

Brown University Mailroom

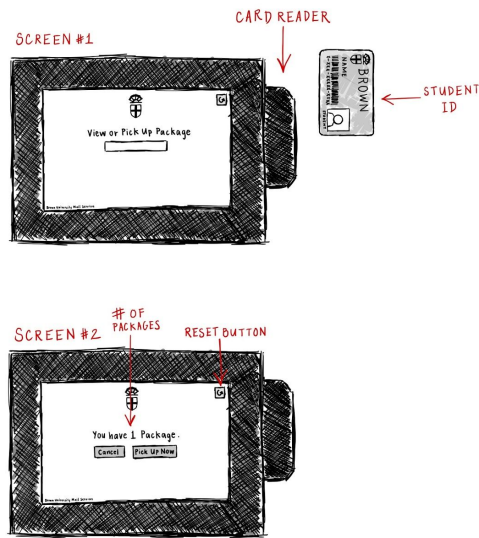
INTRO

For Brown University students, the mailroom is the place to go whenever they receive mail or a package. When you walk into Page Robinson, there are two kiosks outside the room to swipe and one inside the mailroom. Once you have swiped, you can see how many packages you have and choose whether to pick up now or cancel. Students then wait in the room until their name is called, upon which they give their ID at the counter and sign to receive their mail. Below find our research and analysis of the mailroom interface, as well as some personas and a storyboard we constructed based on our research.

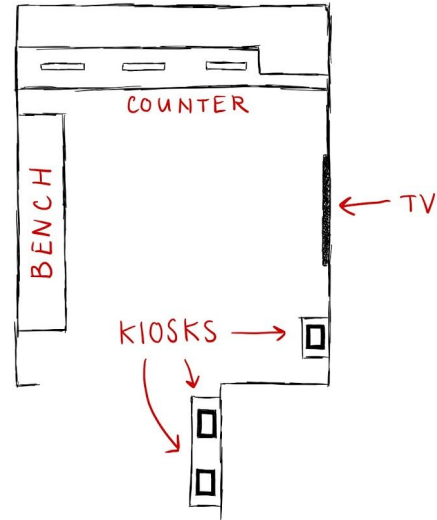
OBSERVATIONS

To start our research and analysis of the Brown University Mailroom Interface, we sat in the mailroom during a busy time for 20-30 minutes. Most people would walk in alone and go to the machine that was either closest or had the least amount of people in line. More people swiped on the outside kiosks than the inside one. Not many people had problems using the interface, with one or two who briefly forgot to press the "Pick-Up Now" button but remembered a second later. Despite there being open seats on the bench, some people still decided to stand, generally towards the middle/front. A few people came in with their friends and chatted while waiting.

SKETCHES



MAIL SERVICES LAYOUT



INTERVIEWS

***NOTE:** 1 and 2 are not the same people throughout all these questions

Which swipe kiosk do you use?

1: The one outside right as I walk in, and if it's busy I just use whichever has the shortest line.

2: I use the one on the inside because it's more hidden so fewer people know about it and I can swipe sooner.

Have you ever had to swipe twice? What happened?

1: Yes, many times and it's always frustrating especially when there are a lot of people waiting behind me.

2: Sometimes it swipes but only fills halfway and then I have to swipe again to make it fully go through.

Do you ever forget to click the "Pick Up Now" button? What happened?

1: No I usually always remember to click Pick-Up now because I'm used to the mailroom process

2: Yes. Once I accidentally pressed the cancel button and had to swipe again and another time I waited forever before realizing, so I had to swipe and wait again.

Where do you opt to wait? Is it dependent on something? Why?

1: I like to stand near the front when it's busy so I can hear my name be called or if I'm in a rush I can't be bothered to sit so I stand and wait.

2: I like to sit if there's an open spot, but if there isn't I stand near the middle. Sometimes I come with friends, which affects my decision to stand or sit.

How long do you normally have to wait?

1: 15-20 minutes if it's super busy but around 3-5 if it's emptier.

2: On average I wait around 5-10 minutes, I've never found myself waiting forever.

Do you schedule your pickups in any way?

1: Not really, I usually go when I get the email but I do try to avoid the busier times like early afternoon right after a lot of classes get out.

2: I try to go at less busy times like the morning or late afternoon and if I stop by when I'm passing the mail room and it's busy then I just won't go in and swipe.

BIAS

We believe we got a decent range of people due to there being some standing, some sitting, going to the kiosk inside the mailroom versus outside, coming alone or with friends, and other factors, which made it a good representation. The people we interviewed also generally weren't in a rush because their classes were over for the day, which may have worsened our sample than if we had observed people during both busy and empty times.

PERSONAS

1. Mental Models

1: One user may not understand how the queue system works, and assume that there isn't much of an order to the process (i.e., a queue). They might think their package will be retrieved right when they swipe. Alternatively, they could believe the process is completely random and based off of who the staff member picks/a physical line system, leading them to stand closer to the counter to influence their decision.

2: Another user might be new to the process, and assume that they should just wait at the counter. If they *did* know to swipe their card, they might think that they swipe and sit down, not interacting with the interface (especially if it's slow) and missing the "Pick up Package" button. Their thought process could be, "*Why come to the mail room if not to pick up a package?*" They wouldn't think there would even be an option to cancel.

2. Personas:

Thinks

- I only have 10 minutes before my next class!
- There are only four people in front of me now...
- Didn't the person whose name was just called get here after me?
- Why isn't my card swiping?!

Feels

- Powerless
- Anxious because of the time sensitivity
- Attentive
- Distracted by the music



**Organized
Odin**

Says

- "Sorry! Did you miss my name?"
- "Is your swipe kiosk working?"
- "How long have you been here for?"

Does

- Walks up when their name is called with their ID in their hand
- Swipes at the kiosk multiple times up and down
- Stands close to the front so they can hear their name being called

Organized Odin is an upperclassman at Brown who schedules out their entire day on their calendar. He can't estimate how long he has to wait at the mailroom, which annoys him. If an interface (the kiosk) is taking too long, it tends to bother Odin as well. In the mailroom, Odin struggles with the lack of clarity as to the wait time (besides the amount of people). Organized Odin represents the subset of mailroom users that see it as a logical process that may be tedious, but is effective. Odin typically spends about 5 minutes at the mailroom each visit.

Thinks

- Wow, there are a lot of people here. This might take a while.
- Oh gosh, did I forget to swipe?
- Hey! Is that my friend Clio?
- I forgot I ordered this!

Feels

- Relaxed because they can sit and be on their phone without feeling like they should be doing something else
- Excited about their package



Says

- “What package are you waiting for?”
- “I was with you when you swiped in, right?”
- “I don’t think I’ve seen it this crowded yet, wow.”

Carefree Caliope

Does

- Doesn’t hear their name being called the first time
- Hurriedly fumbles in their bag for their ID
- Finishes their conversation before heading to the counter

Carefree Caliope goes with the flow and doesn’t seem to care how most things work, tending to accept them as they are--she’s a first-year. Caliope heads to the mailroom when she remembers to, often right before it closes (when it’s *busy*). Sometimes she may have to swipe twice, because the entry bar was only filled halfway at first. She might have trouble focusing due to the crowd size. She represents the subset of mailroom users that don’t see the process as something that can be changed or finessed. Caliope usually spends about 10-15 minutes in the mailroom per visit.

PERSONA ETHICAL ANALYSIS

Thinks

- I should really get out there and meet some new people online!
- I've never been to Europe, maybe I should take a trip sometime soon
- I love my family
- I hope my grandkids visit me soon!

Feels

- Anxious to stay updated on social trends and learn social media
- Happy she has the means to live a decent life and wants to live a good lifestyle her last few years
 - Grateful for her loving family



Says

- "I just joined this new social media site! I'm learning from my kids."
- "How was your trip? Maybe I should go sometime."
- "Come visit me anytime sweetie I'm always happy to have you!"

Gullible Gertrude

Does

- Spends her day taking care of her dog and garden
- Is very active and present in her family's lives
- Stays active on social media, making posts about her grandkids and daily activities

Gullible Gertrude is an elderly woman who is enthusiastic about keeping up with the younger generation's social media trends. Due to this, she's very enthusiastic about embracing all aspects about being on social media and updating all her information. A new social media company could unethically take advantage of this by getting Gullible Gertrude to give a lot of her personal information and twist it to just be another way of getting involved online or completing her social media profile. They could then use or sell this person's information to advance their own unethical agenda.

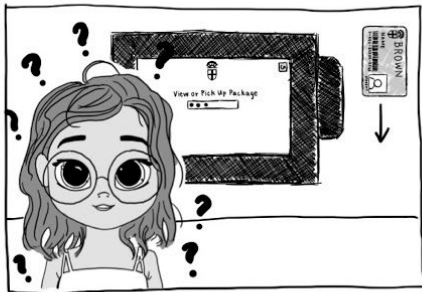
Storyboard: Carefree Caliope



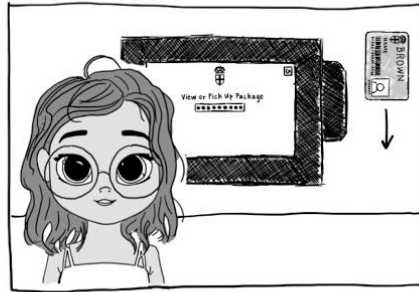
Carefree Caliope walks into the mailroom at around 12:55pm, just as many classes end and students are rushing to get their packages.



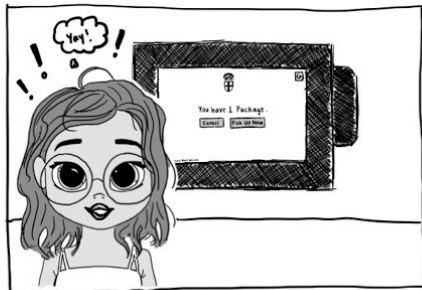
She notices it's busy but because she is a first year and doesn't have much experience with mail services, she still waits in line at one of the busy kiosks outside the room. She doesn't know there is another one inside the room with less people.



Carefree Caliope swipes at the kiosk once but doesn't get a message displaying if she has packages. The bar only filled halfway which she thinks must mean the swipe didn't go through.



She swipes again and the bar fills up which she takes to mean her swipe went through this time.



Carefree Caliope gets a message on the screen saying she has one package. She clicks the "Pick Up Now" button and goes inside.



She goes in the room and notices again how busy and crowded it is. She sees a friend and decides to wait with her in the middle of the mailroom.



About 12 minutes later her name is called but she doesn't hear it the first time because she is in the middle of a conversation with her friend and some people in front of her are blocking the sound. Her name is called again and she rushes to the front, fumbling to get her ID out of her bag.



She gives her card to the person at the desk and signs her name when prompted. She then leaves the mailroom, happy to have gotten her mail and left the crowded room.

This storyboard shows the typical user journey for Carefree Calliope on her trips to the mailroom. She doesn't think of the mailroom as something which needs to be fixed, nor does she make much of an effort to speed up the process, which is represented by her actions in the storyboard. She doesn't try to find the most available kiosk (the inside one) nor does she worry about hearing her name as soon as possible. She is always relaxed on her mail room visits and doesn't think much of it.