

H&D

Subscription Program

UX Case Study

E-commerce

Retail

Subscription UX

Role

Product Designer
(Sr. Interaction Designer)

Project Start

November 2019

PROJECT FOCUS

Turning seasonal buying into year-round subscriber relationships

Harry & David's financial success has been linked to seasonal buying for the past ten years. A subscription program was introduced as one of several efforts to help bring in more sales during the off season, giving customers an easy way to keep their favorite gourmet items on hand.

\$5-8M

projected incremental sales

2020 holiday season forecast

20+

companies reviewed

Comparative analysis

8 wks

project plan

From kickoff to delivery

About Harry & David

Premium gourmet brand inside a ten-brand, e-commerce-led portfolio.

THE BUSINESS

Premium fruit, specialty foods, and gift baskets

- Harry & David is owned by 1-800-Flowers and is one of several brands under its umbrella.
- Harry & David's primary source of income is generated through website sales.
- Product pages are considered a high priority and are the focal point in the purchase decision process.

MY ROLE

Leading UX across every brand

- Joined Harry & David as a Senior Interaction Designer, one of two Interaction Designers in a company with 18 brands and a rudimentary UX culture.
- Supports design across every aspect of the business and is responsible for leading UX and UI efforts across all brands.
- Has stepped into a variety of UX roles, often taking on the function of Product Designer — as on this project.

Key Achievements

Highlights from growing the UX practice across an 18 brand portfolio.

1

Implemented Design Process

Helped the team establish more structure in how design work is conducted and gave other teams visibility into upcoming sprints.

2

Improved Usability Across Brands

UX research and usability testing are now supported on all projects, backed by a fully established center for excellence.

3

Established a Design System

Helped Engineering and Marketing teams understand how and why certain components are chosen over others.

Top Considerations

The first task was identifying project goals and how a new subscription product would integrate into the existing experience.

THE CHALLENGE

A new model would touch checkout, product pages, and legal

- This would require changes to the checkout system and informed a review of how Amazon handles subscriptions.
- A product landing page was needed, plus a way to visually flag subscription-eligible products on product list pages.
- The biggest challenges on this project would be the planning and the legal process.

1

Impacted Sections

Several areas of the site would be affected; a complete understanding of impact was critical.

2

Differentiation

With an extensive product catalog, subscription-eligible items needed to be easy to differentiate.

3

Functional Requirements

What could be built now versus what would need to wait for a later phase.

4

Legal Requirements

Terms and Conditions placement required close, early work with the legal team.

Planning

Behavioral data justified the redesign; the next step was assembling a diverse, cross-functional team.

1 Team Formed

Recruited a Visual Designer, Lead Developer, Interaction Designer, Marketing Manager, and Customer Service Manager.

2 Setting The Pace

Scheduled a kickoff meeting to align the team on goals and ways of working.

3 Setting Deliverables

Produced a project plan spanning eight weeks from kickoff to delivery.

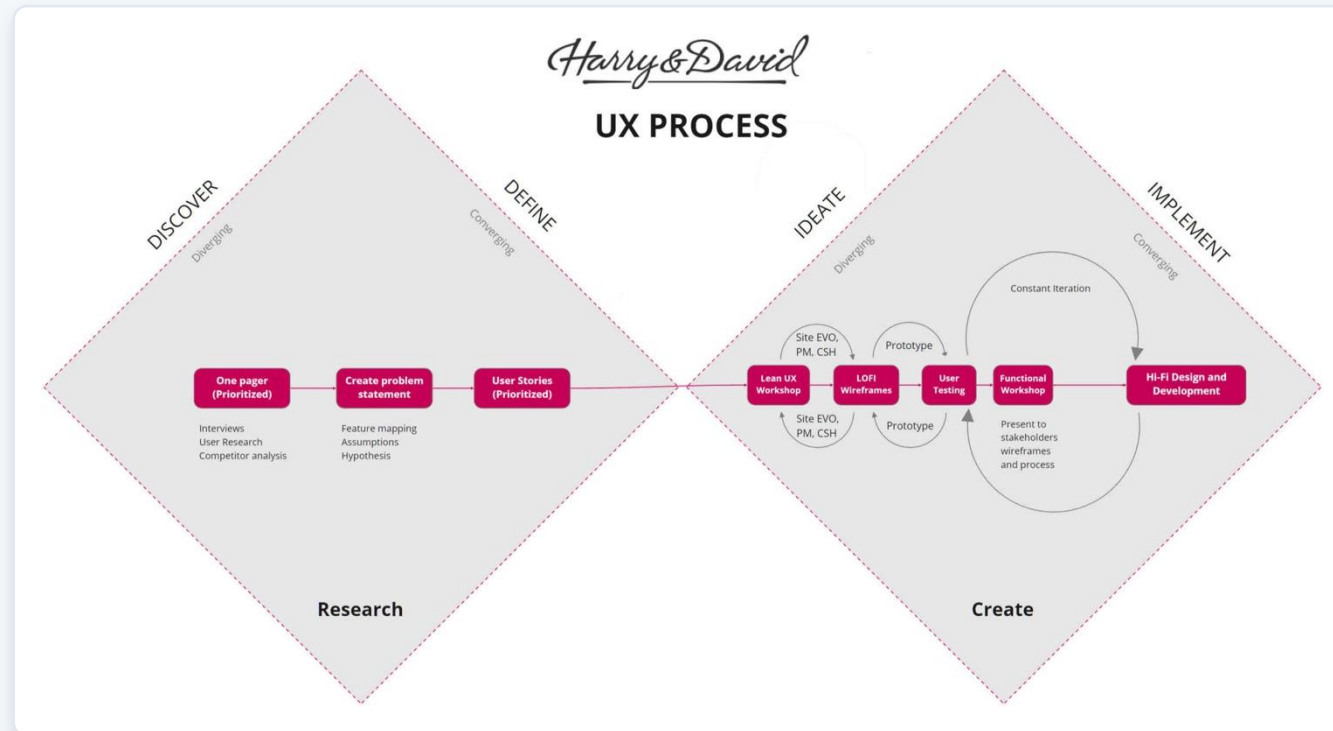
4 Leading The Effort

Set the agenda for meetings; the team produced mind maps, traffic flow charts, and discussed element positioning.

Management was very supportive of the effort — assembling a diverse team was critical to the project's success.

UX Process

Work at Harry & David follows the Double Diamond and Lean UX process — Discover, Define, Ideate, and Implement.



Research Overview

Comparative analysis was the key research tool, since the solution needed to work for all brands under the 1-800-Flowers umbrella long term.

1 Contextual Inquiry Interviews

Interviewed participants within the key persona demographic to understand real reactions to a subscription model.

2 Comparative Analysis

Reviewed 20+ companies with subscription programs for inspiration — and for what not to do.

Amazon was the only directly comparable company operating in a similar multi-brand space.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Contextual Inquiry Findings

The interviews surfaced far more insight than initially expected.

- **Initial Thoughts**

Participants loved the idea. The concept of not being required to re-order every year was appealing.

- **Offer A Discount For Sign-Up**

Three out of five participants said they would be more inclined to sign up if a discount was offered.

- **Cancellation Concerns**

Two participants were concerned that cancelling a subscription might prove difficult.



Sentiment captured during interview sessions

Comparative Analysis Findings

Reviewing twenty companies surfaced patterns in best-known methods, functionality, and layout.

1 Challenges

Few comparable companies existed in this space. Of twenty reviewed, Amazon was the only comparable company in the multi-brand space.

2 Discounts For Signing Up Are Common

Most companies reviewed provide a discount for signing up for a subscription.

3 Legal Terms Position Is Subtle

Terms and Conditions placement was typically located in checkout or close to the product page call to action.

4 Keep It Simple

Some companies' subscription options were confusing, since they weren't clearly identified as an ongoing commitment.

Design Process

With research complete, the team moved into wireframing the product page update, checkout, and subscription landing page.

1 Team Workshop

Scheduled and attended a workshop with the team.
Created low-fidelity wireframes.

2 Legal Requirements Checkpoint

Produced low-fidelity wireframes for the Legal department covering terms placement and comparative-analysis context. Approved after two weeks.

3 Polishing The Wireframes

Moved from low-fidelity to hi-fidelity wireframes. One final review meeting and the wireframes were approved.

DESIGN

Product Page

The key goal at this point was to identify how this new design would perform.

The screenshot shows the Harry & David website product page for Pepper and Onion Relish. The page features a navigation bar with various categories and a search bar. The main content area displays the product name, a large image of the relish jar, and a list of product options with their respective prices and availability. A subscription section is also visible, including a frequency selector, a duration selector, and a checkbox for recurring shipment. A red button labeled 'ADD SUBSCRIPTION TO CART' is located at the bottom right of the product details.

Product Option	Product ID	Price
Pepper and Onion Relish <small>AVAILABLE TO SHIP NOW</small>	218733X	\$6.99
Pick Four Relishes Quick View	23920X	\$27.99
Choose-Your-Own Relish 8-Pack Quick View	33522X	\$55.99

Frequency: Every 4 Weeks
Duration: Continue until I stop

Make this a recurring Shipment
Start a subscription and have it delivered monthly.

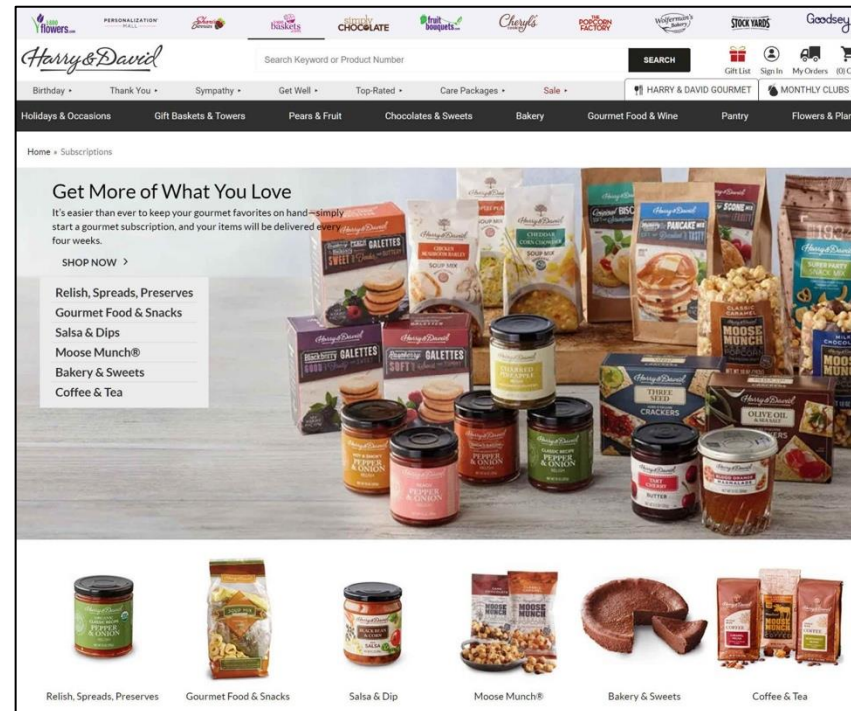
- Payment method on file will be charged on a recurring basis
- You may cancel at any time prior to shipment
- To learn more, see [Subscription Terms and Conditions](#)

ADD SUBSCRIPTION TO CART

Visual Scent: a continuous-shipping icon. Value Proposition: "Make this a recurring Shipment" copy, with Frequency and Duration giving a quick reference to how the program works; the selector's drop-down provides cancellation guidance.

Subscription Landing Page

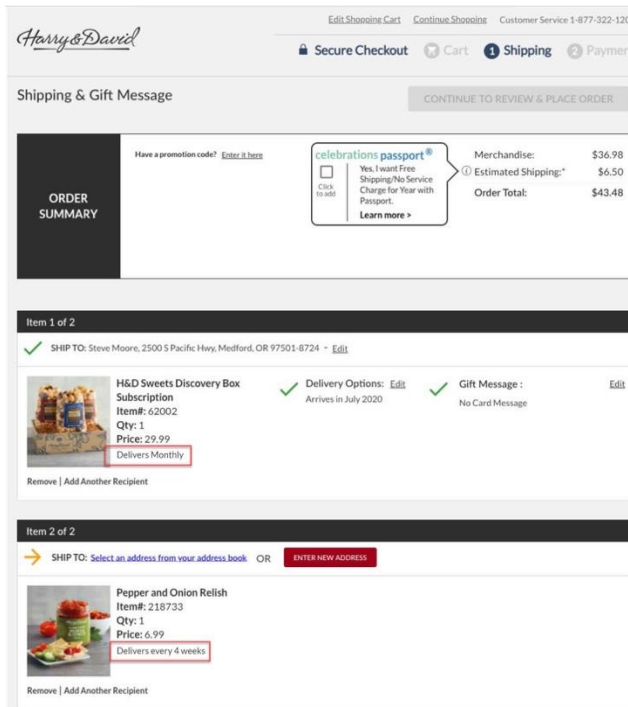
A dedicated destination makes it easy to browse every subscription-eligible category in one place.



Visual Scent and Value Proposition copy carry over from the product page, giving customers a quick reference to how the program works.

Checkout Update

A basic update added delivery frequency to checkout to avoid any confusion for the customer.



Each line item in the order summary clearly states its delivery cadence — a one-time shipment versus a recurring subscription.

VALIDATION

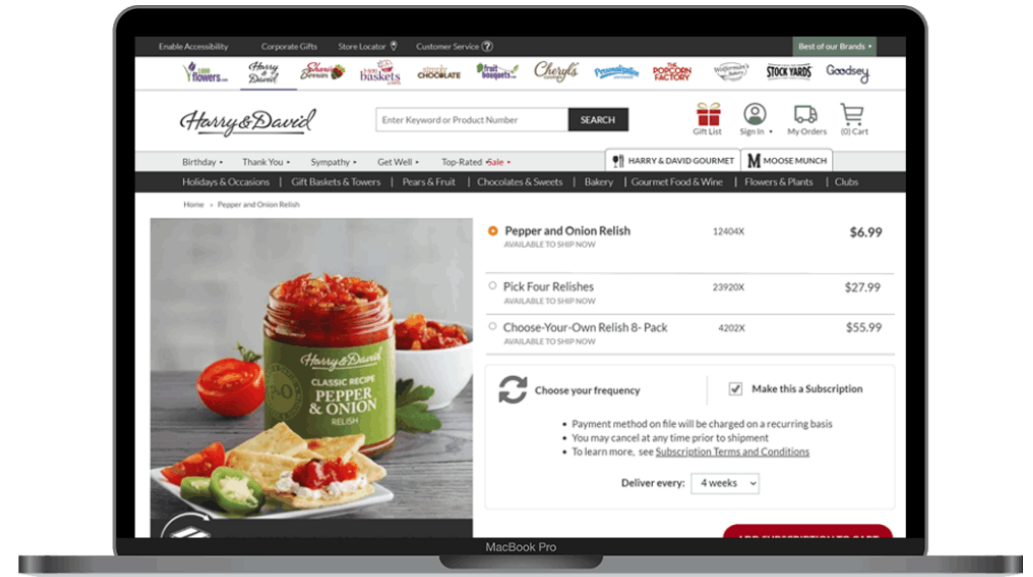
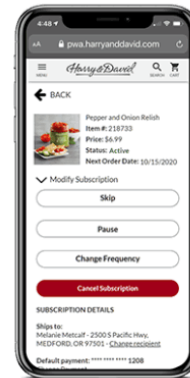
Design Validation

The key goal at this point was to identify any usability concerns before launch.

WHAT WE VALIDATED

The best feeling is knowing your efforts have made a difference.

- Additional Testing — Is the value proposition producing interest? Do customers understand how the program works?
- Performance — Is conversion on track?



The responsive experience, validated across desktop and mobile

IMPACT

Results

Results are still coming in, but the early data is encouraging.

\$5–8M

projected additional sales, 2020 holiday season

1

Customers Are Responding Well

Customer feedback surveys show customers are very happy with the subscription offering.

2

Projected Sales

Forecast is in line with current product offerings, as conversion tracks alongside existing performance.

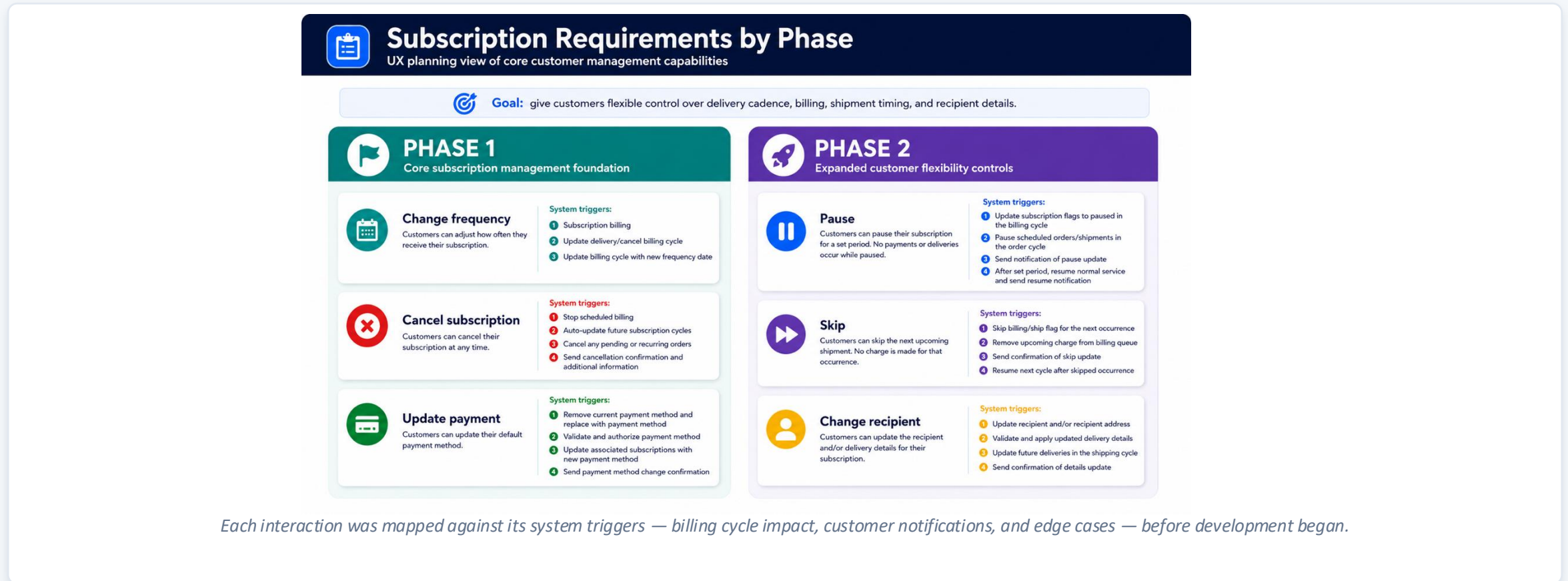
3

New Functionality Coming

Phase 2 of the subscription program is already underway, adding new functionality like skip, pause, and change frequency of delivery.

Subscription Requirements: Phase 2

Mapping the system triggers behind each new piece of functionality — pause, skip, change frequency, cancellation, payment, and recipient updates.



REFLECTION

What I Learned

Always think of how a design may impact the entire experience. This was a key takeaway.

“ Legal Timing

Get with Legal as early as possible. Reviews can take time.

“ Plan Ahead

Think ahead and plan for future functionality early. It's easier to document ideas in the middle of a project when it's fresh in mind.

“ Patience With Results

Results don't always present early. Continue to be patient — if the customer experience is positive, favorable results will follow.

Key Takeaways

What this project demonstrates

- **Strategic UX** Solved a cross-functional commerce challenge inside an 18-brand e-commerce ecosystem.
- **Research-Led Decisions** Contextual inquiry interviews and a 20+ company comparative analysis guided the model.
- **Measurable Impact** Forecast of \$5–8M in additional sales for the 2020 holiday season, with strong early customer response.
- **Scalable Foundation** Created a flexible structure ready for Phase 2 functionality: skip, pause, and change frequency.

This is the kind of work I enjoy most: taking complex systems, aligning teams, validating decisions with research, and creating product experiences that are easier for real people to use.