



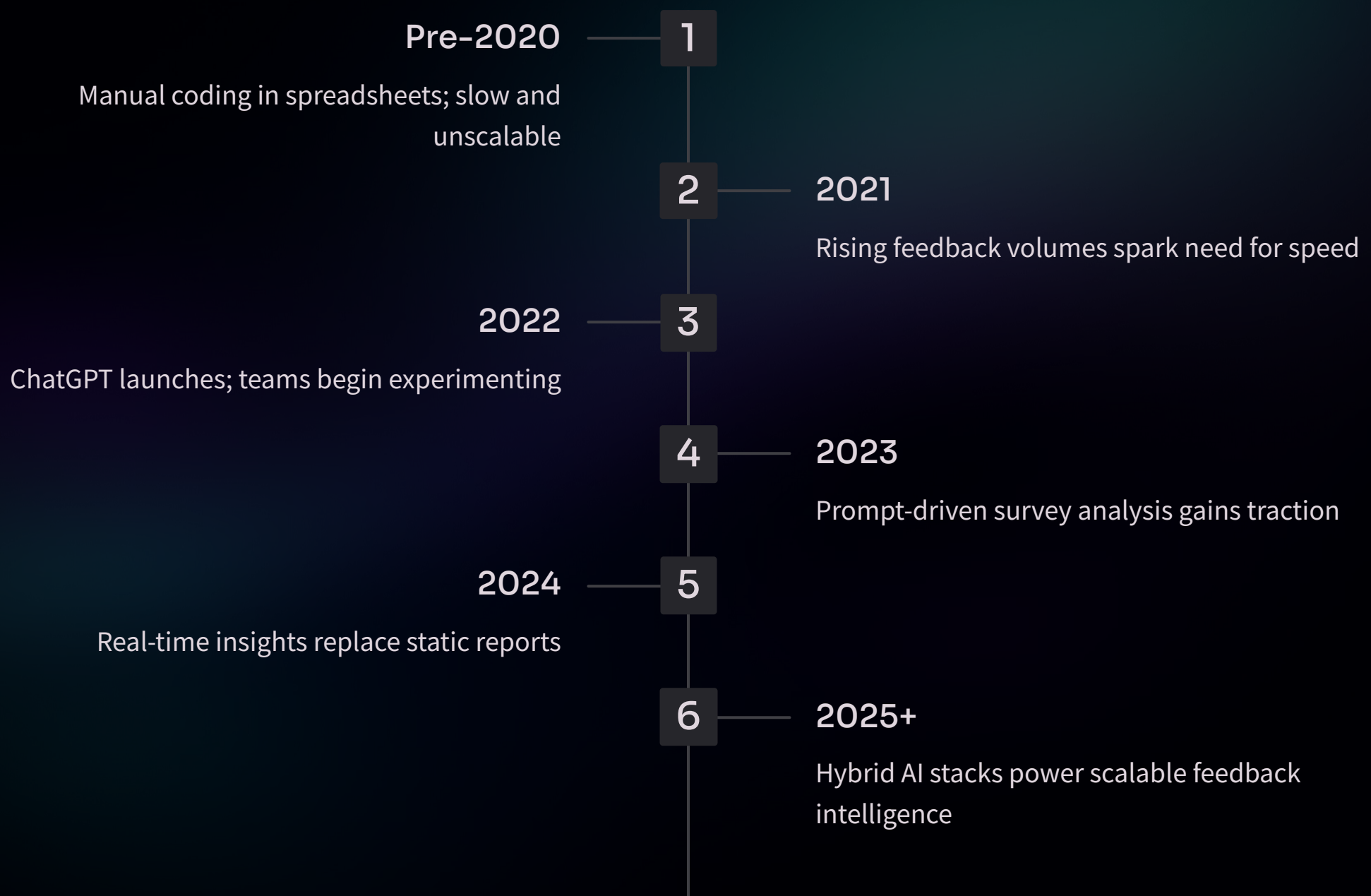
# Using Powerful Prompting to Master Qualitative Survey Analysis with ChatGPT

# Introduction

For years, CX and product teams relied on spreadsheets and manual coding frameworks to analyze qualitative survey data—tagging comments line-by-line, grouping themes by hand, and spending hours to produce insights that were often delayed and hard to scale.

Today, ChatGPT has changed the game. With just a few prompts, teams can uncover patterns, extract sentiment, and generate action-ready insights from open-ended responses—in minutes, not weeks.

## Evolution of Qualitative Survey Analysis



# Step-by-Step Guide for Qualitative Survey Analysis using ChatGPT

## Step 1: Define Your Research Objective

Before running any analysis in ChatGPT, clarity on what you're trying to learn is non-negotiable. Your research objective shapes your prompt design, how you chunk data, and how you interpret the output. The clearer your goal, the sharper your analysis.

🎯 A focused objective turns raw feedback into targeted insights.


### Examples of Clear Objectives

- 1 Extract top feature requests from survey responses
- 2 Identify why trial users drop off after onboarding
- 3 Understand sentiment around a new feature
- 4 Spot recurring pain points across store locations
- 5 Identify post-purchase issues affecting loyalty

# Step 2: Export Your Qualitative Survey Data for Analysis

To get started, export your qualitative survey responses from wherever your customer experience data lives—whether it's a specialized customer experience platform like Zonka Feedback, Qualtrics, or general survey tools like Google Forms, or Excel.

Be sure to include all the context you'll want to analyze later like question text, store location, customer segment, or any attributes tied to the response. The more context you include now, the better your insights will be.

 Tip: We recommend using the paid version of ChatGPT (GPT-4) for good results. You can freely upload a CSV/Excel file and process up to 1000+ short responses per batch or 50–100 long ones in one go.

# Step 3: Start Analyzing by Using Smart Prompts for Insights

Now it's time to get into analysis mode. Once your qualitative survey data is added, your first step should be to uncover themes and subthemes from the responses. This helps you cluster feedback, spot patterns, and prioritize action.

💡 Use the ChatGPT o3 version (not o4) for running your survey analysis prompts. o3 is purpose-built for step-by-step thinking and delivers more consistent, structured outputs especially critical when identifying themes, analyzing sentiment, or following multi-part instructions.

## Prompts for Different Use Cases

### a. Themes, Sub Themes & Frequency

**Use When:** You want to cluster all customer feedback into major topics, break them into actionable sub-topics, and measure their frequency to prioritize what matters most.

You are a qualitative data analyst reviewing open-ended responses from a retail in-store customer experience survey. Analyze the responses to identify the 7–10 most recurring themes based on language patterns and customer context. Each theme has to make sense and should not be generic words or phrases fetched from survey comments. Instead, they should be generated using GenAI.

For each theme, provide a short descriptive label, a brief 1–2 sentence explanation, 2–3 representative customer quotes or paraphrased phrases, and include the frequency of that theme—both as a count of how many responses mention it and as a percentage of total responses.

Next, for each theme, please give more granular insights by dividing the generated themes into 3–4 specific sub-themes that capture specific recurring topics or issues.

- Sub-themes should be distinct and actionable (e.g., under "Checkout Experience" → "Payment Options," "Cart Errors," "Promo Code Issues").
- For each sub-theme, include a one-line description, 1–2 sample quotes or paraphrased responses, and its frequency count and percentage.
- Present all information in a clear, organized format grouped by theme, and sort both themes and sub-themes in descending order of frequency. Use only the actual content of the responses without generating assumptions or artificial insights.
- Output format in a Table with columns: Themes | Sub-themes | Description | Sample Quote | Frequency

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Theme	Sub-theme	Description	Sample Quote	Frequency (n / %)
Staff Helpfulness & Courtesy	Friendly & Welcoming Staff	Warm greetings and upbeat demeanour leave a lasting positive impression.	"What a pleasant experience—everyone was smiling at check-in."	47 / 13.8 %
	Product Knowledge & Assistance	Associates who confidently recommend or explain products boost purchase confidence.	"Loved how the team recommended the right coffee beans."	40 / 11.7 %
	Staff Availability	Shoppers struggle to locate staff during peak times or in specialised sections.	"Couldn't spot anyone in electronics for five minutes."	8 / 2.3 %
	Rude / Indifferent Behaviour	Perceived coldness or lack of courtesy turns otherwise good visits sour.	"Felt ignored at checkout; cashier never said hello."	7 / 2.1 %
Store Cleanliness & Hygiene	Clean Aisles & Floors	Overall tidiness and quick spill removal signal a well-run store.	"Aisles were spotless—impressed!"	67 / 19.6 %
	Sanitisation & Safety Measures	Visibility of hand-sanitiser stations and cleaning routines reassures customers.	"Liked the sanitizer stand near carts."	5 / 1.5 %
	Restroom Cleanliness	Condition of customer washrooms shapes perceptions of overall hygiene.	"Restroom could use more frequent checks."	1 / 0.3 %
Product Availability & Stock	Shelf Organisation & Facing	Well-faced, neatly arranged shelves help shoppers find items quickly.	"Shelves looked half-emptied and messy."	41 / 12.0 %
	Product Variety & Range	Breadth of options within categories meets diverse dietary or lifestyle needs.	"Wish you carried more gluten-free snacks."	15 / 4.4 %
	Out-of-Stock Items	Missing staples or promos cause immediate disappointment and lost sales.	"My favourite yogurt was sold out again."	5 / 1.5 %
	Pricing Labels & Tag Accuracy	Accurate shelf tags and scanner prices build trust at checkout.	"Price tag said \$5, but it rang up higher."	2 / 0.6 %
	Checkout Speed & Payment Experience	Long Wait Times & Queues	Extended lines or slow registers create last-mile frustration.	"Waited nearly 10 minutes to pay for three items."
Payment Options & Ease		Modern methods (tap-to-pay, digital wallets) streamline transactions.	"Great that you now take Apple Pay."	10 / 2.9 %
Self-Checkout Functionality		Reliability and ease of scanners/screens influence perceived convenience.	"Self-checkout kept freezing—needed staff three times."	2 / 0.6 %
Promo Codes & Discounts at Checkout		Smooth application of coupons or loyalty rewards lifts value perception.	"Cashier didn't know how to apply my coupon."	1 / 0.3 %
Store Layout & Navigation	Clear Signage & Directions	Visible, logical signage reduces search time for key sections.	"Got lost looking for dairy—signs are confusing."	30 / 8.8 %
	Aisle & Section Organisation	Logical grouping and uncluttered pathways enable efficient trips.	"Seasonal items block the main walkway."	19 / 5.6 %
	Crowding & Space	Narrow aisles or heavy traffic hamper manoeuvrability.	"Too crowded to navigate with a stroller."	5 / 1.5 %
Ambience & Atmosphere	Temperature & Climate	Comfortable heating/AC keeps shoppers browsing longer.	"Felt chilly near the freezers."	11 / 3.2 %
	Overall Vibe & Mood	Combined effect of lighting, décor, and crowd energy shapes the visit.	"Love the relaxed vibe on Sunday mornings."	7 / 2.1 %
	Music Volume & Choice	Appropriate playlist and volume subtly influence dwell time.	"Music was too loud for conversation."	7 / 2.1 %
Product Quality & Variety	Freshness of Perishables	Quality of produce, bakery, and chilled items affects trust and repeat visits.	"Avocados were over-ripe—couldn't pick any."	5 / 1.5 %
	Value for Money on Quality	Alignment of perceived quality with price point drives satisfaction.	"Premium cheese felt worth the extra cost."	1 / 0.3 %
Pricing, Deals & Value	Discounts & Promotions Awareness	Clear, visible deals enhance perceived savings and basket size.	"Didn't spot the 2-for-1 signage until checkout."	24 / 7.0 %
	Perceived Value for Money	General assessment of fairness in everyday prices.	"Prices are creeping up—might compare elsewhere."	1 / 0.3 %

## b. Sentiment Analysis

**Use When:** You want a basic emotional polarity check

Think of yourself as a sentiment analyst reviewing open-ended customer feedback from a retail experience survey. The data has already been clustered into themes and subthemes. Your task is to analyze all responses grouped under each subtheme and assign an overall sentiment label based on the dominant tone across those responses.

Use Positive, Neutral, Negative as sentiment labels.

Instructions:

- Review all responses grouped under each subtheme.
- Determine the dominant sentiment for each subtheme (not individual responses).
- Assign a single sentiment label that best reflects the overall tone and emotion.
- Provide a 1-line rationale summarizing why this sentiment applies—reference common words, tone trends, or patterns across responses.

Output Format in a Table with columns: Theme | Subtheme | Sentiment Rationale

Use only the actual data to make sentiment judgments. Do not infer sentiment beyond what is clearly expressed in the responses.

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Theme	Sub-theme	Sentiment Rationale
<b>Staff Helpfulness &amp; Courtesy</b>	Friendly & Welcoming Staff	<b>Positive</b> – overwhelmingly upbeat (≈ 58 positive vs 7 negative); words like “friendly”, “helpful”, “smiling” dominate.
	Product Knowledge & Assistance	<b>Positive</b> – majority praise (≈ 8 positive vs 1 negative) citing “knowledgeable”, “recommended”, “explained”.
	Staff Availability	<b>Negative</b> – repeated frustration (“no staff”, “couldn’t find help”) shows shortages hurt CX.
	Rude / Indifferent Behaviour	<b>Negative</b> – nearly every mention uses “rude”, “ignored”, “cold”, leaving a strong negative impression.
<b>Store Cleanliness &amp; Hygiene</b>	Clean Aisles & Floors	<b>Positive</b> – positive tone dominates (≈ 48 positive vs 23 negative); “clean”, “spotless”, “tidy” recur.
	Restroom Cleanliness	<b>Negative</b> – negative remarks (“dirty”, “smell”, “unhygienic”) outweigh sparse praise.
	Sanitisation & Safety Measures	<b>Positive</b> – small but upbeat cluster (≈ 3 positive vs 1 negative) praising “sanitiser”, “safe”.
<b>Product Availability &amp; Stock</b>	Product Variety & Range	<b>Positive</b> – most comments highlight “variety”, “selection”, “choices”.
	Shelf Organisation & Facing	<b>Positive</b> – more compliments (≈ 20 positive vs 15 negative) on “organised”, “neat” shelves.
	Out-of-Stock Items	<b>Negative</b> – dominant negatives (≈ 14 negative vs 3 positive) repeating “out of stock”, “sold out”.
	Pricing Labels & Tag Accuracy	<b>Positive</b> – single comment notes accurate pricing; no negatives recorded.
<b>Checkout Speed &amp; Payment Experience</b>	Long Wait Times & Queues	<b>Negative</b> – “long wait”, “slow queue” outweigh modest praise (≈ 13 negative vs 12 positive).
	Self-Checkout Functionality	<b>Positive</b> – comments commend “quick” self-checkout; no negatives.
	Payment Options & Ease	<b>Positive</b> – mention of “Apple Pay accepted” drives satisfaction.
	Promo Codes & Discounts at Checkout	<b>Positive</b> – most note “easy coupon use”; only one minor issue.
<b>Store Layout &amp; Navigation</b>	Clear Signage & Directions	<b>Positive</b> – more positives (≈ 19 positive vs 9 negative) citing “clear signs”, “easy to find”.
	Aisle & Section Organisation	<b>Positive</b> – “well-organised”, “easy to navigate” dominate (≈ 22 positive vs 11 negative).
	Crowding & Space	<b>Neutral</b> – mixed feedback (crowded vs manageable) produces no clear dominant tone.
<b>Ambience &amp; Atmosphere</b>	Temperature & Climate	<b>Positive</b> – positives (“comfortable”, “pleasant temperature”) edge out negatives.
	Overall Vibe & Mood	<b>Positive</b> – slightly more upbeat (≈ 13 positive vs 12 negative) with “good vibe”, “nice atmosphere”.
	Music Volume & Choice	<b>Positive</b> – majority appreciate playlist/volume; isolated gripes only.
<b>Ambience &amp; Atmosphere</b>	Temperature & Climate	<b>Positive</b> – positives (“comfortable”, “pleasant temperature”) edge out negatives.
	Overall Vibe & Mood	<b>Positive</b> – slightly more upbeat (≈ 13 positive vs 12 negative) with “good vibe”, “nice atmosphere”.
	Music Volume & Choice	<b>Positive</b> – majority appreciate playlist/volume; isolated gripes only.
<b>Pricing, Deals &amp; Value</b>	Discounts & Promotions Awareness	<b>Negative</b> – phrases like “missed deal”, “promo not clear” prevail (≈ 11 negative vs 9 positive).
	Perceived Value for Money	<b>Negative</b> – lone comment decries “overpriced”, driving an overall negative tone.
<b>Product Quality &amp; Variety</b>	Freshness of Perishables	<b>Positive</b> – five of seven mentions highlight “fresh”, “good quality”; few negatives.
	Value for Money on Quality	<b>Negative</b> – only comment labels product “not worth the price”.

## c. Key Drivers of Positive/Negative Impact

**Use When:** You want to know what's driving great or poor customer experiences

You've already identified themes, subthemes, and sentiment from the survey responses. Now, using that information, determine which themes and subthemes are driving positive or negative customer experience.

Instructions:

- Review the sentiment and emotional tone associated with each theme and subtheme.
- Classify each one as a:
  - Positive Driver – consistently associated with satisfaction, delight, or appreciation
  - Negative Driver – consistently associated with frustration, dissatisfaction, or abandonment
- Provide a short rationale for each classification based on observed patterns in sentiment, emotion, and frequency.

Output Format: Theme | Subtheme | Impact Driver (Positive/Negative) | Rationale

Use only the insights previously extracted. Do not re-analyze the raw responses or re-identify themes. Focus on what is clearly driving customer perception based on prior sentiment and emotional trends.

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Theme	Sub-theme	Impact Driver	Rationale
<b>Staff Helpfulness &amp; Courtesy</b>	Friendly & Welcoming Staff	Positive	Consistently praised for "friendly", "smiling", "helpful" interactions that elevate CX.
	Product Knowledge & Assistance	Positive	Shoppers value "knowledgeable" recommendations and guidance, reinforcing confidence to buy.
	Staff Availability	Negative	Frequent complaints about "no staff around" create frustration when assistance is needed.
	Rude / Indifferent Behaviour	Negative	Words like "rude", "ignored", "cold" dominate, leaving a lasting negative impression.
<b>Store Cleanliness &amp; Hygiene</b>	Clean Aisles & Floors	Positive	High volume of "clean", "spotless", "tidy" comments links cleanliness to satisfaction.
	Sanitisation & Safety Measures	Positive	Mentions of "sanitiser", "safe", "well-maintained" reassure health-conscious shoppers.
	Restroom Cleanliness	Negative	All restroom remarks cite "dirty", "smell", "unhygienic", sharply eroding hygiene perception.
<b>Product Availability &amp; Stock</b>	Product Variety & Range	Positive	"Variety", "selection", "choices" are applauded, signalling assortment drives delight.
	Shelf Organisation & Facing	Positive	More compliments than critiques on "neat", "organised" displays support smooth shopping.
	Out-of-Stock Items	Negative	Repeated "out of stock" / "sold out" phrases cause disappointment and lost sales.
	Pricing Labels & Tag Accuracy	Positive	Accurate tags build trust; only positive or neutral mentions recorded.
<b>Checkout Speed &amp; Payment Experience</b>	Long Wait Times & Queues	Negative	Dominant complaints about "long wait" and "slow queue" frustrate customers at the final step.
	Self-Checkout Functionality	Positive	"Quick" and "easy" self-checkout comments show technology enhances convenience.
	Payment Options & Ease	Positive	Acceptance of modern payments (e.g., Apple Pay) earns clear approval.
	Promo Codes & Discounts at Checkout	Positive	Smooth coupon redemption noted, boosting perceived value.
<b>Store Layout &amp; Navigation</b>	Clear Signage & Directions	Positive	"Clear signs", "easy to find" remarks reduce effort and improve experience.
	Aisle & Section Organisation	Positive	"Well-organised" aisles help efficient shopping, drawing praise.
	Crowding & Space	Negative	Complaints of "too crowded" and tight aisles hamper movement, creating discomfort.
<b>Ambience &amp; Atmosphere</b>	Temperature & Climate	Positive	More mentions of "comfortable" temperature than complaints support a pleasant environment.
	Overall Vibe & Mood	Positive	"Good vibe" and "nice atmosphere" phrases link ambience to longer dwell time.
	Music Volume & Choice	Positive	Majority appreciate playlist/volume; isolated gripes only.
<b>Pricing, Deals &amp; Value</b>	Discounts & Promotions Awareness	Negative	"Missed deal", "promo not clear" comments indicate confusing offers hurt value perception.
	Perceived Value for Money	Negative	"Overpriced" and "not worth the price" feedback shows cost concerns diminish satisfaction.
<b>Product Quality &amp; Variety</b>	Freshness of Perishables	Positive	"Fresh", "good quality" dominate, reinforcing trust in food items.
	Value for Money on Quality	Negative	Comment citing "not worth the price" highlights quality-price mismatch where it arises.

## d. Identify Top Customer Pain Points

**Use When:** You want to zero in on the most urgent issues causing friction in the customer journey.

You have already extracted themes, subthemes, sentiment classification, emotional tone, and key drivers of positive and negative experience from a retail customer experience survey. Now, based on that existing analysis, identify the top customer pain points.

Instructions:

- Use the negative sentiment themes and subthemes, along with emotional tone (e.g., frustration, disappointment) and negative impact drivers, to pinpoint recurring pain points.
- Prioritize pain points that:
  - Appear frequently across responses
  - Trigger strong emotional reactions
  - Contribute directly to negative experiences
- Summarize each pain point clearly in 1–2 lines.
- Support each pain point with:
  - A short rationale based on observed patterns
  - One illustrative customer quote (if available)

Output Format in Table with columns: Pain Point | Rationale | Example

Avoid creating new themes or reclassifying the data—only distill what has already been extracted. Focus on friction areas that demand action to improve the retail experience.

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Pain Point	Rationale	Example
<b>Slow checkout &amp; long queues</b>	The most-mentioned negative driver ( $\approx 28$ comments, 8 % of total) carries strong frustration words like “waited”, “slow” and “queue too long,” souring the final stage of the visit.	“Waited nearly 10 minutes to pay for three items.”
<b>Unable to find staff when help is needed</b>	Repeated reports ( $\approx 8$ comments) of “no one around” and “couldn’t spot anyone” create anxiety and stall purchases when customers need assistance, dragging down otherwise positive staff sentiment.	“Couldn’t spot anyone in electronics for five minutes.”
<b>Rude or indifferent employee attitude</b>	Although smaller in volume ( $\approx 7$ comments), every mention uses emotionally charged words—“rude”, “ignored”, “cold”—which leave a lasting negative impression.	“Felt ignored at checkout; cashier never said hello.”
<b>Out-of-stock essentials</b>	Frequent disappointment over missing staples ( $\approx 5$ comments) features phrases like “sold out again,” signalling lost sales and eroding trust in reliability.	“My favorite yogurt was sold out again.”
<b>Confusing or missed discounts &amp; promos</b>	Over a third of promo-related remarks ( $\approx 11$ of 24) are negative, citing “missed deal,” “promo not clear,” leading to frustration and perceived lost value at checkout.	“Didn’t spot the 2-for-1 signage until checkout.”
<b>Crowded aisles &amp; limited space</b>	Comments about congestion ( $\approx 5$ ) describe difficulty moving carts and strollers, using words such as “too crowded,” driving discomfort during peak times.	“Too crowded to navigate with a stroller.”
<b>Dirty or poorly maintained restrooms</b>	Though low in count ( $\approx 1$ ), every restroom mention is strongly negative—“dirty”, “smell”, “unhygienic”—suggesting that even isolated incidents sharply hurt the overall hygiene perception.	“Restroom could use more frequent checks.”
<b>Prices perceived as poor value</b>	Price-to-value complaints ( $\approx 1$ explicit negative) employ terms like “overpriced” or “not worth the price,” indicating that when raised, cost concerns immediately diminish satisfaction.	“Prices are creeping up—might compare elsewhere.”

# Step 4: Deepen the Analysis with Follow-up Prompts

Once you've run your initial round of prompts (themes, sentiment, etc.), go deeper by asking ChatGPT to uncover patterns that aren't immediately obvious—like hidden drivers of dissatisfaction in product, repeat complaints about in-store experience, or inconsistencies across store locations.

## Follow-up Prompts



### Store Layout or Navigation Issues

Are there recurring complaints or confusion around how the store is laid out or how easy it is for customers to find products?



### Location-Based Trends

Are there recurring issues or feedback patterns tied to specific store locations or regions? Highlight which locations are mentioned and summarize the key points.



### Cart Abandonment Insights

Do any customers mention abandoning purchases, long wait times at checkout, or lack of product availability leading them to leave without buying?



### Emerging Product Expectations

Are customers suggesting new features, product variants, or improvements they expect? Focus only on forward-looking or unmet product needs mentioned in open-ended responses.



### Post-Purchase Support Gaps

Are there any patterns in feedback that suggest customers are facing issues after the purchase such as returns, loyalty benefits, delayed support responses, or poor follow-up?



### Root Cause Analysis

Based on the top 3 customer pain points already identified, what likely root causes can be inferred from the tone, phrasing, or patterns across responses?

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# Step 5: Turn Qualitative Survey Insights into Action

The final and most valuable step is transforming ChatGPT's findings into clear, team-specific actions. Push the model to recommend next steps based on what the data reveals. Focus on generating takeaways tailored to each business function, built to support decision-making.

💡 If you want to avoid your GPT being influenced by your earlier prompts or responses, we recommend starting a new thread before running these action-focused prompts.

## 1 Product

Based on the feedback themes and subthemes, recommend 3 product adjustments we can test in the next sprint to resolve major issues or delight users.

## 2 Customer Experience (CX)

Using the insights gathered, outline 3 changes we can make to frontline experience, store layout, or communication flows to reduce drop-offs.

## 3 Marketing/GTM

Suggest messaging angles or campaign ideas that align with the top emotional tones and expectations shared in feedback.

## 4 Support & Operations

Based on repeat support-related feedback, list 3 process or documentation fixes that would reduce ticket volume or resolution time.

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# Pro Tip – From ChatGPT to Scalable AI Feedback Intelligence ✨

ChatGPT is excellent for analyzing survey data in small batches—but when feedback volume grows, team needs expand, and insights must drive action across functions, you need something purpose-built.

That's exactly why we created Zonka Feedback's AI Feedback Intelligence platform. It helps you move from manual prompting to always-on, enterprise-grade analysis, without the limitations.

## Zonka's AI Feedback Intelligence at a Glance



### Unified Feedback View

All your feedback—surveys, chats, tickets, reviews—in one place for clear, contextual insights



### AI-Powered CX Insights

Auto-detect sentiment, tag themes, and surface patterns without any manual effort



### ROI-Focused Impact Analysis

Uncover what's moving NPS, CSAT, CES, and revenue to prioritize the right actions



### Role-Based Intelligence for Teams

Deliver relevant insights to leadership, product, and frontline teams instantly

## Ready to Scale Your Feedback Intelligence? 🚀

Be the first to try Zonka Feedback's new AI-powered platform built for real-time, role-based, qualitative insight at scale.

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