01 / THE OPPORTUNITY

A Clearer Starting Point.

Protective iPhone cases / U.S. consumers / proposed audience: ages 45-65

FICTIONAL FOUNDER ANSWERS. THIS IS A SAMPLE, NOT A VALIDATED OPPORTUNITY.

Our Read

Explore protection with everyday convenience as a positioning hypothesis. Before committing to tooling, find out what would make a buyer switch from a case they already trust. An age range alone is not a compelling reason to choose a new brand.

91%

U.S. adults ages 50-64

own a smartphone. [1]

$49

Apple silicone case

observed U.S. price. [2]

$35-45

Proposed founder price

unvalidated assumption.

What the Evidence Supports

Established brands already sell cases at multiple prices. Some promote magnetic attachment, soft-touch surfaces, or protective construction. These are existing competitive offers, not proof of an unmet need. [2,3]

The Decision to Make First

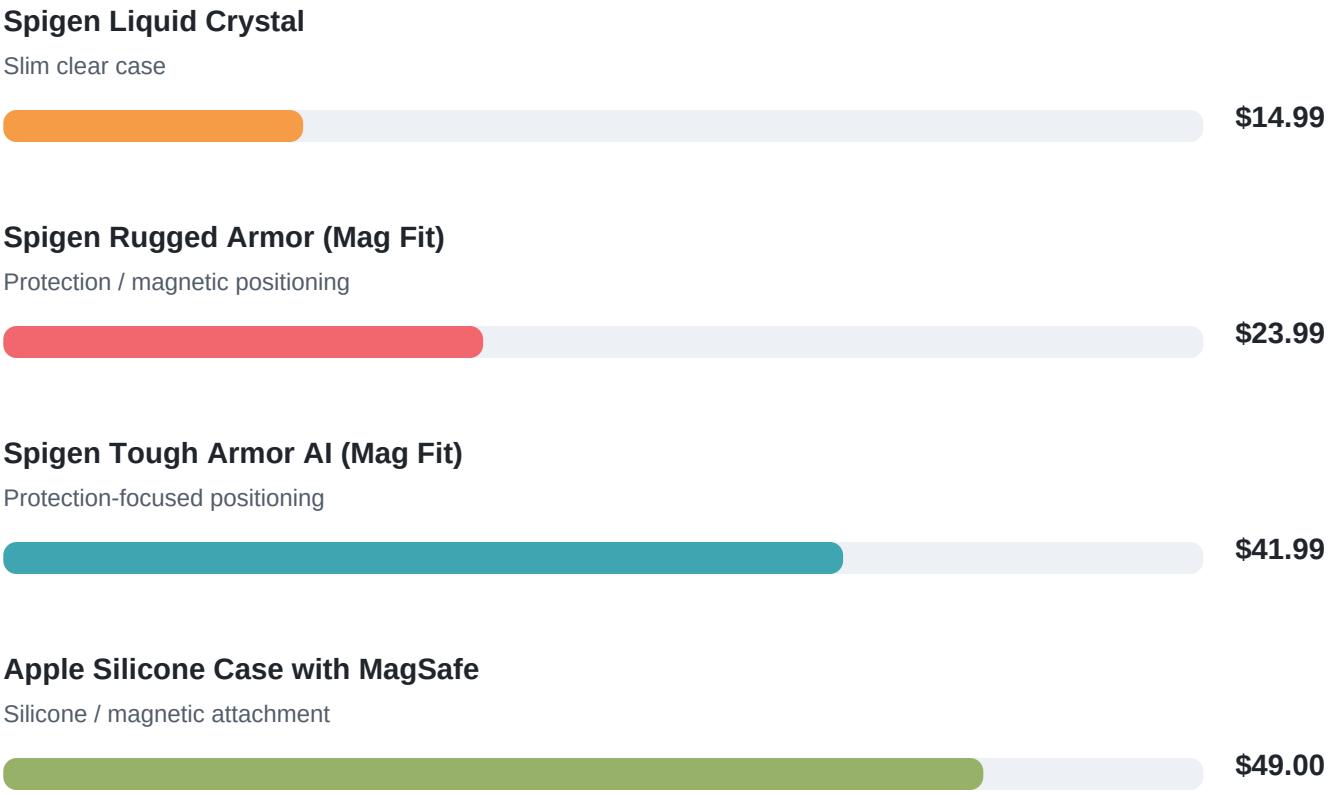
Can you identify a repeatable frustration with existing cases, then show that your proposed benefit matters enough to change a buying decision? We recommend testing this before selecting a launch price.

02 / COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

What Buyers Can Already Buy.

A small competitive reference set, not a market-wide price distribution.

OBSERVED ONLINE PRICES / USD / BEFORE TAX & SHIPPING



All examples are listed for iPhone 16; features and model variants differ. Spigen prices are displayed promotional prices on its U.S. collection page. Apple is a single product listing. Prices can change. [2,3]

What This Means for Your Proposed $35-45 Price

That range is close to an established protection-focused offer in this sample. Being within the range does not establish demand or margin. You would need a clear reason to switch, not simply a similar price.

This chart shows asking prices, not transactions, sales volume, historical spending, or what adults ages 45-65 are willing to pay.

03 / CUSTOMERS & CHANNELS

Who to Learn From First.

Use behavior to narrow the audience; treat age as context rather than a buying motive.

PUBLISHED FINDING

A Large Smartphone Audience Is Only a Starting Point

Pew reports 91% smartphone ownership among U.S. adults ages 50-64 in its 2026 survey. That age band overlaps the proposed audience but does not isolate ages 45-65, iPhone owners, frequent travelers, or case purchasers. It cannot be used as the size of this opportunity. [1]

MV RECOMMENDATION

Recruit Around a Recent Buying Experience

Start with people in the proposed age range who bought an iPhone case recently and travel regularly. Include different phone models and purchase channels. Compare their reasons for buying before assuming they all prioritize protection.

THREE USEFUL SEGMENTS TO INVESTIGATE

Frequent Travelers

Ask about pocket access, charging, bulk and carrying the phone.

Recent Replacement Buyers

Ask what happened to the previous case and why they changed brands.

Magnetic-Accessory Users

Ask what they attach and which compatibility problems they have experienced.

Channels: Investigate Before Selecting

The founder is considering Amazon and a direct website. Neither is verified as this audience's preferred channel. Ask about their last actual purchase: where they bought, what they compared, and why. Consider Kickstarter only if there is a distinct benefit you can demonstrate.

04 / YOUR NEXT STEPS

Turn the Snapshot Into Action.

A practical learning sequence. These are recommendations, not statistically validated thresholds.

01 Interview > 02 Compare > 03 Test > 04 Decide

01 / Speak With 8-10 Relevant Buyers

As an exploratory starting point, recruit recent case buyers in the proposed audience. Ask: What did you buy last? What did you pay? What annoyed you about the previous case? What almost stopped the purchase? Record actual experiences before asking about preferences.

02 / Compare Three Existing Cases

Use cases for the same phone model. Ask people to handle them, select one, and explain their tradeoffs. Record grip, bulk, button access, charging and appearance separately. Rotate presentation order. Look for repeated frustrations; do not report this small sample as population percentages.

03 / Investigate Price and Commercial Feasibility

First record actual past spending. Then compare the proposed $35, $40 and $45 options with existing alternatives, including keeping the current case. Treat stated choices as exploratory. Use a truthful purchase or reservation test later to examine behavior; an email signup is not a sale.

04 / Write a Go / Revise / Stop Decision

Continue if a recurring problem and credible reason to switch emerge. Revise the audience or benefit if responses diverge. Pause tooling if demand remains unclear. Separately obtain supplier, packaging, shipping, return and channel cost estimates before judging profitability.

Brand Readiness: The simulated founder is considering names. Develop a shortlist and investigate availability separately; this snapshot does not evaluate or clear brand names.

05 / SIMULATED ANSWERS

The Brief Behind This Report.

All 16 answers below are fictional. No confidential design information is needed.

01	**General product category**	Protective phone cases; iPhone accessories.
02	**Development stage**	Exploring an opportunity, before prototyping.
03	**First sales market**	United States; nationwide.
04	**Proposed customers**	Frequent travelers who buy their own phone accessories.
05	**Age range to investigate**	45-65; this is a proposed audience, not a verified segment.
06	**Use context**	Commuting, airports, everyday use and travel.
07	**General customer need**	Protect a phone while keeping it convenient to use.
08	**Priorities to investigate**	Protection, grip / comfort, and low bulk.
09	**Proposed selling price**	US $35-45; no willingness-to-pay evidence yet.
10	**Possible sales channels**	Amazon and own website; open to Kickstarter.
11	**Competitors to compare**	Apple and Spigen; open to other alternatives.
12	**Decisions to support**	Audience focus and pricing.
13	**Who purchases?**	Individual buying for their own use.
14	**Current alternative**	Existing protective case or keeping the current case.
15	**Research completed**	Browsed competitor sites; no customer interviews or sales.
16	**Brand-name readiness**	Considering options; no name supplied or evaluated.

06 / SOURCES & METHOD

1. Pew Research Center. Mobile fact sheet; 2026 survey, Jan 30-Jun 18. U.S. adults. Supports the 91% figure for ages 50-64; not iPhone ownership or case demand.

2. Apple Store. iPhone 16 Silicone Case with MagSafe, Black. Observed $49 asking price; silicone and magnetic features are manufacturer descriptions, not independent tests.

3. Spigen Store. iPhone 16 collection. Observed promotional asking prices: Liquid Crystal $14.99; Rugged Armor (Mag Fit) $23.99; Tough Armor AI (Mag Fit) $41.99. Collection prices may vary by variant.

4. U.S. Small Business Administration. Framework for demand, customers, competition, location and pricing. Guidance informs report structure; SBA has not endorsed this tool.

5. Pew Research Center. Questionnaire guidance supports clear questions and pretesting. This founder intake is a research brief, not a representative consumer survey.

6. Google Trends Help. Explains relative search interest, normalization and low-volume limitations. No Trends series was retrieved for this sample, so no growth or seasonality conclusion is asserted.

What Remains Unverified

This review did not establish category market size, purchase-channel shares, age-specific spending, preferred colors, or search trends. No paid datasets, customer interviews, or Consensus literature review were used. Competitor samples are intentionally limited; this is not a comprehensive market study.

Recommended trend research: compare the U.S. search terms "iPhone case", "MagSafe case" and "protective phone case" together across five years. Check related queries and launch-season spikes. Publish an actual dated export before drawing trend conclusions. [6]