Capable-U
COOK TOGETHER

Opportunity

Our opportunity to create an interactive and collaborative device that allows users to coordinate their meal times, ultimately encouraging social connections within the household.

Our Concept:

A physical device within a kitchen (e.g., integrated into the counter, fridge, or kitchen splashback) allows users to interact with one another and the device within the space.

SOCIAL VS MOBILE QUALITIES:

- Social: awareness, collaboration, interaction, synchronous and asynchronous
- Mobile: context specific, location specific

Domain:
students who have recently moved out of their family home who are adapting to living independently in a shared house environment.

Problem space:
Centered around feelings of loneliness and isolation when living in a shared environment where one wants to cook and create connections with their housemates.

Key Users: students who have recently moved out of their family home and need to learn how to become self-sufficient in a shared living environment

USER CONSIDERATIONS

- Not all students have an interest or desire to cook
- Some may have different access to kitchen equipment
- Variety of available time and skills
- Not all households operate in the same way as some household members are close and friends, whilst others don't like to interact with one another at all
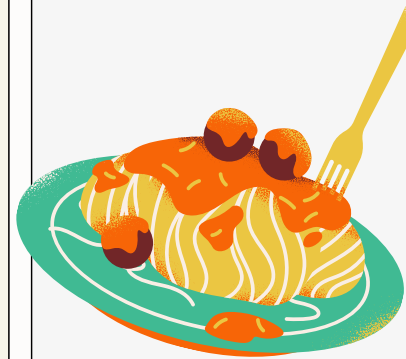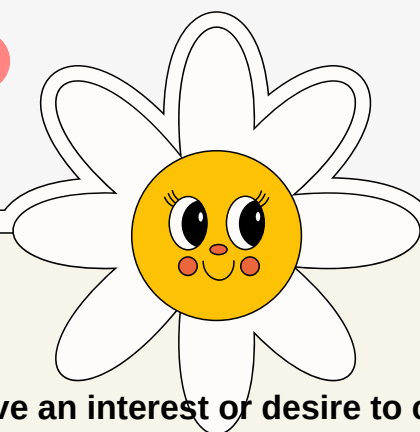
Research: Conducted academic and user research to inform the design process, focusing on the importance of home connections and user needs.

User Profiling: Developed user profiles and personas based on insights from user interviews, creating a niche design space.

User Values: Identified varying user values and needs, extracting patterns to guide the design process.

Prototype Development: Created an initial prototype with layout and dimension considerations.

Feature Prioritization: Prioritized features by user input, determining the top nine for the high-fidelity prototype.

THE DESIGN PROCESS

- We started off with some research, naturally, and found previous design attempts as well as academic papers surrounding the benefits of cooking with others
- Research:
  - Academic: literature review, finding articles that discussed the importance of eating and forming strong connections in the home environment. We found some papers suggested that this might reduce loneliness among students, which would in turn boost their moods and can help them do better in uni or work spaces.
  - User: we conducted a range of user research. Initially we conducted user research to find our key user and their core values. We continuously sought feedback from our users in regards to our prototype and ensuring we were designing something useful for them.
  - We conducted user interviews, with the goal of gaining insight into our users needs and wants which would ultimately shape our domain and design direction. From these interviews, we learned that the dynamics within shared living environments varied to a higher degree than we had thought. Some households were very social and seemed very receptive to our design idea, others however were much more anti-social and presented a number of issues we hadn't considered. We also learned that there was a very broad range of concerns around cooking and things people wanted to learn.
  - From our initial interviews we created user profiles and personas, narrowing down our key users to create a niche design space for us to work within.
  - From our interviews we discovered that despite many users being apart of the one domain, there was a broad range of needs and values - with many not aligning. Thus, with the user profiles, finding patterns within the values of users was important and allowed us to streamline our design process and incorporate key features that we could use as pillars for our design.

From gathering a range of user data and sorting this into key categories and breaking it down, we were able to then create a first draft of our prototype. We started with many different drawings, trying to workout layout of the interface and the way users would interact with it. Once we had a rough idea of the proper layout, and the dimensions - as we were working with designing a full interface rather than an app, we needed to consider the limitations in which it could function in. We knew we wouldn't have enough time to create a full piece of technology, but we wanted to illustrate our idea through programming an interface that could be interacted with in a similar fashion to that of an iPad. In defining our design parameters we were overwhelmed with ideas, and stifled on where to draw the line. Thus we wrote down all of the features that we could think of onto sticky notes and categorised them into usability and importance. From here, we narrowed the list down to the top nine features of our device. At this point we went back to our users and asked them to sort and order these features from most to least important ones. This then paved the way for our high-fidelity prototype. Knowing which features were important to users allowed us to design around these parameters.

THE DESIGN STEPS

Prototype:
1) Storyboard
2) Low-fidelity
3) User profiles
4) Medium-fidelity
5) User testing - think aloud + feature card sort
6) High Fidelity
7) User testing - think aloud

Evaluation:
- User think aloud

Ideation:
- In response to user testing feedback at each stage, we iteratively ideated and refined our design, enhancing user-friendliness through modifications and targeted testing, whether for specific features or complete prototype assessments.

USER RESPONSIBILITY

- **Inappropriate Behaviour:** Users' inappropriate, predatory, or harassing actions.
- **Allergic Reactions**: Users hold responsibility for not eating food they are allergic to .
- **Food Poisoning**: Users hold responsibility for cooking food safely.
- **Appliance Damage:** Users are responsible for using appliances correctly.
- **Shared Comments or Recommendations**: User-generated content.
- **Unsolicited or Inappropriate Content**: Sharing of inappropriate images or profane language.
- **Ignoring Professional Advice:** User compliance with healthcare and dietary recommendations.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Accessibility and Access
Adding/Removing Users: We are adding users not physically present in the house with the option for users to remove them.
Blocking/Banning of Users
Report Function: Allowing users to report inappropriate behavior.
User Information and Safety Instructions
User Support: Assisting interface and professional questions.
Secure Hardware and Networks: Creating a safe and privacy-conscious data-sharing environment.
Environmental Responsibility: Creating an environmentally sustainable technology.