
Creativity & Cognition 2019 Proposal: “Make a Sandwich”

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Abstract

This paper describes the functionality, design strategies, and audience engagement of my “Make a Sandwich” website. Briefly, this website’s intention is to educate the consumer on which foods lessen your carbon footprint and which foods increase it. This way, grocery shoppers and cooks can make informed and stress-free decisions when thinking about their next meals. The website employs friendly graphics, charts, and easily consumable data to accomplish its mission of increasing knowledge about our produce and its impact on the earth.

Author Keywords

Carbon footprint; produce; environmental impact; grocery shopping; education; sandwich.

ACM Classification Keywords

H.5.m. Information interfaces and presentation (e.g., HCI): Miscellaneous; See <http://acm.org/about/class/1998> for the full list of ACM classifiers. This section is required.

Introduction

The goal of the “Make a Sandwich website is to allow the user to pick from a range of ingredients to create their own personal sandwich. Once the sandwich is made, the user can “find their footprint”, an action which gives the user data on the carbon footprint of their sandwich as well as offers them alternatives that would lessen their carbon footprint if they so wish.

The Importance of Educated Consumption

Our environmental impact as humans is something we have failed to consider for centuries. Within our blip of an existence in earth’s timeline, we have somehow managed to do more damage on the earth’s health than any other creature before us. As such, it is necessary that we start making a conscious effort to undo the damage we’ve caused on the environment. A small part of this process includes being more aware of our consumption habits. It’s true that there are certain agricultural products that use more energy, resources, and create more waste than others, but how do we know which products are worse and which are better? There are many resources online that point finger at certain foods over others, but many of these reports are conflicting. And, with an ever-evolving agricultural process, how do we as consumers find sources of

information that are trustworthy? The environmental impact of the food we consume is still a mystery to many, and the “Make a Sandwich” website’s goal is to rectify that.

Environmental Impact of Food

One of the main ways that people measure the environmental impact of various foods is by comparing their costs per calorie. While this method does indeed give us some information about the economic upsides and environmental impact of various foods, cost per calorie (or vice-versa) by itself isn’t enough data to fully understand which foods are better to consume than others. In her article “No, Lettuce is Not Worse for the Environment than Bacon”, Natasha Geiling explains how a Carnegie Mellon study rated foods by their energy, water, and greenhouse gas usage, and then compared them on a per calorie basis. She argues that while lettuce might be worse for the environment by the calorie, but pork accounts for more greenhouse gas emissions by weight. As such, the information and data presented in the “Make a Sandwich” website will reflect the fact that simply looking at cost per calorie is not enough, we have to weigh in other factors as well.

Target Audience

The target audience of this website are college students and young adults trying to be more conscious consumers. College students often have little leeway in terms of meals, even though many would be interested in making economical and environmental choices in terms of their food consumption. A website in which you can experiment with different ingredients to get a better feeling of carbon footprint is a quick and easy way for college students or young adults to find information while on-the-go grocery shopping. The

website's playful and friendly design makes it a fun application to revisit at any time. not enough, we have to weigh in other factors as well.

Design Strategies

The "Make a Sandwich" website's home page includes a visual menu that lists ingredients the user can choose from. As they start clicking on various ingredients, those ingredients get added to the sandwich they are creating. Once they are satisfied with their sandwich, they can press a button to reveal the carbon footprint of said sandwich, as well as information on better alternatives. The site features bright and bold colors to catch attention as well as organize information, and the graphics have a semi-realistic feel to them, making it seem like you're actually making a sandwich.

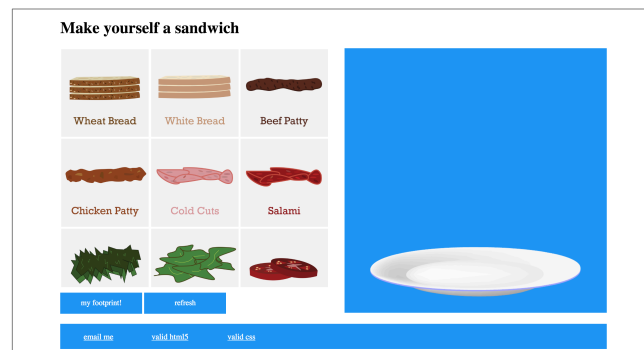


Figure 1: The screenshot above highlights the basic preliminary design of the "Make a Sandwich" website. Much more attention to detail and aesthetic will be included in the final product.

Once the sandwich is made, the menu will slide over to reveal all of the carbon footprint data.

References

1. Natasha Geiling. 2015. "No, Lettuce Is Not Worse For The Environment Than Bacon". Retrieved March 5, 2019 from <https://thinkprogress.org/no-lettuce-is-not-worse-for-the-environment-than-bacon-e6c495e6abb0/>
2. Richard Jones. 2017. "Why Eating Kale is Actually Terrible for the Environment". Retrieved March 5, 2019 from <http://www.richardjones.org/why-kale-is-actually-terrible-for-the-environment/>