



FESTIVAL MARKETPLACE

**UNDERSTANDING
TRAFFIC
PATTERNS**



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INTRODUCTION

The Festival Marketplace is a shopping centre located at the east gateway into Stratford and has 39 stores¹, most of them known to mainstream Canadian culture, such as Canadian Tire, Bath & Body Works & Dollarama. Simplistic in layout, the mall consists of one long hallway with the store fronts along the sides of the hallway. The largest stores by square footage in the mall are Sears, Canadian Tire, Winners & Sports Chek, and they are scattered throughout the mall.

This brochure is a study of the traffic patterns in the mall. The study aims to show which stores sell products or services that better appeal to the visitors based on their purchases as observed by number of visitors in each store and shopping bags carried by consumers. Through unobtrusive fly-on-the-wall observation and behavioural mapping, some conclusions can be made on general store preferences of mall visitors and the potential impact that the infrastructure of the shopping centre has on these shopping decisions.



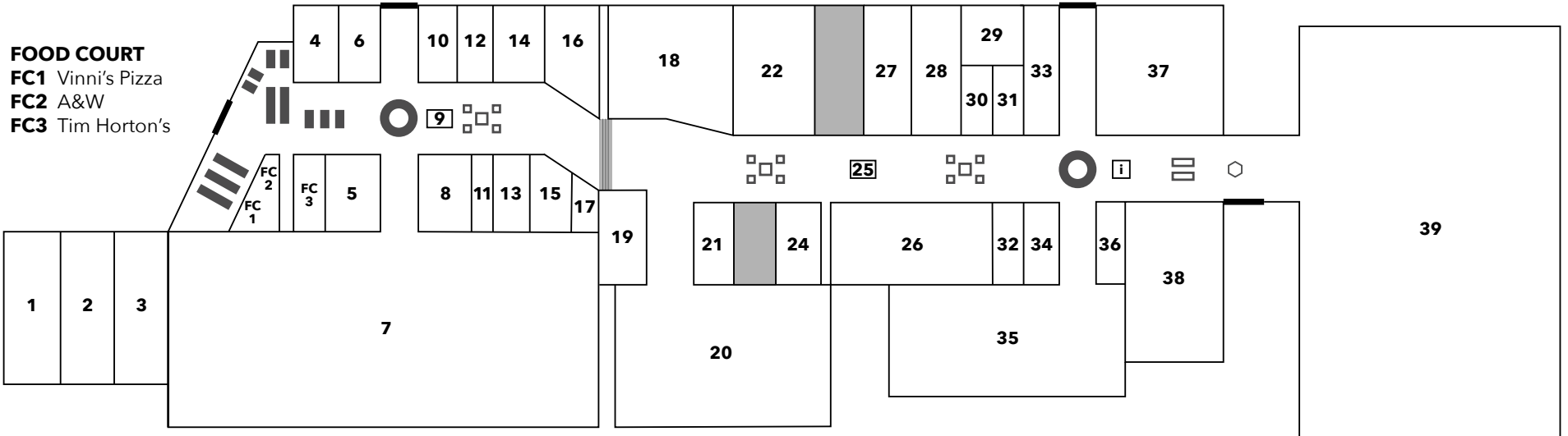
¹ "Festival Marketplace Store Directory View Map." Store List / Festival Marketplace / Stratford Ontario / Shopping Mall. Accessed October 13, 2017. <http://www.stratfordshopping.ca/stores>.

MAP OF FESTIVAL MARKETPLACE

LEGEND

-  Food Court Seating
-  Communal Seating
-  Information Booth
-  Candy Machine

23



STORES

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 Mark's Warehouse
(access only from outside mall) | 9 Fido (recently closed) | 21 Bell | 31 Nutrition House |
| 2 Reitmans
(access only from outside mall) | 10 Payless Shoe Source | 22 Maurices | 32 Telus |
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| 6 Green Earth | 14 Coles Book Store | 26 Ardene | 36 Peoples Jewellers |
| 7 Sears | 15 Salon 5010 | 27 Hallmark | 37 LCBO
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| 8 Your Neighbourhood
Credit Union | 16 Bluenotes | 28 Bath & Body Works | 38 Dollarama |
| | 17 ReMax | 29 Ruffins Pets
(access only from outside mall) | 39 Canadian Tire |
| | 18 Carters / Osh Kosh | 30 Wireless + | |
| | 19 The Source | | |
| | 20 Winners | | |



WINNERS

BACKGROUND

When I first ventured into the Festival Marketplace, I walked through this entrance (depicted on the previous page) into the shopping centre, thinking that I had entered through Winners. To my astonishment, I found myself in the mall's food court, standing in front of A&W and a long hallway ahead of me with many other stores. So then, I began thinking, "Where is Winners?" After trekking down the hallway and encountering two more Winners signs, I finally found the front of the Winner store I had been looking for since the beginning of my adventure into the mall.

It was at that point that I realized there was no directory within the mall. Despite the mall layout being one hallway, it was long and had many stores, so I didn't suspect people knew exactly where everything was. So how did people know where to go? This question posed as the premise to this study of traffic patterns within the mall.



CONTEXT

Before jumping into the observations from the study, let's get an idea for the atmosphere of the shopping centre first. The Festival Marketplace markets itself in two ways: family-oriented and fashion forward. In looking at Statistic Canada's 2016 Census of Stratford, it can be seen that these two traits affect much of the population of Stratford.





FAMILY-ORIENTED

The Festival Marketplace presents itself as a family-friendly shopping centre, holding events such as the *Swan Parade*² back in April 2017 for people of all ages to see swans march through the mall and the upcoming *Kid's Halloween Party*² at the end of October 2017 for children to visit the mall in costume and have a headstart at trick-or-treating. Comments about the shopping centre on its Facebook page have reinforced that the mall has a family-friendly environment³. There are many communal seating areas spread out across the mall to allow for families to sit together and converse, as well as a candy machine just outside Canadian Tire where children can buy candy for a few coins.

It is not surprising to see families being targeted by the shopping centre, as the population from families with children account for approximately 51.8% of Stratford's population according to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census of Stratford⁴. That is a target audience of 16,095 people that can create traffic within the mall and potentially purchase products and services from the stores.

2 "Festival Marketplace Mall Events." News and Events Festival Marketplace / Stratford Ontario / Shopping Mall. Accessed October 14, 2017. <http://www.stratfordshopping.ca/news>.

3 "Rich Lutman." Rich Lutman - Family friendly mall that's wheel chair... Accessed October 14, 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/Rich.Lutman/activity/10159105888805065>.

4 Canada, Government Of Canada Statistics. "Census Profile, 2016 Census Stratford [Population centre], Ontario and Ontario [Province]." Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. August 25, 2017. Accessed October 14, 2017. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Tab=1&Geo1=POPC&Code1=0897&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Stratford&SearchType=Be-gins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=2>.





FASHION FORWARD

The mall also brands itself as a fashion-forward shopping centre, saying that it “has everything you need to be stylish”⁵. As the shopping centre is located in an area of Stratford that has all the major stores within the block, such as Wal-Mart and Food Basics, it has the reputation of being the sole provider of a mainstream shopping experience in Stratford. The area serves as Stratford’s one-stop shop, providing people with access to a large variety of stores. With 39 stores all concentrated in one place, the Festival Marketplace certainly lives up to the above slogan, and aims to attract as many of the area’s visitors as possible amidst all the competition.

Among Stratford’s population of 31,053 people, 11,325⁶ or 36.5% of the total Stratford population is aged 55 and above (seniors), which is almost as many people as there aged 20 to 54 (working adults) at 13,310⁶ or 42.9% of the total Stratford population. As these two categorizations of people amount to over 70% of the population, the Festival Marketplace has the greatest chance at attracting a higher number of visitors by targeting these age groups. As a result, the selection of stores in the mall need to appeal to these audiences.

⁵ “Festival Marketplace Mall Events.” Festival Marketplace / Stratford Ontario / Shopping Mall. Accessed October 14, 2017. <http://www.stratfordshopping.ca/>.

⁶ Canada, Government Of Canada Statistics.

MOTIVATION

The study was carried out during what was identified as the shopping centre's busiest time each day - from 11am to 2pm. This timeframe was observed as the busiest time after a few repeat visits to the mall at different times. The reason for using the busiest time was to leverage the maximum potential number of visitors that the mall could attract so that more accurate traffic patterns could be identified.

The two observation methods used in the study were unobtrusive, fly-on-the-wall observation and behavioural mapping. These methods were repeated for a few weekdays and a few weekends to find patterns in the traffic, and the average results across weekdays and weekends were reflected in this study. Personas were also created to better understand the visitors and their behaviours.

The main conclusive observation from the findings is that the traffic in the east side of the mall was considerably less than traffic in the west side, which we'll look into the reasons why through explaining each of the observation methods.

WINNERS

WINNERS

practice some brand
name drop





FLY-ON-THE-WALL OBSERVATION

Fly-on-the-wall observation allows for information “to be unobtrusively gather[ed] ... by looking and listening without direct participation or interference with the people or behaviours being observed”⁷. As the mall covered a large area, I had to walk through the entire mall back and forth at regular intervals in order to better capture the motions during the timeframe. Findings were generally categorized into two groups: the visitors’ behaviours and the influence the mall layout had on their behaviours.

⁷ Martin, Bella, and Bruce M. Hanington. *Universal methods of design 100 ways to research complex problems, develop innovative ideas, and design effective solutions*. Beverly, MA: Rockport Publishers, 2012.



FLY-ON-THE-WALL OBSERVATION continued

Visitor Behaviour

Gender Roleplay

Visitor behaviour was found to be quite gender-dependent, and were stereotypical to common perceptions among genders and their shopping habits.

Adult females (25 to 54) and senior females (55+) tended to be the ones shopping or in shops browsing around.

Adult males (25 to 54) and senior males (55+) tended either to accompany their female counterparts, to wait for their female counterparts outside in the main hallway, or to go into the mall on a mission to purchase a specific product or service.

Operating as a Family

Families tended to be more prevalent in the mall on weekends due to working schedules of the parents. Members tended to stay together as they walked through the mall and entered stores, possibly to have more quality family time together.

Shopping Patterns based on Purchases

The number of bags from each store was counted to get a gauge for what shops were more popular among the visitors. Below is a diagram of the average number of bags from each store on weekdays and weekends.

WEEK-DAYS



WEEK-ENDS



Winners is the clear winner across both weekdays and weekends as the number one store with most purchases.



FLY-ON-THE-WALL OBSERVATION continued

Mall Layout Influences on Visitor Behaviour

Browsing Stores vs. Utility Stores

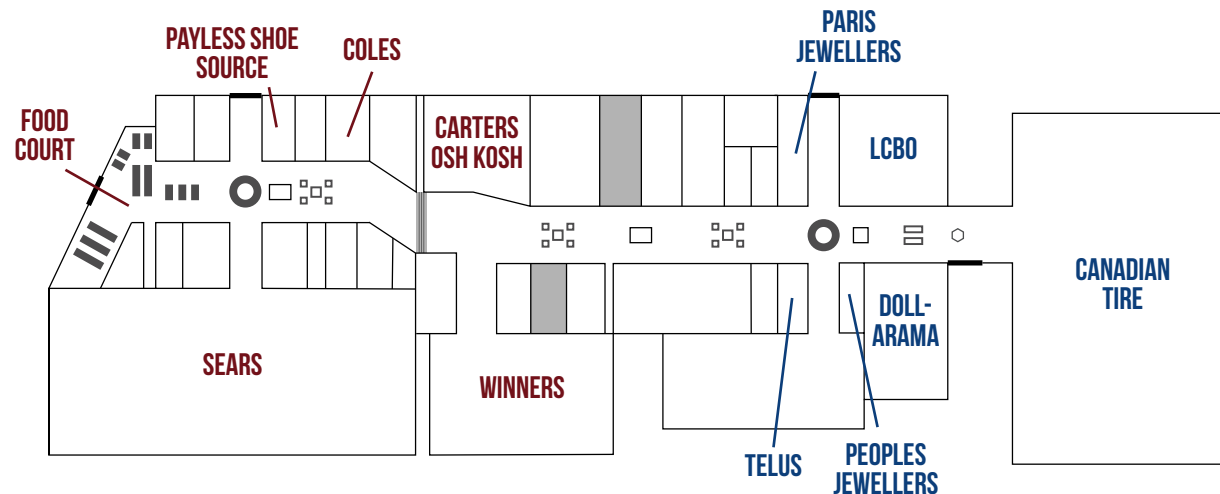
Stores like Sears and Winners allow customers to browse through a selection of products prior to making any purchasing decisions. Consumers visiting these stores may have something in mind they want to buy, but are more in a browsing mood, and take a longer time in the stores. These stores are identified as “**browsing stores**” as a result. Visitors who went to these stores usually shopped for long periods of time, and also wandered through the mall aimlessly.

In contrast, stores like Canadian Tire and Dollarama carry products that cater to specific needs, for which customers visit the stores to purchase only those products. These are identified as “**utility stores**.” Visitors who went to these stores were observed to keep their shopping trips short.

West Side vs. East Side (A)

Looking at the map of the mall below, we can see that the **west side** of the mall has what would be considered browsing stores, such as **Sears**, **Payless Shoe Source**, and **Coles**. These stores contributed to **more traffic** since people lingered in the stores for a longer duration. The food court’s positioning on the west side also contributed to this high traffic, as people sat down to eat the food they bought.

On the **east side** of the mall, there are many of what would be considered utility stores, such as **Canadian Tire**, **Dollarama**, and **Peoples Jewellers**. Customers of these stores entered the mall just to buy products from these stores and left immediately, creating **less traffic** due to lower idling times.





BEHAVIOURAL MAPPING

Behavioural mapping “systematically document[s] location-based observations of human activity”⁸. In this study, place-centered methodology is used to observe the people at the Festival Marketplace.

A map of the mall was drawn during the research period, and quick tallies of the number of people in each store were taken with a tour through the mall. Gender and age information were taken, and the people were generalized into five categories: Adult Females (aged 20-54), Senior Females (aged 55+), Adult Males (aged 20-54), Senior Males (aged 55+), and Children / Teens (aged below 20). The larger stores required walking into the store spaces to carry out the people count. Dots were then placed on the map according to the rough location of where they were in the store at the time of the observation. This procedure was executed twice at each visit to the shopping centre to create the average results displayed in the behavioural maps in the following pages.





⁸ Martin, Bella, and Bruce M. Hanington.

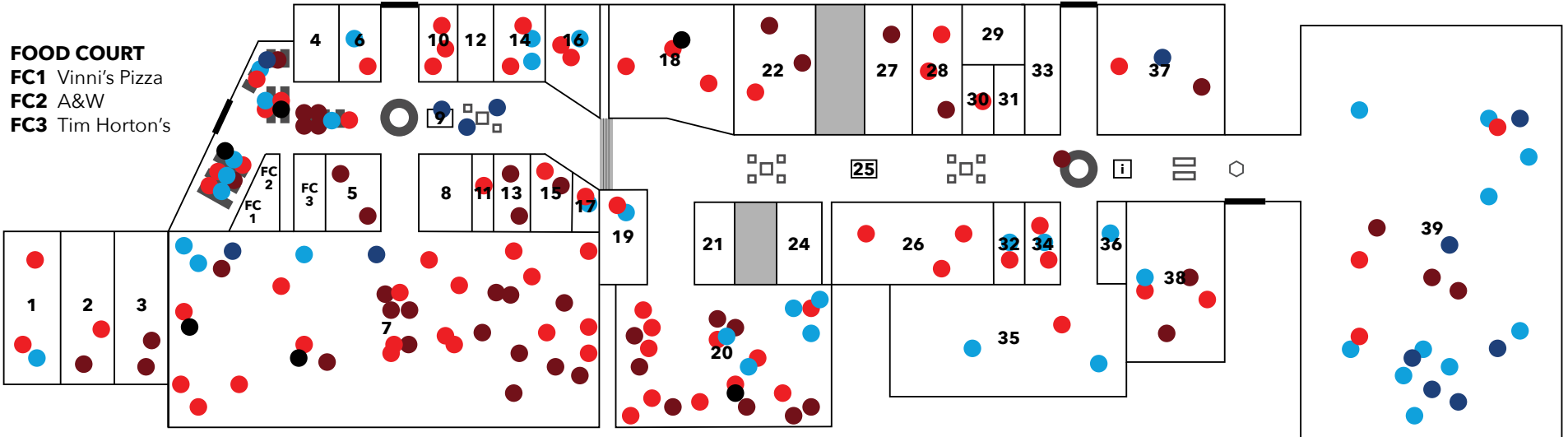
WEEKDAYS AT FESTIVAL MARKETPLACE

TOTAL 178 Visitors
72 Adult Females
46 Senior Females
40 Adult Males
13 Senior Males
7 Children / Teens



LEGEND

-  Food Court Seating
-  Communal Seating
-  Information Booth
-  Candy Machine
- Adult Female (20-54)
- Senior Female (55+)
- Adult Male (20-54)
- Senior Male (55+)
- Child / Teen (<20)



STORES

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---|---|
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(access only from outside mall) | 9 Fido (recently closed) | 21 Bell | 31 Nutrition House |
| 2 Reitmans
(access only from outside mall) | 10 Payless Shoe Source | 22 Maurices | 32 Telus |
| 3 Tootsies Shoe Market
(access only from outside mall) | 11 Pharmasave | 23 EB Games | 33 Paris Jewellers |
| 4 Hakim Optical | 12 Goliger's Travel | 24 Just For Him | 34 Bentley |
| 5 Northern Reflections | 13 Tan Jay | 25 Virgin Mobile | 35 Sports Chek |
| 6 Green Earth | 14 Coles Book Store | 26 Ardene | 36 Peoples Jewellers |
| 7 Sears | 15 Salon 5010 | 27 Hallmark | 37 LCBO
(access only from outside mall) |
| 8 Your Neighbourhood
Credit Union | 16 Bluenotes | 28 Bath & Body Works | 38 Dollarama |
| | 17 ReMax | 29 Ruffins Pets
(access only from outside mall) | 39 Canadian Tire |
| | 18 Carters / Osh Kosh | 30 Wireless + | |
| | 19 The Source | | |
| | 20 Winners | | |

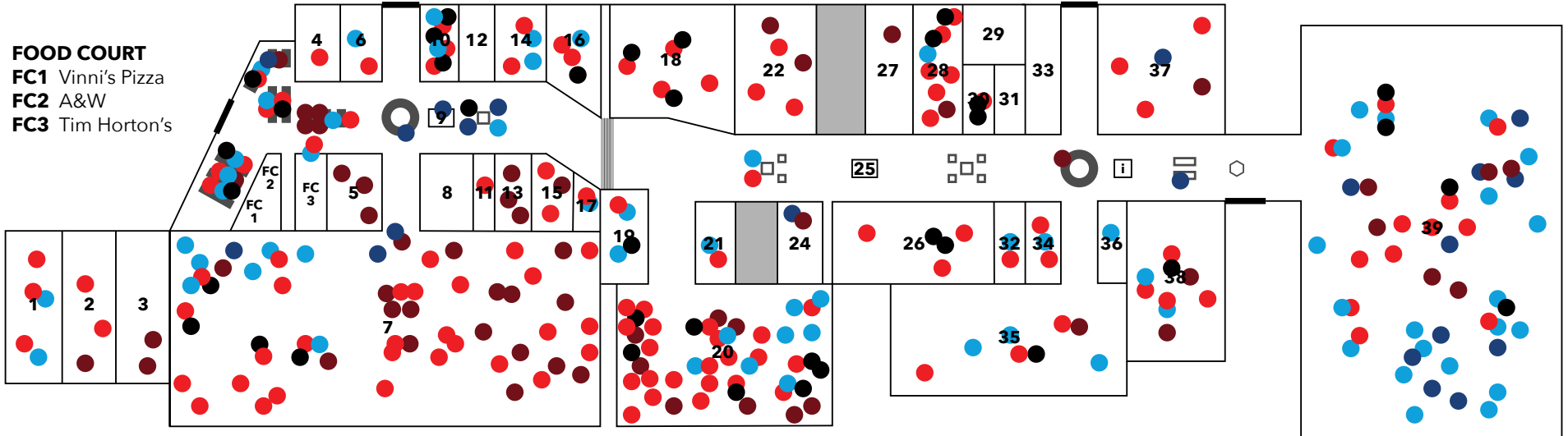
WEEKENDS AT FESTIVAL MARKETPLACE

TOTAL 300 Visitors
122 Adult Females
57 Senior Females
65 Adult Males
23 Senior Males
33 Children / Teens



LEGEND

- Food Court Seating
- Communal Seating
- Information Booth
- Candy Machine
- Adult Female (20-54)
- Senior Female (55+)
- Adult Male (20-54)
- Senior Male (55+)
- Child / Teen (<20)



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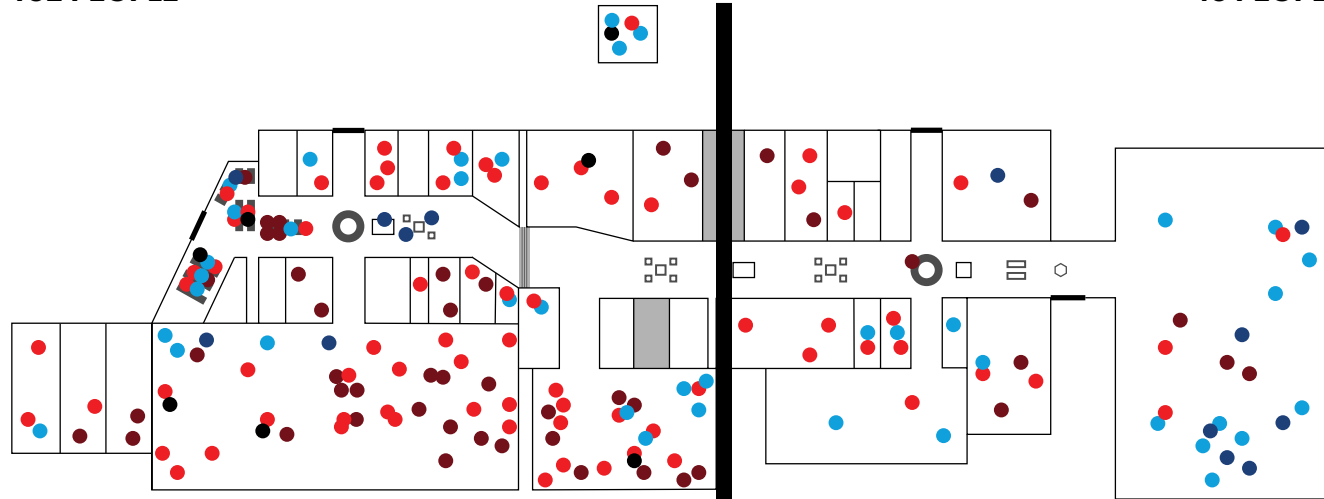


WEST SIDE
132 PEOPLE

WEEKDAYS

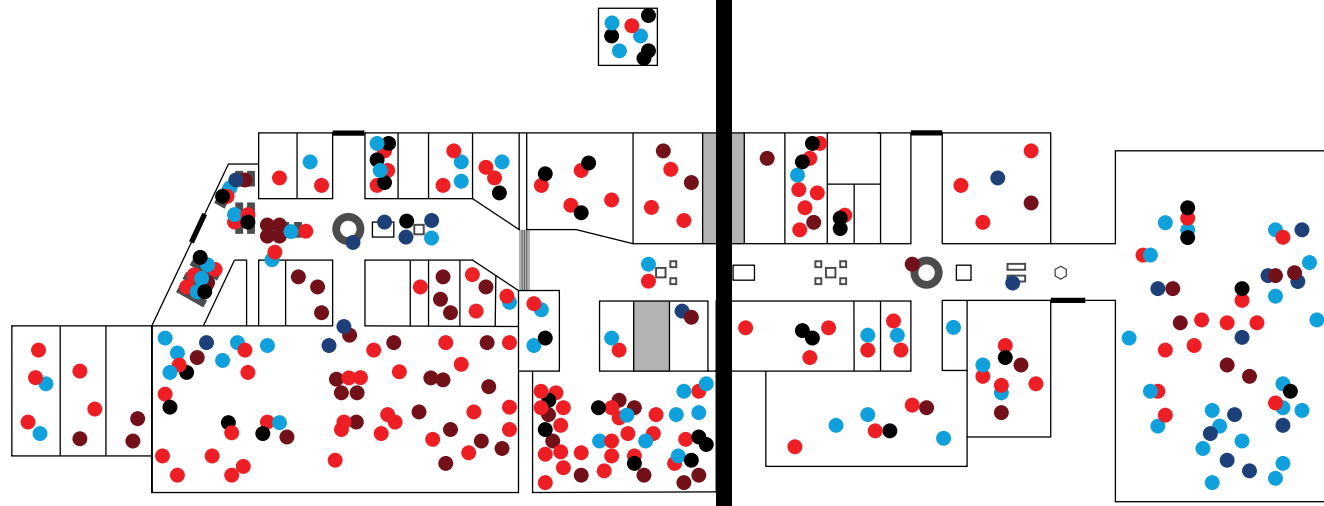
EAST SIDE
46 PEOPLE

West Side vs. East Side (B)



Confirming the observations found with the fly-on-the-wall method, these behavioural maps indicate that there were definitely more people on the west side than there were on the east side. The pattern was the same between weekdays and weekends, just that the weekends had a higher volume of people overall.

There were noticeably many more females (both adult and senior) on the west side in comparison to the east side, which had its traffic predominantly male and mostly from Canadian Tire. The west side included Sears and Winners, which together held about 50% of the population on the west side on both weekdays and weekends. These two stores had predominantly female customers.



WEST SIDE
208 PEOPLE

WEEKENDS

EAST SIDE
92 PEOPLE

LEGEND

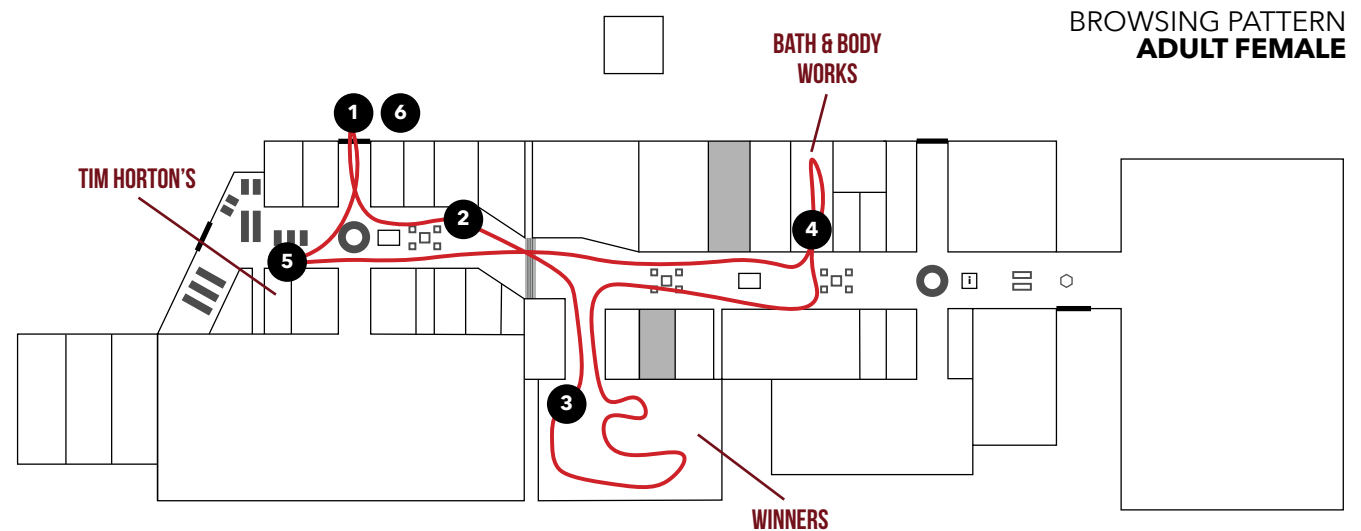
- Adult Female (20-54)
- Senior Female (55+)
- Adult Male (20-54)
- Senior Male (55+)
- Child / Teen (<20)



BEHAVIOURAL MAPPING continued

Consumer Routes

Two consumer routes were observed during the research period with use of the shadowing technique. The first demonstrates a **browsing pattern** (observed on a weekday) while the second demonstrates a **utility pattern** (observed on a weekend).



Browsing Pattern

- 1 Adult female entered the mall.
- 2 She was seen looking around, scanning through store fronts.
- 3 She entered Winners, first looking at purses, then moving on to kitchenware. Afterwards, she began looking through the women's clothing section and found a shirt she liked. She waited in the queue to purchase the shirt after and then left the store.
- 4 She continued browsing through the mall and ended up at Bath & Body Works to try out a new flavour of soap. She left the store after trying it.
- 5 6 She bought an iced coffee at Tim Horton's before leaving the mall.

greenearth

Tim Hortons

Tim Hortons

RESTROOMS

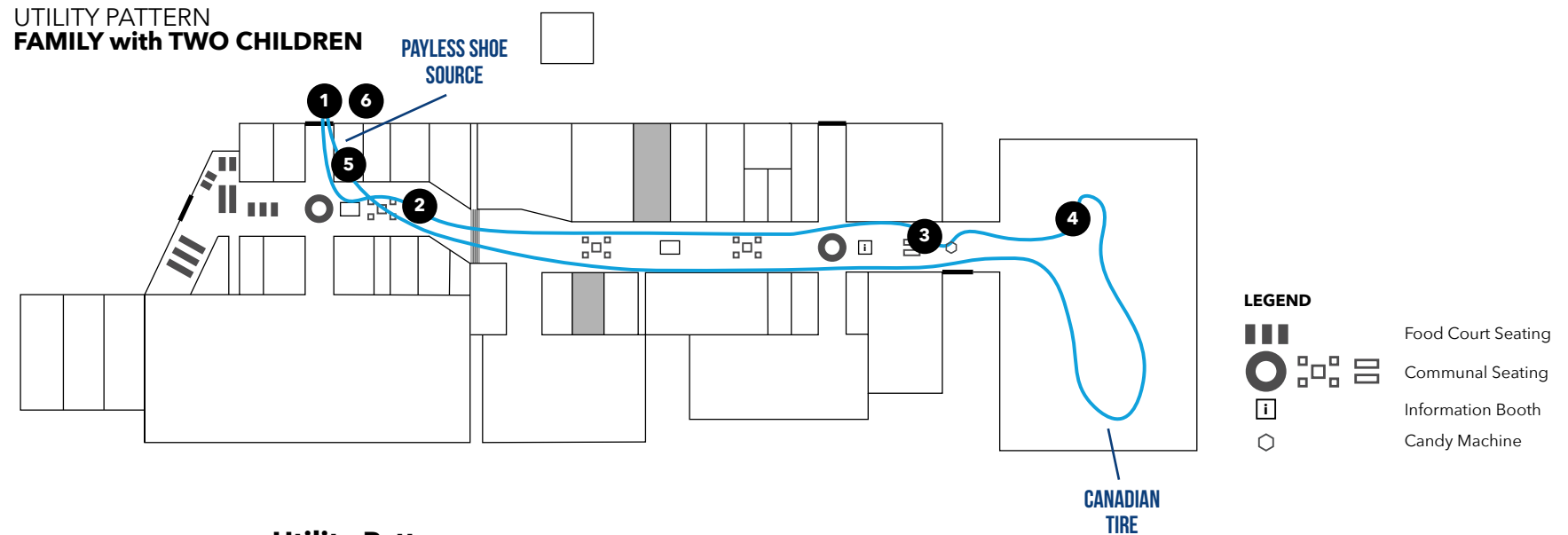


Secret SALE





BEHAVIOURAL MAPPING continued



Utility Pattern

- 1 Family consisting of father, mother, and two children entered the mall.
- 2 3 The father needed to go to Canadian Tire and the mother asked if the children wanted to come along. The children agreed, but only on the promise of candy at the candy machine in front of Canadian Tire. The mother bought them each a gumball and they entered Canadian Tire.
- 4 Upon entering Canadian Tire, the family walked past the Toys section and the parents let the kids peruse through the selection for a few minutes. The father then rushed them, and together they left for the Hardware and Tools section, where he picked up a toolkit. Immediately after grabbing one, they went to the cashier to pay for it and left the store.
- 5 6 The family headed back to the entrance they came in from. As they got to the exit, they passed the Payless Shoe Source, where the mother took a few glances at the shoe selection at the front of the store before being rushed out of the mall by her husband.

NOTE

Although this shopping trip was heavily driven by the father's need to buy a toolkit, the family still operated in the style of a family where all members remained together throughout the trip vs. splitting up to go to different stores.



PERSONAS

Personas help “consolidate archetypal descriptions of user behaviour patterns into representative profiles ... to aid [in] design communication”⁹. To understand the consumers that visit the Festival Marketplace, two personas were created using the behaviours observed from the previous two observation methods. One is of a mother, and she carries with her traits that resemble a browsing pattern consumer route while shopping. The other is of a businessman who resembles someone who would use a utility pattern consumer route while shopping.

⁹ Martin, Bella, and Bruce M. Hanington.



KATE

Kate is a loving mother of two children. She likes to go shopping for herself, but after having her two children, she started to revolve her life around their needs. As a result, she needs to prioritize her life in order to fulfill her daily tasks efficiently.

On weekdays, during the day when the children are at school, she browses the stores in the mall for both her personal needs and her children's needs. After picking her children up from school, she will bring them to the mall not only to chaperone them, but potentially to have them try on clothes at the stores she perused through earlier.

On weekends, she will visit the mall with her children (and husband if he is available) for similar reasons, but there is a greater emphasis on wanting to share quality family time with her children.



Mother and children in shopping mall¹⁰.

10 "Mother And Children On Escalator In Shopping Mall." <https://previews.123rf.com/images/stockbroker/stockbroker1411/stockbroker141100019/33469159-Mother-And-Children-On-Escalator-In-Shopping-Mall-Stock-Photo.jpg>. (2017). [image].



JOHN

John is a businessman. He is usually busy at work and does not have much time to do recreational activities, like going shopping at the mall. As a result, any free time he has he treats valuably and uses it only for anything he necessarily needs to do outside of work.

When he does go to the shopping mall, he has an idea of what he needs to buy, and heads into the mall on a mission to find that product or service he needs. If it is a necessity that is not too expensive like toiletries or food or something personal like a t-shirt, he will just go into the shopping centre and purchase it without much thinking. If it is something grander like a gift, an appliance, or a piece of furniture, he will do some research before heading into the shopping centre, and will only do some browsing for the product within the relevant stores to become buyer beware enough to commit to a purchase.



Businessman using smartphone¹¹.

11 "Smartphone Business Man." <https://stock.adobe.com/ca/stock-photo/smartphone-business-man-talking-on-mobile-phone-in-airport-travel-lifestyle-businessman-using-smartphone-calling-on-phone-walking-in-corporate-building-or-on-work-commute-in-public-transit-area/126191918>. (2017). [image].

SUMMARY

The study demonstrated that there is a difference in traffic patterns between the west side of the Festival Marketplace and the east side. This was identified based on the stores that are physically at each side of the mall and the behaviours of their customers in purchasing their products or services.

The west side of the mall was often busier and had many browsing stores like Winners and Sears, catering to adult and senior females, who were identified as the main shoppers. Winners and Sears were both also identified as shops that were popular among customers based on the observed number of shopping bags from both stores. The food court's location in the west side also generated much traffic from idling people eating their food.

The east side of the mall was less busy and the low volume of traffic could be attributed to the higher number of utility stores in the area, such as Canadian Tire and Dollarama.

A deep dive into the effects of either rearranging stores throughout the mall or adding browsing stores to the east side would be suggested to move towards improving traffic on that side of the mall and potentially increasing store sales and profitability.

