

CASE STUDY N.1

The Big Issue



WHO IS?

The Big Issue is a weekly news and entertainment magazine, it offers people facing poverty and exclusion the opportunity to earn their own money; people turn to the Big Issue for an opportunity to help themselves at a time of utter personal crisis. They are people who have lost their homes, their families and their sense of themselves in the world.

The Big Issue, as a charity, seeks to empower them through their finances and beyond; it was created 25 years ago by John Bird, who had been himself through homelessness and knew that the solution to the problem was to focus on the lost confidence, rebuild it to return to the mainstream society, to do so his model needed to radically break with the premise of traditional charity and pioneered the principle of 'a hand up not a hand out'.

THE SITUATION NOW

The **Old Business Model** implies the sale of each magazine for £2.50, of which £1.25 is for covering the cost and £1.25 goes to the vendor, the homeless that actually sells the magazine in the streets, he first buys from the Big Issue, £1.25 each copy, and sells in the street for £2.50, earning £1.25 as a self-employer.

There is a certain average income per week that during the month of December increases more than 7 times.

In December it can be an emotional sale while during the rest of the year can be a client base loyalty.

These clients are in a age bracket that goes from 40 to 65.



ACTUAL USERS

PROBLEM

How to reach a younger target?

Aim:

- Increase awareness among Youth
- Engage Youth
- Monetise – Youth
- Reach age bracket 16-30 years old



USER TO REACH

"STRATEGIZE: In the beginning phase of the product development, you typically consider new ideas and opportunities for the future. Research methods in this phase can vary greatly"

Nielsen Norman Group

HOW TO GET TO THE SOLUTION - PROCESS

Step 1:

Empathize and Research

Plan:

- 1 **Focus group** with young people
- 2 **Online surveys**
- 3 **Online research**



FOCUS GROUP

Ideas on how to reach a younger target developed during the meeting with young people (*)

Awareness issue

- wristband / badge / pin showing support /connection to homelessness cause
- documentary on homelessness then sell on Netflix / Prime (stories, figures and stats)

Giving back free stuff

- creating and advertising free activities / events
- competitions (appeal to people's CV)
- free samples /stickers

Appealing to the youth

- Social Media
 - * videos
 - * good /fun content (trending news presented by PERSONALITIES)
 - * good campaigns on FB
 - * video previews on FB
 - * Short interesting tweets for content (video) on Twitter
 - * theme (colour, content, etc) on Instagram
- Less Formal – putting a face to the big issue
- Podcast / Youtube (celebrities collaborations*) – “it’s the new radio + TV” and appeals to both demographics
- Youtubers that sell products/services – sponsor adsense

Topics

- Trending
- Politics
- Music --- spotlight
- Fashion
- Celebs
- Film /TV --- spotlight
- Jobs / Opportunities ---in depth specific opportunities, creative jobs
- Homeless issue - aka anti homeless benches

(*) in collaboration with Collage Works, an art and education charity based in the Haringey Cultural Quarter of London.



brainstorming during the meeting



2 ONLINE SURVEYS

taken through **Google Forms**,
with a total of **21 young people participating**.



Participants have been asked about:

example of online questions

Have you heard of the Big Issue before? *



- ☐ Yes, I've heard of them and know what they do
- ☐ Yes, I've heard of them but don't know what they do
- ☐ No, I haven't heard of them at all

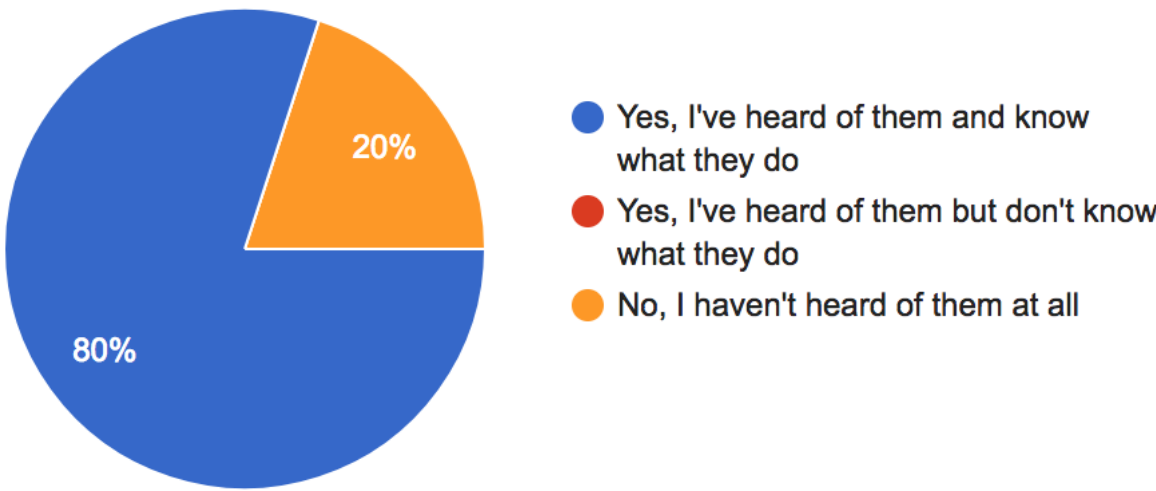
Have you bought the Big Issue before *



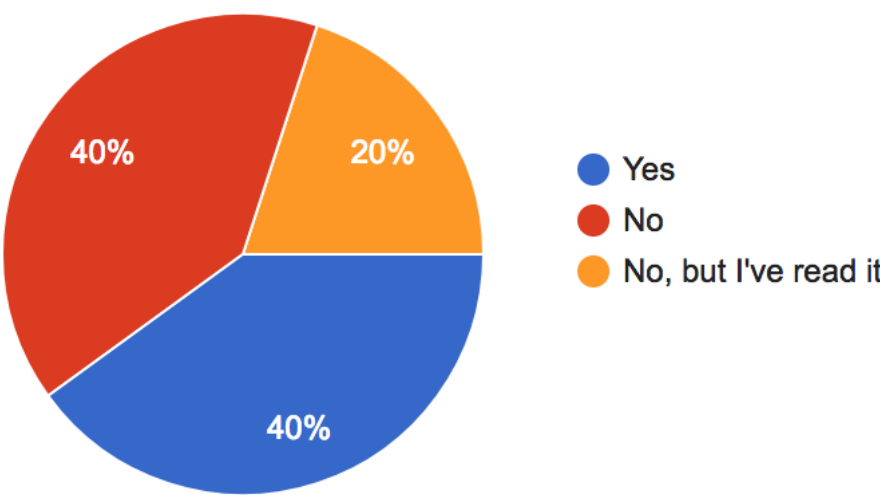
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, but I've read it

- their date of birth
it goes from 1981 to 1995

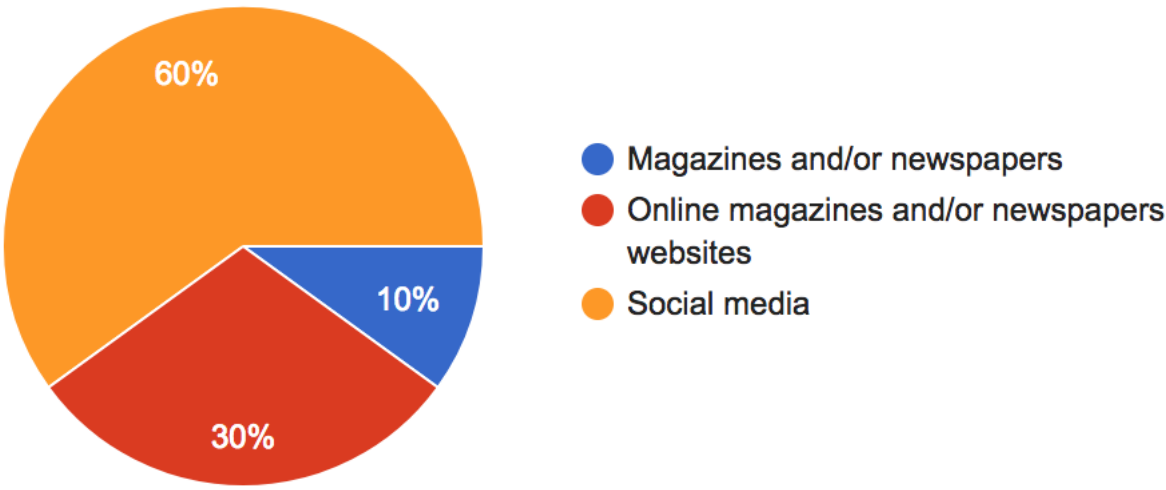
- if they have heard about The Big Issue before



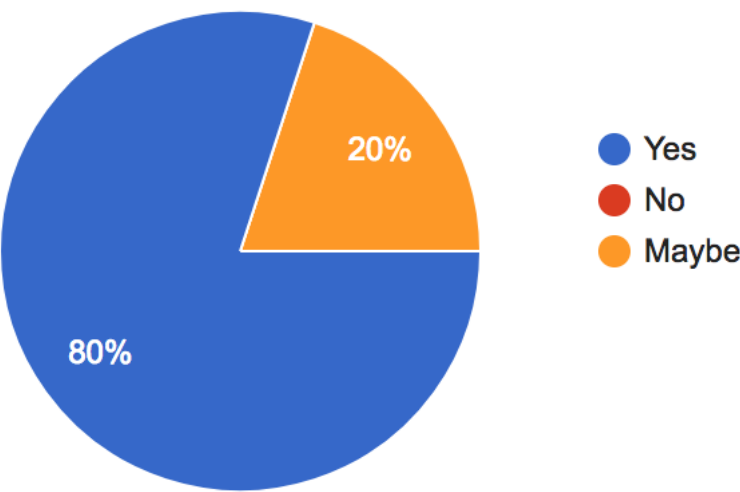
- if they have bought the magazine before



- their main source of news and information



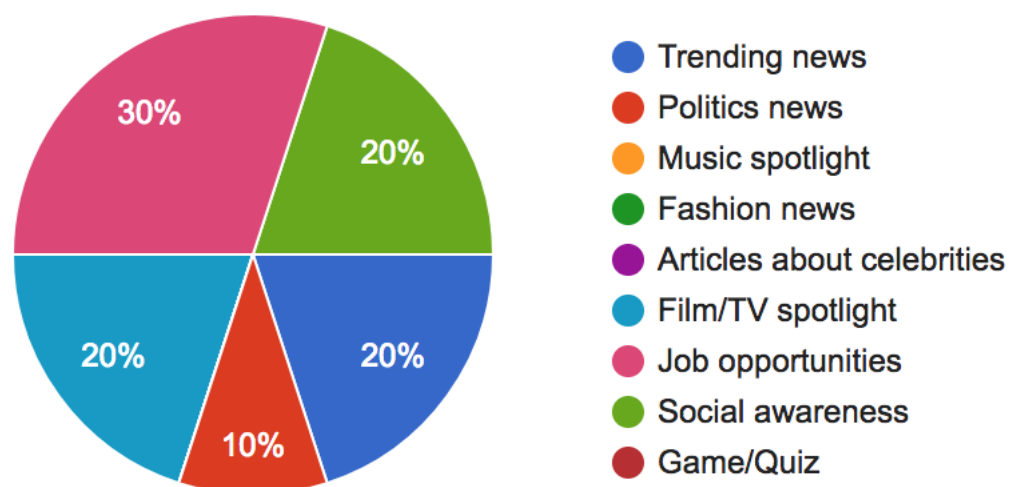
- if interested in helping the cause, homelessness



- their opinion of the The Big Issue content on the Youtube channel

Most say it's not interesting, not engaging and didn't even know there was a channel until told

- If The Big Issue develops an App to reach the Youth which of these features would make them download and use it. They could choose as many subjects as they liked between these and others of their choice: trending news, politics news, music spotlight, fashion news, articles about celebrities, film/TV spotlight, job opportunities, social awareness, game/quiz.



Conclusions on the surveys:

The surveys give as a result that there is awareness of the magazine but no engagement to motivate them to buy it.

It says also that there is a need of an interesting/entertaining online content.

There is a need of a new Business Model, where the product is digital, it goes through Social Media, and it is able to monetise.

Online Research: The Big Issue resources

There is a **website** for the foundation, for the magazine, for the shop that sells the magazine (paper) and other echo items, and for the social investment arm.

The magazine website has:

- competitions

e.g, Win the Delicious DVD boxset, containing series one and two of the comedy starring Dawn French and Emilia Fox

Win Casablanca on DVD, the most romantic movie of all time now available as a collector's Blu-ray edition

Win tickets to Isle of Dogs and an overnight hotel stay.

- a subscription scheme

There are amazing videos on Youtube – stories of vendors, celebrities telling how important The Big Issue is, a street cat named Bob, etc.

They are social, on **Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.**

There is a need to utilize these resources in a better way.

Step 2:

Developing ideas after meeting, surveys and research

Videos produced by young people (16-30) at Collage Art (free film courses) about Homelessness

can lead to:

- Awareness to Youth
- Engage Youth
- Educate youth
- Job opportunities in the video production
- appeal to people's CV



Sell the videos - <https://www.filmmakingstuff.com/sell-a-movie-to-netflix/>

can lead to:

- Monetise
- Awareness to public



Create competitions in schools (colleges, universities) making them produce the best articles for the magazine, the best video, the best advertising to use

can lead to:

- Awareness to Youth
- Engage Youth
- Educate youth
- appeal to people's CV
- (monetise?)



Create free events /activities where give free wristbands, pins, badges, stickers

can lead to:

- Awareness to Youth
- Engage Youth
- Educate youth



Involve more in Social Media

- * videos
- * good /fun content (trending news presented by PERSONALITIES)
 - Podcast / Youtube (celebrities collaborations)
 - "it's the new radio + TV" and appeals to both demographics
 - Youtubers that sell products/services – sponsor adsense
- * good campaigns on FB
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- * theme (colour, content, etc) on Instagram



- Less Formality – putting a face to the big issue

can lead to:

- Engage Youth



Create an e-version of the magazine

You can buy online. You can read online.

can lead to:

- Monetise



Create an app

app topics:

- Trending
- Politics
- Music --- spotlight
- Fashion
- Celebs
- Film /TV --- spotlight
- Jobs / Opportunities ---in depth specific opportunities, creative jobs
- Homeless issue
- Gamification (create a contest that gives points in multiple actions like spreading content, creating content, making donations, giving time for the cause...)
- Engage Youth



WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

This UX project has been my very first one, created by myself on a real need from The Big Issue, suggested and in collaboration with Collage Works.

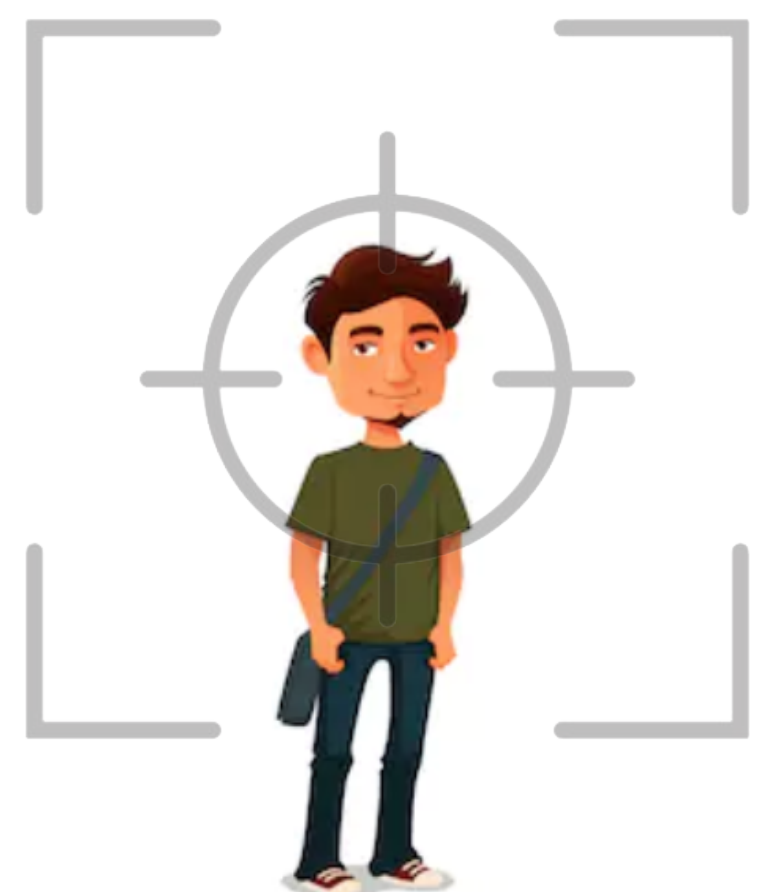
The ideas developed as possible solutions after the research are the aim of the project that I can consider concluded even without a further design of the app, that can eventually happen.

The visual part of the UX process is more familiar to me as I come from the graphic design field but the research is new. This project has been mostly research so **I have learned to step back and listen to the potential users.**

I liked the new approach that I understand is the main idea of UCD and I am eager to develop more experience in solving problems and building solutions this way.



MYSELF



USER TO REACH