

## **Save and save**

*Please note: I used some references to external sources. They are meant as links to supporting documents that I consulted. Those sources back my statements, but reading them is not necessary for understanding the arguments within this paper – hopefully ;-)* Of course, you are invited to verify my claims if you feel the need to. Not everything that I stumbled upon was discussed in the course. You can find all my sources online in case you want to have a look.

*Please also note: The bibliography was not required for this assignment, so it should not count towards the 1,500 word limit. If you want to count the words – I managed to keep the text under 1,500 words – please start at the next page and stop before the bibliography.*

## **Define business objectives**

The long-term objective of ShareAll is to make shared use of products and services as common as individual purchases. If this goal was achieved, the number of possible users would increase, and ShareAll could increase its revenue. Furthermore, the secondary goal of propagating social benefits could be achieved this way, because strategies based on "using rather than owning" use natural resources more sustainably (Leismann et al. 2013, p.185). A different objective could be to focus on the current users and to raise their number of transactions within a certain time period. In turn, this would increase ShareAll's revenue from transaction fees.

A subordinate goal to both objectives would be to overcome an engagement gap. Hamari et al. (2015, p.9) found that even people with a positive attitude towards the Sharing Economy do not necessarily use its services. It's called attitude-behavior gap. As we learned in the interview with Daniel Debow (video 9.5), Gamification can be a feasible tool to amplify existing motivations that do not yet translate into action. Consequently, an interesting gamified system could motivate prospective customers to use services such as ShareAll's and could motivate those who are already participating to use them more frequently.

## **Delineate target behaviors**

- *Players shall gradually make collaborative consumption or sharing a common habit.* Motivation for this behavior may well be extrinsic if we consider introjected regulation: people do things without actual impulses from someone else, but because it is customary within society, or because they seek approval from others (Deci and Ryan 1993, p.227-228). This change in behavior suits ShareAll's long-term objective.
- *Players shall influence others and recommend ShareAll's services.* Based on social proof theory, people are more likely to engage in behaviors that others are also engaged in, or that others at least endorse (Cialdini 2001, p.100-101). Hence, the foregoing target behavior could directly increase the number of users and also support the above-mentioned habit formation via introjection. Players could keep track on how well they're doing by indicating the number of people they canvassed and by thanking them for supporting sustainable resource usage.

- *Players shall enjoy using the service.* This target behavior may sound too universal, but it is important. On the one hand, we include an intrinsic component that will help us to balance motivators. On the other hand, Hamari et al. (2015, p.8) found that enjoyment is a crucial factor for people to engage in collaborative consumption, thus relevant for bridging the attitude-behavior gap. Also, it could help to prevent a crowding-out effect that may be induced by ShareAll's money-like virtual currency (Hamari et al. 2015, p.10). Enjoying ShareAll's service would probably raise the number of transactions. What brings enjoyment depends on what type of people will be playing, so we need to discuss the framework's next section before addressing this issue.
- *Players shall compare the price of using vs. the price owning.* Even in the Sharing Economy that is charged with idealism, economic benefits are a significant motivator for participating in collaborative consumption (Hamari et al. 2015, p.8-9). Therefore, making it easy to compare prices or to visualize possible savings for players, e.g. comparing the price of a normal taxi ride with the amount of money that another player takes, will increase the likelihood of transactions.
- *Players shall offer and use a variety of products and services.* The business of ShareAll is subject to network effects (Shapiro and Varian 1999): The more people share goods and services, the more interesting it will be for others to use the platform, and the more transactions will occur. Furthermore, services like ShareAll's rather show sporadic use patterns, but gamification relies on persistence (Hamari 2013, p.243). Therefore it seems to be crucial to offer many opportunities to use ShareAll's platform. Feedback to people could be provided by visualizing how many different items or services they offer.

## **Describe your players**

In the long run the shared use of products and service is envisioned to be as common as purchases. Nevertheless, as a starting point, ShareAll should focus on those people who match the core values of the Sharing Economy. A recent study in Amsterdam showed that their primary motives, besides saving and earning money, are "meeting people, contributing to a healthy environment, recommendation, social attitude towards the neighbourhood, general social attitude and environmental behaviour" (van de Glind 2013, p.3). It feels safe to consider them to be mostly Socializers within Bartle's typology. They gain the most enjoyment from a game by interacting with other players. In consequence, ShareAll's gamified system should emphasize social, interactive and cooperative elements.

## Devise your activity loops

This sections seems to be a good point to outline some game elements before discussing activity loops. The platform will feature a narrative that deals with saving the environment. Once a month, players can decide to team-up and to engage in a cooperative mini role playing game: fighting an environmental threat. Each player will be able to choose a character from with different traits that influence what they will be able to do. In order to stand a chance against the threat, the team will have to be balanced, so the players will have to coordinate, discuss, etc. Afterwards, within a fixed number of rounds, the players must agree on certain decisions that determine the fight against the threat. They can decide to obtain bonuses by spending some of their virtual currency, thus initiating more engagement on the platform. If the team eventually beats the threat, it not only wins, but ShareAll donates some money to a good cause that the team can choose – a meaningful decision.

There are many engagement loops that could be discussed, but due to the word limit, we only look at the following three examples:

1. Whenever players successfully canvass a new player, they will receive an email thanking them for their effort, and they will be told to what extent they have made the world a more sustainable place based on the total number of players they attracted. This way, there's a positive reinforcement of promotional actions that have a social character and appeal to relatedness needs: not only will there be more people to engage with on ShareAll's platform, but the feedback also creates a positive buzz linked to working for a higher good.
2. For each transaction, players will receive a message telling them about the possible good deed they have done, e.g. by pointing out the natural resources needed to build and maintain a car that are conserved by renting instead of buying. This feedback is a positive reinforcement linked to actions with idealist character and should lead to more transactions.
3. In section 2, we described the importance of enjoyment. Since the primary target group is composed of Socializers, enjoyment is tantamount to interaction with others. Hence, in general, when players show the pursued behavior, they could obtain new options for better cooperating with others, e.g. gaining access to more powerful characters for the mini role playing game.

Within the mini game, there's also a progression loop. It is straightforward. Players can gain experience for fighting in mini games, and new and harder challenges/threats can get unlocked by teams if they pool enough experience. This way, engaging with ShareAll keeps interesting and people have a reason to return.

## **Don't forget the fun**

We briefly describe the fun elements of the system using the four keys to fun of Lazzaro (2012) that we learned about (video 3.5):

- *Easy Fun*: The platform can be casual, giving it a nice atmosphere with some hidden or surprising features to be explored.
- *Hard Fun*: There are cooperative challenges that must be mastered within the mini game.
- *People Fun*: Hanging out with others within the mini game are people fun.
- *Serious Fun*: Doing meaningful things can be fun, and supporting sustainable use of resources falls into that category.

Even if we strip extrinsic rewards, there are still motivating elements within the system.

## **Deploy the appropriate tools**

Since the system has already been described to a large degree, we will focus on some technical issues. In order to support a wide range of services with ShareAll's platform, e.g. location based services like Uber (see assignment description), mobile devices must be supported. Offering access via PCs is not excluded though. After logging into the platform, players should be presented with items or services that they might be interested in based on their previous actions. This would support ShareAll's objective of increasing the number of transactions. Since the players are likely to be Socializers, the suggestions should be phrased like "You might be interested in Alice's car – contact her!", thus highlighting social interaction. Finally, players should be presented with further suggestions to engage with others such as: "Last time you were here, you defeated threat X together with Alice and Bob, and ShareAll donated \$100 to „myclimate.org“ in your name – schedule a fight against threat Y!"

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