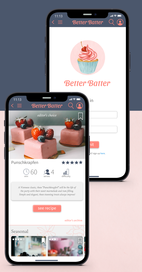
Recipe Web App Case Study

UI Immersion 3.11

Better Batter is a responsive web app providing users with an fun, comfortable and intuitive experience for finding and organizing recipes.



The Journey

1. Landscape
Setting the stage with a competitor overview

2. Users
Gaining insight into user needs and defining user personas

3. Coming to life
MVP iterations, user flows, moodboard & low-fi wireframe sketching

4. Iterative growth
User and preference testing, wireframes, responsive design

5. Final designs
Finalizing designs with mockups

6. Credits

1. LANDSCAPE

Competitor Analysis

Baking Mad

Key Objectives
Baking Mad presents itself as "all of the yum", placing a strong emphasis on sweet desserts, with an underlying theme of convenience.

Overall Strategy
Baking Mad is part of the Silver Spoon Company, which is a family of baking brands. Their social media presence is very strong. In addition, Baking Mad has a two-season baking show available on Amazon's Prime Video.

The Baking Mad web-based app helps advertise their products within the recipes, naming specific brand names and utilizing informational/advertising blurbs in their shopping list feature.

Market Advantage
Baking Mad has a massive following across all popular social media platforms and appear in many "best of" lists. However, they are not prominently placed in Google searches.

Followers

Youtube	Facebook	Instagram	Pinterest
59.400	37.400	27.800	29.000

Strengths
- Wide reach
- Recognizable image

Weaknesses
- SEO rating
- Lack of engagement

Opportunities
- Increase engagement (e.g. monthly challenge)

Threats
- Competitors focusing on diet trends (keto, sugar-free)

Chefkoch

Key Objectives
The objective of Chefkoch is to build a very large library of high-quality recipes. Because from and engage with Chefkoch allows users to upload their own recipes.

Overall Strategy
Chefkoch was bought by Hamburger Heimatauskunft GmbH in 2020. The brand has since been expanded, including apps and a magazine.

The Chefkoch web-app is filled with a multitude of ads, with up to a number of 4 ads visible on the screen when viewed on a laptop.

Market Advantage
Chefkoch is well-ranked in recipe searches on Google. The webportal has 22 million users, making it the largest platform of kit kind in Europe. They benefit from having been at the top of the game for many years (since 1998), having become the habitual site of choice for many.

Followers

Youtube	Facebook	Instagram	GooglePlay
250.000	837.332	671.000	5+ mio

Strengths
- Established local base
- Authenticity

Weaknesses
- Language barrier (German)
- Chaotic feeling

Opportunities
- Increase user-friendliness (e.g. fewer ads)

Threats
- Competitors focusing on "foodporn"

I hypothesize that most users have a broad grasp on baking basics and are looking for recipes they can make within a feasible timeframe and without the need to practice. They are looking for accessible ingredients, specific preparation/baking times and above all, they value accuracy of the provided information.

Finding a Place

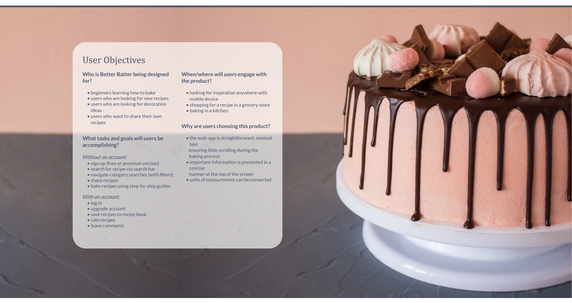
Better Batter strives to become the primary source for reliable and flexible recipes provided by an active and supportive user base. Recipes are user-uploaded and user-reviewed, with the community providing the foundation of the app. The app aims to cater to the desire for authenticity by a market already flooded with apps and websites geared towards flashy imagery and Pinterest perfect products.

Users with an account can leave comments on recipes, allowing an exchange of ideas, for example for substitutions to meet different dietary requirements or availability of ingredients in different countries.

Step-by-step instructions guide users through a recipe upload process which allows them to share their creations in a well-structured uniform manner. This, in combination with prominent placement of the most important key data, enables other users to have a good orientation of the site and make quick decisions on whether the recipe is a good fit for them.

The Goal is to Keep it simple and Keep it real. Better Batter is simple, straightforward and functional.

2. USERS



User Objectives

Who is Better Batter being designed for?
- beginners learning how to bake
- users who are looking for new recipes
- users who are looking for decoration ideas
- users who want to share their own recipes

When/where will users engage with the product?
- looking for inspiration anywhere with mobile device
- shopping for a recipe in a grocery store
- baking in a kitchen

What tasks and goals will users be accomplishing?

Without an account:
- sign up (free or premium version)
- search for recipes via search bar
- navigate category searches (with filters)
- share recipes
- bake recipes using step-by-step guides

With an account:
- log in
- upgrade account
- save recipes to recipe book
- create recipes
- leave comments

Why are users choosing this product?
- the web-app is straightforward, minimal and
- ensuring little scrolling during the baking process
- Important information is presented in a concise manner at the top of the screen
- units of measurement can be converted

User Interviews

Six user interviews were conducted between the 16.08.2022 and the 20.08.2022. Interviews were conducted in person and via Signal. All participants were between 30 and 36 years of age with one exception (62 years). All participants were from Austria, with one exception (USA).

Process

"My search is guided by visual presentation, ingredients and the time and process of preparation. The occasion is also important."

"First I will look at how many stars it has. Then how long it takes. Those are the main things."

"An important deciding factor is if the ingredients are available at home, or accessible in a nearby store. The time it takes to make is also very important, and an easygoing preparation."

Frustrations

"Imperial units. Cups. I hate those. I've used converters, but that is awful. If the unit is in cups and there is no built-in converter, I don't make the recipe."

"Foreign units are a big problem, which aren't used in my country. Also unusual ingredients you find in foreign recipes."

"What I usually encounter is that the measurements for each ingredient tend to be off."

Wishes

"Step-by-step instructions are of course helpful. But also comments from the community and tips for variations or tips for substitutions of ingredients."

User Personas

The results of the user interviews were used to guide the creation of four user personas. The four developed user personas are characterised as the "multitasking nurturer", the "inexperienced novice", the "skillful routineer" and the "prudent budgeter".

"I just want to make something good, but I don't know those terms or techniques."

"I want to organize my collection. Maybe I can even exchange tips with others!"

"I love to treat others, but money is tight."

3. COMING TO LIFE

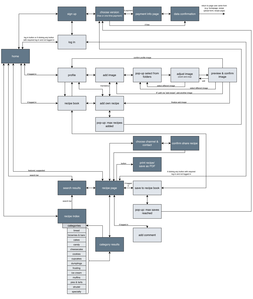
MVP Iterations

The first MVP iteration contains the required jobs to be done for the release of the Better Batter web-app, which are informed by user needs identified through the user interviews. A second iteration (not depicted) has also been developed surrounding the users wants, providing guidance for potential expansions of existing features (e.g. expanding category and filter searches, recipe book etc.) and new features (e.g. substitution glossary, guides).

Iteration 1

Jobs To Be Done	Feature requirements	Rationale	Need/Want
When I am looking for inspiration, I want to browse by category to not get overwhelmed by too many options.	Categories Filter categories Pagination	Limiting options to not overwhelm users.	need
When looking for inspiration, I want to browse/filter by product category to manage my options.	Product categories (e.g. cakes, muffins, cupcakes, pies...)	Defining relevant product categories to meet user needs.	need
When I search for a specific recipe, I want to use Keywords to find relevant results.	Search bar Keywords	Provide accurate & relevant results	need
When I am considering a recipe, I want to have a comprehensive overview of key data to make an informed decision.	Images Stars	Reducing workload and increasing ease of use.	need
When I am considering a recipe, I want to know if other users liked it, to determine if it is good.	Star rating	Providing info. Higher engagement. Building trust.	need
When I am considering a recipe, I want to know how long it will take to make, so I can plan my time.	Duration icon	Reducing workload and increasing ease of use.	need
When I am considering a recipe, I want to know the ingredients, for my dietary needs and shopping.	Ingredient list Icons for diets	Reducing workload and increasing ease of use.	need
When I am making a recipe, I want to have a good overview of each step with no irrelevant information, so I can focus.	Clear instructions Sparse text	Reducing workload and increasing ease of use.	need
When I like a recipe, I want to be able to access it again, so that I can refer to it in the future.	Save to recipe book Print/save as PDF	Increasing loyalty	need
When I like a recipe, I want to be able to save it to my recipe book, so that I can find it again.	Save to recipe book	Increasing loyalty	need
When I am uploading my own recipe, I want to be supported by a structured form, so I don't forget anything.	Upload form	Increasing ease of use. Ensuring uniformity	need
When I like a recipe, I want to be able to share it with my contacts.	Share for social media channels	Spreading the word via trust networks.	need
When making the purchase to-unlock all features, I want to know my information is safe, so I can feel comfortable.	Visualizing password requirements Automatic logouts	Building trust. Ensuring safe transactions.	need

User Flows


sign up
Home screen
payment to user
sign confirmed
log in
Home
profile
add recipe
view my recipe book
upload image
preview & publish
recipe form
add recipe steps
add ingredients
recipe book
view recipe steps
add ingredients
add upload
recipe steps
add upload
save to recipe book
save to recipe book
upload image
save to recipe book
add upload
recipe steps
recipe steps
add upload
image & recipe
image & recipe
add upload
image & recipe
add upload
image & recipe
add upload

4. ITERATIVE GROWTH

User Testing

The prototype developed from the sketched low-fi wireframe was used to conduct a first round of user testing to assess whether the design of the navigational components is intuitive for users upon first time use of the site. It would serve to identify pain-points that users experience when attempting to complete specific tasks.

The time tasks were:

1. Search a recipe by category
2. Find a recipe using the page menu
3. Add your own recipe

The user tests were conducted in person with three participants in Graz and Vienna between the 29.04.2022 and 29.04.2022.

Prototype Link

https://marvelapp.com/prototype/46f9c42

Results Synthesis

Issue	Suggestion
Users are accustomed to searching via search bar, not using categories	The search bar also takes achieve that goal. Consider implementing a search function that searches for ingredients instead of recipe titles. Alternatively, provide a filter function that allows users to search for recipes based on ingredients
Menu functions expected on other sides	The menu icon can be placed on the left side of the header
User had issues Navigating to the library and Always Fresh tags via the menu first	In addition to being able to navigate through the profile, a link to the library can be added into the menu bar

Revised Mid-Ability Home Screens

Moodboard

The moodboard seeks to recreate the feeling of a casual and loving environment with family and friends, bonding over coffee tea and cake. I believe most people who bake or wish to bake do so as an act of love, allowing many people to relate to this theme. The casual atmosphere is also welcoming to users who are new to baking.

Primary

HEX #9E7F6C
Rgb(158,127,108)
Hsl(24,18%,49%)

Support

HEX #6B6F6D
Rgb(107,111,109)
Hsl(165,2%,42%)

HEX #C9B6A9
Rgb(201,182,169)
Hsl(24,16%,71%)

Support

HEX #7D7D7D
Rgb(125,125,125)

HEX #A4B0A0
Rgb(164,176,160)

Accent

HEX #F9D274
Rgb(249,210,116)
Hsl(43,92%,69%)

HEX #F2E9E3
Rgb(242,233,227)
Hsl(24,33%,93%)

HEX #F2F2F2
Rgb(242,242,242)

HEX #F2E9E3
Rgb(242,233,227)
Hsl(24,33%,93%)

User Preference Testing

A color preference test of the home screen was conducted on the 14.05.2022 over the span of a few days. During which 15 user responses were collected. The preferences were split relatively evenly. between the two options. Option A received 8 votes, while option B received 7. The feedback provided helped inform the design of Option B, further by integrating the elements of Option B which were described by multiple users as appealing. The revised design was qualified by all mind users.

Option A

Option B

Revised design

Designing Responsive Screens

Sketches were made for the breakpoints Smartphone (390x844), tablet (768x1024), laptop (1280x800) and desktop computer (1920x1080). Of these, one screen was chosen to gather feedback on the responsive design from fellow or design students. All screens were revised based on the gathered feedback.

Compiled Critques

Constructive Feedback	Positive Feedback
General	General
• The rating now doesn't stand out enough, maybe it would help to place ratings, now and bake, and bake, and bake,