Mobile Initiated Retuns
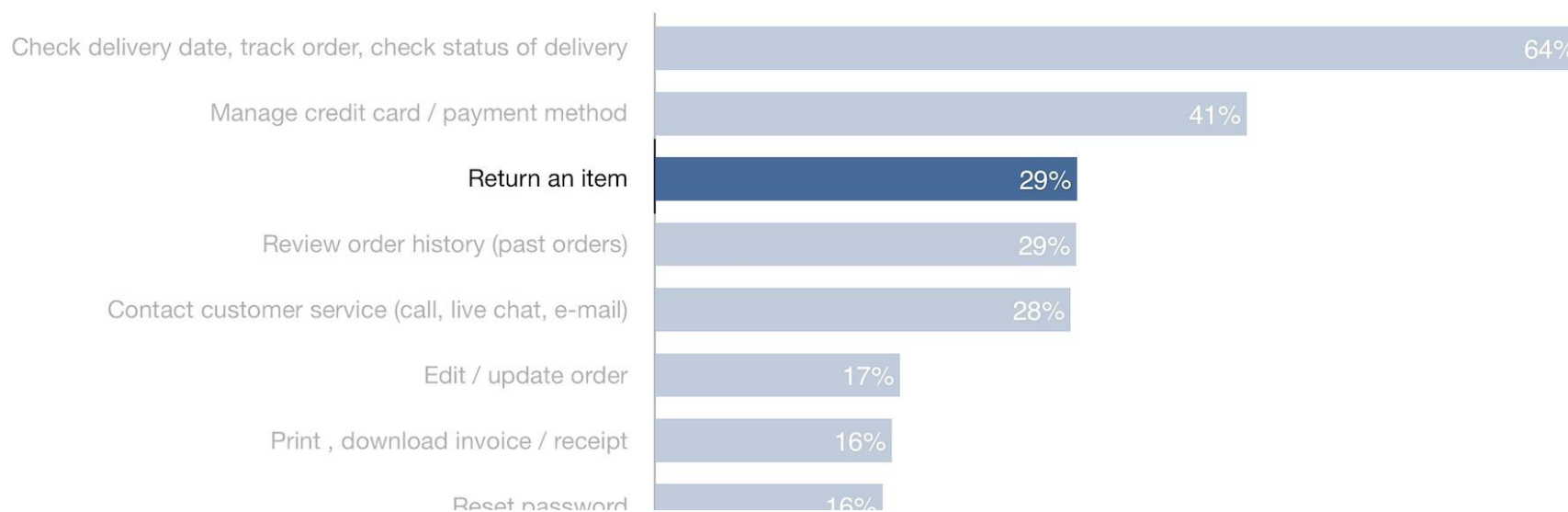## Competitive Analysis & Research

LOWE'S®

Introduction

E-Commerce Account Features Most Important to Users

1102 responses · US adult internet shoppers · 2018 · © baymard.com

"Select up to 3 items from the list below that are MOST IMPORTANT to you when accessing your account on an e-commerce site. Please trust your first instincts and spend no more than 2 minutes on this exercise."

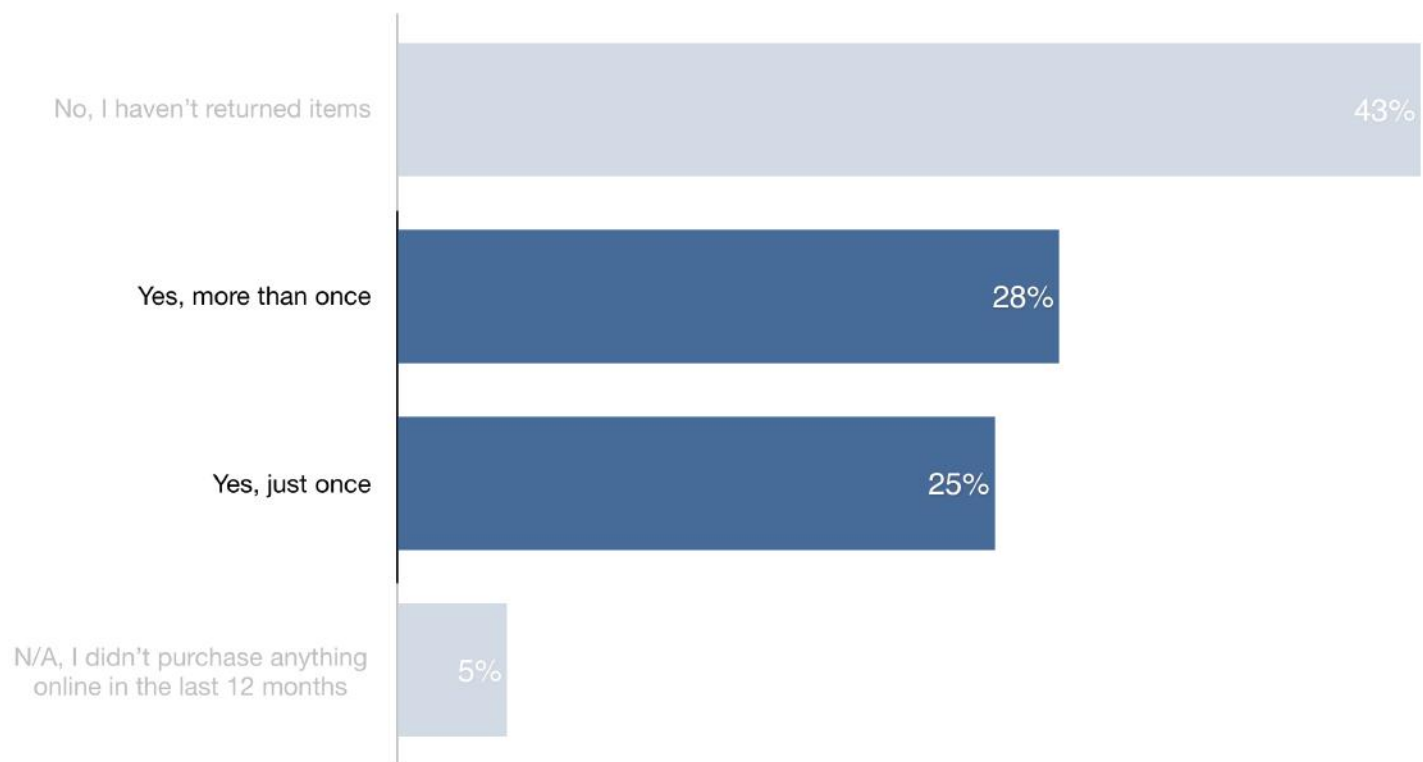|	
Check delivery date, track order, check status of delivery	64%
Manage credit card / payment method	41%
Return an item	29%
Review order history (past orders)	29%
Contact customer service (call, live chat, e-mail)	28%
Edit / update order	17%
Print , download invoice / receipt	16%
Reset password	16%

According to baymard.com, a quantitative study of users' reasons for accessing their e-commerce accounts found that 29% of users said initiating, managing, and completing returns were among the three most important reasons why they'd access their account.

Frequency of Online Returns (per year)

1,045 responses · US adult internet shoppers · 2018 · © baymard.com

*"Have you returned an item you bought online in the last 12 months?"*

No, I haven't returned items	43%
Yes, more than once	28%
Yes, just once	25%
N/A, I didn't purchase anything online in the last 12 months	5%

53% of users returned at least one item in the past year to an e-commerce site,

Likelihood of Future Purchases Based on Previous Return Experience

1,045 responses · US adult internet shoppers · 2018 · © baymard.com

"If you returned an item that you bought online in the last 12 months, how would that experience impact the likelihood you'd purchase again from that e-commerce site?"

Would definitely buy again from that e-commerce site	38%
May buy again from that e-commerce site	24%
Would probably buy again from that e-commerce site	18%
Unlikely to buy again from that e-commerce site	13%
Would never buy again from that e-commerce site	7%
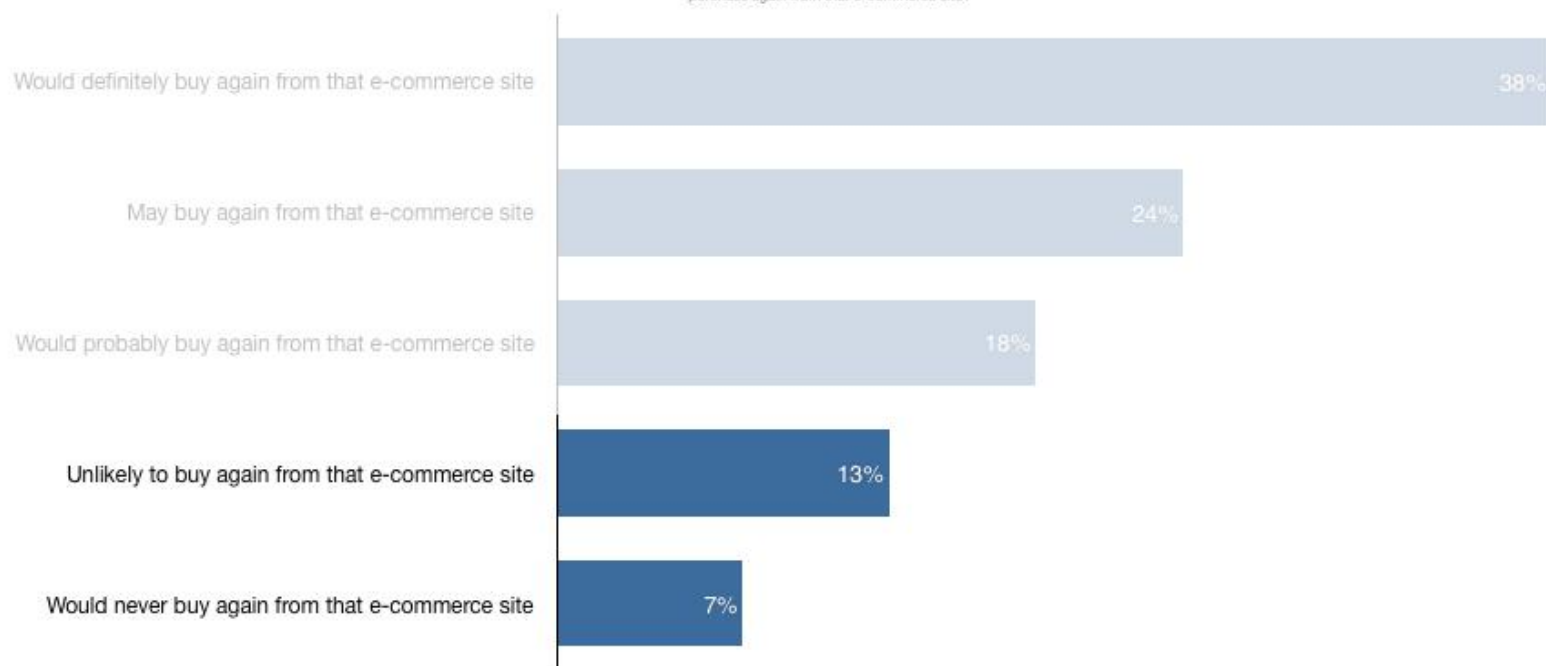
11% of users have abandoned at least one order in the past quarter solely due to an unsatisfactory returns policy. 7% of users would never purchase from a site again solely due to the returns experience, while 13% responded that they would be unlikely to purchase from a site again.

Despite the importance of returns, during the usability testing of the return processes and user interfaces, they generated the most usability issues for users.

Baymard's UX performance benchmark revealed that that 54% of sites have significant usability issues within their returns flow.
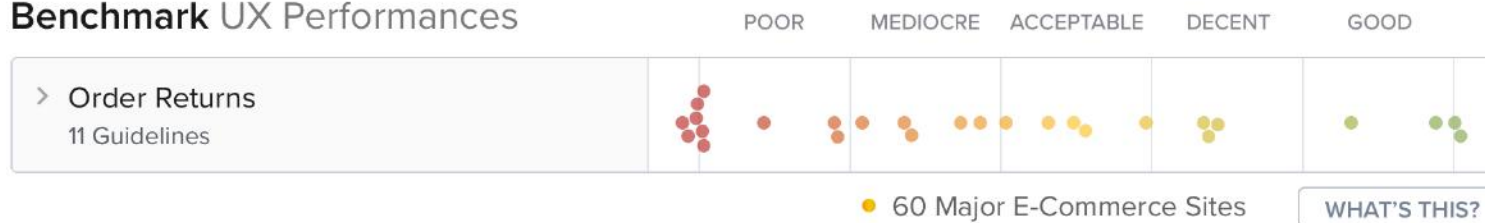
They've identified four sites that do a good job on their return processes based on 11 guidelines.

11 Guidelines

1. Provide an Online Return Flow in Addition to Any Pre-Printed Labels

When users decide they need to return an item, the extent to which users are accommodated by a site was shown during their testing to inform users' decision as to whether to conduct business with that site again in the future — turning a potentially negative experience into a positive one.
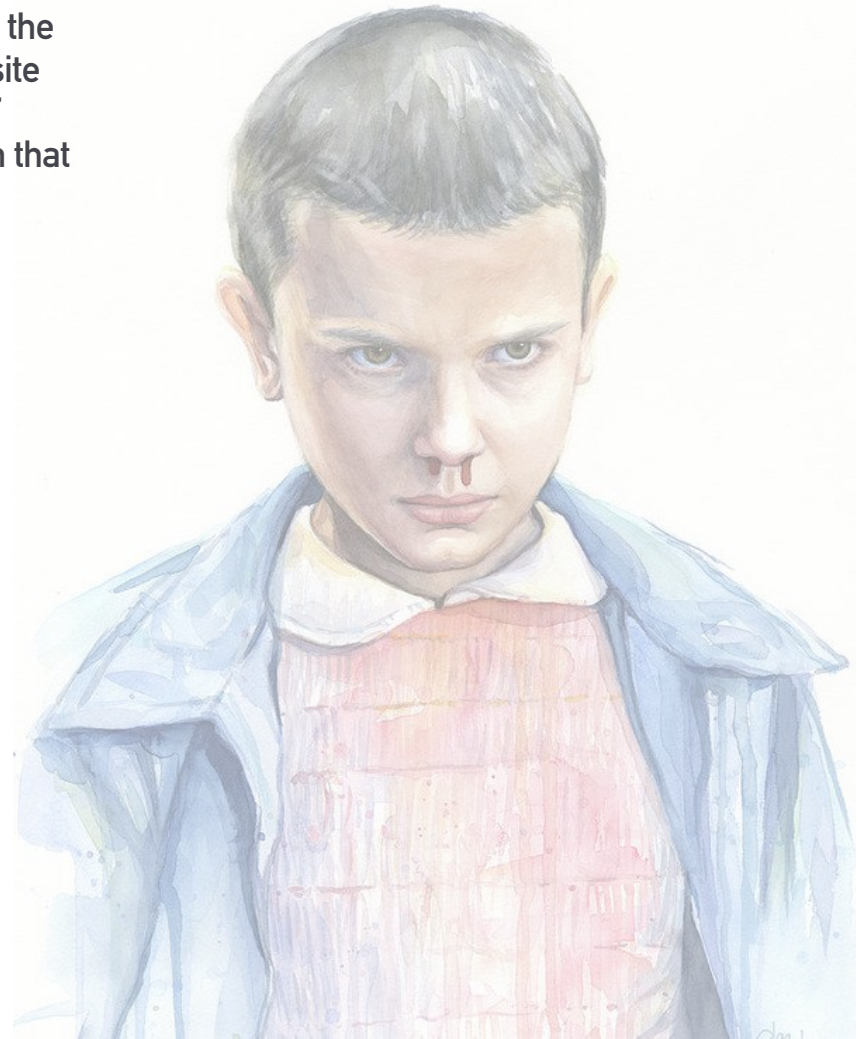
2. Explicitly State the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

When the cost of the expected return was not clear, test subjects became confused, annoyed, and, at worst, felt cheated. The cost of the return was repeatedly observed to be a friction point during testing.

3. Make Intelligent Default Selections for Users in the Return Flow

In the checkout flow, making intelligent default selections for users was observed to eliminate distractions and inconveniences. For example, Pre-populating an e-mail, address field, closest location for in-store return, and dictating the flow based on the reason for the return can all help make make the customer feel that their problem is understood and being addressed.

Damaged
Missing Parts ➡ Replacement/Exchange

Changed Mind
No Longer Needed ➡ Refund
Lower Price Available
Other

4. Provide the Ability to Both Print and Email the Shipping Label

Printing the return shipping label is frequently the last step in the return flow. However, testing revealed that many users will not print the label when they complete the return shipping process. In testing, this was observed to be the case for 67% of test subjects, who cited printer issues or the lack of a printer as reasons for having to postpone printing the return label to a later time.

If printing a shipping label appears to be the only option, it can in many cases lead to users being anxious about their ability to eventually print the label and complete the return process. This in turn can escalate to a phone call to customer service or live chat initiation, and delay a user's ability to ship an item back.

5. Update Order Statuses to Show Key Returns Milestones

Without timely and accurate updates on the progress of a return, users who are concerned about whether and when a refund will be received are likely to seek assistance from a customer service representative. As one test subject stated,

"After drop off [of the returned item, ed.], I would check my credit card for a reverse charge a week later, and check the site. Another week later I would call customer service".

6. Use Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip Text Throughout the Return Flow

Testing revealed that without appropriately descriptive headers, text descriptions, and primary buttons in the return flow, users take longer to complete the process and have more issues.

7. Promote In-Store Returns Alongside Mailed Return Options

In testing, 20% of test subjects indicated a preference for returning an item directly to the store.

8. Provide Detailed Instructions on How to Package Returns

To initiate any mail return of an order, the items have to be packaged securely to be sent to the vendor. Although this may seem like a straightforward task, during testing a number of test subjects expressed the opinion that packaging items was the most challenging part of the whole returns process.

The issues center around whether the items need to be packed in a certain way and to a certain standard in order for the return to be accepted and the refund to be issued.

9. Provide a Clear Path Forward in the Return Flow with Noticeable Calls to Action

When users are not able to easily identify the primary button or the way forward, they experience unnecessary friction. The worst possible outcome can occur when users feel as though they've reached a dead end (e.g., "The app is broken!"), or completed the task at hand but actually haven't.

10. Consider Providing More Than One Return Shipping Method

Providing users with the ability to return an item by more than one courier acknowledges that some options are, for the individual user, vastly more convenient than others.

11. Provide "Other" as an Option in the "Reasons for Returns" Interface

In testing, it was observed that some subjects spend an inordinate amount of time selecting a reason, if the provided reasons do not perfectly align with why they want to return an item.

Competitive Analysis

Amazon app
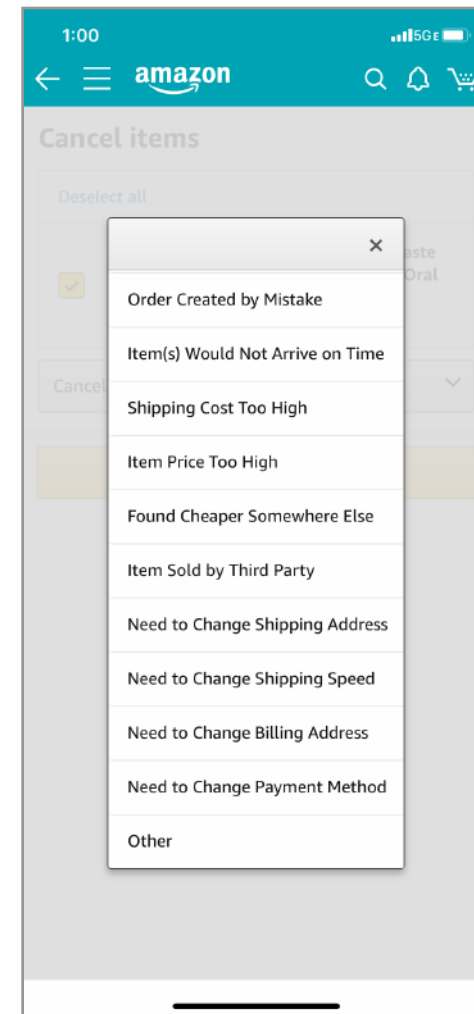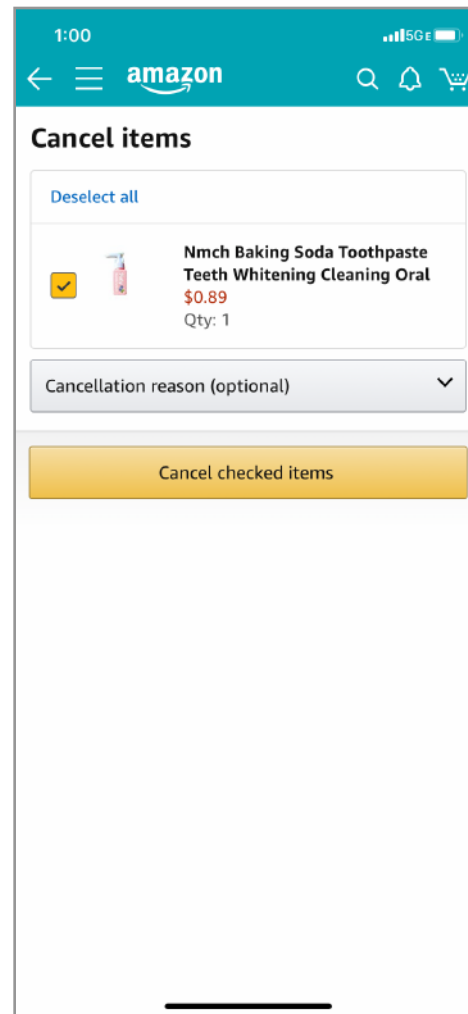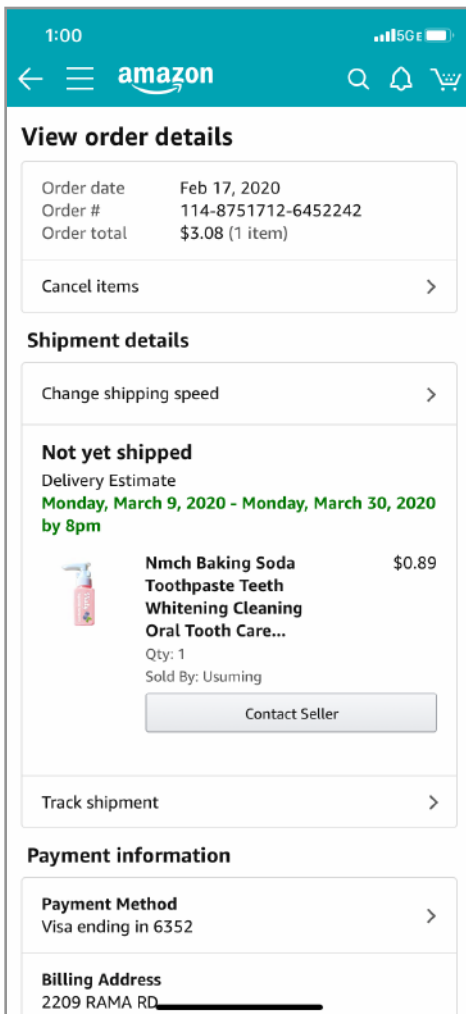
Amazon App
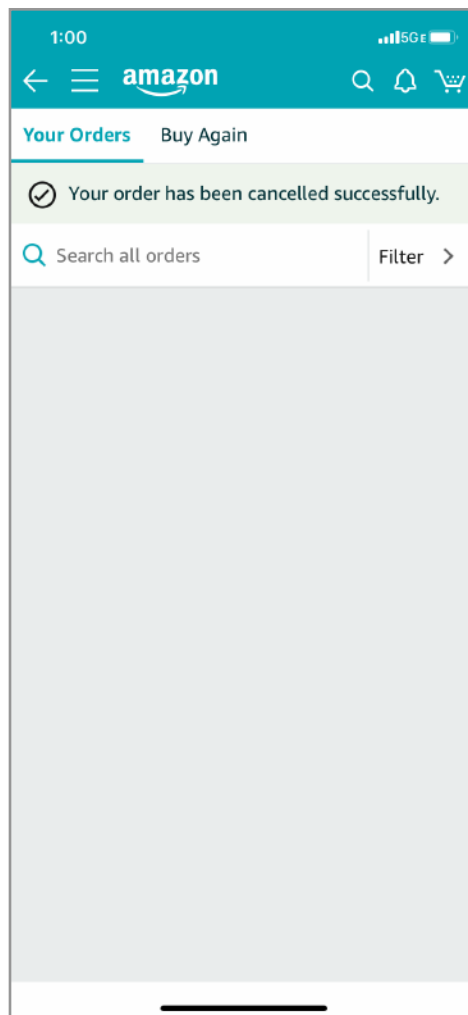
Pros:

- Provides a clear path forward in the return flow with noticeable calls to action.

- Uses Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip text through the return flow

- Updates order statuses to show key returns milestones

- Intuituve and easy to use

Cons:

- Design isn't aging well, feels more like a wireframe than a final design

Best Buy App
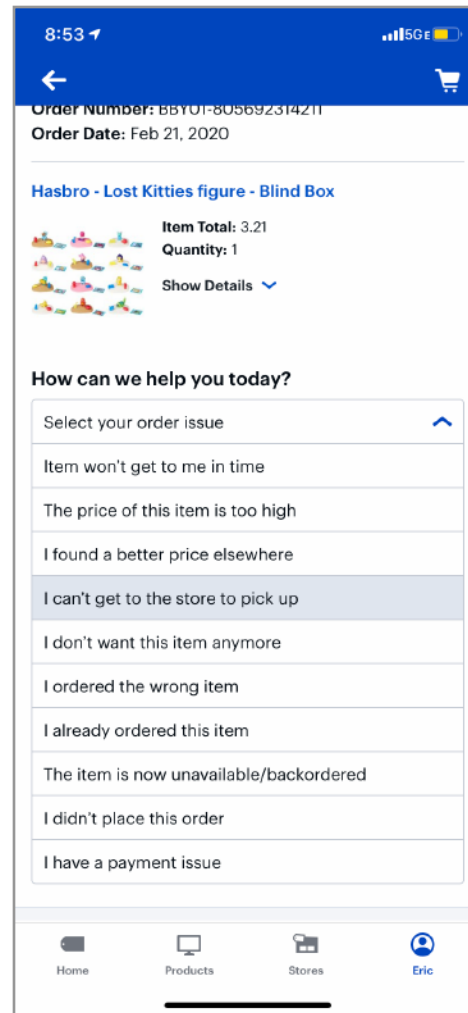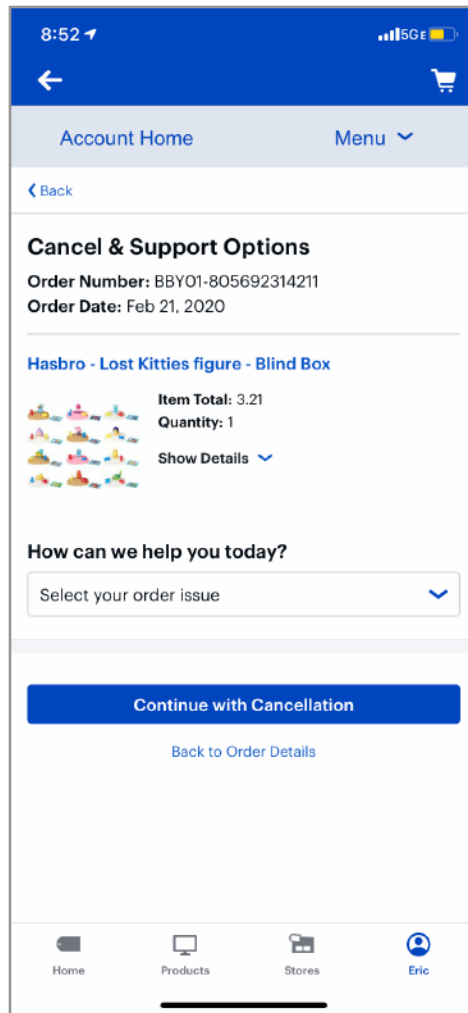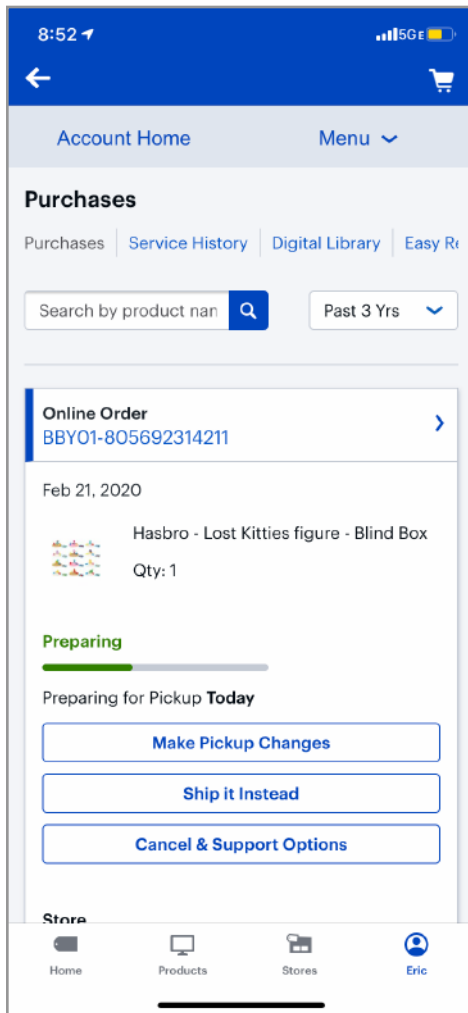
Best Buy App
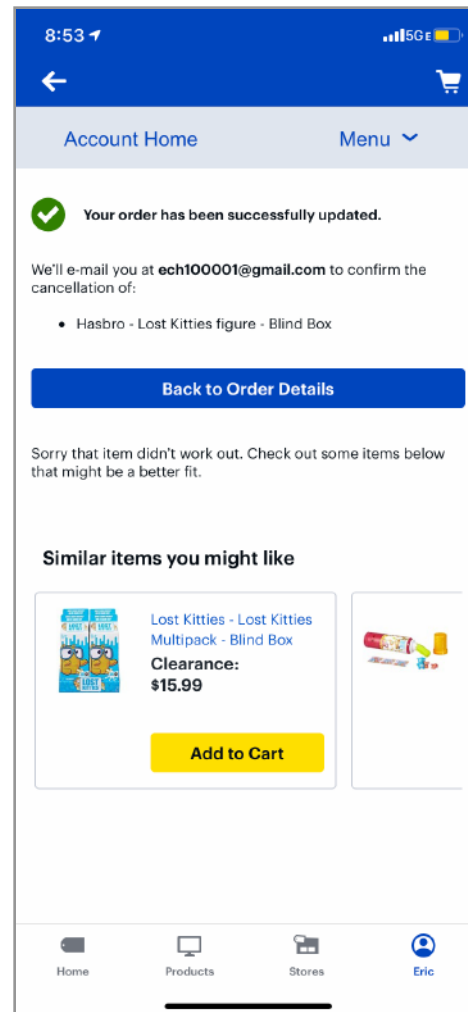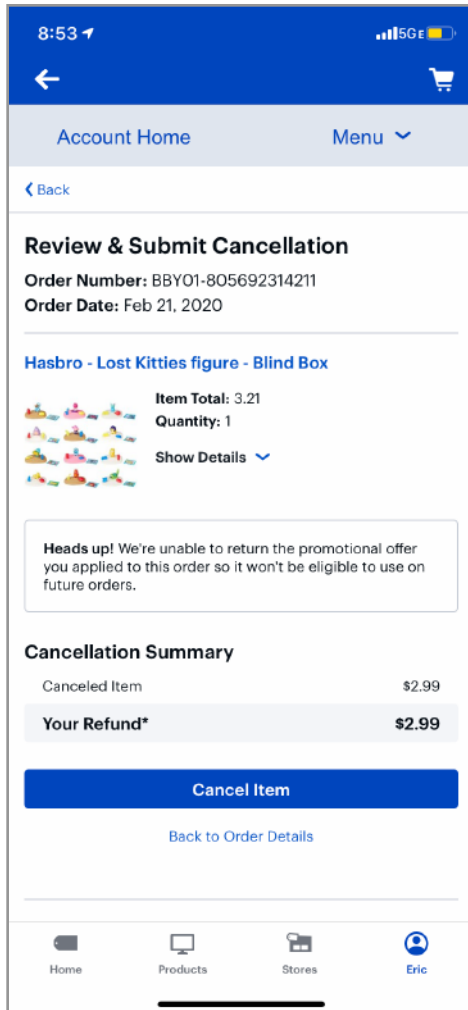
Pros:

- Provides a clear path forward in the return flow with noticeable calls to action.

- Uses Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip text through the return flow

- Updates order statuses to show key returns milestones

- Explicitly States the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Intuituve and easy to use

Cons:

- Design is meh…

- No "Other" option in return reasons

Wayfair App
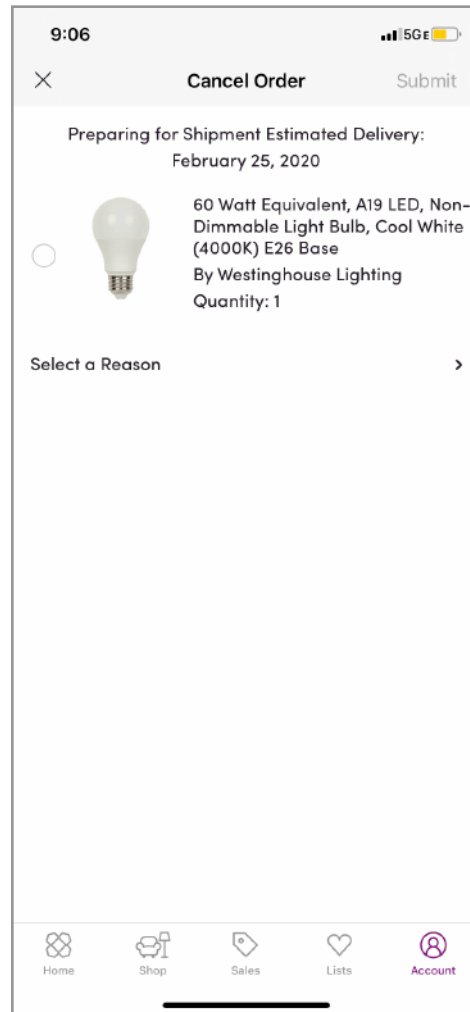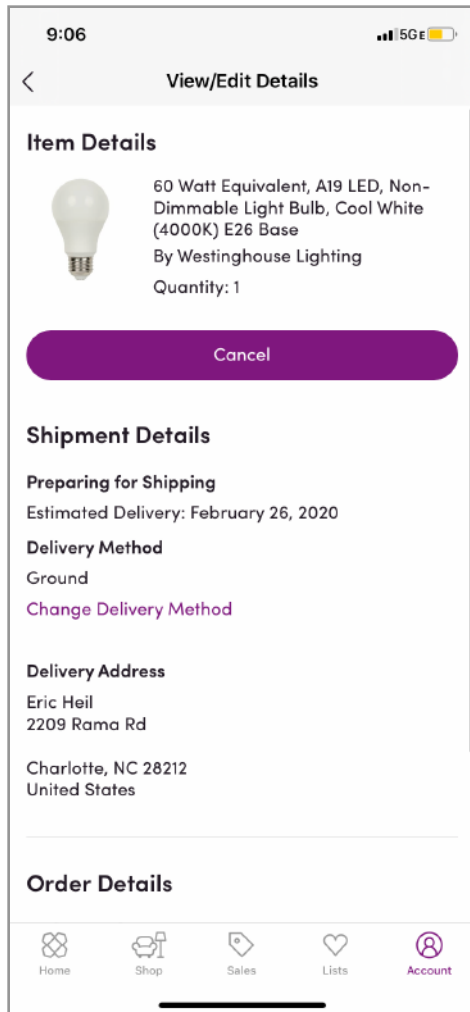
Wayfair App
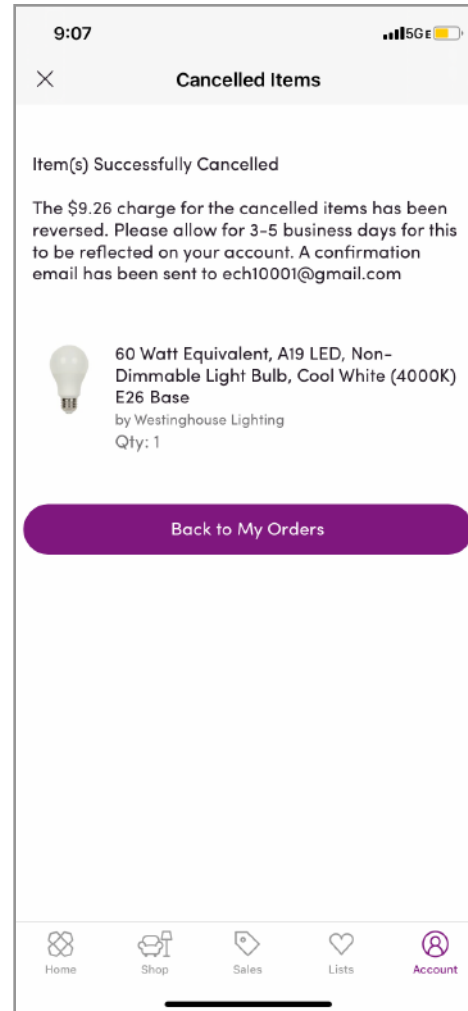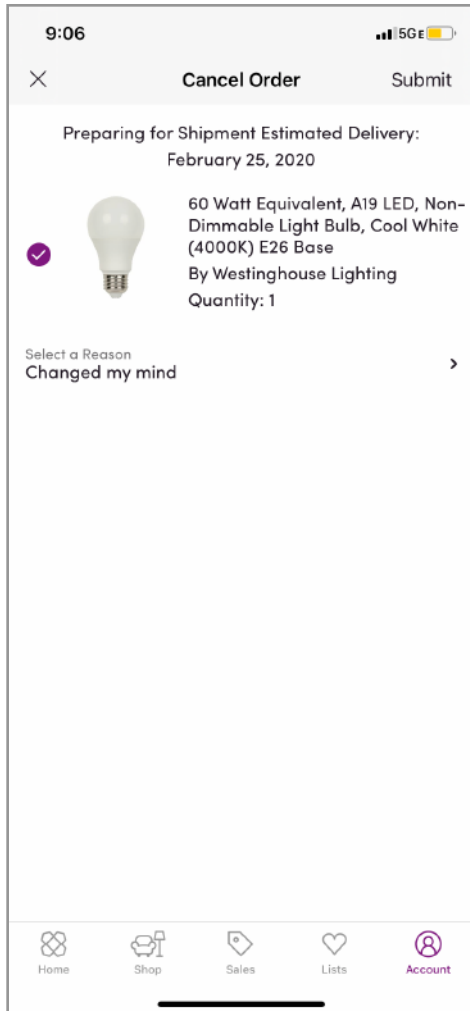
Pros:

- Provides a clear path forward in the return flow with noticeable calls to action.

- Updates order statuses to show key returns milestones

- Explicitly States the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Intuituve and easy to use

Cons:

- Design feels unfinsihed

- No "Other" option in return reasons

Target App
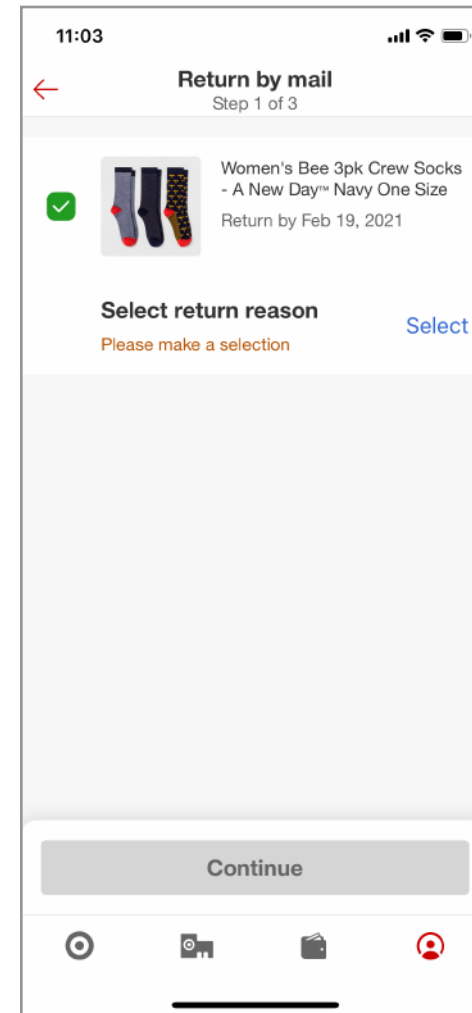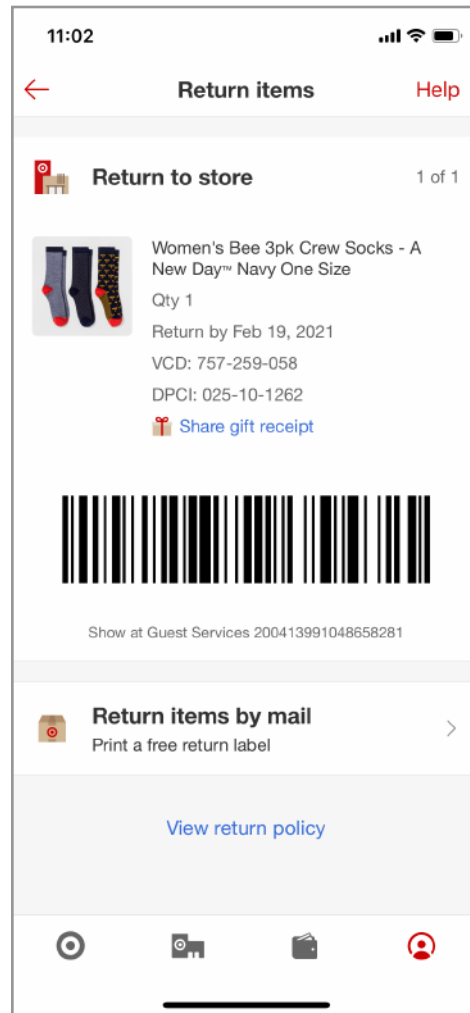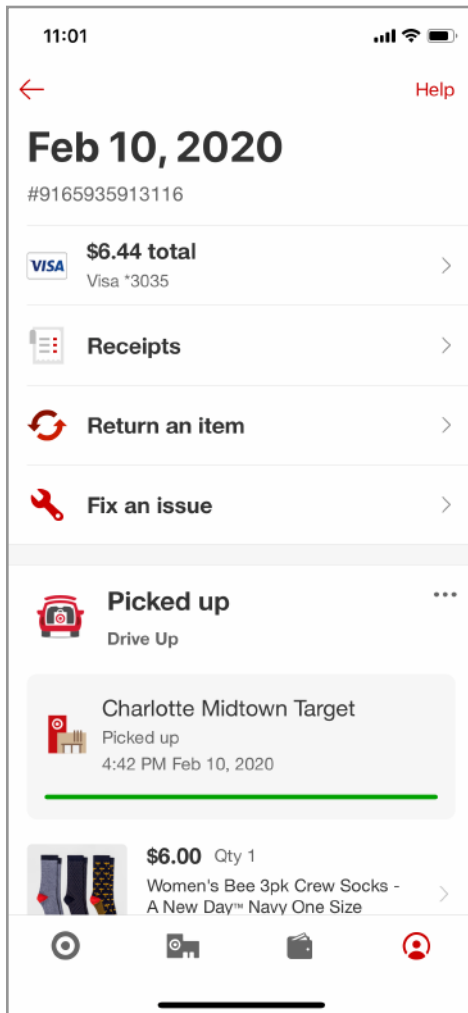
Target App
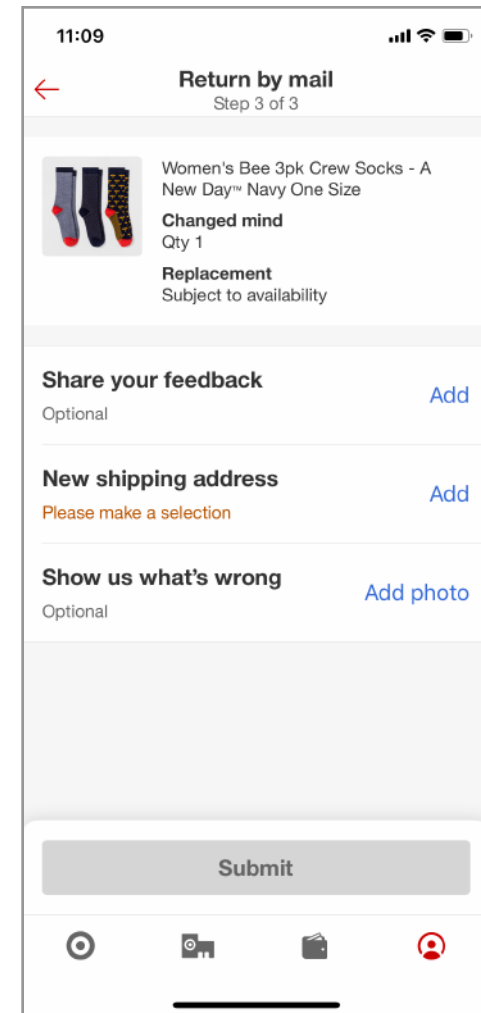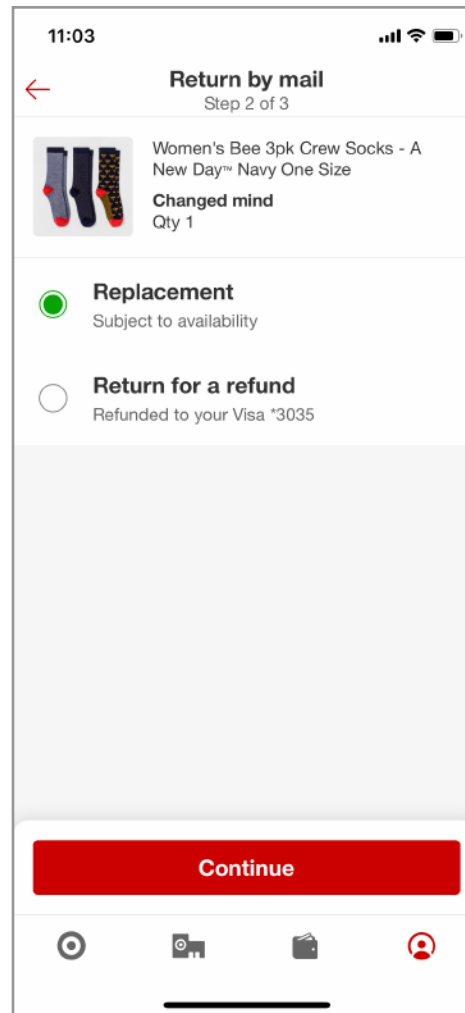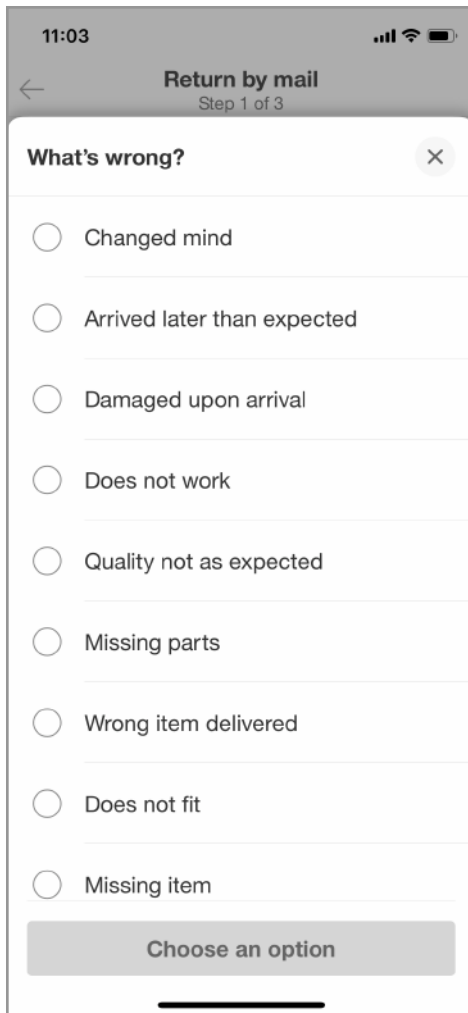
Target App
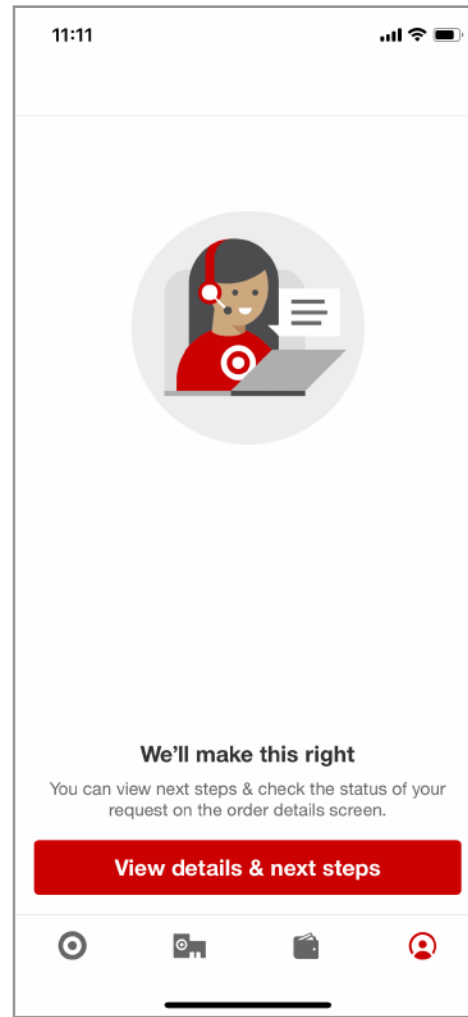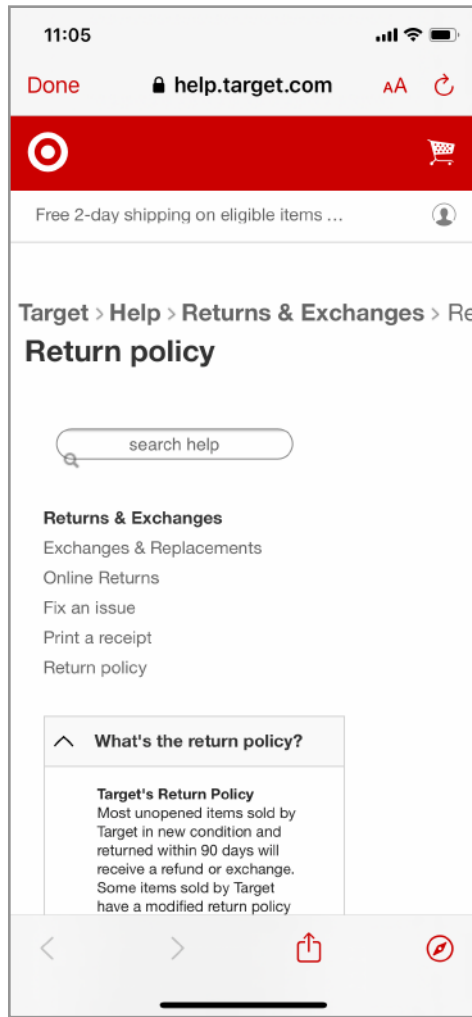
Pros:

- Provides a clear path forward in the return flow with noticeable calls to action. (sticky CTA)

- Updates order statuses to show key returns milestones

  Explicitly States the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Intuituve and easy to use

- Promotes In-Store Returns Alongside Mailed Return Options

- For in-store returns, shows receipt, and instructions on where to take it in the store

- For return by mail, provides replacement option as well as refund option

- For replacements, Allows users to share feedback, change shipping address, and take a picture of what's wrong

- Good design

Cons:

- No "Other" option in return reasons

- Doesnt provide option to email shipping label

- Doesn't provide instructions on how to package return item

Amazon Web

Amazon Web

Pros:

- Provides a clear path forward in the return flow with noticeable calls to action.

- Makes intelligent default selections for users in the return flow (user address pre-entered)

- Explicitly States the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Uses Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip text through the return flow

- Provides the ability to both print and email the shipping label

- Updates order statuses to show key returns milestones

- Provides detailed instructions on how to package returns

- Provides more than one return shipping method

Cons:

- No "Other" option in return reasons

- Comments are required making it likely many users will simply retype the reason they selected

Apple Web

Apple Web

Pros:

- Provides a clear path forward in the return flow with noticeable calls to action.

- Promotes In-Store Returns Alongside Mailed Return Options

- Makes intelligent default selections for users in the return flow (user address pre-entered)

- Explicitly States the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Uses Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip text through the return flow

- Updates order statuses to show key returns milestones

- Good design

Cons:

- Doesn't Provide Detailed Instructions on How to Package Returns

- Doesn't Provide the Ability to Both Print and Email the Shipping Label

Wayfair Web

Wayfair Web

Pros:

- Makes Intelligent Default Selections for Users in the Return Flow

- Provides an Online Return Flow in Addition to Any Pre-Printed Labels

- Provides More Than One Return Shipping Method

- Uses Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip Text Throughout the Return Flow

- Explicitly States the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Provides the Ability to Both Print and Email the Shipping Label

- Good design

Cons:

- Doesn't Provide Detailed Instructions on How to Package Returns
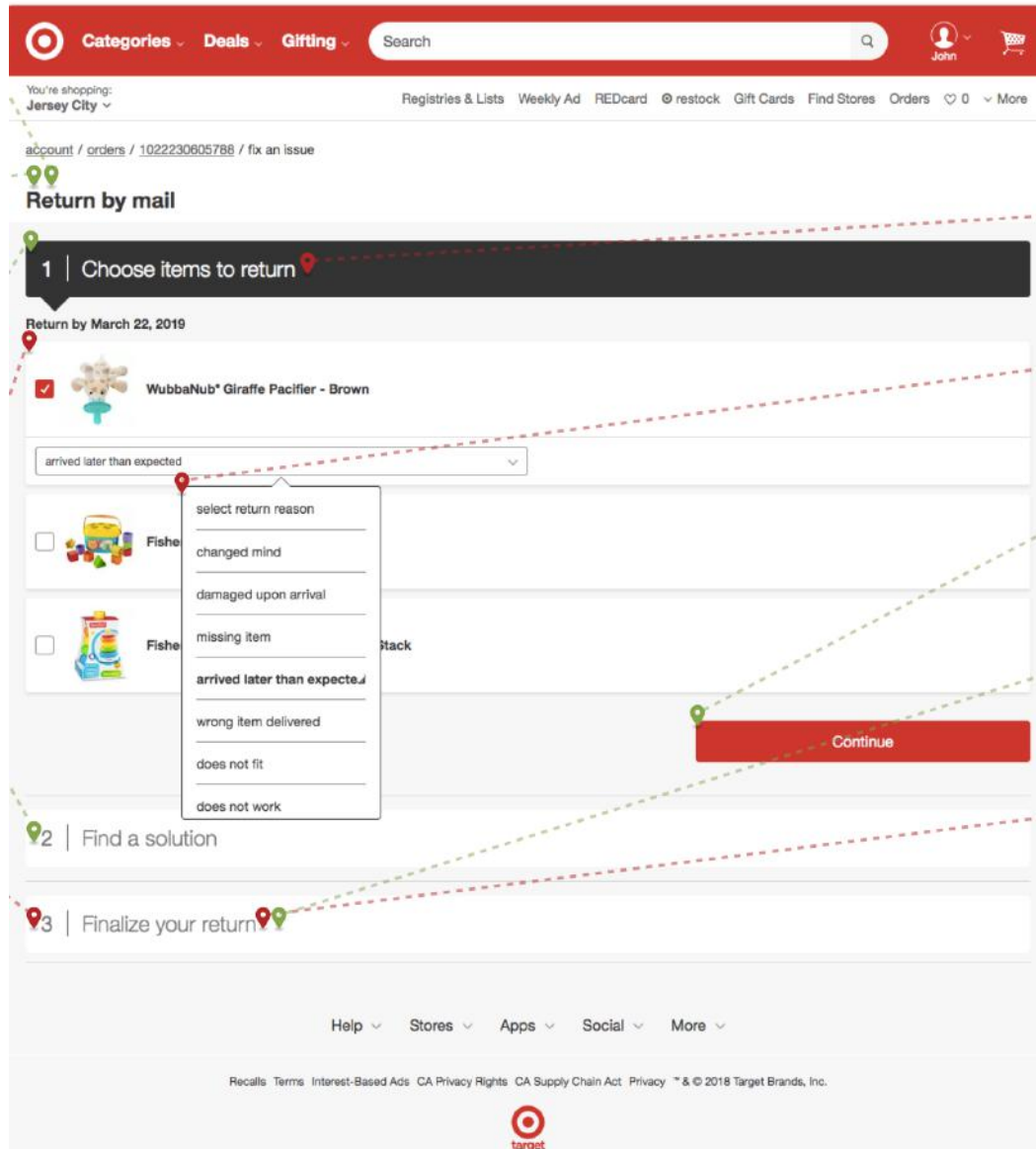
Target Web

Pros:

- Promotes In-Store Returns Alongside Mailed Return Options

- Makes Intelligent Default Selections for Users in the Return Flow

- Provides a Clear Path Forward in the Return Flow with Noticeable Calls to Action

- Updates Order Statuses to Show Key Returns Milestones

- Good design

Cons:

- Doesn't Provide Detailed Instructions on How to Package Returns

- Doesn't Explicitly State the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Doesn't Use Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip Text Throughout the Return Flow

- Doesn't Provide "Other" as an Option in the "Reasons for Returns" Interface

- Doesn't Provide the Ability to Both Print and Email the Shipping Label

Analysis of Lowes.com

Post Purchase - Return Process - Select Return Items Screen

- Not immediately clear that a user needs to select a reason to continue to next screen

- Primary CTA is frequently off screen and the user must scroll to see it

Select Return Method Screen - Return In-Store
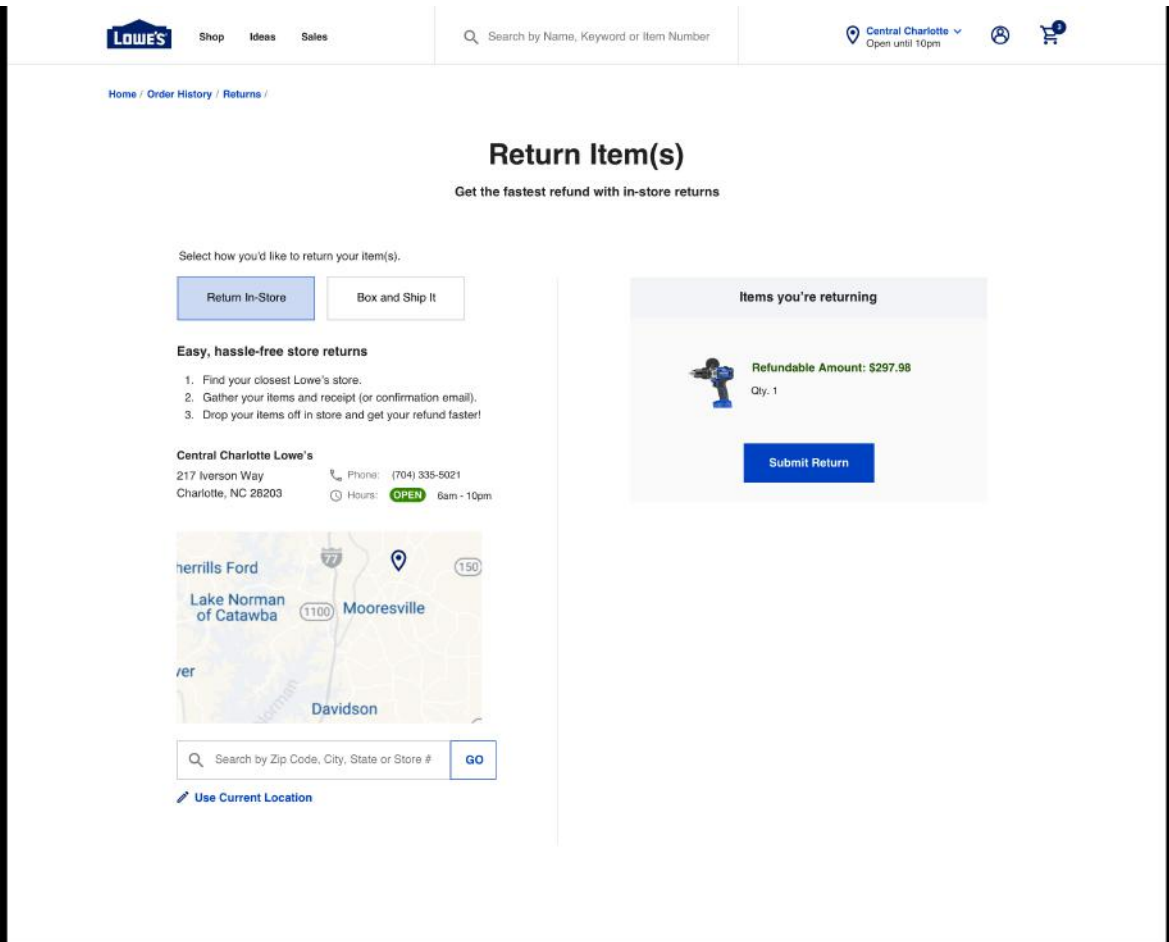
- Original purchase cost is not displayed

- No receipt shown

- Reason for return is not shown

- No instructions on where to return In-Store (i.e go to Register, Go to Customer Care, Go to Guest Services)

- No clear instruction as to what the primary action a user is supposed to take on this page

- User could hit Submit Return without selecting proper return method resulting in possibility user feels they were steered towards return In-store vs Box and Ship it intentionally
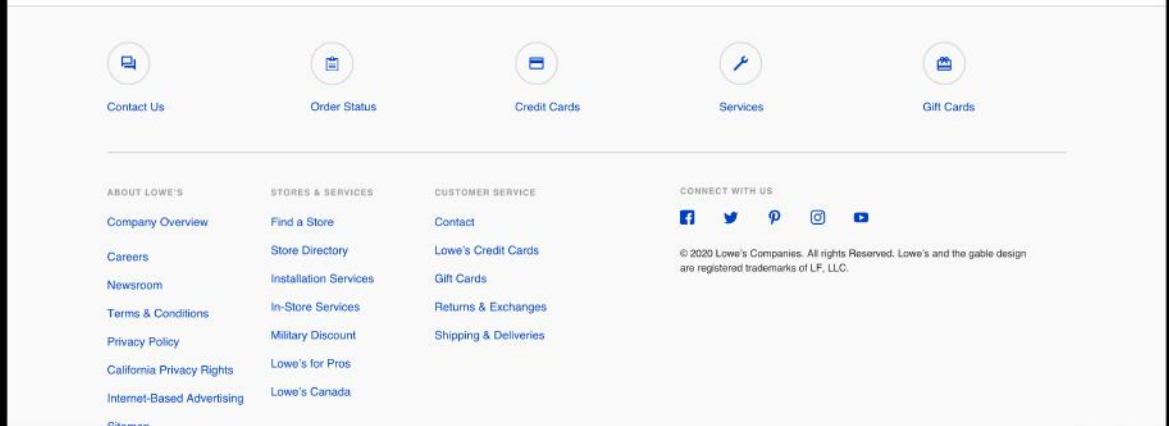
Confirmation Screen - Return In-Store
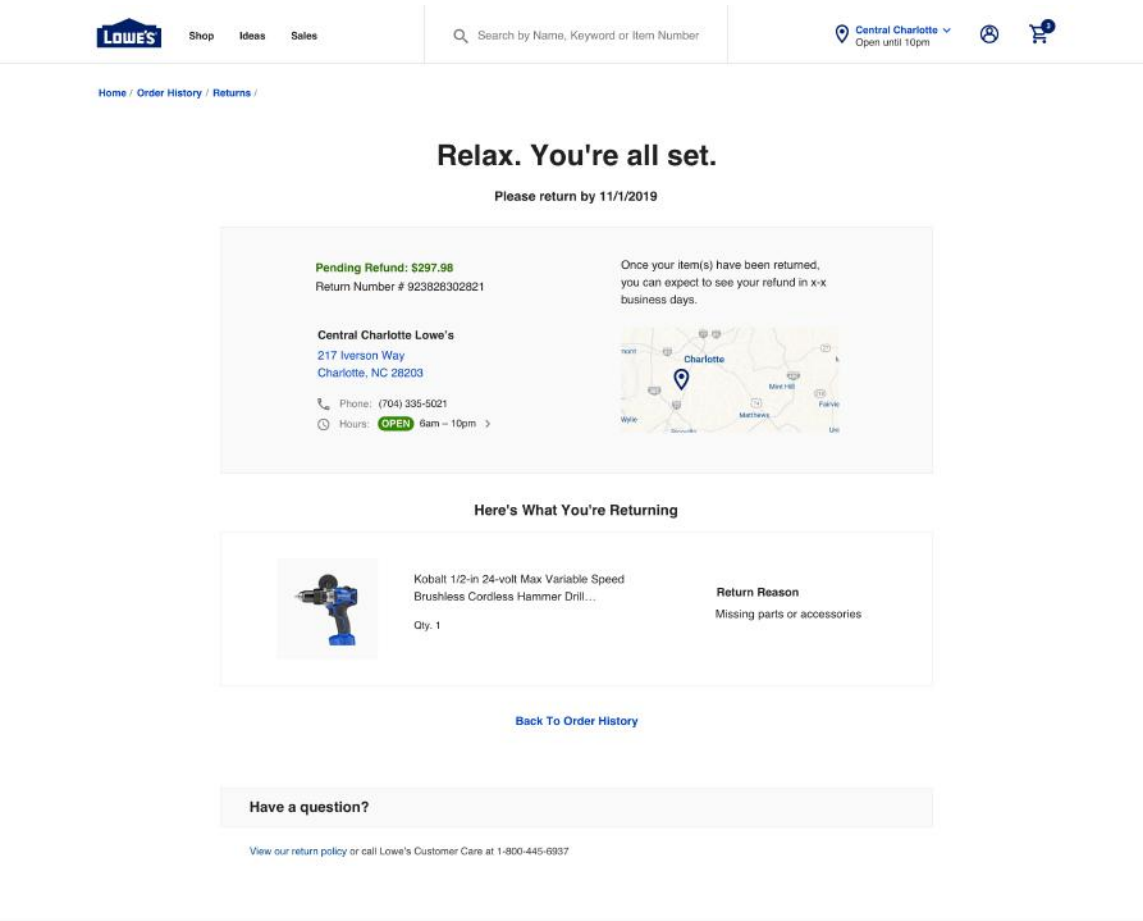
- h1 text is condescending

- Feels like its missing some kind of confirmation message. (i.e "Your return has been initiated. You should receive an email containing the information on this screen. If you would like to send this information to a different e-mail addrress please click here.")

- Please return by date could be more prominent
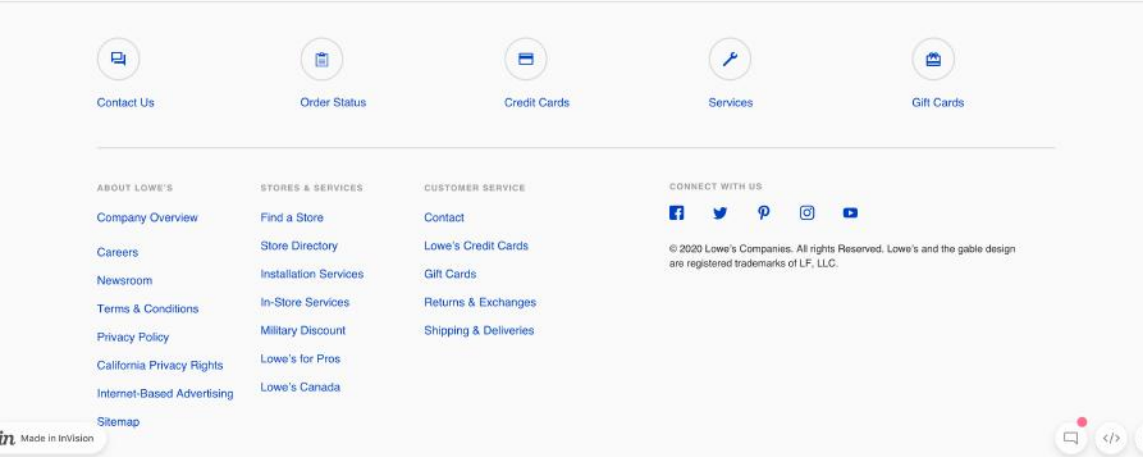
Select Return Method Screen - Box and Ship it
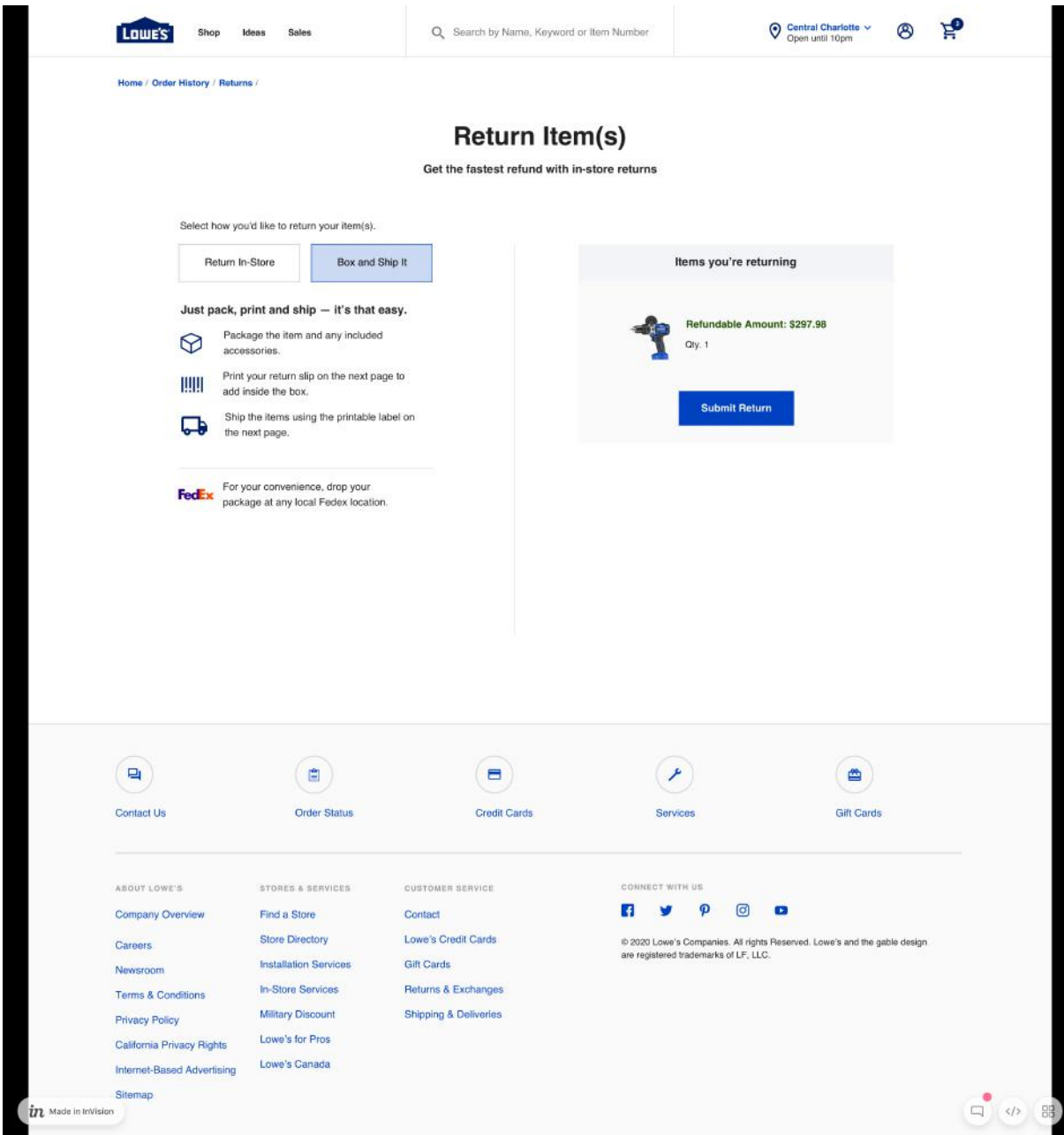
- No option to replace or exchange instead of refund

Confirmation Screen – Box and Ship it
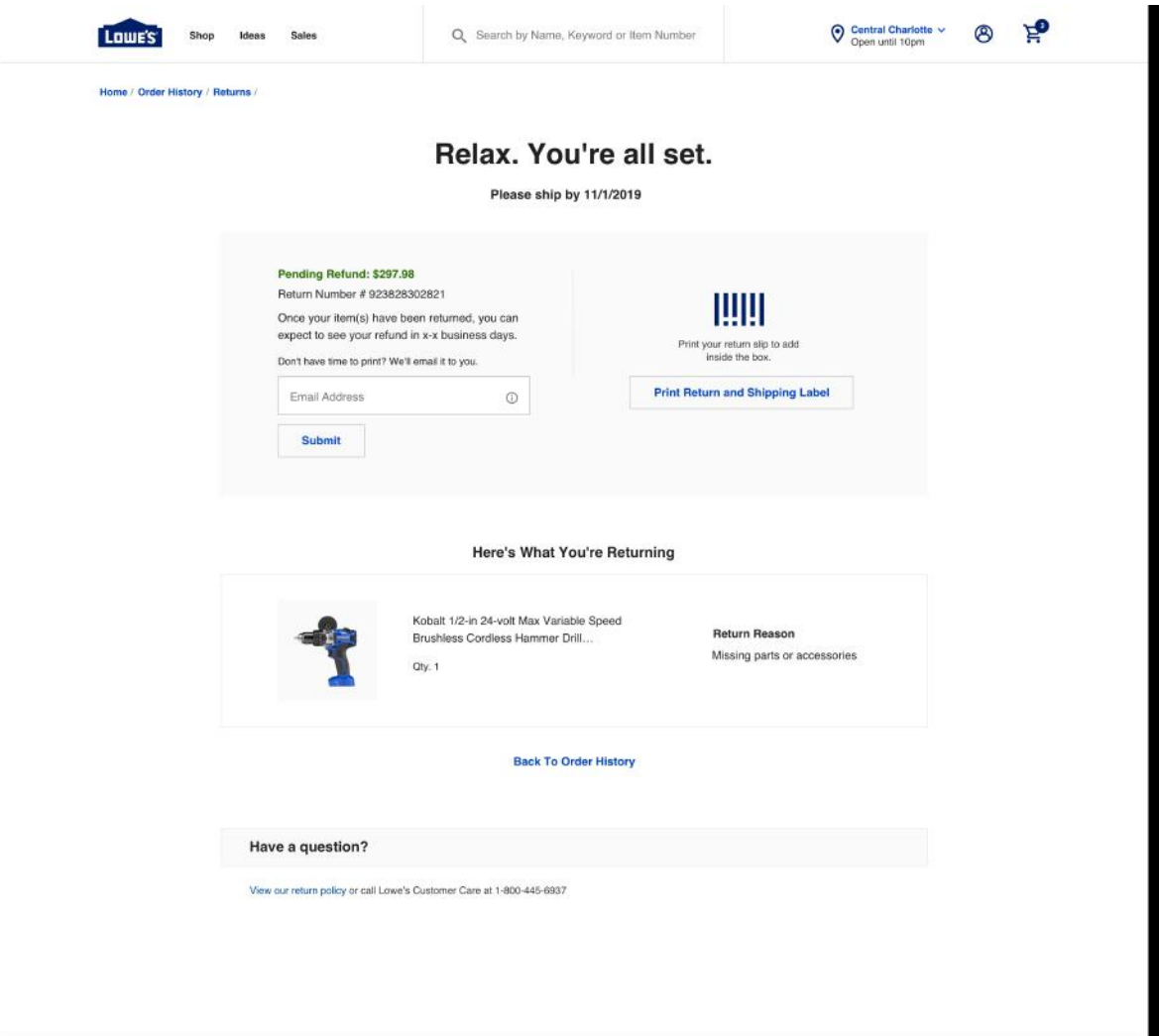
- Email copy of shipping label could be a button instead of a text field. Users may think they are required to enter their email address. "Don't have time to print?" Should be more prominent

- No instructions on how to package their return
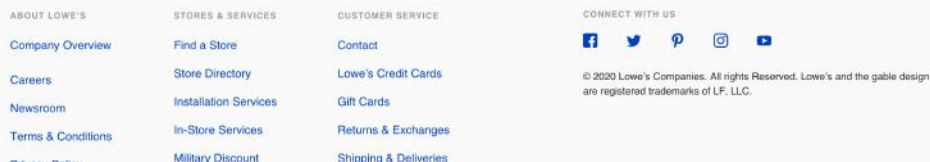
Adherance to 11 guidelines - 6 out of 11

Pros:

- Promotes In-Store Returns Alongside Mailed Return Options

- Updates Order Statuses to Show Key Returns Milestones

- Provides "Other" as an Option in the "Reasons for Returns" Interface

- Provides the Ability to Both Print and Email the Shipping Label

- Provides an Online Return Flow in Addition to Any Pre-Printed Labels

- Uses Descriptive Microcopy, Button Text, and Tooltip Text Throughout the Return Flow

Cons:

- Doesn't Explicitly State the Costs Associated with Returning an Item

- Doesn't Make Intelligent Default Selections for Users in the Return Flow

- Doesn't provide a Clear Path Forward in the Return Flow with Noticeable Calls to Action

- Doesn't Provide Detailed Instructions on How to Package Returns

- Doesn't Provide More Than One Return Shipping Method

Pontential Wireframes

1. Select Item

2. Select Item - no item selected (drawer open)

3. Select a return reason

4. Select a return reason (reason selected)

9:41

⟨ Back   **Return Item(s)**

X

Select a return reason.

Hammer | Refundable amount: $20.99
Reason for return: Changed Mind

⦿ Changed mind

◯ Damaged during shipping

◯ No longer needed

◯ Missing parts

◯ Lower price avaivable

◯ Other

Continue

5. Select an item - item selected

9:41

⟨ Back   **Return Item(s)**

**Select the items
you'd like to return.**

$20.99
Hammer
Real nice hammer here
Probably the best one
Item# 235352

− 2 +
Qty.

✓

$20.99
Hammer
Real nice hammer here
Probably the best one
Item# 235352

1
Qty.

$20.99
Hammer
Real nice hammer here
Probably the best one
Item# 235352

− 2 +
Qty.

$20.99
Hammer
Real nice hammer here
Probably the best one
Item# 235352

1
Qty.

Continue

2 items ⌄

6. Select an item - item selected (drawer open)

9:41

⟨ Back   **Return Item(s)**

**Select the items
you'd like to return.**

$20.99
Hammer
Real nice hammer here
Probably the best one
Item# 235352

− 2 +
Qty.

✓

$20.99
Hammer
Real nice hammer here
Probably the best one
Item# 235352

1
Qty.

$20.99

Continue

Hammer | Refundable amount: $20.99
Reason for return: Changed Mind   X

Hammer | Refundable amount: $20.99
Reason for return: Changed Mind   X

Original Purchase Amount: $41.98

Total Refundable Amount: $41.98 ⓘ

2 items ⌃

7. Select a return method
(In-Store selected)

9:41

< Back   **Return Item(s)**

Select how you'd like to return your items

In-Store	Box and Ship it

Easy, Hassle-free In-Store returns

1. Find your closest Lowe's store.
2. Gather your items and receipt confirmation email
3. Drop your items off in store and get your refund faster

Central Charlotte Lowe's

217 Iverson Way   (704) 335-5021
Charlotte, NC 28203   Hours: 6am - 10pm

Store Locator

Show at Customer Service counter

Submit Return

2 items ⌄

8. In-Store Return Confirmation

9:41

< Back   **Return Item(s)**

You're all set!

Please return by 11/21/20

Pending Refund: $41.98
Return Number #923828302821

The closest Lowe's to you is…

Central Charlotte Lowe's

217 Iverson Way   (704) 335-5021
Charlotte, NC 28203   Hours: 6am - 10pm

Store Locator

Show at Customer Service counter

Once your items have been returned you can expect to see your refund in X-X business days.

Here's what you're returning

Hammer | Refundable amount: $20.99
Reason for return: Changed Mind

Hammer | Refundable amount: $20.99
Reason for return: Changed Mind

You should receive an email containing the information on this screen. If you would like to send this information to a different email address click here.

Back to Order History

Return Policy

Lowes's Customer Care 1-800-445-6937

9. Select a return method
(Box and Ship it selected- Replacement)

10. Select a return method
(Box and Ship it selected - Replacement - Additional Feedback)

9:41

< Back   **Return Item(s)**
1 of 2

Select how you'd like to return your items

In-Store	Box and Ship it

⦿ **Replacement**
Subject to availability

○ **Return for a refund**
Refunded to your Visa *3035

Just pack, print and ship — it's that easy.

▱ Package the item and any included accessories.

|!!!! Print your return slip on the next page to add inside the box.

🚚 Ship the items using the printable label on the next page.

FedEx For your convenience, drop your package at any local Fedex location.

Shipping label cost: FREE

How to package your return

Continue

2 items ⌄

9:41

< Back   **Return Item(s)**
2 of 2

Is there anything else you would like to let us know?

| Share your feedback
Optional	**Add**
New shipping address
Please make a selection	**Add**
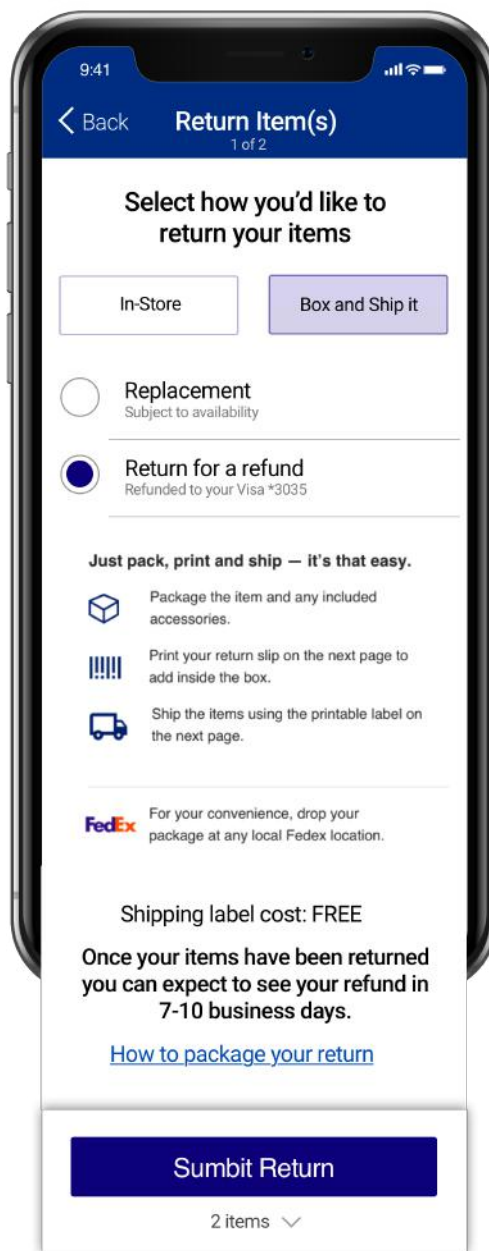| **Show us what's wrong**
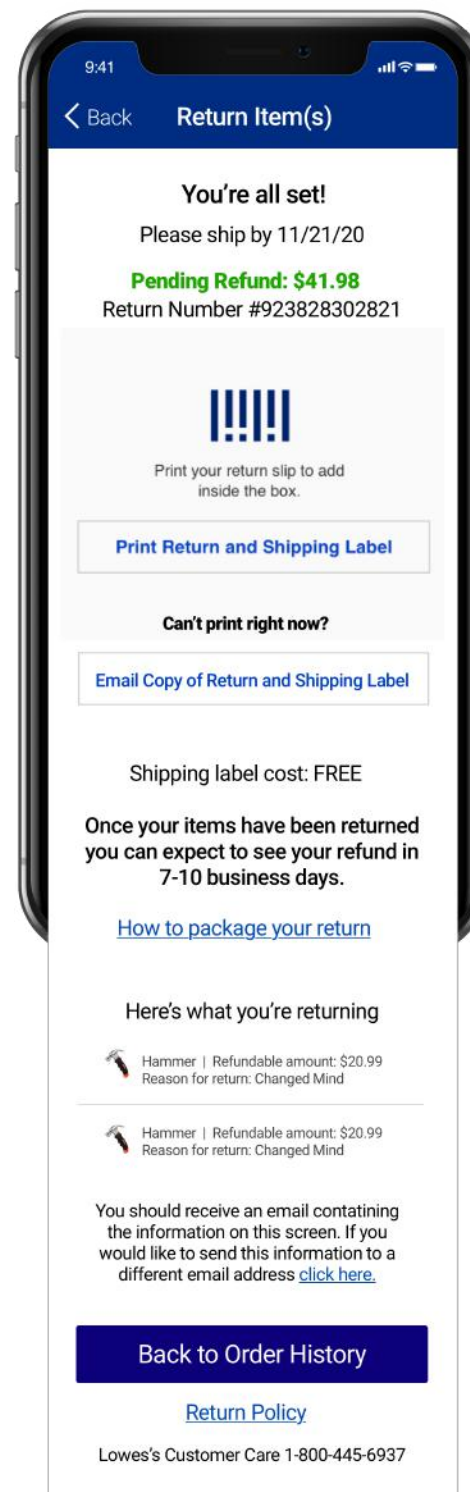Optional	**Add photo**

Submit Return

2 items ⌄

11. Box and Ship it - Replacement - Confirmation
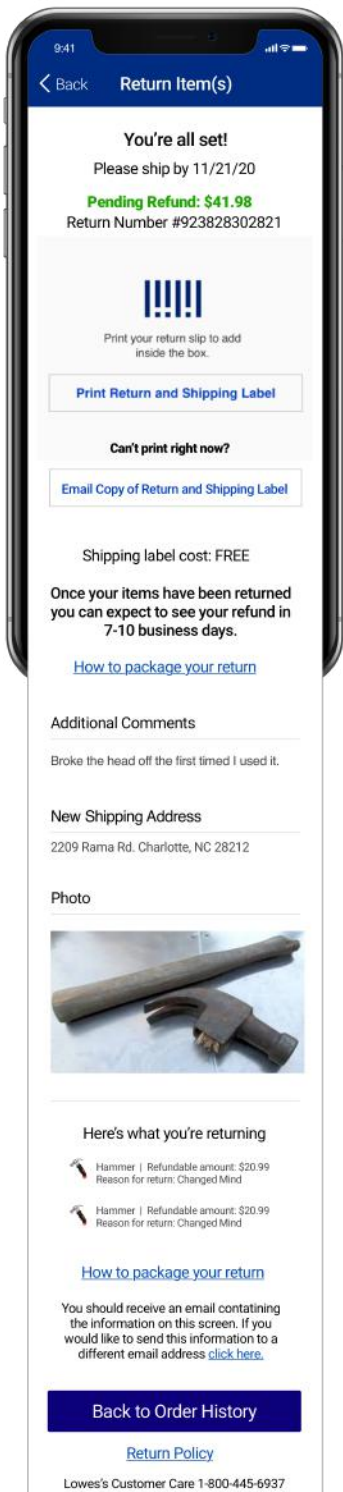
12. Box and Ship it - Return for a refund

13. Box and Ship it - Confirmation

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https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/920

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/868

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/867

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/922

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/869

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/897

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/921

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/898

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/899

https://baymard.com/premium/guidelines/927

LOWE'S®

MOBILE RETURNS

Prepared by: Eric Heil
eheil@lowes.com
2/24/20