

BEST4U.COM: AN E-COMMERCE PLATFORM FOR USED ITEMS TRANSACTION

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ABSTRACT: This article introduces a conceptual business model for "Best4u.com," an online platform powered by web and mobile applications. This platform enables users to buy and sell used goods. "Best4u.com" aspires to achieve one of the Sustainable Development Goals 12, which calls for the promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns. The business model for this app is being developed using the design thinking method, which enables the identification of critical problems, possible solutions, validation of customer segments, and conceptual solution suggestions. Other tools used are the Business Model Canvas (BMC), Value Proposition Canvas (VPC), and Environment Map (EM). A survey of potential customers was conducted to validate the initial Business Model Canvas and Value Proposition Canvas. Most of our respondents are comfortable using the internet to purchase books, gadgets, and other items. The survey discovered that most people are uninterested in online secondhand shopping due to the scarcity of effective business platforms. They are, however, willing to purchase their essential used items online if several critical issues are addressed, including delayed delivery, fraudulent products, and transportation costs. Finally, this article presents a validated conceptual business model for an online second-hand shopping platform/apps called "Best4u.com," with the objective of simplifying online second-hand shopping.

KEY WORDS: *E-commerce, Used items, Business Model Canvas, Value Proposition Design Canvas, Digital Entrepreneurship*

1. INTRODUCTION

"Best4u.com" is an online marketplace where you can buy and sell used goods at reasonable prices and in good condition. During this global pandemic of COVID-19, most of the world's population is confined to their homes. It forces us to stay at home and complete as many tasks as possible online. (Đogaš, 2020). Shopping becomes more difficult than at any other time during this pandemic (Salim, 2020). Our proposed business venture will have some distinguishing features to help low-income customer segments such as students, households, and many more (Banoo, 2020).

Producers, second-hand product retailers (stores and other small businesses), consumers, and delivery personnel are the target customer segments. There will be virtual shops for various used retailers and manufacturers. They can use our platform to sell their product. Additionally, used shops will be able to purchase products directly from producers.

The platform enables the delivery man to be assigned for the purpose of collecting and delivering products to customers. The agent will collect the stock products and deliver them to the consumers. The "students" and consumers are the primary customers of this business. The local agent is the primary manufacturer of high-quality products. The delivery staff will pick up the products from the agent or seller and deliver them to our customers. Anyone with sufficient delivery abilities can register with us and earn money as a delivery person.

Nowadays, many people prefer online shopping for its ease. However, due to the lack of search opportunities, many people are still used to purchasing their necessities and home products from physical stores (Nogoev, 2011). It is not easy to find second-hand products in good condition. Our delivery person will quickly verify the product and, if it is approved, the seller will be able to deliver it to the customer.

Physical shopping is extremely difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic due to movement control order (MCO) restrictions. It is now required to be able to purchase household goods online (Coker, 2020). There is, however, a very limited platform that allows for the online purchase of used items. Despite the fact that some chain supermarkets operate virtual online stores, the purchasing and selling process is inefficient.

Our proposed systems can save people's time and money while shopping for used items online. They will be able to find every shop and product on a single platform and will be able to purchase items from multiple shops concurrently. The proposed business venture will alleviate our consumers' concerns about second-hand goods shopping. This system is currently being developed for people of all ages. A platform like "Best4u.com" appears to be necessary in this scenario to make our lives easier and more efficient.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

For many people, purchasing new items online is both costly and inconvenient. College and university freshmen, particularly from middle-class families may struggle to afford new books and supplies. As more people struggle financially, many will turn to such sites to purchase used goods that appear to be brand new at a reasonable price.

Regrettably, fraudsters prey on online businesses that provide a secondhand marketplace by listing bogus products under legitimate brand names. As a result, there is a growing demand for a reputable online marketplace that verifies sellers to weed out scammers and focuses on pre-owned goods that are significantly less expensive than their newer counterparts. Additionally, consumers are concerned with the quality of used products and the condition of current products. The product images are insufficient to determine the product's quality. A verifier who can assist customers and consumers is required to ensure the products' quality.

"Best4u.com" is a platform to address these issues by offering an online marketplace for used products in excellent condition as well as emergency customer service. It will propel the internet purchasing industry forward while putting an end to traditional second-hand shopping. The purpose of this paper is to describe a conceptual business model for an easy-to-use website and mobile application for second-hand item transactions. The e-commerce platform shall maximize used items by recycling and reusing them rationally. As a reliable platform, it offers verified quality products at a reasonable price and with a quick turnaround time.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Online marketplace for used goods

The global pandemic of COVID-19 and the Movement Control Order (MCO) tipped the balance in favour of online used product purchases. Online purchasing of used products holds a lot of promise. The trend toward online shopping is not limited to Malaysia, but also to other countries with a growing e-commerce sector, such as Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia. Online used product shopping has evolved into a go-to service, especially during Movement Control Orders (MCO), as people have noticed that it is safer to buy second-hand items online rather than go to physical stores (Banoo, 2020). Passionate and skilled employees are the keys to success in the goods delivery industry and e-commerce in the online used items company (Gorman, 2020). While delivering value is crucial for all organizations, online goods selling enterprises require a well-trained and managed delivery service. In the e-commerce sector, it is critical to have well-designed platforms with a simple and engaging user experience and used goods selling platforms are no exception (Banoo, 2020). Even if online secondhand shopping is becoming more popular, it is critical to keep the trend going. The most difficult aspect of building an online buying habit is altering the traditional purchasing culture (Bauerova, 2019). However, there is a segment of the population that finds secondhand shopping to be a chore (Zaini, 2011). Online shopping is a convenient and hassle-free option for those people (Kian, 2018).

In recent years, several businesses have shifted their focus to internet purchasing. The sector appears to be expanding and getting more competitive. The rivalry in online purchasing is a good indicator that firms should be pushed to develop and create the Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS). Every online transaction comes with an undeniable fee for the delivery of the products. One of the most vehement opponents of online secondhand buying is that most buyers are unwilling to pay the shipping fee (Banoo, 2020). There is also the issue of timely product delivery because many people prefer to buy their necessities online (Coker, 2020). Time constraints can have a major impact on purchasing behavior. However, current factors are not the same as they were before the pandemic. Most individuals work from home and have plenty of free time, yet many people are afraid to venture outside to shop for used things, and many more are restricted in their movements. Considering the period and other worldwide conditions, we identified it as a promising and expanding business.

3.2. Touchstone

One of the most important factors to consider when starting any type of business is whether similar businesses already exist. This aids in identifying the company's weak and strong points. We are also looking for a company with a similar business plan to ours.

3.2.1. Shopee

Shopee is the most popular e-commerce site in Malaysia. They have two main marketplaces: the Shopee mall, where selected brands and authorized distributors can sell their products; and the standard Shopee marketplace, which is open to everyone, including part-time sellers and resellers. The standard e-commerce marketplace can be used to sell used goods. A growing concern is that there is no seller verification required to list your products on the standard Shopee marketplace. As a result, the number of online scammers on the Shopee marketplace has nearly tripled, from 278 fake resellers in 2019 to 697 cases in 2020 (Baker, 2021).

3.2.3. Lazada

Lazada is the second most popular e-commerce site in Malaysia. Lazada, like Shopee, has two main marketplaces: LazMall, which is only available to brand owners and authorized distributors, and the Lazada marketplace, which is open to anyone to list and sell their products. Lazada Marketplace, which lists a wide variety of used items, can be used to buy second-hand products. Unfortunately, because the Lazada marketplace lacks seller verification, scammers continue to sell counterfeit goods under the guise of genuine brands.

3.2.4. Mudah

Mudah is yet another large Malaysian e-commerce site. They have a marketplace for licensed businesses and another that is open to anyone. Mudah is one of the go-to sites to trade second-hand items in Malaysia. Scammers still operate in this marketplace with no seller verification and sell fake electronics like phones and TVs. Victims of these scams must seek assistance and file a police report.

3.2.5. Bikroy.com

Bikroy.com is one of the most popular e-commerce sites in Bangladesh that deals in second-hand products. Sellers can include a photo of their product in their listing. The buyer can choose to directly contact the seller via phone number and chatbox. This platform is not liable for any instances of fraud or cheating, and it is not affiliated with any delivery service. Customers can always locate products quickly and at a reasonable price. Regrettably, the seller took advantage of the customers' maximum time. Delivery is a distinct matter. They even lack a payment method, which makes purchasing on this site extremely difficult.

3.3. Market Demand

Online shopping has become increasingly popular in recent years. Global e-commerce revenues are expected to exceed \$3.53 trillion in 2019. Total e-commerce revenues are expected to grow quickly, reaching around \$4.206 trillion

in 2020 (Kristensen, 2020). Because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, many people are forced to buy online due to movement restrictions or prohibitions around the world (Statista Research Department, 2020). Many companies began to offer delivery services from their physical locations, and many chain superstores began to sell their products online and deliver them to their customers through their websites.

5. FOUR LENSES OF INNOVATION

Four lenses of innovation define thought processes and help innovators understand how to turn their ideas into large-scale businesses (Gibson, 2015). These four thought patterns can aid in the development of an individual's creative thinking capacity for problem-solving and idea-generating (Hobcraft, 2015).

5.1. Challenging Orthodoxies

Make people understand that it is best to shop secondhand online. Maintaining the service and product quality is also a great challenge for online second-hand selling, especially when it comes to express delivery. Convincing the sellers and producers to sell their products on our platforms is another important issue to be resolved.

5.2. Harnessing Trends

The trend of online shopping is a great motivation for us to start the venture. The COVID-19 global pandemic is greatly triggering online second-hand product sales because of social distancing and financial issues. People also like to shop online because it saves time and is very convenient. We hope that people will like our platform to buy and sell their secondhand items.

5.3. Leveraging Resources

From this perspective, our main target is those people who are students and are interested in secondhand products. It will solve their difficulties with secondhand shopping and provide more time for other tasks.

5.4. Understanding needs

Our service will benefit students and those who are interested in secondhand products. It is more convenient and easier, especially for those who prefer to shop for second-hand products. Our venture will create more job opportunities for many people, for example, developers for our system and delivery personnel.

6. ENVIRONMENT MAP

The environment map is a diagram that depicts the environment clearly while also highlighting opportunities, constraints, and threats to a business. The purpose of utilizing this tool is to adapt and develop a firm in the face of continual environmental change, in order to avoid commercial irrelevance or economic decline (Amarsy, 2015).

6.1. Key Trends

Online secondhand shopping is booming right now due to the global pandemic. Due to the financial crisis, people are also interested in selling used products and purchasing good-quality second-hand products.

6.2. Market Forces

Our key market force is that the customer does not need to go to the seller if any product is faulty. And many people nowadays lack the time and authorization to travel across state or city boundaries. There are good forces as customers do not want to go shopping in crowded places because of COVID.

6.3. Macroeconomic Forces

The online second-hand shopping industry is growing throughout the year. However, there has been a significant job loss as a result of the pandemic, and people are purchasing fewer products.

6.4. Industry Forces

Our main industry force is direct buying from a first-party seller, even if the price is cheaper. Even though there are many wholesalers and stock sellers connected, we will give priority to local unprofessional sellers.

7. INITIAL BUSINESS MODEL

The Business Model Canvas (BMC) is a way of visualising business modelling. To begin, the initial business model canvas (BMC) and initial value proposition canvas (VPC) demonstrate the proposed models. In comparison to other similar second-hand transaction platforms or services, "Best4u.com" is intended to be more distinctive and stand out from the competition. Additional elements, ideas, and details will be added to the canvas and presented in enhanced versions that will be discussed later.

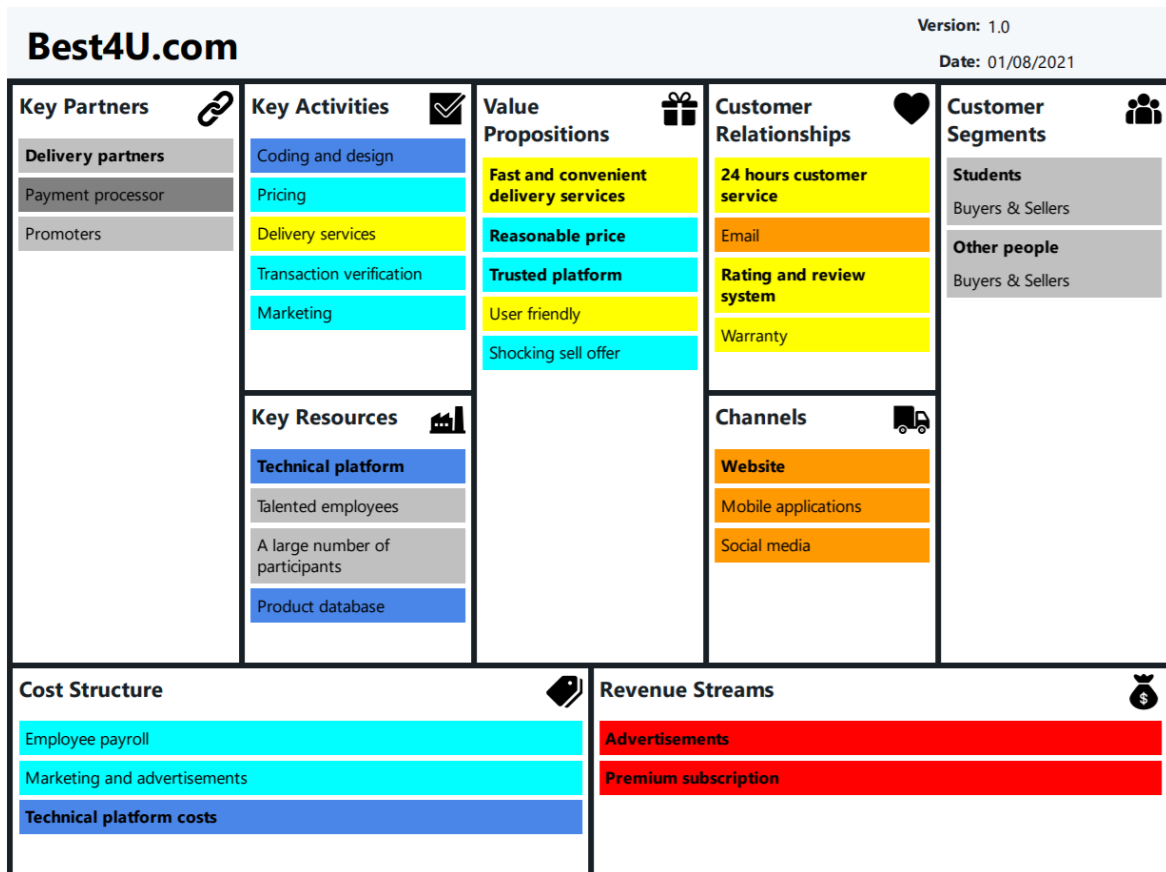


Fig. 1. Initial Business Model Canvas

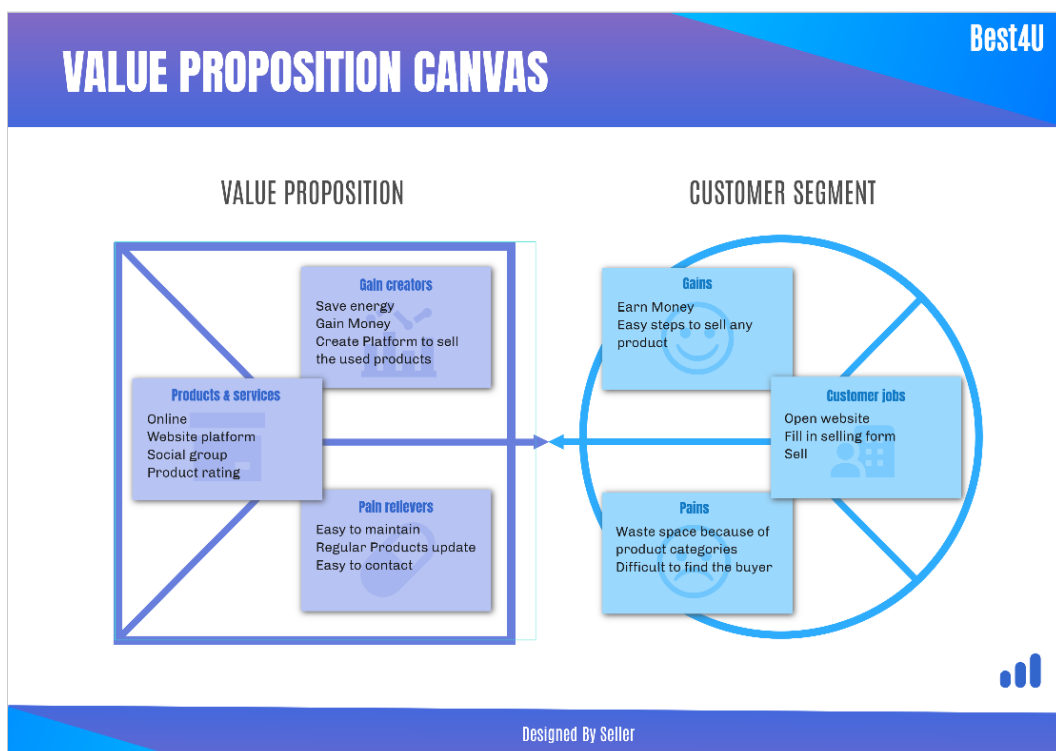


Fig. 2. Initial Value Proposition Design Canvas for Sellers

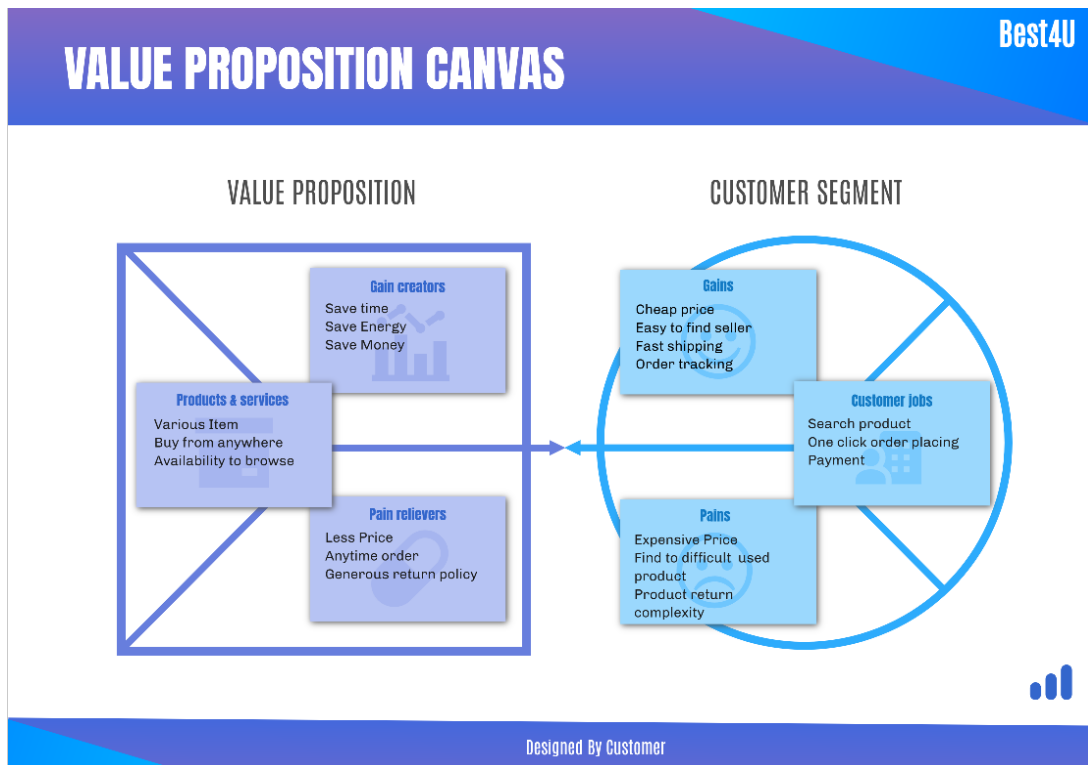


Fig. 3. Initial Value Proposition Design Canvas for Buyers

8. VALIDATION OF INITIAL BUSINESS MODEL

8.1. Methodology

In this section, we walk through the methodology used in this study, focusing on each sector of the population, which is divided into students, employees, and business owners. To obtain the information required for completing the project goal, we conducted an online interview using Google Forms. To ensure client satisfaction, the business will evolve based on the findings from the data collected. A random sample of consumers was interviewed online to ascertain their primary concerns when purchasing used products. As part of their evaluation, interviewers looked through the business plan and the BMC, and offered suggestions for quick delivery services. Participants were asked broad questions regarding their second-hand buying experiences and expectations in an online survey. As a result of this study, it was possible to receive direct input from customers on the opportunities and problems of online product selling. All of the replies gave valuable insight into the firm and recommended ways to improve the situation. The results of this survey will help the firm avoid any problems that consumers have had in the past. Clients require a comprehensive, fast, trustworthy, and simple solution for online secondhand shopping.

8.2. Customer Validations

We conducted a survey of customers who could benefit from our business using our initial BMC and VPC. The results of our survey were gathered from the target group and analyzed for future use in order to meet the requirements and expectations of consumers.

8.3. Findings

The survey is completed by a specific group of people who can benefit from our business, such as consumers. The poll was disseminated to the public using social media. To make the analytic process easier and capture all the replies, we used a Google form to build our survey.

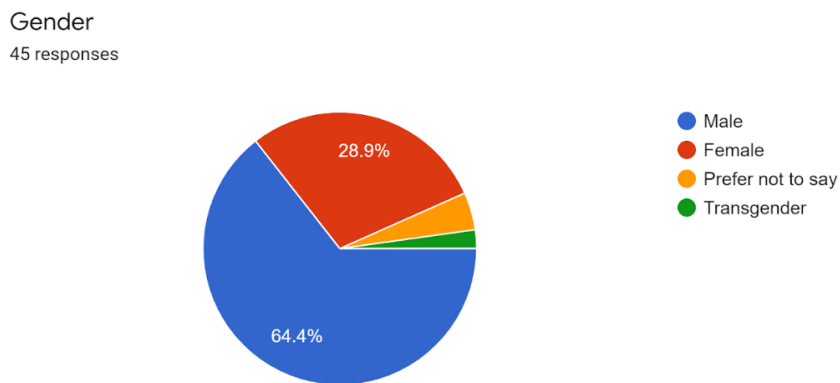


Fig. 4. Gender

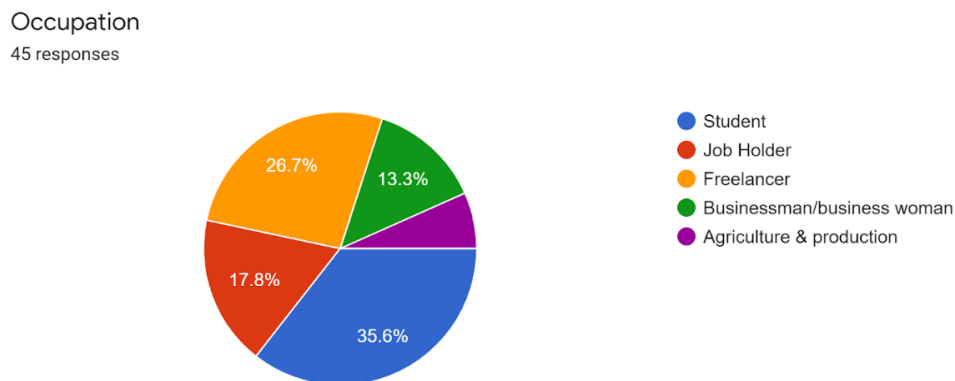


Fig. 5. Occupation

How often do you shop online?

45 responses

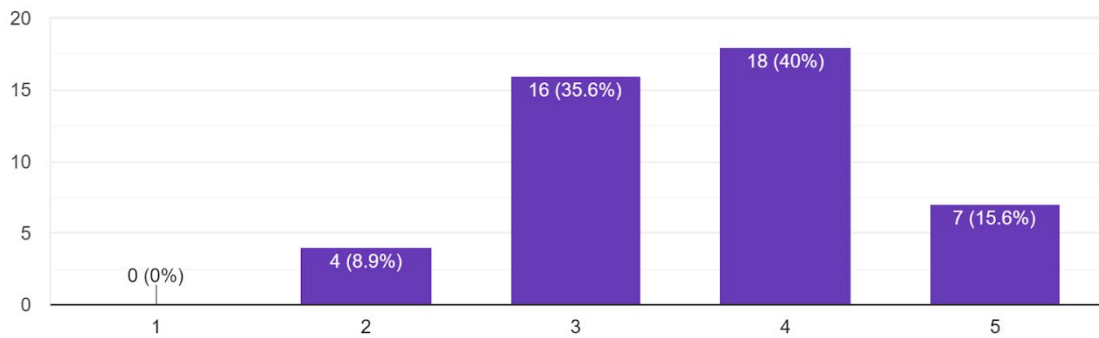


Fig. 6. Online shopping frequency

Why do you prefer online shopping? (Select as many as are applicable.)

45 responses

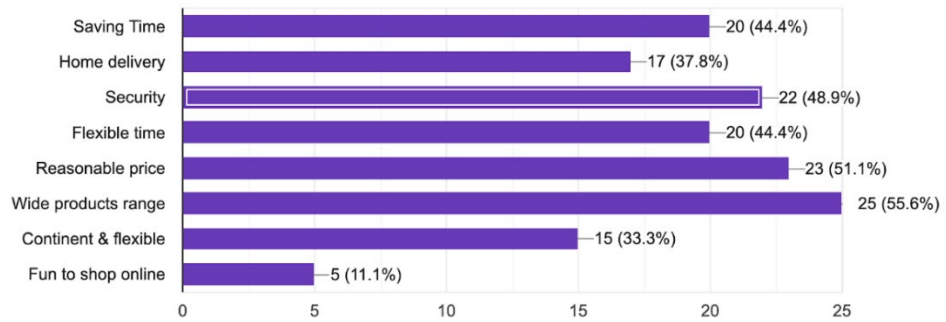


Fig. 7. Reasons for preferring online shopping

What do you usually buy online from the following types of listed items? (Select as many as are applicable.)

45 responses

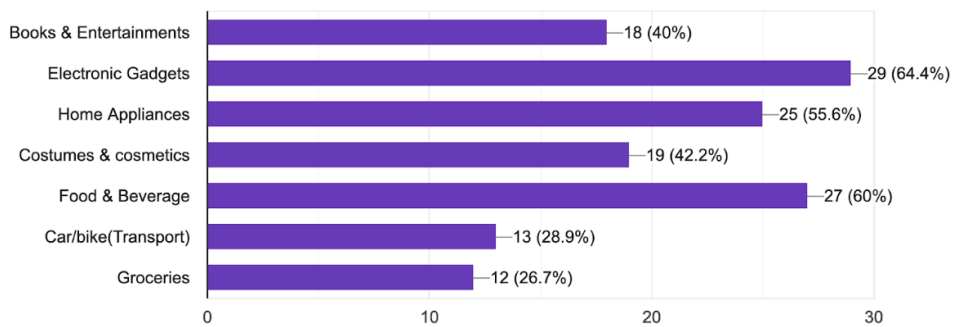


Fig. 8. Products that are frequently purchased

How much do you spend on shopping per month?
45 responses

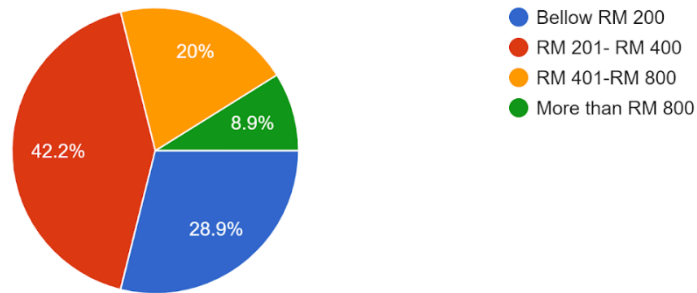


Fig. 9. Monthly online shopping expenditures

Are you facing any difficulties with second-hand product shopping during this MCO period because of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic?
45 responses

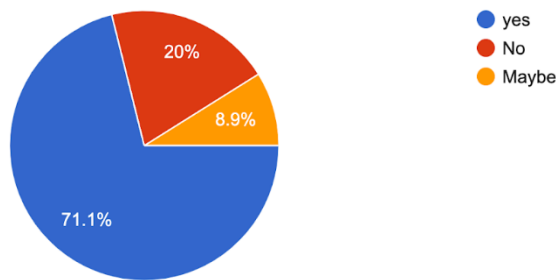


Fig. 10. Second-hand shopping challenges during MCO due to COVID-19 global pandemic

Do you prefer to buy your necessary products as used products?
45 responses

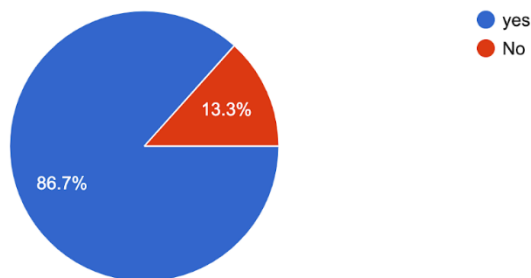


Fig. 11: Preference for purchasing previously owned products

What are the crucial challenges for online second hand products shopping?

45 responses

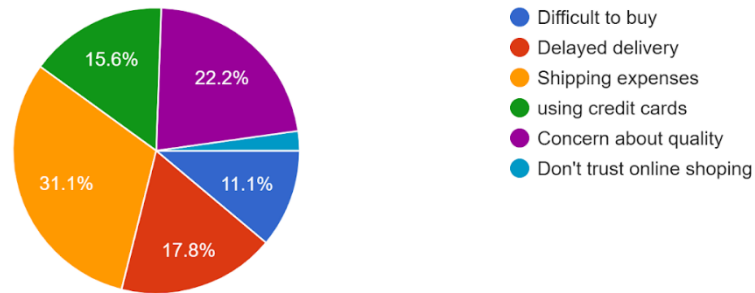


Fig. 12. Challenges associated with online second-hand product shopping

What are the items you can consider buying online?(Select as many as are applicable.)

45 responses

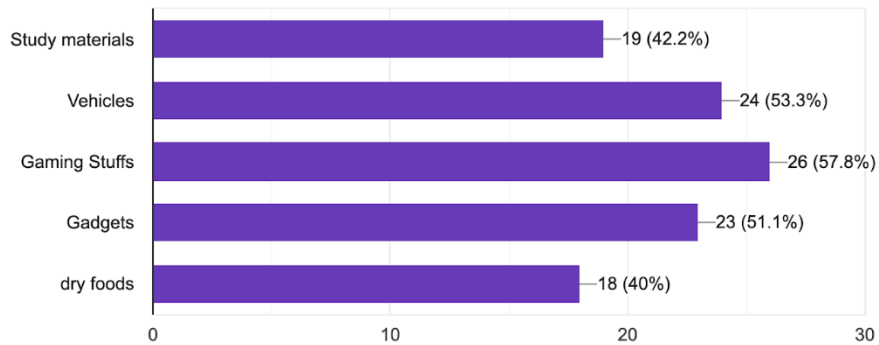


Fig. 13. The most frequently purchased products online

Do you have any suggestions regarding Best4u.com?

9 responses



Fig. 14. Additional suggestions

According to the data gathered, most people are having difficulty locating used items during the MCO and are interested in purchasing secondhand items such as clothing online. Many of our respondents are familiar with online shopping and make frequent purchases of books, gadgets, and other household items. Due to the scarcity of effective business platforms, most people are uninterested in online secondhand shopping. They are, nevertheless, willing to buy their essential used things online if several important issues are addressed, such as delayed delivery, fraudulent products, and transportation costs.

9. CONCEPTUAL SOLUTION



Fig. 15. Enhanced Business Model Canvas

9.1. Customer Segment

Customer segmentation is the process of categorizing consumers based on shared criteria. Any firm may sell to each set of consumers correctly and effectively thanks to customer segmentation.

Best4u.com shopping lists the group of customers in the “Customer Segment” block, that is:

- Consumers (Including a great variety of groups of people like students, housewives, etc.)**

The people who will buy used goods from our Best4u.com shopping site. Especially student is the main group of our service target. Otherwise, there are many possible roles from ordinary people such as housewives, housekeepers and middle-class people.

- Entrepreneurs / Providers**

They are the agents, industries, or super retail companies. They can sell their products from their virtual shops on our platform. Individuals also can provide their used items on our platform.

9.1. Value Proposition

The value proposition block contains information on the value that Best4u.com shopping delivers to its clients through its products and services. There is a handy, reliable platform that simplifies and speeds up the ordering procedure, as well as quick fulfillment. It will provide some additional income options for delivery employees around the city.

9.2. Channels

Promote this business platform via advertisements and push notifications on mobile applications, websites, social media, and affiliates.

9.3. Customer Relationship

This section discusses the various types of connections that a business can make. Customers will be able to place orders via Best4u.com purchasing from any smartphone, providing a seamless and user-friendly experience.

9.4. Key Resources

The key resources section details the resources required to run the Best4u.com e-commerce platform. Quality service, a dependable distribution fleet, as well as people, software, and hardware, are the most important resources.

9.5. Key Partners

The firms or services that assist a business in operating are referred to as key partners. Sellers, affiliates, and logistics partners are the main partners of Best4u.com shopping.

9.6. Cost Structure

The cost structure explains how much a company's business model costs. The cost structure includes marketing, taxes, training fees, facility costs, and online platform maintenance.

9.7. Revenue Streams

Revenue streams refer to the company's primary source of income, which is mostly sales commissions as well as media products and services for Best4u.com shopping.

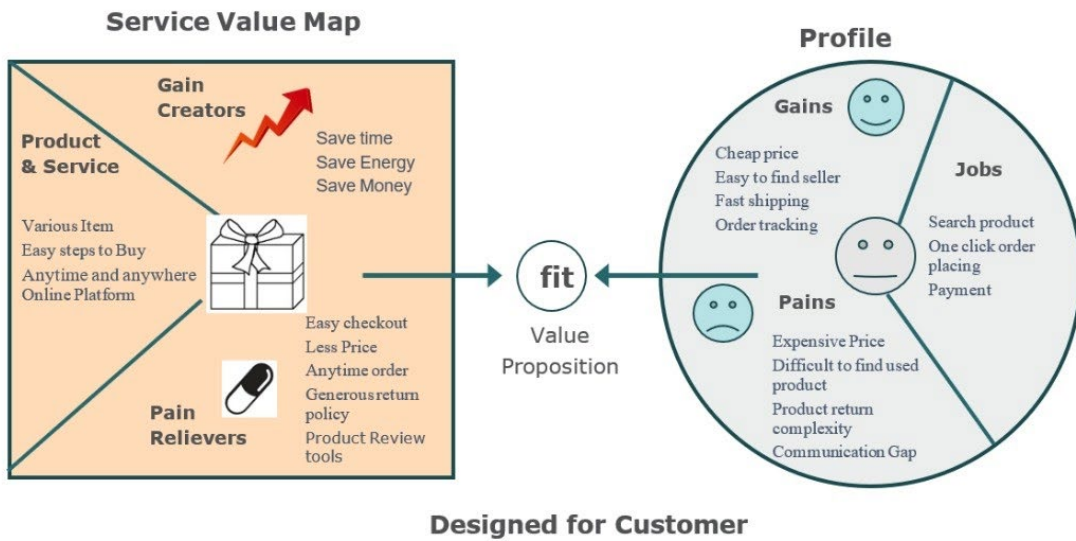


Fig. 16. Enhanced Value Proposition Design Canvas for Customers

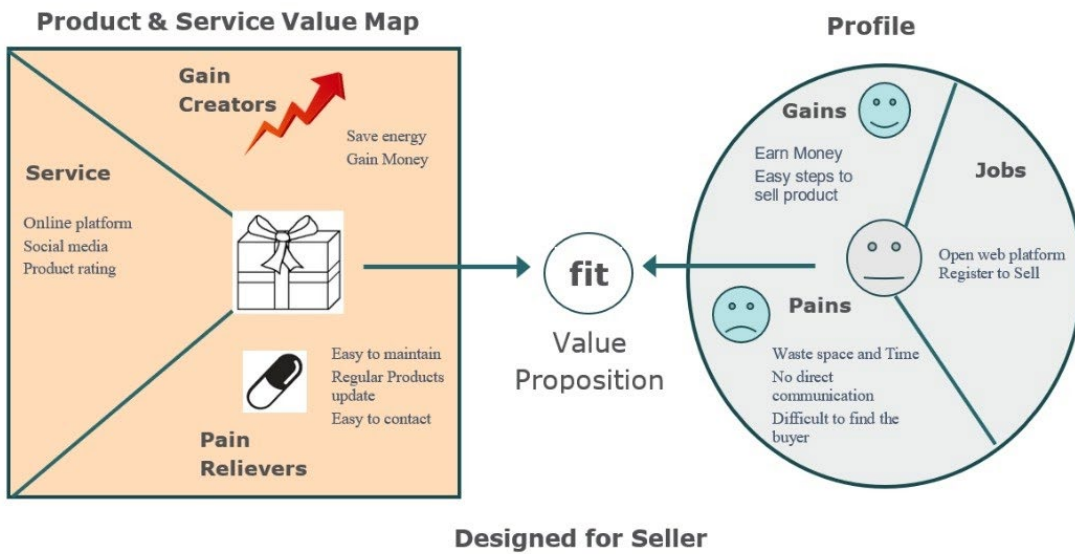


Fig. 17. Enhanced Value Proposition Design Canvas for Sellers

9.8. Rapid and Convenient

We will provide rapid delivery at reasonable prices and our logistic department will ensure customers' products are shipped safely.

9.9. Reasonable Prices

Our platform will handle all pricing. The sellers cannot charge more. Our system will compare the prices to the product and market conditions to ensure reasonable prices.

9.10. Diverse Products

This approach is a merchandising technique that draws people into the shop by offering a diverse choice of products. A typical example of a wide variety approach is the old-fashioned five-and-dime shop.

9.11. Trusted Platform

Our platform is a government-registered company. Any customer can give us feedback or complain to Best4U.com about any issue.

9.12. User Friendly

The user interface (UI) is very user-friendly. Based on customer feedback, we designed it to accommodate all customer types.

9.13. Seller Verification

Each seller must create an account in our system and submit an application. After our investigation, we will provide the seller code separately.

9.14. Cash On Delivery (COD)

We will provide a "Cash on Delivery" (COD) service. Customers can check their products first, then check the quality, and receive the items. If they are not satisfied, they can return the items to the same delivery provider.

9.15. Customer Feedback

Customer feedback is one of the best practices for any business. We will highly encourage our customers to give feedback about our service and products. Product reviews boost sales and are simple to find.

9.16. Scammer Detection

Our system will detect scammers. Our investigation unit will conduct due diligence on the sellers and track down genuine individuals and businesses.

9.17. Student Promotion

Students are our potential customers. We want to encourage them even more and provide special promotions for students. We anticipate that this promotion will make life easier for students.

9.18. Product Verification

Verification of products is one of the most novel concepts on our platform. Our logistics department will send an employee who is knowledgeable about product verification, and he or she will verify the products quickly. Following that, he or she will determine how the product will be delivered.

9.19. Instant Delivery

We offer three distinct modes of delivery. One of them is an instant delivery system. We must deliver it immediately upon receipt of the order. This method of delivery will be more expensive, but it will resolve the immediate problems.

9.20. Refund

Our refund system is quick and hassle-free. The same logistics can be used to refund the customer immediately. There is no need to pay additional money. If they

are sent via standard delivery, they will be handled by our investigation unit, which will resolve the issue as quickly as possible. Following that, our system will issue a refund.

10. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

The following modeling presentation depicted the aims and perceptions of the Best4u.com retail business model, a hypothetical internet platform for buying and selling used items. This hypothetical strategy may benefit consumers, merchants, and producers alike. SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) may be partially attained. Shopping at Best4u.com might help merchants sell more items online, as well as establish a direct communication channel for selling and buying between producers, shops, and consumers, as well as between producers, shops, and consumers. Our platform may also be used by other online second-hand shopping programs such as Bicroy.com, Shopee, and Mudah.com. When it comes time to build a full business plan for Best4u.com, the retail conceptual business model will be using the V2MOM (Visualization, Values, Methods, Obstacles, and Measures) model. For our users, we provide both web-based and mobile applications. With Best4u.com, online second-hand shopping will be taken to the next level.

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