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Goodyear "As a service" Project Plan

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Goodyear As-A-Service

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The University of Akron

10 May 2019

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Introduction and Purpose

The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company is a global tire manufacturer located in Akron, Ohio. Founded in 1898 with \$3,500, the company has grown to be the leading tire manufacturer in The United States and the third largest in the world. Goodyear has an extensive global footprint with 47 manufacturing facilities in 21 countries. In 2018, the company reported approximately \$15 billion in net sales and expect that number to continue to grow in the next few years (Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, 2018).

Goodyear currently operates primarily on a product sales business model focusing on manufacturing, selling, and installing tires on passenger and commercial vehicles (Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, 2018). While this model has been successful for the company, technology and the need for convenience is changing the way that many firms are conducting business. In order to cater to their customer's need for convenience, many businesses are integrating into the "as-a-service" space. Goodyear asked our team to conduct research surrounding the as-a-service model and how they can become a player in this space.

The as-a-service model is essentially anything as a service. Common companies that use this model are in the technology and telecommunications sector. For example, instead of renting movies from Blockbuster, consumers can subscribe to services, such as Netflix and Hulu, that offer a wide variety of movies and television shows for a monthly subscription price. Throughout our research process, we searched for what customers value in the as-a-service platform and what they disliked. We then used this information to make recommendations of how Goodyear, a primarily sales driven company, can take advantage of this business model.

Primary Research

Our primary research consisted of two methods: a survey and a focus group. These helped us get a better understanding of consumers' opinions surrounding tires, car maintenance, and the subscription services they currently use. This process also allowed us to have a better understanding of consumers' thoughts on Goodyear and competing companies. We then used this data to see if it would be feasible for Goodyear to implement a subscription service. Our goal when conducting our research was to see what consumers value in their current subscription services and their thoughts on how we can create "tires-as-a-service".

Implications of Secondary Research

Throughout our research on the "as-a-service" model, we had several significant findings that would influence the direction that we took our primary research. We focused primarily on consumers' likes and dislikes on the "as-a-service" model and what made this model so successful.

First, we found that the term "as a service" is commonly utilized in computer software. Software as a service is usually distributed to its users through a licensing or subscription service, rather than from buying a physical product as a one-time purchase. For example, we can store information on a cloud service instead of using a flash drive or floppy disk. When such a subscription is active, the user normally receives regular updates to their software, or other perks from using the service. This software as a service model has become extremely popular over time and continues to grow.

Keeping this in mind, we pursued the idea of a Goodyear subscription service, with which subscribers would receive regular maintenance on their vehicles, as well as other perks, such as roadside assistance in the case of an accident or break-down, and a loyalty program that

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could offer other incentives to subscribe. We modeled much of our primary research to gather consumers' initial reactions to a Goodyear subscription service such as this, without fleshing out too many of the details in the early stages.

Next, we focused our secondary research on the aspects of the software-as-a-service model that consumers value the most, why the model is so successful, and how those aspects can be translated in the context of Goodyear and buying tires. We examined two relevant companies that market extensive software as a service options for consumers and businesses alike. Those companies were Workday and Amazon. After performing research on those companies, our findings on what aspects of the software as a service model consumers value most can be summarized. It seems as if the most important piece of the “as a service” model is convenience. Businesses and consumers alike subscribe to these services because they are convenient to use. Basically, a third-party entity is handling some aspect of your business or your life so that you do not have to worry about it.

Directly relating to convenience is ease of use. An “as-a-service” platform that is not user-friendly and simple to employ is not convenient and will frustrate customers, completely defeating the purpose of the service being offered. Users also enjoy the updates and perks of a service subscription that are added onto the original service itself. In a more traditional offering, customers would purchase a product. When a new version of that product is released, users must decide if they want to stick with what they already have or purchase the new one. In an “as-a-service” model, that choice is irrelevant because the user would receive free and regular updates as newer versions of the product are released.

With these findings in mind, we directed our primary research into finding out what our target audience, college students or college-aged people, specifically value in an “as a service”

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platform. We would accomplish this by first asking what services, if any, they currently use. Some common examples relevant to our target audience might be Amazon Prime for shopping, Spotify Premium for music, and a Netflix or Hulu subscription for watching movies and shows. Next, we would find out exactly what it is that they value the most in these services, and why they choose to use them in the first place. After that, we would have a good understanding of what our target audience values in their service subscriptions, and we could begin to translate those findings into the context of Goodyear, vehicle maintenance, and tire-buying.

Another interesting finding in our secondary research was that in general, brand loyalty makes little difference in a consumer's choice of where to have car maintenance done, specifically with oil changes. We wondered if this would remain true for other aspects of car maintenance, such as tire rotations, and why this may be. We decided to focus a significant amount of our primary research efforts on looking into this.

We planned to question if our target audience had a preferred brand of tires and if they were loyal to a particular brand for their car maintenance. If not, it would be extremely beneficial to investigate some suggestions of services that Goodyear could offer to increase brand loyalty. We planned to find out what sort of services Goodyear could offer our target audience to convince them to switch to Goodyear exclusively and stick with them. Examining other services our target audience uses would help in this area as well. We would be able to find out why they are subscribing to the services that they are, and what makes them loyal to those services. We could then take some of those ideas, and translate them into our final Goodyear as a Service offering.

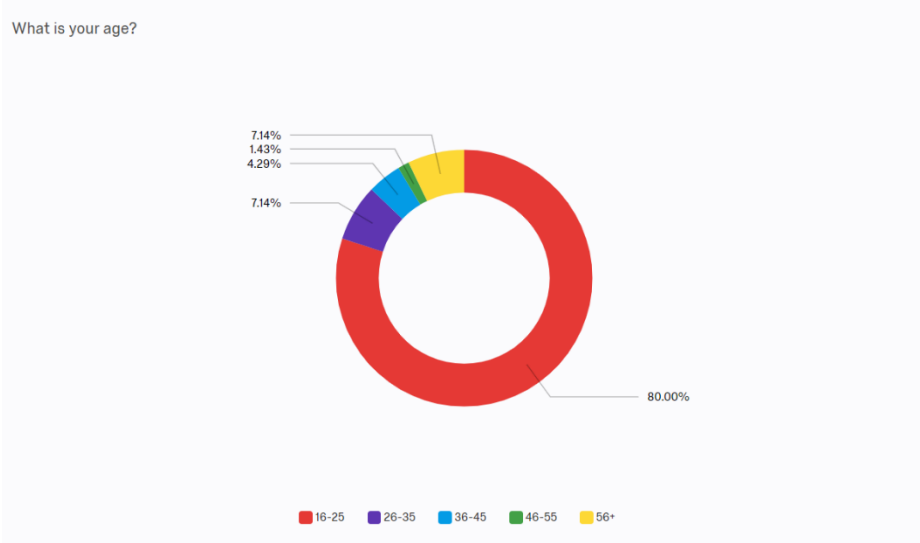
The implications of brand loyalty that we would focus on in our primary research are also related to Goodyear's competition, which we looked into in our secondary research as well. It

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will be useful to know if our target audience has ever used a different brand, other than Goodyear, for purchasing tires and their car maintenance. From there, we could look into why they chose that brand over Goodyear. It would also be important to question what their experience with that other brand was like. Whether they had a good experience or a bad one, we could gain some valuable insights into what aspects of those brands we should attempt to emulate, and which aspects to avoid in our final product.

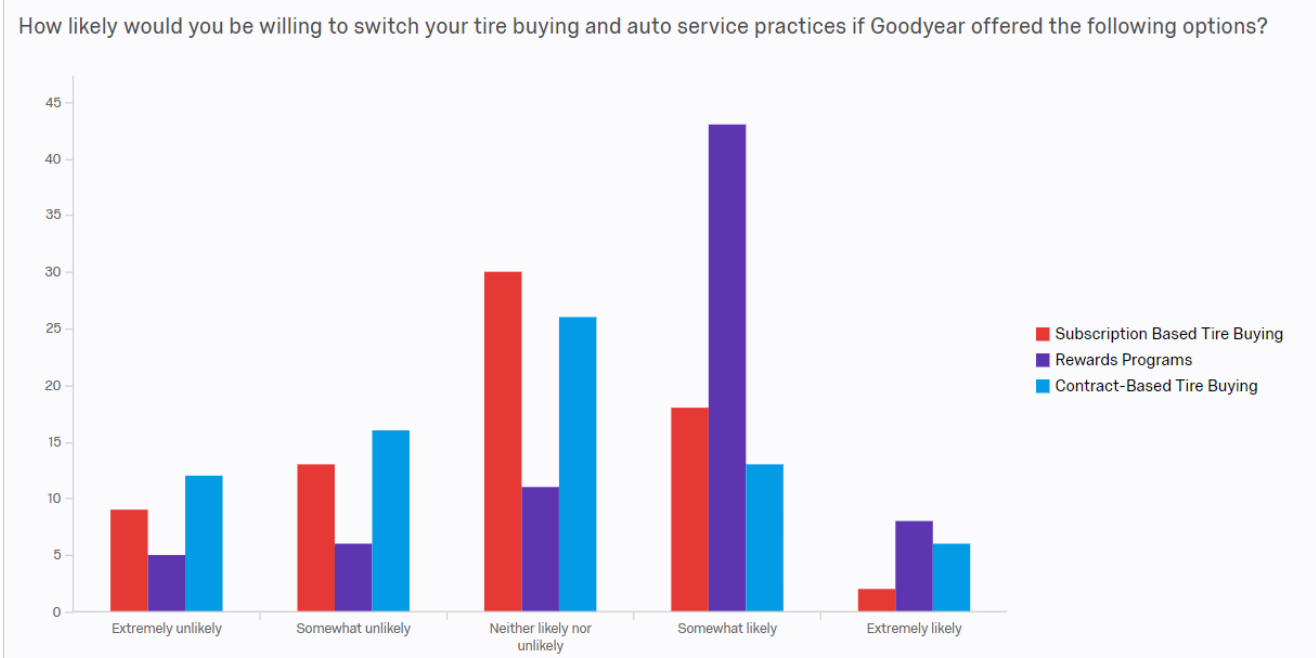
Survey

Our team conducted a survey to explore what car owners’ value in the tire-buying and car maintenance process. The survey included questions on our respondents’ opinions on roadside assistance and loyalty programs. We also asked questions about what they value in their current subscription services and what services they currently use. Our participants were all drivers and were at least over the age of 16. The survey got 94 responses. The majority of the respondents were females between the ages of 16 and 25.



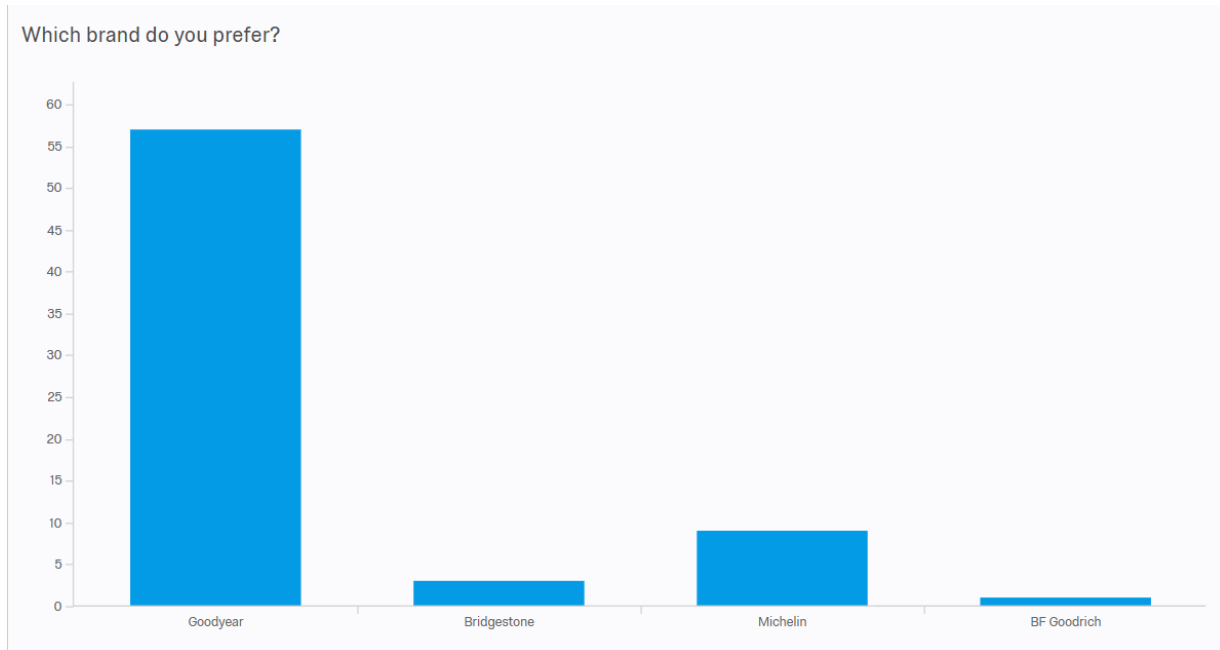
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One thing the survey showed was that people use a lot of food delivery services, such as Doordash and Uber Eats. Analyzing how these services operate allowed us to create features of our subscription service that consumers value. We also found that there is no brand loyalty in buying tires. According to our data, 55% said they are not loyal to a specific tire company. Because of this, we believe that Goodyear will be able to gain market share easier with lower switching costs. Additionally, we found that a rewards program would increase brand loyalty in the tire industry, with 58.9% of respondents indicating that they would switch tire buying practices if it included a loyalty program.

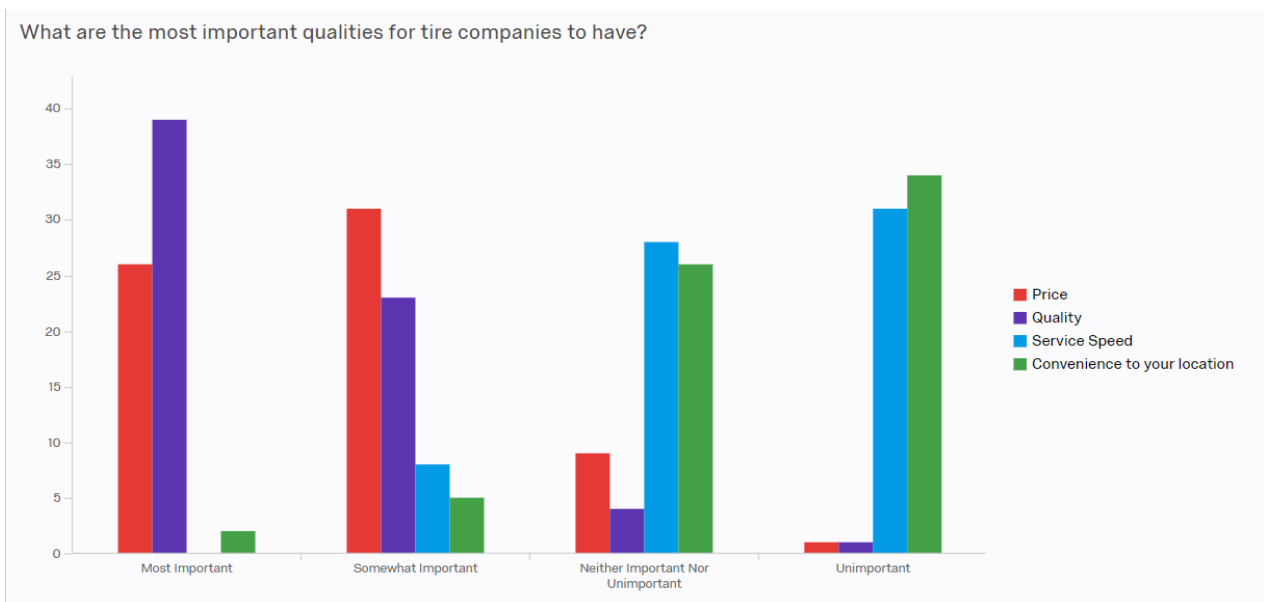


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When compared to its main competitors, Bridgestone, Michelin, and BF Goodrich, 80% of those surveyed said they prefer Goodyear.



Some of their complaints about the tire buying experience was it being overpriced, especially for a low-quality tire. Another complaint was misleading information. We also asked about people's general perception and experience with Goodyear. When it comes to the tire buying experience, people care most about price and quality.



Focus Group

In addition to our survey, we conducted a focus group to gain more insight on what people like and dislike about tire buying and car maintenance. We had twelve participants that were between 18 and 22 years of age and owned a car. Some of the services that our participants subscribed to were Spotify and Hellofresh. Hellofresh is a new subscription service that allows subscribers to have ingredients and recipes delivered to their home. The company has been successful thus far, which is promising for Goodyear, being a new company entering this industry.

We found that the majority of our focus group participants were not responsible for their own car maintenance. Shockingly, many of the participants did not even know what brand of tires were on their car. We also found that car maintenance is not a priority for them until something goes wrong. This changed the direction of our recommendations. Based on this information, we thought that our target market should be parents of college students, rather than college students. This data helped us create the idea of alerts to manage this regulating and scheduling for the consumer. It also implemented the emotional connection to the parents in our market. Recognizing that having someone to take care of car maintenance for their children while they are living away from home would be appealing to them.

In the focus group, we found that people care most about quality and price and least about speed and convenience when it comes to services. However, when asked of roadside assistance and tire buying, speed and convenience were considered more important than just with general services. There was an overwhelming belief that quality is most important. Only two people chose price as the most important factor in services. This was slightly contradictory to our survey findings, which is why estimating a price for the program has been one of our main

challenges. The survey and focus group align in that quality is very important. However, in the survey, there were many complaints of tires being overpriced, where in the focus group, people said they hardly care about price in comparison to other factors such as quality. Our secondary research also verified the preference of convenience being one of the highest factors. We found that convenience was higher than brand loyalty when it came to most car services.

One of our best ideas came from one of the focus group participants. She expressed a problem she had with needing to get gas late at night after work and not feeling safe in places, like Akron. She suggested a possible solution could be “gas deliveries”. When asked what people dislike about the tire buying experience, they brought up feeling uneducated. This spurred on the idea of the text alerts to keep track of things for the customer. This way, when they go in for whatever services they need, they have the knowledge of what they need and what will be offered to them.

Summary of Innovation Tools

There was an overwhelming sense in our research that online retail was taking off and consumers wanted an easy service in which their lives were made easier. This should not however take away from the fact that consumers also enjoy some services that can only be performed in person like tire rotations, oil changes, and wheel alignments. We live in a day and age where people want instant gratification for things they buy and receive through services. Because of these things that we found through our secondary research, we decided to ask more questions to the consumers about these types of things to gain better insight on what consumers liked about services that can be ordered online, yet have a personal feel like Uber, Lyft, Hello Fresh to name a few. We asked questions like: What aspects of products as a service do consumers enjoy? What about products as services makes customers want to subscribe rather

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than buy in person at stores? What, if anything, about those services do you think can be improved? How could these or similar services be used for cars and tires? What would translate well? What products do you currently use that could be transitioned into services? Why do you think services could be beneficial for these products? These questions were intended to better understand how consumers thought and the process that they went through to come to a conclusion about services and preferences via online or retail stores. Once we could understand the consumer's thought process, it was easier to decide on a service that was right for not only Goodyear, but the consumer.

There was overwhelming evidence in our research that tire demand was huge in areas with mostly cars doing the commuting. Places like New York and Chicago weren't really target areas for us because of the plethora of public transportation via metro, subways, taxis, and busses. Because of these, we wanted to learn more about the demand in areas that do have mostly commuting vehicles owned by everyday consumers that are potential candidates for Goodyear brand users. We wanted to know based upon 4 variables: price, quality, speed, and convenience, what consumers would look for most in a tire service location. (e.g.: oil changes, tire rotations etc.) What we found was that price and quality were the two main determinants in how consumers decide what tires that they wanted. Some people said that they go into the tire store and ask for the cheapest tires that will fit their car, and others just asked for the best quality that they could get. Either way, those two determinants are what really drove demand for what tires were purchased by the consumers that we talked to.

We found that there is a noticeable projected growth that the tire sales industry is expected to experience in the next few years. The automotive manufacturing industry has already had consistent levels of growth over the past few years. There is forecasting that predicts a

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similar pattern to take place over the next few years. The global automotive manufacturing industry had total revenue of \$1,252.6 billion US dollars in 2015. Because of this forecasted growth, we wanted to see if brand salience (the degree to which your brand is thought about or noticed when a customer is in a buying situation) of Goodyear was high or low among particular consumers that we polled via survey or focus group. Because of the overall growth in tire sales, we wanted to see that if we marketed tires in general, if consumers would already have Goodyear in their heads as their first or second choice. We asked our participants which places they went to most often to get their oil change and car work done. Most responses were based on the cheapest, closest, and most convenient option. They didn't have a place that they were particularly brand loyal and felt that did the best job. This made us wonder how we could raise Goodyear to a status above the rest offering points of differentiation above the rest of the competition. These points would make consumers loyal to Goodyear thus giving Goodyear the market share and have the option to cross market the rest of their products while they already have the consumer's focus. Things like royalty programs, and tire credits came to mind first when deciding on how Goodyear could captivate that audience. If a company offers you rewards for using their stores, you will be more inclined to go to that place if you don't see much difference between them and their competition. Oil change reminders and updates are also things that give consumers reason to stay with a specific company for all tire and car needs.

Recommendations

Based on our research, we came up with 5 main recommendations for Goodyear to use for the "as a service" sector. We based our recommendations off of exactly what we heard that the consumer wanted. These can be tweaked, edited, and compiled to get the outcome that Goodyear is looking for.

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Our first recommendation are Goodyear Subscription packages: “*The Driven Membership*” and “*The More Driven Membership*”. Both names are a play on the Goodyear slogan. The Driven Subscription Level (\$129/year) and More Driven Level (\$199/year) packages include text reminders, discounted towing, and “Meet your technician” and no extra charge and is a base part of package. Both packages also include a pick 3 system, where the customer picks 3 of the following services: 24/7 roadside assistance, 3 FREE Gas Deliveries, 2 FREE Oil Changes, 1 FREE Tire Rotation, or 10% off additional tires. This way, customers can pick and choose what suits them better and if they already get roadside assistance somewhere else, Goodyear does not have to compete with another company. The subscription package idea was sparked from the high use of services like UberEats, Hello Fresh, and Netflix. An experience that is online and convenient, but still personalized to the needs and taste of the consumer. This allows the consumer full access to a wide array of benefits, while only getting what they need and not paying for more.

Exclusive to The More Driven Membership is the earning and redemption of tire credits. Tire credits is our second recommendation and are saved for the member while they are a part of the subscription membership. This allows the consumer to save up for new tires while not having to think about it. Our research told us that consumers don't think about new tires until it's time to buy them. We wanted to remove that unwillingness to acknowledge the need of tires that consumers seemed to have. Goodyear More Driven members receive one credit per year as long as they have an active membership. Each credit is valid for one free tire. The tire provided is the base model and can be upgraded for additional charges. Credits can rollover for up to 4 years giving a member a full set of 4 tires every 4 years. Now customers don't have to think about tires,

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we will for them. This increases brand loyalty and positive word of mouth from members to non-members.

Our next recommendation is a “Meet Your Technician” feature. This feature gives members a small profile and summary about the technician that will be meeting with them. It gives them a peace of mind so they know exactly who they should be expecting making no surprises. It gives the member their name, age, time with Goodyear, specialization, and ETA. It's obvious why this feature would be beneficial and should be implemented at most servicing agencies. This was an idea to us because of the feedback we received from many of our survey and focus group participants that said car maintenance seems impersonal and you never know what you are going to get. We wanted to take some of the guesswork out of the tire buying experience and we felt this was a good way to do it.

Gas deliveries are our next recommendation to Goodyear. As part of the subscription service, Goodyear will provide members with up to 3 gas deliveries per year based on their package. These can be delivered roadside, in parking lots, or even at home! The price of gas is not included in the package and customers will be responsible for the cost. This gives customers the peace of mind that they will never be left stranded and Goodyear will be there for them. Many of our focus group participants expressed how they wished there was a service that would deliver gas to them, whether it be late at work and they are afraid to go to a gas station or stuck in a parking lot or the side of the road. There are so many situations where gas deliveries would be a necessity to have readily available. We believe that this would increase Goodyear's brand salience when talking about roadside assistance companies.

Our last recommendation is text reminders. By being a subscriber to the “Driven” or “More Driven” membership, customers will be given text reminders to keep up to date on

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mileage, service reminders, and the ability to schedule appointments on the go! This allows customers to stay up to date on their car and drives them to come into Goodyear whenever service is required. It also increases brand loyalty when picking which location to take your car. This idea was fueled off the basis of Goodyear's desire to have a tire company that talks to you. They expressed this want to us during our on-site visit in April. By giving you tips, making appointment scheduling easy, and reminding you when you need a servicing, Goodyear will be at the top of people's minds when they look for a tire company that talks to them.

Alternative Solutions

Throughout our research process, we found multiple solutions for Goodyear to adapt. While conducting our secondary research, we thought it would be beneficial to research the use of ride sharing services, such as Uber and Lyft, would impact Goodyear. Although we chose to take our recommendations and research in a different direction, we gathered useful data on what customers value in these services. Some of the data that we collected from this research influenced our final recommendations.

Through our secondary research, we found that Uber, average ride cost \$24.22, and Lyft, average ride cost \$19.69, had become cheaper alternatives to Taxis, average ride cost \$33.70 (Certify 2018). Based on these findings, we asked questions during our focus group regarding opinions of ride sharing services and found that the participants generally preferred the option of these services to Taxis.

In order to understand why these services were so popular among our participants, we asked them what they valued in ride sharing services and found that they valued convenience and price, which correlated with the data that we collected from our survey about subscription services and tire buying.

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We also found that the number of Uber and Lyft rides taken in 2017 increased by 700 million to 2.6 billion when compared to the number of Uber and Lyft rides taken in 2016 (Schaller Consulting n.d.). That number was projected to grow by 1.6 billion in 2018 (Schaller Consulting n.d.). We asked the participants in the focus group whether they had taken an Uber or Lyft ride before, and if they had, whether their first ride was taken in 2018. The majority of the group had taken an Uber or Lyft ride and two of them had taken their first ride in 2018. In addition, it was discovered that the vast majority of Uber and Lyft rides taken in 2017 (over 1.9 billion) were taken in the eight most densely populated areas of the United states (Schaller Consulting n.d.).

We asked the participants of the focus group when they were most likely to take an Uber or Lyft ride. We found that the majority of the participants were more likely to take an Uber or Lyft when they were on vacation, going for a night out, or when their car was in the shop. Lastly, we found that 18% of frequent Uber and Lyft riders in the United States claim that they are less likely to buy or lease a new car in the future due to the services offered by Uber and Lyft (Sharespost n.d.). We asked the participants whether the services offered by Uber and Lyft made them less likely to buy or lease a new car in the future. We found that Uber and Lyft did not make anyone in our focus group less likely to buy a car in the future.

From our findings mentioned above, we developed an idea of a subscription service that would be targeted toward Uber and Lyft drivers specifically. We developed an idea that would include Goodyear offering customer friendly service stations with comfortable restaurant style waiting areas that provided things such as charging stations, tire pressure, oil changes, tire rotation, tires, etc, to all consumers but at a reduced cost to Uber and Lyft drivers.

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In addition to offering discounts on the products and services mentioned above, Goodyear may also want to consider offering a subscription-based tire service. If subscribed the service would allow for participants to take advantage of various price reductions and offer a way to build Goodyear loyalty points. The subscription could offer deals such as reduced-price tire upgrades, free tire maintenance, free tire replacements (refurbished tires of the same model on the car), as well as more offers that would prove valuable to the consumer. This would go a long way in raising brand image and customer loyalty in an industry that shows promising growth while many transportation industries growth remain relatively flat or declining.

If the idea of Goodyear service stations were to be implemented, we would recommend starting the implementation in the eight largest, densest, metropolitan areas of the United States. These areas include Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle and Washington DC. (Schaller Consulting). We would advise beginning these major metropolitan areas because over one of the 1.9 billion Uber and Lyft rides taken in 2017 occurred in one of the eight metropolitan areas mentioned above (Schaller Consulting). Though not mentioned as one of the eight metropolitan cities above the New York metro area would be another ideal spot to test the Goodyear service station. New York alone accounted for 215 million of the 2.6 billion Uber and Lyft rides taken in 2017 (Schaller Consulting). Once the idea and the execution of the Goodyear service station has been implemented and refined in the highest demand areas of the United States, we would then recommend branching into the less dense areas to capitalize on the remaining 700 million rides per year.

Another potential alternative we developed was a roadside tire change service. The main feature of the service being convenient roadside tire changes, in places such as driveways, and parking lots. This service would eliminate the need for consumers to schedule a tire change

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appointment at brick and mortar locations. In addition, the service would eliminate the time many consumers spend in waiting rooms while their tires are being changed. Instead, consumers could spend their time comfortably at home, or productively at work while their tires are being changed. While roadside tire changes would be the main aspect of this service the technician would also be able to make oil changes, refill gas, check tire pressure, etc. all available for additional costs. The goal of this service would be to provide the majority of a consumer's car maintenance without the consumer ever having to enter a brick and mortar location. With the main goal of developing Goodyear customer loyalty among tire consumers. As we discovered in our secondary research most tire consumers are not loyal to any tire manufacturer. We believe that the convenience offered by this service would breed Goodyear loyalty among many consumers.

One of the main reasons we decided against this plan was because during our site visit at Goodyear Headquarters, we discovered that Goodyear had already developed a similar service that was already in its testing phase in the Akron-Cleveland area, as well as several other locations throughout the United States. Although, we would recommend to Goodyear if feasible to add the ability to provide additional services such as oil changes, gas refills, etc. that could be done during the same tire change appointment for an additional charge. We believe the additional services would increase the likelihood of consumers utilizing the service. We would also recommend to Goodyear to slowly increase the service area of the roadside tire change service to enable it to reach a maximum number of consumers.

Limitations and Challenges

Throughout the course of the project, our team faced a few challenges. The main limitation that we faced was in the limited number of people involved in our primary research.

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The majority of our survey respondents and focus group participants were college-aged students. This narrows our results to a small percentage of the population and results may have differed if a wider range of people were surveyed and involved in the focus group. We also found that many college-aged students are not responsible for their own car maintenance and rely on their parents to make decisions about their cars. Although this led us to our recommendation to market the service to parents of college students, our data is still skewed.

Another limitation we faced was in our secondary research. We were asked to research how Goodyear, a primarily sales driven company, can integrate into the “as-a-service” space. Although many companies are adopting the as-a-service platform, we did not find any research on tire companies using this business model. Because of this, we could not see if competitors were successful using this platform and were limited to the research published on existing as-a-service companies. However, we utilized the information that we could find on existing “as-a-service” companies and integrated that into a tire-based subscription service.

Our group also found that we had limited information about Goodyear’s operations. When trying to calculate a price for Goodyear to charge for the service, we realized that we did not have adequate data to get an accurate estimate. Therefore, we could not make financial projections and do not know if our solution will be profitable for the company. Our team estimated the pricing of the service using the average price of oil changes, tires, and roadside assistance programs. We also incorporated what consumers would be willing to pay for a subscription service to Goodyear. If we had access to the required financial data, we would have been able to make accurate projections.

One of the challenges that we faced during our project was limited communication with Goodyear. We were assigned a contact from the company at the start of the project to coordinate

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site visits and to answer any questions we had throughout our research. During the second semester, our contact at Goodyear resigned. This caused communication issues, thus, pushing back our site visit. Due to this, we had to move forward with our recommendations without being able to ask more questions to the company. We believe that we could have gained more insight on the company that could have been integrated into our final recommendations if we were able to reach our company contact and visit the headquarters earlier.

Recommendations for Further Research

We recommend that Goodyear further investigate integrating into the as-a-service platform. Because of the limitations and challenges that we faced throughout the project; we believe that it would be beneficial for the company to conduct further research. Since the majority of our primary research was conducted with college students, we were only able to form a hypothesis on how customers feel about “tires-as-a-service”. Our team recommends that Goodyear conduct a survey that includes a more diverse range of respondents. By doing this, they can gain further insight on what their consumers value in an as-a-service platform and if it would be feasible for them to integrate into this space. We also recommend that they analyze the potential financial gain of moving into the as-a-service industry.

One way that Goodyear could further research this potential change in their business model is to test it in select locations. For example, they could launch the subscription service in the Akron/Cleveland area. Based on the results of the test, they can begin expanding the program by integrating into larger metropolitan areas. After launching the test, they can ask for customer feedback and make changes to the service or, if necessary, end the program.

Conclusion

Throughout the last two semesters, our team conducted research on the “as-a-service” business model and how Goodyear can integrate into this space. With technology advancing and allowing services to be more convenient, consumers are demanding convenience. Thus, many companies are entering the “as-a-service” space to increase market share and keep up with consumer trends.

Through our secondary research, we analyzed what consumers value in subscription services, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Uber Eats. We then researched how these services became successful and compete with other services in the industry. We found that consumers value convenience and ease of use the most, which led us to further investigate this in our primary research. We also found that there is no brand loyalty surrounding the tire-buying process and car maintenance. This led to investigate potential solutions that would increase brand loyalty for Goodyear while using an “as-a-service” platform to keep up with the consumer demand for convenience.

Our primary research consisted of a focus group and a survey among mainly college students and millennials. The data we collected from these allowed us to make our recommendations on how Goodyear can take advantage of the “as-a-service” platform.

Ultimately, we are recommending that Goodyear implement a subscription service that offers two levels of membership: *Driven* and *More Driven*. Each package will feature text reminders, discounted towing, and meet your technician. Subscribers will also have the choice of three additional services. *More Driven* members will also receive tire credits: one credit per year that is redeemable for four years. Although there is still further research needed in this space, we

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believe that this subscription service will build brand loyalty among customers and increase Goodyear's market share.