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EMGT 378
Homework 3

Question 1

My research group uses a team management software called Zoho. It allows people in the same group tasks, such as sharing and editing documents online, adding tasks, and sending messages. I happen to find this software annoying for a variety of reasons.
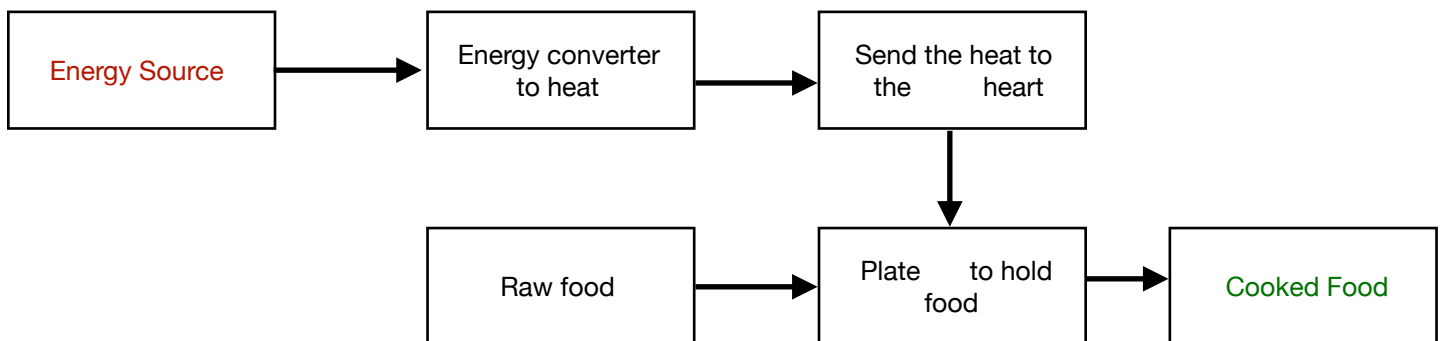
One crucial need the developers of Zoho missed was a clean and intuitive user interface. While the developers packed a lot of features into the product, in doing so overload the user interface with a lot of different options. These options clutter up the screen which makes it really intimidating to use especially for new users.

An intuitive user experience is another need the developers of the product missed. For example, on their iOS application, the user gets a push notification whenever someone in their group has edited a file. This is fine, but when someone does 100 edits on the same file in the same session, the other user gets 100 notifications! Zoho should have implemented this feature in such a way that one notification would have been sent per user session. Another issue with Zoho is that when you try to view a document someone has created the link immediately downloads the file instead of opening it in their editor. This is annoying as in most cases I want to view and make changes to the document within Zoho instead of downloading it.
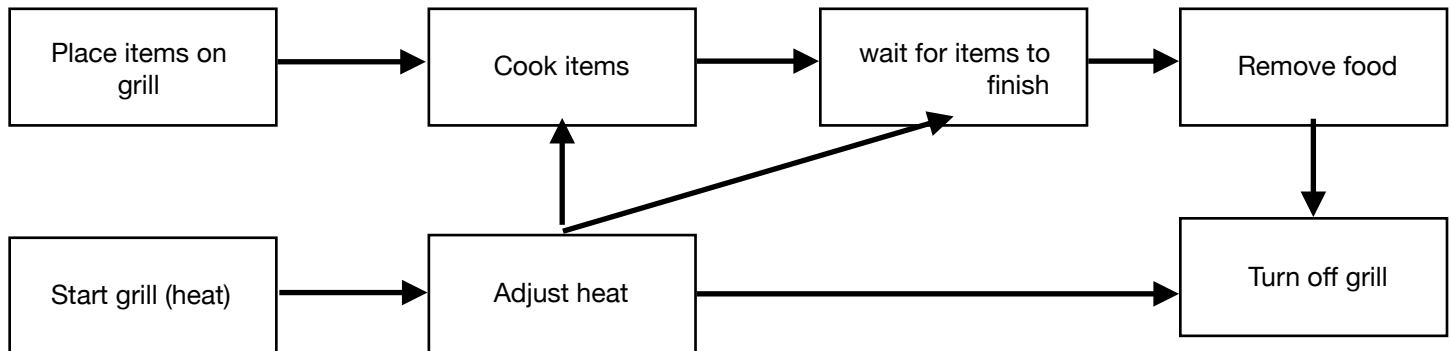
I feel a lot of these needs were not met because Zoho is at its core a business tool. Rather than individual users, Zoho's customers are businesses who need a productivity suite for day to day operations. Because of this, I feel that the developers for Zoho focused on functionality and a rich feature set instead of aesthetics and user experience. The software definitely packed a lot of features that I personally do not use, such as creating task lists and the kanban board, but I can see bigger teams relying on the extra features in their daily routines. And these teams probably would value those important features over aesthetics. This is also why I believe that the developers deliberately ignored those needs.

Question 2

Functional

Interactive

Place items on grill	→	Cook items	→	wait for items to finish	→	Remove food

Start grill (heat)	→	Adjust heat	→			Turn off grill

Question 3

Part 1
There are a couple of advantages which Toyota will experience from adapting a more modular design. The first would be that it reduces the cost in the investment of its production lines. If Toyota was using a specialized way of manufacturing for every one of its different models, then they would have to develop specialized production lines and specialized manufacturing plants for each individual model car. By adapting a modular approach where components are shared and easily integrated, Toyota's production lines can be capable of producing different models of cars which definitely will reduce costs in investment.

Another advantage Toyota has is cost of reduction in development. By creating components and parts which can be shared and integrated across multiple models, Toyota can reuse parts across its product line. For complex machines, like a car, having the ability to repair part of an engine or a brake without having to replace the whole thing definitely will reduce the amount of time, development, and costs to replace and fix. Further upgrading certain parts of the car is much easier by having a modular design

Part 2
I believe Toyota is opening more of its business to suppliers for a couple of strategic reasons. The first is that Toyota can reduce investment in supply manufacturing plants. The article mentions how Continental AG supplies crash prevention systems alongside Toyota. By having a relationship and purchasing from Continental AG, Toyota can reduce costs that they may have had to incur by making their own crash prevention systems. Offloading that task by buying from Continental AG allows Toyota to instead either save some money, or re invest it into another area. It can also allow Toyota to expand faster. Toyota can focus on other aspects they are good at, such as making engines and other systems.