

BUSINESS CASE	
Project Name	Community of Meal Planners Forums A.K.A Community Meal Planner Forum.
Proposed Project	<p>This project aims to provide members of the meal planning community with a space for relevant discussion and critique of recipes, practices, and tools that can be received by meal planning companies/tool developers so as to incite community-led change in the status quo.</p> <p>The discussion space is to be public and structured in such a way that lessons to be learned and acceptable changes deemed by the community are identifiable from each relevant conversation.</p> <p>This project is intended to support the following sub-goals of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Sustainable Development Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature 12.A Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production 12.B Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products
Date Produced	February 7, 2021
Background	<p>The current market for meal planning applications offers a wide variety of convenience tools that make the manual work of meal planning easier: including calendar tools for mass planning of meals, the conversion of recipe ingredients to an automatic grocery list, and even tools which take the generated grocery list and orders the items from a delivery service straight to the user's home.</p> <p>The available convenience tools simplify consumption practices without paying attention to concerning aspects like the sustainability of large communities eating one particular diet, ordering food from far-away producers, and food waste stemming from pre-planned, pre-portioned meals that do not fit all consumers. No single, nor popular, platform combines aspects of convenience, good practice, and sustainability education. It is easy for consumers to follow the instructions given by available platforms blindly without ever knowing about how their consumption practice impacts others.</p> <p>The market consists of convenience tools rather than educational tools because the development companies influence and control what platforms and content members of the community have available. There exists side platforms and content that only</p>

	<p>those “in the know” access and share. These two situations limit the demand for education and consumption practice change because there is no collective place for members to voice concerns and ask for change.</p> <p>An important, worldwide-reaching organization that is asking for consumption practice change is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In particular, the UNDP adopted “...a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030” (UNDP, 2021). Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production applies to meal planning platforms.</p> <p>References: UNDP statement, 2021. https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html</p>
Business Need/ Opportunity	<p>This project will address the need for the community to break free from market-forced limitations of discussion spaces by providing such a space to discuss and demand changes be made, particularly in response to controversial practices, suggestions, and tools.</p> <p>This project will also introduce broader, critical thinking within participants and lead to wider awareness for sustainable consumption practices (UNDP Goal 12).</p>
Options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use WordPress to build a forum website 2. Use Flutter to build a forum application for mobile and web 3. Curate a Subreddit (forum) on existing mobile and web application Reddit 4. Do nothing (not applicable for this project as it is required something be done)

Cost-Benefit Analysis

The cost-benefit analysis is performed with the following considerations:

1. The project is student-led and performed for experimental purposes: it is not expected for a project of this scope to be picked up by any for-profit company
2. The costs incurred by employee salary or research and development costs by a potential company picking up this project cannot be estimated at this time
3. It is required by the student lead that tools used to build the project are royalty free and open-source

This analysis is performed by subjective means. Additionally, some benefits and costs may be called free, as in either free to personally take, use or free to modify, share: usually both are meant.

Option	Costs	Benefits
WordPress	<p>Hosting the website live is not free using plans offered by WordPress. Ongoing costs incurred.</p> <p>Maintenance of personal servers to host the website live will be time consuming. Such time expenditure would take away from time spent developing the website</p> <p>The scripting languages PHP, JavaScript, Perl and markup languages HTML, CSS are not well-known to the student lead. Time</p>	<p>WordPress is free to use and royalty free.</p> <p>An open-source content management system (CMS) that can be used by non-technical persons after the website is finished</p> <p>Very popular CMS that boasts world-wide popularity and was used to create 39% of websites available on the web (WordPress, 2021)</p> <p>Due to the CMS’s popularity, there exists a large community of developers and non-developers alike that have gathered content and tutorials</p>

	<p>would be spent on relearning these languages, their limits, and how best to use them</p> <p>The scripting languages PHP and JavaScript are difficult to work with, notably that PHP's core functionality is unchangeable and that JavaScript is vulnerable to security threats</p> <p>The notable WordPress site development tools are also new to the student lead. More time is required to become familiar with the tool(s)</p> <p>The above-noted difficulties also would apply to parties picking up the completed project</p>	<p>related to using WordPress</p> <p>The building blocks of websites already exist, are free, and can be "plugged into" the website for use (plug-ins)</p> <p>There exists free WordPress site development tools, such as Local by Flywheel which supports development of the project now and the future by possible interested parties. Supports cross-browser development</p> <p>Hosting the website using personal services can be free if using existing server, and using open-source software for database and other tools</p> <p>If existing meal planning platforms are using wordpress, the project could be immediately adopted into their website</p>
Flutter	<p>The project cannot be easily adopted by non technical persons after the application is finished due to the requirement that one be familiar with programming concepts</p> <p>Flutter web development is still in development (available as beta production release at the time of writing) (Flutter, 2021)</p> <p>It is possible the performance of Flutter Web is lesser than traditional websites</p> <p>It is possible that major breaking changes to the web development framework could occur before the Project is finished or right after it has finished</p>	<p>Flutter is free to use and royalty free.</p> <p>Developed by Google, the software development kit is the second most-used language for developing mobile apps in 2020 (Google Trends, 2021)</p> <p>There exists a large community of developers that have gathered content and tutorials related to using Flutter</p> <p>The building blocks of mobile applications already exist, are free, and can be plugged into the application for use (plug-ins)</p> <p>The Flutter framework is not limited to development environments and can be used with a variety of IDEs. Supports cross-platform development and cross-browser development (Flutter, 2021).</p> <p>If existing meal planning platforms are using cross-platform frameworks to develop, the project could be immediately adopted into their codebase. Especially so if their framework is also Flutter</p> <p>The student lead has become familiar with Flutter languages due to other, recent projects using Flutter. Far less time will be required to implement features in Flutter as a result</p>

		<p>Flutter allows for both mobile and web development, with almost the same code used for mobile development on the web</p> <p>There is little risk for breaking changes in the Flutter Mobile framework would occur during the Project or right after it has finished. Current releases are stable for development</p>
Subreddit	<p>Using Reddit limits the future growth of the forum to Reddit's features and tools</p> <p>Using Reddit limits the forum from being integrated with existing and future websites or applications</p> <p>Reddit is at times a controversial platform, and it's reputation could affect the proposed community forum resulting in it's total loss (if Reddit were lost) or loss of community as members use another, less controversial platform</p> <p>Reddit provides limited customization of subreddits, limiting user experience to the overall Reddit experience of a Q&A style forum. Long threads decrease readability in highly conversational discussions</p> <p>Reddit does not provide a tool to group posts by topic, rather it is assumed all posts in the subreddit are related. Missing finer-grained organization options.</p>	<p>Reddit is a popular social media site already providing a space for discussion and content posting in a Q&A forum format, boasting millions of users visiting every day (Reddit, 2021).</p> <p>It is a free and easy solution to set up a new subreddit with the focus on discussing meal planning platforms, all it requires is a Reddit account. Persons interested in participating in discussion would also require a Reddit account. Lurkers do not require an account.</p> <p>A wiki can be created alongside the subreddit to accumulate sound and community agreed upon information</p> <p>Content on the subreddit can be moderated by anointed members of the community directly. Reply threads to the discussion at hand are helpful when new responses do not add to the discussion or are related to a particular response only.</p> <p>It is likely persons who are meal planners are interested in, or a part of existing subreddits regarding meal planning, prepping, and cooking, and so would also be interested in a subreddit discussing available platforms, their features and tools, and sustainable practices</p> <p>Persons in related meal planning subreddits may be invited to investigate the proposed subreddit as the topics are related, and as prompted by Reddit's suggestion algorithms</p>
Nothing	The lack of community space for discussion persists	Absolutely free

Both WordPress and Flutter platforms maintain the ability to integrate existing internet tools such as EDAMAM's [Recipe Database API](#), which can be most useful for providing an endpoint for future users to use the project.

Not included in the cost analysis is the environmental impact of the internet, internet services, server hardware maintenance, and internet-enabled devices (components, electricity, replacements over time). It is assumed that

moving forward with any project option besides doing nothing that the possible environmental expenses are acceptable.

References.

WordPress popularity, 2021. <https://wordpress.com/>

Google Trends for Flutter, 2021.

<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?cat=31&date=2020-01-01%202020-12-31&q=React%20Native,Flutter,NativeScript,Xamarin>

Flutter Web development, 2021. <https://flutter.dev/docs/development/platform-integration/web>

Flutter Web cross-browser, 2021.

<https://flutter.dev/docs/development/platform-integration/web#which-web-browsers-are-supported-by-flutter>

Reddit popularity, 2021. <https://www.redditinc.com/>

Recommendation

The student lead recommends the Flutter option be explored over WordPress or curating a Subreddit because Flutter and it's required development practices are familiar; and such familiarity will make it most probable for the project to be completed on time and with all promised minimum viable products.
