

Running Head: Possibilities for a Wish-List Mobile App

A Look Into Opportunities and Limitations for a Wish-List Mobile App

Jonathan Forsgren

Pace University's MCA MA Program

ABSTRACT

Americans give over a trillion dollars in gifts annually. A large percentage of is lost to “dead-weight gifts”, gifts that will not be of any value to the recipient. As mobile applications have been adopted as methods of aiding Americans in nearly every aspect of life, there remains a lag in adopting the ubiquitous practice of saving and sharing wish-lists on a mobile app in a way that would turn the loss of “dead-weight” gifts into a net gain worth billions to consumers as well as manufacturers, marketers, and merchants. While there is strong interest and research on mobile application use related to merchandising, social commerce, and integrating mobile application use into our shopping experience, there has yet to be research conducted on the possibility of a wish-list mobile app in this space. This study uses mixed-methodology to review consumer and retailer practices to identify limitations and opportunities for the popular adoption of a wish-list app. The findings conclude that consumers would find value in utilizing such an app, but are largely uninformed that they exist and that merchants are still lagging in integrating mobile use in their brick-and-mortar operations. The research suggests that in order for a wish-list app to be widely adopted, established merchants would need to make strong push and sizable investment of capital toward building out the functions of a wish-list app.

INTRODUCTION

The United States is an event-spending culture. These event-driven occasions to spend capitalize on relationships between friends and family and commonly come in single days where one must buy gifts for others i.e. birthdays, Mother’s or Father’s day, Valentine’s day, Hanukah, and Christmas. Marketer’s have leveraged these relationships and created the so called “Hallmark Holiday’s” to build pressure in consumers, forcing American’s to show their appreciation for one another through gift giving. Twenty-five percent of men celebrate Valentine’s Day out of a sense of obligation (Tuttle, 2015).

A major issue that arises during these gift-giving events is the question for the gift-giver of what the intended recipient wants. “Gift-giving is not only subject to the general rules of reciprocity, individual altruism, but also to an intricate set of cultural etiquette rules.” (Mamonov, 2015). Gift benefactors in this relationship can deal with issues where are unable to simply ask the recipient what they want as is the

case with Office “Secret Santa” exchanges and because there is the cultural practice where gifts are supposed to remain a secret until they are opened. In other cases people may feel that they know the person well and it would be an insult to ask what they wanted, or simply think they know the person’s tastes, but actually don’t. The result is lost time looking for the present, getting stressed over buying the right present, and wasting money on a gift that will ultimately be unappreciated.

With today’s ubiquitous use of mobile applications, especially for communication and social networking, there is the possibility for a commonly used application that would allow people to share their specific desires for material goods and transferable services, which we will call their wish-list. There are several applications that exist that allow people to share exact items they hope to receive from one another, even allowing users to store links to online merchants for the item or purchase them online for an intended recipient. There are apps that are specific to event-giving occasions such as Christmas, weddings, baby showers, and there are generic applications that can apply to any occasion. And there are many of each type. Even Google and Amazon have Shopping List and Wish List applications imbedded in their websites. While statistics on exact use are protected company secrets, none have become household names and the practice of communicating our wish-lists through a mobile app remains at large.

Although mobile apps and social networking have been widely adopted, they are still identified as a strong growth area. “Social commerce, which integrates e-commerce, social media and social networking sites, is widely seen as an opportunity to leverage the existing social connections and resources within the business value chain.” (Mamonov, 2015). While the emergence of social media and online commerce cross-integrated organically, integration with traditional methods of brick-and-mortar retailing have been more difficult and could potentially benefit from integration of mobile apps like the wish-list app into the shopping experience. Inversely, these apps could also benefit from their integration and promotion at the brick-and-mortar stores.

This project sets out to explore potential limitations and opportunities for growth of a wish-list mobile application by looking at consumer behavior as well as brick-and-mortar space through mixed-methodology, conducting field research and interviews to answer the question:

R1: Why aren't consumers using applications to store and share their current wish lists?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The top five gift-giving events in the United States measured by dollars spent in 2014-2015 are as follows: Father's Day- \$12.5 Billion, Easter- \$15.9 Billion, Valentine's Day- \$18.9 Billion, Mother's Day \$19.9, and the Winter Holidays adding up to a massive \$616.1 Billion (Monthly Consumer Survey, 2014). With nearly a trillion dollars spent annually in the top 5 gift-giving events, billions are wastefully spent on "deadweight loss" gifts, which make up for 18% of Christmas gifts or \$12 Billion (The Week, 2014). Getting disappointing gifts is also one the top ten things Americans dread about the Winter Holidays, with 19% fearing they will get something they don't want (Cobett, 2014). Similarly, for Father's Day "the most often wish revealed in different surveys among dads is their kids don't waste money on things their fathers don't want" (Really Cool Blog, 2014). These figures reveal that there is a great deal of monetary potential for a wish-list app as well as prevalent need for a way communicate gifts that will be appreciated.

Another indicator of potential for growth of a wish-list app is that the National Retail Foundation found that consumers are relying more heavily on mobile devices to aid them in their search for gifts, with 55.7% of smartphone owners using them up from 53.8% the year prior, and 63.2% of tablet owners will use them in their search for holiday gifts. Of smartphone users, 35.8% will research products on their devices- a survey high, 23.9% will use coupons through their devices, and 19.1% of users will make a purchase through their mobile devices- another survey high. Tablet users, rely even more heavily on their devices to make the holiday gift shopping experience easier with 47.4% using them to research products and a third using them to make online purchases (Grannis, 2014). With over half the population of the United States using mobile devices to aid in their holiday shopping, the largest gift giving event of the year by over half a trillion dollars, it would seem logic that Americans would also use mobile devices to save and share their wish lists so that they could get exactly what they wanted as gift recipients and as a gifter.

Additionally, mobile apps are well-positioned vehicles for storing and sharing a personal wish list because we are used to them providing us with “access to personal information on social networks, bank accounts, travel itineraries, and corporate calendars” (Gualtieri, 2011). They are also particularly applicable because of their locomotion and our ability to take them with us when shopping, and because “many mobile apps are event-driven” (Gualtieri, 2011). This ties in perfectly to the nature of our gift giving, which is event driven. We are used to using apps to service a particular need at a particular time.

Mobile users are also more likely to entrust their wish lists with a mobile device. According to Mike Gualtieri, “mobile users identify with their mobile device, and you can and should take advantage of this personal nature in your app design.” An application that would store a person’s wish-list would harness that sentiment and provides another reason why this sort of application can and should be successful.

Consumers have an apparent need and could derive benefits from using a wish-list app, but it is important to note a potential obstacle is the possible lack of available applications that users approve of; the “Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and, its recent reformulation, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) posit that performance expectancy (perceived usefulness) and effort expectancy (perceived ease of use) play central roles in influencing technology adoption.” (Mamonov, 2015). This applies to both the consumer and brick-and-mortar retailer.

Merchants have struggled to integrate online functions such as e-commerce, social media, and mobile applications into their traditional methods of brick-and-mortar retailing. “One oft-noted critical challenge for click and mortar enterprises is the potential for multi-channel conflict to arise, leading to one cannibalizing sales from the other, limited cooperation, customer confusion, and even sabotage of one channel by the other.” (Steinfeld, 2002).

On the consumer side, the “metaphors of virtual or digital experience, customer engagement and empowerment create a qualitatively different “life on the screen” (Joy, Sherry, Venkatesh, and Deschenes, 2009) that are different from conventional experience in the bricks-and-mortar channel. Customers do not move around virtual environments the same way in which they do around physical environments (Hofacker 2008).” (Shankar, 2010). It is clear that “each channel can have spillover effects that

result in increased purchases and reduced costs in the other channel.” (Steinfeld, 2002). And as a result “the emerging trend in the industry is the convergence of the two models of retailing.” (Enders, 2000). “The challenge facing the retail industry is how to fully transform the cultural object, the mobile lifestyle, and the small screen virtual environment into a commercial proposition in the retailing environment and improve marketing effectiveness.” (Shankar, 2010).

At present, “retail consumers use the mobile for a variety of activities relating to shopping in the retail environment. These activities include creating a shopping list, searching for the right products and prices, querying retailers, comparing different items, purchasing items, and indulging in post-purchase activities.” (Shankar, 2010). The behaviors required in using a mobile wish-list sharing app including storing a shopping or wish-list and social network communication already exist. Yet, “We still have a limited understanding of the best mobile marketing practices for retailers. Several questions remain open for future research. What are the best ways for retailers to participate in the conversations in social networks?” (Shankar, 2010).

A ubiquitously used wish-list app facilitating communication between gifter and recipient would save shoppers time, billions of dollars lost to “dead-weight gifts” annually, ensure recipients got something they would use, and is a potential way for brick-and-mortar merchants to engage in “social commerce”. Because the merits of such an app are so high, yet the popular practice of using such apps doesn't exist, it is important to explore potential reasons that may be inhibiting it.

METHODOLOGY

This project recognized the need for in-depth knowledge and understanding of behaviors and practices related to mobile app integration in gift-giving for both consumers and merchants. Mixed-methodology, utilizing Field Analysis and Interviews, was identified as the optimal way to collect data that would highlight areas of limited understanding.

METHODOLOGY: FIELD ANALYSIS

In an attempt to build an in-depth knowledge and understanding of human behavior as well as choices made by retailers, the project found that field research was an ideal way to collect data. Observa-

tion in a natural environment provides a valuable vantage point to collect data exhibited in thought process, communication, and behavior, in this case between the retailer and the consumer, the consumers amongst each other, and mobile and online interfacing. In order to gain immediate proximity without introducing any bias or changes in the natural setting, the researcher entered the field as a participant observer.

It was established that categorization and basis of analyses for the project would be best served using Glaser's grounded in data coding (Holton, 2010). Establishing a fixed or flexible coding would introduce greater bias to the focus of the field researcher, potentially amplifying results in one area while muting other invaluable data. It would also allow for an experience that most resembled a shopper's. In the same effort to be as open to observation and mimic the customer experience as well as to avoid any behavior that might alter the environment, it was decided that direct observation notes taken once the researcher had left the field was the best strategy for recording data. These direct observation notes taken after exiting the field included researcher inference, analytic, and personal notes.

Two flagship stores were selected as sites for research in New York City, FAO Schwartz and the Ralph Lauren Women and Home Store. They were chosen for their high-profile established natures, accessibility, ensured consumer traffic, and the researcher's ability to blend in as a participant observer. These stores were also deliberately selected because of their similarities as well as differences that would offer perspective to compare and contrast consumer behavior and retailer strategies. The two world-renowned brands and stores are eponymous with American culture, marketing prowess, and are considered pinnacles of their markets. Both occupy multi-level spaces on the Upper East Side near Central Park. They sell high-end consumer goods, in-store and online, and predate online marketing and mobile devices. The differences found are mostly in the products they sell and the consumer, though there is overlap; FAO sells high-end toys, Ralph Lauren is considered a luxury lifestyle brand.

Observation at FAO took place on Friday, April 3rd between 5:30pm and 7:30pm. Incidentally, it was Good Friday and the first day of Passover. The store is located at 767 5th Ave, near several icons in-

cluding The Plaza Hotel, Central Park, the Apple store on 5th Ave, and FAO Schwartz is an icon itself. The store consists of two floors.

Observation at Ralph Lauren took place on Sunday, April 5th between 3:30pm and 5:30pm, which coincided with Easter Sunday. The Ralph Lauren Women and Home global flagship store is located at 888 Madison Ave, thirteen blocks north of FAO Schwartz. The store is a block away from Central Park on “Museum Mile” in a high-density area of luxury fashion stores. The store occupies 5 floors.

At both locations the researcher chose a spot near in the middle of the ground floor that offered a vantage point from which to observe the flow of traffic and behavior on that level as well as traffic flow to the upper levels. During the second hour, the observer proceeded to the second floor and followed the current of consumer traffic. The researcher utilized the restrooms at both sites. At both stores the researcher took note of points of sale, transactions, store employees, merchandizing and displays as well technology use. After each session in the field the researcher wrote the aforementioned direct observation notes.

METHODOLOGY: INTERVIEWS

This study additionally sourced data by conducting interviews, which are ideal for exploring attitudes and behaviors with depth that can be used to explain patterns seen as well as reveal areas outside those previously considered. Researchers often become blinded by their preconceived notions and focus. Interviews provide a forum of collecting targeted data, while minimizing input and bias from the researcher (it should be noted that while the raw data is largely empirical, interpretation of that data is subject to bias). Interviews also require establishing a personal connection and as a result more personal information is provided.

A convenience sample of two participants were chosen. They were selected because they were acquaintances of the researcher and were willing to be interviewed. The individuals were chosen because they did not have a long and established previous relationship with the researcher that might affect the researcher’s understanding of the data based on prior knowledge of the person, nor would the respondent’s answers be altered by a previously built rapport. The participants were only told they would be in-

interviewed, but were not told the subject until the interview. This was done in an effort to keep responses as spontaneous as possible

A touring question was selected with follow up questions established to keep the conversation flowing, collect pertinent information, and funnel the discussion to more specific areas as the discussion elapsed. The questions were open-ended and the researcher’s goal was to keep any other questions open-ended as well in order to keep the participant speaking and to allow the interviewee divulge information related to the app; “when interviewing, be sure to ask open-ended questions: questions that do not assume a particular outcome or a particular way your app might approach solving a user’s problem.” (Gualtieri, 2011). The researcher also set out to achieve that by remaining as silent as possible, providing pauses, affirmations, and repetition in order to build a rhythm to the conversation where the respondent would get used to providing long-form and detailed answers.

Table 1: Questions	
Touring Question:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your process in selecting a gift for someone?
Follow Up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What challenges do you face in the selection process?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important is getting someone a gift they will use and enjoy?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you gotten gifts that you don't use or find value in?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you use the internet to help you in your gift selection process?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your most used types of mobile applications?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you use your phone to help you shop for gifts?

Times for the interviews were established in advance. The researcher made sure to allow flexibility for the participants and both landed on the weekend; one was at 6pm on a Friday and the other at 11am Saturday morning. This ensured the participants were commitment-free, so they could focus on the interview and avoid being pre-occupied by other obligations that may limit the depth of their answers. The researcher called the participants’ cell phones via Skype in order to record the audio and set out to lead into the conversation naturally and speak slowly to build the rhythm and environment that would encourage the participants to speak freely. Data was reduced by identifying common themes that arose between

the two interviews and areas that had particular relevance to limitations or opportunities for a wish-list mobile app.

RESULTS

RESULTS: FIELD RESEARCH

Both FAO Schwartz and Ralph Lauren identified the strength of brick-and-mortar stores provide in creating a “shopping experience”. FAO did this with their “Toy Soldiers” -men in red jackets and the tall black fuzzy hats who greet customers at the entrance, toy displays, attractions like “Zoltar Speaks” and the “Giant Piano” from the movie *Big*, and by maintaining an eclectic mix of products in an array of colors displayed in a way that encouraged active handling. RL did it with a mansion setting complete with an attentive staff of approximately 7 per floor catering to shopper’s needs and build the sense of opulence. FAO’s staff had a similar number of staff per floor, but they were occupied with tasks outside tending to consumers. They were able to make the consumer feel a certain way about the store and the products. FAO encouraged shoppers to handle the products, which is what you do with toys, by putting them in the middle of walkways. RL built the sense of value and luxury of their products by presenting them like curated museum pieces in individual displays and having a staff member access them for the shopper. These atmospheres would be impossible to translate to an online or mobile shopping experience. Approximately 200 shoppers entered FAO in the hour of observation on the ground floor compared to the 16 in the same timeframe at Ralph Lauren.

FAO used several TV screens with advertisements for a particular item on loop, which were given little attention. Limited mobile use was observed and it was mostly done by shoppers who appeared to be millennials and their interfacing indicated they were texting or social networking in ways that had nothing to do with the store. Ralph Lauren had an iPad out for consumers to use, but it went untouched. While both retailers have e-commerce sites, there was no attempt to integrate online or shoppers’ mobile use to enhance the in-store shopping experience. At Ralph Lauren there was French shopper in her late twenties who extensively used her phone to engage her social network in making the purchase. She was there to buy a purse, “The Ricky”, as a gift for her mother’s birthday. She had a dedicated salesperson

who would disappear and bring back various colors for a purse, The shopper had done research online, but wanted to see the colors and make the purchase in-store. She used her phone to text and send pictures to her contacts soliciting advice. After about 45 minutes a color was decided on and purchased.

Table 2: Field Research Observations	FAO Schwartz	Ralph Lauren
Customer Traffic per hour	approx. 200	16
Retailer Tech Integration	TV screens with ads on loop. Ignored by consumers.	1 iPad out, untouched.
Mobile Use Observed	Millennials, interacting in a way that indicated communication and social networking unrelated to the store.	1 millennial, taking pictures and soliciting advice from her social network to help in purchasing a purse.

RESULTS: INTERVIEWS

Both participants felt comfortable and even enjoyed the gift selection process, “I really love gift giving.” (Gabby, 2:59). She often starts by doing online research on items related to what she knows about the person and will often make purchases gifts online. The last gift she got was for her boyfriend’s birthday; the idea was sourced from a targeted Facebook ad on her homepage, but she thought he would like it. Gabby also uses the internet to locate where she can buy something and will go simply to pick it up because she hates being in stores.

Rachel doesn't do any online research or shopping. For people she knows well, she uses her knowledge of what they are interested in and decides on an item or store that carries items she thinks they will like and go to the store directly. Rachel cannot make a purchase without seeing and feeling the product. She will go to a store and walk around for at least half-an-hour to consider all the inventory before making the purchase, even if she had arrived with a specific product in mind.

Neither said the gift selection process was stressful, but both women expressed difficulty selecting items for people they didn't know well. When Rachel is unsure, she will usually give a Visa or restaurant gift-card. Gabby said, “I hate giving gift certificates or money” (Gabby, 3:36). On the receiving end,

both have gotten gifts they didn't appreciate, interestingly citing socks from their aunts, which they still try to appear grateful for.

When the idea of a wish-list sharing app was introduced, they both saw many potential benefits. Rachel stated: "Everyone's busy, everyone has their own schedule and doesn't always have time to analyze what other people want." (Rachel, 8:20). Similarly, Gabby stated she would likely use such an app for people she didn't have the time or energy to invest in the selection process.

In addition to helping source gift ideas for others, Rachel saw benefit because she didn't want other people stressing over what to get her and because when people do ask her what she wants she has difficulty thinking of anything. When asked if Gabby felt her love for the gift selection process might discourage her from using the app, her response was it would be helpful to her if the app provided a person's interests rather than a specific item so she could still have creative freedom in selecting a gift.

DISCUSSION

With nearly a trillion dollars spent annually in just the top five event-driven gift-giving events (Grannis, 2014), there are high stakes and money to be made. 18% of holiday gifts, amounting to \$12 billion, are lost to "dead weight gifts"; this app poses not only to cut that loss, but recover it, which is a gross positive change of \$24 billion dollars to the American consumer. There is opportunity here to serve the interests of the consumer and the retailer in a mutually beneficial way, while creating a highly profitable app as a result.

Through field research and interviews, our project used mixed methodology to shed light on consumer and brick-and-mortar behaviors and practices that might be inhibitors or opportunities for a wish-list mobile app to be popularly adopted. The study found potential obstacles standing in the way of adoption as well as opportunities to better position itself.

The study found brick-and-mortar retailers are not capitalizing on potential advantages mobile applications offer to an in-store experience. This is supported by a survey that found "only 29 percent of online shoppers used a mobile phone as part of their shopping experience" and the same study found that 72 percent of people who use mobile devices while shopping used it to "ask someone about a particular

product” and “40 percent of those who used the mobile phone used it to send a photo of the product.”(Shankar, 2010). This means, as the study observed, mobile use is not a large part of the in-store shopping experience, but when it is, shoppers are engaging with their social network about items they are shopping for and the merchant is left out of the conversation. Retailers need to realize that mobile commerce is not a threat to their brick-and-mortar business and is actually an area to introduce beneficial synergies. The key for them is to further integrate and encourage mobile use as part of the in-store experience and be part of the dialogue shoppers have with their social networks. “Networking is a key enabler”(Shankar, 2010). Especially among millennials, who “are very interested in peer-to-peer (P2P) communications. Given this reality, retailers should incorporate P2P communications (e.g. user-generated ads) in their marketing strategies.”(Shankar, 2010).

Last year Kohl’s mobile app beat Nike, Tinder, and Uber on the list of fastest growing mobile apps with over 1 million monthly users. The discount department store’s 800% increase in user base was only topped by Lyft’s 835%. “While many in the technology industry sneer at old-school retailers and their sprawling brick-and-mortar store chains, the success of apps from Kohl's and others such as Walmart and Target proves that they can be formidable competitors.” (Pressman, 2015). The department store’s app previous app had a 1-star rating and was “largely ignored” until the company’s management decided to target smart-phone owners, spending \$1 billion on “a digital effort revamping its web platform, the systems that collected customer data and its back-end order fulfillment network.” (Pressman, 2015). The new apps focus is on customer rewards, sending coupons and discounts to users based on their purchases and then allowing them to use or share their credits as well as shopping lists with others. Although it was a massive investment, Kohl’s is seeing returns: “Fourth-quarter sales gained 4% from the year before, the first increase in the past seven quarters. And earnings per share rose 18% to \$1.84, more than analysts had expected and the biggest increase since 2011. Kohl's share price has shot up 20% in the past three months.” (Pressman, 2015).

Kohl’s success introducing an app that helped consumers and integrated their brick-and-mortar operations outlines the willingness of consumers to adopt an app that will help them and the potential for

future apps with similar benefits. ““They gave people a simple value proposition and -- boom -- all of a sudden people are downloading these apps,’ says Andrew Lipsman, vice president of marketing and insights at Comscore.” (Pressman, 2015). Other stores should build out their in-store experience by offering value propositioning based on mobile apps like the wish-list app.

The information collected from the interviews proved invaluable in identifying that consumers feel comfortable with selecting gifts for people they know well, but described difficulty with selecting gifts for people they were less familiar with and agreed the app would be helpful in that aspect. The participants acknowledged it would save them time, which they didn't necessarily want to spend on this category of recipient. This highlights an inelasticity in time they are willing to spend searching for gifts for close connections, but are less unwilling for people they are less familiar with, which is also the group they have the least information on; for those reasons the app would be best suited to target this area of gift giving. It is also useful information for marketers who could point to this area as the app's primary benefit to users.

It also identified that gift cards pose an obstacle to the wish list app because they solve much of the same problem for a gifter who doesn't know what to give. Mobile app developers could take this on in direct competition or integrate it by suggesting stores that the person liked so a gifter could buy a gift card based on information derived from the mobile app.

CONCLUSION

This project set out to explore why aren't consumers using applications to store and share their current wish lists. Using mixed-method, the research collected data through field research and interviews in an attempt to build an in-depth understanding of what behaviors and practices consumers and brick-and-mortar stores might be engaging in that limited the prospects of a wish-list app from reaching widespread use and opportunities therein that may help it achieve that status. The research's main limitations were in resources of time and budget. While the data collected provides valuable information in answering the research question, it would be strengthened by further research in more field research sites, times

of year -especially around the holiday season when most gift shopping is done, as well as increasing participant interviews.

The data collected reveals that consumers are unaware of the existence of mobile apps that would allow them to store and share their wish-lists and that they saw a value proposition therein when introduced to the concept of such an app. The research showed that the main area gifters would benefit is when they need to find gifts for people they are unfamiliar with, who they generally do not want to spend the time and effort assessing what a suitable gift might be. This is valuable information to app developers to understand what wish-list app should target as the main area to build functionality because perceived usefulness is one of the main criteria in the “Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and, its recent reformulation, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2)”. (Mamonov, 2015). Marketers should also use this information in promoting the app by helping mobile device owners understand the value proposition the app offers. The interviews also divulged that gift cards present an possible obstacle to the adoption of a mobile wish-list app because many consumers rely on them to solve the question of what to give people they are unfamiliar with, reducing the usefulness of the app to those consumers. The application developers and marketers could either compete directly with gift cards by the stigma some consumers have against them, as was found in the interview section. They could also integrate them by making suggestions of what retailers a person might appreciate a gift card from.

Based on the data collected, the research finds that in order for the wish-list mobile app to reach popular cultural use, marketers and retailers need to make further efforts to integrate mobile applications into their in-store experience and total value proposition to their customers. The five fastest growing apps of 2014 were company-specific apps. These corporations -Nike, Tinder, and Uber, Kohl’s, and Lyft- are all billion dollar companies with capital to invest in apps. Kohl’s app went from obscurity to the runner-up in the fast growing apps after a strategy review that led the company to identify mobile users as a crucial area they wanted to target followed by a \$1 billion dollar investment to execute that vision. (Pressman, 2015) This is both good news and bad news for the wish-list app. It signals that the top apps are being built by established brands; corporations that have huge sums of capital to invest in apps that will be

used by a consumer based they have already established. With that in consideration, Amazon seems like the ideal company to make the wish-list app a ubiquitously used app. It is already the world's largest online marketplace, it already facilitates retail from several different merchants and is positioned to direct traffic to stores if consumers want to buy at a nearby location, has a vast selection of items, already has a wish-list function that can be shared, has an established brand as a tech titan, and billions in capital. The value to Amazon is that the merchant would get a better understanding of consumer demand and it would build an entry into the social networking space, as companies look to tap into the growth potential in social commerce.

Reference List

- A brief history of the Christmas present. (2014). *The Week*. Retrieved from <http://theweek.com/articles/441360/brief-history-christmas-present>
- Corbett, H. C. (2014, November) 11 Things You Stress Most About During the Holidays. *Prevention*. Retrieved from <http://www.prevention.com/mind-body/emotional-health/solutions-holiday-stress>
- Enders, A., Jelassi, T. (2000). The Converging Business Models of Internet and Bricks-and-Mortar Retailers. *European Management Journal*, 18, 542-550
- Grannis, K. (2014, May). The Long and Short of America's Consumer Holidays. *National Retail Federation*. Retrieved from <https://nrf.com/news/the-long-and-short-of-americas-consumer-holidays>
- Gualtieri, M. (2011). Mobile App Design Best Practices for Application Development & Delivery Professionals. Retrieved from http://www.imemsummaries.nl/downloads/2012-2013/year3/PR8/PR8_other_Mobile_App_Design_Best_Practices.pdf
- Holton, J. (2010). The Coding Process and Its Challenges. *The Grounded Theory Review*, 9, (1). Retrieved from <http://groundedtheoryreview.com/2010/04/02/the-coding-process-and-its-challenges/>
- Mamonov, S., Benbunan-Fich, R. (2015). *To Give or not to Give? An Exploratory Study of User Beliefs Influencing Adoption of Facebook Gifts*. Retrieved from: <http://conferences.computer.org/hicss/2015/papers/7367c063.pdf>
- Monthly Consumer Survey. (2014). Holiday Spending Totals in Billions, 2014-2015. *National Retail Federation*. Retrieved from <http://research.nrffoundation.com/Default.aspx?pg=9039#.VNy73EKpX8E>
- Pressman, A. (2015). *The Department Store App that Outpaced Uber, Tinder and Nike*. Retrieved from <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/the-department-store-app-that-outpaced-uber--tinder-and-nike-193431641.html>
- Shankar, V., Venkatesh, A. (2010). *Mobile Marketing in the Retailing Environment: Current Insights and Future Research Avenues*. Retrieved from: <http://web.nchu.edu.tw/pweb/users/arbortfish/lesson/8953.pdf>
- Steinfeld, C., Adelaar, T. (2002). *Integrating Brick and Mortar Locations with E-Commerce: Understanding Synergy Opportunities*. Retrieved from: <https://www.msu.edu/user/steinfie/HICSS2002.pdf>
- Top Five List of Gift Giving Holidays (2014, January, 10) [Web log post] Really Cool Blog. Retrieved from <http://reallycoolblog4you.blogspot.com/2015/01/gift-giving-holidays.html>
- Tuttle, B. (2015, February). 6 Totally Unromantic Truths About Valentine's Day Spending. *Time*. Retrieved from <http://time.com/money/3699604/valentines-day-spending-history-truth/>