Dishclosure - Product Strategy (One Page)

Problem Statement

Food allergies are a trust-critical, high-risk constraint. Existing dining and delivery experiences rely on verbal verification, static menus, or probabilistic inference, creating unacceptable failure modes where a single mistake can cause severe medical harm. The core problem is not discovery; it is data reliability, provenance, and liability across a fragmented food ecosystem.

Target Users / ICP

Primary: Parents and caregivers of children with severe allergies; adults with medically diagnosed, high-risk allergies.
Secondary: Mid-size restaurants, catering services, and operators sensitive to liability and workflow overhead.
Non-ICP: Lifestyle or preference-based dietary users; restaurants unwilling to maintain ingredient-level accuracy.

Competitive Landscape

Current solutions fall into four groups: (1) consumer allergen apps with self-reported or scraped data; (2) barcode or ingredient scanners limited to packaged foods; (3) AI-based inference tools that produce unsafe false positives; and (4) manual restaurant workflows that do not scale to digital ordering. Most competitors optimize for convenience, while allergen safety requires certainty.

Why Current Solutions Fail

There is no authoritative source of truth at the ingredient level, no propagation model across recipes and modifiers, no incentive for operators to maintain accuracy, and asymmetric liability where platforms benefit from discovery while restaurants absorb risk. In this domain, 99 percent accuracy is functionally unsafe.

Proposed Solution

Dishclosure proposed a B2B2C allergen transparency platform grounded in verified ingredient-level data. The system emphasized explicit exclusion over probabilistic recommendation, modeled allergen propagation from ingredients through recipes and modifiers, and separated consumer safety from restaurant liability.

Strategic Outcome and Learning

Despite strong technical foundations and early pilot interest, Dishclosure hit a hard systemic constraint: responsibility without control destroys adoption. Maintaining real-time allergen accuracy required ecosystem-level standardization beyond a startup's control. The product was intentionally stopped to avoid creating false confidence or shifting risk to users. This work reshaped my approach to building trust-critical systems, emphasizing infrastructure, boundaries, and knowing when not to ship.