

Homelicious: taste from home

Description:

Homelicious is a food sharing platform offering opportunities to taste various food made in local kitchens. Homemade desserts/meals/snacks have been gathering increasing popularity recently due to low price, diverse choices and exotic tastes. Home kitchens also provide chances for culinarians to explore the option of starting their own home food businesses. Leveraging the power and convenience of internet, Homelicious provides a community-based online platform where consumers could easily search for homemade cuisine within their neighborhood (most likely geographical) while simultaneously, manufactures('home chefs') are able to advertise their food businesses, acquire more orders and deliver better catering. The fact that most food needs to be delivered fresh requires both the producer (i.e. chef) and the consumer to part of a same geographical community. Homelicious is an example of a sharing economy paradigm, offering a socio-economic system based on sharing of human and physical resources.

Nowadays, 'homemade kitchen' becomes a popular choice for meals, because it always means lower price, more types and you do not have to go out and walk in the freezing world. There are many kinds of homemade food you can choose, Chinese food, Japanese food, cakes and so on. But there is no gather of the information of all of the homemade kitchens, people can only know the information of the homemade kitchen through social network(like wechat, facebook). So Homelicious aims to provide a platform to share the information, and make it easy for consumers and chefs to communicate as well as ordering online.

How it works:

Homelicious is an online platform aimed at streamlining the process of ordering and distributing homemade food within local communities. The platform is comprised of two major actors: the consumer who searches domestic kitchen catering and the chef who prepares food in his/her own kitchen. Culinarians(chefs), register on the platform and commence their virtual home food businesses. They are able to supplement their service by including details (e.g. description, photo) about meals available, or explicitly stating range of delivery, minimum amount of ordering,etc. Consumers, register on the system and search for desired catering, and if found one, they can order online and make appropriate payment (either prior to or after delivery). The order represents a contract between the chef and the consumer that ensures the consumer to receive food requested within a predetermined time frame and the chef would obtain financial compensation for offering such service. Both the chef and the consumer need to specify their communities for catering, which are most likely based on geographical proximity. Once the user (of the platform) declares to which community he/she belongs, he/she will automatically join the social network within the neighborhood that allows him/her to either explore potential customers as a chef or search various food as a consumer. Consumers are able to rate/comment food providers or refer local kitchens to each other either through the platform or other social media (e.g. facebook).

Homelicious is a platform to make it easy to order and sell homemade food online.

For chefs: You can have your Virtual Restaurant online, you need to provide the information of the food you sell, like the price, the photo, and the description. Also, you need to state clearly the delivery area, the

minimum price to deliver, and all the other fees consumer need to pay(tax, service fee, delivery fee...). You can reply to the reviews from the consumers but you have no right to delete them.

For consumers: You can view all the information of the homemade kitchen in the platform, and you can order the food online, as for the payment, you can either pay online or pay when you receive it. You can write the reviews for the food you ordered as well as evaluating it. If you like the chef, you can share it to your friend.

Challenges for Homelicious:

Home chefs often struggle to reach potential consumers due to lack of advertising and communication. Simultaneously, there are numerous consumers actively searching for food but fail to locate desired catering. Connecting these two parties in a streamlined and user-friendly process is a main challenge of Homelicious. Furthermore, consumers are always concerned with food sanitation so delivering safe, healthy food from licensed food handlers comprises additional challenge to the platform. One possible way to ensure food safety is to work with local health department and check chefs' license or kitchen environment before registering on the platform. Culinaricians are also susceptible to order cancellation after significant amount of commitment. Thus safeguarding chefs' labor poses one more challenge to the system. Such challenge could potentially be resolved by introducing the blacklist for consumers or enforcing cancellation fee.

Feature set:

- **Profiling:** All users registered on the platform have their own profiles. Users are categorized into consumers and chefs, and different categories lead to different profiles.
 - Consumer: Profile includes name, address (geographic community), food preference, payment information. Consumers can update their own profile or view each other's profile except for personal data (e.g. payment information, exact address).
 - Chef: Profile includes food handlers' names, cuisine by region or style, delivery range, working hours, and methods of payment accepted.
 - Both chefs and consumers are able to update their profile and view each other's profile except for sensitive/personal data. (e.g. payment information)
- **User Authentication:** Users need to login to the system in order to either place orders or sell nourishment.
 - Users are authenticated through username/id and password, which is one of the most widely-use and convenient authenticating mechanism online.
 - Consumers are able to log in with their facebook account or google account.
- **User Interactions:** A user can act either as chef or consumer.
 - Chef: As a chef, the user can post meals/snacks/nourishment available as well as price for each dish. The chef could also add additional descriptions including but not limited to: Composition, calories amount, allergy precaution.
 - Consumer: As a consumer, the user is able to browse through list of catering available based on filtering (e.g. proximity, price, rating) and place order through the platform. The consumer could add catering specifics (e.g. gluten-free, allergy) into the order and optionally arrange payment through the platform prior to delivery.
 - Chefs will receive notification from the platform through preset methods (e.g. emails, sms, phone notification) once orders are placed and deliver custom-tailored nourishment to the consumer based on requests.

- Consumers can view history of orders placed and cancel order in case of unexpectancy.
- Consumers are able to view each other's preference and refer local kitchens to each other through the platform or through other social media.
- (Optional) Consumers can share orders with other consumers within the same community for the same chef if their order does not reach the required minimum amount of ordering.
- **Rating and commenting:**
 - Consumers are able to comment/rate chefs based on services provided and other can make informed choices based on rating/comments.
 - Comments include text or images and could be categorized into negative/neutral/positive reviews.
 - Rating will utilize a simple star rating system (1-5 stars with 5 stars as the best)
 - Consumers could rate chefs in different aspects: general taste, food sanitation, delivery speed, catering specifics, etc.
- **Search and Recommendation System:** The platform enables consumers to search through all chefs within local community and receive recommended whenever requested.
 - Search: Searching allows consumers to locate caterings based on different filters -- names, price, geographical proximity, cuisine.
 - Recommendation: The system should be able to provide recommendation based on user's preference combined with chefs' rating or geographical location and methods of payment.
- **Reputation System:** The system will resemble a reputation system that computes and publishes reputation scores for the chief. The reputation score of a chief is based on ratings that the consumers provide about how satisfied they were about the food and the chief. Ratings are typically passed using a simple star rating system. Reputation scores are representing a collection of consumers' opinion and can be used by the system to provide recommendations about the homemade kitchens.
- **Admin:** The platform will provide administrative functionalities for users.
 - Entering admin site always requires re-authentication (password only if already logged in).
 - Change password
 - Consumers:
 - Update payment methods or delivery address
 - View history of orders and cancel uncompleted orders
 - Delete/update reviews/ratings
 - Chefs
 - View reviews/ratings
 - Respond to reviews
 - Contact consumers through consumers' preset methods (e.g. email)
 - Post/Delete food available
 - Change sequence of food listing.
 - Update food descriptions
 - Change methods of payment accepted
- **Site Administrator:**
 - View number of consumers/chefs

- View average number of orders per day
- Revoke chef qualification (e.g. if food poisoning occurs)
- **Feedback system:**
 - Chefs can report consumers should the consumer cancels orders frequently or leave unmatched reviews.
 - Consumers can report chefs if sanitation problems are found or chefs fail to complete the order over an extended period of time.

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