

Zepto already solved speed.

What if it could solve remembering?



Prepared by · Shreya Gupta
Product Management Case Study · Zepto

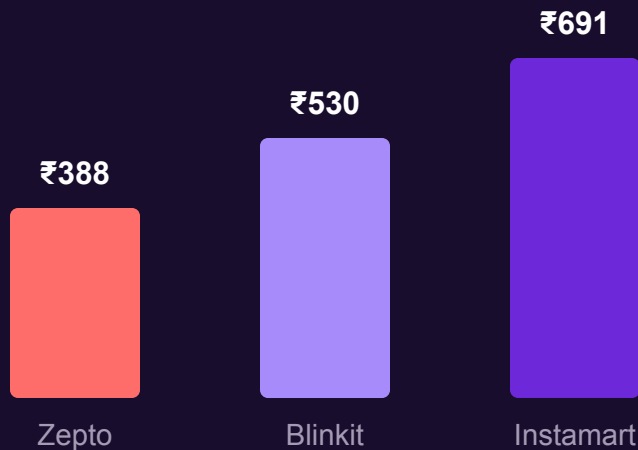
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[zepto.com ↗](https://zepto.com)

But one number has not moved in three years.

Zepto excels at rapid execution, but unit economics are bounded by a stubborn average basket size.

Basket value per order (₹)



₹388

Zepto's average basket size, remaining flat for three years.

₹(-5) to ₹(+20)

Estimated contribution margin range generated per order.

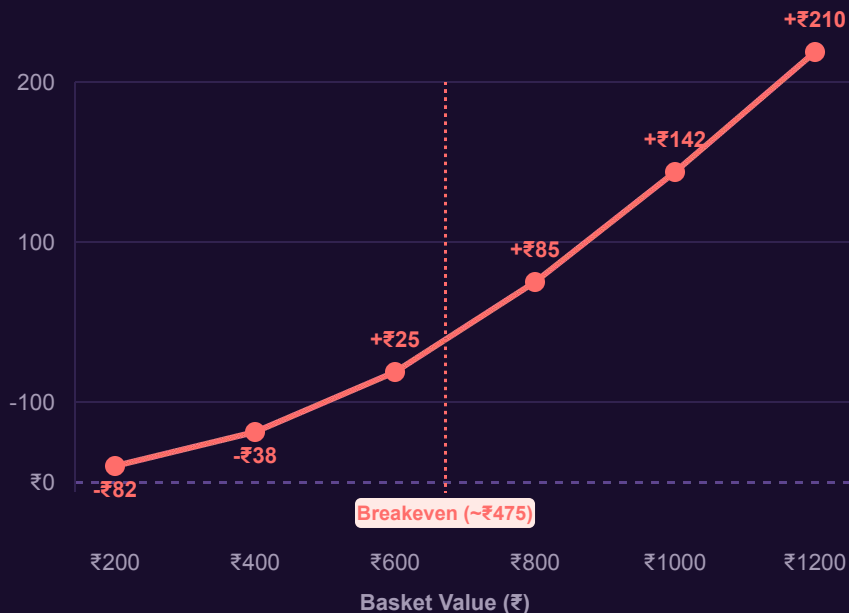
Fewer, fuller

The only operating lever that successfully clears the delivery line.

At ₹388, an extra order can cost Zepto money.

Why basket size, not order count, is the lever.

Contribution per order as basket value rises



Below ₹475, every delivery loses money.

At Zepto's current average of ₹388, contribution margins are negative, placing a heavy cost burden on growth.

The curve is steep, and that is the good news.

Small, incremental increases in basket size trigger massive gains in order profitability once past the breakeven threshold.

So the product question becomes narrow.

We do not need more casual orders; we must design high-intent pathways that systematically raise individual basket values.

Challenging the Brief: From Order Volume to Trip Density

THE ORIGINAL BRIEF

"Increase monthly order frequency without relying heavily on discounts."

More fragmented orders = more logistical cost



RESULT: Fragmented, low-value deliveries

Frequency ≠
Baskets
Replenishment
Lifecycle



THE PM INSIGHT

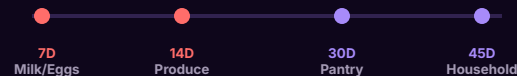
Grow contribution profit per household per month.



THE "FULLER" TRIP

Consolidated Household Basket

HOUSEHOLD REPLENISHMENT TIMELINE



Hypothesis: Design triggers aligning to specific replenishment cycles.

We are not trying to make households buy more. We are trying to make them buy the **same things** in **fewer, fuller trips**.

So I threw away my first brief.

I challenged the problem. The opportunity was bigger.



Meet Ananya

28 yrs • Working
Professional • Mumbai

“I don't mind ordering often, but I hate running out of essentials.”

Her reality

- Busy weekdays
- Forgets to order until something is finished
- Searches every time
- Places many small orders in a month

WHERE I STARTED

“Increase monthly order frequency without discounts.”

More orders didn't always mean more profit.

Ananya's past 30 days

● Orders placed

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

! Many small orders = High effort + Low contribution

Here's the reframe

FREQUENCY
≠
MORE BASKETS

FREQUENCY
=
SMARTER
REPLENISHMENT

WHERE I LANDED

“Grow contribution profit per household per month.”

Make the existing trip bigger, don't manufacture a new one.



- FEWER TRIPS
- ↓
- FULLER BASKETS
- ↓
- MORE INTENTIONAL TRIPS
- ↓
- HIGHER CONTRIBUTION OPPORTUNITY

Target the 7-45 day pantry cycle

7 DAYS



Milk / Eggs
(Short cycle)

14 DAYS



Bread / Produce
(Medium cycle)

30 DAYS



Pantry Essentials
(Medium to long cycle)

45 DAYS



Household / Pet
(Long cycle)



THE PM DISTINCTION:

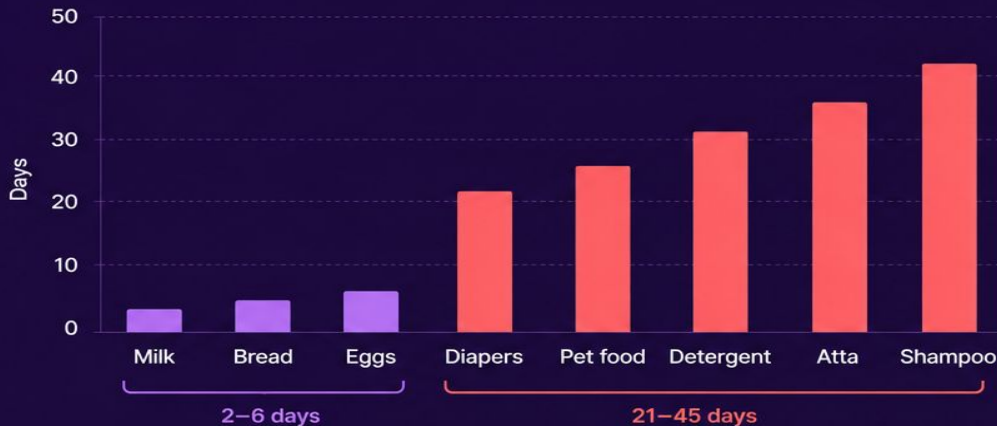
We are not trying to make households buy more.

We are trying to make them buy the same things in fewer, fuller trips.

Household buying splits into two clean clusters.



Average days between repurchases, by category



LEFT CLUSTER · 2–6 DAYS

Frequent essentials.
Short cycles.
Served by Zepto Daily already.



RIGHT CLUSTER · 21–45 DAYS

Irregular essentials.
Long cycles.
Easy to forget. Hard to remember.
This is the unserved opportunity.



A 3-day cycle is a **habit**.
A 26-day cycle is a **blind spot**.



Three replenishment clocks.

Zepto owns two.

0–1 days



THE INSTANT CLOCK

We're out, right now.

Urgent needs. Impulse buys.

Quick decisions.
Low consideration.

OWNED — the Zepto app

1–3 days



THE DAILY CLOCK

Milk. Bread. Eggs. Curd.Recurring every 1–3 days.
High frequency.Habit forming.
Easy to remember.

OWNED — Zepto Daily

7–45 days



THE PANTRY CLOCK

**Detergent. Diapers. Pet food.
Atta.**Irregular cycles. Low frequency.
Needs planning.Easy to forget.
Hard to prioritize.

UNOWNED — this is the wedge

**The pantry clock is high-value, under-served, and unowned.****Higher basket value**
Stock-up behavior**Low mental availability**
Easy to forget**Biggest opportunity**
Zepto doesn't own this moment

Nobody forgets milk. Everybody forgets detergent.



TP

The Time-Poor Professional

24-35

Busy schedule. Shops on autopilot.



“I never forget milk or bread. But I always forget dishwash until I'm out.”

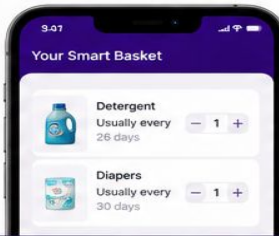


HM

The Household Manager

30-50

Manages the home. Carries the mental load.



“There are twelve things I need to track. Something will always slip.”

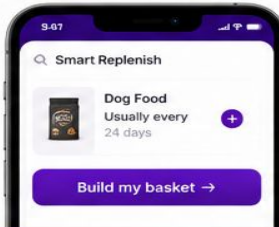


PP

The Pet Parent

Any age

Thinks of everyone. Even the furry one.



“We runs out of dog food at 9pm. Stores are closed. Not fun.”



JOB TO BE DONE: Help households remember what they need, so they can live uninterrupted.

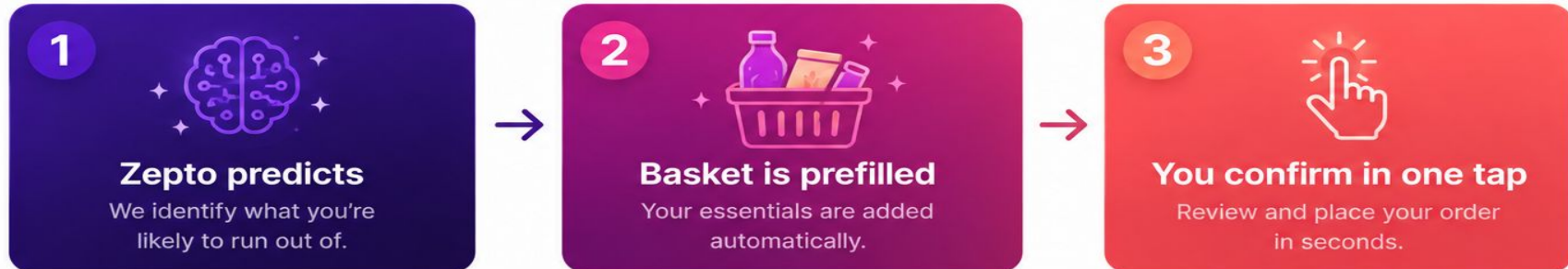


Invert the journey.

TODAY — REACTIVE



WITH ZEPTO AHEAD — ANTICIPATORY



HYPOTHESIS: If Zepto predicts needs and pre-builds the basket, customers will order **more frequently, with higher basket value and less effort.**

Zepto Ahead,

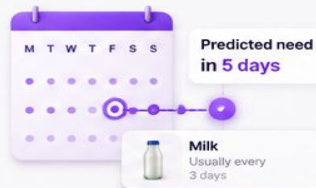
Three surfaces. One new habit.

Predict what matters. Prefill the basket. Consolidate the trip.

01

PREDICT

Learn each household's replenishment rhythm and surface essentials when they are likely to be needed.



02

PREFILL

Turn predicted needs into a ready-to-review basket, using the customer's usual products, quantities and preferences.



03

CONSOLIDATE

Bundle upcoming household needs into fewer, fuller trips instead of creating another fragmented order.



THE ZEPTO AHEAD EXPERIENCE



▶ Open the clickable prototype

'Skip a trip' — where the margin actually comes from.

WITHOUT AHEAD — Three separate rescue trips

 Tue – Detergent run ₹388

 Fri – Dog food run ₹388

 Sun – Atta and oil run ₹388

3 deliveries · ₹1,164 basket value

– Contribution ≈ ₹(-52) for the week

WITH AHEAD — One consolidated basket

 Detergent run Pulled forward

 Dog food run Pulled forward

 Atta and oil run ₹388

1 delivery · ₹1,164 basket value

⚡ Contribution ≈ ₹138 for the week



+₹190
contribution
per household
per week



Model assumptions: (1) Avg margin per order = ₹190, (2) Orders consolidated from 2 → 1 per week via Ahead, (3) No material change in AOV, (4) Variable fulfilment + logistics cost per order remains constant.

The prediction engine.



WORKED EXAMPLE — 1KG DETERGENT

Purchase dates

12 Jan 2025

08 Feb 2025

05 Mar 2025

02 Apr 2025

Computed intervals (days)

27 days

25 days

28 days

Recency-weighted mean
($\alpha = 0.6$) = 26.3 days

Predicted next need

**28 Apr 2025**

(± 3 days confidence window)

THE SURFACING SCORE



Purchase frequency



Days-to-empty



Model confidence



Stock availability



Rejection history

Items with **higher scores** are surfaced in the Ahead card.
Low scores stay silent — we don't guess, **we prioritize**.



WHERE THE LLM SITS

Understands items, normalizes names, maps variants, and explains 'why this' in human language.



WHERE THE STATISTICAL MODEL SITS

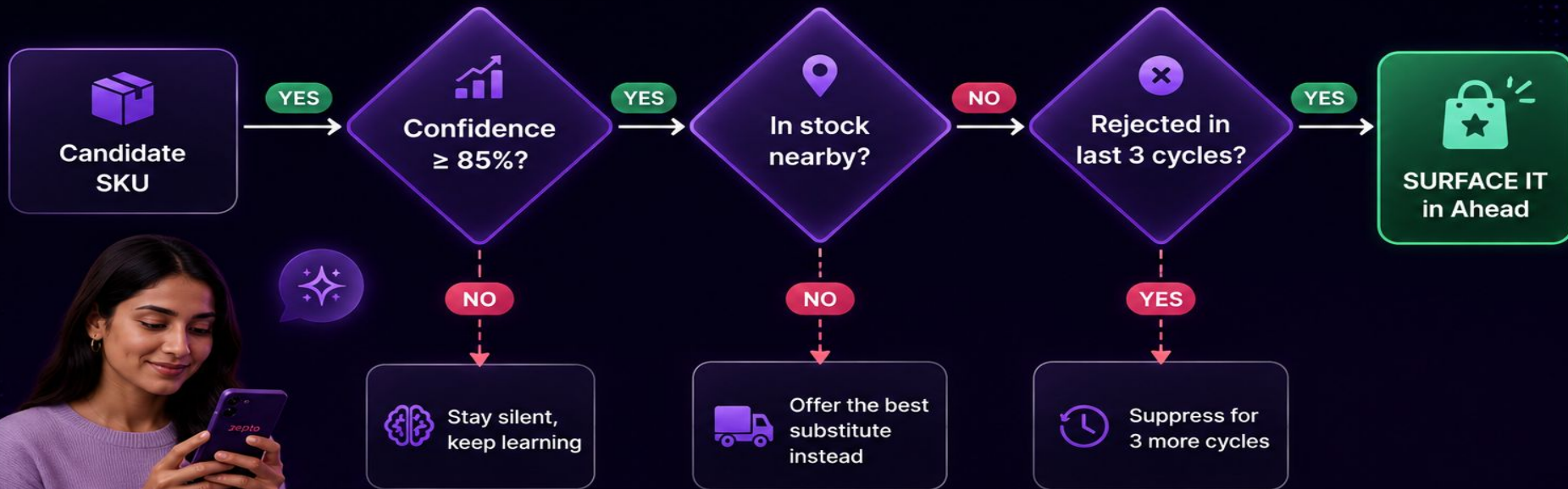
Crunches your data, learns rhythms, produces predictions, confidence scores and replenishment dates.



Together:

Accurate predictions.
Trusted by design.

Should we say anything at all?



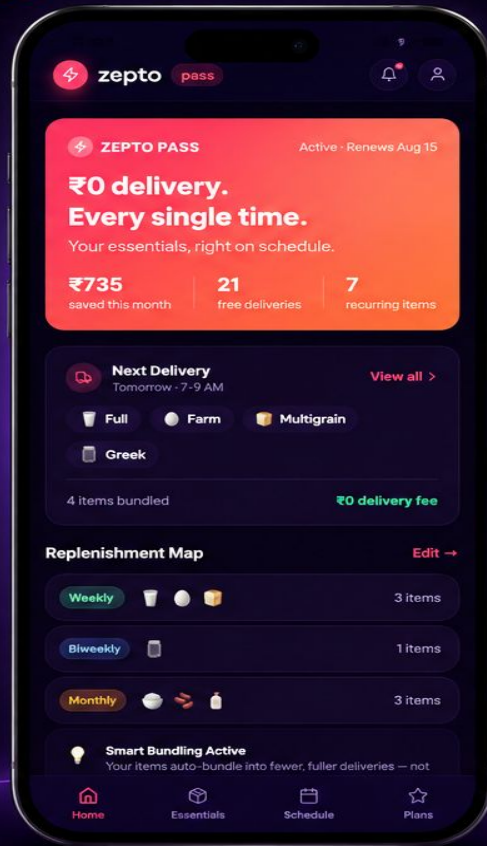
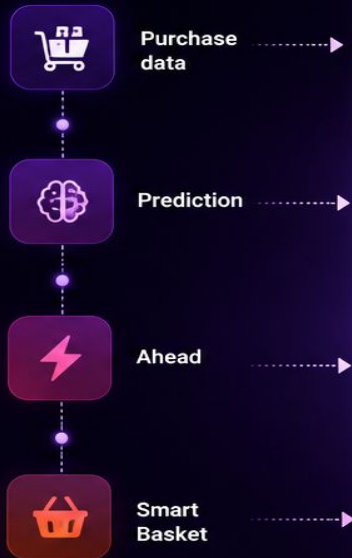
The most important box on this chart is 'stay silent'.

How it fits together.



BUILD NOTE

Synthetic household data powers the prototype.



NON-FUNCTIONAL



Fast



Reliable



Explainable



Prototype stack: React · TypeScript · API · Prediction service

The loop that makes this defensible.



The moat is not the model. It is the **interval data**.

What ships, and what deliberately **doesn't**.



MVP · 0–3 months



Ahead card



Due now vs
Coming later



Smart Basket
(editable)



Why this +
one-tap dismiss



Notifications



V1 · 3–6 months



Calendar view



Preferences



Substitutes



Store aware



History & edits



V2 · 6–12 months



Household profiles



Personalized offers



Lifestyle nudges



Voice setup



Analytics



OUT OF SCOPE



Ads



New markets



B2B features



International



IoT integrations



The discipline: the MVP exists to answer one question.

I would not assume this works. I'd test it.

**PRIMARY****Contribution profit per household per month****SECONDARY**

AOV

Items /
orderGross
margin %Repeat
rate

NPS

**GUARDRAILS**Cancel
rateSubstitution
rateReturns
rateComplaint
rateApp
uninstall

Latency



Note: We deliberately want **deliveries per household** to go down. Fewer trips, same (or more) profit.

One north star, and the funnel beneath it.



NORTH STAR

Contribution profit per household per month

Not orders per customer—because fewer, more consolidated trips reduce costs, emissions, and customer time while growing margin.

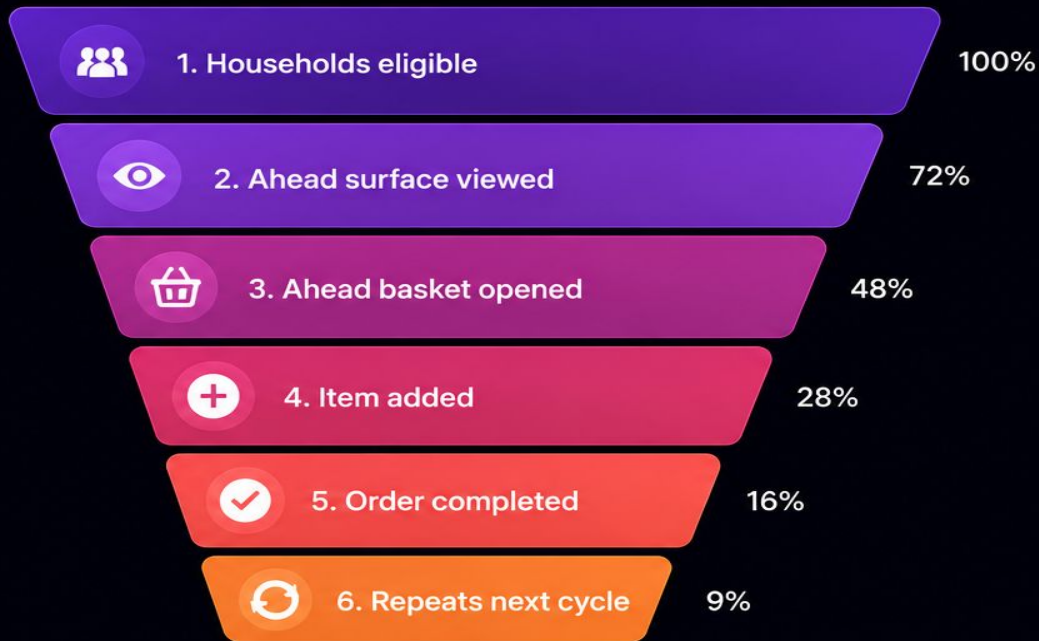


THE SECOND-ORDER PRIZE

Advertising revenue

More intent data + higher trust unlocks relevant ads that compound with adoption.

THE AHEAD FUNNEL



Events tracked: `ahead_surface_impression` · `ahead_basket_opened` · `item_added_from_ahead` · `order_completed` · `repeat_order_next_cycle`

The four ways this fails.



01

Customers read it as upselling

If Ahead feels pushy, trust drops and engagement collapses.



MITIGATION

Lead with utility, show savings and time back.



02

The model is confidently wrong

Bad predictions create friction, waste and loss of credibility.



MITIGATION

Conservative thresholds, human-in-the-loop early on.



03

Notification fatigue

Too many alerts train users to ignore everything.



MITIGATION

Rate limits, smart bundling and user-controlled prefs.



04

Consolidation cannibalises rather than adds

Fewer trips could mean smaller baskets and lower margin.



MITIGATION

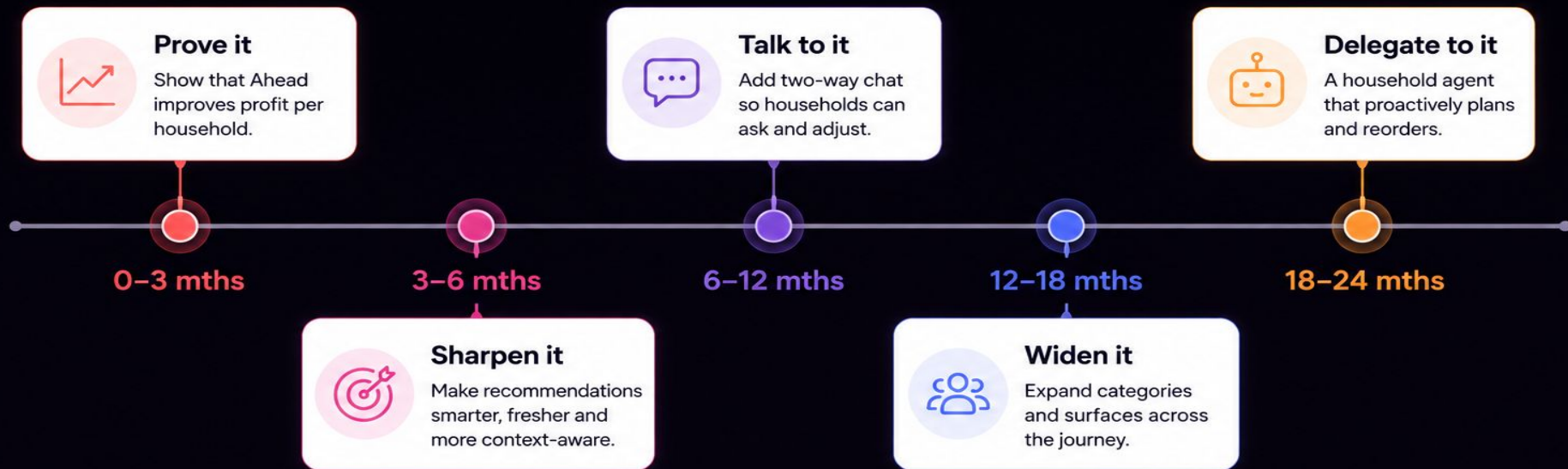
Optimize for profit per trip, not frequency. Watch mix, basket size, margin.



Privacy first: We use your data to save you time and money, never to sell to anyone.



From a card on the home screen to a household agent.



Each phase earns the next.

Trust is the compounding asset.
We earn it a little more in every phase.



zepto

‘I wouldn’t try to make Zepto more addictive.

I’d make it more profitable — by removing the mental effort of remembering what a household needs next.’

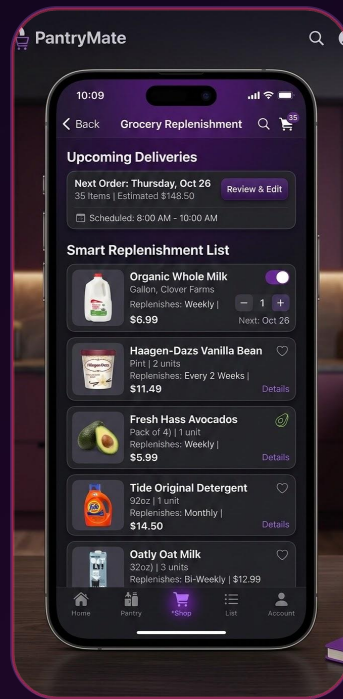
↑ Contribution profit / household ↑ Basket value past break-even ↓ Deliveries per household ↓ Discount dependency



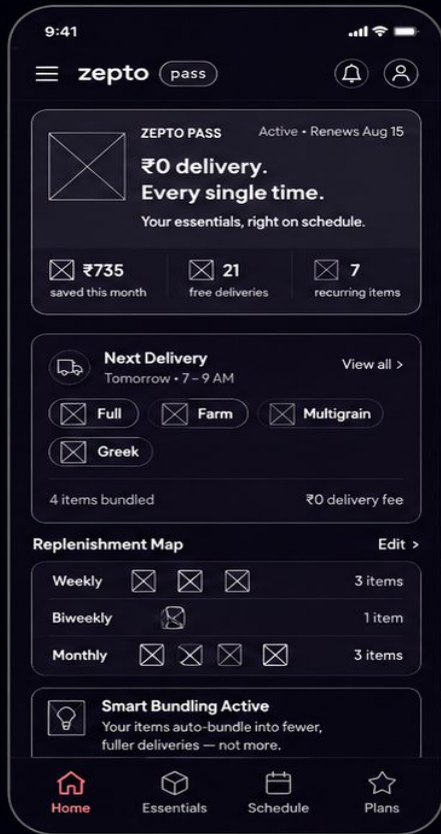
Prepared by · SHREYA

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[Clickable prototype ↗](#)



Zepto App – Wireframes (Mobile)



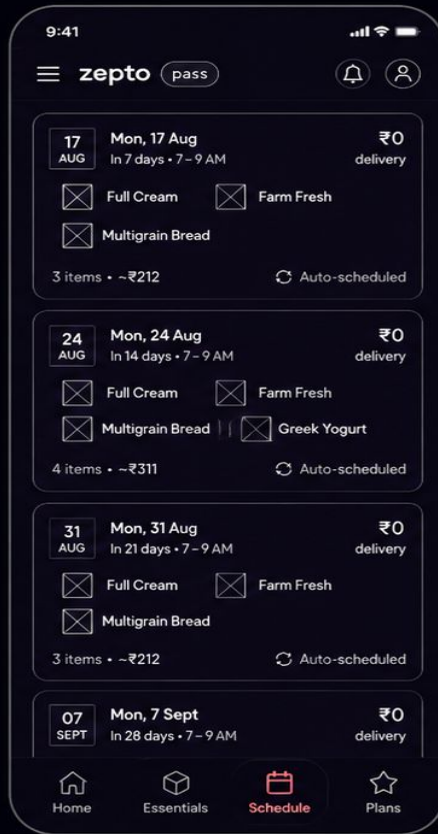
01 Home

Overview of pass, next delivery and replenishment summary.



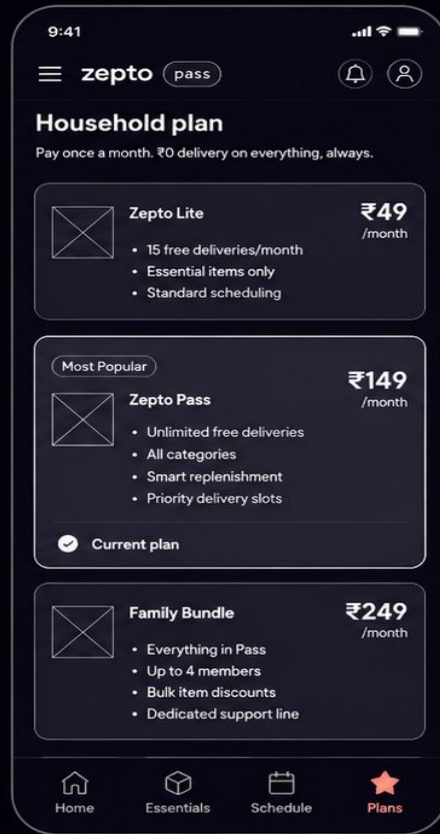
02 Essentials

Manage items and set delivery frequency.



03 Schedule

View and manage upcoming scheduled deliveries.



04 Plans

Choose the plan that fits your household needs.

Click on the Slide to go Zepto Prototype