

# Errand Study

A screenshot of a data table with a green header. The table contains multiple columns and rows of text, which is mostly blurred. The header row is highlighted in green.



A screenshot of a data table with a blue header. The table contains multiple columns and rows of text, which is mostly blurred. The header row is highlighted in blue.

A screenshot of a data table with a red header. The table contains multiple columns and rows of text, which is mostly blurred. The header row is highlighted in red.



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## Research Goal

Understand the nature of household errands in New York City where storage and transport are often limited. Identify any solutions.

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Fernando Cervantes  
Jonathan Cousins

# Results

## Respondent tables



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Understand the nature of household errands

# Results

## Respondent tables

**Questionnaire Results**

**Liz/Rob (Morningside Heights)**

Date/time	What items did you purchase?	Was this trip planned in advance? If so, did you make a list?	Did you forget any items?	Where do you typically store these items and why? Did this affect what or how much you	How long did this trip take? Did it take less time than expected? If so, why?	Did you purchase these items from a store or online service that you routinely visit for these
03/18/06 11pm	milk for cookies	no	no	In fridge and on top of fridge (did not affect)	5 minutes (as expected)	yes, close to home, open late, en route from subway to home
03/19/06 5pm	tonkatsu sauce, umi, shiso leaves, green onions, fishcake, konbu	yes	yes (see next entry)	fridge or shelf, (no)	45 min	yes, this store has specialty items (Japanese)
03/19/06 5pm	sea weed, rice vinegar	no	this was to get misad items	fridge or shelf, (no)	15	yes, this store has specialty items (Japanese)
03/19/06 2pm	many items (\$118 worth of groceries running the gamut)	yes, list_yes	yes (green onions)	fridge, shelf, hanging baskets, bathroom	2 hours	yes, preferred grocery store
3/22/06	six pack of beer	no	no	fridge (yes)	5 minutes	yes, convenient location open late and dinner was already ready when they decided to purchase the beer

**2 out of 5 trips planned in advance**      **2 out of 5 times something was forgotten**      **5 minutes or over 1 hour**      **all regular stores near home and some were for specialty items.**

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Interviews

User-diaries/questionnaires

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- Frequency and timing
- Convenience factors (proximity and accessibility)
- Advance planning and use of lists
- Adaptive and outstanding behaviors

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  - 2.) Proximity is the primary determinant in selecting vendor (home, work, and "piggybacking"). Hours of operation is the secondary determinant.
  - 3.) Errands we planned in advance 42 percent of time. Lists were used 45 percent of the time for planned trips. Overall, lists were made 30 percent of the time

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# Insights

## Framework

**Liz and Rob**



**Becky and Scott**

**Rachel and Christian**

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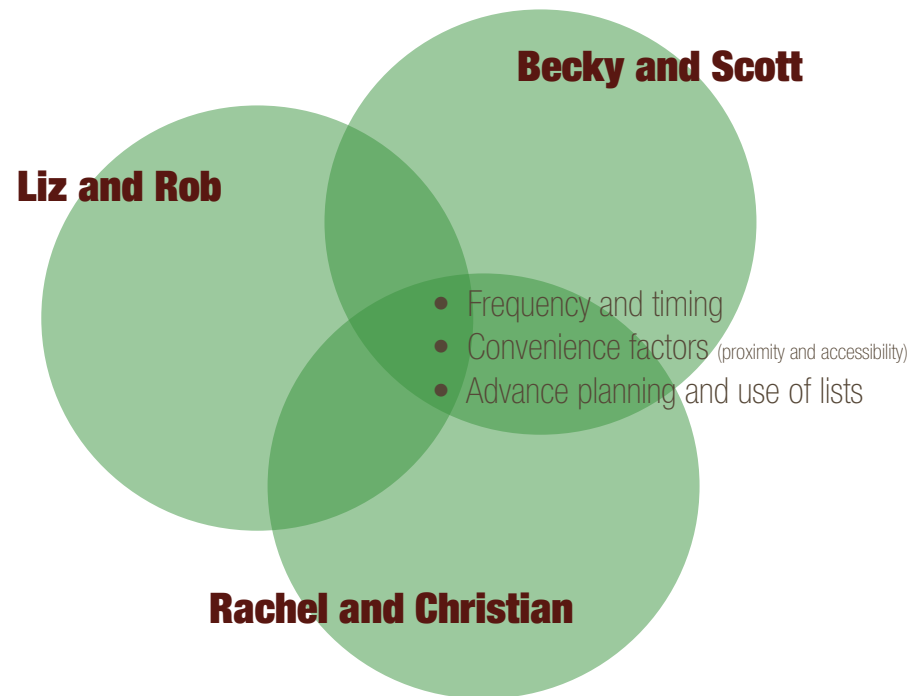
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Framework - common issues



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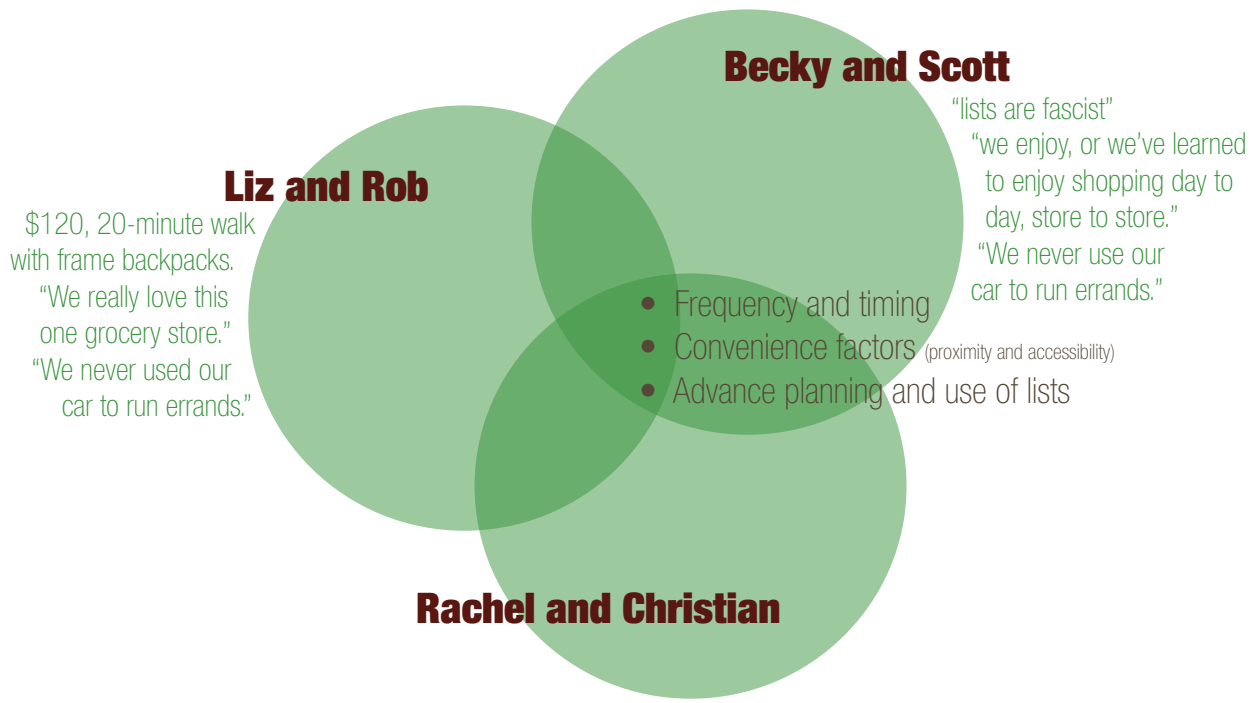
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# Insights *Outsights*

- Adaptive and outstanding behaviors



## Fred and Chery

"You wanna' talk about lists?"  
Chery keeps many different lists  
Sub lists for Fred  
One list is of ideas for meals  
Out of town shipping from family members  
"We use our car for errands all the time."  
Holland Tunnel timing (7 min)

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# Conclusions

Errands, Shopping, Space, Transport, needs, etc.

- Some New Yorkers hate lists while others find them comforting and enjoyable.
- Most people accept their circumstances regarding errands as part of life in NYC.
- Cars are not the solution and more space is rarely an option.
- People forget items at least 1/3 of the time.
- Meals drive most errands.
- Any solution should consider their limitations of space and transportation.
- A lot of New Yorkers enjoy shopping, but errands are not always shopping.

A **solution** should be helpful in that it allows the user to generate and record ideas for meals or needed items, reduce the number of times they forget to purchase items, and make it easier to carry items when they decide to purchase more than they had originally planned. Just as important, a **solution** should also seek out and enhance any shopping (enjoyable) aspects of every errand experience.

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## Where can we go?

- **The Lunch Hour Tour** - Service that conducts 1/2 hour walking tours in business areas of the city to visit local neighborhood vendors that are popular with people working and/or living in the area. Specialty tours can also be arranged – for example, a group of office mates wanting a tour on where they can find organically grown produce in the area or “vegetarian” tours, etc. The tours could be conducted based on local users and vendors. It could be split left and right much like Google is with paying ads on right and regular search results on left.
- **Mobile Market** - It's NYC street fair meets farmers market. Every day of the week, the farmers market gets a different, long block in a business district. They are on a two week cycle. Local vendors can have a booth as well.
- **Online errand management** of list (could be shared with family members in the immediate *or* extended family - which could be good if someone is coming to visit a New Yorker and could buy in bulk on their behalf before visiting) . Such a list could be printed.
- **Cellphone errand management** of list would work much in the same way as above and it could be updated by feed from cash register directly to phone. Users could add to the list via phone or website. When they are out, they can simply call the site for the latest list. The cellphone could also give directions and recipes.
- **Shopping Van Group Rental Service** - Service that rents vans or other large vehicles to groups of users who want to coordinate large shopping trips together in and around the city. Vehicles would be more NYC driver and shopper friendly than the larger vehicles available at a moving/storage service. Since the service only specializes in certain types of vehicles and can be rented by groups, pricing is lower and availability higher than that offered by car rental companies.

(more)

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## more possibilities...

- **User-generated database of “inspiration”** (favorites, proximity, price, specialty items). Such a community site could also include a special section where you can look up recipe ideas based on a variety of criteria, like tags. Inspiration would include variations on a dish. “Don’t like lamb? This works great with chicken or extra-firm tofu.” It could even do this automatically for dishes that have primary ingredients you don’t like, like leaving out cilantro if you’ve already entered that in your profile at some point. It could be broken down into a printable or phone-ready list. Entries can also be synced with a PDA, iPod, etc. Such a site could have a **“like-minds” section** that would not only match people up who share tastes, but who also share systems for organizing errands and errand information. Sharing a mental errand model could mean they might like to shop in the same kinds of places, a great way to pick up tips for making errands more pleasurable.
- **Dynamic inventory-keeping including.** One very small wireless device could be mounted on a refrigerator door or to a wastebasket containing a barcode scanner. When items are being discarded in the kitchen/bathroom area, they can be scanned. The device keeps a list of items needed for the next shopping trip. It could also tell them if the item is recyclable in their region, and if so, how it should be recycled. This device could network with a website and cellphone, so the cellphone could take in data from a cash register.
- **Collapsible backpack** made of durable nylon with several chambers to protect items. Make available in several colors. Must be collapsable to 4”x6”x1” so it can be easily carried in another area such as brief case or purse.
- **Available parking suggestions** could be made available to cell phone devices for those who like to drive.
- Online or cellphone-based **ingredient re-calculator** so ingredients can be recalculated for two adults or two adults and two kids on the fly.