

Ivanhoé Cambridge  
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April 12, 2023

Dear. Ivanhoé Cambridge,

There is a demand for enhancing customer experiences at Metrotown Mall. Specifically, through implementing a navigation app to enhance customer experiences.

This report is, Examining the Need for a Navigation App to Improve Customer Experiences at Metrotown Mall.

Data was collected from Metrotown mall users to analyze current customer experiences while navigating the mall. The data shows that customers have difficulty navigating Metrotown Mall, even though tools for easier navigation are provided. The report also compares the navigation strategies of other malls in Canada.

The data analysis, as well as the review of other malls, allowed for the formulation of appropriate recommendations and solutions for improving customer experiences while navigating Metrotown and distinguishing Metrotown from its competitors.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this report for review. Feel free to contact me at [annaatehortua@gmail.com](mailto:annaatehortua@gmail.com) if there are any questions.

Regards,



Anna Karolina Atehortua,  
UBC student.

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**Examining the Need for a Navigation App to Improve  
Customer Experiences at Metrotown Mall**

for

Ivanhoé Cambridge

Owner, Metrotown Mall

by

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April 12, 2023

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### **ABSTRACT**

Shopping malls are experiencing high volume of customers daily. Metrotown Mall is no exception, with thousands of customers passing through daily. The mall's administration has put in place several tools to help customers navigate the mall, such as information desks, navigation stands, and a website with a map. Nonetheless, people are still getting lost, resulting in wasted time and frustration. Implementing a navigation app with a map that provides customer guidance will result in a higher customer satisfaction rate.

According to the survey results, respondents agree that despite being provided with tools for navigating the mall, they are frustrated by the amount of time it takes to navigate the mall.

Providing a navigation app for Metrotown customers will result in many customers using it to save time and have a pleasant shopping experience.

Recommendations provided throughout the report include implementation of a navigation app to enhance customer experience. Additionally, the installation of signage informing customers of the available app will facilitate app usage. If Metrotown implements these recommendations, it will be the first mall in Canada to use such a tool to improve customer experiences.

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background on Metrotown Mall

Metrotown Mall, located in Burnaby, Canada, is a large shopping center that opened its doors to the public in 1986 (Cambridge, n.d.). The mall has undergone numerous renovations and expansions, including a major expansion in 2001, which added over 400,000 square feet of retail space (Tourism Burnaby, n.d.). Today, the mall features over 450 stores and is considered one of the largest malls in Canada (Tourism Burnaby, n.d.).

Metrotown Mall's success is attributed to its strategic marketing and branding efforts, which position the mall as a popular destination for fashion and lifestyle shopping (Ivanhoé Cambridge, n.d.). Additionally, the mall has invested in events and experiences, such as fashion shows and art installations, to create an engaging shopping experience for visitors.

### B. Purpose of Report and Intended Audience

Although Metrotown Mall has implemented information desks, navigation stands and a website with a map to provide a positive shopping experience, some customers still face challenges in navigating the mall's vast size. The information desks are characterized by an available customer service agent to assist users of Metrotown Mall. The navigation stands, on the other hand, are distinguished by touch screen stands that customers can use to navigate around the Mall.

Despite Metrotown providing many tools for easier customer navigation across the mall, accessing the information desks and navigation stands during peak hours can be difficult due to the constant flow of people. The absence of a user-friendly app with a map accessible through mobile devices causes people to waste time searching for an information stand or navigating the website on a phone browser, which is inconvenient. As a result, having a mobile app to guide

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customers around the mall can result in increased revenue because people will spend less time navigating and more time shopping.

Therefore, this report is assessing and presenting public opinion to Ivanhoe Cambridge, highlighting the need for a navigation app for Metrotown Mall to improve its customers shopping experience. The report will assess the feasibility of developing a navigation app and provide recommendations for implementing new navigation solutions across Metrotown.

### **C. Description of Data Sources and Methods of Inquiry**

Primary data for this report consists of the results of an online survey distributed on Reddit and Facebook groups among people who live in Greater Vancouver area. The survey was created on Qualtrics and consisted of eight multiple choice and ranking questions, which assessed comfort of utilizing current navigation resources around Metrotown. It also, assessed the demand for developing a Navigation app for the Metrotown Mall. A total of eighty-eight survey responses were collected.

Secondary data for this report was gathered through a review of current navigation practices in other malls across Canada. The purpose of this review is to examine and compare the strategies used by other malls across Canada to make customer navigation easier.

### **D. Limitations of the Report**

There are three potential limitations to this report. First of all, the sample size of eighty-eight survey responses is not representative of the entire population of Metrotown Mall visitors and may not accurately reflect the opinions and experiences of all visitors. Secondly, the report is limited in scope, as it provides recommendations on improving navigation across the Mall, however it does not assess the financial costs of the app development. Lastly, there is a time

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constraint. The report was completed within a specific timeframe, which may have limited the amount of research and analysis that could be conducted.

### **E. Scope of Inquiry**

This report covers six main points of inquiry:

1. How large is the demand for an online app of Metrotown mall?
2. Are many people familiar with the locations of places at the Metrotown Mall?
3. Would having an app ease the shopping experience of the customers?
4. Would people spend less time at the mall if they know how to get from point A to point B?
5. Do people experience being lost at the mall?
6. How likely are individuals to refer to the app for navigation, rather than information desks or navigation stands?

## **DATA SECTION**

### **A. Current Navigation Around Metrotown Mall**

Navigating a large shopping mall like Metrotown Mall can be challenging, however the mall has implemented several measures to help visitors find their way around. One of these measures is the information desk, which is located on the ground level near the Grand Court. The information desk is staffed by associates who can provide directions, answer questions, and offer other assistance. The associates are also equipped with paper mall maps and can provide visitors with information about the mall's stores, services, and amenities. Additionally, the mall's website has a built-in map for customers to access. However, it is not as detailed as it could be. Moreover, Metrotown Mall also has at least one navigation stand per floor located throughout the mall. These stands display mall directories and maps, and some have interactive touch screens that allow visitors to search for stores and services. The navigation stands are

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strategically placed near high-traffic areas, such as escalators and elevators, to make them easily accessible to visitors. Nevertheless, these navigation stands are occasionally out of service, resulting in customer becoming lost and frustrated as they lose time moving from point A to point B.

### **B. Navigation Strategies at Other Malls Across Canada**

The comparison of Pacific Centre in Vancouver, Eaton Centre in Toronto, and West Edmonton Mall in Edmonton to Metrotown is done by analyzing their navigation strategies as described on their websites to evaluate the potential customer appeal of developing a navigation app for Metrotown.

Pacific Centre and Eaton Centre, both owned by Cadillac Fairview, have similar strategies for customer navigation. They do not currently offer a navigation app for their malls, and instead rely on information desks, navigation stands, and website maps to enhance the customer experiences (CF, n.d.). These strategies are compatible to those employed by Metrotown Mall.

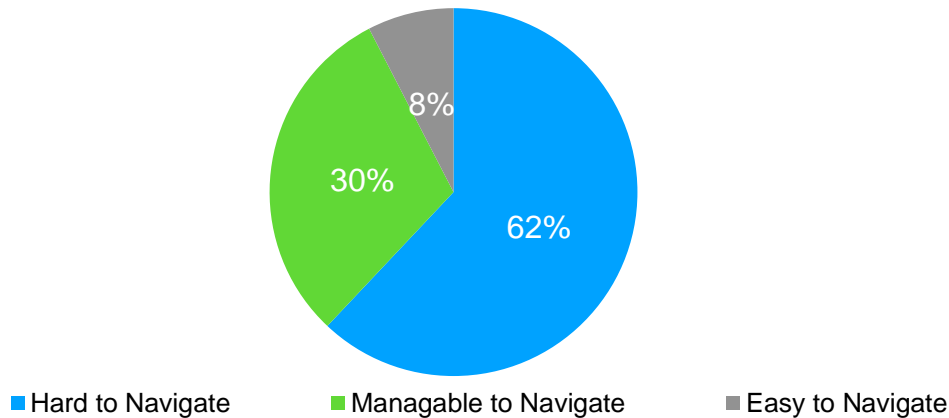
After analyzing the navigation strategies of West Edmonton Mall, which is the largest mall in North America, it was discovered that the mall does not have a navigation app (WEM, n.d.).

Like other malls, West Edmonton Mall uses information desks, navigation stands and maps on their website to assist customers with navigation (WEM, n.d.). However, West Edmonton Mall has the most detailed map among all other malls under reviewed. Thus, if Metrotown implements a navigation app, it will be the first mall in Canada to use such strategy to improve customer experiences.



### C. Analysis of Collected Data & Feasibility Discussion

#### Current Customer Comfort Level Navigating Metrotown Mall



**Figure 1.** Current Customer Comfort Level Navigating Metrotown Mall

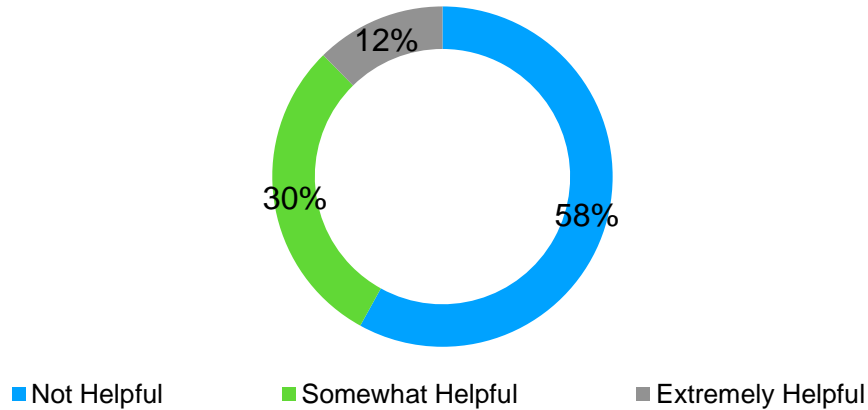
Data from eighty-eight surveys conveys that 62% of the individuals believe that it is hard to navigate Metrotown Mall, 30% of the respondents believe that its manageable and only approximately 8% believe that it is easy to navigate the mall (Figure 1).

#### Rates of Getting Lost at Metrotown Mall

Out of eighty-eight respondents, forty-five stated that they have experienced getting lost at the Metrotown Mall before. On the other hand, thirty respondents have never been lost while navigating the mall, and thirteen respondents were unsure if they have ever been lost at the mall. This data reveals that more than a half of the respondents do not feel comfortable navigating the mall, resulting in getting lost. As such, these individuals are more likely to refer to available resources for navigation.

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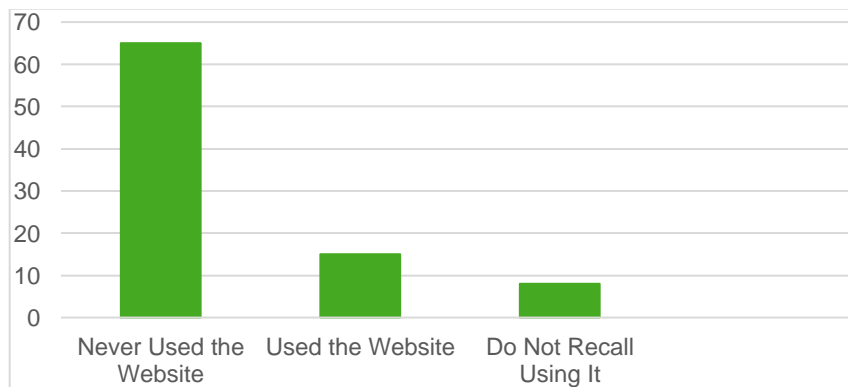
### Helpfulness of Information Desks and Navigation Stands at Metrotown Mall



**Figure 2.** Helpfulness of Information Desks and Navigation Stands at Metrotown Mall

In assessing the helpfulness of the information desks and navigation stands at Metrotown, 58% of the respondents stated that the information desks and navigation stands are not helpful at all (Figure 2). Comparatively, 30% found them somewhat helpful, and only 12% stated that the information desks and navigation stands are extremely helpful (Figure 2).

### Use of Metrotown Mall Website for Navigation Assistance



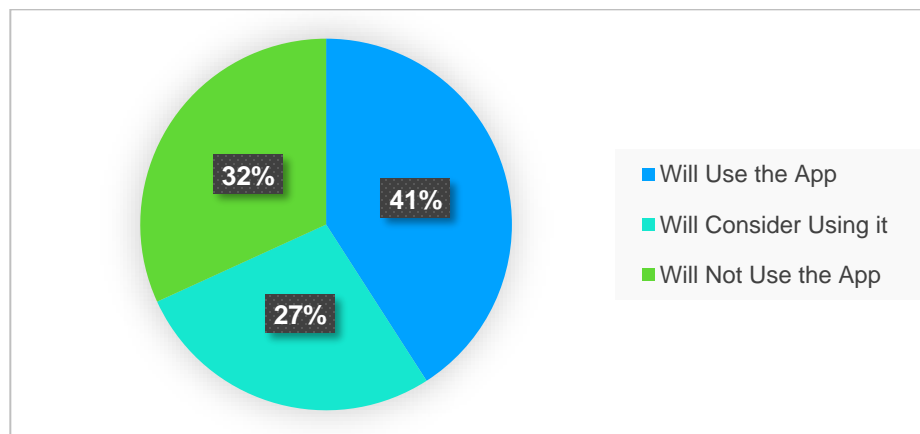
**Figure 3.** Use of Metrotown Mall Website for Navigation Assistance

In addition, it was found that utilizing the Metrotown Mall website for navigation purposes is the least popular option (Figure 3). 65 respondents have never used a website for navigating the

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mall, 8 respondents are unsure if they have ever used the mall's website and only 15 respondents used the website to navigate the mall (Figure 3). These findings suggest that people might not know that there is a map on the website which can be used, or that the map is not convenient enough. Similarly, as shown in Figure 2, although people do use information desks and stands, they do not find them helpful.

### Public Opinion Regarding Using a Navigation App for Metrotown Mall



**Figure 4.** Public Opinion Regarding Using a Navigation App for Metrotown Mall

Finally, the data results convey that 41% of respondents will use a navigation app if provided by Metrotown, 27% of respondents will consider using it and only 32% respondents are certain that they would not use a navigation app (Figure 4).

## CONCLUSION

### A. Summary and Interpretation of Findings

The findings show that the majority of the respondents found it difficult to navigate Metrotown Mall, with only a small percentage finding it easy. Moreover, a significant number of respondents reported getting lost while navigating the mall. The findings also suggest that while

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information desks and navigation stands are available at the mall, they are not perceived as very helpful by most respondents. Similarly, the website map is not widely used, possibly because it is not user-friendly or convenient.

Most importantly, the majority of respondents expressed interest in using a navigation app if provided by the Metrotown Mall. Accordingly, it can be concluded that Metrotown Mall would benefit from developing a navigation app to improve the customer experiences, especially given that many respondents have had difficulty navigating the mall and have expressed interest in using a digital navigation tool.

### **A. Recommendations**

The following are recommendations for enhancing customer experiences at Metrotown Mall:

1. Developing a navigation app: since majority of the respondents expressed interest in a navigation app, the mall should consider developing one to aid and promote customer navigation. This would be a first-of-its-kind initiative among the malls in Canada and could help set Metrotown apart from its competitors.
2. Implementing signage: installing signage which would inform customers that there is an app that could be utilized for navigation purposes.

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## APPENDIX

### A. Survey Questions

Q1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how easy is it to navigate Metropolis at Metrotown?

- 0 not easy
- 5 normal
- 10 extremely easy

Q2. How often do you visit Metrotown Mall?

- Rarely (once a year or less)
- Occasionally (a few times a year)
- Regularly (once a month or more)

Q3. Have you ever gotten lost in Metrotown Mall?

- No
- Yes
- Don't remember

Q4. How often do you use the information desks and/or navigation stand at Metrotown Mall?

- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Regularly (every time I visit)

Q5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful do you find the information desks and navigation stands at Metrotown Mall? (put 0 if never used it)

- 0 not helpful
- 5 somewhat helpful
- 10 extremely helpful

Q6. Have you ever used the Metrotown Mall website to navigate the mall?

- No
- Yes
- Maybe

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Q7. On a scale of 1 to 10, how helpful do you find the Metrotown Mall website for navigation purposes? (put 0 if never used it)

- 0 not helpful
- 5 somewhat helpful
- 10 extremely helpful

Q8. Would you use an app that provides navigation assistance at Metrotown Mall?

- No
- Yes
- Maybe

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