Emilia Edwards

User Researcher & Experience Designer

ABOUT ME

Hi. I'm Emilia, a User Researcher and Experience Designer with a 15-year history of sales and customer service in the restaurant industry and a background in visual art, teaching, and production printing.



I have **one year of experience in a UX role** creating the client interface for a B2B SaaS startup.

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In 2021 I earned **MS in Human Computer Interaction** from Drexel University. My Capstone Project focused on generative research, user research, qualitative data analysis, and user testing.



I'm based in Philadelphia and looking for a full-time hybrid or remote role on an established design team.





SKILLS

My Areas of Focus



User Research: I tailor designs to stakeholders' needs by gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing quantitative and qualitative data.



Content Strategy: Understanding the unique constraints of each product and project, I design intuitive content flows based on user research and testing.



Experience Design: From low-fidelity wireframes to interactive prototypes, I focus on context and usability during each stage of the design process.





HISTORY & EXPERIENCE

My Path to UX

Education

BFA in Visual Art MFA in Printmaking

2004 - 2011

Self-Employed Artist

Commissions, Teaching, **Production Printing**

2011 - 2019

2006 - 2023

Hospitality Professional

MS in HCI

Drexel University Dept. of Info. Science

2019 - 2021

UX/UI Intern

Shamrck Enterprise CMS

2020 - 2021





CASE STUDIES

Examples of My Work



Understanding the Health Information Needs of Food Service Industry Workers

Context: Capstone Project for MS Degree

User Research & Data Analysis



Pricing Page Redesign for Enterprise Web Content Management Startup

Company: Shamrck

Experience Design & Prototyping



CASE STUDY #1

Understanding the Health **Information Needs of Food Service Industry Workers**

Context: Capstone Research Project for MS in Human-Computer Interaction

Project Summary

I planned and conducted user research to formulate design recommendations for a mobile chatbot addressing health information gaps for food service workers.

Team

- Solo research project
- 2 advisors: Faculty at Drexel University
- Remote team based in Philadelphia

Timeline: 20 Weeks

Tools: Figma, Miro, Google Sheets, Zoom

My Responsibilities

- Qualitative research study
- Data analysis & synthesis
- Prototype & testing
- Report & design recommendations

Outcome

- Detailed insight into the specific health information needs of food service workers
- Actionable research to determine content & narrow scope of proposed chatbot app

I had no idea how to get a primary care doctor. It's challenging to just try to Google something.

66

Injury Care



PROCESS

I led this user research study from discovery through analysis and, in collaboration with 2 other researchers, developed design recommendations for a product addressing the problem.



Study Format - Technology probe: During a series of interviews, I asked participants to interact with an early prototype to gain an understanding of how well my proposed solution would address their needs.





I saw a problem opportunity as a hospitality worker during the Covid-19 pandemic. My colleagues were struggling to locate and understand information and resources impacting their health, finances and stability.



Project Focus: Discovery and user research



Target Audience: Food service industry workers



Starting Point: Informal conversations and mindmapping to empathize and define problem space

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Median pay for food and drink service \bullet workers in 2020 was \$24,000/year *
- Projected growth of 17% in food \bullet service jobs over the next decade *
- 35% of restaurant and hospitality workers received health insurance through their employers in 2020 *
- 15.6 million food service workers in U.S. in 2019 **

* US Bureau of Labor Statistics ** National Restaurant Association



DISCOVER

First, I conducted exploratory research to empathize and understand the problem before developing an in-depth user study.



Detail: mind map of generative research conversation

ary, HSA... *\$300... ?? Catastrophic, temporary, high deductible, etc. What do these terms mean?

options ependents s with public Emotional toll

Trouble going outside

What concerns you most right now?

I spoke informally with a small group of food service workers to:

- Understand their immediate concerns.
- Locate information gaps. Where is absent or incomplete information creating stress?
- Mind map anxieties around information they struggle to access or understand.



DEFINE

According to our exploratory research, locating, understanding, and paying for health services was the most common and immediate stressor.



How might we address gaps in the availability and accessibility of health-related information for food service workers?



Project Objective: Conduct end-user research to design a digital product addressing the health resource-related information gap for service workers



Next Step: Formulate product requirements and conceptualize research and testing methods

REQUIREMENTS

- Minimal Navigation
- Simple Language
- Mobile Platform
- Location-Based

CONTEXT

- Long irregular work hours
- Inconsistent employment
- Varying education levels
- Low income
- Varying levels of English language proficiency





IDEATE

We brainstormed a list of ideas and selected 3 possible solutions. A mobile chatbot application best fit the defined requirements.

Aggregator App: For Uninsured

Scope is too wide for time frame

Chatbot App: Location-Based

Immediate results & simple interface

Covid-Specific App: Find Services

How long will this be useful? Short term

USER FLOW



RESEARCH METHOD

After framing the problem, I developed a central research question to guide the interview protocol.



- What is the current state of healthcare information accessibility for service industry workers?
- What types of **healthcare information or knowledge** are a. important to this audience?
- How do food industry workers access information about b. healthcare and find health-related services when needed?
- What type of **mobile design solution** would be most useful С. to provide access to information about healthcare services to food industry workers?

METHOD

Technology Probe: Prototype + Interviews

- Medium fidelity initial prototype as ۲ technology probe – Deployed during user research interviews to gather use case data
- Semi-structured interview format to obtain rich qualitative data
- Heterogeneous sampling recruitment method – Trace behavior patterns across food service industry jobs







PROTOTYPE

I built a simple interactive prototype of the chatbot in Figma to show interview participants and discuss the research question. We exposed participants to the prototype to gauge if, and when, they would use this type of solution to the defined problem.





INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

I planned and conducted 9 virtual 45-minute interviews with food service workers about their needs and experiences accessing health-related information.



Recruitment: I recruited participants through several representative members of the food service industry community in Philadelphia.



Strategy: Using a heterogeneous sampling method, I sought to interview workers across a variety of jobs to trace patterns across the industry.

	Age	Gender	Main Job	Y
Participant 1	36	Female	Server	17
Participant 2	30-34	Nonbinary	Bartender	2
Participant 3	28	Male	Executive Chef	1
Participant 4	30-34	Female	Kitchen Manager	7
Participant 5	20	Female	Host/Busser	4
Participant 6	29	Female	Barista	1/
Participant 7	30	Female	Server	8
Participant 8	31	Male	Owner	1
Participant 9	25-29	Male	Cook	8



IRB APPROVAL

- This project was funded by and conducted in conjunction with the Drexel University Department of Information Science.
- Data collection involved human lacksquaresubjects discussing potentially sensitive (health) information.
- It was necessary to obtain prior • approval from the Institutional Internal Review Board (IRB) before beginning recruitment or gathering data.





INTERVIEW METHOD

Following the approved interview protocol, I asked participants about their work history, technology use, Covid-19, healthcare, and health insurance.



Technology Probe: Near the end of each interview, I sent the participant a link to a clickable prototype of the proposed chatbot.



Method: Interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. Participants were asked to think aloud as they navigated the prototype.



Rationale: By including a medium-fidelity prototype in a user research study, our team learned if, and in what context, our proposed chatbot app would be useful as a solution.

Example prototype screen

Chat Bot Name • Active Now	:
Mental Health	
What do you need help with?	
Find a Therapist	
Addiction Help	
Crisis Help	
Other	
Write text here	

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Have you sought healthcare for any reason this year? What was that experience like?
- Has the Covid-19 crisis changed your thoughts about your health in any way?
- Where do you look for information when you are sick or need health-related care?

PROTOTYPE QUESTIONS

I am going to show you a prototype (mock-up) of an application for locating health and Covid-related information...

- In what kinds of situations would you use an \bullet application like this? What information would you search for? If you wouldn't, why not?
- When would this application not be useful? • Can you imagine a situation where it would be frustrating to use?





QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

I edited 7 hours of interview transcripts for accuracy and organized each question and response in a spreadsheet. Then, I used open coding to identify recurrent themes and patterns.



Method: Our data coding scheme was Informed by the constant comparative method.



Parsing the data: I highlighted phases, words, behaviors, and sentiments that comprised the "essence" of each individual response.



Codes: These excerpts were translated into open codes to link patterns and concepts.



Themes & Categories: I then grouped the codes into higher-order themes and defined relationships.





Illustration of a segment of the coding process

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

A framework of codes, subcodes, and relationships built a complex picture of the participants' views and concerns about their own health in relation to their jobs and the current public health crisis.



Some relationships between codes are causal: seeking healthcare for injuries and mental health needs



Some open codes are **responses to the process of locating** care: delaying healthcare until the problem is acute



Some codes and themes established causal relationships with significant health outcomes:

- Increased anxiety due to a significant increase in takeout orders ullet
- Physical exhaustion associated with understaffing
- Forgoing healthcare due to financial hardship from decreased tips or hourly wages

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Food service workers are typically excluded from discussions about healthcare, mental health services, or workplace safety practices.
- Health insurance and other **benefits** that one would receive through an employer are offered about 1/3 of the time.
- As observed in this study, nearly 90% of participants have spent their entire working lives in the food service industry.





FINDINGS

Research interviews and analysis revealed patterns of forgoing or postponing healthcare due to insufficient access to clear, relevant information.



8 of 9 participants reported **avoiding care** due to high cost, lack of health insurance, or not understanding "where to start."



100% of the interviews included themes of **feeling confused** when locating healthcare and insurance and not understanding the specific related **vocabulary**.



3 of 9 participants said they **do not pursue healthcare at all** because they are "generally healthy", and they find the process of locating and understanding health services intimidating.



7 of 9 participants use family, friends, or social media to find healthcare services or tips about where to locate healthrelated information.

⁶⁶ It's so ingrained in me not to go to see a doctor. I think it was just like the stress of figuring out a way to see a doctor and having to pay for it.

Interview participant





FINDINGS: USER FEEDBACK

Each interview included a discussion of the exploratory prototype to gather feedback for the next iteration of the chatbot.



Most participants appreciated choosing from a list of **answer prompts** to expedite their search for information.



- Participants were split about whether a **space to type** should be present at the same time as the answer prompt buttons.
- (3)
- 100% agreed that a **search bar** would increase usability.



6 of 9 participants emphasized the importance of including a glossary, menu, or series of pop-up dialogue boxes **defining terms** related to healthcare and insurance.



4 of 9 participants recommended including a system of rankings or reviews to distinguish query results.





FINDINGS: USE CASES

To understand use case scenarios, I asked participants if, when, and exactly how they would interact with a chatbot to locate health information. Coding the data revealed themes, including immediacy and minimal input, associated with increased participant-proposed use. Users stressed the importance of filtering results based on cost and insurance access.

67%

Indicated that they would use a mobile chatbot to search for general healthcare services such as flu shots or routine tests.

100%

Expressed an interest in using the chatbot to locate **mental** health services.

Recommended including reviews or ratings to alleviate concerns about finding legitimate care services.

44%

33%

Admitted **frustrations** when they are not connected with a human after using a bot that does not answer their query.

78%

Were familiar with and stated that they use chatbots at least occasionally.





FINDINGS: PROJECT SCOPE

A theme emerged: 7 of 9 participants spontaneously reported problems finding mental health care and expressed a need for more accessible resources specifically targeting this information gap.

The topic of mental health access for service industry workers has the potential to be the sole focus of an information product.



44% referenced the "private" and "taboo" nature of mental health in the service industry and high levels of addiction and substance abuse.



67% stated that mental health services are the most unavailable and accessible information bridging that gap is essential.



100% were insured but none were confident that their insurance covers mental health services.



56% said they intended to seek some form of mental health care but deferred due to the cost and difficulty of finding a trusted provider.

66 Over the past year l've been thinking about going to therapy, and mental health stuff seems like it's pretty much unavailable on Medicaid.

Interview participant



FINDINGS: DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

100% of participants reported using Google to search for information about possible diagnoses and local services.



Pain Point: Participants expressed frustration about the uncategorized search results and unreliable accuracy of online sources.



Research: Cost and quality of services are paramount concerns and should be high-order organizing principles of a digital product for this target audience.



Filter results: Sort by cost, location, or insurance

Include reviews or ratings: Measure of quality

Reviews would be cool. Especially for mental health stuff because you can't always get that with insurance. There's different price ranges and people that are willing to do sliding scales, and like that would be really cool to have an app to be able to sort through all of that by area or something.

Interview participant





Our research shows that packaging health information in a mobile digital format designed in response to the unique challenges of food service working conditions would eliminate some logistical, systemic, and economic barriers preventing this population from seeking medical care.

Design Recommendations for Next Iteration:

- No login/account required
- Highlight Spanish language information & services
- Add search function
- Option to filter query results by price, insurance, & location
- Include reviews or ratings



Reason:

- low barrier to entry
- User demographics
- Immediacy & accuracy
- Increase usability & relevance

Measure of quality



NEXT STEPS

This project was conducted as generative user research to conceptualize a hypothetical product. To launch an MVP, my next steps would be:



Competitive Analysis: Conduct competitive and heuristic analysis of health information apps and informational chatbots.



Narrow Scope: Consider designing a chatbot geared toward providing accessible information about mental health services to low-income populations who may not have insurance.



Test & Iterate Prototype: Build 2nd iteration of prototype based on interview participant feedback and design recommendations. Test and refine.



Understand technical and database constraints: What input fields are needed to yield useful results? How do the technical limitations of implementing a chatbot change the design?

DESIGN

Feedback from participants revealed that potential users would be more inclined to use a less "generic" looking chatbot



- Build a style guide to systematize the visual design decisions.
- Design a logo that forges a brand connection with the target audience.
- **Iterate** the mechanics and aesthetics of the UI through user testing.





WHAT I WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY

Reflecting on my experiences conducting this user study, I think the actionable research insights would benefit from a few adjustments:



Conducting interviews in languages other than English would better represent the demographic composition of the U.S. food service industry.



A 2nd research method, such as a survey, would add dimension to the results by providing a broad data from a larger, more demographically accurate, sample.



Presenting **2 different prototypes** as technology probes in interviews would spark discussions of a larger range of possible solutions before iterating.



Consulting a developer with database and chatbot experience would give me a better understanding of technical constraints.

CONSTRAINTS

- Qualitative data analysis and synthesis was conducted by **only one researcher** (myself).
- Working with human subjects and **healthrelated information** added obstacles during data collection.
- The budget for this project was very limited.
- As an interviewer, my inability to speak
 Spanish influenced the participant
 demographics and results of this study.



OUTCOMES & INSIGHTS

Participants' perceptions of health information as "unavailable" and the belief that healthcare is "only for emergencies" highlight the need for an information tool designed to appeal to and communicate with food service workers.

Key Outcomes & Results:

- Gathered rich qualitative data and developed an understanding of the health information needs of food service workers.
- **Developed requirements** for a mobile digital product based on context and constraints of the target audience.
- Synthesized design recommendations for the next iteration of the chatbot prototype.
- **Tested viability** of a proposed solution to the identified information gap.

What I Learned:

- Necessary protections involved in working with sensitive health data
- Qualitative data analysis methods
- Interview planning and execution
- Formulating open-ended interview questions and **gathering data without bias**
- Reorganizing the iterative design process for generative research





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CASE STUDY #2

Pricing Page Redesign for Enterprise Web Content Management Startup

Context: UX/UI Internship at Shamrck, in-house project for company website

Timeline: 2 Weeks **Tools:** Figma, Miro, Balsamiq, Zoom

Project Summary

I conceptualized and prototyped a solution to the high exit rate on the pricing and subscription page of a small tech company offering a WordPressbased B2B CMS product.

Team

- I worked as a solo designer
- Founder & CEO of the company
- 2 remote WordPress & JavaScript developers

My Responsibilities

- Heuristic & usability analysis
- Ideation
- Prototyping
- Developer hand-off

Outcome

- Increase in new client subscriptions
- Decreased exit rate on the pricing & subscription page
- Overall increase in user time spent on Shamrck website









PROCESS

As the sole designer at a startup, I worked within tight time and budget constraints to understand, ideate, and prototype a design solution for an in-house project.







- Figma prototype
- Design guidelines

Implement

- Developer hand-off
- Reflections & insights

Week 2









PROJECT OVERVIEW

Shamrck, a startup focusing on B2B enterprise web content management products, was losing traffic and potential clients on the pricing and subscription page of their website.



My tasks:

- Find a solution to the high exit rate on the 1. subscription page.
- Design an informative pricing breakdown that 2. translated into new client subscriptions.



Project Focus: Usability analysis, ideation, prototyping



Stakeholders: Shamrck LLC & potential clients - small businesses in need of enterprise CMS products and website maintenance services



ABOUT SHAMRCK

- I worked on a B2B SaaS product that combined enterprise CMS with customcoded and automated web maintenance.
- Shamrck is a small startup, based in Atlanta, GA, consisting of a distributed team of remote workers.
- Shamrck built and maintained websites for small business clients in industries including education, beauty, hospitality, entertainment, and retail.



DEFINE

I began this project with the feedback that potential clients thought the prices were too high, while the company CEO believed that potential clients were not understanding the value and breadth of the services they would receive for the price. Starting Point: Pricing & subscription page of website

Easy monthly payments

Expensive upfront website development can put stress on your business. We offer affordable plans for all budgets for small business and agencies.







USABILITY ANALYSIS

To understand usability issues with the UI of the pricing page, I conducted a brief heuristic analysis using Nielsen's 10 usability heuristics. The two primary problems I located were:



Match between system and the real world The design should speak the users' language.*

• Technical and branded jargon does not communicate the purpose of each listed feature to the user.



Recognition rather than recall The user should not have to remember information

from one part of the interface to another.*

- Why does the user's business need these specific products?
- Which industries typically need certain features?
- What are the different types of support?

* Nielsen Norman Group



FRAMING THE PROBLEM

After speaking with stakeholders at Shamrck, it was clear that the pricing page was not communicating the value of customized enterprise web services or differentiating their product from other CMSs.

How Might We Statements:



How might we change users' value perception?



How might we make potential clients **feel confident they** understand their choices between subscription plans?



How might we empower potential clients during the subscription sign-up process?



How might we help business clients connect with end users through their website?

66 I think the users just see a number and click away. They don't realize everything they're getting with Shamrck.

Founder & CEO of Shamrck





CONSTRAINTS

The research stage of this project was limited because I did not have direct access to web analytics data or current or potential Shamrck clients. These constraints influenced the design solution.

Available Knowledge & Parameters:

Based on Google Analytics data the exit rate on the pricing page was "extremely high".



Potential clients were primarily cost-conscious, non-tech, small businesses operating with thin profit margins.



The timeline for this project was short to prevent further loss of potential clients.



I was asked to design a solution that **did not alter much of the** language and format of the final pricing plan screen.

DATA THAT WOULD **ADD CONTEXT**

- Embedding a survey in the sign-up process would, over time, collect insights into potential clients' thoughts while deciding whether to purchase.
- Interviewing current clients would • help our team understand how the value of Shamrck services translates to each small business. This would tell us which CMS services to highlight in the pricing breakdown.





IDEATE

The pricing and subscription page did not communicate the VALUE of the services included in the prices. To understand the differences between price and value, I visualized key concepts using an affinity map.



IDEATE: SOLUTION #1



Value is **specific** to each user.



Value is **fluid** and changes with the user's unique budget, time, technical constraints, and business needs.



Value is a measure of how **useful** something is to a person or business.



Value is more **complex** than price.



First, I sketched an idea comparing Shamrck's enterprise CMS features to competitors. While this solution explained the services included in each subscription plan and how they relate the the user's business, it still didn't convey the VALUE of the product.



IDEATE: SOLUTION #2

Next, I conceptualized the idea of an interactive price calculator. Potential clients take the "quiz" and select the appropriate features for their business. A slider illustrates the cost of hiring a traditional web developer to code a site with the selected features.



Calculator format illustrates the value of Shamrck's CMS and **shows examples** of how included features apply to each client's business. Inspired by online mortgage calculators and onboarding tutorials.



Interactive segment engages users long enough to present the price in terms of value to their business.



A slider visualizes how the addition of each feature affects the price of a website using a traditional developer rather than Shamrck's bundled services.

First wireframe of interactive price calculator concept





EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Using Figma, I built a high-fidelity prototype of a pricing tool including elements from both initial ideas.

Users answer 6 questions by selecting which features their website needs.

A slider illustrates what the cost of their customized website would be using a traditional developer.

Large icons increase the **usability and** comprehension of technical terms.

4

3

2

A lower section includes a **comprehensive list** of features and services included in every plan.



After completing 6 questions, a cost comparison shows users the price of their customized site using Shamrck versus a traditional web developer.



On the subscription screen, the **plan matching the** user's specific needs is preselected.



PROTOTYPE

The interactive price calculator visually demonstrates how specific features contribute to the value of Shamrck's CMS product for each potential small business client.



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ordPress Requests
Multisite Network
essive Web Apps
rce Support
port
n
Get Started

PROTOTYPE: USABILITY

After a brief 6-question "quiz" about a potential client's needs, the final screen of the interactive pricing tool is a call to action with the appropriate subscription plan



preselected. The preceding interactive calculator brings context to the plan descriptions.



NEXT STEPS

This design solution was briefly launched unt Shamrck pivoted to a different primary produ pandemic. If given the opportunity to iterate refine this idea I would:



Conduct a competitive audit of pricing and subscriprocesses within the enterprise CMS space:

- Most enterprise CMS software services do not have their pricing structure listed on their website.
- An audit would involve obtaining custom quotes based o small business with a specific set of characteristics and analyzing the data.



Test & Iterate Prototype: Conduct talk-aloud user testing with the high-fidelity prototype to understand where users encounter issues or need more information.

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POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Include a BACK button and RETAKE option so users can adjust input parameters.
- Format the final pricing breakdown as a table to allow for easier comparison of plans.
- Add hover over information pop-ups to define branded or technical terms.



RESULTS

The pricing and subscription page redesign improved potential client engagement with the Shamrck website. While the company ultimately changed direction due to pandemic-related causes, the interactive price calculator provided a fruitful touch point for the company to interact with potential clients.

Exit Rate

Implementing the interactive price calculator significantly decreased the exit rate on the pricing and subscription page of Shamrck website.

Framing the pricing breakdown in terms of value increased the total time each visitor spent on the Shamrck website.

Time

Contact

Demonstrating the context and potential impact of Shamrck's bundled services led to increased potential client inquiries and email contact.



WHAT I WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY

Reflecting on my experiences redesigning the pricing information for Shamrck, I think the process would benefit from a few adjustments:



Direct access to B2B users would enable me to conduct primary research, ensuring a solution is tailored to user and business opportunities, in addition to stakeholder requirements.

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Collecting survey data over a long period of time would give insight into a wide array of users' thoughts as they decide if, when, and how much to pay for enterprise CMS software.



Adding a heat map and collecting click data would help me understand what parts of the pricing and subscription sequence are not connecting with potential clients.

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

- About how many visitors does your website have per month?
- Do your customers find what they are looking for when they visit your website? Why or why not?
- What goals are your customers trying to accomplish when they visit your website?
- What part(s) of your website are confusing for your customers?
- How do you help customers when they can't find what they need on your website?



OUTCOMES & INSIGHTS

Redesigning the subscription page to focus on value rather than price led to an increase potential user engagement. The tight timeline, limited budget, and specific stakeholderdriven constraints led to a solution that combined comparison and interactivity to effectively communicate Shamrck's value to clients.

Key Outcomes & Results:

- Brainstormed using HMW statements, affinity mapping, sketching, and wireframing
- Rapidly prototyped and shipped a design that made an **immediate impact** on website traffic
- **Increased time** spent on Shamrck website and decreased exit rate from pricing page
- Increased potential client communication with the company

What I Learned:

- How to design a solution that **balances user** needs and behaviors with stakeholder constraints.
- Brainstorming multiple solutions allowed me to combine the parts of each that worked.
- Conducting a **usability analysis** highlighted that pricing information was not presented in a way that met users' expectations.





THANK YOU

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