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FROM CLICK TO HORN: HOW TO MAP THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY IN THE RIDE-HAILING INDUSTRY

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Ride-hailing services have afflictive «monopolized» regions of North Africa and changed the nature of interaction cities and various digital platforms. Yassir — which provides a mobile-based alternative to standard taxi services — has rapidly established itself among Algeria's dominant VTC service providers. But this increasing visibility brings up critical questions about the real quality of the user experience. The company touts the affordability, efficiency, and convenience of its service, but user reviews from the web paint a more complex and, at times, contradictory portrait. By investigating the digital footprints present in comments made publicly by users as well as reviews found on platforms, this study aims to shed light on the various user stages in order to better comprehend the journey customers undergo when engaging with Yassir. The aim really is to find those key friction and satisfaction moments and how that influences their engagement and loyalty. We employed a qualitative netnographic methodology where we compiled and thematically analyzed user generated content on social media and mobile app platforms. Data were coded according to the four key phases of the customer journey: awareness, consideration, decision and post-experience. The results suggest that Yassir customer experience is an assemblage that is constituent by a variety of cognitive, and emotional factors that changes over time.

Users usually find out about the app in the initial awareness stage when it is shown in the form of a sponsored ad or via a friend or an influencer. This phase is critical because it sets first impressions. The right pricing models will attract some users, a cross-section will be drawn in by competitive prices and the promise of convenience, while others express initial reluctance based on unclear pricing models and negative word-of-mouth. Those early concerns suggest a perception gap between the promotional promise and the perceived reliability of the service. In the consideration stage, users are actively comparing Yassir against their competitor apps (TemTem and Heetch). Online ratings, reviews and anecdotal experiences all serve as social proof, which is a critical driver of perceptions. While promotional codes and referral incentives boost engagement, cyclical pain points — such as pricing, sudden cancellations, and lack of clear route tracking — are frustrating users. This again points to the need to ensure they can maintain transparent communication and information flow. During the decision-making stage, for example, users tend to prefer availability and price first, since time pressures can influence a booking. Hip at this stage everyone, the app interface, driver ratings, and estimated arrival times, play a huge role in your choice. Yet that experience is often muddled by unpredictable fare fluctuations, delays and unresponsive customer service, all of which erodes trust and pushes some users to competitors. Once they are done with an experience, this post-experience stage will provide important insights into their long-term involvement. They can also serve up satisfied users, who turn into active promoters sharing positive reviews and encouraging others to install the app. By contrast, users who experience recurring problems — like overcharging, impolite or unprofessional drivers, or problems with complaints going unanswered — are more likely to vent publicly about their frustrations. Such negative narratives have a multiplicative effect on brand goodwill and highlight systemic failures in service recovery processes. The analysis finds that even though Yassir manages to attract a wide range of users with high visibility and low-price posting offers, it fails to provide a consistently reliable and transparent service. To improve the end-user experience and gain user loyalty, the platform needs to take some tangible actions: clear pricing structures, increased driver accountability, faster response to user complaints and effective loyalty programs targeting users with consistent usage. They're not just important for addressing the gap between promise and performance, but also for turning transactional interactions into deep and durable customer relationships. By adapting, Yassir stands to further consolidate its competitive edge while building deeper levels of trust and satisfaction among its users.

Keywords: Online customer journey, Digital transformation, User experience, Customer journey mapping, customer Journey optimization, Netnographic analysis.

ОТ КЛИКА ДО ГУДКА: КАК СОСТАВИТЬ КАРТУ ПУТЕШЕСТВИЯ КЛИЕНТА В ИНДУСТРИИ РАЙД-ХАЙЛИНГА

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Службы Ride-hailing фактически «монополизировали» регионы Северной Африки и изменили характер взаимодействия с городами и различными цифровыми платформами. Компания Yassir, предоставляющая мобильную альтернативу стандартным услугам такси, быстро заняла лидирующие позиции среди поставщиков услуг VTC в Алжире. Однако растущая популярность компании заставляет задуматься о реальном качестве обслуживания пользователей. Компания заявляет о доступности, эффективности и удобстве своих услуг, однако отзывы пользователей в Интернете рисуют более сложный и порой противоречивый портрет. Изучая цифровые следы, присутствующие в публичных комментариях пользователей, а также в отзывах на платформах, данное исследование призвано пролить свет на различные этапы работы пользователей, чтобы лучше понять путь, который проходят клиенты при взаимодействии с Yassir. Цель исследования состоит в том, чтобы найти ключевые моменты трения и удовлетворения и определить, как это влияет на их вовлеченность и лояльность. Мы использовали качественную нетнографическую методологию, в рамках которой мы собрали и тематически проанализировали пользовательский контент в социальных сетях и на платформах мобильных приложений. Данные были закодированы в соответствии с четырьмя ключевыми этапами путешествия клиента: осведомленность, рассмотрение, принятие решения и пост-опыт. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о том, что покупательский опыт Yassir — это совокупность различных когнитивных и эмоциональных факторов, которые меняются с течением времени.

Обычно пользователи узнают о приложении на этапе первоначальной осведомленности, когда оно показывается в виде спонсорской рекламы, через друзей или авторитетных людей. Этот этап очень важен, поскольку на нем формируется первое впечатление. Правильные модели ценообразования привлекут некоторых пользователей, другая часть будет привлечена конкурентоспособными ценами и обещанием удобства, в то время как другие выражают первоначальное нежелание из-за неясных моделей ценообразования и негативных отзывов из уст в уста. Эти первые опасения указывают на разрыв в восприятии между рекламными обещаниями и воспринимаемой надежностью услуги. На стадии рассмотрения пользователи активно сравнивают Yassir с приложениями-конкурентами (TemTem и Heetch). Онлайн-рейтинги, отзывы и анекдотический опыт служат социальным доказательством, которое является важнейшим фактором восприятия. Хотя промокоды и реферальные стимулы повышают вовлеченность, циклические болевые точки — такие как цены, внезапные отмены и отсутствие четкого отслеживания маршрута — разочаровывают пользователей. Это еще раз указывает на необходимость обеспечения прозрачной коммуникации и информационного потока. Например, на этапе принятия решения пользователи, как правило, предпочитают в первую очередь информацию о наличии мест и цене, поскольку нехватка времени может повлиять на бронирование. На этом этапе огромную роль в выборе играет интерфейс приложения, рейтинг водителей и предполагаемое время прибытия. Однако этот опыт часто омрачается непредсказуемыми колебаниями тарифов, задержками и неотзывчивым обслуживанием клиентов, что подрывает доверие и толкает некоторых пользователей к конкурентам. После того как пользователи получают опыт, эта стадия, которая наступает после опыта, позволит им получить важные сведения об их долгосрочном участии. Они также могут стать довольными пользователями, которые превращаются в активных пропагандистов, делящихся положительными отзывами и побуждающих других установить приложение. Напротив, пользователи, сталкивающиеся с повторяющимися проблемами, такими как завышенные тарифы, невежливые или непрофессиональные водители или проблемы с жалобами, остающимися без ответа, скорее всего, публично расскажут о своем разочаровании. Такие негативные рассказы оказывают мультипликативный эффект на репутацию бренда и подчеркивают системные сбои в процессах восстановления сервиса. Анализ показывает, что, хотя Yassir удастся привлечь широкий круг пользователей благодаря высокой узнаваемости и низким ценам, он не может обеспечить стабильно надежный и прозрачный сервис. Чтобы улучшить опыт конечных пользователей и добиться их лояльности, платформа должна предпринять ряд ощутимых действий: четкая структура ценообразования, повышение ответственности водителей, быстрое реагирование на жалобы пользователей и эффективные программы лояльности, ориентированные на пользователей с постоянным использованием. Они важны не только для устранения разрыва между обещаниями и результатами, но и для превращения транзакционных взаимодействий в глубокие и прочные отноше-

ния с клиентами. Адаптируясь, компания Yassir сможет еще больше укрепить свои конкурентные преимущества, одновременно повышая уровень доверия и удовлетворенности своих пользователей.

Ключевые слова: онлайн-путешествие клиента, цифровая трансформация, пользовательский опыт, картирование пути клиента, оптимизация пути клиента, нетнографический анализ.

Introduction. As of now, digital infrastructure is drastically altering our behavioral trends and overhauling our societies. It precipitates a transformative impact on organizations, catalyzing a paradigm shift in their operational frameworks and strategies [1]. New engineering advancements are reconfiguring consumer interactions, uses and expectations [2]. Thus, algorithmic is burgeoning as a pivotal fulcrum for change in all areas.

Driven by the digital revolution, the intangible goods sector is undergoing an erudite and propelled transformation. This tech-enabled metamorphosis, elucidated as the integration of digital technologies into all business activities to optimize their efficiency and competitiveness [3], is escorted by the rise of digital platforms, the digitalization of processes and changes in customer expectations, redefining traditional models [4, 5]. This paradigm shift is generating new forms of interaction and shaping consumer tendency [6, 7]. To adapt to these alterations, companies must constantly innovate in order to offer more fluid and adapted services, by integrating a phygital approach. The priory referenced, defined as a continuum between the physical place and the digital space, represents a major competitive opportunity [8] and is based on effective synergy between interconnected services, ensuring seamless integration between physical and digital interactions [9].

This transformation dynamic affects all service sectors, profoundly reshaping business models and customer interactions. In the banking sector, the rise of online banks and mobile payment services is redefining financial practices and the relationship between institutions and users [10]. The retail industry is adopting an omnichannel approach, combining e-commerce, mobile applications, and connected stores to streamline the purchasing process and enhance consumer engagement [11]. Similarly, the tourism and hospitality sector is undergoing a digital revolution with the development of online booking platforms and automated services that are transforming traveler habits [12].

The transportation sector particularly illustrates the impact of these changes. The emergence of mobile applications has revolutionized access to mobility services, offering more flexible, fast, and user-centric solutions [13]. Ride-hailing platforms, carpooling services, and online booking systems have significantly altered consumer behavior and challenged traditional

transportation business models [14]. Faced with these developments, industry players must continuously innovate to enhance accessibility, efficiency, and seamless travel experiences.

In the context of increasing digitalization, the customer journey has become a strategic priority for service-oriented businesses [15]. It no longer consists of isolated interactions but encompasses the entire set of steps a customer goes through before, during, and after a service experience [5]. A well-designed customer journey enhances satisfaction, strengthens loyalty, and optimizes business performance [7].

Digitalization has deeply transformed these journeys by multiplying interaction channels and raising consumer expectations in terms of seamlessness and personalization [9]. All service sectors are affected by this transformation: banks integrate monochannel solutions [10], the retail sector optimizes the synergy between physical stores and e-commerce [11], and tourism leverages digital platforms to redefine interactions between clients and service providers [12].

Among these evolving sectors, the ride-hailing industry (VTC) particularly highlights the importance of a smooth and optimized customer journey. The rise of mobile applications has profoundly changed how consumers access transportation services, offering more flexible, faster, and user-adapted solutions [13]. Unlike traditional transport methods — where the customer journey was linear and limited to a few touchpoints (booking, ride, payment) — VTC platforms now provide a fully digital and interactive experience, from searching for a driver to post-ride service evaluation [14].

In this highly competitive sector, managing the customer journey becomes a key differentiating factor [16]. A seamless transition between service stages — vehicle search, price estimation, pick-up, payment, and rating — is essential to ensure customer satisfaction and foster loyalty [7]. However, despite these advances, challenges remain, particularly in reducing friction points (waiting times, dynamic pricing, and complaints management) and optimizing the user experience to ensure a smooth and engaging service.

This empirical study scrutinizes the hurdles and possibilities linked to boosting the Omni channel experience in the ride-hailing stratum [17]. Streamlining interrelations in the midst of users and locomotion frameworks is the main motive behind scrutinizing the effect of digital transformation and

strategic approaches. Notably, the investigation probes how clients' gratification, engagement, and loyalty are clouded by these improvements. It illuminates key areas for consumer pathway enhancement throughout the service experience.

Consequently, a pivotal question arises: In what manner can ride-hailing platforms enhance the customer experience to reach user satisfaction and fortify their market position within the digital economy?

The fundamental purpose of this study is to map the customer journey in detail, emphasizing on the preliminary, operational and follow-up phases subsequent to the application of a VTC service, and denoting prominent. Key interaction between the user and the platform. Making a conspicuous detection of the opportunities that can improve and optimize each stage of the journey; in addition to identifying friction points that may disrupt the service experience.

Prior to reservation, the examination explores prominent factors that have an impact on customer decisions: ease of access to the app, pricing transparency, and the relevance of recommendations. Amid the transit, mindfulness is given to service quality, reliability, comfort, and real-time support. Ultimately, subsequent to the ride, loyalty mechanisms, such as post-ride follow-up, customer feedback management, and engagement incentives are examined intensively.

The cognition of these phases aids to propose concrete strategies to enhance customer satisfaction and competitiveness of ride-hailing platforms in an ever-evolving digital environment.

Research Method. A netnographic approach was adopted in this scrutiny, a qualitative method developed by Kozinets [18] that triggers the analysis of consumer interactions on digital platforms. Reliance on reviews to get insights about products, services, or experiences is a valuable source of information, as they show genuine and unfiltered opinions from customers without restrictions or boundaries [19]. This methodology is highly prominent to have a deeper understanding of the customer journey, as it helps identify expectations, friction points, and opportunities for improvement across various stages of the process [20]. By adopting a qualitative and exploratory approach, this research aims to make use of the benefits from the valuable insights found in online conversations, and gains an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of the customers' journey, including their expectations, behaviors and different touch points.

Data Source Selection. The main purpose behind appointing Yassir is its central role in the VTC in Algeria, in addition to its robust existence on digital platforms (e. g., social media, online marketing, or app usage), and diverse customer interaction.

The analysis is based on multiple data sources, including social media (Facebook, Instagram), online

review platforms (Google Reviews), and specialized forums, providing a broad range of user feedback.

Comments and reviews were selected based on several criteria:

- *Study period:* From January 2024 to March 2025, ensuring an up-to-date and representative view of user perceptions.
- *Relevance:* Only contributions directly related to the customer journey were considered.
- *Data volume:* A sufficient number of reviews were collected to ensure a diverse and in-depth analysis.

This method has for a motive gathering important information that truly represents the consumers' expectations and thoughts.

Data Collection. To carry out this research, we used a combination of methods of both automated extraction and manual collection of user comments and reviews that focuses on collecting consumer feedback from online platforms mainly Talkwalker, that is a social media monitoring and analytics tool, to extract public discussions related to Yassir across various digital platforms. This method made it possible to recognize various types of digital engagements from social networks. Over and above that, it was compulsory to conduct a manual data so as to identify data extraction and encompasses imperceptible by the automated tool.

The collected data was then sorted and refined based on several criteria to remove irrelevant survey responses and to ensure its reliability. The process was based on the selection of comments written in French and dialectal Arabic, while irrelevant contents, spam, and duplicate entries were excluded, so as to guarantee a coherent and targeted qualitative analysis of the customer journey.

Ultimately, the data was grouped based on shared characteristics or criteria and according to the main showcase of the customer journey when using VTC services:

- *Before using the service:* This phase encompasses information search about Yassir, user reviews, and the first interaction with the app (registration, interface navigation, payment method selection).
- *During service use:* This stage covers the booking experience, vehicle wait time, interaction with the driver, ride quality, as well as safety and comfort perceptions.
- *After service Use:* This phase analyzes experiences related to payment, dispute resolution, customer support, and Yassir's loyalty strategies (discounts, loyalty programs, post-ride satisfaction).

The customer journey was systematically approached to yield a clear perspective through

collecting and analyzing customer data, mapping the journey stages and highlighting issues, bringing to pivotal challenges so as to implement resolutions and enhance the experience within Yassir.

Data Analysis. The analysis of the collected data compels the use of NVivo, qualitative software tailored in assessing large volumes of textual data, mainly online reviews and comments, as it facilitates coding,

a) Data Coding Process

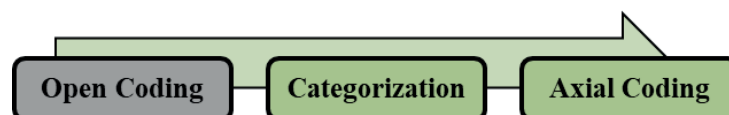


Figure 1. Data Coding Process

To investigate comments and reviews, an in-depth coding process has come into fruition:

1 — Open Coding:

The process commenced with the identification of emerging themes throughout an open-ended manner to encourage responses and enables future modifications and enhancements. The purpose was to extract recurring elements that reflect customer perceptions, expectations, or frustrations [22].

2 — Grouping into Categories Based on Customer Journey Stages:

Systematically speaking, themes are then classified following a structured approach according to the stages of the customer journey:

- *Before using the service:* Information search, app navigation, decision-making.
- *During service use:* Ride quality, driver behavior, vehicle condition.
- *After using the service:* Payment, customer service, loyalty.

3 — Axial Coding:

At this stage, themes are interconnected to identify relationships and ****prioritize categories**. This step helps establish a more in-depth structure by linking customer concerns to specific aspects of the service [23].

b) Validation Criteria for the Analysis:

To ensure the ****reliability and validity**** of the results, several methodological strategies are applied:

- *Data Saturation:* The analysis continues until no new significant themes emerge from

organization, and the identification of emerging trends within extensive datasets [21].

The use of NVivo in this research maybe grounded by its ability to structure data into thematic categories by involving the organization of information based on recurring patterns, to provide a clear understanding of customer perceptions and expectations regarding VTC services.

the comments, ensuring a comprehensive representation of user perceptions [24].

- *Triangulation with Other Sources:* The obtained results are compared with other data sources (reviews from different platforms, previous studies on VTC services) to strengthen the credibility of the conclusions [25].

The adopted approach thus enables a detailed mapping of the ****customer journey** in the VTC sector, highlighting both friction points and key areas for improvement to enhance the user experience.

Customer Journey Mapping. The analysis of the customer journey at Yassir results in a detailed visual representation of user interactions with the service, structured into three phases: before, during, and after use. This mapping highlights key friction points, such as app navigation, waiting times, driver service quality, and customer support.

Based on the findings obtained through NVivo, recommendations are proposed to optimize the customer experience. These include technological improvements (user interface, seamless payment process), better driver management (training, continuous evaluation), and enhanced customer support (automated responses, reduced wait times).

This approach enables Yassir to identify opportunities for improvement and implement strategic actions to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, thereby strengthening its competitiveness in the VTC market.



Figure 2. The customer journey stages

Discussion of Results. The analysis of user reviews and comments has allowed us to map their journey through the various interactions with the

VTC platform. By structuring this analysis according to the four stages of the customer journey (Awareness, Consideration, Decision, Post-Experience), we identify

key trends, friction points, and opportunities for improvement. The primary objective of this approach is to elucidate user interactions with the service and how to boost their experience.

Key elements are applied to achieve the outcome; by way of illustration, **touch points, actions, motivations, pain points, customer experience, and ideas for improvement**. The insights were derived from customer reviews and comments collected via Talkwalker and manual data extraction, and then analyzed using NVivo.

The generation of the word cloud relies on the extraction of numerous comments from social networks, where users share their experiences. This method allows capturing a diversity of terms, including those written in Arabic, as some comments are written in this language. Thus, the cloud reflects the linguistic and cultural richness of user interactions on these platforms. This approach ensures an accurate representation of the expressed opinions, regardless of the language used.



Figure 3. Word of cloud. The customer journey stages

1 — Awareness Stage:

At the **awareness stage**, potential users of this service gain insights about it through various channels such as **social media, online ads, word-of-mouth recommendations, and app store reviews**. This stage is highly critical as it shapes their first impressions and influences their decision to endeavor the service.

Many users discover Yassir through targeted ads on social media, emphasizing affordability and convenience, while others hear about it from friends or online discussions comparing different VTC services. Some users download the app out of curiosity or frustration with competitors, as illustrated by one user: «I was scrolling through Instagram, and an ad for Yassir popped up, saying it's cheaper than taxis. I was intrigued and decided to check it out.» Another added, «My cousin told me Yassir is better than traditional taxis because you know the price upfront. I downloaded the app to see if it's true.» The primary motivations for

trying Yassir are convenience and competitive pricing, as users appreciate the ability to book a ride instantly rather than struggling to find a taxi, while also valuing transparent and often lower fares compared to traditional taxis. As one user explained, «Finding a taxi in my area is a nightmare, especially at night. With an app, I can just book a ride from my phone — so much easier!» Another highlighted pricing concern: «I was tired of bargaining with taxi drivers. I wanted a fixed price without surprises.» However, despite effective marketing, some users hesitate due to unclear pricing policies and negative word-of-mouth. Many are confused about how fares are calculated, as Yassir's ads often promote affordability without detailing actual pricing structures. Additionally, concerns about driver reliability deter potential customers. «I downloaded the app after seeing an ad about cheap rides, but there was no real explanation of how prices work,» noted one user. Another shared, «I was about to book my first ride, but I checked Facebook comments and saw so many people complaining about drivers canceling. Now I'm hesitant.»

2 — Consideration stage:

This stage represents users actively probe of the Yassir app, navigate its interface, and compare its offerings with competitors as TemTem and Heetch, where the oversight of app store reviews, social media discussions, or forums is essential for gaining insights to forge their decision; as well as, the driver's attainability and price benchmarking. As one user explained, «Before booking, I wanted to see how much a ride would cost compared to other apps. I also checked Google Reviews to see what people were saying.» Another shared, «I downloaded Yassir, but before using it, I searched on Twitter to check if people were complaining about long wait times or cancellations.» In this mechanism, a number of factors come into play to enhance motivation including first-time user discounts and promotional offers along with positive testimonials from peers. One user highlighted, «I saw a promo code for 50% off my first ride, so I figured I'd give it a try.» Others are drawn to the app by recommendations, as another mentioned, «My friend told me she always uses Yassir because it's cheaper than other apps, so I decided to test it myself.» Conversely, some remain perturbed about its use, citing concerns over pricing integrity and calculation methodology. «The app says «estimated fare,» but I don't know if it will change once I book,» one user remarked. While others opt to refrain from using it out of fear of drivers' cancellations as mentioned in online reviews. «I read that sometimes drivers accept a ride but then cancel if they find a better request. That made me unsure about trusting the app,» shared another potential user.

3 — Decision stage:

This phase discerns a critical decision-making procedure pertaining to the use of Yassir, through

assessing real-time driver availability, estimated fares, and user ratings before confirming their trip. Digital app adopters tend to harness the platform; predominantly, to ensure a smooth process, as one user noted, «*I had the app installed for weeks but only used it when I saw a driver was just two minutes away.*» Another shared, «*I compared the price with Heetch before booking. Yassir was cheaper, so I went with it.*» «*Clients are compelled by a multitude of factors among the most important of which: convenience, immediate availability, and perceived cost-effectiveness, with promotions and discounts further incentivizing first-time bookings.*» A satisfied customer remarked, «*I finally booked because I got a promo code for my first ride, and it made the price very attractive.*» Others prioritize safety and ease of use, as another user stated, «*I liked that I could see the driver's name, rating, and car details before confirming my ride.*» Nevertheless, there are some concerns regarding last-minute trip cancellations and the uncapped pricing. «*I confirmed a ride, but the driver canceled after five minutes. It was frustrating,*» one user commented, while another mentioned, «*The*

fare estimate showed one price, but I was charged more at the end. I don't understand why.» These drawbacks drive consumers to turn to alternative applications such as Heetch and TemTem, especially if they have had a negative experience with the service of the app under consideration.

4 — Post experience stage:

The experience of using the app concludes by shaping the final impression among individuals, upon which the final decision is made, either to continue using it or switch to other more efficient applications in terms of time management, fixed pricing, and reliability in responding to booking. Here, many resort to posting their impressions on social media as a means of sharing their experience with potential customers, as one user shared, «*The ride was smooth, and the driver was polite. I gave him five stars and recommended Yassir to my friends.*» However, others report negative experiences, particularly regarding unexpected price changes or poor customer service. «*I was overcharged compared to the initial estimate, and customer support never responded to my complaint,*» one frustrated user noted.

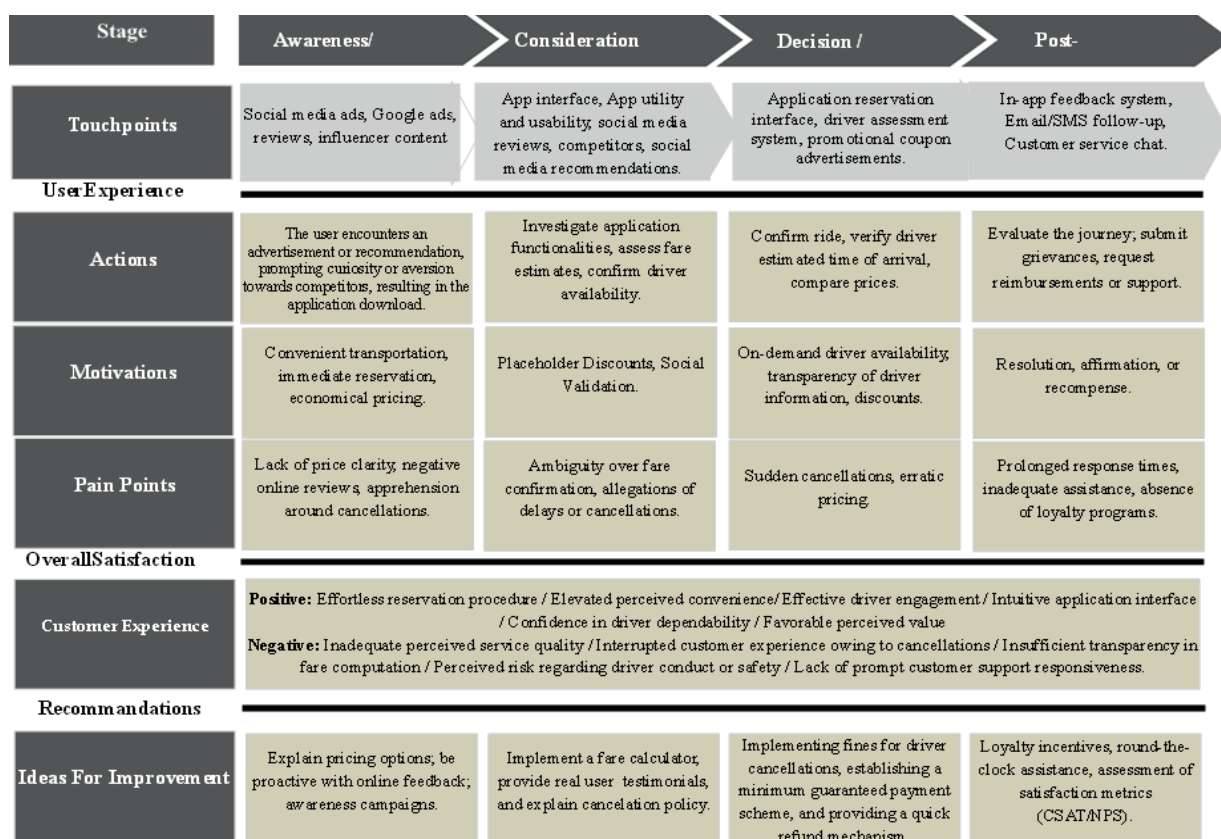


Figure 4. Customer Journey Map for VTC

Customer loyalty does not emerge in a vacuum; it is the result of personal experiences and decisions that lived the voyage and conveyed it in its entirety, ultimately leading them to either return or seek an alternative. A satisfied rider stated, «*I've used Yassir*

several times now, and it's reliable. I won't bother switching to another app.» Conversely, dissatisfied customer mentioned, «*After multiple cancellations and price hikes, I'm switching to another VTC service.*» Be that as it may, parallel issues may arise, causing customers

to be repelled, and in this regard, some users of the program suggest proposing solutions to mitigate the difficulties that may emerge during the process, such as a clearer fare structure and better incentives for loyal customers. *«I'd use Yassir more if they had a loyalty program or discounts for frequent users,»* one customer proposed. Addressing these concerns can enhance retention and brand advocacy, ensuring a better post-ride experience for users.

Conclusion. The scrutiny aimed to map the customer journey in the realm of seamless usage in the VTC sector, leveraging the Yassir platform as a case study. A netnographic approach assisted in analysing users' perspectives and comments on various online platforms (social networks, forums, Google Avis, etc.) so as to ascertain friction points and opportunities for improvement at each stage of the customer experience path. This investigation was based on a qualitative analysis of users' interactions across preliminary, operational and follow-up phases of service deployment, which enabled us to gain an advanced insight of customers' perceptions and expectations regarding Yassir.

The results highlighted several major trends throughout the customer journey. During the Awareness Stage, users become aware of the service mainly via social networks, online advertising and word of mouth. The attractiveness of promotional offers and personal recommendations acts as a fundamental driver in their intention to download the application. Yet, a lack of pricing transparency and negative reviews about drivers' frequent cancellations creates doubts among some prospective customers. In the Consideration Stage, a juxtaposition is drawn between Yassir and other alternative platforms, notably Heetch, TemTem and Bolt, with due regard to account prices, driver availability and customer reviews. Certain features play a pivotal role in attracting customers, such as promotions and discounted first journeys, but this is susceptible to the impact of a sometimes-unintuitive user interface or limited availability in certain areas. During the Decision Juncture, users make their decision contingent upon the speed with which they are connected to a driver, the dependability of the price assessment and service reputation. When the service is streamlined and optimized for efficiency, the user experience is unequivocally positive. While some customers endure negative experiences related to prolonged waiting times, last-minute cancellations, and the like.

One of the main contributions of this research is the detailed mapping of the customer journey, which is an essential strategic tool for understanding how users interact with the platform and improving their experience. This mapping makes it possible to visualise all the points of contact between the customer and the service, to identify the critical moments when friction

arises and to propose appropriate solutions to optimise each phase of the journey. In a highly competitive sector such as VTC, where customer retention depends on their overall satisfaction, having an overview of the customer journey enables companies like Yassir to anticipate user expectations, correct the major points of friction, optimise customer relations and better target their marketing actions to retain existing customers. As such, this charting is not limited to a simple descriptive analysis, but constitutes a genuine decision-making tool, enabling VTC companies to improve the quality of their service and stand out in the market.

Although this study provides relevant and usable results, it nevertheless has certain limitations that should be highlighted. Firstly, the analysis is based exclusively on a netnographic approach, i. e. the study of opinions and comments left by users on social networks and evaluation platforms. However, these opinions are often biased, as dissatisfied consumers are more inclined to express their frustration than those who have had a positive experience. A complementary scrutiny, based on quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews, would provide an exemplary balance of results and a more complete picture of customer expectations and behaviour. Secondly, this research focused on a single VTC platform, Yassir, with no direct comparison with other competing services. A comparative approach with Heetch, TemTem or Bolt would make it possible to identify best practices implemented by other market players and to draw up even more precise recommendations for improving the user experience. Finally, our study focused on the perceptions and expectations of users, without including the perspective of drivers. Yet their role is crucial to customer satisfaction, particularly in terms of punctuality, quality of service and communication with passengers. Including drivers' insights would offer a more nuanced perspective on the functionality and efficacy of the system.

The main limitations of this research lie in its methodology and sampling. By focusing solely on the Yassir VTC service and using a netnographic approach, the study may lack representativeness of other VTC services or different geographical regions. Moreover, the data extracted from social media may primarily reflect the opinions of the most active users, which can introduce bias. Qualitative analysis with NVivo can also be subjective, limiting the depth of understanding of customer motivations. Moreover, the absence of quantitative data prevents the assessment of the extent of the identified problems. Finally, the results may become outdated due to the rapid evolution of technologies and consumer expectations in such a dynamic sector. These limitations suggest that future research could benefit from a more diversified and longitudinal approach, integrating quantitative data and a broader scope.

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