

CHEF iQ - Product Manager Case Study




Peter Jough



The Challenge

**How do we improve the
CHEF iQ App / Experience?**

What is the goal for CHEF iQ?

Helping people **Discover** , **Create** , and **Plate**  utilizing CHEF iQ and the Smart cooker

“

*There are opportunities for
us to create an **elevated
culinary experience.***

”

Ralph Newhouse
CEO, CHEF iQ

Business Objectives

- Increasing our growth (users, revenue)
- Provide enhanced cooking experiences to attract + retain users
- Showcase the potential CHEF iQ



Demographics: Who Are Our End Users?

- For this new feature, we should focus on the **Millennial and Gen Z market** as our end users
 - They're more adept in tech products.
 - CHEF iQ is in the forefront of IoT, these generations will be experiencing these smarter technologies for the bulk of their lives.
 - If the Millennial period begins in 1985, and average U.S. life expectancy is ~79 y.o, then we can assume there's at least 44+ years of IoT exposure. CHEF iQ can become the staple IoT cooking technology for younger consumers as they age.
 - Value experiences over material possessions
 - Study done by [Harris group](#) shows majority of Millennials prefer spending their money over traditional material possessions (house, car, etc.)
 - CHEF iQ can benefit in the social media and FOMO cultural shift where people share their experiences online.
 - People share their experiences, and reviews on social media in response to staying relevant, and connected to others, otherwise they feel [socially excluded](#).

Trade Offs?

- Younger people tend to be more thorough in doing research and making sure a particular purchase is right for them.
 - Could lead to a lower probability of sales for the Smart Cooker.
- Baby Boomers and Generation X buying behavior is more heuristic and spontaneous
 - Could lead us to having a potential influx of sales for the Chefman Smart Cooker, but they might not be as familiar or willing to use the app. On average, they're less tech savvy too.
- So in the long run, it's more effective to focus on the Millennial and Gen Z as opposed to older generations.

Capitalizing on Social Media Culture

- Millennials and Gen Z are the bulk of social media users and are synonymous with it.
- When it comes to sharing cooking-related content (recipes, tutorials, etc.):
 - Over 95 millions posts and videos are shared on Instagram per day.
 - 40.2+ million “#cooking” posts/videos
 - 500K+ “#cookingvideo” posts/videos
 - 7+ million “#recipe” posts/videos
 - Over 4.75 billion items shared by Facebook users each day.
 - 379K+ “#cooking” posts/videos PTAT
 - 104K+ “recipe” post/videos PTAT
- Millennials make up [40%](#) of social media discussions regarding food on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter in the United States alone.
- Think about all the additional cooking-related content that’s shared without the hashtag.

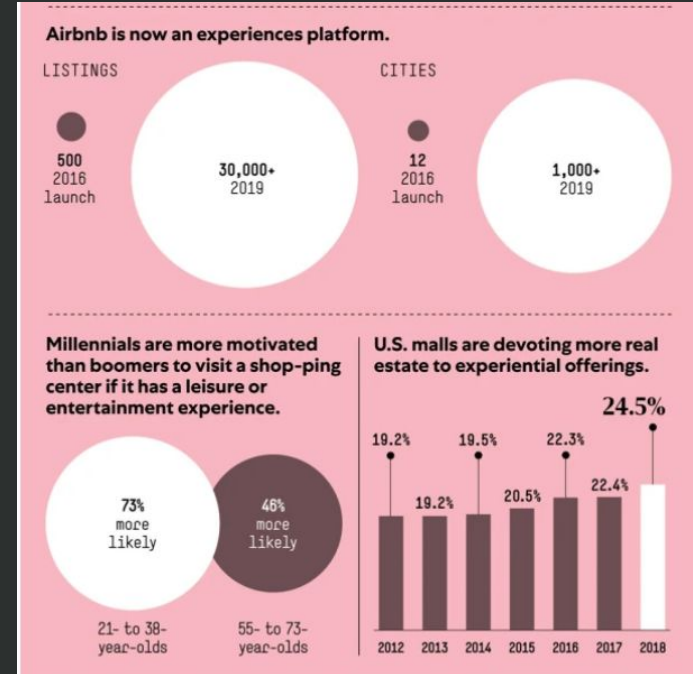
Understanding the Experience Economy and Market

- In a recent survey by [Arival](#), (tours, activities, and attractions industry)
 - 68% of travelers said food and drink were the most important elements of their trips.
 - 4,000 American and European travelers revealed that 27% had done some type of culinary tour, class, or experience.
 - Younger travelers ages 18 to 34 (32%) are more likely to have done some food-related experience during their most recent travels.



Leveraging Social Media and Experiences Economy

- In 2018, Airbnb saw \$15 million in revenue from Experiences for the first three quarters of 2018.
- Airbnb recently debuted a collection of 3,000+ experiences exclusively dedicated to cooking in 75+ different countries.
 - It's the first time Airbnb had carved out a category of Experiences dedicated to a single activity.
- There's a lot of potential with this ever growing experiences space. CHEF iQ could be a position itself to be a niche leader for cooking-related experience by differentiating itself with the Smart Cooker to pair with the experiences. Having people share their CHEF iQ experiences on social media can combine both aspects.



Define The Problem

What problems are **Millenials** and **Gen Z** people encountering when it comes to their cooking experience?

Similar to doctors, we have to treat the root of the problem, not just the symptoms.

So What Are Customers Currently Saying?

- A great way of defining the problem is to learn through the customer themselves! Afterall, we're building the product for them.
- I visited Amazon, Walmart, Target, to read reviews about the Smart Cooker and CHEF iQ. Then I went on Google Play Store, and the iOS Store to read customer reviews about their experience with the CHEF iQ app.
- Many customers mentioned how they're enjoying the product and the experience by allowing them to cook tasty meals in a simple manner, while other customers voice their complaints towards the firmware and inconsistency of the hardware and software, which gave them a poor experience.



Sample of Customer Reviews

Ratings:

Walmart: 5 stars (10)

Amazon: 4.4 (79)

Play Store: 4 (8)

iOS: 4.5 (40)



Richard Garrison

★★★★★ May 6, 2020



The app is working well with the pressure cooker. No issues. Could use more recipes but it is new as of May 2020.

★★★★★ **Great purchase**

This was a great purchase. I have never used a pressure cooker before and the ease of use made me wonder why I didn't get one sooner. Plus, the app included has endless recipes.

Mark, June 24, 2020



Chelle5678, 07/08/2020

Firmware update failure

I've tried numerous times. Firmware update fails!

How do I get a hold of customer service!
At \$200 this should work right out of the box



The Pimento, 04/01/2020

Lack of recipes is worrying

I purchased this off Kickstarter and was browsing the recipes. I'm shocked at how many of their own categories have zero results. Hopefully the developers will fill the app with recipes before launch.



krystle stolleis **TOP 100 REVIEWER**

★★★★★ **Wow this smart cooker is AMAZING!**

Reviewed in the United States on April 10, 2020

Verified Purchase

Wow this smart cooker is AMAZING!!! Versatile nice all in one pressure cooker and so much more! Amazing machine! Can use it for so many things: pressure cooking, steam, sear, broil, sauté, ect! Works great, and super easy to figure out!! Total capacity is a large 6 qt! 1500w even cooking! Has led digital touchscreen display with presets which is amazing! I've cooked several things in this now and have not one single complaint! Super easy to clean! Best \$180 I've spent in awhile! The fact that you can set it with a phone app is the best feature yet! App also has a cooking a calculator which is super nice, and tons of awesome recipes! The auto pressure release function is also great as that's what's always scared me most with most pressure cookers! Highly recommend!

17 people found this helpful

Customer Sentiment

Good:

"I never used a pressure cooker before and the ease of use made me wonder why I didn't get one sooner."

"Cooking calculator is super nice."

"App has a cooking calculator, which is super nice, and tons of awesome recipes!"

What Can Be Improved:

"After that it said update firmware. It was already updated, but I guess it didn't recognize it...I couldn't connect it to my phone."

"I'm shocked at how many categories have zero results (recipes)."

"Could use more recipes."

What to prioritize?



The lack of cooking-related content on the app (recipes, tutorials, etc.)

or



The connectivity and technical issues customers are having on the CHEF iQ app

“Content Is King”

- I’ve decided to prioritize the **“lack of content”** issue because at the end of the day, the cooking content is the crux of the app.
- The Smart Cooker and CHEF iQ is an engine and needs content to fuel itself since they go in tandem.
- So even if a customer fixes their technical issues, goes onto the app, but finds out there isn’t enough cooking content, then the need of using the Smart Cooker and app will decrease drastically because there’s little meaning for them to discover and create dishes.
- While the customer feedback for the connectivity issues are important, content is the root of this problem.
- Another reason why I’ve decided to prioritize this problem is because there could also be user error involved when initially setting up the Smart Cooker and app, which are problems that can be more “easy” to solve compared to the latter.

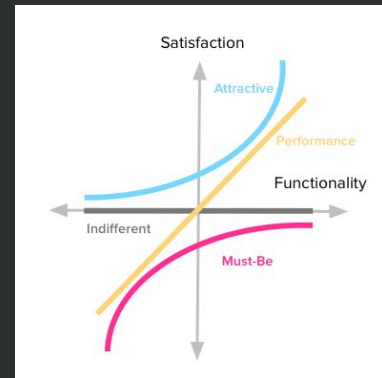
First Principles Thinking

First Principles Thinking is the process of deconstructing things into its most fundamental truths to gain a more holistic understanding of how it works. This process helps us analyze the challenge and synthesize new ideas.

- The lack of cooking-related content on the app
 - >> cooking-related content are just videos and text
 - >> videos and text are forms of media
 - >> media is a communication outlet

SOLUTION: People need cooking-related content because it carries important cooking information that guides them to cook properly and be entertained.

LIMITATION: In the future I would try to use the Kano Model to have precise data telling me customers' delight levels to determine whether this feature should be prioritized. Would probably be a performance need, "more is better."



Why Do A Qualitative Study?

UX research is effective when trying to build something that's relevant and enjoyable to users.

Qualitative studies are more ideal because they're more effective when trying to better understand concepts, experiences, or thoughts whereas quantitative studies are better for trying to test/confirm something with numbers.

I did a quick 15 minute interview with 6 unique people with different backgrounds. I recruited these participants by messaging colleagues, and other people within my social circle. I did this study to see if my "leap of face assumption" was accurate (the importance of cooking-related content).

I prepared 5 questions with the objective of better understanding at a granular level what the general sentiment towards cooking is, as well as their motivation for it, their thoughts about cooking-related content, and the future of cooking. Where can CHEF iQ app interject and help remedy those issues and be a good fit for the market?

By analyzing my participants' quotes I began conceptualizing personas out of them, they served as a model for potential user segments. And it's important to understand different customer segments' in order to build a well rounded product that accommodates our different users.

Qualitative Study

I asked questions along the lines of:

1. How would you rate your interest and passion level for cooking?
2. (Based on their response to question 1), why do you have a low/med/high level of interest/passion for cooking?
3. Can you share your behavior when you interact with cooking-related content?
4. What are your thoughts about the future of cooking? (i.e cooking classes, IoT)
5. If you go onto the app to view content, and find enough of it, how do you feel?
 - a. If you onto go an app to view content, but find there's little of it, how do you feel?
 - b. How would you rate the importance of this content?

Qualitative Analysis: What I learned

People who don't have an innate passion for cooking tend to be deterred easily when trying to learn more about it.

2 participants mentioned how if they were to pay for any cooking experience, the price should match their skill level to make it a good ROI.

Users who have a genuine interest in cooking enjoy it because it allows them to connect with others (kids, friends, etc.).

People believe that smart cooking technology plays an influential role in creating more interest/hype for them to cook (i.e Samsung Smart Fridge).

Overview: Personas



The “Inconsistent”

Not as innately passionate in cooking. Get confused, and frustrated too easy by jargon or technical things. Inconsistent when learning a skill. Just wants things are easy as possible.



The “Student”

A relatively new person to cooking. Has an innate interest for it, and is willing to get her hands dirty and learn. Is committed to improving. More casual about cooking.



The “Enthusiast”

Proficient at cooking and wants to elevate her skills and experience new things to cook. Only wants to use good quality products/services that are effective and clean.

Dylan (Cool, Kind-Hearted, Lazy)

Age: 25

Occupation: Sports Marketing Associate

Location: Newark, NJ

Status: In a relationship

Bio:

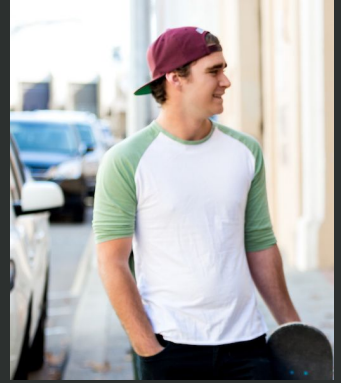
Dylan Johnson is sport marketer for a regional sports good store. Throughout his life, Dylan has been playing sports throughout his life from elementary to the end of high school. Influenced by some of his favorite athletes, Dylan wants to pursue a more healthy lifestyle by changing his diet, however, he's really inconsistent about it. He also wants get better at cooking for his girlfriend, and impress her.

Goals:

- To cook effectively with the least effort required.
- To save some money by not ordering out consistently.
- Eat healthier by preparing home cooked meals.

Pain Points:

- Not innately passionate about cooking.
- Gets easily frustrated and deterred when attempting to cook.
- Would rather just order out to save time and effort.
- Wouldn't spend much time researching and learning how to cook properly.



Sabrina (Trendy, Charismatic, Nerdy)

Age: 23

Occupation: Graduate Student

Location: Boston, MA

Status: Single

Bio: Sabrina is a very intelligent and studious, and currently pursuing a graduate degree at Boston College in Biology. She is mixed and of Indian and Italian descent. She's very trendy and loves going on food crawls in Boston and posting her pictures of her food on Instagram. When she's not studying, she loves watching "Binging with Babish," and tries her best to recreate meals from both of her parents' backgrounds.

Goals:

- Wants to be better at cooking, has a genuine passion for it.
- Showoff her delicious looking creations on Instagram
- Recreate dishes from her both of her ethnic backgrounds.

Pain Points:

- Constantly busy with studying
- Experiences learning curve when trying to cook



Talia (Focused, Passionate, Go-Getter)

Age: 34

Occupation: Director, Management Consultant

Location: New York, NY

Status: Married

Bio:

Talia is a professional, she's a driven, and determined person. As a director for one of the top management consultant firms in NYC she is driven by the fast pace nature of the city. She has the duality of someone who is hard working, but also has a soft side for the arts, literature, and her kids. As someone who travels often to meet with clients, she discovers new eats and tries to replicate those dishes at home for her family to try. She especially enjoys spending time with her kids cooking and baking treats.

Goals:

- Because Talia is a skilled cook, and doesn't always have the time to cook, she wants to be able to enjoy delicious meals that are simple to execute.

Pain Points:

- Because she thinks highly of her cooking level, she doesn't enjoy using cheap cooking products/services and only wants good quality.



The Opportunity:

How We Can Solve The Problem?

What Users Want:

- Cooking should be simple enough for anyone
- Affordable ways to learn cooking-related concepts
- Should be a meaningful way to connect with the craft and others
- More cooking-related content for any skill level and for any pace of learning

Now that we know what to solve, what are the alternatives out there in the market, how do we compete against them?

Card Sorting Exercise

I did a pseudo card sorting activity with the 6 participants (all U.S. based) if they recognize these companies and to rate from a scale 1-10 (10 being the leaders) how strong they think X company's position is in the market (if participants didn't know the company, I gave a brief background explanation). I then took an aggregate of their responses and rounded their averages relative to the graph.

The objective of this exercise is to understand how people view the cooking IoT space and experiences market. By understanding what their perceptions are, we can position ourselves to differentiate from our competitors.

People recognize household consumer tech names such as Samsung and LG and assumed they're industry leaders in cooking IoT. People also assume Airbnb is the leading experiences company because of how synonymous they are with that industry. However, more people were unfamiliar and less confident with some Chinese IoT companies and ed-tech companies.

Market and Competition



Market and Competition Analysis

What's really important to note here is that the hardware is what makes the experience magical for customers compared to online ed-tech classes. For example, you could just use the Smart Cooker and app separately, but similar to the Apple ecosystem, when you combine multiple Apple products such as iPhone, Apple Watch, and Macbook together, you're getting a superb user experience, in the case of Apple, having all your documents and photos sync'd across all devices through iCloud.

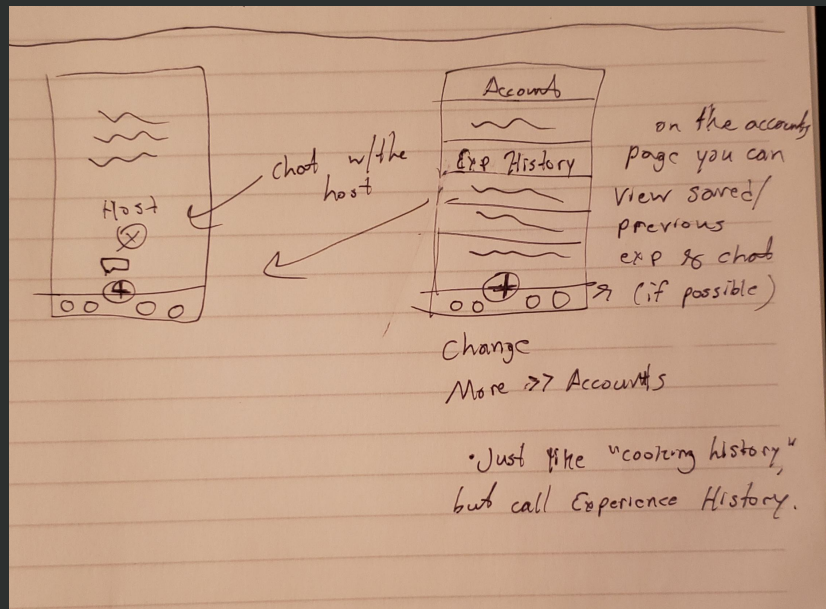
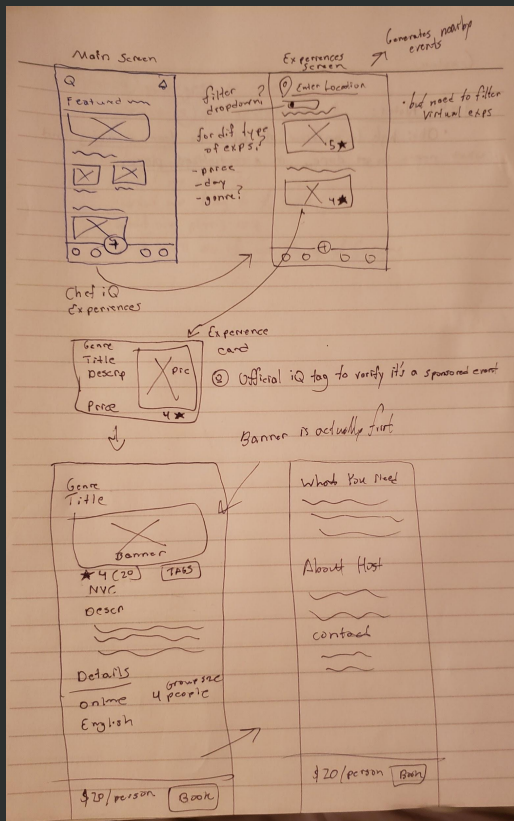
For us, combining the Smart Cooker and CHEF iQ app will help differentiate ourselves and provide that enhanced culinary experience that's unrivaled.

Product Overview

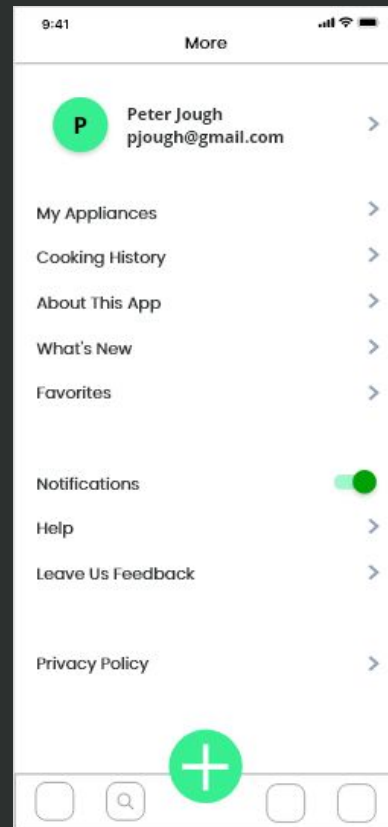
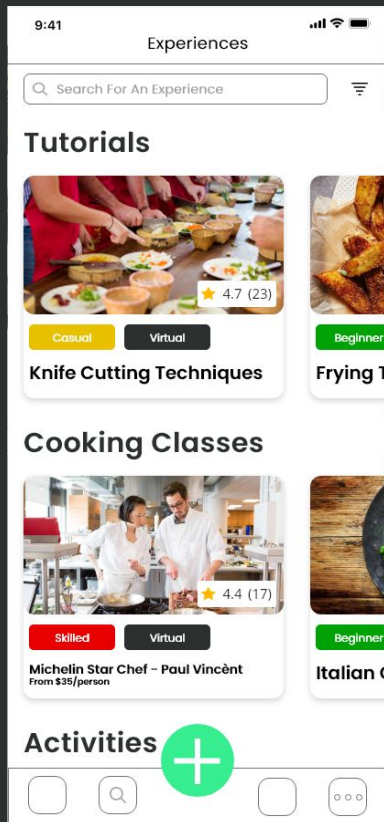
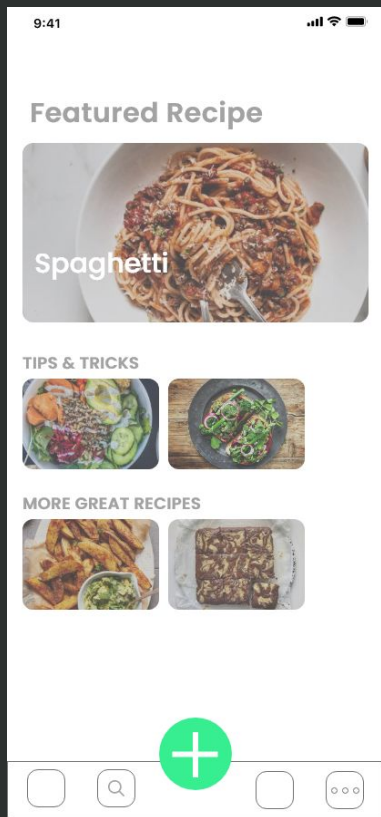


- Our MVP will be **"CHEF iQ Experiences"** on the CHEF iQ user app.
- By combining data from general market research, customer sentiment towards the product and market, I have a clearer path for how our new feature can benefit our users. I can now use this data to create **design insights**.
- It'll provide cooking experiences and content that's immersive and designed to be fun, informative, and inspiring for any skill level or interest.
 - Allowing people to **Discover** (new cooking content/experiences), **Create** (new dishes from the content), **Plate** (share these experiences and cooking moments).
 - A mixture of promoting cooking experiences and getting better in the kitchen.
 - For the best experience possible you'll need the Smart Cooker and the CHEF iQ app.
 - If I had more time, I would've liked to develop a rewards/loyalty system for people who book experiences. Millennials love rewards (i.e Starbucks 19 million users on Loyalty Program, [48% of sales](#) Q2 2020)
- The feature will include a new variety of cooking-related content for people to consume besides recipes.
 - This'll help attract and retain customers in the Chefman ecosystem.

Wireframes



Mockups



Interactive Prototype

- Genres (virtual/physical)
 - Tutorials
 - Video Tutorials, Product Recommendations, Product Maintenance
 - Cooking Classes
 - Cooking classes (pro/casual)
 - Activities
 - Social Impact (charity-based cooking)
 - Kids (kid friendly cooking activities)
 - Challenges

Go To Market Strategy



Pilot with cooking influencers (Celeb chefs, reality TV chefs, Michelin star chef).



Launch a sample of online classes and experiences. See how people respond to the content.



Scale (partnerships, exclusivity). i.e Joe Rogan X Spotify deal. Brings exclusive content to Spotify, which draws an influx of users.

Business Model

- 15% sale cut from any paid experience (there can be free experiences)
 - Experiences are created by CHEF iQ. In the future, independent content creators can set up their own experiences.
- Word of mouth and publicity increase probability of CHEF iQ Smart Cooker sales
- Partnership/Exclusivity deals to be on the CHEF iQ experiences
- Sponsored experiences on CHEF iQ
 - I.e Kraft Foods could have a sponsored cooking event/lesson on CHEF iQ. Utilizing Kraft Food products with the Smart Cooker, you can make X dish.
- Introduction/Retention of customers into the Chefman ecosystem
 - Future: Marketplace for individual content creators. Pay Chefman to have their content featured.
 - User recipes from the CHEF iQ community, i.e food bloggers, cooking influencers, etc.

Post Launch: Metrics

Success Metrics (KPI, Growth):

- Active Users
 - New users, unique users, MAU
- Monthly Revenue
 - Experience sales, Smart Cooker sales v.s production cost

Tracking Metrics (What are users actually doing?):

- Time spent on “Experiences”/User
- Videos Watched/User
 - Quantity + duration
- Experience booking rate (click through/bounce)
- Customer satisfaction (reviews/NPS/churn)
- Content shared

Post Launch: Feedback

What's next after launching?

- Collect our metrics
 - Analyze them, and understand our performance with the data we have
 - Gives us context for the “what?”
- Collect qualitative feedback
 - What are customers saying on reviews? User interviews?
 - Gives us context for the “why?”
- Iteration
 - Iterate on the metrics and customer feedback we've collected to improve CHEF iQ app/experience.

Thank you!