

Sust 713 /// Summer 2023 /// Process Book

# Starbucks

EVOLUTION OF A COFFEE EMPIRE

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Image by Starbucks via [starbucks.com](https://www.starbucks.com)





# Project Team



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*M.A. Design for Sustainability*



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*M.F.A. Service Design*

## Project Brief

Design a memorable and meaningful user-focused innovation for a company that enables users to behave more sustainably even as it drives real improvements in that company's sustainable practices. The design solution must not be able to be implemented through greenwashing, but only through a lasting commitment to change in the company.

## Research Strategy

Thoroughly research the chosen company's market, brand identity, customer demographics, strengths, and weaknesses. Investigate the company's sustainable performance through corporate materials, third-party certifications, and independent research. Assess higher risk threats and weaknesses impacting the company's sustainable practices. Incorporate both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of user behaviors, perceptions, and needs. By synthesizing insights from diverse sources, our research strategy aims to guide the creation of a memorable and impactful user-focused innovation that drives tangible improvements in the company's sustainable practices.

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# Introduction

COFFEE INDUSTRY

RETAIL COFFEE MARKET

COFFEE & CLIMATE CHANGE



# Coffee is Powerful

It helps us stay alert and productive and has shaped our world and history.

Coffee is a central element of social interactions, providing a reason for us to gather, converse, and share experiences. Cafés and coffeehouses have historically served as hubs of intellectual exchange of ideas and community bonding.

Since the 18th century, coffee has established itself as a highly desirable commodity. But coffee's journey is fraught with both progress and challenges. The rise of coffeehouses, played a significant role in the expansion of commerce and exchange of ideas. However, the economic growth it powered is undeniably intertwined with the stark realities of enslaved labor and environmental strain.

Coffee culture has a long-standing legacy of bringing people together. Coffee is a beverage that unites cultures and perspectives, while simultaneously compelling us to confront the challenges that lie ahead.

Image by Maahan Durmlao via unsplash.com

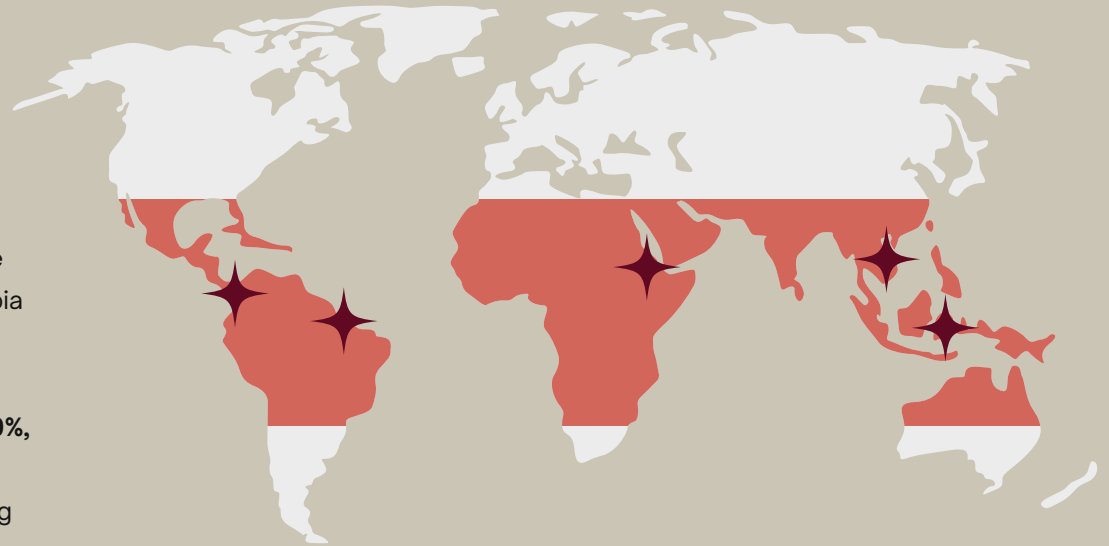


# Global Coffee Industry

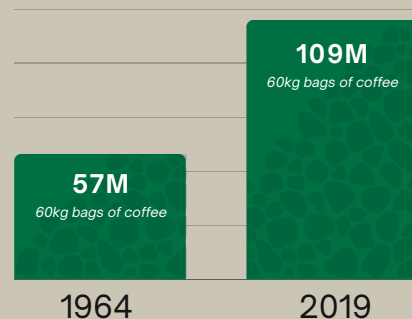
The global coffee industry is a massive market, with approximately **3 billion cups of coffee consumed every day**. This industry generates an annual income of **\$200 billion USD**. The coffee market is highly competitive and is dominated by household names like Nestle, Kraft Heinz, and Starbucks.

Coffee beans thrive in specific climates, primarily **subtropical and equatorial regions**, which are commonly referred to as the "**coffee band**." Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia, and Ethiopia are the major global coffee producers.

Since 1964 the global market size has increased by **nearly 200%**, driven by factors such as increased accessibility, growing popularity, and rising incomes in both established and emerging markets. In recent years, consumers have shown a heightened awareness of the manufacturing processes and origins of the products they purchase.



## World Coffee Consumption



## Retail Coffee Market

**The United States and China** are the largest markets for retail coffee shops. Coffee shops' lifestyle, atmosphere, espresso-based beverages, and cultural customs have helped **break cultural barriers** and increase consumption in countries like China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Russia

Key marketing trends and drivers in the coffee shop industry include consumer preference for **premium products** fueling growth in specialty coffee shops, the rise of **non-dairy milk alternatives**, and the increasing popularity of **online and contactless ordering**.



# Coffee & Climate Change

Coffee is one of the most widely consumed beverages worldwide and the coffee industry supports the livelihoods of millions of farmers, workers, and their families. However the global coffee supply is highly vulnerable to climate change due to the sensitivity and growing conditions needed for the coffee plant. Rising temperatures, longer droughts, extreme weather, and increased invasion of pests will determine changes in the location of equatorial production areas, and vulnerable ecosystems such as those in which Arabica coffee is grown. **Experts predict that up to 60 percent of land used for coffee production will become unsuitable for farming by 2050.**

## Arabica

*Arabica is the prevailing coffee variety and **constitutes approximately 75% of the worldwide coffee supply.** Arabica is favored in specialty coffee shops and blends. The Arabica bean produces lower yields, and takes less time to cultivate than Robusta but requires a special attention, altitude & temperature.*



## Robusta

*The Robusta bean is more hardy, possesses a bitter taste profile, and more caffeine content. It is a common ingredient in cheaper blends and instant coffee. The Robusta bean can **grow at much lower altitudes and withstand higher temperatures** than Arabica, but requires more time to cultivate.*







# Starbucks

BRAND OVERVIEW

BRAND TIMELINE

VISUAL BRAND IDENTITY

MISSION & PROMISES

CONSUMER STRATEGY

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENTS

THE CUP DILEMMA

# Starbucks

A name now synonymous with coffee, has cultivated a global network of cafes that extends far beyond serving beverages.

From the bustling streets of Seoul to the serene cafes of Paris, Starbucks is a global cultural phenomenon. Their iconic siren logo has become an emblem of connection and community.

Beyond the charming interiors and the allure of a perfect latte, Starbucks holds the potential to reshape the way we view our world and the resources within it. By fostering a mindset that embraces responsible consumption, Starbucks' influence has the potential to ripple through industries, inspiring others to follow suit.

As we explore the coffee empire, we will look at how Starbucks can leverage its strengths to challenge conventions, prioritize ethical practices, reduce waste, and embrace sustainable innovation.



Image by Starbucks via [starbucks.com](https://www.starbucks.com)



## Starbucks Coffee Company

# Brand Overview & Timeline

Starbucks was founded in 1971 in Seattle, Washington. Now, Starbucks is the world's largest coffeehouse chain - with **over 36,000 cafes in 84 countries**. Starbucks serves a variety of hot and cold coffee, whole-bean coffee, instant coffee, pastries, snacks, and official merchandise. Don't like coffee shops? You can even buy Starbucks coffee at your local grocery store and brew it at home. Starbucks is the biggest player in the retail coffee market - **purchasing around 3% of the entire global coffee supply** annually. In **2022 Starbucks Revenue was \$32.3 Billion USD** and they currently **employ over 400,000 people**.

Their **preferred bean arabica** is purchased from more than **400,000 farmers in 30 countries**. The green coffee beans are then transported to one of Starbucks six roasteries (Seattle, Shanghai, Milan, New York, Tokyo, or Chicago), then packaged and shipped to one of their many locations around the world.

### Did You Know?

Starbucks is named after the first mate in Herman Melville's "Moby-Dick" and the logo is a twin-tailed siren from Greek mythology.







Images by Starbucks via [starbucks.com](https://www.starbucks.com)





# Creative Expression

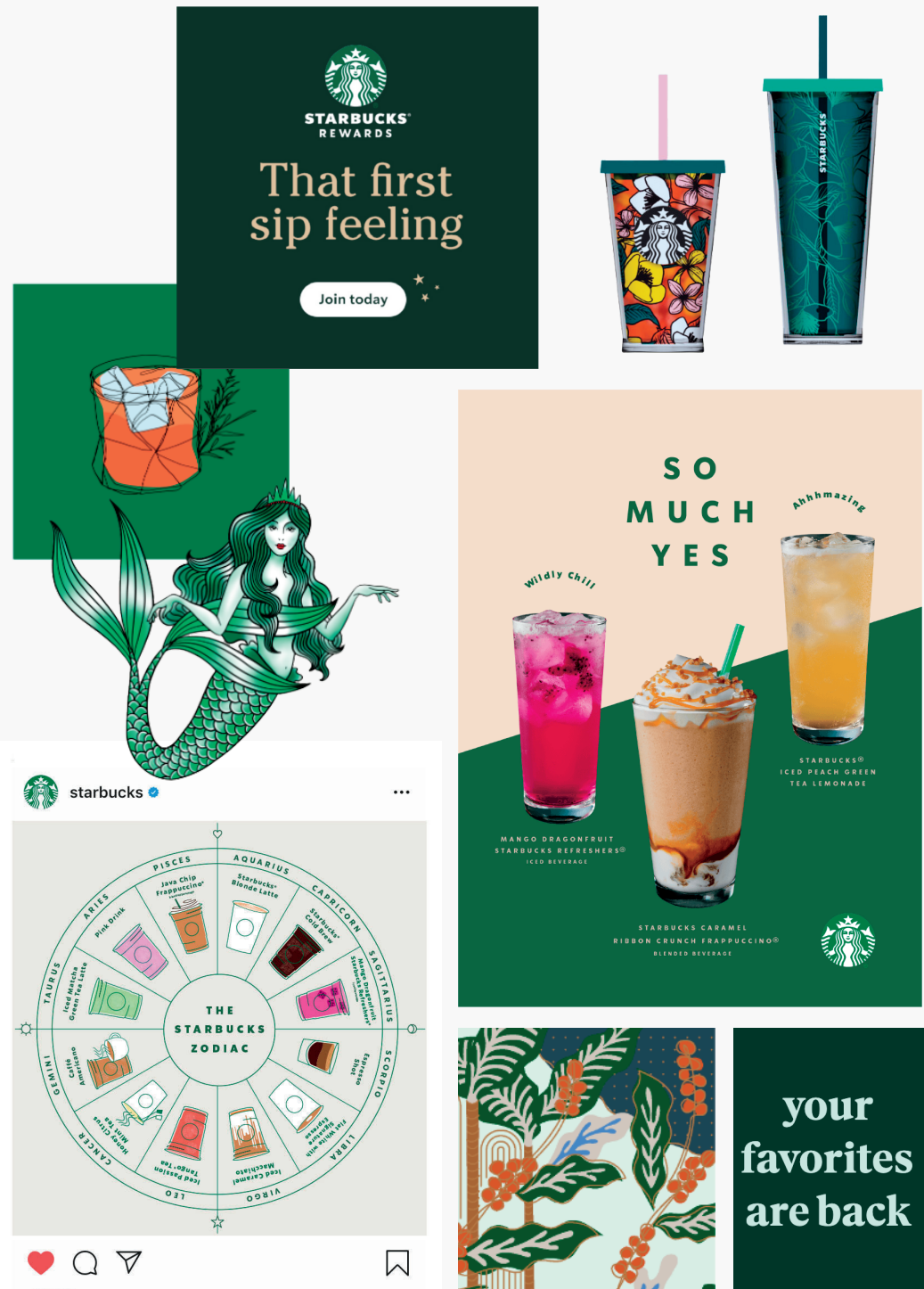
Starbucks' design system reflects their diverse customers worldwide. By incorporating expressive moments, calming confidence, and iconic logo and colors, they ensure a cohesive brand experience.

Starbucks' visual identity spans functional to evocative, intricately woven with a strong focus on customer experience. At the heart of Starbucks' visual language lies the color green, thoughtfully integrated into their logo, aprons, communications and merchandise. Green is Starbucks' recognizable and symbolic color, representing freshness, invitation, and a global perspective.

The Siren logo represents tradition and innovation, anchoring Starbucks' visual story. With a harmonious palette and carefully chosen typefaces, Starbucks creates purpose and coherence in each interaction.

Starbucks uses hand-drawn illustrations to bring their brand and heritage to life. Custom details like texture, collage, composition, and graphics are encouraged.

Starbucks is focused on improving the customer experience by reducing competing messages and helping customers find what they need. Through a combination of functional and expressive voices, they aim to enhance brand relevance, connection, and joy.





## Mission & Promises

*"With every cup, with every conversation, with every community – we nurture the limitless possibilities of human connection."*

- **Partner Promise:** Bridge to a better future
- **Customer Promise:** Uplift the everyday
- **Farmer Promise:** Ensure the future of coffee for all
- **Community Promise:** Contribute positively
- **Environmental Promise:** Give more than we take
- **Shareholder Promise:** Generate long-term returns

## Consumer Strategy



AD CAMPAIGNS



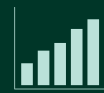
MERCHANDISE



THIRD PLACE



CUSTOMIZATION



CONSISTENCY

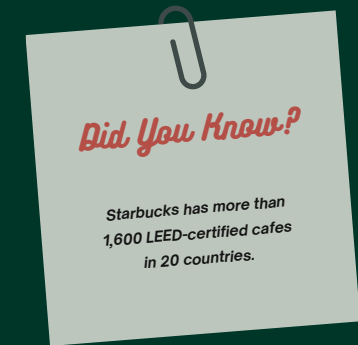
In terms of its consumer strategy Starbucks has done a great job of convincing customers their premium product is worth a higher price. They do this by offering a lot to the consumer - they have created an experience that is customizable and consistent, and it's about more than just coffee. They have an engaging social media presence, merchandise, and a convenient location to unwind, work and socialize.



# Sustainability Commitments

Starbucks is committed to becoming a resource positive company by 2030

They plan to do this by focusing on reducing impact in "the first ten feet" (farm to port). Including on-farm activities and land use, GHG emissions before the rest of the value chain-transportation, roasting and packaging.



## Metrics:



**50%**

Reduction in  
CO2 emissions



**50%**

Reduction in  
water use




**50%**

Reduction in  
landfill waste

## Current Challenges:

Starbucks has a **history of making environmental commitments & failing to follow through**. Notably they still have not met a 2008 promise to reduce single-use cup dependency, or a 2013 goal of using "100% sustainable palm oil." The **rapid expansion of its stores** is much to blame and has led to escalated energy consumption and substantial waste generation - including **more than 8000 plastic cups a minute**.

The notable **environmental impact of dairy products** within its operations also contributes significantly to the company's carbon footprint. Due to the widespread location of Starbucks outlets (spanning more than 47 countries) Starbucks **relies on complex transportation networks** to get their coffee to the consumer. Starbucks has been pursuing a "zero-waste" cup for almost 30 years, but creating one that is eco-friendly & commercially viable is not easy, .

A Starbucks paper cup is shown floating in dark, rippling water. The cup is partially submerged, with a thick layer of white foam on top. The Starbucks logo is visible on the side of the cup. The water is dark and textured with many small bubbles and ripples, creating a complex pattern of light and shadow.

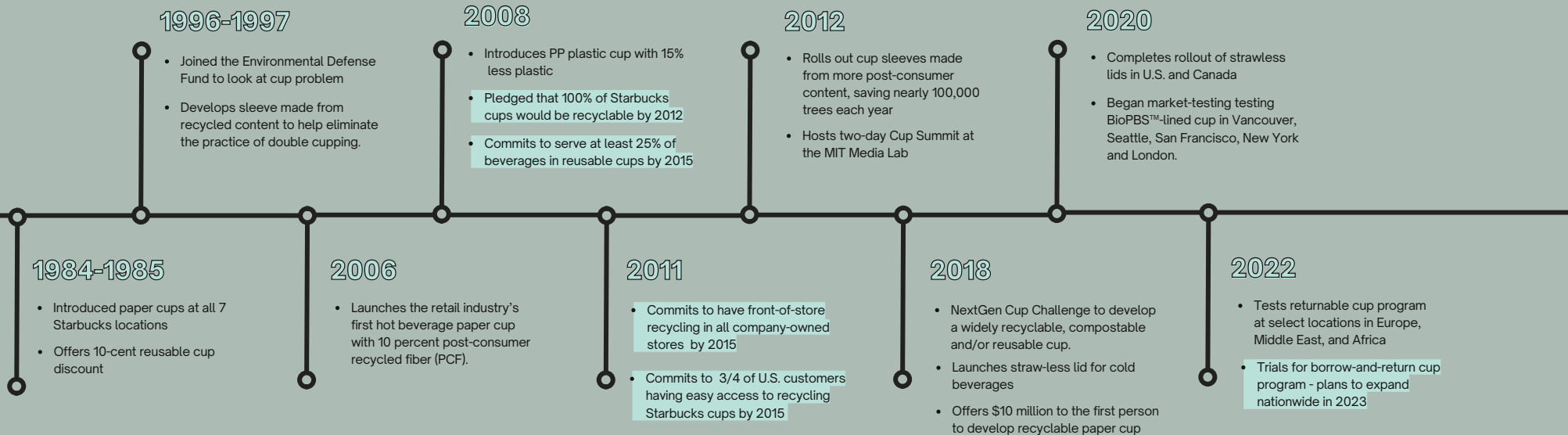
“From our customers’ standpoint, the cup is our No. 1 environmental liability, cups are our icon, our billboard, part of the ethos of the company. Customers have this great experience of interacting with store partners and the beverage. Then, when they’re finished, they say, ‘Now what do I do with my cup?’

*Jim Hanna, Starbucks Director of Environmental Impact*

# The Cup Dilemma

Starbucks has long been engaged in tackling single-use cup waste, yet the challenge persists. 80% of Starbucks transactions are take-away, meaning over 3 billion paper cups end up in landfills annually. Over the past two decades, Starbucks has undertaken multiple measures to mitigate the environmental impact of its packaging. However, as the company has expanded, so has the issue of cup disposal, and progress has been limited. This pressing and increasingly evident problem has prompted environmental advocates and consumers to question Starbucks' dedication to its sustainability pledges.

## History of Innovation & Sustainability Commitments:



## Challenges:

Starbucks' hot coffee cups consist of paper, 10% post-consumer fiber (PCF), and a low-density polyethylene (LDPE) lining. This combination ensures heat retention and leak prevention, making them suitable for hot beverages. However, their production is resource-intensive, utilizing fresh lumber and significant water quantities. Recycling is difficult due to the plastic lining, leading most cups to end up in landfills where they produce methane and break down into microplastics. Despite substantial investments and decades of research, no definitive solution has emerged. **It's increasingly evident that true sustainability cannot be achieved with single-use products.** With the escalating impacts of climate change, our time and options are dwindling. Starbucks must confront the truth that the best course of action is to shift away from disposable cups completely.





# Business Analysis

MARKET COMPETITORS

STRATEGY CANVAS

USER PERSONAS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MAP

SERVICE BLUEPRINT

VALUE PROPOSITION CANVAS

AUDIO ANALYSIS

S.S.W.O.T.

# Marketplace Competitors

The retail coffee market in the United States stands at an approximate \$47.4 billion, with Starbucks holding a significant market share of 39.3%. Starbucks' biggest competitor is Dunkin' Donuts, as they compete in the US market and have a strong international presence. Other major competitors are McDonalds, Costa Coffee, Tim Hortons, and Peet's Coffee. Instead of trying to replicate Starbucks, these competitors differentiate themselves by focusing on different aspects of the business such as pricing, convenience, and customer experience. To succeed in the market, companies must either offer a unique product, target a specific niche audience, or possess a sustainable competitive advantage. Starbucks, in particular, utilizes its strong brand reputation, global reach, and customer loyalty to maintain its position as the industry leader.



## Dunkin'

**Founded:** 1950, USA

**Revenue:** \$1.25 Billion USD

**#Locations:** 11,300

**Business Model:** Dunkin focuses on speed, consistency, and low pricing. Stores are small, and coffee has few frills. Dunkin' operates mainly through franchises, resulting in lower expenses compared to Starbucks. By reducing overhead and other costs, Dunkin' is able to provide coffee at an extremely low price.



## McDonalds

**Founded:** 1940, USA

**Revenue:** \$23.18 Billion USD

**#Locations:** 40,275

**Business Model:** McDonalds is a global giant with significant resources, they pose a major threat to Starbucks' growth plans due to its extensive reach, and strong brand recognition. McDonald's competes directly with Starbucks in the breakfast category due to it's McCafe coffee brand and expansion of specialty coffee drinks in recent years.



## Costa Coffee

**Founded:** 1971, England

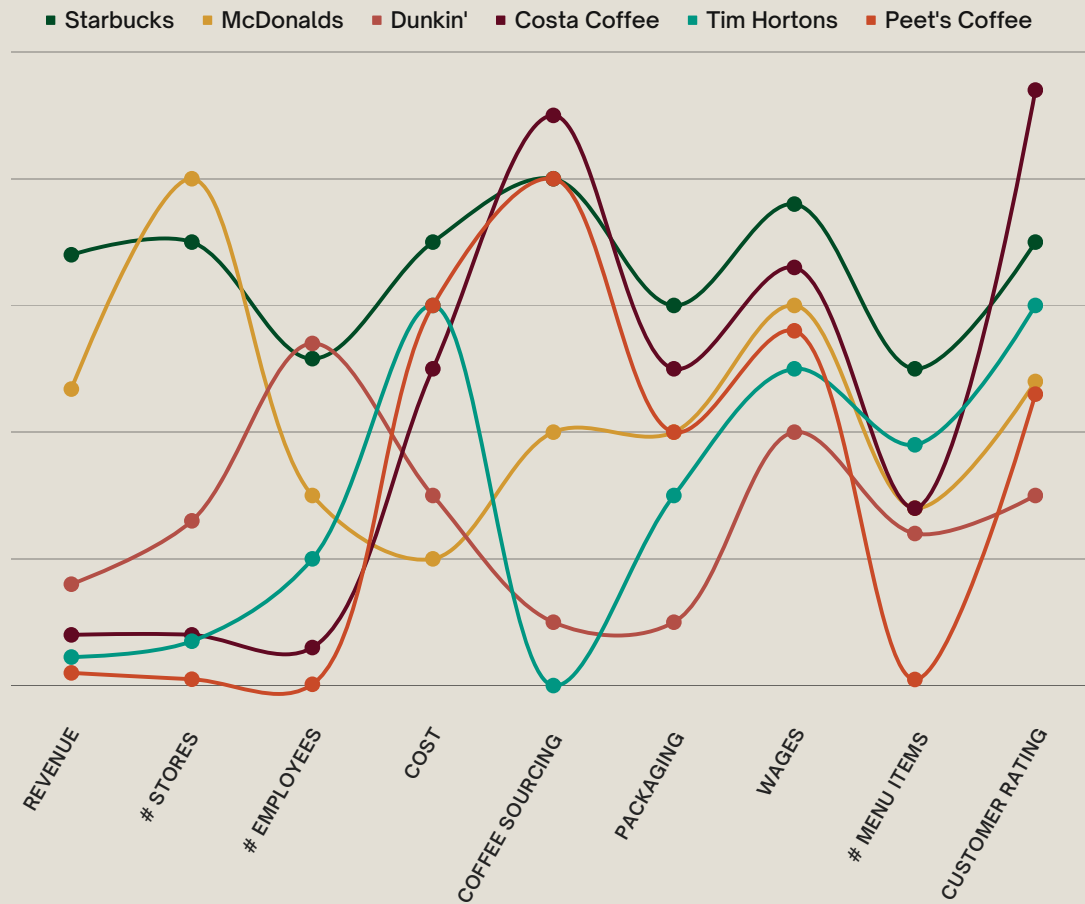
**Revenue:** \$1.17 Billion USD

**#Locations:** 3,884

**Business Model:** Costa Coffee has a strong brand identity and recognition in the UK market. With a recent acquisition by CocaCola in 2019, Costa has expand its international footprint and scale of operations. Costa has the opportunity to become a global major player in the global coffee market.

# Strategy Canvas

The strategy canvas reveals a compelling snapshot of the highly competitive landscape within the coffee industry, suggesting avenues for differentiation, growth, and improvement for each coffee retailer. Starbucks emerges as a frontrunner in the coffee industry, excelling in terms of revenue, store count, and customer rating. Its substantial market presence and strong financial performance position it as a significant player in the competitive landscape allowing them to be proactive in the market and embrace calculated risks in pursuit of growth and innovation.



While not leading in revenue, McDonald's robust store network establishes it as a formidable contender. Its extensive footprint indicates a wide accessibility and potential for customer engagement, making it a notable competitor. Tim Hortons' struggles with ethical coffee sourcing have created reputational challenges, underscoring the growing importance of ethical considerations in the industry. The struggle with sustainable packaging is a common thread across all coffee retailers, highlighting an industry-wide concern. Ethical coffee sourcing has a significant impact on brand reputation and customer trust. Brands like Starbucks and Costa Coffee have effectively capitalized on their commitment to ethical practices to enhance their image. The strategy canvas reveals areas where each player can innovate and improve. Starbucks has room for improvement in cost, coffee sourcing, packaging, and customer rating.



## Rebecca Thompson

PRAGMATIC /// BUSY /// GOAL-ORIENTED



28, CHICAGO IL, *MARKETING EXECUTIVE*  
MARRIED, EXPECTING FIRST CHILD

Image by Julian Hochgesan via [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

## The Convenience-First Consumer

Sarah is a busy professional who values convenience and reliability. While she's not against environmental sustainability, it's not her top priority when choosing products or services.

**Goals:** To balance her work and personal life effectively, while enjoying the comfort and convenience of the products and services she uses

**Frustrations:** Inefficient services, products that do not deliver on their promises, time wasted on unreliable brands

**Motivation:** Convenience, efficiency, and reliability in her daily routine

**Favorite Brands:** Amazon, Starbucks, Apple, Uber

## The Lifestyle-Focused Health Enthusiast

Zion is a vibrant leader in health and wellness, inspiring and guiding others with his personal journey and online presence. He researches and stays up-to-date with the latest trends, studies, and scientific findings related to nutrition, fitness, and holistic well-being.

**Goals:** Have a positive impact on the environment and cultural society by advocating for social equity and address health disparities in underserved communities

**Frustrations:** Social inequity and lack of access to health and wellness resources, misinformation and prevalence of unhealthy, processed foods in the market

**Motivation:** Passion for creating a healthier, more sustainable, and equitable society. Commitment to personal well-being and holistic health

**Favorite Brands:** AG1, Nike, Peloton, Under Armour

## Zion Tucker

POSITIVE /// AMBITIOUS /// DISCIPLINED



31, ATLANTA GA, *SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER*  
SINGLE, NO CHILDREN

Image by Good Faces via [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

## Elijah Mitchell

PASSIONATE /// PERSUASIVE /// INFORMED /// PROACTIVE



34, SEATTLE WA, PROGRAM DIRECTOR AT NON-PROFIT  
SINGLE, NO CHILDREN

Image by Brooke Cagle via [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

## The Green Advocacy Steward

Elijah is dedicated to promoting transparency and accountability in corporate environmental commitments. He leads initiatives that encourage businesses to uphold their sustainability pledges.

**Goals:** Expose greenwashing, advocate for stronger environmental regulations, and encourage corporations to fulfill their environmental promises.

**Frustrations:** Deceptive businesses, lack of awareness about greenwashing, slow improvements in corporate transparency.

**Motivation:** Desire for a more sustainable world, wants honesty, transparency, and genuine commitment to environmental sustainability in the corporate world.

**Favorite Brands:** B Corporation brands, Patagonia, Ecosia

## The Experience Seeker

Chloé is a creative and adventurous individual. With her vibrant personality and love for fashion and music, Chloé aims to inspire others through her creative expressions and build a community of like-minded individuals.

**Goals:** Self-expression through unique style and creativity. Influence and Inspiration through her content, spreading joy and creativity in the online community.

**Frustrations:** Fear of missing out on the latest trends, experiences, & opportunities. Judgment and criticism for her personal choices

**Motivation:** Desire to live a fulfilling and vibrant life, seeking happiness through self-expression, connecting with others, and embracing new experiences.

**Favorite Brands:** Urban Outfitters, ASOS, Zara, Glossier

## Chloé Pierce

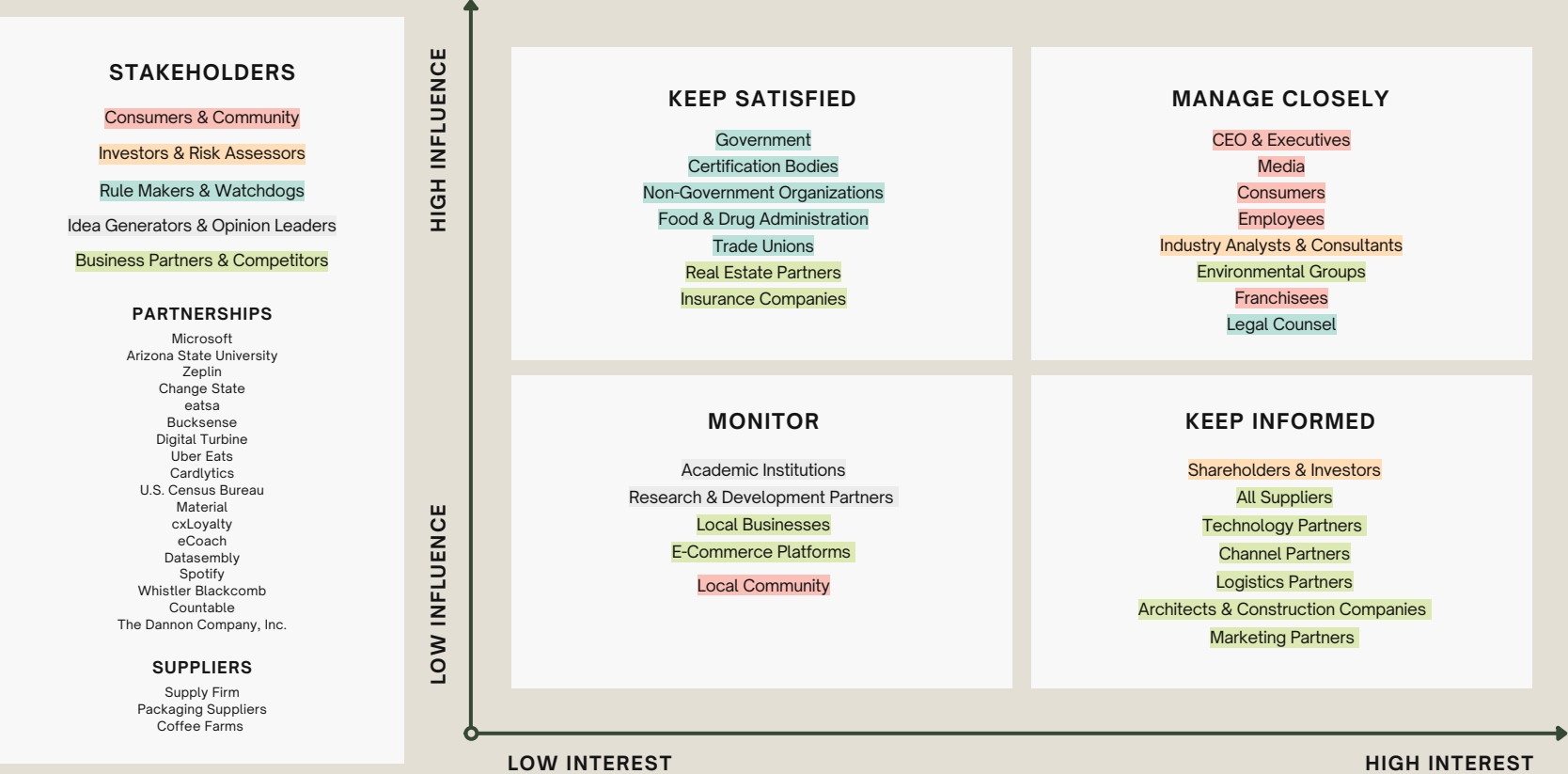
CREATIVE /// ADVENTUROUS /// SOCIABLE



20, BROOKLYN NY, STUDENT & CONTENT CREATOR  
SINGLE, LIVES WITH PARENTS

Image by Thought Catalog via [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

# Stakeholder Engagement Map



## KEY OBSERVATIONS:

The stakeholder map shows that Starbucks partners with various organizations, and individuals and communities as well as rule makers have a significant influence on the company's efforts to improve sustainability. However, **it can be challenging for their influence to extend to Starbucks' partners**. Starbucks is not just a single company, but **a collaboration of different partnerships** involved in making a cup of coffee. The stakeholder map and blueprint map reveal the many stakeholders and steps involved in this process. Thus, **Starbucks requires the cooperation of its partner companies to achieve its sustainability goals**, as a product or service provided by them could contradict its zero-waste strategy and have a significant impact on the environment in the long run.

# Service Blueprint Map

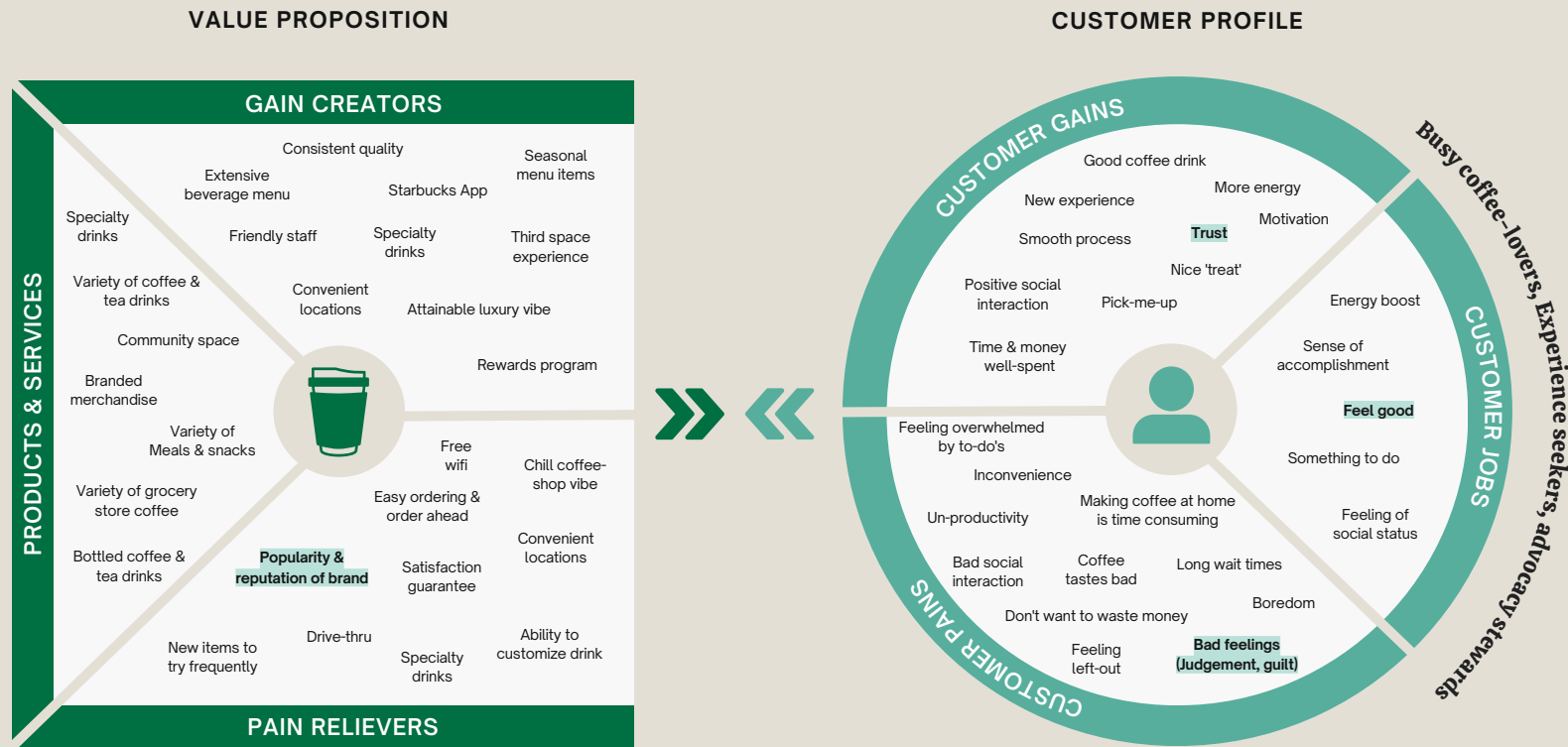
	PRE-PURCHASE			AT CAFE					POST-PURCHASE
	Awareness	Find Cafe Location	Go to Cafe	Place Order	Wait	Get Coffee	Drink / Eat / Work	Clean	Leave Cafe
Physical Evidence									
Customer Actions	See advertisement for new seasonal beverage in the media or in person	Use mobile app to find cafe Know where cafe is Order delivery	Drive to cafe Walk to cafe	Order with barista Place order online Order at drive-thru Stand in line & browse menu	Scroll on phone Interact with customers Look around cafe	Barista calls name Pickup mobile order	Drink coffee & eat food Use cup / straw Use restroom Find & use outlet	Throw away single-use cup, silverware, & straw Leave ceramic mug & metal silverware on return table	Drive car Walk to home/ work Go to work
Emotions & Painpoints	Excited Curious	Frustrated No convenient location	Satisfied Curious	Engaged Excited	Impatient Frustrated	Accomplished	Satisfied Disappointed	Guilty Unclean	Motivated Refreshed
Front of Stage Interactions	Change ads in cafe Barista learn new recipe Receive supplies Dispose delivery packages	Clear exterior signage Locations added to highway signage	Greet customers Hours clearly posted	Barista receive order Write customer's name on cup Use real food in display	Make coffee Use blender / coffee machine Put beverage in single-use cup Heat food	Call customer's name (sometimes multiple times) Engage with customers Wipe down tables & surfaces	Take next order Clean when not busy Clean blender each time	Clean equipment Empty coffee grounds in trash Empty trash bin Wash dishes	Clean cafe before closing Throw away unsold food Unsold food goes to distribution center
Emotions & Painpoints	Stressed & overwhelmed by too many deliveries	Frustrated when inconvenient location or lack of parking	Baristas overwhelmed & frustrated during peak times	Baristas overwhelmed & frustrated during peak times	Baristas overwhelmed with too many tasks	Baristas overwhelmed with too many tasks	Baristas overwhelmed with too many tasks	Taking out the trash is messy & gross	Feeling wasteful when throwing away unsold food
Back of Stage Interactions	Design seasonal campaign Develop new recipes Plan new menu item(s) Inventory planning Suppliers receive order Deliver supplies	Digital team keeps online listings up-to-date Locations are strategically placed		Developers maintain app & fix bugs Customer service respond to online complaints Drive through is updated & maintained	Management trains workers on recipes Playlist curated for ambiance - partnership with Spotify	Manager makes sure things run smoothly Employees manage inventory levels	Maintenance workers maintain cafe Property owner maintains furniture & purchases improvement	Recycling is sent to facility for processing and sorting	Unsold food is sorted Unsold food transported to local food banks
Support Processes	Supply chain distribution for coffee beans			App development Print vendors for menu	Internet provider	Technology development & support	Various suppliers engaged for furniture, A&D	Waste goes to landfill	Food bank hands out food to community
Ideas & Opportunities	Reduce number of seasonal items & merchandise		Plan cafes in high-traffic areas & near public transportation	Use photos or eliminate display foods	Innovate ways to simplify complicated beverage recipes	Innovate ways streamline order pick-up process	Innovate ways to reduce cleaning process	Encourage reusable cup use	Producing food with a longer shelf life

## KEY OBSERVATIONS:

Starbucks' service design forces customers and baristas to generate a considerable amount of waste and consume energy, resulting in guilt and discomfort among all users. This situation highlights the need for improvements in the service. The disposal of organic waste (edible food) by baristas also causes them to feel uneasy, and this issue has been widely discussed on the internet, potentially harming Starbucks' reputation. Starbucks' approach of providing consistent service across all locations can be seen as a potential drawback since it requires delivering products in the same manner to multiple locations, creating little flexibility in the products and services provided.



# Value Proposition Canvas



## KEY OBSERVATIONS:

We have identified two consumer groups: the busy coffee lover and the experience seeker. Convenience is crucial for the busy coffee lover, while the experience seeker prioritizes their external image and positive perception by others. Customer expectations include quality, variety, convenience, community, focus, and the "feel good" factor. Starbucks has a strong value proposition, but **gaps exist in the brand's reputation** concerning consumers' desire to **feel good about their decisions**. Starbucks' mission centers around **creating community** and delivering a premium coffee experience. However, their success is tied to **fluctuating cultural perceptions**, and losing favor would result in a significant loss of market share. To maintain their competitive position, Starbucks must actively monitor and **adapt to changing consumer preferences**.

# A.U.D.I.O. Analysis

	Aspects	Upstream	User	Downstream	Issues	Opportunities
<b>Climate Change</b>	847k tonnes direct CO2eq, 923,483 tons CO2eq of location-based emissions	Farm activities & land use = big GHG emissions. Packaging is hotspot due to PE, aluminium, glass, and PP	CFCs emitted from refrigeration and cold storage systems	Co2 emissions from wholesale, returns & waste management. 450,777 mtCO2e.	Low-carbon marketplace is competitive, reactivity risks disruptions and obsolescence	Cost savings by implementing <b>value chain resource efficiency</b>
<b>Energy Use</b>	Cafes, supply chain, roasting process & heat consumption. Especially rapid growth in China	Cafes & supply chain, rely on fossil-fuels. Packaging manufacturing has large impact due to PE & aluminium	Primary energy use during user phase - energy needed for heating/cooling of products	Energy use for distribution centers & manufacturing. Licensed cafes lack operational control	Rising fossil fuel prices will impact business operations across entire value chain	Reduce energy consumption, agricultural by-products and <b>diversify energy sources</b>
<b>Water Use</b>	Used 24 million cubic meters of water in 2021. Equivalent to 10,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools	Coffee processing is water intensive. Currently over 200,000 wet mills in supply chain	Water is used primarily for brewing coffee	Inadequate wastewater treatment releases harmful chemicals into local water systems	Operational difficulties & supply chain disruptions due to water scarcity & poor management	Invest in <b>water recycling and reuse</b> systems, develop plan for water use
<b>Biodiversity Loss</b>	No deforestation policy, inadequate biodiversity commitment	Forests and peatlands commonly destroyed for plantations. Monocropping harms soil	Increasing consumer demand leads to more land clearing for coffee cultivation and urban development	Insufficient waste management facilities can lead to retail waste polluting soil and waterways	<b>Increase in operational expenses.</b> Legal actions and lawsuits, increased agricultural costs	Commit to ambitious public <b>deforestation goal</b> . Eliminate plant-based milk charges
<b>Chemicals &amp; Toxins</b>	Methylene chloride in decaf; meat antibiotics; PFAS, phthalates, bisphenols & PEHCs used	Endocrine disruptors in products (insecticides, detergents, plastics, ect) Pesticides used in farming	Improper disposal of packaging. Expired products that are not used within their shelf life become toxic	Cleaning and maintenance chemicals, toxic solvents used in plastic recycling	Expect <b>increased scrutiny of chemical use</b> in governments & "court of public opinion"	Increase product & process transparency, reduce plastic use
<b>Air Pollution</b>	By-product incineration creates harmful emissions: Ground and instant coffee are the culprits	Pesticide use in production worsens air pollution, esp. in deforested, arid, & compacted areas	Transportation used by consumers contributes to air pollution	Emissions from distribution vehicles and VOC's from plastic recycling	Standards and enforcement will become more strict in developing nations	Focus on <b>streamlining transportation &amp; invest in renewable energy</b>
<b>Waste Management</b>	> 1,183 thousand tons of solid waste burned or buried. Waste from roasting. Plastic cups & straws	Coffee produces an enormous amount of waste, 57% of coffee bean is made up of contaminants	Improper dispose of waste. Education is required for more responsible behavior	Global fragmentation of product labeling & waste management	limitations in product innovation and lack of circular-economy waste infrastructure limit positive impact	Invest in <b>zero-waste packaging innovations</b> , support grassroots companies leading material innovation.
<b>Ozone Layer</b>	methylene chloride (ozone depleting solvent) used to decaffeinate coffee	Equatorial zones have loose regulations. Use of methyl-bromide & HFCs in farming	Improper dispose of waste leads to methane production	Improper dispose of waste leads to methane production	Regulations increasing to mitigate methane emissions & CFC's	<b>Reduce landfill waste &amp; insure no CFC is released by suppliers</b>
<b>Oceans</b>	"to-go" coffee culture is indirectly contributing to ocean pollution	Production regions rely on fish as a food source, which will be greatly affected. Eutrophication	Improper disposal of non-biodegradable waste. To-go culture contributes to pollution	Improper waste water management & infrastructure	<b>Risk to faming labor</b> - decreased food stability impacting in coffee producing regions	Partner with NGO focusing on food insecurity in equatorial regions
<b>Deforestation</b>	Starbucks lacks deforestation goal. Cafes rely heavily on animal products for food & drink	Consumption of palm oil has not ceased - linked to tropical forest destruction	Increased demand for coffee & convenience drives deforestation for coffee production	Single-use packaging increases demand for virgin material	<b>Highly commodity-dependent</b> - Risks supply-chain disruptions, & regulatory non-compliance	Commit to ambitious public <b>deforestation goal</b> . Eliminate plant-based milk charges
<b>Social</b>	Starbucks uses toxic additives and has scandals involving race, sex, gender, and politics	Lacks fair trade standards. Allegations of slave and child labor. Chemicals are risk to human health.	Questionable welfare of employees, financial uncertainty after COVID pandemic	Distribution and transportation workers may receive low wages and face poor working conditions	Unstable global economy, slow market growth, high inflation = <b>reduced economic opportunity</b>	Build public trust & gain long-term brand loyalty by obtaining <b>third party certifications</b>

## KEY OBSERVATIONS:

The AUDIO analysis examines Starbucks' environmental impact throughout the entire value chain. The increasing effects of climate change threaten agricultural yields and food security, risking supply-chain disruptions and increased costs for **commodity-dependent** companies like Starbucks. The retail coffee market needs to **address waste challenges**, especially with single-use cups and packaging. Introducing a zero-waste coffee cup would provide a substantial advantage. Publicly committing to sustainability goals, such as the UNSDGs and deforestation, demonstrates dedication to sustainability, mitigates risks, enhances brand reputation, and meets **rising consumer and investor expectations**. The **fragile global economy** with slow growth, inflation, and recession possibilities, combined with **increasingly stringent regulations**, creates challenges. To secure future success, Starbucks must position themselves as leaders in this evolving landscape.



# s.S.W.O.T. Analysis

## CHALLENGES & TRENDS

- **Biodiversity loss** will create issues in coffee cultivation
- Global warming and **rising temperatures**
- **Water** is used in large quantities
- **Packaging** of cups and cutlery is not reusable or recyclable
- Dairy production leads to release of GHGs
- Consumers are becoming more **environmentally conscious**
- High amount of **energy** is **consumed** at stores

## STRENGTHS

- **Global** brand recognition
- Seasonal innovations keep up with **trends** and provide customer satisfaction
- Thought about their sustainability **commitments**
- **Consistency** of quality
- Strong **customer loyalty**
- Mobile app provides a good **digital presence**
- Generated **revenue growth**
- **International** supply chain

## WEAKNESSES

- Focuses on only **one line of product** for revenue generation- coffee
- **High pricing** of products
- Not aligned with culture of an area- **generalized** standard
- Vulnerable to **coffee price fluctuations**
- Critique in **labor practices** related to wages, working conditions

## OPPORTUNITIES

- **Inspire** other markets to change
- **Innovation & diversification** of products
- Appeal to **eco conscious** users
- Collaborate with **local cafes**
- Leverage **social media influence**
- Positive social impact- **community collaborations**
- Lower pricing- **competitors** have more affordable quality coffee
- **Subscription** to maximize loyalty

## THREATS

- **Competitors** catching up
- Consumer **preference shifts** point to healthier options
- Supply chain **disruption** (like transportation)
- **Scrutiny** in achieving sustainability goals
- **Market saturation** from existing stores
- **Rising price** of raw coffee beans

## ACT & PRIORITIZE

### SHORT TERM

- Collaborative **community participation** – to make aware and understand impacts
- **Minimizing resource consumption** at outlets and finding renewable resources

### MID TERM

- Reduce **water usage** in stages
- **Alternative materials** for packaging
- Collaborative efforts with **local coffee shops** to promote environmental awareness

### LONG TERM

- **Waste management**- from company as well as consumer perspective
- **Streamlined transportation** to reduce GHG emissions

## KEY OBSERVATIONS:

As a global brand, Starbucks has been at the top of its game, as one of the top quality coffee chains. However, **waste management**, including single-use plastics and resource wastage at their outlets, remains a significant challenge for both Starbucks and its customers. Starbucks faces **challenges in their global supply chain**, resulting in increased **energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions**. Starbucks has their sustainability goals in place and is very aware of environmental issues but their goals seem distant, with expansion into new markets being a big priority. Swift action is necessary to minimize their impact and meet predicted targets. Starbucks has the potential to **lead by example** and inspire other brands to address environmental issues.



Image by Starbucks via starbucks.com

# Primary Research

PRIMARY RESEARCH GOALS

ONLINE SURVEY

USER INTERVIEWS

CULTURAL PROBE

# Primary Research Goals

This research aims to study Starbucks customers' mindset, habits, and preferences regarding sustainability, waste management, and brand loyalty. We intend to uncover insights that will enable Starbucks to facilitate positive behavior change, enhance its environmental initiatives, and align its services with the preferences of its customer base. This will help Starbucks make informed decisions, create positive behavior change, and commit to a more sustainable future with loyal customers.

## BRAND LOYALTY

We will carefully investigate the factors driving brand loyalty among Starbucks customers, exploring why they prefer Starbucks over other coffee brands. Surveys, interviews, and social media analysis will help us identify the key elements that foster loyalty, including emotional, experiential, and functional aspects.

## EXPERIENTIAL

We aim to understand Starbucks customers' habits, preferences, and satisfaction levels, we will observe them in natural settings and conduct interviews. This approach will reveal ordering patterns, satisfaction drivers, environmental influences, and areas for improvement.

## SUSTAINABILITY

We will conduct research to understand customers' awareness and engagement with Starbucks' sustainability initiatives. We aim to uncover attitudes, knowledge, and perceptions about sustainability and waste management. Our investigation will identify barriers and motivations that impact user choices.



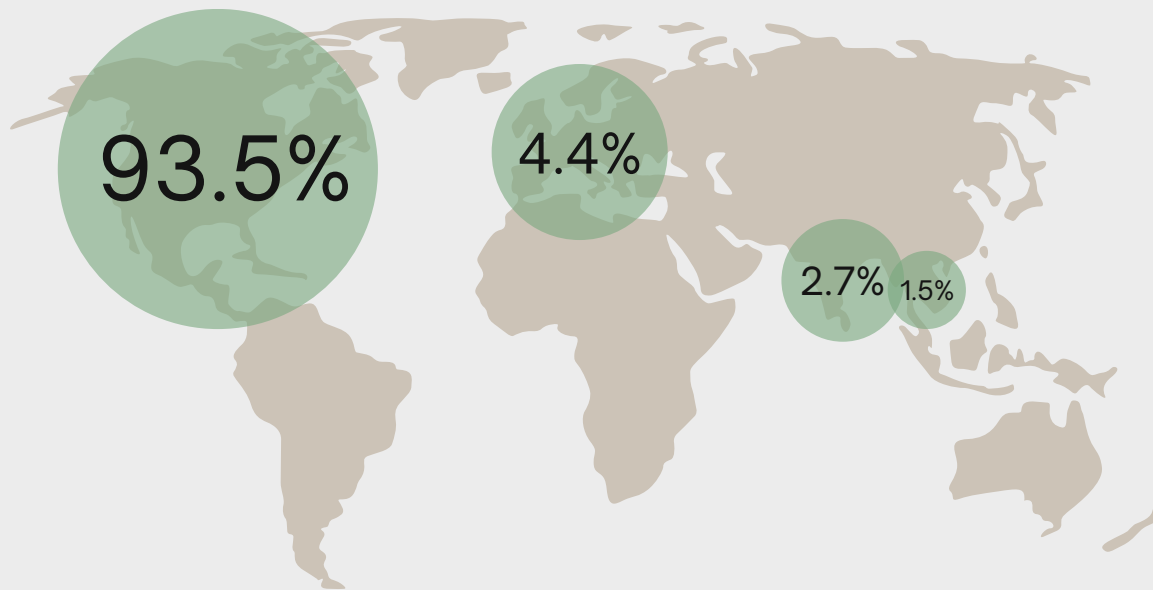


# Online Survey Total Responses: 366

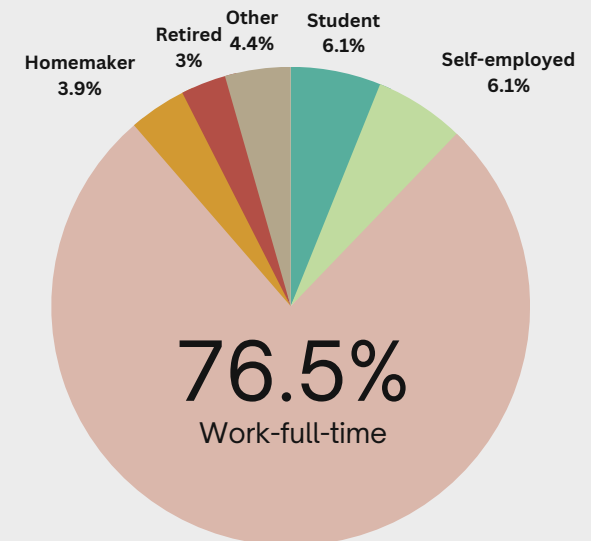
We conducted a survey with a total of 366 responses, excluding 5 during data validation. The data was collected through an online survey via Typeform, which was widely circulated on social media, international company Facebook pages, and a local neighborhood Google group. The survey was conducted over a period of two weeks.

The survey was designed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the mindset, habits, and preferences of Starbucks customers with regards to sustainability and waste management, as well as their loyalty towards the brand. The majority of respondents were from the USA (93.5%), followed by Europe (4.4%), India (2.7%), and Korea (1.5%). To encourage a higher response rate, we opted not to collect age and gender information.

Region of Residence



Employment Status



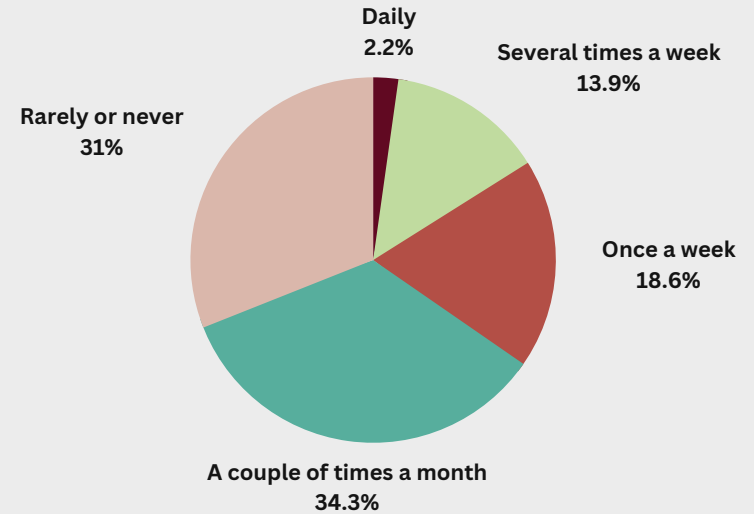
# Purchase Behavior & Starbucks Loyalty

69% of the respondents reported purchasing coffee from a retailer on a regular basis. 82% of the participants indicated that they visit Starbucks for their coffee purchases.

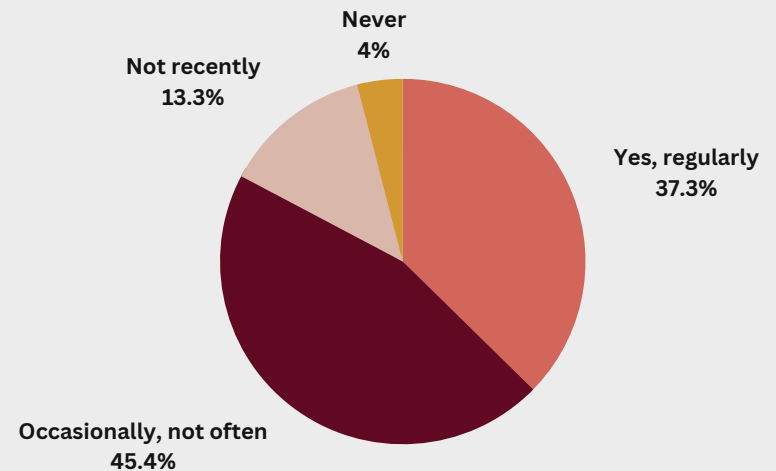
Among those who answered "rarely or never" to purchasing coffee from retailers, the top reasons cited were high cost, preference to make coffee at home, and sustainability.

The primary reasons for choosing other coffee brands over Starbucks were quality and diversity of coffee drinks, preference to support local coffee shops, and high cost.

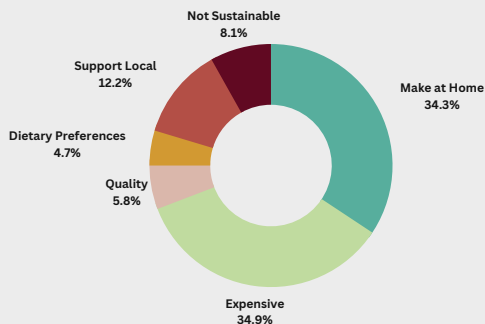
How often do you purchase coffee from a retailer?



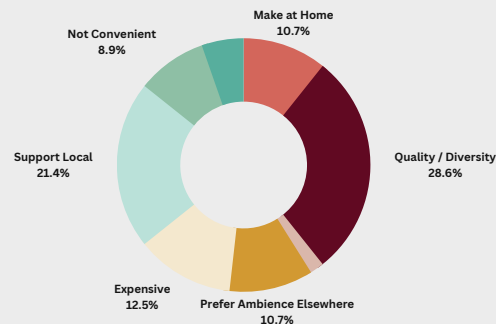
Do you visit Starbucks for your coffee purchases?



*For those who answered "rarely or never" Why don't you purchase coffee from retailers?*



*For those who answered "not recently, no, or never" Why don't you visit Starbucks?*



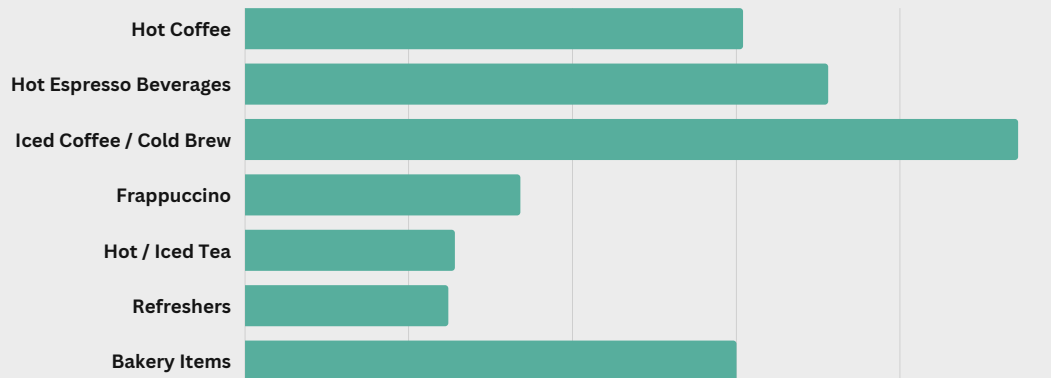
# Ordering Habits & Menu Preferences

62.3% of respondents reported placing their Starbucks orders online or at the drive-thru, highlighting the appeal of quick and on-the-go service and popularity of digital channels for convenience and efficiency. 37.6% of participants preferred ordering their Starbucks beverages in-store, likely due to the personalized experience or lack of awareness of app ordering. A considerable number of respondents (47.8%) mentioned having their coffee in the car, likely due to the popularity of drive-thru orders and commuting habits.

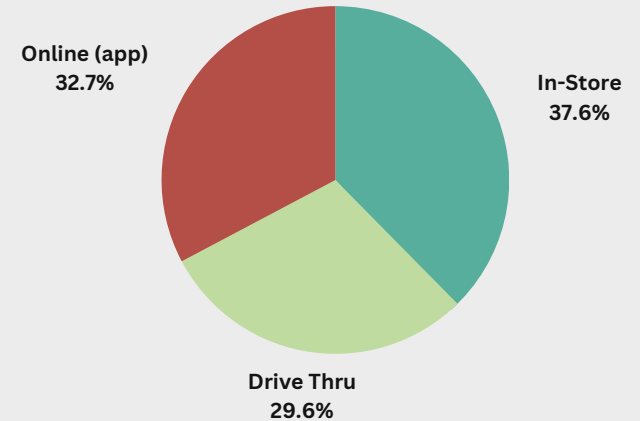
The survey revealed that the most popular menu items at Starbucks were iced coffee/espresso beverages, and hot espresso beverages. Respondents were able to make multiple selections and 16.2% selected that they order bakery items in addition to their drink of choice.

## What do you usually order at Starbucks?\*

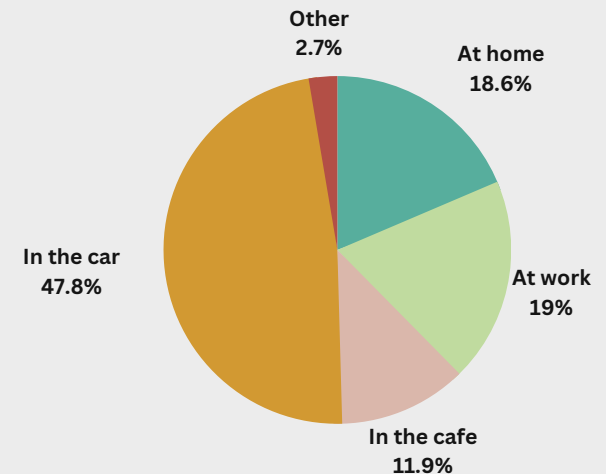
*\*Respondents could make multiple selections*



## How do you usually place your Starbucks order?



## Where do you typically enjoy your coffee?





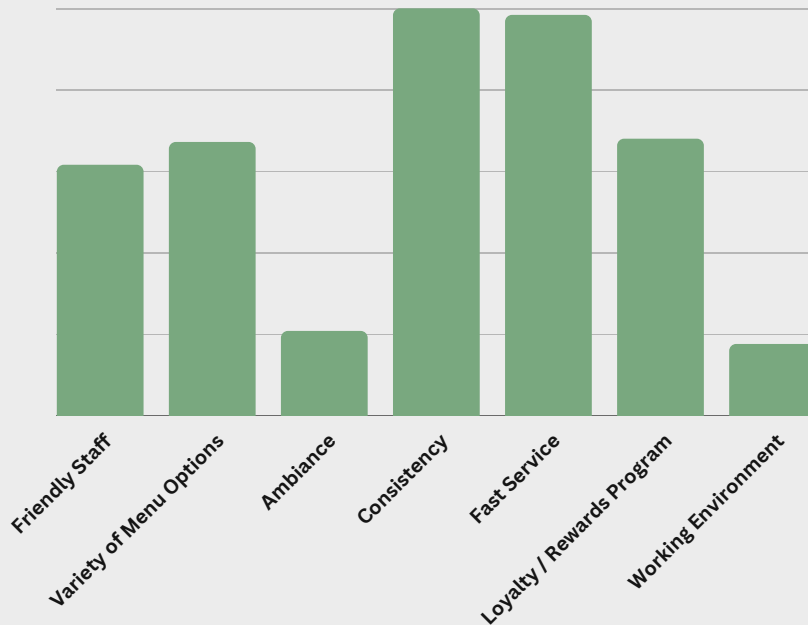
# Customer Satisfaction & Dissatisfaction

The survey findings have confirmed our previous assumption that Starbucks customers have expressed a high level of satisfaction with respect to the consistent quality of products, efficient service, and the loyalty and rewards program Starbucks offers.

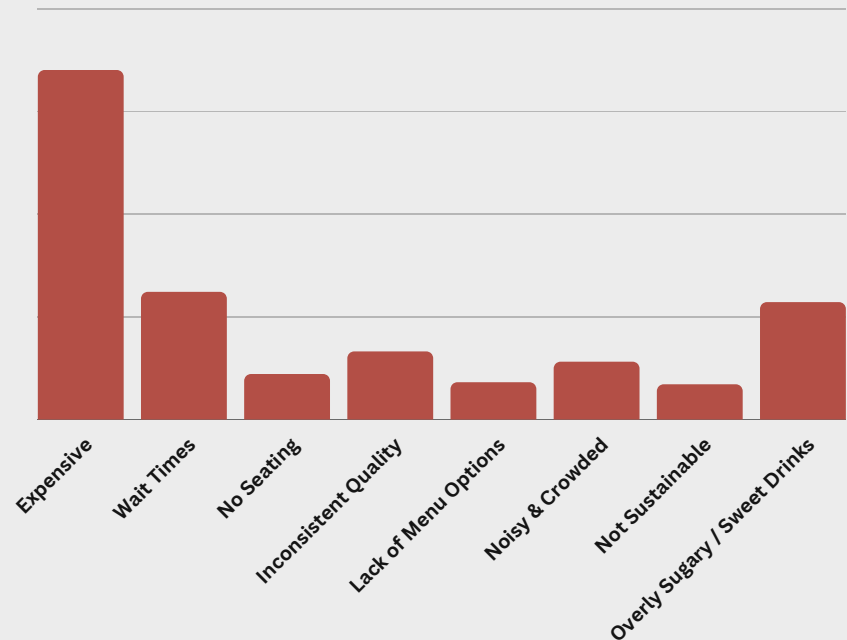
The primary element influencing customer dissatisfaction with Starbucks is high cost. Additionally, there are several other aspects of Starbucks' services and products that could benefit from improvements. These include reducing wait times, addressing the sugar content in beverages, creating a quieter atmosphere, and increasing the availability of seating options.



What are things you enjoy about your Starbucks visits?



What are things you don't enjoy about your Starbucks visits?

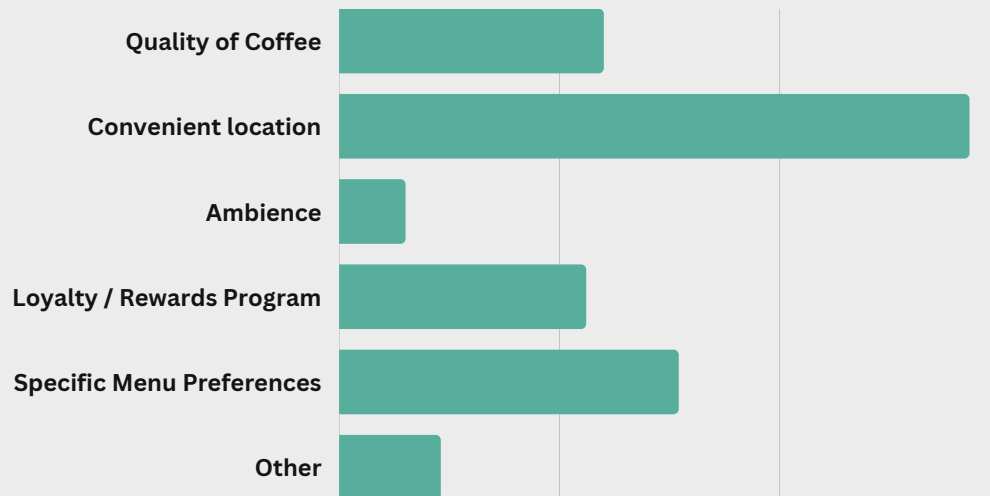


# Customer Motivation

The main factor driving individuals to prefer Starbucks over alternative coffee brands was predominantly convenience, accounting for 38.2% of the respondents. This can likely be attributed to the extensive presence of Starbucks locations.

Additionally, other factors contributing to customers' brand loyalty to Starbucks included specific menu preferences and the availability of specialty drinks, which may not be found elsewhere, the quality of coffee, and their loyalty rewards program.

What motivated you to go to Starbucks for your last visit?



## Notable Quotes:

*"Consistency - I know what I like and it tastes the same everywhere I go"*

*"I like their refreshers"*

*"Commitment to customer service"*

*"The brand image"*

*"My kids love it there"*

*"Consistent, repeatable experience across locations"*

*"New items, I like the egg bites"*

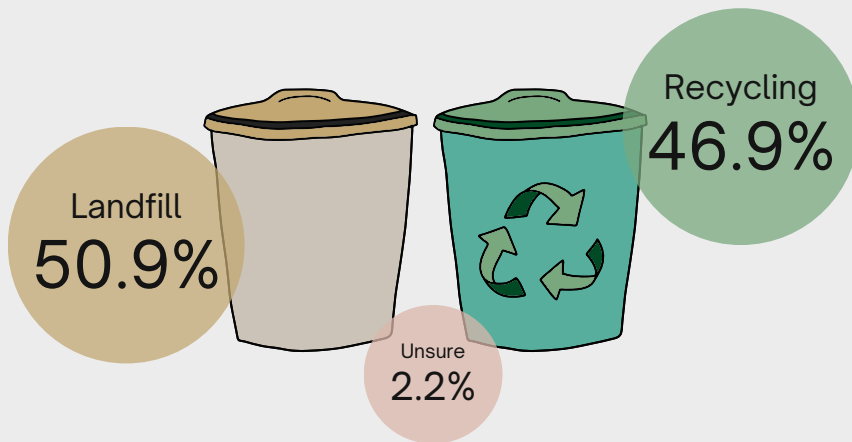
*"Friendly staff"*

# Sustainability & Waste Management

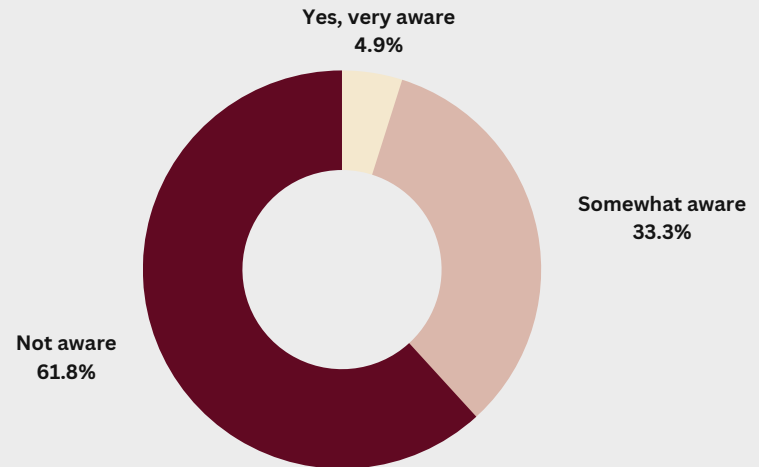
The survey results indicate that Starbucks customers show an almost equal split in their cup disposal practices, with 50.9% of respondents opting for landfill disposal, 46.9% choosing recycling, and a small percentage of 2.2% being unsure about the appropriate method.

An interesting finding from the survey is that a significant majority of respondents (61.8%) were not aware of any sustainability efforts undertaken by Starbucks, highlighting potential opportunities for the company to increase awareness about their environmental initiatives. Only a small percentage (4.9%) of respondents claimed to have in-depth awareness of Starbucks' sustainability initiatives, suggesting the need for further communication and visibility of the company's sustainability practices.

How do you typically dispose of the to-go cup from Starbucks?



Are you aware of any sustainability efforts made by Starbucks?



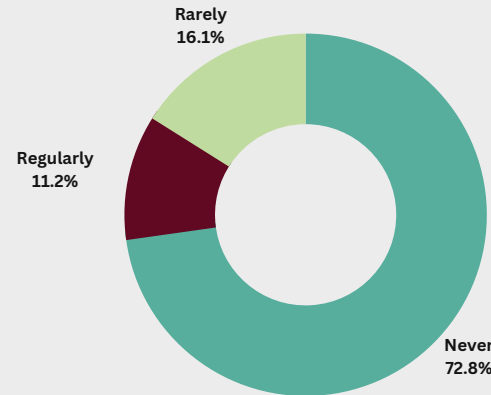


# Reusable Cups

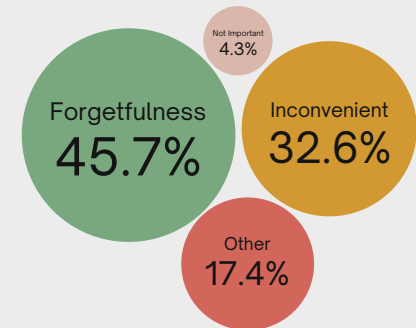
A striking finding from the survey indicates that an overwhelming majority (72.8%) of respondents reported never bringing a reusable cup to Starbucks. 8.5% of Starbucks customers reported bringing a reusable cup or tumbler on a regular basis.

The main barriers to bringing reusable cups to Starbucks included lack of awareness, inconvenience, forgetfulness, and inability to use it when ordering from the Starbucks app. Respondents were able to write a short response for this question, which resulted in, the excerpts featured below. These excerpts highlight the need for more education & innovation.

How often do you bring a reusable cup or tumbler to Starbucks?



If you don't, why not?



## Notable Quotes:

"I order cold beverages"

"I thought it wasn't allowed for hygienic reasons"

"Not aware of how that works"

"I never thought about it 😞"

"Mobile orders don't allow that option."

"I never purchased one, it's expensive"

"Unable to use reusable cup when ordering ahead on app"

"I didn't know that was an option!"

"Don't own a reusable Starbucks cup"

"Didn't know I could"

"Does it need to be a Starbucks cup? Not sure how it works."

"I worked in coffee shop, & outside cups are gross"

"I'm out of town when I go to Starbucks"

"That's an option?"

"Can't use with mobile orders"



# User Interviews

Over the course of two weeks we interviewed eight Starbucks customers. Audio recordings were utilized and automatically transcribed using otter.ai. The following information has been anonymized for confidentiality and each user is named for their favorite Starbucks beverage. Some responses were paraphrased for narrative simplicity.

From interviews with eight diverse users across various markets, clear themes surfaced. Customer experience, convenience, efficiency, and customization matter greatly and many users enjoy Starbucks' seasonal drinks. A seamless digital experience and comfortable ambiance contribute to a positive coffee experience. Brand loyalty, rewards program, and familiarity with Starbucks also influence their choices.

Interviews highlighted an emerging trend that users prioritize sustainability and eco-friendly practices in coffee shops. Due to lack of transparency and communication from the brand, users have concerns about Starbucks actions towards sustainability efforts.



**Matcha Maria**  
LOYAL STARBUCKS CUSTOMER



**Espresso Ellie**  
WELLNESS ENTHUSIAST



**Frappuccino Fiona**  
CAFFEINE CONNOISSEUR



**Blended Bryce**  
EFFICIENCY SEEKER



**Macchiato Max**  
SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY SEEKER



**Latte Leah**  
CAFFEINE RITUALIST



**Mocha Miles**  
DISCERNING VALUE SEEKER



**Coco Cadence**  
OCCASIONAL ENTHUSIAST





## Matcha Maria

### LOYAL STARBUCKS CUSTOMER

CHANDLER, ARIZONA, UNITED STATES

KEY ACCOUNT DIRECTOR

*"I REALLY WISH THAT I WROTE THE WORLD, I WOULD PUT EVERYTHING IN A REUSABLE TRENTA CUP WITH A SIPPY LID"*

Maria leads a busy life filled with frequent travel and work-related meetings, sometimes purchasing many coffees in a single order for her customers. She values consistency and convenience, preferring her regular Starbucks shop due to its reliable service and familiarity, and has intimate knowledge of the brand.

**Emerging Trends:** Growing importance of sustainability and complexity of making eco-friendly choices. Issue of recycling practices and the need for clearer communication and accountability in the process.

**Likes:** Maria enjoys the convenience of Starbucks, appreciates friendly baristas who accommodate her special requests, and values the consistency and familiarity of her regular shop.

**Dislikes:** Inconsistency in customer service, like when certain locations refuse to provide refills or recycle properly.

**Insights:** Maria's insights highlight the significance of sustainability concerns for consumers and the need for businesses to focus on better recycling practices. Also, the importance of customer service and accommodating unique preferences in creating an ideal retail coffee experience.



## Espresso Ellie

### WELLNESS ENTHUSIAST

ATLANTA, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

USER EXPERIENCE CONSULTANT

*"I AM FROM COLOMBIA WHERE YOU'RE GIVEN COFFEE AS SOON AS YOU GET OUT OF THE WOMB, IT'S SO NORMAL THERE - NOBODY EVER TALKED ABOUT CIRCADIAN RHYTHMS."*

Ellie enjoys a structured routine, prioritizes sustainability and environmentally-friendly practices, is curious, adventurous, and health-conscious in her coffee choices.

**Emerging Trends:** Importance of sustainability, seeking coffee shops that offer plant-based milk options and vegan food choices. She also shows concern for recycling and reducing waste in coffee shops.

**Likes:** Ellie prefers her coffee routine at home, enjoying Colombian freeze-dried coffee with almond milk. She appreciates convenience and the availability of plant-based milk options at Starbucks.

**Dislikes:** Coffee shops with limited drink options, loud ambiance, up-charges for plant-based milk, lack of vegan options, and poor customer experiences. She also expresses concerns about artificial colors and wishes for more organic ingredients.

**Insights:** Ellie's insights underline need for sustainable options, including recycling and composting facilities, to attract environmentally-conscious customers. She suggests improvements such as quiet areas for studying or working, standing desks, and a variety of vegan and gluten-free food choices.



## Frappuccino Fiona

CAFFEINE CONNOISSEUR

PUNE, INDIA

ILLUSTRATOR

*"I HAVE CONSIDERED BRINGING MY OWN CUP WHEN I WANT TO GO BUY COFFEE. BUT THEY DO GIVE ME A REUSABLE CUP OR GLASS. WHAT DOES CONCERN ME IS THE STRAWS."*

Fiona values sustainability and emphasizes reducing waste. She appreciates coffee shops that strike the right balance in coffee taste and use of sweeteners/milk, and prefers cafes with comfortable seating.

**Emerging Trends:** Fiona recognizes the importance of sustainability and environmental responsibility of brands, especially mass producing companies. She also desires coffee shops with customizable options and rewards for loyal customers.

**Likes:** Fiona likes coffee shops that maintain consistent taste and allow her to customize her coffee according to her preferences. She appreciates Starbucks' points system and spacious environment, which allows her to work comfortably.

**Dislikes:** Crowded coffee shops and wishes Starbucks had better seating options for a more comfortable experience.

**Insights:** Fiona's insights point out the significance of sustainability initiatives and the need for businesses to reduce waste. She appreciates friendly baristas, consistent quality, and loyalty rewards. However, she believes Starbucks could improve by offering more comfortable seating and understanding the cultural differences in coffee consumption.



## Blended Bryce

EFFICIENCY SEEKER

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

MOTION MEDIA DESIGNER

*"STARBUCKS REWARDS MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM IS GREAT AND KEEPS ME COMING BACK."*

Bryce is a health-conscious individual who prefers tea over coffee due to health reasons. She values sustainability and actively participates in Starbucks' eco-star system to reduce disposables, but questions the brand's intentions behind frequent seasonal merchandise releases.

**Emerging Trends:** Importance of sustainability and appreciates Starbucks' efforts to encourage the use of personal tumblers through their rewards system.

**Likes:** Wide variety of drinks and customization options at Starbucks, especially the ability to order decaffeinated and milk alternatives. She appreciates the nutrition labels on drinks and food.

**Dislikes:** Lack of information on mobile ordering about wait times, leading to potential frustration. She also questions Starbucks' frequent release of seasonal merchandise.

**Insights:** Bryce's insights highlight the importance of accessibility and flavor. She appreciates Starbucks' mobile ordering app, rewards system, and eco-friendly initiatives, but wishes other cafes would adopt similar sustainability efforts. She also values cafes with local flavors and atmospheres when she's out and about.



## Macchiato Max

### SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY SEEKER

PARIS, FRANCE

MARKETING EXECUTIVE

*"SUSTAINABILITY IS ABOUT RESPECTING THE PLANET - AND BEING ABLE TO LIVE A LIFE THAT IS IN ACCORDANCE TO THE RESOURCES THAT THE PLANET IS GIVING US."*

Max values sustainability and a balanced daily routine that includes coffee, workouts, friends, and walks with his dog. He seeks unique and specialty drinks, and his Starbucks preference is influenced by nostalgia and the variety of options available.

**Emerging Trends:** Importance of sustainability, as well as the rising trend of using recyclable and reusable cups in coffee shops.

**Likes:** Max enjoys the variety of specialty drinks at Starbucks, especially those with special syrups and flavorings. Macchiato enjoys elegant ambiance, comfortable seating, and amenities like workspaces. He is partially motivated by a nostalgic connection with Starbucks from studying abroad in the US.

**Dislikes:** Long lines, and when they run out of ingredients for his preferred drinks, which may lead him to avoid making a purchase altogether.

**Insights:** Max's insights suggest that Starbucks' brand image and unique offerings make it an appealing choice for younger generations. While he appreciates sustainability efforts, he believes the brand could do more, especially concerning alternatives to plastic bottles and coffee capsules.



## Latte Laura

### CAFFEINE RITUALIST

LITHONIA, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

CONCEPT DESIGNER

*"WHEN I WAKE UP EARLY AND THE WEATHER IS BEAUTIFUL, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S SUMMERTIME, I LIKE TO MAKE IT A RITUAL TO GO OUT AND GET COFFEE FROM STARBUCKS."*

Laura is a disciplined and health-conscious individual who enjoys routine coffee trips to Starbucks for their sugar-free syrup options. She values efficiency and simplicity in her coffee experience and appreciates Starbucks' consistent quality and reasonable prices.

**Emerging Trends:** Growing awareness of sustainability, but admits to needing more education on the topic. She believes large companies like Starbucks have a responsibility in positively impacting the environment.

**Likes:** Laura enjoys oat milk lattes with sugar-free syrup. Her ideal coffee experience involves quick service, friendly staff, and well-behaved customers, resulting in a smooth and efficient experience.

**Dislikes:** Laura dislikes instances of staff incompetence and incorrect drink preparation, as well as a crowded experience while waiting in line.

**Insights:** Highlight her preference for Starbucks' sugar-free syrup options, suggesting the importance of catering to customers with specific dietary preferences. She also raises concerns about the lack of sustainability efforts and acknowledges the need for more information and awareness on the topic from the brand.





## Mocha Miles

### DISCERNING VALUE SEEKER

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES

STUDENT

*"SUSTAINABILITY IS PART OF THE CULTURE IN INDIA. WE BUY GOOD QUALITY, MULTI-FUNCTIONAL THINGS AND UTILIZE THEM EFFICIENTLY. IF I FIND A GOOD QUALITY PACKAGE, I REUSE IT. "*

Miles values sustainability and incorporates it into his lifestyle by reusing items and buying multi-functional products. He prefers predictable experiences and enjoys visiting cafes on a whim, choosing coffee or tea depending on his mood and schedule.

**Emerging Trends:** Importance of sustainability in Indian culture, where people prioritize buying quality items that serve multiple purposes and focus on utilizing products efficiently.

**Likes:** Miles enjoys drinking tea or coffee twice a day, opting for mochas and hot beverages at Starbucks. He appreciates the predictability of Starbucks' service, especially while traveling.

**Dislikes:** Miles has had some frustrating experiences at Starbucks related to cleanliness and service inconsistency.

**Insights:** Miles suggests that Starbucks should focus more on sustainability and create consumer-inclusive sustainability services. He values cafes that offer better flavors and easy-to-use mobile app ordering systems and suggests offering rewards for using tumblers.



## Coco Cadence

### OCCASIONAL ENTHUSIAST

DALLAS, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

UX RESEARCHER

*"SEEING NATURE MAKES ME THINK ABOUT THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF TRASH. WHEN I SEE THE OCEAN, I THINK ABOUT MICROPLASTICS, TURTLES AND AM MOTIVATED TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE. "*

Cadence loves cooking, watching movies with her cat, and being mindful of sustainability. She is environmentally conscious, enjoys nature, and actively reduces her use of disposable products.

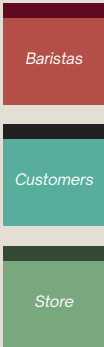
**Emerging Trends:** Cadence has been increasingly interested in sustainability and is actively trying to use fewer disposable products and recycle. She also values seasonal drinks and collectible cups offered by Starbucks.

**Likes:** Enjoys Starbucks' Christmas seasonal drinks and the collectible cups they offer in different cities. She appreciates using reusable cups but finds Starbucks' tumblers expensive.

**Dislikes:** Cadence finds Starbucks a bit expensive, especially for basic drinks. She also dislikes when her Starbucks orders get skipped due to busy store conditions.

**Insights:** Cadence appreciates the convenience of drive-throughs and occasionally visits Starbucks when running errands for friends. She suggests having seasonal drinks available throughout the year and a service that refills basic coffee in personal tumblers.

# Cultural Probe



We utilized the AEIOU observation framework to analyze interactions between baristas, the store environment, and customers at different Starbucks outlets. We identified correlations between store layout, ambiance, and customer behavior, providing valuable insights into how outlets create unique atmospheres that influence consumer behaviors.

ACTIVITIES	ENVIRONMENTS	INTERACTIONS	OBJECTS	USERS
<p>Don't use stickers when they get order, they write order on the cup</p> <p>Empty a 150 cm high trash bin at 12:00 p.m.</p>	<p>No restroom inside the store</p> <p>They have great view</p>	<p>Four small, sust. signs - No one read it</p> <p>Most throw their cups in the trash before leaving</p>	<p>Work place for barista is wide so they barely make mistakes</p> <p>Pastries are packaged in paper bags and sometimes paper trays too</p>	<p>Mostly iced drinks ordered</p> <p>Average 5-14 people in the store including waiting line</p>
<p>Never saw anyone taking out trash maybe door in back?</p> <p>Syrups are poured from packaging into a larger plastic bottle.</p>	<p>4 small tables and 8 sofa chairs, no table for work</p> <p>One door for entrance only and the other one is for exit only</p>	<p>Delivery -&gt; seated in paper bag with green tape.</p> <p>Using a straw to eat fruit in a drink</p>	<p>Frozen drinks are difficult to drink without using a straw</p> <p>One person using Starbucks reusable cup</p>	<p>3 people used tumblers in three hours (10-20 customers per hour)</p> <p>10 percent of in-store customers charge their own devices</p>
<p>Threw out a whole drink including tea, coffee, &amp; milk</p> <p>Syrups are labeled with the expiration date with a sharpie.</p>	<p>Single use cutlery is available on request</p> <p>Suddenly a long line at 12:00</p>	<p>Orders printed on paper stickers, stuck to disposable cups</p> <p>Customers asked for ice water 8 times in a hour</p>	<p>Use disposable cups for in-store beverages.</p> <p>Use shaker for iced drinks. Rinse with water after each use</p>	<p>Baristas are mostly women in their 20s</p> <p>Everyone who used a personal tumbler was a single guest</p>
<p>Threw out two medium-sized trash bags at 2 p.m.</p> <p>Shaker pint has no handle, dropped sometimes</p>	<p>Wear a bandana, green apron, and gray tee</p> <p>high desks &amp; wooden chairs for working</p>	<p>Baristas give you straw if you order beverages with whipped cream on it</p> <p>Store doesn't have mobile order counter</p>	<p>Two people used disposable cups even when have empty tumblers</p> <p>Use single usage cutlery to eat yogurt</p>	<p>30% of guests come alone</p> <p>30% of guests come in pairs</p>
<p>Rate of single-use disposables was highest on weekends</p> <p>Users stayed at locally-oriented store for longer period of time</p>	<p>Straws were freely available at the counter</p> <p>Waste from stickers, straws, snack packages, packages for delivery.</p>	<p>95% of people took cold drinks to go</p> <p>High percentage of people unconsciously grabbing straws</p>	<p>Specialized equipment used for cleaning shaker pint (for 1-2sec)</p> <p>Whipped cream leftovers used for next drink not disposed.</p>	<p>40% of guests come in groups of 3 or more.</p> <p>High percentage in the store for more than 30 minutes</p>
<p>Stickers printed &amp; placed on cups whenever a drink order was taken</p> <p>High percentage of wasted drinks due to baristas making mistakes</p>	<p>#of straws significantly lower when it was out of way</p> <p>line can cause an obstacle for customers to enter.</p>	<p>Don't call guests by name, they call them by the name of the drink</p> <p>Customers order iced water due to hot weather</p>	<p>Used 8 beverage syrup packs in 3 hours (paper pack and plastic lid)</p> <p>Food shelf, counter has cash register, straws, coffee drip machine</p>	<p>People coming to meet their friends / colleagues</p> <p>Customers picking up coffee on their way to work</p>
<p>Only one coffee blender is active when less customers</p>	<p>Smaller outlet - only one big table where customers can sit and work.</p> <p>Harder to see menu when there is a long line</p>	<p>After paying customers stand at pick-up counter.</p> <p>Customers pick up food in brown paper bags.</p>	<p>Microwave, blenders, syrups, disposable plastic cups, &amp; two kinds of lids</p> <p>Separate table with garbage disposal bin, tissues, straws, sachets, stirrer</p>	<p>Customers picking up cold beverages on hot day</p>



# Data Analysis

AFFINITIZATION MAP

KEY INSIGHTS

CONCEPT IDEATION

CONCEPT REFINEMENT



# Affinitization Map

For our research, we used a comprehensive approach to analyze data from multiple sources, including surveys, interviews, observations, and secondary research.

We collected a total of 247 data points. To make the data more manageable, we used affinity mapping to categorize and identify patterns. This process helped us uncover **50 distinct patterns** and themes within the dataset, providing valuable context and uncovering trends and connections.

In order to gain a holistic perspective, we engaged in cross-cluster analysis, working collaboratively as a group to identify insights. By examining relationships and intersections between themes and clusters, we drew meaningful conclusions and generated actionable insights.

Our research analysis methods allowed us to synthesize diverse data sources, explore patterns, and discover insights on Starbucks customers' mindsets, experiences, habits, preferences, and barriers, in relation to sustainability, waste management, reusable cup barriers, and Starbucks brand loyalty.



# Key Insights

Using affinity mapping and cross-cluster analysis, we conducted a thorough exploration to reveal valuable insights. Our mission was to understand Starbucks' current state and identify the path towards a sustainable and consumer-centric future. During this process, we engaged in exploration of significant themes, ultimately generating nine areas of actionable insights with the potential to redefine Starbucks' strategic direction.

**Sustainability & Consumer Demands:** Sustainable designs are crucial for creating long-lasting products, and demand is increasing for more sustainable choices, transparency, and practices.

**Perception & Communication:** Limited awareness and communication create a perception among customers that Starbucks is not actively prioritizing sustainability.

**Customer Value & Pricing Perception:** People are hesitant to choose Starbucks every time because of the perceived high pricing of their products.

**Motivating Sustainable Behavior:** Enhancing Starbucks' rewards program and providing additional benefits could serve as a motivating factor for customers to adopt more sustainable behaviors.

**Waste Management:** There is an opportunity for Starbucks to address improper waste disposal practices and excessive food & drink waste to reduce environmental impact.

**Brand Reputation & Trust:** Starbucks' commitment to quality, consistency and customer experience builds trust and dependency.

**Barriers to Sustainable Behavior:** Hygiene concerns and confusion about disposal methods present significant barriers for customers in adopting more sustainable practices.

**Adaptation to Evolving Preferences:** Starbucks has an opportunity to proactively adapt its menu to cater to evolving consumer preferences, including an emphasis on sustainable choices.

**Global Standardization & Risk-taking:** Starbucks' global standardization approach allows for risk-taking and innovation across various markets.



# Concept Ideation

From our research, we know that Starbucks needs to address the prevalence of single use cups and explore the barriers users face in adopting a reusable cup. Our long-term goal is to establish a circular economy without single-use cups, but until then, we wanted to investigate sustainable alternatives and promote adoption of reusable cups.

Our team utilized the 10+10 exercise to ideate. Our initial concepts focused on six areas of improvement: single use and reusable cup strategies, expanding the existing rewards program, increasing awareness by creating meaningful partnerships and displaying sustainability metrics, as well as simple in-store enhancements for hygiene and waste reduction.

## Single-Use & Reusable Cups

Cup w/ secondary use, partner w/ local food forests

Collect and use disposed cups to plant- can be picked up by customers

Cup rental program made w/ bioplastic

Cup composting program

## Rewards Program

Free refills for bringing reusable cups (certain #)

Create an eco-membership program to offer free refreshers

Give a badge to the person who uses own cups & straws

Rollout eco benefits/ rewards/ sust stat tracking in app

## Partnerships & Marketing

Appoint ambassadors for social marketing

Contest for ideas to reuse cups and straws

Meaningful events - connect w/ local markets

Partnering with sustainable brands for festivals

## Display Change Metrics

Create a screen in the store that displays sust stats

Active count on number of trees saved (or similar)

Initiatives displayed & include customer actions

Social media rollout campaign w/ user participation

## In-Store Improvements

Efficient cleaning for reusable cups (hygiene factor)

Multiple order counters in the outlet

Barista asks if you bring your own cup every time you order

Special drinks for guests who bring reusable cups at certain times

## New Bin Design

Recycling bins in store + clear signage

Separate bins for paper cups and straws

Collecting single use cups in a separate bin

Make stats visible so it becomes a trend



# Concept Refinement

## TRANSFORMING TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY: EMBRACING CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Our final concept direction revolves around a strategic and incremental transformation aimed at achieving a sustainable future for Starbucks. Our strategy focuses on maintaining market share and securing advantages for all interested parties, including the company, customers, and the environment.

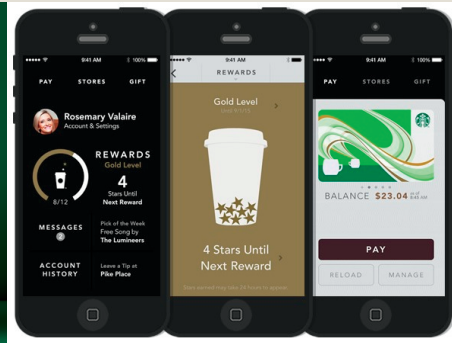
Our final concept will focus on Starbucks' cup issue. Creating a seamless and rewarding experience that overcomes barriers to reusable cup usage. We will also propose an improved single-use cup made with more sustainable materials.

To illustrate these changes effectively, we will showcase visible changes using in-store metrics, meaningful partnerships, and ignite innovation through a design challenge.

Using behavior change strategies, we will work to motivate active user participation and shift the cultural norm to a more sustainable behavior.



SINGLE-USE & REUSABLE CUPS



REWARDS PROGRAM



DISPLAY CHANGE METRICS



IN-STORE IMPROVEMENTS



PARTNERSHIPS & MARKETING



NEW BIN DESIGN





Image by Kaffeeform via [kaffeeform.com](https://www.kaffeeform.com)

## Solution

CHOOSE REUSE PROGRAM

PLANT-BASED REUSABLE CUP

IN-STORE METRICS

APP DESIGN

CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP

PARTNERSHIPS & CERTIFICATIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

# The Solution

It's evident that true sustainability cannot be achieved with single-use products. With the escalating impacts of climate change, time and options are dwindling. Our solution introduces **three key innovations** to drive lasting behavior change, combat Starbucks' to-go culture, and address single-use product challenges. Starbucks reports that 8% of customers consistently opt for reusable cups over disposables. According to the diffusion of innovation model by Everett Rogers the milestone for successful innovation adoption stands at approximately 20%. With the implementation of these initiatives, we are confident that Starbucks can exceed this threshold, thereby actualizing long-term sustainable change and successfully attaining their sustainability goals - even surpassing them.



## 1. Solve The Cup Dilemma

We want to transform Starbucks into a circular economy by eliminating single-use cups. To promote reusable cups, we must address Starbucks' waste problem. As a first step we will partner with a German company to manufacture reusable coffee cups from coffee waste.

## 2. Create Behavior Change

We'll enhance the rewards program by creating tangible sustainability metrics, benefits, reminders, and gamification that reusable cup adoption. The app will employ prompts, feedback, and modeling for easy sustainable participation, aided by triggers and reminders.

## 3. Encourage Innovation Adoption

In-store, captivating visuals will normalize sustainable behavior. Dedicated screens will show customer names, eco badges, wait times, and amplify social norms, addressing wait time concerns and making sustainable behavior desirable.



# Choose Reuse Together

In a world where every choice matters, we're united by a powerful vision:  
**a waste-free world that thrives on reusables.**

By choosing to embrace reusables, we're not just altering habits; we're **building a legacy of sustainability**, one cup at a time. Each sip, each cup, carries the promise of a brighter, healthier future for our planet.

Ready to rewrite our climate story?  
**Join us as we create the legacy that our planet deserves.**



## Mission

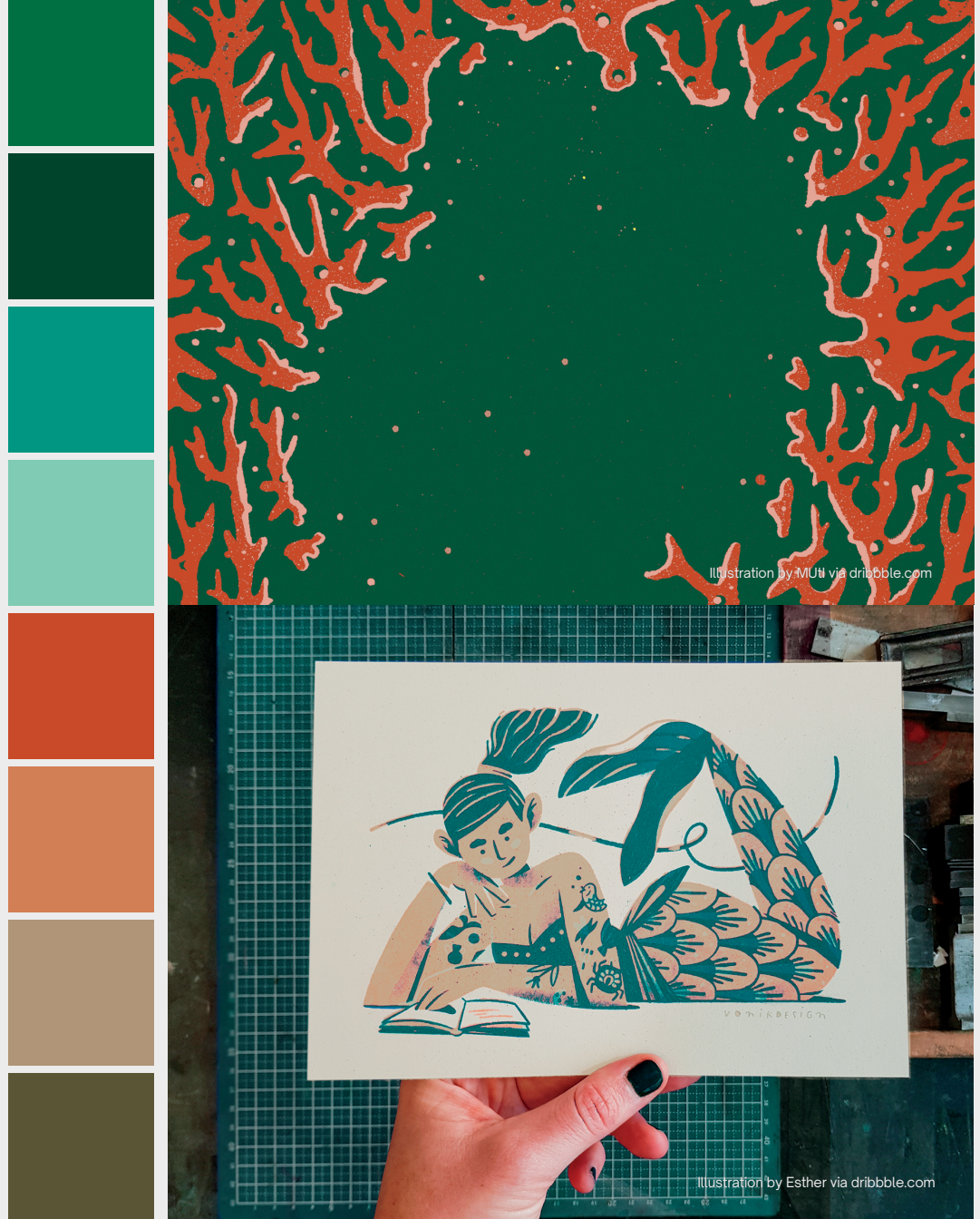
Our mission is lead a sustainable revolution by challenging norms and creating a cultural shift that eradicates to-go culture. We strive for a reusable mindset and a world without waste.

## Vision

Our vision is a future where every individual carries a reusable cup as a badge of responsibility and disposable cups are relics of the past.

## Look & Feel

This should not be mistaken for a greenwashing campaign; therefore, we do not want it to give off that impression. Our rebrand serves as a beacon of ocean guardianship. Primarily revolving around reimagining the iconic siren, along with ocean life, to establish an emotional connection with our audience.

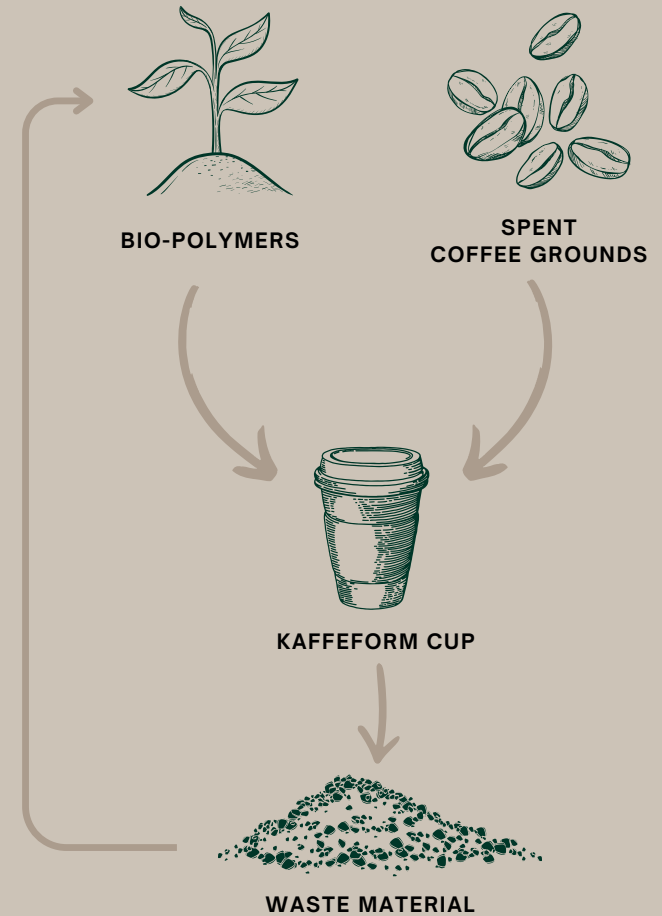


# Closing the Loop With Kaffeform

A groundbreaking partnership with Kaffeform will confront the truth that the best course of action is to shift away from disposable cups completely. Kaffeform cups are meticulously crafted using a groundbreaking process that reimagines the lifecycle of coffee grounds. Here's a closer look at the process:

1. **Coffee Ground Collection:** Used coffee grounds that would otherwise go to waste are collected from Starbucks cafés.
2. **Drying and Preparation:** The collected coffee grounds are carefully dried, preserving their aromatic qualities.
3. **Innovative Formulation:** Dried coffee grounds are blended with other plant-based polymers to create a coffee-composite material that is lightweight, durable, and robust.
4. **Local Production:** By keeping the production local, we minimize our carbon footprint and support the communities where our cups are created.
5. **End of Life:** Cups can be returned to the Kaffeform where they are broken down into small pieces, thereby yielding new material.

As coffee consumption grows globally, so does the generation of coffee grounds. These grounds, which often end up in landfills, release methane – a potent greenhouse gas. Kaffeform intervenes by upcycling coffee grounds, diverting them from disposal and curbing methane emissions.



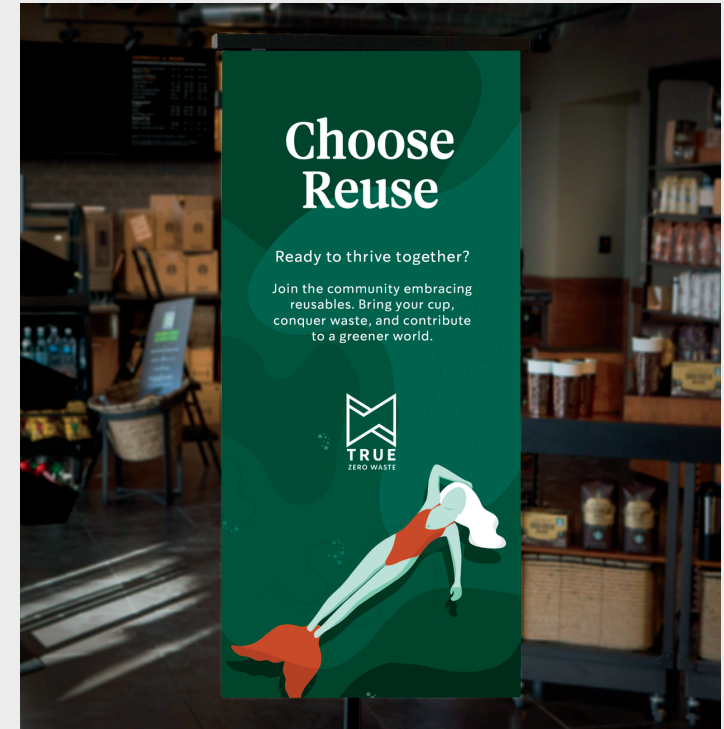






# In Store Communication

In-store eye-catching visuals play a key role in communicating our new initiatives. These visuals will showcase the stylish cups, encourage participation, and guide customers towards embracing the reusable revolution.




### The True Cost of Disposables


We're introducing a \$0.50 disposal cup fee.

This is a reflection of the true cost of disposable cups including materials, production, disposal, but most importantly environmental impacts. We're taking a step toward a more honest representation of what goes into our packaging.

One change is ripple, together we're making waves.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE



### Saving Money With Reusables

By simply bringing any reusable cup, you'll pocket \$0.25 when you enjoy your favorite beverage.

On average, our customers are saving \$75 each year by embracing reusables.

We think that's a win-win



SCAN TO LEARN MORE



# In Store Metrics

## SOCIAL CONFORMITY

By highlighting that the majority engages in sustainable practices, we leverage the power of 'going with the crowd.' Emphasizing the widespread adoption of these behaviors makes customers perceive them as the norm.

## PERSONAL APPEAL

By referencing customers by name, we foster a more intimate connection, letting individuals feel that they are recognized and valued in their eco-conscious efforts.

## CALLS-TO-ACTION

While Starbucks spearheads their zero-waste initiative, not all stages necessitate customer action. We focus on conveying specific actions customers can undertake, underlining how each contribution supports our objectives.

## EMOTION & BRAND IMAGERY

Motivating customers to embrace new habits is crucial to our mission. Instead of underlining environmental detriments, we are creating a shared vision, signifying positive actions and increasing awareness.





Start your waste-free journey

Take the first step towards a waste-free world. Grab your reusable cup, conquer waste, and become a pioneer of sustainability.



Welcome!

Log in

Sign up



## App Design

Starbucks is global, which means the app is one of the most important channels of communication for all those loyal Starbucks customers. Majority of the customers have the Starbucks app to order online, whether that's in-store or for a pick up and helps them keep a track of their reward points.

Reward points is one big strength of Starbucks that has been attracting people to stay loyal and this feature can be leveraged to direct people to more sustainable choices. Starbucks can rebrand itself to align more with their sustainability goals and so, communicate that with their customers.

The new and improved Starbucks app we designed, does just that. It has a new look to it while keeping the brand identity of Starbucks as it was. Features like viewing the menu and ordering, setting up payments, and loading the Starbucks card have remained the same. The idea of rewards and benefits also stays intact.

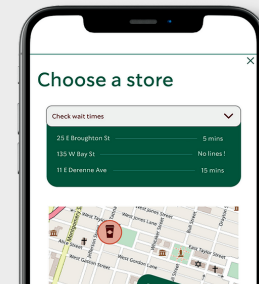
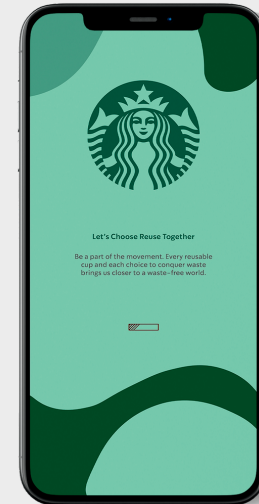
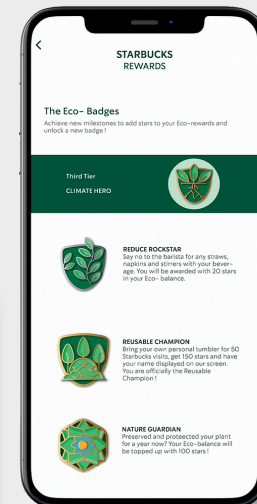
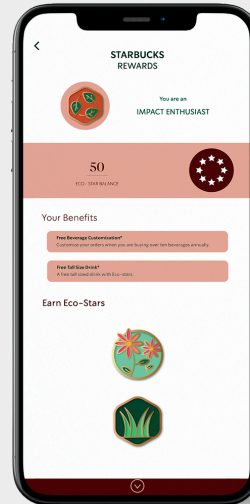
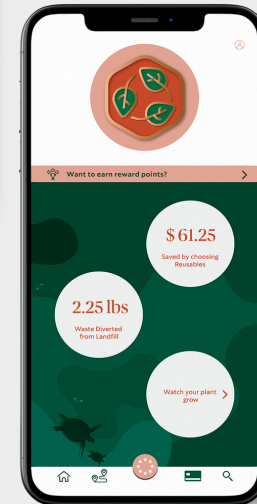
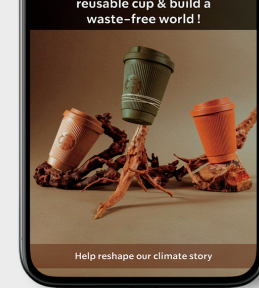
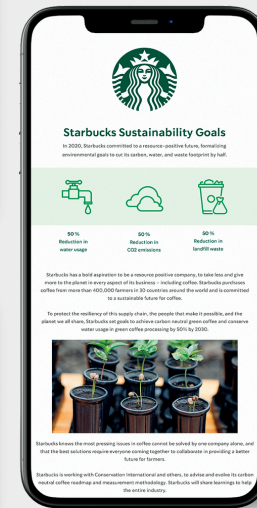
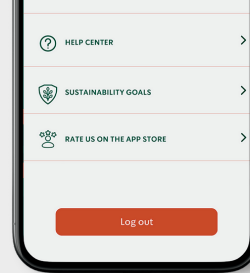
The mermaid and turtles in the blue-green ocean is introduced to remind customers that their choices have a direct impact; the waste created is going somewhere.

# App Experience

The idea was of reusability being the ultimate behavior change to create among Starbucks customers. Rewards are now encompassing the reusability of cups, minimizing the use of disposable items and making customers more aware that there is a choice to make; and that Starbucks recognizes the need for a new way.

The newness comes in when we describe the rewards, store information and transparency from the brand side. Rewards are all about reusability and waste management and are associated with eco-badges, sparking customer's interest to unlock and participate in this new wave. The app also communicates a brief introduction on what Starbucks has set as their goals, making customers loyalty more valuable to the brand.

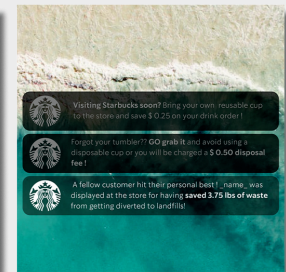
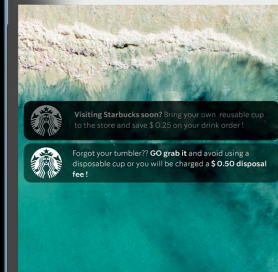
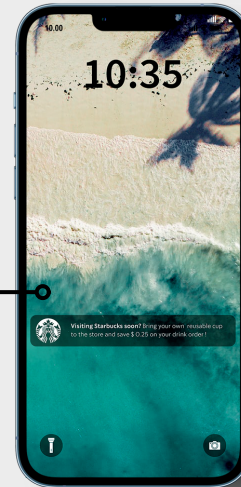
The app is the bridge between what Starbucks has set out to do and how 'we', the customer can help them rebuild a greener, cleaner environment.



# App Features

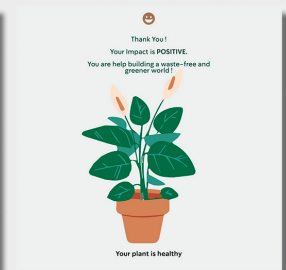
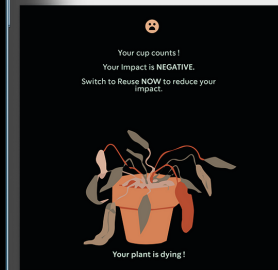
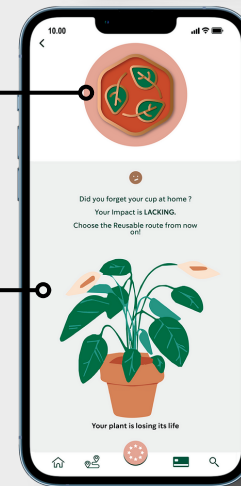
## REMINDERS

Timely reminders act as prompts for individuals to take action at the right moment. Reminding users to grab their reusable cup once an online order is placed, these prompts create opportunities for behavior change by aligning with users' routines.



## UNLOCKING MILESTONES

As users make progress, they unlock virtual milestones that celebrate their achievements. These milestones create a sense of accomplishment akin to reaching a new level in a game.

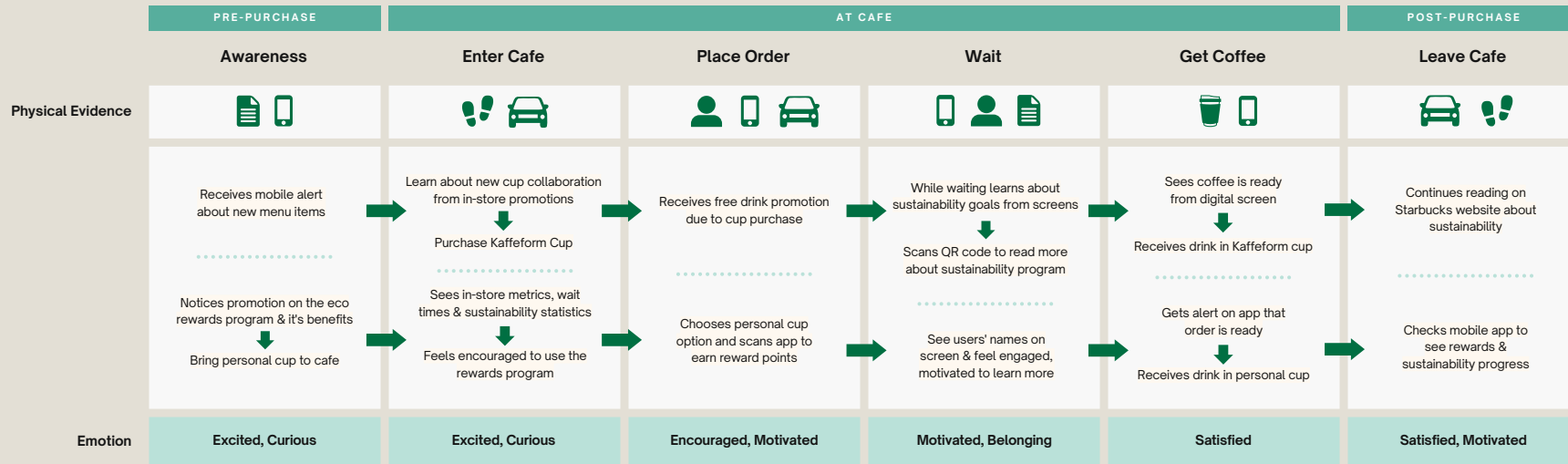


## REAL-TIME METRICS

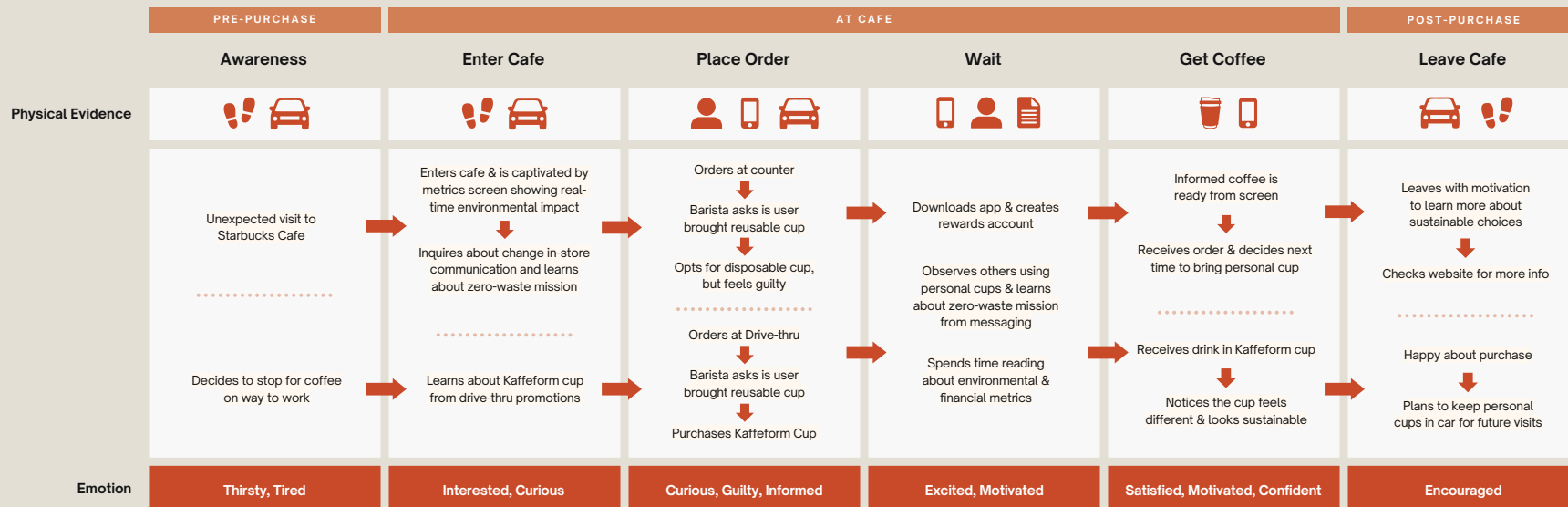
Live tracking of users' behaviors provide immediate feedback. Personalized and easy-to-understand metrics provide users with tangible insights into their actions, making the abstract concept of sustainability more relatable and encouraging them to adopt and maintain positive habits.



# Loyal Customer Journey Map



# Spontaneous Customer Journey Map



# Goals & Partnerships

There are other changes Starbucks must address in order to reduce their environmental impact. While the main goal is achieving a zero-waste circular economy, Starbucks must also work towards eliminating all animal-based products, promoting plant-based alternatives and driving positive change within the next 10 years. Waste management infrastructure, food scarcity, and transparency are pressing concerns that demand attention. As Starbucks diligently pursues its zero-waste mission, it is crucial to forge partnerships that will contribute to the fulfillment of these additional sustainability objectives.



**US Composting Infrastructure Coalition** is an essential partnership for Starbucks. This collaboration would contribute to the creation of crucial waste management infrastructure. By joining forces with this coalition, Starbucks can actively shape a waste-free future. This partnership will advance the circular economy, ensuring that waste is efficiently managed.



A partnership with the **World Food Programme** will focus on addressing food security challenges in equatorial regions that are significant coffee producers, such as Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia, and Ethiopia. By supporting food security initiatives in these areas, Starbucks can positively impact the lives of farmers and their families, fostering a sustainable future for the coffee supply chain.



As an impartial and renowned environmental organization, the **Natural Resources Defense Council** can serve as a vigilant watchdog, tracking Starbucks' sustainability goals and ensuring transparency. The NRDC's expertise and network can help forge meaningful global partnerships, contribute to larger-scale environmental initiatives, and foster a lasting positive impact on a global scale.

# Third Party Certifications

## Current



## Opportunity



Starbucks C.A.F.E. Practices is an ethical sourcing approach that primarily emphasizes the economic and equality aspects of coffee sourcing. But it leaves a lot to be desired in terms of sustainability. It's always best to have true third-party certifications, rather than ones created, managed, and funded by the corporation. Starbucks should consider exploring alternative and impartial certifications such as B Corporation, Fairtrade, True Zero Waste, and pursuing LEED certifications for all its cafés. By doing so, Starbucks can strengthen its reputation as a responsible and environmentally conscious company.

**Certified B Corporations** are highly regarded for integrated and purpose driven companies. Becoming a Certified B Corporation shows commitment to social and environmental responsibility beyond profit. This certification assesses impact on workers, customers, community, and the environment. For coffee retailers, it signifies dedication to ethical practices and transparency. As a certified B Corp Starbucks would drive positive change globally, aligning businesses with customers and stakeholders, enhancing reputation, and attracting socially conscious consumers.

**Fairtrade** certification guarantees ethically sourced coffee, supporting small-scale farmers, improving working conditions, and promoting sustainability. It empowers producers and resonates with consumers seeking a more equitable world.

**True Zero Waste** certification on all products, especially cups would highlight Starbucks' dedication to minimizing waste and diverting as much as possible from landfills. By acquiring this certification Starbucks can reduce their environmental impact, inspire their customers to adopt similar behaviors, and contribute to a circular economy.

**LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)** certifications for each Starbucks location would showcase the brand's commitment to environmentally friendly spaces, reducing costs and providing a healthier environment for customers and employees. LEED-certified establishments serve as models for sustainable building practices, inspiring others to prioritize eco-friendly design and construction.



# Sustainable Development Goals

## Primary

**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**12** RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



**13** CLIMATE  
ACTION



## Secondary

**2** ZERO  
HUNGER



**6** CLEAN WATER  
AND SANITATION



**7** AFFORDABLE AND  
CLEAN ENERGY



**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



### PRIMARY GOALS:

**#9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure:** By investing in technological investments, sustainable practices, and infrastructure like energy-efficient equipment, innovative packaging solutions, and sustainable supply chains.

**#12 Responsible Consumption and Production:** By sourcing ethically cultivated coffee beans and advocating for waste reduction through recycling and composting Starbucks will embody responsible consumption and production

**#13: Climate Action:** By reducing their carbon footprint and promoting a circular economy, investing in renewable energy, water conservation, and advocacy, Starbucks can become a climate action leader.

Publicly committing to these SDGs would show that the company is socially responsible and actively working towards a more sustainable future.

### SECONDARY GOALS:

Including, partnerships with local farmers for zero hunger (Goal #2). Water conservation in cafes, and promoting access to clean water in coffee-growing regions (Goal #6). As well as integration of clean energy (Goal #7). Finally, responsible store design, and waste reduction strategies (Goal #11).





Images by Starbucks via [starbucks.com/responsibility](https://starbucks.com/responsibility).



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