grow up seeing that, and they won’t even question it anymore.

- Lucas:

So it would take a transition generation?

- Sandra:

Yes, exactly. I think we’re too old for that kind of test phase. I mean, we might try it, but probably with the goal of eventually buying. Or maybe not — maybe we’d get used to it. But really, the goal is for people to test not just the product, but the solution itself. The concept.

- Lucas:

If you think of anything else that would motivate you to try it, feel free to say. Suppose all your barriers were removed and the service was perfect — what would that experience look like, from discovering it to returning the item?

- Sandra:

First of all, clear instructions and pricing — not too many price ranges. Nothing where it’s like, “One day it costs this much, two days it’s...” It should be simple, clear, and easy to understand. Delivery — yeah, definitely delivery. For me, it should be automatically included. I know it’s a bit silly, but if the price shows options with or without delivery, I’d think, “I’ll save money and go pick it up,” but then I’ll be annoyed. If I see the difference in price, I’ll know delivery is more expensive and I’ll still be tempted to skip it, but in the end, it will annoy me. Then I’ll probably drop the whole idea.

- Lucas:

What if, right from the start — like at the moment you sign up — you were asked whether you want delivery? Would that be a problem for you?

- Sandra:

That depends on what’s involved with signing up. If it’s just registering to browse without commitment, then sure.

- Lucas:

Let’s say basic registration: name, email, address, password?

- Sandra:

Yeah, no problem. I’ve signed up for stuff for way less than that. Creating an account doesn’t bother me at all.

- Lucas:

So imagine at sign-up, you’re asked whether you want delivery or not. You’re not shown any prices yet, but it says, “Note: delivery may cost a bit more.”

- Sandra:

Yeah, I know I’d *have* to click “with delivery included,” but I’d still want to see the cheaper price just to compare. It’s complicated.

- Lucas:

You could always change your choice later in the settings. But if it defaulted to delivery included?

- Sandra:

I think it should be neutral — something you decide case by case, depending on the item. Because delivery costs will vary depending on size, etc. So yeah, case by case makes more sense. But again, it depends where the item is located. If it's somewhere I pass by regularly, I don't mind picking it up myself — even if it means renting for an extra day to avoid making a separate trip.

- Lucas:

And where would you actually pick it up? I mean, in what format — a locker, a service counter, something else?

- Sandra:

I'd say the simplest would be a locker — unless it's a tool that needs instructions. But for a basic item, just grab and go, a locker is perfect. Even if I'm not passing by, it's like with parcel lockers: I can go when it suits me.

That would be great. And if you could see instantly whether the item is available in that locker — like, I need it now, it's in locker 22, I can reserve it remotely — that would be amazing. Just like parcel lockers.

- Lucas:

So ideally, when you log in, you'd immediately see what's available in real time?

- Sandra:

Exactly. Super responsive. And when someone returns something, you'd get an alert. Like: "The tool you wanted is now available — it's blocked for you." You go pick it up, it's reserved.

- Lucas:

So there's a website, you have an account, and you mark an item as a favorite. If it's not available, you get a notification when it becomes free?

- Sandra:

Yes, and maybe even reserve it in advance. If someone says they'll bring it back tomorrow, I block it for 9 a.m., but if someone else returns one earlier, notify me and I'll go today.

- Lucas:

How would you want to be notified? SMS, email, app notification?

- Sandra:

Not email — SMS or app notification. That would be better.

- Lucas:

Would you be okay providing your phone number when registering?

- Sandra:

Yeah, I don't mind. Unfortunately, I already give my number out everywhere, but sure — I'd be fine with that.

- Lucas:

So if you're waiting for something and it becomes available earlier than expected, you'd get a text with a link, click to confirm, and it's blocked for you?

- Sandra:

Exactly. Then I just go pick it up.

- Lucas:

So either via delivery or locker, and maybe a human counter — though that's less ideal?

- Sandra:

Yeah, because then you have to wait in line. If the person before you is asking a ton of questions, you're stuck. A human counter isn't very efficient — it needs to be quick and convenient.

- **Lucas:**

Then you go home with the item — whether picked up or delivered — and you need to use it. If it's something you're not familiar with, what would you do?

- **Sandra:**

YouTube, tutorials — that's what I already do, even for things like sewing machines. Or maybe a manual.

- **Lucas:**

So if there was a tutorial video linked to the item on the website?

- **Sandra:**

That would be perfect.

- **Lucas:**

And would you look at a written manual or pictograms?

- **Sandra:**

Manuals take time — or you have to skim through them four times to find the right part. Less convenient. But a video tutorial — yes.

- **Lucas:** And now, wouldn't you be afraid of anything, like when you actually have the object?

- **Sandra:** Yes, afraid of breaking it. That's it. It's like when you rent a car. If there's an accident, it's always extra hassle. Now, I'd imagine there's insurance. Or maybe if it's something like a grinder, there could be a missing disk, for example. So maybe there's a deposit system: when you reserve the item, you pay a deposit. That could work. Or not.

- **Lucas:** That could work, but then how do you prove that you didn't damage the object when you return it?

- **Sandra:** Maybe you'd have to do a self-check when receiving the object. Then it would work like a chain: you check it when you get it, the next user checks it for you, and so on. Unless it's just normal wear and tear, then it's more complicated. But when we've rented things in the past, we didn't really worry too much either. Still, I assume that anything available for rent should be of higher quality, since it's passed through many hands. That way, there's less risk of breaking it easily.

- **Lucas:** And if there's an issue, how would you report it?

- **Sandra:** If I arrive and the item is damaged, I'd leave it in the box and there should be a way to communicate within the reservation — an option like "I received the item" or "I didn't receive it properly," with the possibility to add pictures or something like that. But that means you really have to check the object on the spot. If it's something you need to plug in at home, then you only discover the problem once you're using it. In that case, I'd say you should test it right away when you get home. If the platform can track the pickup time, then I plug it in, make a video, and send it. Although that's not super reliable.

- **Lucas:** Photos or a video, then?

- **Sandra:** Yes, either one. Maybe through an app. Or even on a website — you save them and attach them to a message or form. I've done that before with Amazon when there was a problem — took a photo and sent a message. I've never really tested it with videos though.

- **Lucas:** Let's say everything works fine and you use the object. What happens next — ideally?

- **Sandra:** Ideally, I think a well-defined pricing model would help. Like, you only pay for the actual time of use. If you bring it back after one hour, you shouldn't pay for a whole day. Hourly pricing makes more sense. Half-day pricing is already too much for some tools. It also depends on distance and how long it takes to get the item. If it's delivered, it's less flexible.

- **Lucas:** So, with delivery, you'd already pay for the delivery time plus a markup?

- **Sandra:** Exactly. And if you want to return it earlier, you'd need to coordinate with the delivery person. That gets complicated. Maybe you could return it into a box instead. In that

case, deliveries could be locked into day-long rentals only. The object is picked up and returned the next day at the same time. But if you bring it back earlier, you pay less. That could work.

- **Lucas:** And what if the platform asks you, while picking up an item, whether you'd be okay taking other items for neighbors nearby?

- **Sandra:** I'd be okay with that if I have space and it's on my route. Since I'm already going, yeah. Would I drop it off at someone's place? Sure. The only issue would be if there's a problem with the item — who's responsible if I picked it up for someone else? But carrying it, yeah, I'd be fine with that. I'd basically be acting as a delivery person. As long as no one blames me if the object I delivered is damaged — just carrying it wouldn't bother me.

- **Lucas:** And in return, you'd earn credits, right?

- **Sandra:** Yeah, that'd be nice. Or maybe a choice: do you want to be paid a bit more or receive credits? Personally, I think credits are a good idea — depends how often I use the service. If I use it once a year, a credit isn't much use. But credits could help launch the platform — they encourage future use. If I get cash, that doesn't necessarily make me want to use it again. But if I get a credit, it makes me think: "Next time I get free delivery." So, yeah, I'd go for it.

- **Lucas:** So you'd prefer credits directly in the app rather than other reward systems?

- **Sandra:** Yes, I think credits are a good idea. And maybe, like BlaBlaCar, people could organize themselves. Like: "I need this in three days." And someone going in that direction could bring it to me. If it's free or cheaper, I'd wait three days. But then, you'd need to know who's going where.

- **Lucas:** Would people be willing to share their routes and schedules?

- **Sandra:** Personally, no, but some people might be okay with it. If people know upfront that they're opting into that system, they'll decide accordingly. Either way, the routes could be made visible, or an hour before your reservation, if you chose to pick it up yourself, you could get a notification like: "Here's an item one kilometer from you you could also grab." That'd be fine.

- **Lucas:** And when it's time to return the item, how would you go about it?

- **Sandra:** We'd need to indicate in advance when we're planning to return it. It's easier to say when you're going to pick something up, but returning it depends on when you're done using it. So sharing that moment on the platform, like saying "I'm heading out now to return it" — it's not realistic to wait half an hour for others to say "wait, I'll finish in an hour." That'd make coordination tough.

- **Lucas:** What if there are two pricing systems — hourly and daily — and deliveries are only available for daily rentals?

- **Sandra:** That makes sense. If I choose delivery, I'm renting it for a whole day, and it's predictable — I won't return it earlier. And delivery is done by regular people — not a professional service. So I choose pickup, but while I go pick up mine, I bring something to someone who requested delivery.

- **Lucas:** Exactly.

- **Sandra:** Right. So when I return my item, I'd have to consider the delivery route too. But if I only kept it for an hour or two, it might not be worth organizing a return delivery — too complicated. Unless I offer to return someone else's item as a favor. If I get a notification like: "Hey, someone nearby needs a return at 5pm, does that work for you?" — then I can accept or not. Like Uber, in a way. Just checking, no pressure.

- **Lucas:**

And would it still be via SMS then?

- **Sandra:**

Yes, or through a notification in the app. That's more responsive.

- **Lucas:**

To have an app, you first need to download it. Isn't that an extra step?

- Sandra:

Yes, but it's not a big deal. It doesn't bother me. It's much more responsive — you can instantly see which items are ready to be picked up. But yes, regarding personal data, people would need to share that. If you can always see where every tool or item is located...

- Lucas:

You'd also see when it needs to be returned. You'd know you could earn something if you bring one back. I could think, "I'm going shopping anyway, even if I don't have anything to return myself." I'd be near the drop-off point, pass by someone's place — even if it's not mine — and I could return something in exchange for points.

- Sandra:

Right, though the person would have to give their address, but not necessarily their name. The item could have a kind of chip. You'd know it's three blocks from the station or something. You wouldn't know exactly who has it, but at least where. Still, the person would need to know who's coming to collect it, to hand it over reliably.

Alternatively, it could be left outside, like with packages. People already leave parcels out.

- Lucas:

Would you personally leave it outside?

- Sandra:

I'm not sure. If someone steals it, then it might look like I never returned it. I know people leave parcels outside, but I'd be more hesitant with shared items. Someone else mentioned the idea of receiving things when you're not home, so you can use them right away when you return.

- Lucas:

So even if it's slightly hidden, you wouldn't leave it out?

- Sandra:

It's a bit silly because when I get deliveries, I tell them to leave it at my door. But if it's something I'm responsible for returning, I'd worry. With parcels, if one goes missing, I might have some recourse — though it's never happened to me.

- Lucas:

You could maybe have a small insurance.

- Sandra:

The issue is if someone dishonest comes, takes a photo to prove it's been left, then just steals it. It's tricky. Maybe the solution is to put a GPS chip in each item. If it's not picked up by the designated person, you can trace it.

- Lucas:

That would be an extra cost.

- Sandra:

Yes, but it's a one-time cost. You'd need to find where to place the chip — it's harder with small items, like a hammer.

Actually, what if in your village there was a small drop-off box? Would you walk there to return something?

- Lucas:

Yes, I think I would.

- Sandra:

Then you could have a system of boxes — items go from small local boxes to larger collection points.

- Lucas:

That could work.

- Sandra:

It could arrive at a larger depot, then be redistributed into boxes again depending on availability. It might be complicated to organize, though. You'd need to know where to place the boxes, and if you reserve an item for a specific time, it has to be available.

- Lucas:

Right. That's good input for the delivery system. At the start, to get you onto the platform, you might get free credits or trial access to a few items. What would work for you?

- Sandra:

If one object were free, I'd try it — provided I actually need that object. For example, the trailer — if I'd needed it, that would've been handy.

Now I'm thinking about holidays...

- Lucas:

Let's shift a bit. Suppose you don't own a dog trailer, but you're thinking of buying one in two or three weeks. It's not urgent, but you're interested. How would you express that need to the platform?

- Sandra:

There should be a "looking for" feature — like a suggestion form. When you search and don't find it, a little icon could pop up letting you request that item be added to the catalog. And if enough people ask for it, then the platform adds it.

- Lucas:

Or imagine you're reserving something and a pop-up asks, "Would you be interested in this other item one day?" Would you respond?

- Sandra:

Yes, I think I'd check it out — depending on the item.

Another idea is: if the item doesn't exist yet, I could buy it myself and offer it for rent to recoup the cost. I'd make it available to the platform and take it back later.

- Lucas:

Would you reserve it again to use?

- Sandra:

Yes — or buy it and then sell it second-hand. If I really need it and the platform doesn't offer it, I'd like the option to buy it and have the platform buy it back later, deducting the rental cost from the refund. That would help bridge the gap.

- Lucas:

That would depend on whether others are interested too.

- Sandra:

Exactly — the platform would need to test demand. Like a small survey: "Would this object interest you?" The risk is people saying yes even if they're not serious. Between the time I'm asked and the time I need it, I might have already bought it.

- Lucas:

What if, after buying something, you drop it off at the depot and instead of getting money back, you get credits to use other items?

- Sandra:

That could work. It would encourage use. The issue is that people want quality items — but if I'm buying just to rent it, I might not invest in quality. Still, I'd do it. That trailer example again — I wouldn't use it often.

If I see I reuse the same item often, I'd end up buying it eventually. But if it's occasional, I could try out a few with the credits.

- Lucas:

What if the platform had forums? Say, a “Pets” forum, with a “Dogs” section, where people post questions like, “Would anyone be interested in a dog trailer?” Others could give feedback or advice. Would that add value?

- **Sandra:**

Yes, I think it would. But it wouldn’t push me to use the app — it’d just be a bonus. You can already find dog-related advice elsewhere, like Facebook groups. But it could help with object recommendations and usage tips.

- **Lucas:**

So forums are a nice extra, but not a key motivator.

- **Sandra:**

Exactly, not the main attraction.

- **Lucas:**

And what *is* the main attraction for you — the price?

- **Sandra:**

Yes, the price matters. But the issue with rentals is that if you rent something multiple times, you could have just bought it.

And since I have the space to store things, that’s less of an issue for me. What really attracts me is the availability.

If I lived in an apartment with limited space, then fast availability and low price would be crucial. Right now, I wouldn’t use it unless there’s a real advantage. I’d only rent expensive items that I couldn’t justify buying because I’d rarely use them.

For bigger things—like we did for the garden, with machines—we share. But for smaller things, you see, like the dog trailer, I bought it. What else did I buy? Oh yes, a bike rack. My son told me, “You know, many people just rent bike racks.” But how much are you going to rent it for each time? And what if you want to go for a ride on Sunday? Then again, you’ll need it, and the garage might be closed, and you’ll be annoyed. So I said, no, I’m buying it.

- **Lucas:**

Yeah, a bike rack is a good example. We also have one, and how often do we use it in a year? Maybe three times at most.

- **Sandra:**

Yes, exactly. But when you do need it, you don’t always plan ahead. So it’s nice to have it available. That’s the issue. But if there was a rental system with reservations, really responsive and fast...

- **Lucas:**

Yeah, then it could work better.

- **Sandra:**

In that case, it would almost need to be a community more than a company. A community where you say, “Hey, I need a bike rack for this weekend. Who can rent one out?” And then boom, the first person to reply makes it available for others.

- **Lucas:**

That would be more like peer-to-peer renting.

- **Sandra:**

Exactly. And actually, just to mention, I think it already exists now. I think it’s called... Poppins? Maybe? I’m not sure.

- **Lucas:**

I’ve heard of garage spaces you can rent, like workshops where you can go and fix your own car. Concepts like that, yeah—they give you access to all the tools, the car lift, everything.

- **Sandra:**

Yes, I've heard of that too. I think peer-to-peer renting would be more responsive, especially with a big connected community. When it's handled by a company, it's always more complicated.

- Lucas:

Right, but even if it's a community, an enterprise could still create and manage that community, and just take a percentage from each rental.

- Sandra:

Yes, like I could sign up, rent out my tools at a set price, and the community—or the company—takes a percentage.

- Lucas:

And what about guarantees and things like that?

- Sandra:

That would be a separate issue—probably a bit more complicated.

- Lucas:

Yeah, true. Alright, well it's already been an hour so let's finish here. Thanks a lot for your time again! I may contact you in the future to review on the user journey. Would that be alright?

- Sandra:

Yes sure! I'm glad I could help! Goodbye

I.6 Interview - Florian

- Lucas

Hello, and thank you again for your time.

This interview is part of my master's thesis. I'm exploring how we can make mutualized product-service systems (like bike-sharing, tool libraries, etc.) more attractive and engaging. The idea is to have a casual conversation, with no right or wrong answers. I'm simply trying to better understand your habits, preferences, and impressions, whether or not you've already used this type of service.

Everything you say will remain anonymous and used solely for academic purposes.

First of all, Can you describe a typical day or week for you? What are your priorities, your habits—what do you usually do?

- Florian:

A typical week? Well, let's say two weeks to get a more balanced view, not just weekends.

Usually, I go to the office three times a week. Sometimes I wake up around 5 a.m. and get to the office by 6 a.m.—that happens occasionally. In those cases, I finish around 5 or 6 p.m.

But most of the time, when I go to the office, I wake up around 8:30 to be there by 9:30. I work on projects there. At lunch, I take a break for about 30 minutes to an hour and finish work around 6:30 or 7 p.m.

In the evening, after a 10-minute drive home, it really depends. I might work on a personal project or just watch YouTube or Netflix. Sometimes I use Duolingo—can't forget that.

- Lucas:

And how do you usually discover new services or products?

- Florian:

I'd say mostly through online ads—on social media or Google. For example, yesterday I saw an ad on YouTube and thought, "Hey, that looks interesting," but I already forgot what it was.

Sometimes I click, especially on Instagram ads—they're more tailored. I don't mind targeted ads because they actually show me stuff I might want, instead of random things. On YouTube, though, I often see ads on my computer or TV, and I don't really bother to click. As for Google, it's mostly the first three sponsored results I see on my phone. On my Mac, I hardly ever use Google for searches anymore.

- **Lucas:**

Do you ever discover services offline?

- **Florian:**

Yes, sometimes. I have the *L'Essentiel* newspaper right here—I remember seeing an ad in it and checking out whatever it was.

I also read *L'Avenir* and *Le Soir*. I have subscriptions. *L'Avenir* is paid by my parents—it's kind of a family thing. *Le Soir* has a student plan that lasts three or four years.

- **Lucas:**

So you might keep reading newspapers, but not necessarily actively?

- **Florian:**

Exactly. Mostly it's the notifications I get—*L'Essentiel* sends daily updates, and if a topic interests me, I'll click and read it.

- **Lucas:**

Once you've discovered something, how do you decide whether to try or buy it?

- **Florian:**

That depends on the context and the brand. I'm not someone who buys a lot, so even if something seems cool, I might just think "why not?" but not follow through. Whether it's clothes or random gadgets—I don't really care.

I'm more into using platforms or services. If it's free, I'm more likely to try it. Paid stuff—not really, since I don't consume much.

- **Lucas:**

But you must use some services—like the hairdresser or phone plan?

- **Florian:**

Yeah, of course. I pay for my phone plan. For the dentist, I've had the same one for years—it's reimbursed. My mom's a physiotherapist, so I go to her sometimes. And recently, for example, we had no Wi-Fi here, so I got Proximus to set it up.

The fiber connection was broken, so I had to find a service that worked via 4G. That's an example—just doing what needs to be done, not because I enjoy it.

- **Lucas:**

What about platforms like Netflix or YouTube?

- **Florian:**

I use YouTube more than Netflix. I like learning things, watching documentaries.

- **Lucas:**

Now let's talk about shared services or mutualized objects. What comes to mind when you hear those terms?

- **Florian:**

"Mutualized" makes me think of health insurance—but that's not really the same. When I hear "shared services," I think of car-sharing platforms or BlaBlaCar.

- **Lucas:**

And do you associate that with something positive, neutral, or negative?

- **Florian:**

Positive—for people who need it. If someone doesn't have a car, or can't afford one, or plans their trips ahead, it makes sense.

But it's hard for spontaneous stuff. You can't just decide to go to the post office and expect to have a shared car available—it's more restrictive.

- Lucas:

And what do you think of renting or sharing things? Pros and cons?

- Florian:

It depends. Renting is useful if you don't need the item all the time. For example, I might need to clear some land once a year—no point buying a brush cutter. I'd rather rent one.

Same if I need a trailer or a quad to bring branches to a container park. I'd borrow from someone I know or rent, if I don't know anyone with the equipment.

- Lucas:

And what's the difference for you between renting from a friend vs. a company?

- Florian:

Renting from someone I know is often cheaper, and it feels better. I once gave a guy a crate of Orval beer as thanks because he was nice.

I prefer supporting someone I know rather than a company whose only goal is to make money. Also, if there's a problem, I trust my friend more than a company that might try to overcharge me for minor issues.

- Lucas:

So the issue with companies is more about their image?

- Florian:

Yes, it's not that I'm against companies making money—it's normal. It's just that I'd rather go with someone I trust, especially when services aren't readily available in the area.

For example, to rent a wood chipper, I'd have to take a half day off Friday, borrow a car with a trailer hitch from someone like Pauline's dad, drive 50 km to pick it up, then bring it back Monday morning. That's a lot of hassle.

Whereas with someone I know, I can just go Saturday morning, use it, and bring it back in the evening. It's much more convenient.

- Lucas:

So there are two issues here: trust and practicality?

- Florian:

Exactly. With friends, it's easier and closer. But again, I'm not against renting from companies—I just don't often have the opportunity. When I do, I look into it.

- Lucas:

Would you trust a rental company, generally?

- Florian:

Yeah, I think so. Especially since I'd be the one borrowing—not lending. But I'd do some research first.

- Lucas:

And how would you do that research?

- Florian:

Probably Google Maps. I use it for restaurants and services. You can check reviews, even for things like renting equipment.

There are even platforms like Localux where you can see ratings for tool rentals. If something only has one star, it's a no-go.

I wouldn't rely only on reviews on the company's own site—they'll only show the positive ones. So I'd rather look elsewhere for honest feedback.

If society voluntarily opens everything up—opinions, reviews—but with no filters... then yes, that's okay, but it has to be made clear. It has to be communicated, people need to trust it, and it

should be verified. For example, you post a review and maybe the only filter is making sure you're not being offensive or saying anything extreme.

- Lucas:

Okay. Is owning an object important to you?

- Florian:

It depends on the object. A house, yes, that's still important. But something like a table, chairs, a fridge... not really. More and more, even with cars, I just rent. Like a leasing car—it's not mine, and I don't care that it isn't. What matters is that it helps spread out my expenses, I don't have to lock in a big amount of money, and I gain peace of mind. Because everything's taken care of. That's key—having things taken care of, even with short-term objects. If there's a problem or something breaks, unless it's clearly my fault, it's not really my responsibility. That's important to me: I can act responsibly, like a father, but if something breaks down, it's not my problem. Ideally, there should always be insurance—like with rental cars. You pay a bit more, and you're fully covered. Instead of leaving a big deposit, you pay a small percentage extra and that's it. You just return the item and no hassle.

It's like a built-in insurance. Either you pay €100 and leave a €600 deposit, or you pay €110–120 and skip the deposit. That's definitely something to offer.

Personally, I have a Gold MasterCard that covers deductibles, so if I break something and pay with that card, it's reimbursed—under certain conditions, of course. We used it in Canada when renting a car. We didn't take the €200–300 insurance because the card covered it. It's available 24/7 and pretty reliable.

- Lucas:

Are there any blockers for you?

- Florian:

Not really. I think an ideal system would be like Amazon: I say, "I need a brush cutter at 3 p.m.," and someone rings my doorbell at 3 with the item. That would be perfect.

But of course, that's more complicated. If it's delivered a bit earlier, like Amazon sometimes does, it's fine—unless you're not home. So ideally, you'd get a delivery window like "between 2 and 4 p.m."

One time in Spain, we had a TV delivered. The courier gave a time range from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. We waited all day, and he showed up at 5 p.m. We had cleared the whole day for it. It was frustrating.

If it's something like a rental, and I'm stuck waiting all day, I'd honestly prefer to go pick it up. But if I'm home all day anyway and I need it tomorrow, then yeah, delivery works.

- Lucas:

So in an ideal world, delivery would be great. But if delivery is just one option, what others would you want, and why?

- Florian:

Something like a pickup point, like Amazon again. Say I want the item stored at a drop-off spot in town—like "Faubourg 101" or whatever—and I go pick it up when it suits me.

For smaller items, it's easy. For something like a brush cutter or a wood chipper, it's more complicated. Maybe delivery would still be necessary. Or you could leave it locked in a parking lot box with a code.

Honestly, it depends on the object. For cars, for example, some services let you either pick it up from a center or get it delivered to your place with the keys in the mailbox. That's it.

- Lucas:

And for pickup points—how would that work? How would you unlock your item?

- Florian:

I'd imagine having staff at first. The simplest way is what I've experienced: you go to the post office or sometimes a small shop.

When we wanted to send the TV in Spain, we originally tried a little shop. But it was too big, and they refused. Still, it shows it can be done.

These small shops often act as pickup points in addition to their regular business. It's a way for them to earn extra money, either through delivery commissions or attracting more customers.

- Lucas:

So that's really a partnership model with local shops?

- Florian:

Exactly. Some of these shops don't get much traffic otherwise, so having people come in to pick up rentals might bring them more sales. A kind of commission system could work.

- Lucas:

And online—how do you see the platform working? With ads? Or how do you say “I want this item”?

- Florian:

You'd need a solid web or mobile app—I could develop it for you if you want!

Basically, you'd search for “brush cutter,” enter your location—like Arlon—see nearby options, compare prices, brands, availability. Then choose whether to get it delivered or pick it up at a relay point.

It should be clear and easy.

- Lucas:

Would having a community aspect—like user discussions or forums—make a difference?

Whether it's individuals offering items or users sharing advice?

- Florian:

I don't think community features are the main driver. It won't make me use the service more.

But it can be helpful for reliability. Like, if there's a forum where people say, “this brush cutter always breaks down” or “never available,” that helps me decide.

Still, I don't care much about people telling their life story or how their garden is beautiful now. That's irrelevant to me.

- Lucas:

What would motivate you to try such a service? Examples: loyalty points, a free trial, a really smooth app?

- Florian:

A clean, modern app is already a big plus. If it looks like something from the 80s, I won't use it. For loyalty programs—sure, if it's meaningful. Like, this fancy key we bought came with a loyalty card, but after €1,000 in purchases, we got €5 back. Not worth it.

But if it's 1–2%, that's already better. Cocotte (a shop in Luxembourg) gives 5%, which is great.

- Lucas:

Also, maybe if you contribute to the community, like helping with deliveries, you could earn credit. What do you think about it?

- Florian:

Ah, so delivery by the community? Like other users helping?

- Lucas:

Exactly.

- Florian:

Yes that would work. Say I need to drop something off, and my neighbor's going to the same location—they could take it for me. Instead of two trips, it's one.

It would have to be voluntary, though—legal stuff gets tricky otherwise. But if it's informal and based on goodwill, it could be great.

- **Lucas:** And if you participate, your neighbor, for example, might leave you a note or something, and you can earn credits. That's cool. Do you have other examples like that in mind? Contributions or things that would make you want to try something—something that would need to be tested?

- **Florian:** Yeah, in terms of business model, maybe something less direct, but what I liked was a free trial. That's what I had with the app Flex, the car-sharing service. They gave you like €15 of free credit, and so a friend and I tried it—I remember we tested a small electric Mini. It was actually quite good. The experience was smooth. The only issue is, I already have a car, so for me it's kind of pointless. In this case, I don't really need it, but it still made me try it. So if someone else doesn't have a car, I could recommend it because I know it works. I just don't need it myself. But if one day I didn't have a car, it would make sense.

- **Lucas:** So in this example, you download the app, I suppose you create an account, and you get free credits to do something?

- **Florian:** Yeah, exactly. Now the thing is, creating accounts these days is super easy. With Apple accounts, you can quickly create several. So if someone finds out you get €5 or €10 for free, they could theoretically make an infinite number of accounts—if the rental is €3, for example. But with Flex, they ask for your driver's license, so your identity is really verified.

- **Lucas:** So giving your ID for something free—would you be okay with that?

- **Florian:** I think that would put me off a bit. Or maybe I'd just create a basic account, but then to get the free credit, you'd need to provide your ID. That kind of ruins the idea of attracting users easily. But at the same time, I'd do it—it makes sense. It's a car-related service, so obviously they need to know you have a license. Actually, sometimes it's done with your bank card instead. You have to pay eventually anyway. Then again, some people have a ton of different bank cards.

- **Lucas:** Yeah, but with Revolut, for instance, you can create as many cards as you want.

- **Florian:** True. But if you require the card to be in someone's name, then it's harder to fake. Though there are people with the same name. Still, you usually have to take a picture of the card and go through some sort of verification. So yeah, the free credit idea is good, but it depends on how it's implemented.

- **Lucas:** And now, let's talk a bit about price and pricing models. If you were renting an object, what kind of price would you expect—by the minute, hour, day, month?

- **Florian:** It depends on the object, of course. But per minute feels very rushed. Per day can be cool, but might be expensive if you only need it for five minutes—like a hammer to drive in a nail. Maybe for tools you only need for a short time, it makes more sense to price per hour. For other things, a daily rate could work. And for even bigger items, like something for summer, you might rent it for a longer period.

- **Lucas:** Yeah, like an air conditioner during summer?

- **Florian:** Exactly. Everyone wants one at the same time, and that's a problem—it's seasonal. So the business needs to manage storage in winter and demand in summer. But yeah, pricing per hour or day makes sense depending on the item. The app could either let you choose the pricing model, or the company defines it—like “this item is rented by the hour,” and another by the day.

- **Lucas:** And what if you want to rent a hammer for several days?

- **Florian:** Then they could offer both options—hourly and daily. For some items, you only need them for a short time, so hourly is enough. But for others, daily makes more sense. There aren't many items that people only need for a few minutes though... maybe something like a room disinfectant machine, a decontaminator. You'd use it for one or two hours max.

-
- **Lucas:** So maybe better to let users choose the time frame?
- **Florian:** Maybe, but users will always pick the most cost-effective option for them. From the business side, it might be easier to just fix the duration—like always renting per day—to simplify logistics. So yeah, either the company chooses the model, or offers both.
- **Lucas:** If we now take an object that you personally would like to rent in the future, what comes to mind?
- **Florian:** Something I'd need on vacation. Like if I'm in Spain and want to rent a kayak.
- **Lucas:** Okay, but let's say you're on vacation in Belgium and want to rent something?
- **Florian:** Yeah, for example an electric bike but that kind of stuff already exists. If I think more in terms of urgency—like a brush cutter. That's something I would plan ahead. If the weather's nice and I have time, I plan my weekend to go to the countryside.
- **Lucas:** And how do you deal with the weather in that case?
- **Florian:** I plan ahead, but if the weather's bad—too bad, I cancel. One time, we came back from Canada around May 15 and saw that the vegetation had grown too much. We couldn't even walk through it, so we just didn't go. I checked the weather on Friday, and I booked for Saturday. If it was bad, we'd do something else.
- **Lucas:** So in the app, you'd want to be able to book in advance, but also have flexibility?
- **Florian:** Yes, definitely an option to cancel, like two hours in advance. Some car rentals have that—like paying €5 extra for a cancellation option.
- **Lucas:** And what if the weather changes a day in advance?
- **Florian:** Good question. When we planned things, we often canceled last-minute. So ideally, yes, last-minute cancellation should be possible, but maybe at a cost. That's something that makes renting from individuals more appealing. If it's a company, they need to manage that too.
- **Lucas:** In a perfect world, what would that look like?
- **Florian:** In a perfect world, you cancel and don't pay anything. But for a company, that's tough—if someone cancels last minute, they block the object and no one else can use it. So the business loses money. A better system would be: you cancel and pay a small fee. Or like with [Booking.com](<http://booking.com/>)—if you cancel within a certain time range, you're refunded partially or fully. Like 99Although big companies don't really do that. So there must be a reason?
- **Lucas:** Probably because they prefer a fixed cancellation fee to keep the money. But a progressive model would be more fair for the user.
- The aim of my thesis is also to explore what's best from the user's perspective. It's not only about what benefits the operator. And now, if something doesn't work for the company, they won't want to offer the service anyway. That's something I need to assess later. But I think having something that benefits both the user and the company could be ideal.
- So, I don't think we've talked about this yet, but let's say you go to pick up your brushcutter—what happens next? You've just picked it up, it's in your hands—what's next?
- **Florian:**
- Do you mean at the place where I pick it up or afterward?
- **Lucas:**
- Afterward—you've just picked it up, you've paid, and now it's in your car.
- **Florian:**
- Well I drive back home and use it.
- **Lucas:**
- Would you know how to use it directly?
- **Florian:**
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I don't think that's something that would be a barrier for me. Honestly, I would have looked online first. If there were a tutorial linked to the object through the app, that would help.

- Lucas:

So a tutorial in the app would be a plus.

And wouldn't you be worried about losing your deposit by doing something wrong, or accidentally damaging it?

- Florian:

A deposit is always a bit of a psychological barrier, yeah. But I think if I use it like a responsible adult, following normal usage, I don't see why there should be a problem. What would worry me more is the reliability of the company. Like, imagine there's a motor problem that occurs while I'm using it, but I didn't do anything wrong—then what?

Do I return the object and hope they see it wasn't my fault? Maybe the motor just failed on its own. I'd be afraid they'd take my deposit just because I was unlucky. The problem is: how do you prove it's not your fault? That's where it gets complicated. It would come down to a professional's opinion confirming that, for example, the issue was mechanical wear and not user-caused.

- Lucas:

So let's say the object breaks due to wear and tear, and there's a form to fill out on the app. You have your time slot, you fill out a report saying it broke due to normal wear. Your deposit is temporarily withheld while the company consults an expert. Is that acceptable to you?

- Florian:

If I broke something but it wasn't my fault, and they keep the deposit just until they can confirm that, I think that's normal. But if the expert blames me, I'd start wondering—was it really an independent expert? Or someone who gets a commission from the company? There's always that doubt. Trust in the company becomes crucial.

Let's say it's my first time using the service and that happens—I'd be upset and never use it again. I'd probably tell everyone how bad the service is. But if I've been using it for three years with no issues and this is the first time, maybe I'd give them the benefit of the doubt. There should be a human element too—like the ability to call or chat with someone to explain the situation.

- Lucas:

Makes sense. Now let's say nothing went wrong—how would you return the item? What condition should it be in?

- Florian:

You should return it in the condition you received it. If it's a brushcutter, you should clean it a bit. Wear and tear is normal, but I don't think you need to sharpen the blades or anything like that—you're renting, not adding value for the company.

For me, there should be someone who checks the condition of the object, maybe depending on the item. If it's a low-value object, maybe it's fine. But if it's a car, usually someone checks when you return it. Maybe not right on the spot—like if you return something at 3 AM to a secured location—but at least someone should verify it later so the next user receives it in good condition.

- Lucas:

And how would you feel if the object were checked not by staff, but by the users themselves?

- Florian:

That's kind of how it works with car rentals if you don't get insurance. What we usually do is take lots of photos from every angle to document the car's condition—just in case they blame us later for a scratch.

It's more inconvenient, but from a business point of view, it reduces the company's costs. That could allow them to offer lower prices, which would be an advantage for the consumer.

- Lucas:

Would you be okay with checking the item's condition yourself every time? Let's say someone damages the brushcutter slightly—it still works but is clearly in worse shape. They take a photo and say it's degraded. Then the next person also notices the damage and reports it. It becomes unclear who caused it.

- Florian:

Yeah, if it's visible damage or even something mechanical, it usually becomes clear. But if we rely on this system, every user would have to check and confirm the condition when they pick it up.

And not everyone will do that. So if the item's not in perfect shape, there might be constant complaints. Maybe the solution is having a photo log of the item's condition. Or maybe even using 360° scanning via a phone to create a 3D model of the object. That's a bit high-tech and expensive though.

- Lucas:

Yeah, not everyone has a phone that can do that. Imagine someone shows up with a 10-year-old phone—it's not realistic. Maybe just basic photos when picking it up and dropping it off?

- Florian:

True. But even then, what if the previous user didn't take a picture of the underside and that's where the damage is? The next user discovers it and gets blamed. That's like with car rentals—if you don't document every angle, you risk being held responsible.

- Lucas:

So your deposit would be blocked until a staff member checks the object. And what if it's a seasonal item, not used often?

- Florian:

That's tricky. One solution might be a deposit system where the amount is locked on the app—say €1,000. It's blocked until you close your account or return the object in good condition. It's like a locked balance.

- Lucas:

So you'd be okay with having, say, €1,000 locked when creating your account, based on the object's value?

- Florian:

Honestly, for me it wouldn't make a big difference whether the money is blocked on the app or on my bank account—it's still my money, just frozen.

And from the company's point of view, they could even reinvest that money—it becomes part of their business model.

- Lucas:

Ah that would be an idea, but it's something else then. Alright well time is running out and it's already been an hour so let's just wrap up here. Thanks a lot again for your time and comments, it was a really good brainstorming session!

- Florian:

Well the pleasure is all mine. Goodbye!

I.7 Interview - Alexandre

- Lucas: Hello, and thank you again for your time.

This interview is part of my master's thesis. I'm exploring how we can make mutualized product-service systems (like bike-sharing, tool libraries, etc.) more attractive and engaging. The idea is to have a casual conversation, with no right or wrong answers. I'm simply trying to better understand your habits, preferences, and impressions, whether or not you've already used this type of service.

Everything you say will remain anonymous and used solely for academic purposes.

Alright, let's start. If you had to describe yourself using three values, what would they be, and why?

- **Alexandre:** Three values in life, in general?

- **Lucas:** Yes, what really matters to you, what defines you.

- **Alexandre:** I'd say... I don't think they're always fixed. It can change. But I'd say respect is one. Then openness—being open to change. And maybe curiosity as well, wanting to understand things deeply.

- **Lucas:** And if you had to describe a typical day for you, what would it look like?

- **Alexandre:** Depends on the day, but a regular day... In the morning I might have classes. In the evening, I often work on personal projects, or sometimes with others—if I've got an idea, like a video project or something that came to mind that week. Sometimes I work with a friend or on a side gig. I really get into things when I feel like it could lead to something. When I get behind on something, I focus more. So yeah, I usually spend my time like that.

- **Lucas:** Do you usually consume products, services, or more of both?

- **Alexandre:** In general? I'd say I like to find good deals. I talk to others, check what people are doing. I really like figuring things out on my own, doing a lot of personal research, comparing, trying to find the best technique or solution. I take time to decide. I don't rush into things—I want to make sure I'm doing the right thing.

- **Lucas:** So would you say you're more risk-averse in general? Like, you need time and research before being sure?

- **Alexandre:** Yeah. I take time to organize things. I like to compare multiple options. Sometimes the difference is small, but I still want to understand the trade-offs.

- **Lucas:** And how do you know when it's the right choice?

- **Alexandre:** It depends. Sometimes I'm looking for specific technical features. I try to assess if something really suits me more than other options. I also look at what others are saying, user feedback, reviews... I try to combine technical checks with feedback to guide my decision.

- **Lucas:** So first the technical evaluation—to see if the business model or service is reliable—and then you look at reviews to confirm?

- **Alexandre:** Yes, exactly. Reviews help confirm the technical analysis.

- **Lucas:** So it's a very logical approach.

- **Alexandre:** Yes, that's how I usually operate.

- **Lucas:** And when you discover products or services, you mentioned word-of-mouth—then you do online research?

- **Alexandre:** Yes, very often. Sometimes someone will tell me about something, and I'll look it up. Sometimes I talk about it with people, we check if it's a good choice. If I have doubts, I might ask people who are more technical. When something seems really promising, I try to understand the full picture before making a decision.

- **Lucas:** And if there's no comparison possible—like the product or service is unique?

- **Alexandre:** That doesn't happen often, but if it does, I'll try to look at indirect references. I'll dig into what's being said, maybe find some benchmarks, or at least try to get a feel for how reliable it seems.

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- **Lucas:** So at the moment of deciding whether or not to use a service, now that you've discovered it—what are the most important factors for you?
- **Alexandre:** Price definitely matters. Then, how well the service fits my needs—does it actually solve the problem I'm trying to solve. Also, I try to check for quality and if there are hidden aspects, whether on the financial or technical side. And I look at feedback from people who've already used it, to see if they had a good or bad experience.
- **Lucas:** And how do you define quality?
- **Alexandre:** It's partly brand perception—what people think about it. But also how much confidence people have in the service. For example, if you talk with others and many agree on a solution, that can say something. So yeah, trust based on others' experiences plays a big role. It reassures me about the reliability of the product.
- **Lucas:** And when you say you compare, that's also online—like reading articles or testimonials?
- **Alexandre:** Yes, a lot. That could be online articles, blog posts, or user comments. All of that helps me.
- **Lucas:** You mentioned price, fit, and quality. If you had to rank those in priority?
- **Alexandre:** Fit to my needs first, then quality, and finally price.
- **Lucas:** Alright. Now let's go deeper: what do you think about renting or sharing instead of buying?
- **Alexandre:** I think it's something that makes a lot of sense for most people. Especially when it comes to equipment that takes up space and is used rarely. For example, when I moved, I rented a big toolbox. I only needed it for a short time, so renting it was perfect. I returned it afterward and didn't have to store it. It saved me time, effort, and space. It's really a practical solution. I like that idea of finding the right tool, maybe even with someone I know or trust, and not needing to buy it for one-time use.
- **Lucas:** So would you trust a rental system right away?
- **Alexandre:** Yes, but there are always concerns. Like, who's behind it? Who's responsible if something goes wrong? If I'm renting from a stranger, I want some sort of structure or guarantee. Trust is important—knowing that there's a system in place, not just relying on luck. - **Lucas:** So what would help you feel secure when renting? Is it more about insurance, or the platform?
- **Alexandre:** Yeah, insurance helps for sure. But I think what reassures me the most is knowing the platform is serious—like having clear terms, a good interface. I've done rentals through Facebook groups, for instance, where people know each other locally. But having a proper system, with profiles, reviews, maybe photos, that's reassuring too. I think the platform needs to make the process really simple and clear for both parties. Ideally, the platform would handle logistics and be the neutral third party you can trust.
- **Lucas:** Right. So the insurance aspect is important, but at first you'd probably stay more "offline," meaning relying on people you know?
- **Alexandre:** Exactly. I'd start like that, through trusted circles. But if there were a solid platform with guarantees and maybe even a contract between users, I'd be more comfortable. For example, when I did peer-to-peer lending, I made sure to outline everything clearly with the other person.
- **Lucas:** And would you like to see reviews of the users themselves, or of the object?
- **Alexandre:** I'd rather review the person than the object. The person's behavior matters more than the object's condition. But if an object keeps getting damaged, then yeah, having a rating might help the next person decide.
- **Lucas:** What if the company owns the object and rents it?
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- **Alexandre:** Then I'd expect the company to take care of maintenance and ensure quality. But reviews might still be useful for transparency.
- **Lucas:** That makes sense. The idea would be to evaluate how trustworthy the people are.
- **Alexandre:** Exactly. I think what really builds trust is transparency about the users—reviews and a system that holds people accountable. And for the platform, having the ability to intervene if someone abuses the system is important too.
- **Lucas:** So you'd say it's crucial to have a deposit system, clear terms, and user reviews?
- **Alexandre:** Yes, a deposit, clear and precise terms—so that people know exactly what they're agreeing to—and reviews between users. That builds trust. And also, having the option for a platform to act as an intermediary helps in case of problems.
- **Lucas:** But what if it's not peer-to-peer? What if the company owns the items and rents them out directly to users—so users aren't renting from each other, but from a centralized business?
- **Alexandre:** I think user reviews would still matter. For example, if someone rents a drill and breaks it, it makes sense for the next person to know that. Maybe not to rate the object itself, but to leave a comment—like “the drill didn't work well.” That could help identify maintenance issues.
- **Lucas:** Right. The idea would be to maintain the object and avoid repeating problems. What would be the main risk in that case?
- **Alexandre:** If there are too many damaged items, or if the deposit is too expensive, it becomes discouraging. You wouldn't want to rent something and worry about hidden damage. The risk is higher when people feel there's no accountability or when the object is too valuable. Then, they may avoid renting altogether.
- **Lucas:** So if the company owns the objects, you think it's still useful to allow users to rate the item?
- **Alexandre:** I hadn't really thought about it before, but yeah—maybe. It could help track object condition. Especially if the platform isn't purely peer-to-peer and acts as a middleman. Then user reviews on objects could help identify recurring issues. But I'd still prioritize accountability through user profiles.
- **Lucas:** And between three models—peer-to-peer, company as a middleman renting out objects given by individuals, or company owning the items—which would you prefer?
- **Alexandre:** The second one feels like a good compromise—users give their items to a company that takes care of redistribution. I've seen that model used before. It solves a lot of problems.
- **Lucas:** Right, companies don't have to buy everything, they just manage redistribution.
- **Alexandre:** Exactly. Full ownership by the company is expensive and complex. If users provide the items and the company manages them, it's more flexible. But even more flexible is peer-to-peer, you avoid the logistics and budget issues of inventory.
- **Lucas:** So what if the company did own all the objects? Wouldn't that make things more uniform?
- **Alexandre:** Sure, but that would require more logistics and warehouses. And the company would have to be highly responsive to demand.
- **Lucas:** Maybe instead of one large warehouse, you could use multiple small ones scattered around?
- **Alexandre:** Yes, decentralized storage. That could make it easier for users to pick things up nearby. And the platform could track everything. If the platform is trustworthy and offers easy access—like 24/7 lockers—it builds user confidence. People would feel free to pick up items when they want. But again, it depends on how well the system is managed.
- **Lucas:** So the key is trust in the system, regardless of ownership?
- **Alexandre:** Yes. Whether peer-to-peer or centralized, the platform must inspire confidence—rules, deposits, transparency, and maybe some kind of insurance in the background.
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- **Lucas:** What do you think about other business models like partnerships?
 - **Alexandre:** Well so in the case of the boxes, integrating these systems into apartment buildings or neighborhoods could be done. I've seen that somewhere in the US. Having object-sharing systems in buildings or communities could work really well. It's more localized, people feel safer, and everything is nearby.
 - **Lucas:** And partnerships with universities or municipalities?
 - **Alexandre:** Also great. You could create shared systems in student residences or community centers. If people are already grouped by lifestyle or area, it's easier to implement.
 - **Lucas:** So in your view, what would a perfect system look like, if there were no constraints?
 - **Alexandre:** First, prices should be affordable. Then, the process should be easy, transparent, and accessible all the time. There should be insurance and clear rules. In the context of a peer-to-peer system, people could rent our multiple objects, go deposit them, and even show how to use it with the users.
 - **Lucas:** Wouldn't you be afraid of confidentiality though?
 - **Alexandre:** Not really, people on this platform would be respectful and just with good intents.
 - **Lucas:** If you can earn money by renting your objects, what if it ends up that people buy products to rent them out and make money?
 - **Alexandre:** I see, just like Airbnb now. Well Well the idea isn't to make money off others, but to share and reduce waste. I think most people wouldn't go full commercial with it, but it's something to keep in mind.
 - **Lucas:** So perhaps you'd need to target people who already care about sustainability?
 - **Alexandre:** That would help. Raising awareness about the environmental benefits of sharing could guide people to use the platform in a more responsible way.
 - **Lucas:** What do you think of partnering with hardware stores like Brico?
 - **Alexandre:** I think it depends. Big chains already have their own systems. But small, local shops could benefit from increased visibility. It could be a win-win. They offer tools, we bring them users.
 - **Lucas:** And how would that business model work?
 - **Alexandre:** Maybe those shops pay a subscription or commission to be listed on the platform. In return, they get more traffic and exposure, especially if their current websites aren't very efficient.
 - **Lucas:** You'd give them visibility, and they'd give you inventory?
 - **Alexandre:** Exactly. And the value proposition for them would be: we handle the platform, descriptions, logistics—they just provide the items. It's a service they'd benefit from without needing to do much work.
 - **Lucas:** What about bigger stores?
 - **Alexandre:** Well they don't really care about the environment, and mostly wanna make money which is contrary to the purpose of a service like this.
 - **Lucas:** Do you think those big chains would be open to partnerships?
 - **Alexandre:** Maybe not. They might see it as competition. But smaller players could be interested—especially if they don't already have strong digital platforms. They could see it as marketing more than sales.
 - **Lucas:** True, especially if they get access to a new user base without needing much effort.
 - **Alexandre:** Exactly. The platform can help them go digital while promoting sustainable consumption.
 - **Lucas:** Last question—how would you fund the platform in the beginning?
 - **Alexandre:** Start free for users, to encourage adoption. Then, once there's regular use, maybe introduce small fees or commissions. Also, charge suppliers—like local tool shops—a monthly
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fee for visibility.

- **Lucas:** So the platform could live off subscriptions and small transaction fees?

- **Alexandre:** Exactly. But to attract people in the early stages, you'd need to go through local networks—student communities, municipalities, social media groups—and keep everything very user-friendly and low-cost at first.

- **Lucas:** Alright. Thanks a lot for your time, Alexandre. I'll stop the recording here.

I.8 Interview - Manon

- **Lucas:** Can you describe a typical day or week for you—your priorities, what you usually do, etc.?

- **Manon:** Well, I usually work three days a week, and on Thursdays I take the time to do the grocery shopping.

- **Lucas:** What values would you say represent you?

- **Manon:** I'd say I'm caring, kind, and...I don't know—that's it.

- **Lucas:** How do you usually discover services or products? Do you rely more on the internet or word of mouth?

- **Manon:** Word of mouth, definitely. I trust it more than something I see online. I'll go look at reviews—if I see a few negative ones, I usually skip it. For anything really. But word of mouth? If someone I know recommends something, I'm all in.

- **Lucas:** So, you don't fully trust the internet?

- **Manon:** Not really. I check Instagram, but if I see it's a paid ad or if the person promoting something is being paid, I don't trust it. It feels dishonest. So, it's mostly social media—but not for research but just for random discoveries.

- **Lucas:** And when you do research, like looking for a rental, what do you do?

- **Manon:** I'll look at how they communicate, check their Facebook, see if there are before/after photos. Even if prices aren't listed, if I like how they present things and if it feels active—like posting daily—that builds trust. Especially if they show their work and who they are.

- **Lucas:** What usually makes you decide to go for a product or service?

- **Manon:** Reviews, definitely. I watch a lot of YouTube reviews, both positive and negative. I find negative ones helpful too—it depends on the topic.

- **Lucas:** What's most important to you when choosing something? For instance, is it simplicity, control, personalization, etc.?

- **Manon:** I'd say control. But it depends on the context—what are we talking about exactly?

- **Lucas:** For example, shared bikes or renting objects in the city?

- **Manon:** I know that renting objects must exist, but I've never really used them. It's really hard to come across. And I don't trust people easily. But then, it annoys me to buy something—like a shampooing machine for my couch that I'll only use twice a year, and just buy it for that.

- **Lucas:** So for things like bikes or scooters—what do you think?

- **Manon:** They're practical and more pleasant than taking the bus or tram. You get to discover more by bike.

- **Lucas:** What are the pros and cons of renting in general?

- **Manon:** Cleanliness is a big one. And trust—especially when returning something and being told it's damaged when it wasn't. That's a fear. I want things returned clean; otherwise, it really annoys me. Like city bikes—they're kind of gross, but they do the job.

- **Lucas:** Does it bother you as much if it's something like a tool—something not in contact with your body?

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- **Manon:** Depends. A hammer or screwdriver—I'd rather just buy them. But if it's something like a sander or circular saw, it's less about cleanliness and more about proper use—like not ruining the blade on the wrong material. So again, it's about trust.
- **Lucas:** And if it's from a rental company?
- **Manon:** I'd be more open to that. I assume there's a clear form or process that protects you. With individuals, it's more risky. For example, if it's a vacuum and they say the filter is dirty and you need to buy a new one—you have no way of knowing how it was beforehand. But with a company, at least they're aware of the product's condition.
- **Lucas:** Do you often do DIY work at home?
- **Manon:** Yeah. I've lacked products, machines, brushes—lots of stuff. Once, I tried using a steam cleaner from my parents, but it didn't work—it was too old. So I looked for one on Facebook Marketplace, found some locally, and then looked on Le Bon Coin thinking it might be closer in France. But it was mostly daily rentals.
- **Lucas:** Did you consider DIY stores?
- **Manon:** I did check Brico Dépôt—but a shampooing machine was still 400 euros. Maybe they rent them out, but I wasn't sure. I didn't see it anywhere nor heard about it before. When you search online, you only find amateur listings, so you're not sure about the quality. That's the issue—visibility, trust, and accessibility. I'm not going to go all the way to Brussels and back if I'm not sure I'll get something decent.
- **Lucas:** So for you, time matters a lot in renting?
- **Manon:** Yeah, time and whether the person is willing to meet halfway. And price. And reviews from people who've already rented from them.
- **Lucas:** Ah so in a sense you would prefer peer-to-peer renting?
- **Manon:** Yes, but I'd like to see a picture of the person too—to know who I'm dealing with. But honestly, if I had to lend something and put my face on the app, that would bother me.
- **Lucas:** Because of privacy concerns?
- **Manon:** Yeah. I'd be afraid people would contact me just because I'm a woman. You know there are some creeps out there. I wouldn't put my face on something like Doctolib either, because you never know who's going to show up.
- **Lucas:** But peer-to-peer still appeals to you?
- **Manon:** Yes, I like doing things that way. It feels more personal. What bothers me is the financial side—when big companies take a cut from individuals.
- **Lucas:** So would you prefer a model more focused on community?
- **Manon:** Yes—like a cooperative. Even if it's not a non-profit, the communication and system could be different. If an app lets a community form and share—that would be great.
- **Lucas:** It's also about the company's values then? Your main concern with businesses is when they take too much margin from individuals?
- **Manon:** Exactly. Smaller, local businesses—things that don't feel globalized. I like it better when individuals don't lose money—it's more fair, in a way.
- **Lucas:** But what do you think about a distributor? Does it feel safer to you?
- **Manon:** In some ways, yes. You know you won't run into someone creepy. You can go whenever you want, alone, without worry.
- **Lucas:** And for peer-to-peer, you'd want highly verified profiles?
- **Manon:** Definitely. Even if the app has to be paid—I'd prefer that for security. Then I'd go for it.
- **Lucas:**
Okay, and if you only need the carpet cleaner for one day and nothing else, let's say you'd be paying €20 to €30 per month... and in addition to the base price, it's a bit expensive, but...
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- Manon:

Yeah... maybe I'd think, okay, I need a basic carpet cleaner, and I see there's a free trial version on the app. Then I notice it also offers lots of other things, and I think, "Oh, I might need those someday." So I could subscribe annually and end up using the app a lot more, which would make it more convenient and reduce the need to buy things.

I like the idea if it's more peer-to-peer and not just a company making a profit margin off individuals. That's my vision of it—I think it's cool because individuals lose less money. The platform doesn't have to pay staff or anything, so margins are lower.

But how would it work in practice? Like, you go to the locker or dispenser—how do you check that the item is in good condition? You really have to trust the system. There's no one checking the item before you pick it up. That's the downside.

If it's something like borrowing a hammer for an hour or a day, maybe that's fine. But checking the condition when the item is returned is trickier. So maybe it should be a company that handles that and takes responsibility. Like, if the carpet cleaner is returned dirty, they deal with it. As a private user, I don't think we can do that.

Maybe the app lets you rate the previous user. That could work.

- Lucas:

So kind of like a review or rating system after each use?

- Manon:

Exactly. Like, I borrow something, I return it, and I rate the item's condition. And the next person also rates how I returned it. But then, if an item's in worse shape, is it the user's fault or just normal wear and tear?

Also, you really notice the human side of it—like if you're returning it face-to-face, you'd probably feel bad if it's dirty or broken. That pressure doesn't exist with automated systems. So the app needs to take responsibility. In my opinion, it's not up to the users.

Or maybe when you borrow something, the app could take a deposit. If the owner confirms it was returned in good condition, the deposit gets refunded. If not, it keeps part of it.

- Lucas:

So like how Airbnb or car rentals handle it?

- Manon:

Yeah, same logic. But if it's a peer-to-peer system with physical lockers, then you also need to pay the people maintaining them, the warehouse, etc. So the cost can go up. That's why company-run services are often more expensive, but they're everywhere.

With peer-to-peer systems, you save money, but with a company or locker network, you pay for convenience and support staff.

Maybe the app could be paid to guarantee a level of trust. Like dog-walking apps: there are free ones, but the paid ones guarantee that every profile is verified.

My ex-housemate used a paid app—it was €30 per month, and she found someone to walk her dog, someone who had her keys and came to her place. She did this in Liège, Brussels, and never had a problem. The profiles were all verified.

The issue is... I don't know if people are willing to pay €30 per month. Maybe €20, if the service works well.

- Lucas:

So the key value is trust—having access to a verified community?

- Manon:

Exactly, and especially for things like DIY tools, cleaning equipment, cars, appliances, and so on. You need filters—like on second-hand sites—and I personally like having a map interface, not just a scrolling list. With a map and pins, it reassures me.

Also, I'm a bit paranoid (laughs), so I check the surroundings on Google Maps—whether the house is isolated, etc. If someone is renting something, I'll search for them on Facebook to see if they look shady or not.

Imagine lending a €5,000 gravel bike. With your address attached, you have to be sure. So either the person's profile or their house needs to give enough confidence.

- **Lucas:**

So you'd prefer to judge the person offering the object, not just the object itself?

- **Manon:**

Yeah, for sure. There could be categories like "rate your lender" where you could rate the person too. That first impression matters. But items in good conditions are important so categories for objects would still need to be present.

If we go back to the lockers, the advantage is 24/7 access. And like we said, it would be great to have a map with all locker locations. But my concern is that I wouldn't want to put my own stuff into those lockers—I'd be afraid.

- **Lucas:**

So you'd trust the locker to borrow items, but not to lend your own?

- **Manon:**

Yeah. I just like owning my own items.

But I could imagine a hybrid model: the company says, "You can now give us your items for rental." If you let them rent it out for a month, you get credit to borrow other stuff.

Then it's really the company's job to manage everything and give a guarantee. You give them your item, and they rent it out. But then, of course, you have to go to them to drop it off.

- **Lucas:**

Alright, well thanks for this interesting brainstorming session, I learned a lot. Let's cut the recording here.

I.9 Interview - Lucas M

- Lucas:

The goal here is for you to answer based on your own experience, not trying to guess what I want to hear. Just say how you feel, how you think. The goal is also to understand your mindset. And the more you can be specific, the better. So, let's begin. Could you describe a typical day or week for you, with your priorities? What do you usually do?

- Lucas M:

A typical week... If we start with Monday, I usually do the same thing every day. I wake up around 6 or 7 a.m., have breakfast, take a shower, and then drive to work. On Mondays and Tuesdays, I go to Belval by car. I spend the whole day working, take a walk during my lunch break, then continue working until I head home around 7 p.m. In the evening, it depends. I might see family or just relax, nothing major. Once or twice a week, I take the train instead and work remotely. Then weekends really vary a lot.

- Lucas:

And if you had to describe yourself with three core values, what would they be?

- Lucas M:

Three values... I'd say loyal, curious, and reliable. Oh, and I do sports during the week too. That's important.

- Lucas:

Would you say you're also loyal when it comes to brands?

- Lucas M:

Loyal to a brand? Not really. I'm loyal to quality. I like high-quality objects, but I'm not attached to any particular brand.

- Lucas:

Got it. And how do you usually discover the brands or services you use?

- Lucas M:

When I'm looking to buy something, I do a lot of research online. I check out different brands, read reviews and comparisons. Sometimes I discover new ones through YouTube tech influencers. Of course, there are also the well-known brands like Sony, Philips, Apple, etc. But I really dive deep into the research to compare.

- Lucas:

Would you say promotional content influences you?

- Lucas M:

If you mean traditional ads, no. But when it comes to tech influencers talking about products in their videos — that can influence me. I'm not talking about ads before a video, more like integrated content. I have YouTube Premium, so I don't even see regular ads.

- Lucas:

What about on Instagram or other social media — does that influence you?

- Lucas M:

No, not really. I mostly stick to YouTube.

- Lucas:

When you search on Google, do you usually click on the first links or go further down?

- Lucas M:

Usually I avoid the top ones if they're marked as ads. Otherwise, I check the first few, but I still compare multiple sources.

- Lucas:

So basically, you have a need, you search online, and you make your choice based on that?

- Lucas M:

Yeah, that's it. But I also like browsing in stores. Sometimes just being in the store creates a need — I see something I like and then I start researching, watching comparison videos, etc. And sometimes I see YouTube videos about “top 5 new gadgets,” and that inspires me too — but not ads in the traditional sense.

- Lucas:

Do you often buy things you don't really need? Like, if a need is created, do you immediately make the purchase?

- Lucas M:

Not so much anymore. I used to, but over the past two years I've become more thoughtful. I research more. If it's something over €100, I really think about it. If it's under €100, I'm more likely to buy impulsively. Also, if it's available in a physical store, I'll buy it faster. I take more time if I have to order online.

- Lucas:

When it comes to a service or a product, what matters most to you — control, practicality, simplicity, pleasure of use, or something else?

- Lucas M:

Well, it depends whether it's a service or a product — they're quite different. For products, I like them to be up to date. If I'm buying something, I want it to be modern, to meet my needs — even exceed them. I like when it has extra features, things that entertain me. For example, if I buy an air conditioner, I'd prefer a smart one I can play around with. Reliability is important too — I research that a lot. And the brand's reputation matters a bit — I prefer a reputable brand over some sketchy no-name. But it depends — if it's something basic like an SD card, I care less.

- Lucas:

And how do you weigh price in all this? Is the brand more important than price? Or does price sometimes lead you to choose a cheaper brand?

- Lucas M:

It's a balance. If a cheaper product has great reviews and looks reliable, I'm fine going with that — even if it's from a lesser-known or Chinese brand.

- Lucas:

And how do you check if it's reliable?

- Lucas M:

That's where I really dive in — I spend almost as much time researching the product as I do using it. I look at comparisons, reviews, check different websites, see where the product comes from, what alternatives there are, etc. I watch a lot of YouTube videos where people present the product. If someone close to me already has it, that helps a lot — like a robot vacuum or a TV. It's so hard to compare those properly, so if someone I trust has one, it really influences me.

- Lucas:

Would you skip the comparison if someone you trust already has the item?

- Lucas M:

I'd still compare a bit, but I'd be more inclined to choose that one. I'd look for confirmation bias — I'd check if other reviews align with what my friend says, and I'd probably go for it.

- Lucas:

When you hear “shared service” or “mutualized product,” what comes to mind?

- Lucas M:

Right away, I think of car sharing. I also think of that thing that used to exist in Louvain-la-Neuve — Hubspot, I think it was called. It wasn't exactly mutualized, but you could rent tech gear there. It ended up being a bit of a scam — the contracts weren't clear, they asked for a lot more than expected, and the place shut down.

- Lucas:

Okay. So would you say you have a more positive, negative, or neutral image of shared products?

- Lucas M:

Overall, I think it's a good thing. There are lots of items — especially multimedia ones like drones or cameras — where buying them just to use once or twice a year is overkill. Same for tools. So I think there's value in sharing or renting, financially and ecologically. But pricing can be a big issue. I've looked into renting stuff at Decathlon for a weekend and saw that it'd cost me €35. Then I think, for €35, maybe I should just buy it and use it again later. So in theory, I'm all for it — but in practice, it can get expensive quickly, especially if it's something you'd use three times a year. At that point, owning might be more cost-effective.

- Lucas:

What do you see as the advantages of renting vs. buying?

- Lucas M:

First, cost — especially for stuff I don't use often. Like the drone I borrow from my friend Florian. I use it maybe three times a year — it wouldn't make sense to buy one for myself. Then there's the ecological aspect. Instead of ten people buying the same item they barely use, we could share it. It also lets you test a product before buying it. If I like it after trying, I might decide to buy it later.

- Lucas:

Is there a price threshold where you'd definitely rent instead of buy?

- Lucas M:

Yeah, I think so. If something costs less than €50 and I might use it two or three times, I'd probably just buy it — I like owning things. There's also less stress about breaking them when they're yours. But if it's something really expensive and the rental price is reasonable, renting makes sense.

- Lucas:

What's "expensive" for you in this context?

- Lucas M:

Over €150 starts to feel expensive. But it depends on what it is and how often I'd use it. If it's something I'll only use three or four times a year and it costs €200 or more, I'd prefer to rent. Especially if it's more of a "fun" or non-essential item.

- Lucas:

Would you be more likely to rent fun or non-essential things?

- Lucas M:

Probably, yeah. For fun or entertainment — like if I want a good camera for a hiking weekend. But I'd also rent tools or cleaning appliances — things I only need occasionally but are expensive to buy.

- Lucas:

And what are the disadvantages of renting, in your opinion?

- Lucas M:

You usually have to plan ahead — you can't always get what you want instantly. Depending on the platform, you may have to book in advance. Also, it's not yours — so you have to return it, and you don't get to keep anything for the money you spend. Plus, there's the risk of wear and

tear — what if it's already damaged, or breaks while you're using it? That can create stress. And sometimes, after a few rentals, you realize you could've already bought the item.

- Lucas:

What would make you want to try out a rental service like that?

- Lucas M:

First, it has to be super easy to use. Either a place really close by — like a “Cash Converters” but for rentals — or an app where I can get the object in two clicks, delivered to my home or a pickup point. And the return process should be just as easy. Simplicity is key. Also, pricing needs to be fair, and ideally, there's an affordable insurance option in case something goes wrong.

- Lucas:

When you say “Cash Converters-style,” how would that work?

- Lucas M:

I mean something like a store where you walk in, pick up the item, pay, and leave. A big physical location with lots of different categories. But the main thing is speed and simplicity — I don't want to hear, “Yeah, you can reserve that... in three weeks.” If I want something now, I should be able to get it fast — same day if possible.

- Lucas:

Would you be okay with a physical location as long as you could reserve the item online?

- Lucas M:

Totally. Actually, I prefer physical locations. I just care about availability. Like with Decathlon — if I need an item for Saturday, I have to book it from Friday to Monday. But I only need it for one day, which feels wasteful. I'd want flexible rental periods and easy pickup/drop-off nearby.

- Lucas:

Do you feel a human presence is necessary in the experience? Or are lockers or pickup points okay?

- Lucas M:

Personally, I don't need the human aspect — I'm good with tech. But I think it's important for people who need help using the item. Maybe a quick tutorial video would help. I do like being able to see the product beforehand, like behind glass or on shelves — that builds confidence. I'm someone who likes to browse, touch, and test things a bit.

- Lucas:

So more like a “store you can rent from”?

- Lucas M:

Yeah, exactly. You don't test in-store, but you see what you're getting, and then you rent and leave. A catalog on a smartphone is nice, but I still prefer seeing things physically.

- Lucas:

And if there's a mobile catalog, you'd want availability to be shown in real time, right?

- Lucas M:

Absolutely. It would be frustrating to go to a store and find the item's unavailable. At minimum, I want to know if it's in stock and be able to reserve it right away — especially for commonly needed tools or appliances.

- Lucas:

If something's not available, but you can get notified when it becomes available — is that still useful?

- Lucas M:

Yes, that's still interesting, especially if it's not urgent. Like if I want to clean my mattress and I get notified in a few days that the cleaner is back — that works.

- Lucas:

What kind of pricing model would you prefer — per hour, per day, per week?

- Lucas M:

In an ideal world, I'd like something progressive. For example: up to 6 hours, it's a short-term rate; beyond that, it's a full day; then you could go up to multiple days or a week. I think renting for just an hour or two isn't very realistic, but half a day could be great. I'd want to avoid being forced to commit for three full days if I only need something for one afternoon.

- Lucas:

Let's say there's a platform like this out there, but you haven't tried it yet — what would get you to finally give it a shot?

- Lucas M:

Honestly, a specific need. But I could also be influenced pretty easily by an influencer or content creator talking about it — like “Hey, this thing is awesome!” If they show a product I like — say, the latest DJI drone — and it's available for rent and not too expensive, I'd try it.

- Lucas:

How would you want to request an item that isn't yet available on the platform?

- Lucas M:

There should be a request feature in the app — like, “I wish I could rent this item.” And ideally, the platform shows how many other users have requested the same thing. That way you know your voice counts. Maybe even a section showing “most requested items” that aren't in the catalog yet.

- Lucas:

Can you name some websites or apps whose design you find inspiring?

- Lucas M:

I like very clean and modern interfaces — like Apple or DJI. They present the product well and make you want it. Even “Instant Gaming” — which just sells cheap video games — has a nice interface: personalized suggestions, trailers, user reviews, all laid out clearly. Something like that would be nice.

- Lucas:

Would you want video presentations for the items?

- Lucas M:

Not necessarily videos made by the platform itself. But if the official video already exists — like DJI's promotional videos — include those directly in the app. So I don't have to go search YouTube myself. That would definitely increase my interest.

- Lucas:

So is that the only model you envision? Like a library-type place where people come and borrow items?

- Lucas M:

No, I also see something like Leboncoin or Facebook Marketplace — peer-to-peer. That could be cool because people could rent out their own stuff and make some money from it. But the platform would need to guarantee things — in case something gets damaged, for example. That's harder to pull off safely.

- Lucas:

So from a user point of view, what would you prefer?

- Lucas M:

Honestly, I'd prefer a professional company. A real business that owns the products and manages everything.

- Lucas:

And what about insurance — would you want insurance options for what you rent?

- Lucas M:

It depends on the item, but for things that are easy to break, yes — having insurance would be reassuring. And it could be nice to have a loyalty program. Like, if you consistently return items in good condition, you eventually get insurance included for free. Sort of like car insurance: the better your record, the cheaper it gets.

- Lucas:

And how would you prove someone is a “good renter”?

- Lucas M:

The platform would need to check the item when it’s returned. If it’s in good condition, the user’s reliability score goes up. You could track how many rentals they’ve done, how many items were returned in good shape — and reward those with a good track record.

- Lucas:

Let’s say it’s not a staff member checking, but the next user. They receive the item and confirm if it matches the previous photos — would that work?

- Lucas M:

That could work if it’s backed by safeguards. Like, when returning an item, I’d take several photos to prove its condition. But if the next user falsely claims it’s damaged, that’s a problem. There’d need to be an objective system — maybe a smart locker with a camera that takes a 360° photo, or at least something automatic to avoid relying only on trust between users.

- Lucas:

And what if the locker detects that the item has been returned, or tags it when it’s dropped off?

- Lucas M:

Yes, like a scanner or RFID tag that confirms the return. That would help. But still — if I rent 10 items and 5 are in bad condition, I’d stop using the platform. So it has to maintain high-quality standards.

- Lucas:

So users who return items in poor condition should be penalized?

- Lucas M:

Yes. If someone returns an item damaged, and the next user reports it, a staff member should check it. If it’s confirmed, a deposit should be deducted.

- Lucas:

So you’d be okay with paying a deposit?

- Lucas M:

Yes — but the amount should be reasonable. Like with car rentals, you don’t leave a €20,000 deposit. It’s more symbolic or secured via card. I wouldn’t mind using my credit card for that, but younger users might not have one — so the platform would need to accept debit cards or alternative guarantees.

- Lucas:

So would a reward system help motivate you to rent more often?

- Lucas M:

Definitely. Discounts, for example — or the idea that after a certain number of rentals, you earn points. Points aren’t money, but you could redeem them for free rentals or discounts. Or maybe early access to new products for top users. Like, the new DJI drone drops — and only high-ranking users can rent it during the first two weeks.

- Lucas:

That would mean partnerships with brands or stores to get early access?

- Lucas M:

Maybe not even before release — just right after launch. If everyone's renting the DJI 3, then the platform gets the DJI 4 and offers it early to engaged users. That could work.

- **Lucas:**

Let's say the pickup point is in Luxembourg — would you still use it?

- **Lucas M:**

That's a bit far. But if it's in Libramont, which is like 30 minutes away, I probably wouldn't go. If it's in Arlon or Tertre — within 10 to 15 minutes — then yes, I'd do it.

- **Lucas:**

And what about a delivery system? For example, the platform notifies you that a neighbor will return a steam cleaner to point A — would you be willing to deliver it to another person?

- **Lucas M:**

If there's a reward, like credits or points — yes. That wouldn't bother me. I think it's a good idea.

- **Lucas:**

So we'd just need a way to motivate people to help with deliveries.

- **Lucas M:**

Exactly.

- **Lucas:**

Would you personally be willing to list your own items for rent on the platform?

- **Lucas M:**

That would be harder for me. I'd have to be really sure the platform would compensate me in case of damage. With Amazon, I trust that if something goes wrong, I'll get refunded or replaced. That trust takes time to build. If this platform could guarantee that — then maybe.

- **Lucas:**

How would the platform communicate that guarantee clearly?

- **Lucas M:**

Probably not just through videos on the app — people won't watch them. It'll take word-of-mouth and real examples. Once some people try it and confirm that the platform refunded them or replaced damaged items, then others will feel safe using it.

- **Lucas:**

And if that guarantee is clear, would you be willing to rent out your items for free, just to get credits?

- **Lucas M:**

Yeah, if it's well-managed and there are items on the platform I'm interested in. Earning credits by lending something I'm not using — that's appealing.

- **Lucas:**

So for tech, you'd want sleek videos and product pages. But for tools or household items, it's more about utility?

- **Lucas M:**

Exactly. For tech, you can tempt me to browse and try stuff. But if I need a tool, I'll just search directly for what I need. I won't be scrolling through a catalog for fun.

- **Lucas:**

Makes sense. If we only offered tools at first — would that limit user engagement?

- **Lucas M:**

Maybe, especially since big chains like Brico already do that. But if you made the experience easier and more flexible — unlike Brico, where you often have to call and follow strict hours — that could stand out.

- **Lucas:**

Do you feel like people in apartments still need to rent tools sometimes?

- Lucas M:

Sure, but I personally just borrow from family. For most small tools, people already have what they need — like a drill you'll use for 20 years. The only time I'd rent is for bigger machines, and those are usually expensive and rare.

- Lucas:

What about a version where the items come from local businesses instead of individuals?

- Lucas M:

In the tool sector, there aren't many small businesses left. Maybe a gardener could rent out equipment, but they usually need it for work — I doubt they'd want to share it unless it's an old one they don't use anymore.

- Lucas:

So in the end, as long as the product is available and in good condition, it doesn't matter who it comes from?

- Lucas M:

Exactly. Whether it comes from a company or a neighbor, what matters is that I can use it safely and easily.

I.10 Interview - Nicolas

- Lucas: So, let's start simply. Even if you've already told me a bit, could you describe a typical day or week — your priorities and what you usually do?

- Nicolas:

A typical day? That's a bit tricky, because right now there's not really a set routine. Let's imagine when I'm at school, okay?

So I wake up in the morning. Then depending on what I have to do, I either take a shared bike to the train station, or I walk, or I take the metro. Then I take the train to Louvain-la-Neuve, it takes about an hour. I have class there, and usually eat at the university restaurant.

Then I head back, and in the evening I usually have an activity — that depends. And maybe I go out on the weekend, most likely.

Evening activities would often be with Alix, my girlfriend, during the week, and on weekends we might go out in Brussels or around there — a little trip here and there, but not too often.

- Lucas:

Got it. And if you had to describe yourself with three values, what would they be?

- Nicolas:

Three values... Hmm. I'd say authenticity. A bit of diligence too. And the third one... that's a good question. I don't really know.

- Lucas:

No worries, how do you usually discover new products or services?

- Nicolas:

Products? Well, in stores mostly — you might spot something in a display window or notice someone wearing something nice in the street.

- Lucas:

So it's mainly real-life encounters, or through people wearing or using the product?

- Nicolas:

Yeah, often. But it really depends. For physical products, that's how it goes most of the time. But for digital stuff, it's different — like software, for instance. There I might see online ads.

- **Lucas:**

So you'd say it depends on the product category?

- **Nicolas:**

Yes, exactly. For clothing, it's often what you see people wearing. But for software or digital services, it's usually ads on the internet — or someone telling you they used something and it was good.

- **Lucas:**

So more word-of-mouth and peer recommendations?

- **Nicolas:**

Yes, I guess so.

- **Lucas:**

And online ads — do you notice those often?

- **Nicolas:**

Yeah, especially on YouTube — I watch a lot of YouTube. Most of the ads I see are there.

- **Lucas:**

Are they before the videos, or inside the videos?

- **Nicolas:**

Both. Sometimes it's the typical pre-roll ads. But then there's also the sponsored content — like the YouTuber says, "I use this product" or whatever.

- **Lucas:**

Ah yes, product placement.

- **Nicolas:**

Exactly. Sometimes it's well integrated and worth watching. But it depends — sometimes it just feels like an ad.

- **Lucas:**

Yeah, it ends up being the same in the end.

- **Nicolas:**

Right. But some ads are still pretty clever. The problem is when they keep showing the same one ten times — then it gets annoying.

- **Lucas:**

True. But then again, at least you remember it.

- **Nicolas:**

Yeah, that's the idea. They'll first show you the full version ten times so it gets stuck in your head, and then switch to shorter versions. That way you won't forget it.

- **Lucas:**

Smart, but a bit much.

- **Nicolas:**

Yeah, ads definitely work on a subconscious level. Hard to measure, but when you're choosing between two brands — one you've seen everywhere and one you haven't — your instinct tells you to go with the familiar one.

- **Lucas:**

And when you actually need a product — let's say a specific software — how do you go about finding it? Do you ask someone? Go online?

- **Nicolas:**

If it's for school or work, I usually ask classmates or colleagues. Otherwise, yeah, I search online.

- **Lucas:**

And when you search online, do you click on the first few results or go deeper?

- Nicolas:

It depends. If it's something important, I dig a bit further — not just the first three results. Especially because the top ones are usually ads.

- Lucas:

Yeah, makes sense.

- Nicolas:

I also watch a lot of YouTube reviews, especially for tech products or tools. You get to see the pros and cons and understand how it works.

- Lucas:

And those are neutral? Not sponsored?

- Nicolas:

Often, yes. Some creators do it objectively without brand sponsorship. You can usually tell when they're being honest.

- Lucas: Okay, so that's for tech. But now, let's say... Yeah, let's say you need a tool. And you have to discover a platform to find it. So, if it's something specific... You give up on one tool and need to find another. How do you go about finding the shop or platform that offers it?

- Nicolas: Hmm... good question. If I need a tool—like a physical one, not software or tech—Let's say I need something to do pre-gluing or something annoying like that. I'd go to a store. I'd ask for advice. For example, for pre-gluing, I'd ask my dad or someone like that. Then I'd go to the store and try to find the one that's cheapest.

- Lucas: So you go directly to the store?

- Nicolas: Yeah, maybe not to a Brico, but I'd go to a known store. If I already know the model I want, and someone advised me on it, then sure. Now, if I don't know anything, I'll still go check it out. If it's something cheap like a hammer, I'm not going to bother for 10 or 20 euros. But if it's a bigger investment—like a machine costing a few hundred euros—then I definitely do some research.

- Lucas: Once you know what tool you need and where to get it, how do you decide which service or store to choose?

- Nicolas: It'll come down to price, I think. Also, to some extent, how friendly the staff is. It's always nicer to be greeted by someone kind, a real person. But in the end, it's really about the price. And also after-sales service. That often makes a difference.

- Lucas: Okay. So when you hear about shared items or shared objects, what comes to mind?

- Nicolas: Well, first thing that comes to mind is my building's shared bike shed. It's always a mess and people hit stuff because nobody respects anything. So, kind of negative, yeah. But then again, I also see the positive side. It's a bit of both.

You know, possessing is also a mental burden.

- Lucas: Have you used shared scooters?

- Nicolas: Ah no, never again. I had a bad fall on a shared scooter—never got on one again. I might try the bikes instead, I saw there are some available nearby.

- Lucas: Okay, so you've used shared objects before?

- Nicolas: Yeah, scooters. Though, it's not really shared like a co-op—it's more like a rental service. It's shared in the sense that many people use the same thing, but not that we share it among ourselves.

- Lucas: And do you prefer shared platforms run by companies or more peer-to-peer sharing?

- Nicolas: Depends. The key issue is respecting the items. With scooters, for example, people treat them terribly—leave them anywhere, filthy, broken. Now, I wouldn't mind lending my own scooter, but others would have to treat it well. You never really know if the person

borrowing it will take care of it or not. So yeah, you need clear rules. You can't know in advance how careful someone is going to be.

- **Lucas:** Makes sense.

- **Nicolas:** For example, I saw in Brussels a building that had a fleet of Teslas shared among residents. You could just book one and take it. But it's important that after using it, you clean it, return it properly. There should be a cleaning service, so it's kept in good condition. Otherwise, it's disgusting—people eating chips inside or whatever.

- **Lucas:** Right, and maybe the app could let you rate the condition?

- **Nicolas:** Yeah, totally. That way, things are tracked. Though sometimes you can't see everything—photos don't show all the mess.

- **Lucas:** What about subscription systems? For instance, would you prefer owning a car or using a shared one occasionally?

- **Nicolas:** Well, for me, shared cars make a lot of sense. I only need a car maybe once a week—if I'm going home or heading off somewhere. So yeah, that's more logical than owning one. Especially in Brussels, where parking is a nightmare.

- **Lucas:** In a perfect world, how would that work for you?

- **Nicolas:** I saw something in Quebec. I wanted to try it, but I didn't have a credit card. It's a car-sharing subscription—you pay a fee and then pay per kilometer, maybe €1.20 or something like that. You can park wherever in specific zones. You could even go from Quebec to Montreal with it.

In Belgium there are similar services, but sometimes you have to return the car to the exact same spot, which is annoying. That's less practical.

- **Lucas:** Was there any kind of deposit?

- **Nicolas:** There's was a kind of deposit or financial commitment at the start to make people respect the system more. That way they feel more engaged and take better care of the cars.

- **Lucas:** Right, it gives them a sense of responsibility.

- **Nicolas:** Exactly. I think that's a good way to go.

Now, it's true that it freezes some money

- **Lucas:**

What attracts you to buying rather than renting?

- **Nicolas:**

Well, you rent if you need it occasionally. Like a dishwasher—if it's something you use every day, then you'd rather buy.

But renting is more for one-off use.

- **Lucas:**

What do you mean by one-off use?

- **Nicolas:**

One-off use would be something like once a month.

- **Lucas:**

Okay. I ask because what if it's once a week? Would that push you toward buying?

- **Nicolas:**

Yeah, I think so. For example, our steam cleaner at home: if you clean once or twice a month, you'd prefer to rent it. But if you know you're going to live there long term, maybe you'd consider buying.

But then you need to store it.

- **Lucas:**

Yeah, storage becomes a problem too.

- **Nicolas:**

Exactly. It takes up space, and there's also the mental load of owning things. You need to maintain it, store it, maybe clean it too.

- Lucas:

Let's go a bit more specific. You just moved to Horion. You probably need to use or get new things for your apartment. How are you going about that?

- Nicolas:

I think we're mostly buying.

I'm thinking about furniture—we're probably going to buy, or maybe borrow a few things.

Like my mom could lend us a couch or a table until we can afford our own, to avoid rushing.

- Lucas:

So, borrowing too.

- Nicolas:

Yeah. But for all the essential kitchen stuff, we'll need to buy that. Like mixers, even a washing machine.

- Lucas:

And for things you need less frequently, like for small home improvement projects?

- Nicolas:

If it's just once, I'd rent.

- Lucas:

Where would you rent from?

- Nicolas:

I don't really know. I'd check online to see if there's a place that rents that kind of thing.

Say I need a sander just to do one thing—technically I could ask my dad to lend me one.

- Lucas:

But if you couldn't ask your dad, what would you do?

- Nicolas:

Then I'd wait until I go back home to borrow the equipment. Or I'd ask my sister to bring it when she comes by.

- Lucas:

Makes sense. Let's say you want to go hiking and you need something specific for that. Like a hiking backpack—you probably already have one, right?

- Nicolas:

Yeah. But if it's something I don't have and only need once—or maybe I'll need it a few times, but I'm not sure—I'd want to test it first.

So in that case, renting would be better, if that's even possible.

But for hiking gear, I don't know of any services that rent that kind of stuff.

- Lucas:

But if there were services like that—say for a backpack or a tent—that could be great for trying it out.

- Nicolas:

Exactly. Otherwise, I'd try borrowing from someone I know—friends or family.

Find someone who has the gear and is willing to lend it.

Because the rental services for that kind of thing don't really exist, or not that I know of.

- Lucas:

And if such a rental service did exist, and you could either go through your personal network or that service, what would you prefer?

- Nicolas:

I'd go with the easiest option.

Whichever is closest and most convenient.

If it's someone nearby and I know they won't mind, I'd just ask to borrow it.

But if not, and there's a simple rental service that isn't too far, I'd consider it.

- **Lucas:**

What does "simple" mean for you in this context?

- **Nicolas:**

Something easily accessible.

Ideally not too many forms to fill out online.

I like going in person—if you can just walk in, ask for the item, and get it, that's great.

So, a physical place would be better for me.

- **Lucas:**

So you'd prefer a nearby physical place over an app?

- **Nicolas:**

Yeah, ideally a physical location close to home. But an app could work too, if it offers delivery or booking with close locations. But personally, I tend to go in person when I can.

If it's a physical store with multiple locations around, like in different stores with partnerships or even just stores of its own, I think it would be great. A pick-up point would also be an other idea to expand that.

- **Lucas:**

Would you rather rely on your network or use a pickup point? Say there's no prior agreement, but it's online, or you can ask your network—what would you prefer?

- **Nicolas:** If I know someone who has it and they don't use it, I'd just ask them. Maybe they don't need it at the moment. If it doesn't bother them, that's perfect. For rentals, it depends on the price versus the value of the item. And also the condition—whether it's still in good shape.

- **Lucas:** And how would you know if it's in good condition?

- **Nicolas:** I'd need photos or reviews—especially if it's online. If I can see it in person, that's better. But online, yeah, I'd definitely want photos and reviews from past users.

- **Lucas:** Okay. And if it's in person, would it need to be a specific place, like a store?

- **Nicolas:** If it's in a store, that's perfect. Being able to see the item helps. If it's at Carrefour, for example, that could work—just being able to see the item beforehand is key. And maybe having someone there to ask for advice, not someone only dedicated to the service, but like a store employee who could help.

- **Lucas:** Advice to know which product fits your needs best?

- **Nicolas:** Exactly. I'd want the person to be trained and know what they're offering. If you're renting something, it's good to know what you're getting into.

- **Lucas:** And what if it's all online, but then you can go pick it up in a store?

- **Nicolas:** That works too. I often order online and pick it up in-store rather than getting it delivered home. If you're not home, it's a hassle. So yeah, online ordering with store pickup is great—like a pickup point.

- **Lucas:** And in an ideal world, you'd want that pickup point to be specialized in this kind of thing?

- **Nicolas:** Yes, definitely. You don't want to only get advice after you've ordered the item. It's better to have that before the transaction.

- **Lucas:** And if the advice came through a form or survey, where you select what you're looking for, and then a chatbot gives recommendations—would that be enough?

- **Nicolas:** If it's just a bot, then no. It's no better than Googling it. I wouldn't really bother chatting with a virtual assistant. If it's a proper catalog with filters at the top, that's more useful

to me. It's clearer than relying on a machine to make choices for you—it never fully understands you.

- **Lucas:** Okay. So overall, it's still better for you to see the item physically?

- **Nicolas:** Yes. Especially if it's something new that I'm not familiar with—it's good to get advice. But if it's something I already know, then I don't need help.

- **Lucas:** So in a perfect world: you go to pick up the item, you don't know how to use it, so you ask for advice.

- **Nicolas:** Yes, I'd ask for advice. If I still don't get it, I'd go online, look up tutorials. There's always a YouTube video that helps.

- **Lucas:** And then you use the item.

- **Nicolas:** Exactly.

- **Lucas:** And once you're done, you return it?

- **Nicolas:** Yeah. If it's in a store, it's easy to return it there. But putting it in a package and mailing it back—that's too much hassle.

- **Lucas:** Right. And someone would have to check that it's clean before re-renting it?

- **Nicolas:** Yes, usually there's someone in charge of that in rental systems.

- **Lucas:** And if it goes back to a relay point where no one checks it?

- **Nicolas:** That wouldn't change much for me—as long as no one complains afterward.

- **Lucas:** So there could be a kind of deposit—like a guarantee for cleanliness?

- **Nicolas:** Yeah, a cleaning guarantee. For example, €50 for the item and €10 for cleanliness. If it's not clean, they keep the €10.

- **Lucas:** So it's a way to encourage people to return things clean?

- **Nicolas:** Exactly. Otherwise, people just don't pay attention.

That's how it works. But when there's no one around, when you're just online or dropping it off at some pickup spot, you trust it less. When there's no actual person in front of you, there's less trust.

- **Lucas:** You mean because you don't see the person?

- **Nicolas:** Yeah. If I don't see them, they could scam me. I'm handing over money or something of value to someone I don't see.

- **Lucas:** So how would trust be created in that case? If it's not a person, how would you know you can trust it?

- **Nicolas:** Through comments, reviews. If other people say it went well for them, or if I've used it myself two or three times and nothing bad happened, I'd gradually trust it more.

- **Lucas:** But for the first time, what would convince you to try?

- **Nicolas:** If the comments look real—not fake ones posted by the company—and ideally from people I know or who seem like real users, that helps.

- **Lucas:** Where would you expect to see these comments?

- **Nicolas:** If it's within the app—like a real, open comment section—that would work. Like how it's done on Vinted or Keen.

- **Lucas:** And what would really push you to try the service for the first time?

- **Nicolas:** Convenience. If it's the easiest option in the moment. Maybe also promotions or credits you can earn. Like a reward system, or even gamification—like Duolingo?

- **Lucas:** Yeah, Duolingo. You've heard of it?

- **Nicolas:** Sure, I know Duolingo. But I don't think I'd be into that kind of gamification—like maps or pop-ups saying “you're almost there.” I prefer something clear and easy. No gimmicks.

- **Lucas:** So more like a clean interface with 2-3 buttons and what's essential?

- **Nicolas:** Exactly. Straightforward.

- **Lucas:** Do you find that discounts, gamification or point systems influence you?

-
- **Nicolas:** No, not really, gamification not at all. I don't trust sales or deals because I often end up getting tricked. Like, it says there's a discount, but when you get to checkout, they say it's not valid, or it's in the fine print. So no, I'm wary of that stuff.
- **Lucas:** And do you usually read the conditions?
- **Nicolas:** Only if I have a problem. Otherwise, no. It depends if I'm in a hurry or not. If I'm bored, maybe I'll read them, but chances are I won't.
- **Lucas:** So maybe if it was summarized in bullet points with a "more info" button?
- **Nicolas:** Yeah, that could help. But then again, depends how it's done. If it feels too hidden or tricky, I'll trust it less. But if it feels like they're making an honest effort, maybe I'll be more inclined to trust it.
- **Lucas:** So would you trust a company more than an individual?
- **Nicolas:** Not necessarily. Peer-to-peer can be cool too. But with individuals, trust is key. Someone might lend you something broken, claim it was brand new, or try to scam you.
- **Lucas:** And when it's your object being lent, the person also needs to respect it.
- **Nicolas:** Exactly.
- **Lucas:** So what if it's still peer-to-peer, but there's a platform in the middle acting as a facilitator?
- **Nicolas:** Yeah, I'd feel more confident in that case. If something goes wrong, like the item gets damaged, maybe the platform would take responsibility. That would help.
- **Lucas:** Would you lend your own objects through such a platform?
- **Nicolas:** Maybe. If I could earn credits to borrow other things in return. And if it's stuff I don't use much or want to get rid of—like an old bike—I could lend or even sell it through the platform.
- **Lucas:** And the more valuable or new the object, the more credits you'd get, and you could use those to borrow other things?
- **Nicolas:** Yeah, exactly. If my bike is out for rent, I should be able to borrow something else in return. Makes sense.
- **Lucas:** Okay, next question. For this type of object, would you rather pay per use, by the minute, by the hour, or...?
- **Nicolas:** That's a bit vague—it depends how I use it. If I need it for a whole day, I'd prefer a daily rate. If just for an hour or two, then hourly.
- **Lucas:** So if you needed something for three hours, ideally?
- **Nicolas:** Then paying by the hour makes sense. But a progressive system could be cool—like, pay per hour up to a maximum, then it switches to a half-day or full-day rate.
- **Lucas:** Yeah, like a cap after 4 hours, then half-day, then full-day?
- **Nicolas:** Exactly. That way you're not stressed about going a bit over time. Also I think that a cooperative where people would buy objects together and then share them—that could work really well. Kind of like owning stocks but for objects. I also think that there should still be local sharing points, but modernize them, with an integrated space where people can meet to use or repair the objects together. Kind of like a shared workshop.
- **Lucas:** Ah I see yes, that's a big advantage of traditional LoTs. Alright, it's already been an hour so let's stop the recording.
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I.11 Interview - Edith

- **Lucas:** Can you describe a typical day or week for you, including your priorities?

- **Edith:** For me? Well, I don't really have a typical week. I'm self-employed and currently in the process of building my business, so every week looks a bit different.

Work-wise and in terms of rhythm, I alternate—one day I focus on housework, and the next on my professional work. I usually wake up around 7 AM and go to bed around 11 PM. But sometimes, when I'm deep into my work, I might stay up working until 3 AM. I often work until things are finished.

Also, I'm a bit of a homemaker. My husband works during the day and I cook for him in the evening. So on my "house days," I clean and do chores, and on my "work days," I work on my creative business projects.

- **Lucas:** How do you usually discover new products or services?

- **Edith:** I think I'm very different from most people in that regard. It probably comes from my studies and my interest in entrepreneurship. I've supported many entrepreneurs, especially in retail. I actually don't like shopping much, but I love discovering creative ideas and businesses. For example, one of my favorite TV shows is "Qui veut être mon associé?"—I love seeing what people pitch. If I like an idea, I'll do anything to support it. I enjoy original concepts. When I'm on holiday, I never go to mainstream stores. I always look for unique shops or multi-concept stores that offer something different.

- **Lucas:** And how do you come across these places?

- **Edith:** Mostly by walking around. I notice them immediately—either because they're visually striking or because I'm curious about how the concept works. I once bought necklaces sold by weight, just to see how the store functioned.

What interests me is understanding how things work, especially the business model. If I get it, and it seems original, I'm more likely to try or buy it—often as a gift, or sometimes for daily use like food.

- **Lucas:** And how do you decide to buy something?

- **Edith:** It depends. For clothes, I prefer second-hand, mostly because of price but also for the values. I used to work in fashion and I know what goes on behind the scenes, so it kind of disgusts me. For food, I prioritize quality and local origin.

Professionally, I often need very specific materials for my floral creations, and I end up ordering online because I can't find them easily elsewhere.

- **Lucas:** So, online shopping is mostly for convenience?

- **Edith:** Exactly. I don't like going to physical stores, especially big chains. But I love small, independent shops—especially when there's a personal or creative touch. Artisan bakeries, creators, boutiques that aren't franchises—that's what I enjoy.

- **Lucas:** What do you think about sharing instead of owning?

- **Edith:** For me, it's obvious. I think it should be developed much more. I even thought about starting something myself—more about lending than renting. We all have items we use once or twice a year. It's ridiculous.

I cleaned out my garage once and realized I had all kinds of tools—like a special vacuum for water, a circular saw, and more. My husband has a wheelbarrow we use maybe twice a year. And every neighbor has one too! We all have the same rarely-used things. Sharing just makes sense.

- **Lucas:** So you thought about launching a platform for that?

- **Edith:** Yes, starting with my village. The idea was for neighbors to list what they could lend. The municipality would subscribe to the platform, and only residents could access it. But I'm not tech-savvy, and it got too complicated.

Some people loved the idea. Others were hesitant. One person said, “People won’t return things in the same condition.” And it’s true—someone could borrow your tool and damage it by misusing it.

- **Lucas:** That’s the problem with peer-to-peer: trust and liability.

- **Edith:** Exactly. Even with ratings and reviews, it gets tricky—especially if it’s someone you know. Imagine I lend my wheelbarrow to a neighbor, and it comes back with a scratch. Then she gives me a two-star review, and now we’re not talking anymore!

- **Lucas:** So it could make relationships worse instead of fostering community?

- **Edith:** Sadly, yes. That’s why I eventually gave up on the idea. It started from a place of kindness but could end in frustration.

- **Lucas:** What if there was a local organization managing it all? Like you drop off your item and they handle rentals, maintenance, etc.

- **Edith:** That could work. If my wheelbarrow isn’t at home and someone else manages it, I’d be fine with that—especially if I earn credits or small compensation for making it available. But I wouldn’t do that for sentimental items or gifts. Emotional attachment changes things.

- **Lucas:** That makes sense. And how do you feel about using an app for all this?

- **Edith:** I hate apps. My phone is already cluttered. Apps always feel like they’ll ask for payment, or they demand too much data right away. It’s like walking into a store and being bombarded by salespeople before you even look around.

Websites are better. No pop-ups, no pressure. I want to know everything first—who’s behind the service, how it works, etc. Then I’ll decide what to share.

- **Lucas:** And how would you like to discover such a service?

- **Edith:** Through social media—Instagram reels, for example. But it has to be local and visually clear. Show real people, transparent boxes with items, so I understand immediately. Partnerships could help too—like with malls, farms, or vacation spots where people are already passing through. That way, you get traffic without forcing people out of their routine.

- **Lucas:** Would you prefer home delivery, or pickup at a point of collection?

- **Edith:** I don’t like home delivery. You have to be home—it’s restrictive. Pickup is better, but only if it’s nearby—like within 15 minutes by car. If it’s too far, I won’t go.

- **Lucas:** What kind of location would you trust for that? Malls? Local businesses? Farms?

- **Edith:** Malls are good for security—especially if it’s valuable items like drones, cameras, or cargo bikes. I wouldn’t put those outside where they could be stolen.

Farms are great too. They often have space and want more visitors. They could act as pickup points for bulky items.

- **Lucas:** Would you like it if the business had a social/community angle?

- **Edith:** Definitely. Organizing workshops or community events would help it feel human. I’m very into that kind of thing. It shouldn’t just be about transactions.

- **Lucas:** Thank you so much, this has been incredibly helpful.

- **Edith:** My pleasure! It’s a great idea—just needs the right model. You can’t keep consuming the way we do. People are becoming more aware of that.

J Interviewees' Survey Answers

What is your age?

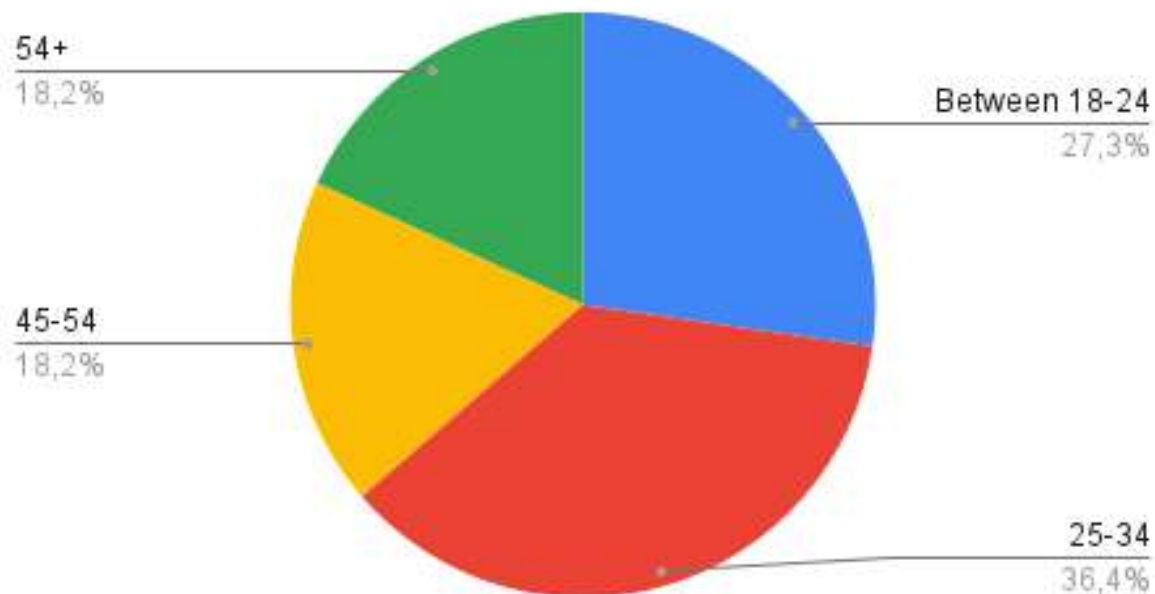


Figure 15: Interviewees' age

What is your gender?

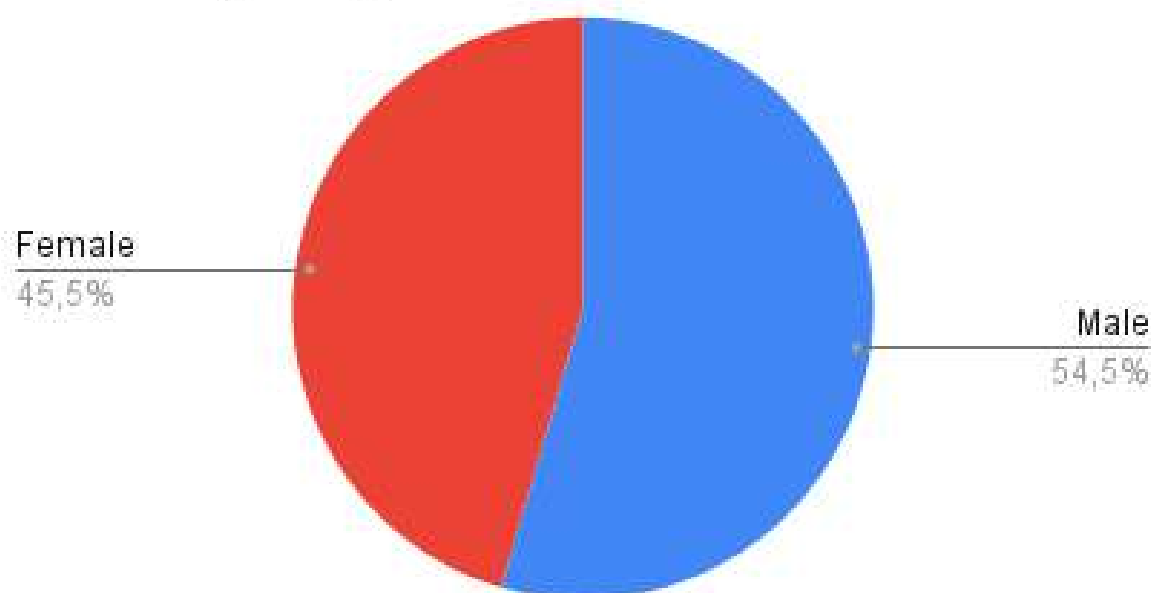


Figure 16: Interviewees' gender

[Back to the text.](#)

Where do you live?

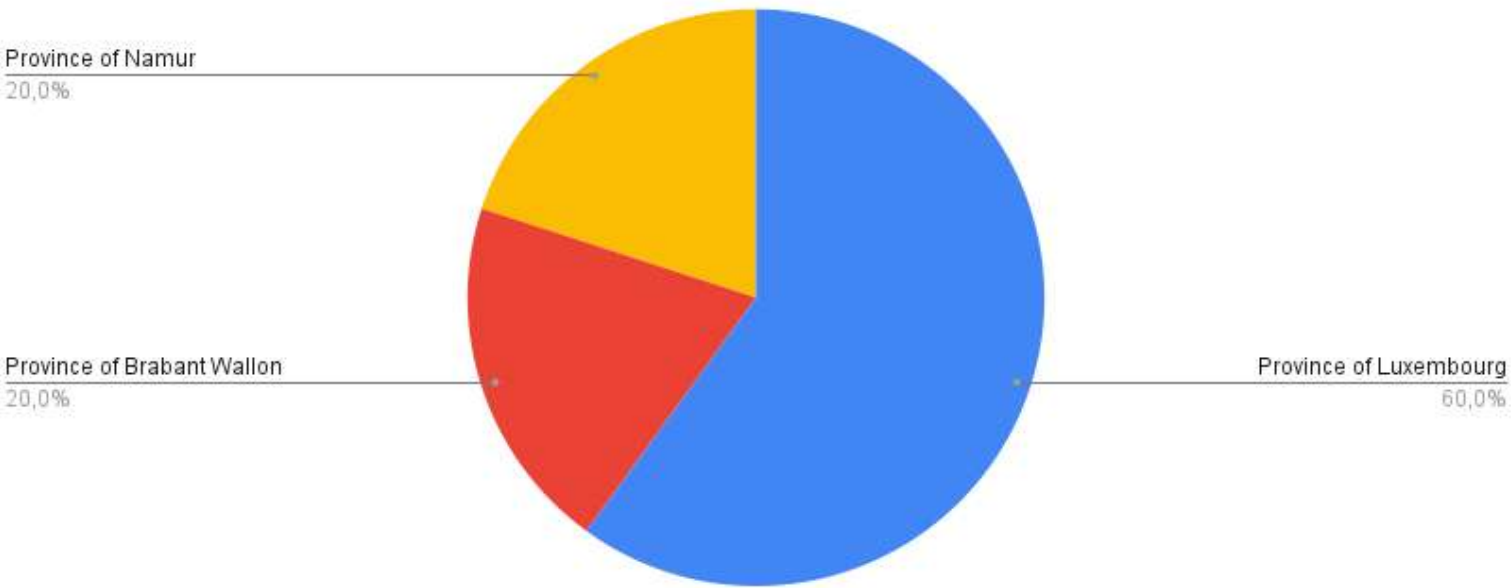


Figure 17: Interviewees’ province

In which type of environment do you live?

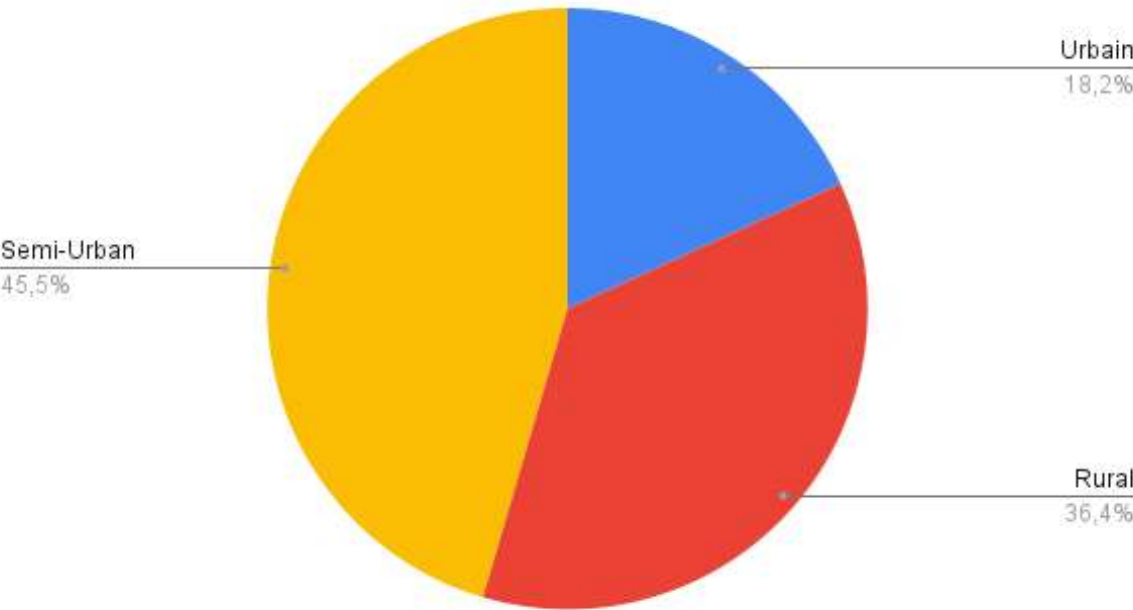


Figure 18: Interviewees’ type of residency environment

What's your professional situation?

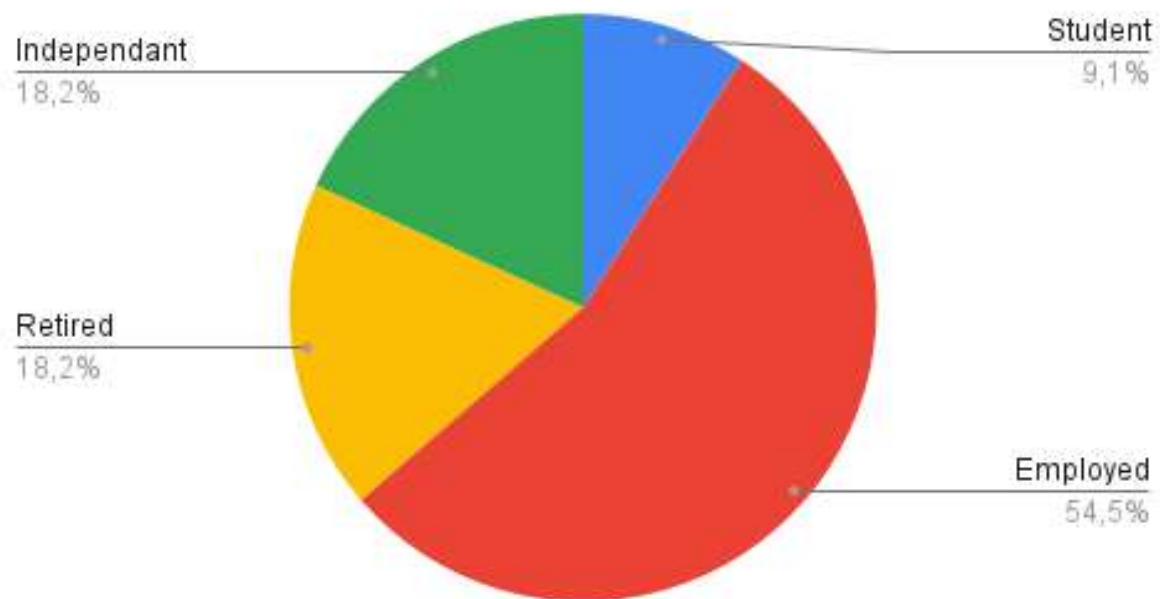


Figure 19: Interviewees' professional situation

Have you ever used object-sharing services (e.g. bike, car, tools, clothing, coworking, etc.)?

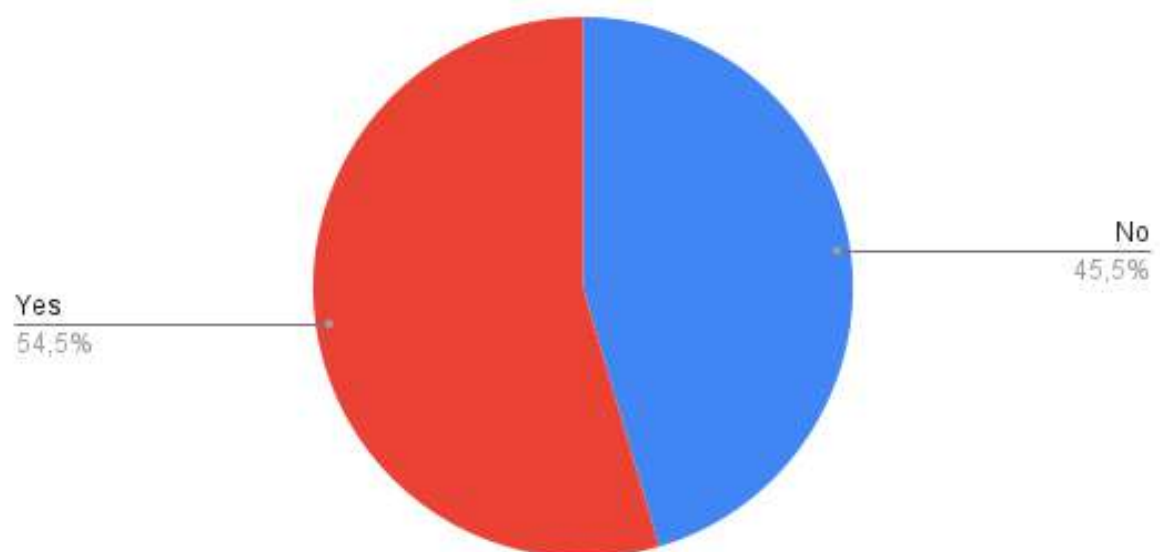


Figure 20: Interviewees' experience with object-sharing services

Which services have you used in the past? (multiple answers possible)

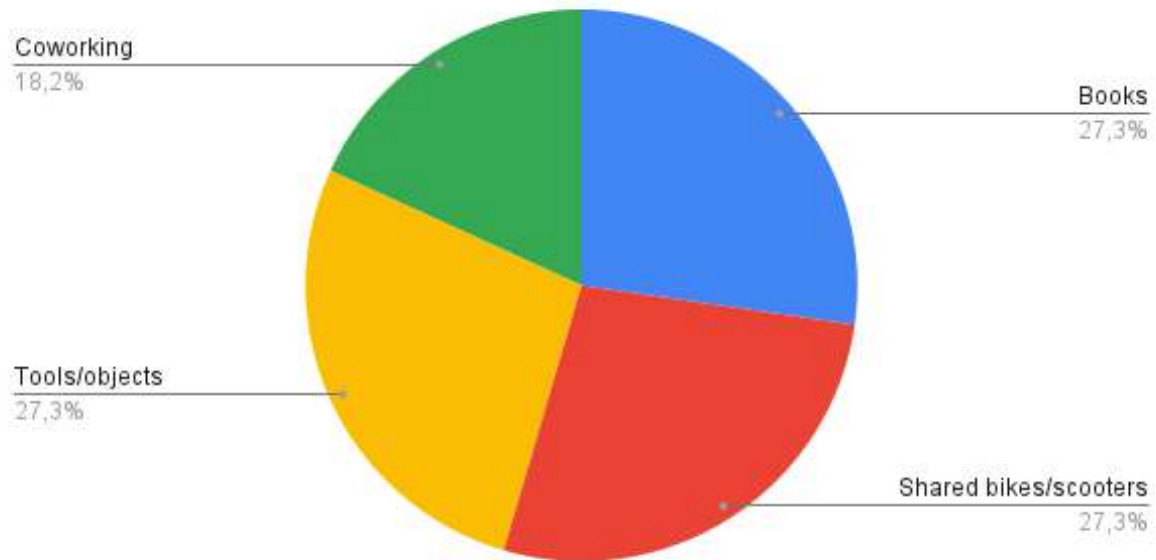


Figure 21: Interviewees' detailed experience with object-sharing services

Do you still sometimes use these services?

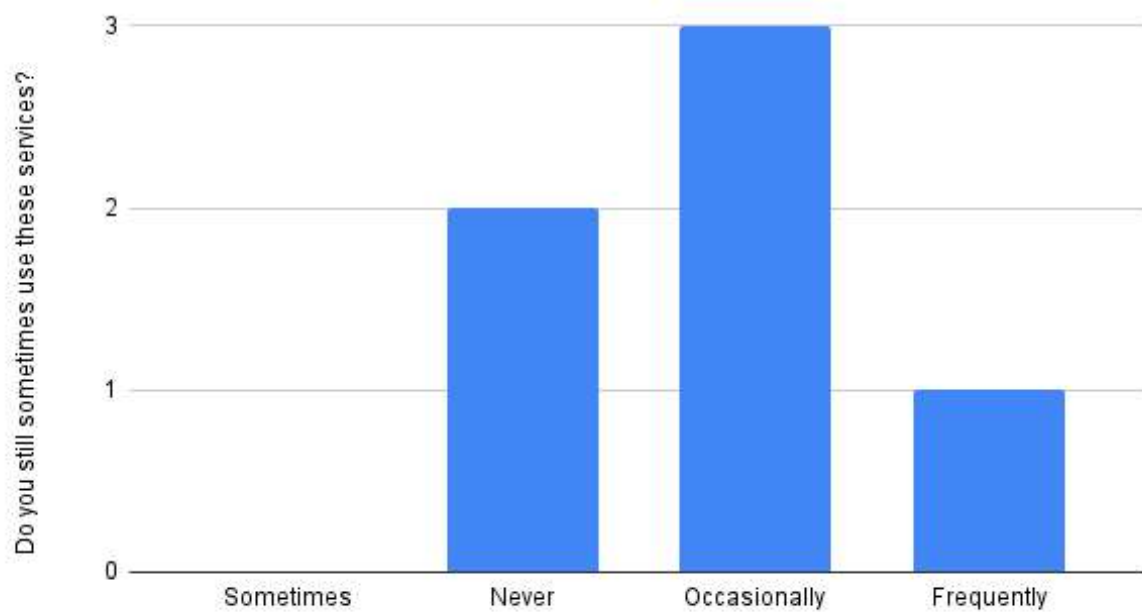


Figure 22: Interviewees' current use of object-sharing services

Which services would you be interested to try? (multiple answers possible)

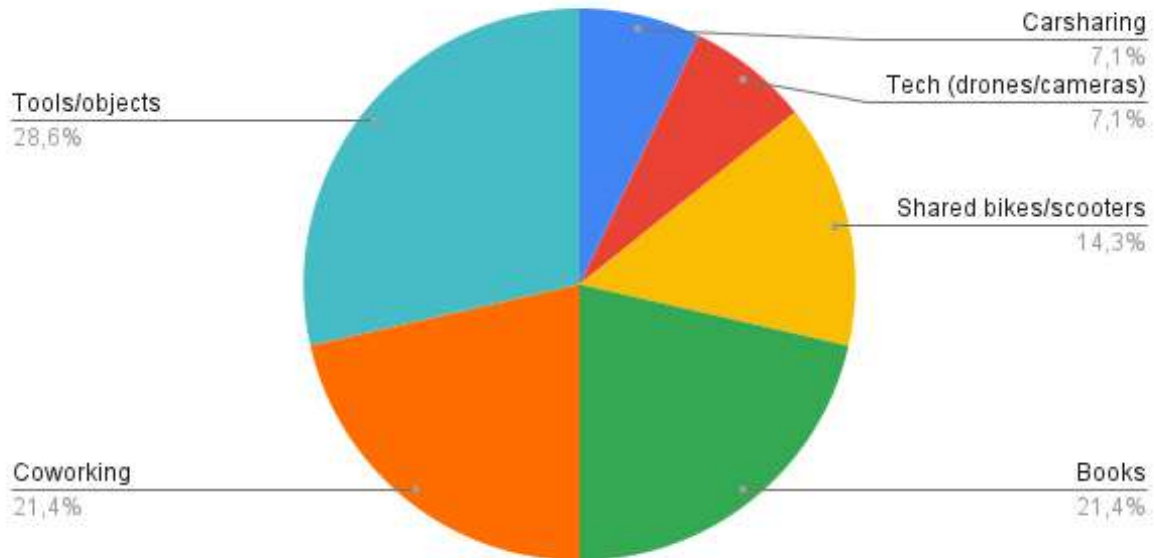


Figure 23: Interviewees' intention to try object-sharing services

Generally, what most holds you back from using these services? (multiple answers possible)

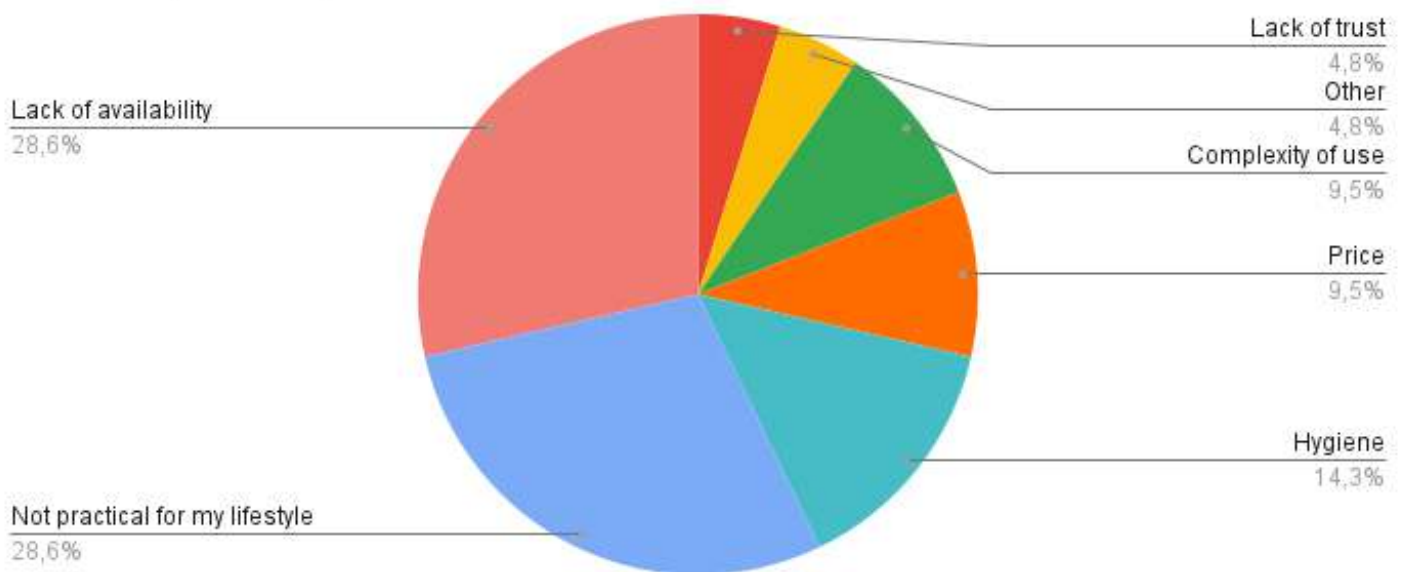


Figure 24: Interviewees' voiced barriers to shared services

I fear not having access to the object when I need it

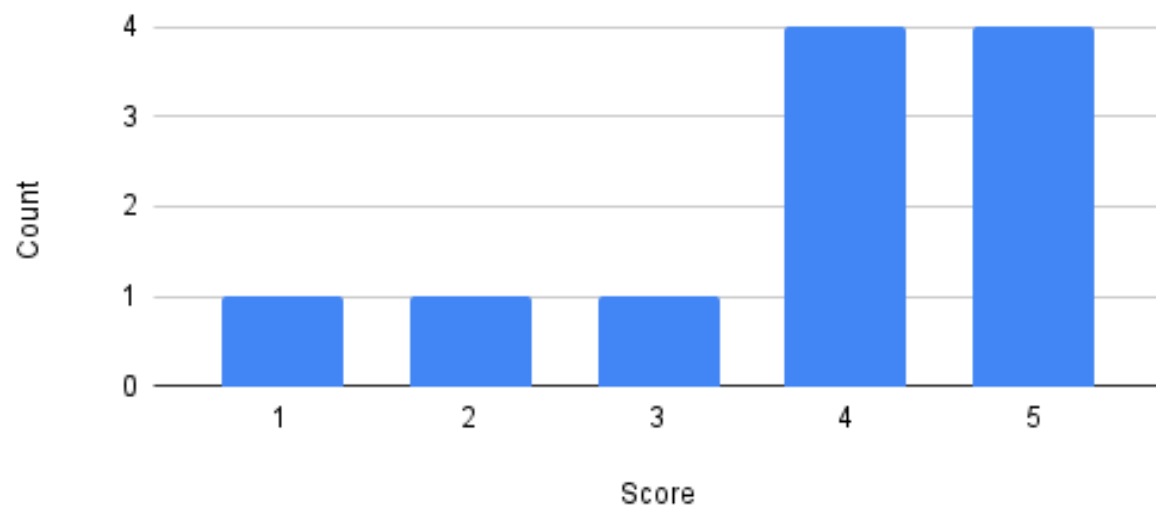


Figure 25: Interviewees' voiced barriers - availability fear

Environmental impact influences my choices

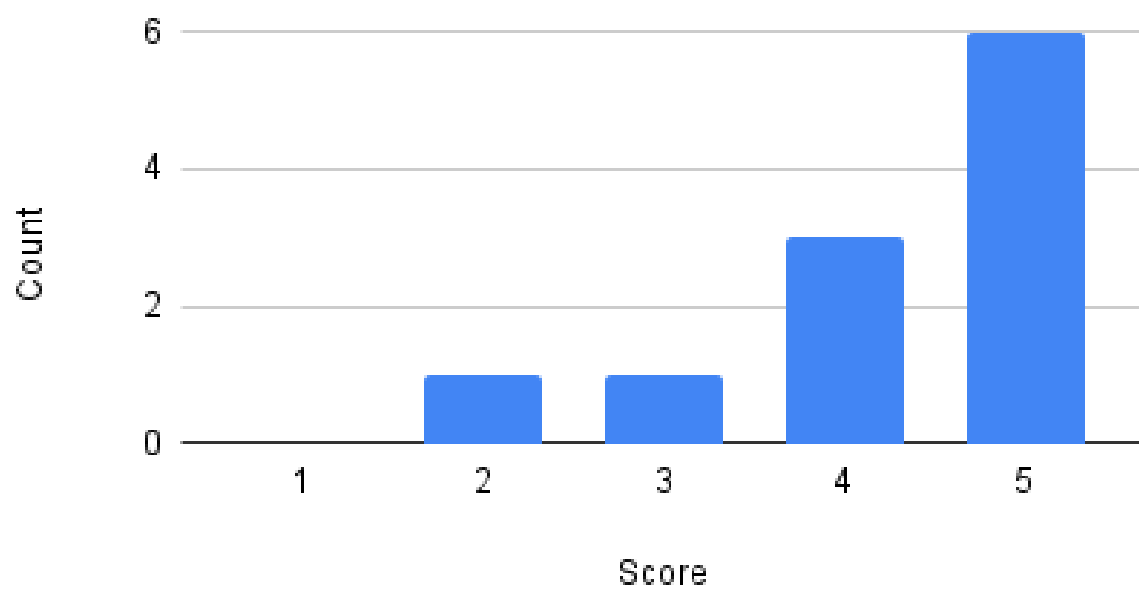


Figure 26: Interviewees' voiced decision influence - environmental impact

I trust digital platforms to manage this type of service

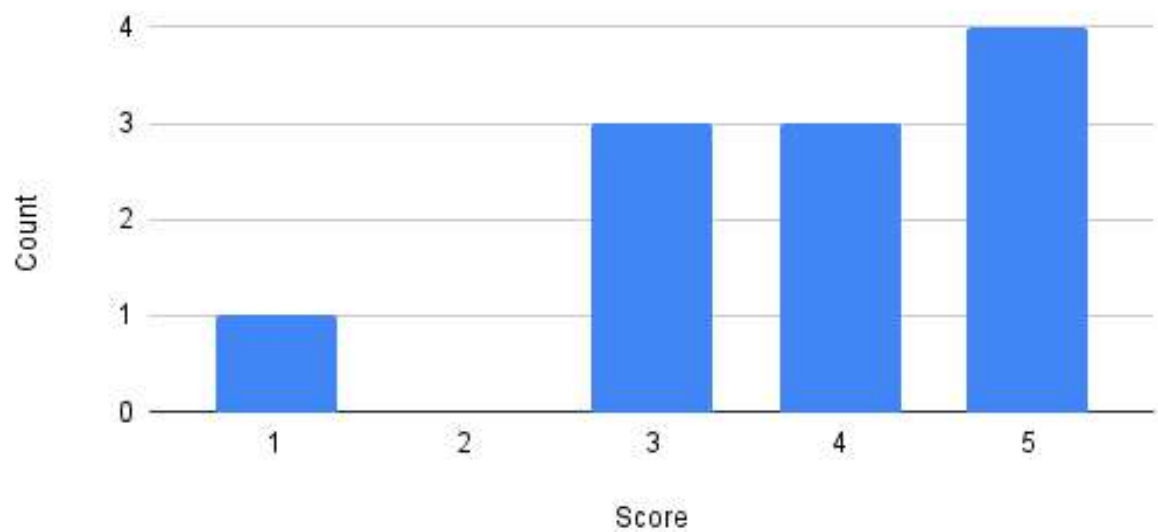


Figure 27: Interviewees' voiced relationship with digital platforms

I worry about hygiene of shared objects

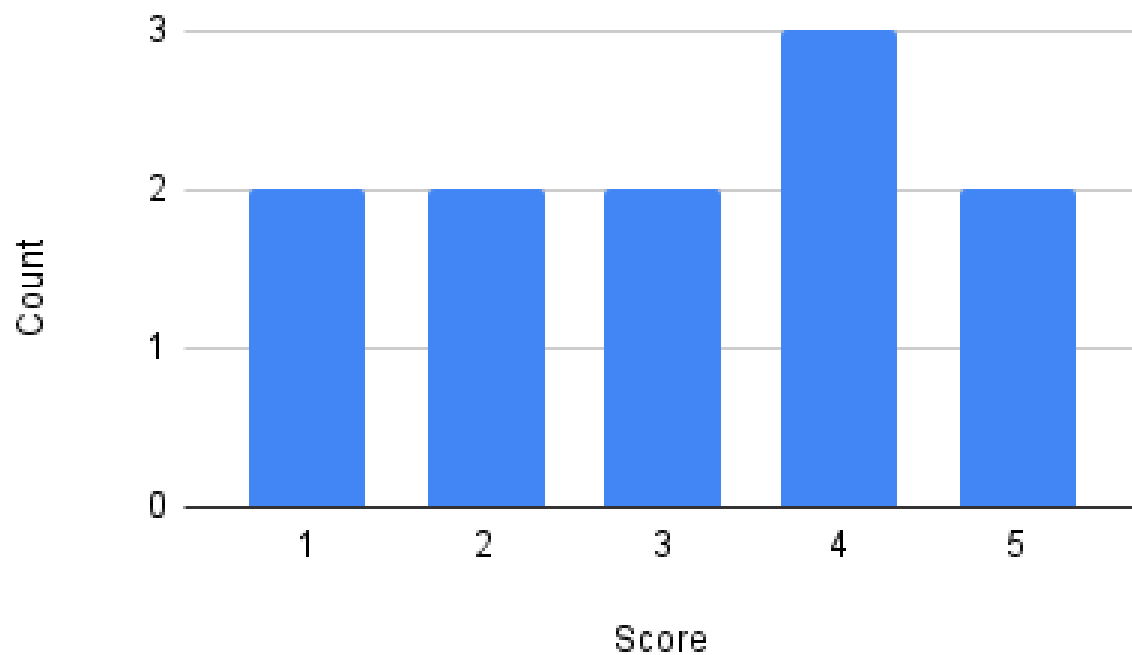


Figure 28: Interviewees' voiced barriers - hygiene

Sharing sometimes makes me feel a loss of control

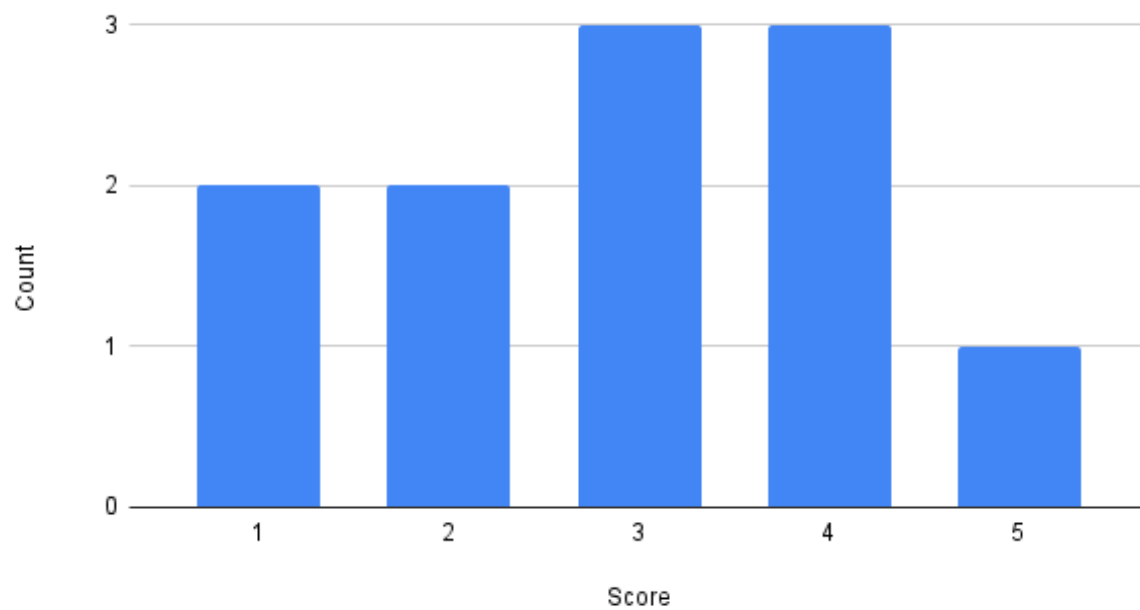


Figure 29: Interviewees' voiced barriers - loss of control

I prefer sharing rather than owning

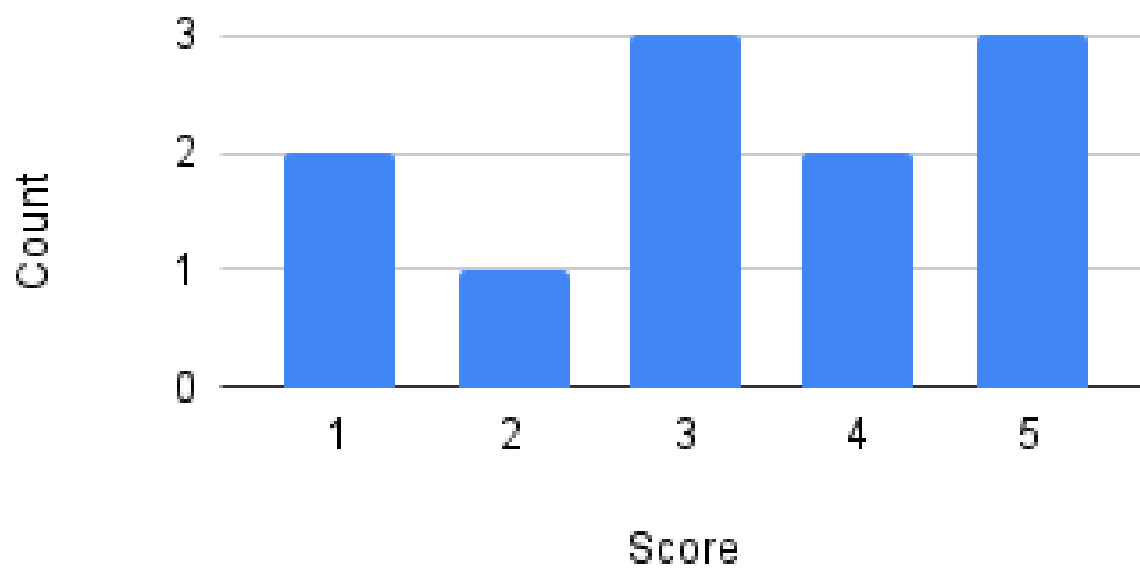


Figure 30: Interviewees' voiced relationship with sharing

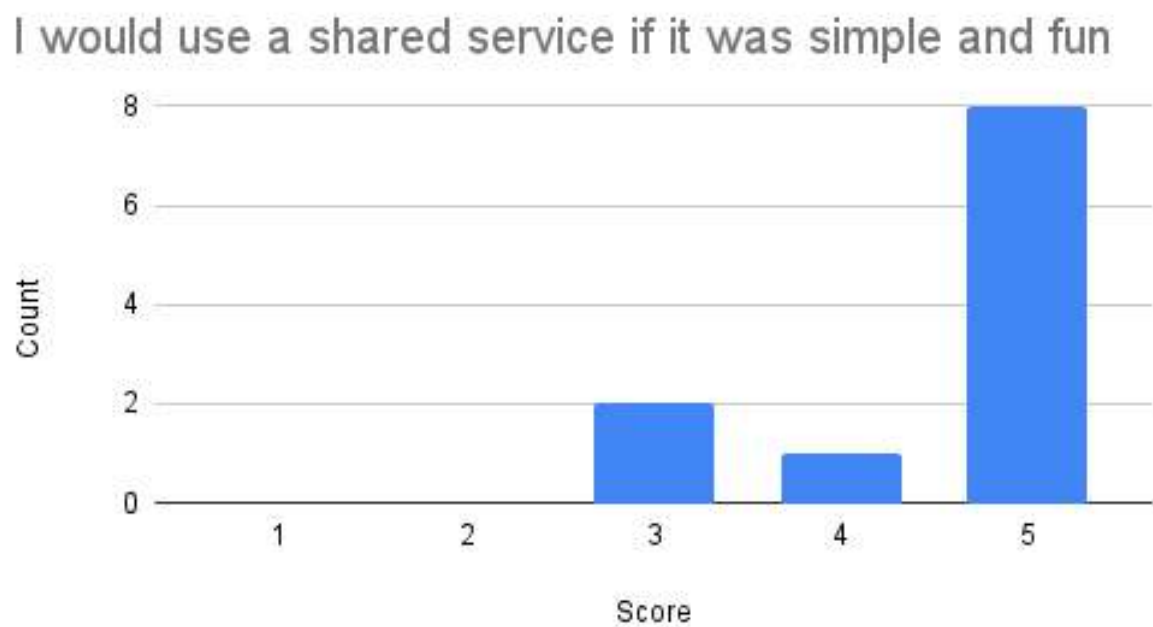


Figure 31: Interviewees' voiced intention

K Four Personas

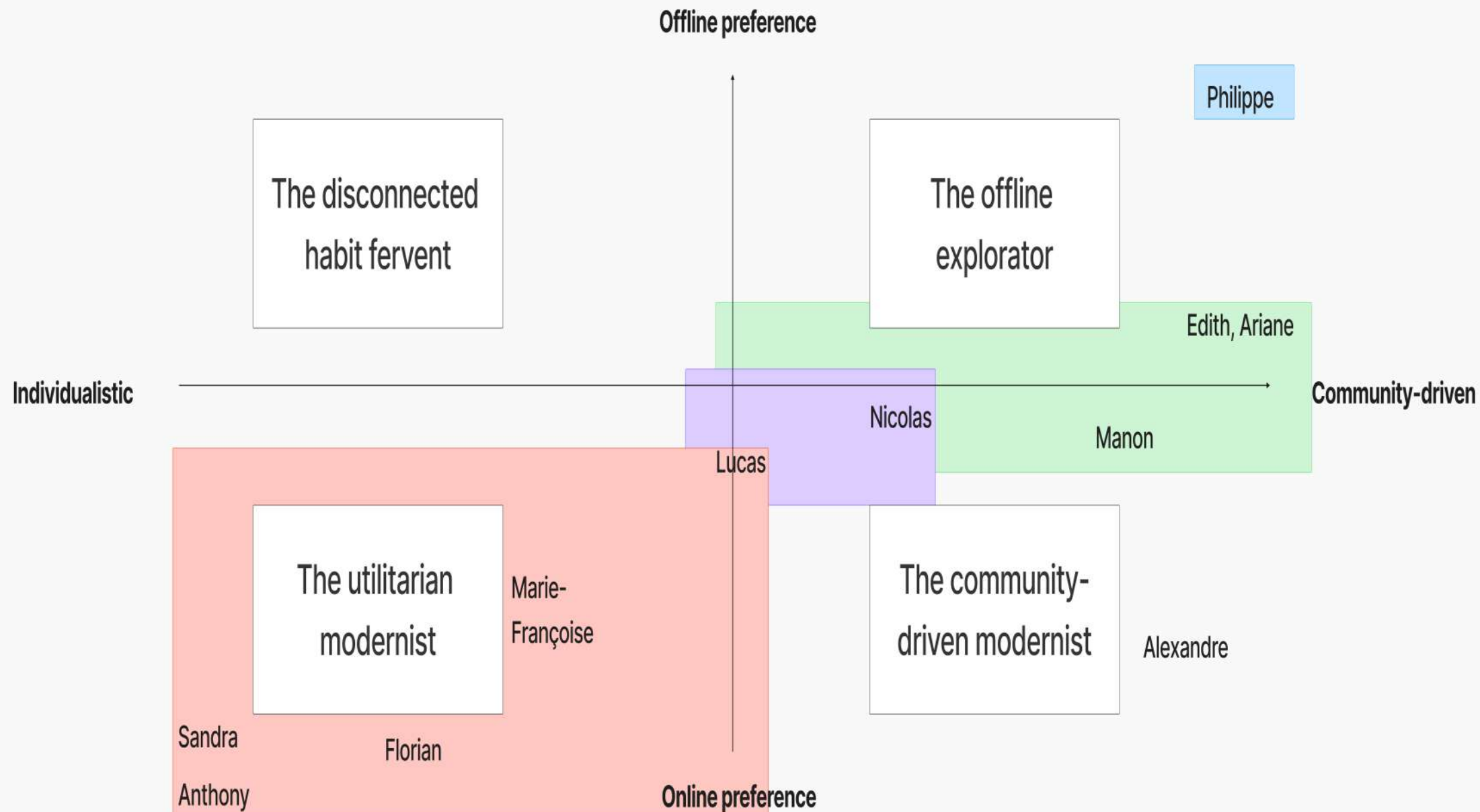


Figure 32: Mindsets representing the main interviewees' characteristics



The Utilitarian Modernist

- Lives with his girlfriend and his young kid
- High digital literacy
- Needs objects to do quick practical tasks in his flat (max. 2 days)
- Doesn't want to own bulky tools
- Lives in a new village near a big city; Has a car
- Not money-driven, but still considers it an important aspect
- Values uncluttered spaces and efficiency

Bio

Urban young professional with a minimalist and busy lifestyle as well as a practical train of thoughts. Honest, curious, and autonomous, he mainly just needs to do a simple task in his home efficiently.

Quote

"If it takes more time to borrow than to buy, I'll just buy it. I need something immediate and reliable without spending too much money or wasting time driving to a store. If it's too messy, I'm out."

Personality

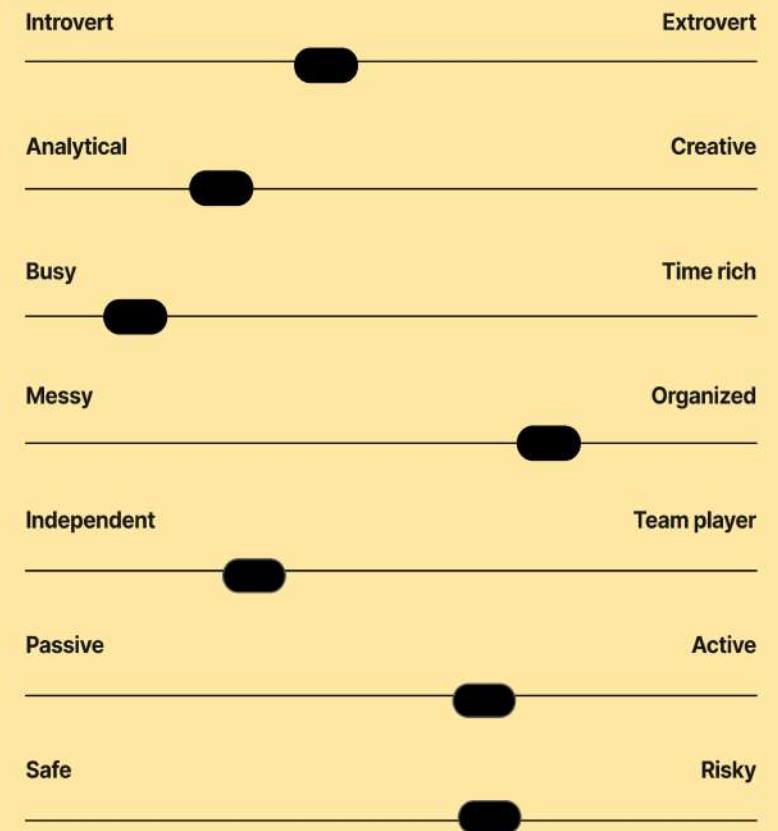


Figure 33: Get to know the Utilitarian Modernist

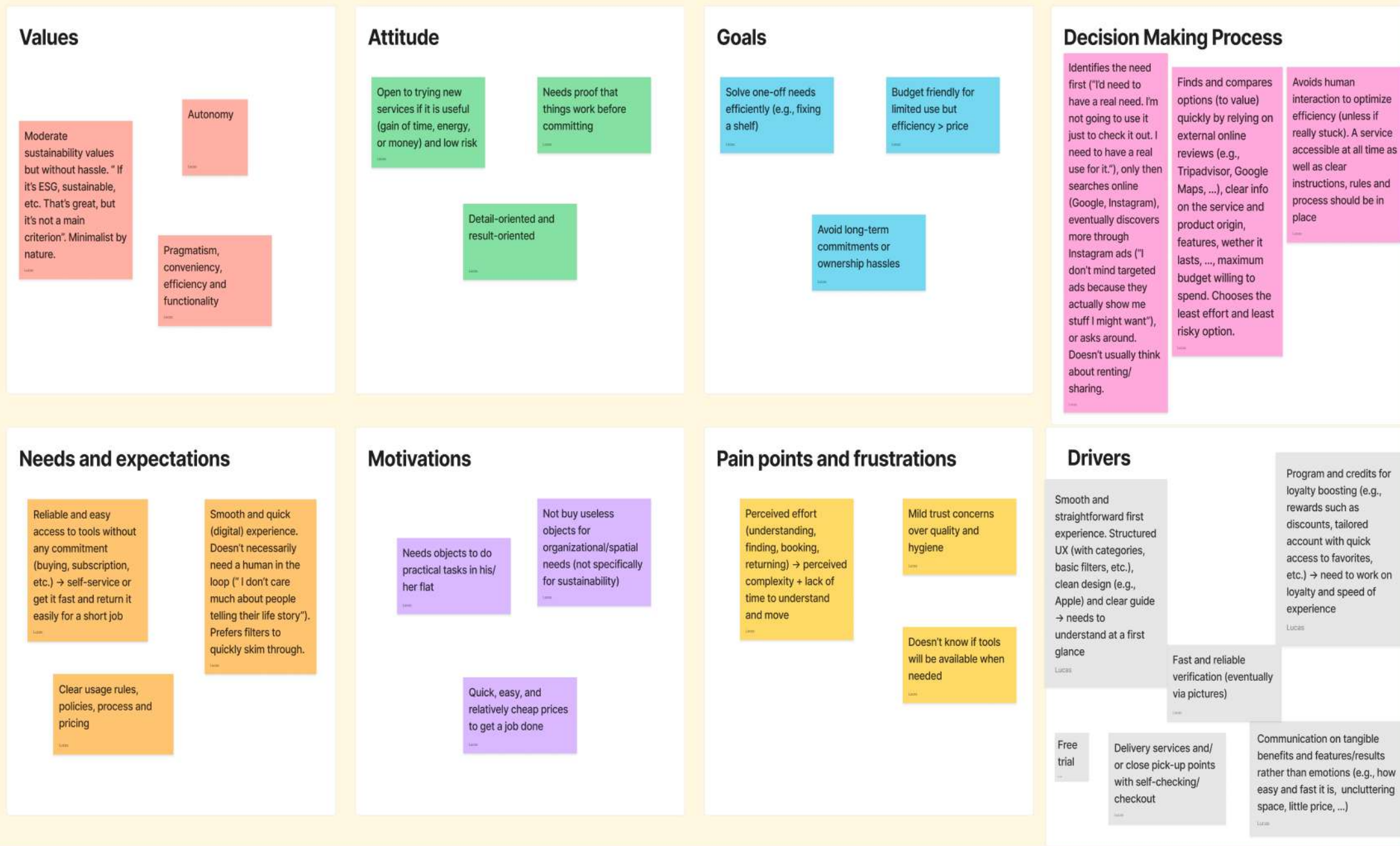


Figure 34: More about the Utilitarian Modernist



The Community-Driven Creative

- Lives in an rural family home; has grown-up children
- Social, idealistic, optimistic, but still cash-conscious
- Wants alternative ways of consuming to align with her values
- Likes community movements (<> too transactional exchanges)
- Curious about LoTs after seeing a poster in the street
- Careful on how she spends her money both for environmental value but also for financial reasons

Bio

Social, caring, and idealistic adult from a suburban area with her husband and grown-up children who wants to discover new alternatives in a human way. She is community-driven, but financially cautious.

Quote

"Caring about others, being kind, and considerate is very important. It shouldn't just be about transactions, but more about trust, local shops, and authenticity. "

Personality

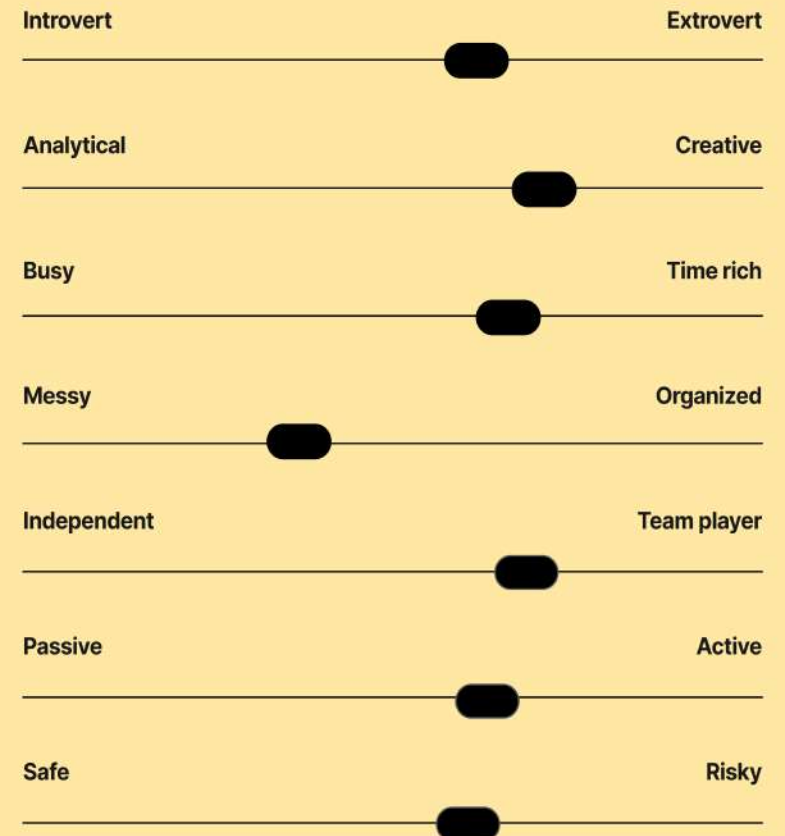


Figure 35: Get to know the Community-driven Creative

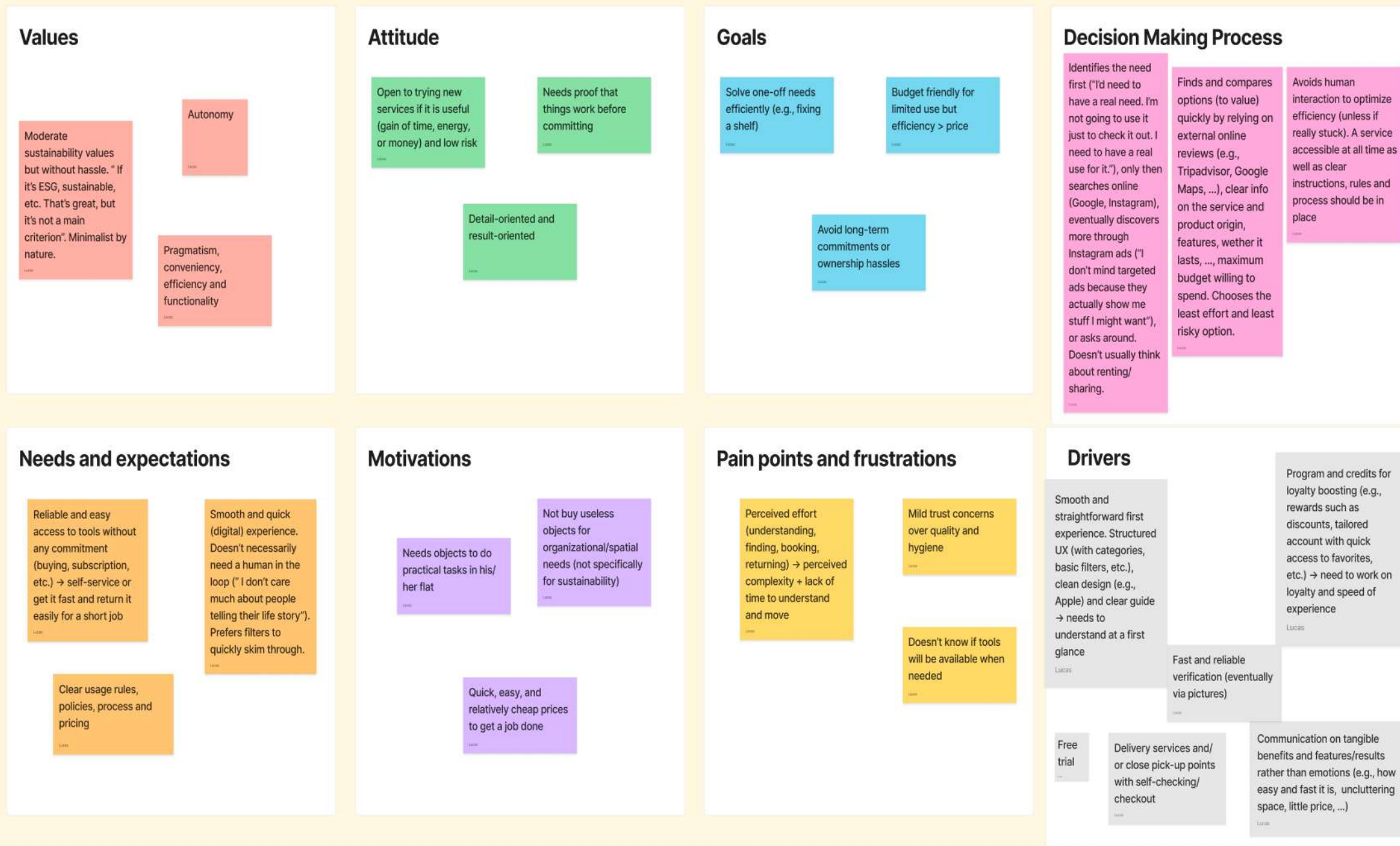


Figure 36: More about the Community-driven Creative



The Offline Explorer

- Retired
- Lives in a suburban house in an affluent and green area (think Uccle)
- Basic digital literacy
- Skilled with tools and uses them frequently
- Educated and has a family with already grown-up kids out of the house
- Very active in community life and family care, volunteers regularly
- Curious about LoTs after reading about it in the news
- Willing to spend a reasonable amount of money if the quality and customer service is present

Bio

A DIY-savvy retired father who enjoys maintaining his home (painting, gardening, maintenance). Cautiously open to change, he adopts new services if they offer quality, reliability, and a smooth experience. He owns most basic tools but occasionally needs specialized equipment. Though cost-conscious, he prioritizes value over price.

Quote

"I believe in quality, human contact, and using what you have before buying more."

Personality

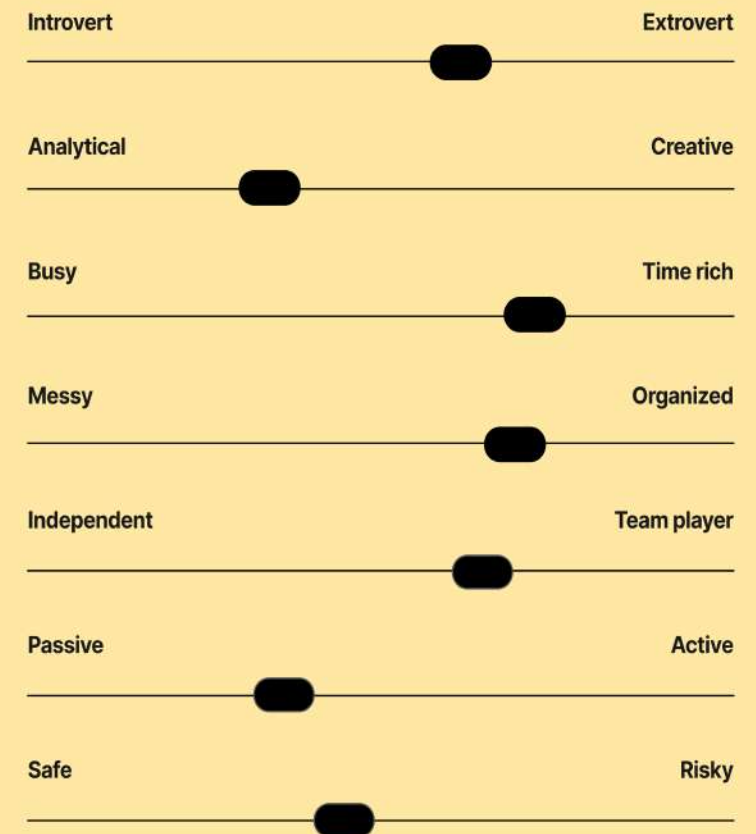


Figure 37: Get to know the Offline Explorer

Values

Trust and respect.
"You break it, you fix it"

Values durability, and quality over quantity for projects ranging from 1 to 4 days. "I'm not rich enough to buy cheap stuff"

Control and self-reliance (do things his way)

Attitude

Skeptical of systems that lack transparency, reliability, or human warmth

Open to alternatives to ownership, *if* they are simpler, cleaner, and safer

Resistance to full digital-only experiences. Easily frustrated and demotivated when something doesn't work (also doesn't want to look like a beginner).

Goals

Extend the lifespan of items through repair, sharing, and smart purchasing

Support systems that respect his values without feeling patronized or overwhelmed

Use good tools without owning too many

Decision Making Process

Values referrals and trusted sources such as municipality, neighborhood associations, beloved newspaper (e.g., Test-achat), friend, and family. "If it's good, I'll end up figuring it out from multiple sources". Internet is his last resort.

Needs to know/feel that it is professional, reliable, and safe to use

Has time to compare the services, the items and to choose an option. Can use at most one digital touchpoint, but seeks a human first. Prefers ethical, close-by, and transparent options

Needs and expectations

Quick processes explained in human terms with an option to speak to someone or have assistance. "I know how to do everything online, but I don't like it because I believe in human contact")

Convenience in picking-up and dropping off the tools.

Physical signs of reliability (clean tools, labeled condition, visible accountability).

Motivations

Avoid unnecessary purchases for rare tasks

Remain independent and relatively tech-competent in a changing world

Contribute to the community however he can

Pain points and frustrations

Fear of picking up a tool that's in bad condition and concerned about being held responsible for pre-existing damage

May drop out if process feels sketchy or unreliable (e.g., vague processes, unclear fees, or robotic interactions)

Frustrated by overcomplicated processes and digital-only services that exclude less tech-savvy users (e.g., apps)

Potential Drivers

A friendly human contact for the reservation and onboarding (either physically or in a limited well developed digital way) → potentially a hybrid model of screen in specific touchpoints + human service. "I don't mind online if it's simple, but don't take away the human."

Proof of concept → photos of the material (clean, functional and with the date), reviewed tools (and names of people) for trust in the condition and reliability of items

Clear information: display repair and maintenance practices transparently, on-paper contract,

Community design and making it more engaging/human (wants to volunteer). Ethical values behind the provider

Figure 38: More about the Offline Explorer



The Urban Wanderer

- Last year student
- Lives in a busy city with her boyfriend
- Social, spontaneous, epicurist, but still cash-conscious
- Likes innovation and curious by nature
- Likes human contact but still very tech-savy
- Curious about LoTs after hearing from a friend
- Careful on how she spends her money

Bio

Curious and social, she loves trying new things without overspending. She supports the city, values smart alternatives to buying, and is drawn to services that are easy, fun, and have a human touch.

Quote

"When I want to try something new, I want to borrow it conveniently, easily and affordably through a service I trust. Just as if I was going at a friend's. That way I can keep my life fun, varied, and light."

Personality

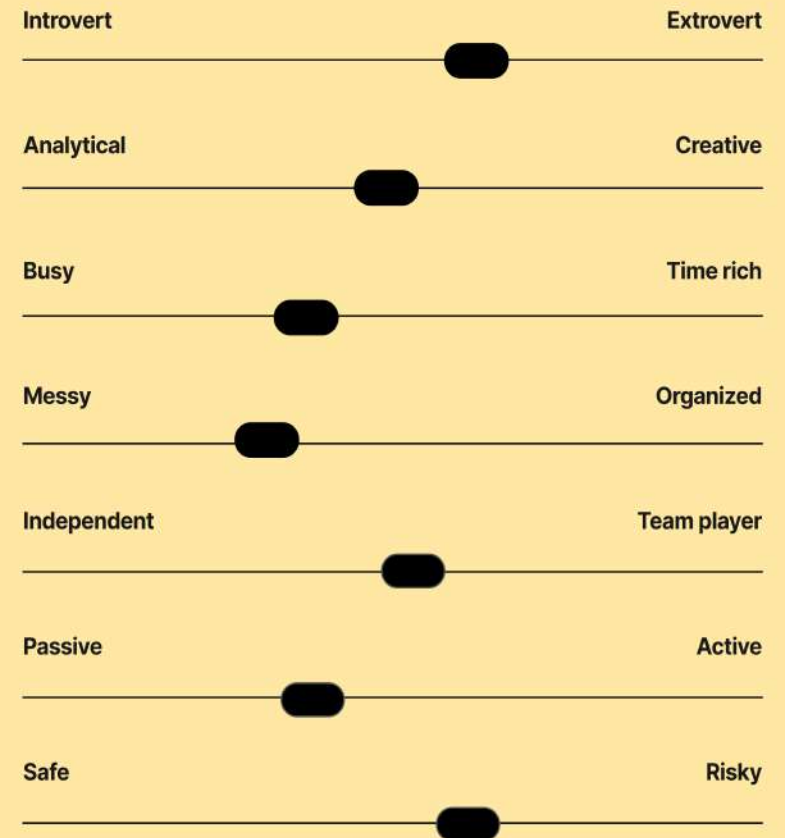


Figure 39: Get to know the Urban Wanderer

Values

Sociability: Enjoys recommendations, events, and shared discoveries

Simplicity: Loves smooth digital flows, but also friendly staff and chatty atmospheres

Epicurist: Wants to enjoy without accumulating and breaking the bank

Attitude

Seeks pleasure and quality without overspending

Loves discovering new things, trends, or alternatives

Influenced by word of mouth recommendations and influencers

Goals

Access cool or unusual items to maybe buy after

Make her money go further

Test the new local shop and help out the owner

Decision Making Process

Discovers mainly on Youtube, from a trusted friend, but also at physical places while wandering

Decides to try something fun, affordable, and easy to return

Checks out the website/app, needs a pleasant and airy UI, check the price (comparison to an experience and not necessarily an item), needs a quick onboarding/process

Needs and expectations

A range of items that match her lifestyle (food, leisure, cozy nights, entertainment, sport)

Flexible and accessible after class or work. Would visit the shop to see the items beforehand, get explanations and meet the owner.

Ability to explore without commitment, and a clear onboarding (without jargon or contracts)

Motivations

Try new objects or tools without committing to buying

"Possessing is also a mental burden". This can help reduce it and be more minimalist

Add variety to evenings with her boyfriend or friends

Keep her lifestyle diverse, social, and affordable

Pain points and frustrations

Clunky UX, unappealing UI, too many rules, and too many steps to rent something

Complexity in understanding how the service works

Hidden fees or unclear return conditions

May drop out if process feels impersonal, too commercial, and/or with too much pressure → light experience

Drivers

Free trials (Affordable pricing with low risk for first use)

Loyalty programs for insurance, access to new items, etc.

Attractive, inspiring website or app, friendly branding or a welcoming person behind the counter

Shelves or glass protected items to see the product range and directly understand what it is about

Reassured that there is no hidden fee (eventually through an insurance, accessible owner, a lot of communication for the deposit, notifications)

Figure 40: More about the Urban Wanderer

K.5 The User Journey

  = Utilitarian Modernist

  = Community-driven Creative

  = Offline Explorer

  = Urban Wanderer

Stages	User steps/actions	Solved Pain, Feelings & Thoughts	Main Touchpoints
What is each step of the user journey?	What action does the user take during each step?	How did the user feel before? What caused friction?	How do the users interact with the product? On which devices? Offline or online?
Acquisition: Awareness	 Identifies the need, searches online, finds the official website, Instagram page, Google Maps, and asking family   Discovers via Instagram, Youtube, and Facebook ads/reels, pop-up and local events, posters in the streets, or a friend  Discovers via word of mouth from social circle, local municipality flyers (not internet)	    Didn't even know that a certain type of item could be rented and shared + didn't know that this service existed     "I search for a service like this, but as soon as I don't see it, I will buy"	 Digital website only (phone or computer)  Computer website, social media (Instagram, Facebook), physical location offline  Phone website, Instagram page, physical location offline (shop & street)  Physical location offline (shop, street, & organizations)
Acquisition: Consideration	   Shows the money and Co2 saved when renting a specific item    Browses the online catalogue and uses filters + categories   Testimonials with real faces & stories   Sees the items in display and asks employees about the concept, prices, etc.   Can clearly compare prices and added-values compared to buying with instant info, KPIs & links to external review sites (i.e., Tripadvisor, Trustpilot, ...) all found on the sober and simple official website	   "Will it be available when I need it?"    "Will it be worth the hassle?"    "What if I break it while using it?"    "How can they verify so that I don't pay if I didn't do any damage?"   "Does it support local shops and has fair processes? Who is behind it?"   "Are there any good items that I want to try (before buying)?"	 Digital website or app (phone or computer)  Computer website highly preferred  Phone website, app, Instagram page, physical location offline  Physical location offline
Activation: Onboarding, booking, finding a location to borrow, etc.	   Creates an account for a free trial or the reward program    Watches the VSL explainer to understand how it works   Might use the "help" button to see the FAQ, message an employee, or call them  Gets email and/or SMS confirmation with further clear steps   Books an item online (with or without account) in a minimum of steps and pays with integrated services (Apple, Google).   Asks the employees and tries on the spot by answering a short oral form. Gets all in paper	    "Am I doing this right?"     "Are there hidden fees?"     "I don't want to read 10 pages of rules."     "Is it worth the effort?"	 Digital website or app (phone or computer)  Computer website  Phone website, app, physical location offline  Physical location offline

Figure 41: Ideal User Journey - Pre-use

Stages	User steps/actions	Pain, Feelings & Thoughts	Touchpoints
What is each step of the user journey?	What action does the user take during each step?	How might the user be feeling? What causes friction? How bad is this pain?	How do the users interact with the product? On which devices? Offline or online?
Rules & policy (deposit, payment, etc.)	 Blocks a deposit or pays a waiver instantly with integrated bank apps. The contract is made by accepting that & sent via email  Receives paper contract, signs it, pays in cash	 “I want it to go quickly and smoothly. I skim through the terms & conditions. I know that I can block fraud via my bank easily”.  “I want to be able to pay in cash and by card. I examine the terms & policy on paper”.	 All digital, via trusted 3rd party and paid by card or digital wallet  At the counter, in cash and signed on paper
Retrieval/Pickup	 Picks up the item in a pick-up box at a local shop seen on a map; opens it with a QR code  Goes to the main LoT in person and picks up the item at the counter  Accepts a notification and delivers an item to a house  Receives the item at their house in the specified time frame	 “Where do I go? How do I open it? I'd like something familiar”  “I want to talk to real humans”.  “It's annoying to wait in line and talk a lot”.	 At pick-up boxes located in local partner shops (e.g., malls, farms, etc.)  At the counter
Usage (Learning to use the item)	 Checks item with online checklist, watches video tutorials in the website, in his/her account section and item page to use  Asks the community on tips to use the item  Checks item with provided paper checklist, Reads the manual that came with the item	 “I wish I had someone to show me.”  “I'm afraid I'll break it.”	 Online with videos from Youtube embedded in the website; eventually using the “help” option from the website to directly call or video-call  Paper manual

Figure 42: Ideal User Journey - Use

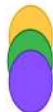
Stages	User steps/actions	Pain, Feelings & Thoughts	Touchpoints
What is each step of the user journey?	What action does the user take during each step?	How might the user be feeling? What causes friction? How bad is this pain?	How do the users interact with the product? On which devices? Offline or online?
Return & Verification	 Receives notification a day before, cleans the item, drops it back into the boxes, receives an email confirmation, employee/volunteer will check soon  Cleans, brings it to LoT, human verifies, signs off	 "Where do I leave it?"  "Who is going to verify?"	 At the pick-up/drop-off boxes with QR code and online via the web + email  At the counter and paper sign-off
Retention: Post-use and review	 Receives thank you notification with explanation of € saved, invitation to rate the service with comments.  Fills in form of satisfaction at counter	 "What now?"	 Email with link and website in account  At the counter and paper form
Recommendation: Further use & Referral	 Invitation to follow and share on social media, join online loyalty program, online referral program. Receives notification with nudge later if no use. Preferences saved  Gets free credits thanks to the P2P delivery  Can get a loyalty card and referral rewards	 "Should I use it again?"	 Email with link and website in account (phone and computer)  Paper form

Figure 43: Ideal User Journey - Post-use