



CM40179: Entrepreneurship

Foodle

Final Business Plan

Prepared by:
Get Rich or Die Trying
(Cheuk Hei Chan, Kimberley Chong, Alex Gooding, David Hurst, Jessica Lok)

University of Bath
Department of Computer Science

Contents

1 Product Description	2
1.1 Pains and Gains	2
1.2 Value Proposition	2
1.3 Product Alternatives	4
2 Industry	4
2.1 Operation	4
2.2 Business Model	
2.2.1 Customers	5
2.2.2 Competitors	5
2.2.3 Suppliers	5
2.2.4 Partners	5
2.2.5 Channels	5
2.3 External Factors	6
2.3.1 Political factors	6
2.3.2 Economic factors	6
2.3.3 Social factors	6
2.3.4 Technological factors	7
3 Market Validation	7
3.1 Methodology	7
3.2 Questions	8
3.3 Key Findings	8
3.4 Detailed Findings	8
3.4.1 Respondent Profile	8
3.4.2 Extrapolations	8
3.6 Industry Insight	11
4 Market Strategy	12
4.1 The Legal Status and Structure of the Business - General Partnership	12
4.2 Team Roles and Capabilities	12
4.2.1 Roles Required	12
4.2.2 Role assignment	13
4.3 Operational Plan	15
4.4 Financing Plan	16
4.5 Sales and Marketing	16
4.5.1 Sales	16
4.5.2 Marketing	17
5 Analysis of the Inherent Risks	17
6 References	18
7 Appendix	19

1 Product Description

Foodle is a social gathering application that allows students to connect and organize social cooking sessions together. With universities around the world becoming more culturally diverse, an opportunity presents itself for people to share and learn from one another. It can be intimidating travelling to a new country, and university is all about meeting new people and experiencing new cultures. Foodle can help with this, as it provides a platform for students to experience all kinds of new cuisines. Foodle works by matching users based on their “FaveFoods”; a selection of user-defined cuisines from a large database. A user selects multiple preferences, (e.g Number of people, availability, cuisines and price range) and is then matched with other users who have selected similar criteria. Upon finding a match, all parties are presented with some basic information about their matches, such as previous experiences and ratings, and then have to manually confirm or decline the gathering. Upon a successful confirmation from all parties, a Foodle date is created. In the event of a user declining, no parties are notified and the match algorithm restarts. Users will have to connect their Foodle account to a Facebook account that has a minimum of 50 friends, to help significantly reduce the amount of fake accounts present on the Foodle platform.

We believe that Foodle not only gives the opportunity to experience new cuisines, but also provides a network for international students from similar countries to meet and socialize, making living in a new country a bit less scary.

1.1 Pains and Gains

For any product to be successful, it is of critical importance that you can identify how the product addresses the customers need. This helps us understand if there is a potential market for the idea, and helps us analyse where our idea excels over competitors. In order to do this, a table has been created which shows the customer’s needs (pains) and the positive outcomes of using our product (gains).

Pains	Gains	Value Proposition (Value Type)
Customer has arrived in a new country and does not know anyone.	Customer socialises and meets new people. Transitioning to a new country is made easier.	Emotional
Customer does not have the necessary cooking utensils to create a specific dish.	Customer can share cooking utensils, without having to purchase it themselves.	Economic Functional
Customer ends up wasting food as food exceeds use-by date and expires.	Customer saves money as food is utilized before expiry date, also environmental benefits.	Economic Emotional
Customer wants to try out new cuisines but is unsure how.	Customer tries cuisines that are authentic rather than finding a recipe online.	Symbolic
Customer wants to save money by eating at home rather than eating out at restaurants.	Customer saves money by cooking with other people and not paying inflated food prices at restaurants.	Economic
Customer already engages in group cooking via other online organizers (e.g. Facebook events) but the process is tedious and has features missing.	The product provides better usability to the customer: easier to arrange times/dates, recipes and financial costs.	Functional
Customer must do all the cooking related jobs by themselves: purchase food, cook and clean.	Cooking jobs can be divided up between the individuals involved.	Economic Functional

Figure 1: The Pains and Gains for Customers using Foodle

Added to the table is a *value proposition* section. This helps us understand which need the customer value addresses. The categories for this section are functional (usability), economic (saves money), symbolic (self-status) or emotional value (enjoyment, attraction) to the customer. By analysing the value type, we can see how our product fulfils the different types of consumer needs, and where our strengths and weaknesses lie.

1.2 Value Proposition

We can further elaborate on Table 1 by creating a *value proposition canvas*. This allows us to see how our product addresses the pains, gains and customer jobs previously discussed.

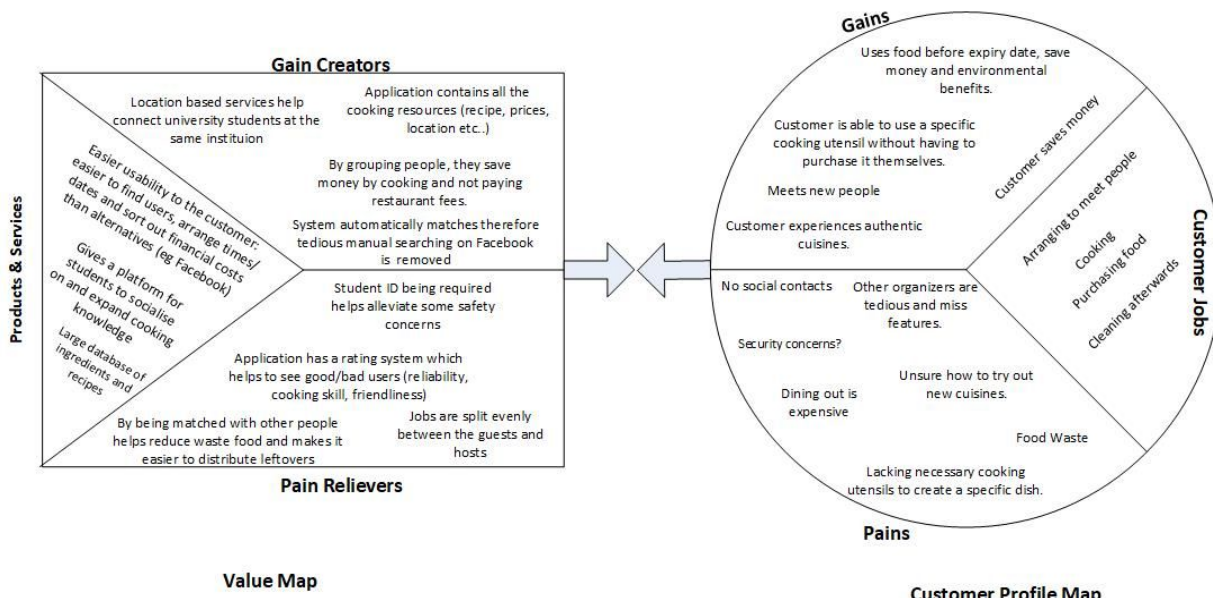


Figure 2: Value Proposition Canvas for Foodle

As we can see from Figure 2, our product helps create a platform in which students can connect with one another based on the type of cuisine they are wanting to make. Not only does this give students a platform to socialize on, it gives them a platform to cook different cuisines and improve their cooking skills.

As explained in the product description, the system will provide all the relevant details required to make a specific type of cuisine (ingredients, prices, recipes etc.) and provides the students with whom they will be cooking with. However, this only occurs once all parties have confirmed their attendance after a pre-match selection. During this pre-match selection, users are presented with some basic information about their potential matches, such as the amount of previous meetups they have had and their average rating. If each individual confirms the match, then the system proceeds with the original setup. If an individual declines the match, no users are notified, and the match disappears. On the systems end, these users are matched based on their similar selection of preferences. However, it is important to allow users manual control in ultimately deciding who they match with. This was one of the revisions to the initial idea, which would automatically match users. This method increased user safety, and although may make the application slightly more tedious to use, we feel that users would feel a lot more comfortable with this feature.

By cooking together, the need to save money and not waste food is addressed, and since there are multiple people, tedious jobs (such as washing up) are split up evenly. Finally, by using location services and only allowing students to sign up via student ID, we address the issue of user safety.

We further revised the issue of safety by requiring every Foodle account to be linked to a Facebook account with 50 friends. This revision was made after realising the criticalness of user security in an application of this kind.

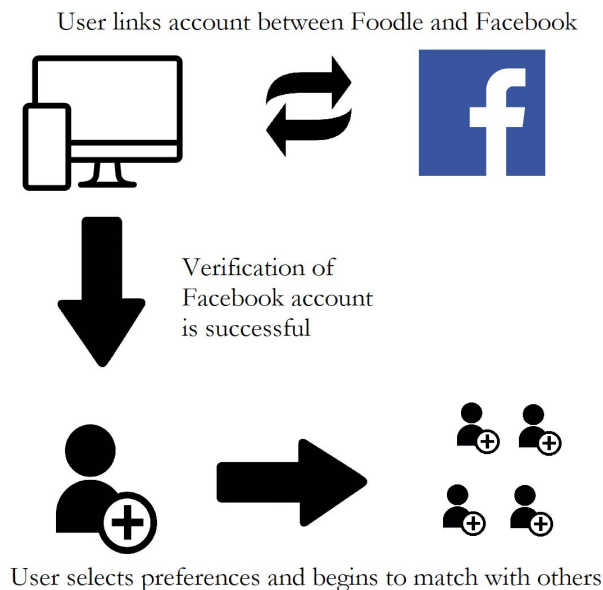


Figure 3: Social media authentication between Foodle and Facebook to increase security

1.3 Product Alternatives

Our group came up with the idea of Foodle by brainstorming a range of ideas we thought were promising, and then voting on the one we wanted to pursue. Initially, we brainstormed the idea of a food related application, and that's when a member suggested an application for group cooking. We all voted on the group cooking idea, as we thought it was an interesting and unique concept and would like to develop it further.

Undertaking a little preliminary research, we found out that a course mate had done something similar to group cooking through Facebook, but she said it failed due to a lack of organisation and the limitations of the Facebook event creator. This was good news to us as it showed us that there was a potential market for this kind of product. As we distributed questionnaires very early on and got an overwhelming number of responses (1500+) we decided that this was a good product idea and began creating this business plan.

2 Industry

2.1 Operation

The main industry of the service is social dining and cooking as it encourages people to not only eat together but also the process of cooking the food itself. It is tied to other industries including social networks, food and drink, and retail.

In the separate industries of social cooking and of social dining, people connect through one of the needs in life - food. While social dining focuses on eating together with ready-prepared food, social cooking focuses just on cooking the food together - this is a relatively new area that is being explored. The industry aims to benefit people with cultural capital compared to financial value as new relationships can be forged whilst maintaining existing relationships.

Due to the cultural capital benefit the app will bring, our industry is closely tied with social networks that involve the communication between users, sharing of information or content, to influence other users. An example is Facebook, in which text, audio, and video communication is used to provide information. They are mostly free to use as the industry itself generates revenue from advertising. Some social networks such as YouTube and Twitch uses a subscription method in which users pay an amount of money periodically to the service.

2.2 Business Model

2.2.1 Customers

The current service is targeted at full-time students pursuing higher education. This target audience is susceptible to new apps and the survey conducted showed that they are eager to socialize through cooking.

2.2.2 Competitors

The direct competitors that do social dining and cooking are Eatwith, Feastly, Groupeat, Travelling spoon, and WeFi. Reviewing the direct competitors, Danovich (2016) observed a lack of attendance in hosted events. This may be due to a lack of focus on actual interests and hobbies in EatWith and Feastly. They are also seen as a grey area in terms of permits by the Health Department to ensure the quality of food. EatWith is also expensive (most of them starts from £30) to join a table for a meal. Although previous similar industries have failed, we believe that the app would be a breakthrough as it starts from university students who are interested to socialize through cooking, but want to save money.

We have considered other indirect competitors that is part of the side industries including:

- Virtual communities (eg. Facebook, Meetup)
 - These are social networks focused on social gathering without a focus on the kind of occasion that would be held.
- Food deliveries (eg. UberEats, Deliveroo)
 - Food deliveries available to our potential user base mean that they would have less motivation to cook
- Restaurants and cafés
 - Without having the intention or motivation to cook, potential users might find alternatives that could provide them cooked food
- Eat out discounts (eg. Group out, Wuntu, Too Good To Go, Groupon)
 - Students might see discounts as a cheap and convenient way to get food without spending too much money or time.
- Ready-made meals
 - Instant meals become a competitor for the service as our target group might seek this as an alternative that does not require effort into preparing a meal

2.2.3 Suppliers

The main supplier for our service is the online platforms where we will provide the application for mobile phones to be available. Our main target is on the Apple iOS store and Android's Google Play stores.

2.2.4 Partners

As our service promotes people to cook their own food, we provide a source of education for the inexperienced or those that would like to learn advanced cooking such as baking or gourmet cooking. These will be done through providing recipes by an online source such as Allrecipes. Another practical option for hands-on experience is for our users to learn cooking at cooking academies that are available in the user's location or online. These partnerships would be a channel of mutual benefits that are gained in a way that our service would advertise for them without a cost but withdraw commissions.

To provide an incentive to the users, we can partner with supermarkets to advertise the ongoing sales of certain items and also other services that provides discounts for buying groceries such as Morrisons 'more card'.

2.2.5 Channels

Our business follows a B2C (Business to Customer) model. For the communication channels, we will directly be communicating with the customers through the app itself, emails, notifications, social media platforms, online chat, and telephone calls.

In terms of distribution channels, the app will be distributed on online app stores, by word-of-mouth, social media, news media, advertising, affiliations and partnerships. Affiliation here refers to a programme in which existing users

would refer new users from their social circle to use the service and gain benefits from it. Partnerships refer to the relationships the service has with other companies that would gain a mutual benefit.

The channels for selling our service will be online app stores and partners' means of promotion.

2.3 External Factors

2.3.1 Political factors

United Kingdom (UK) has decided to leave European Union after the referendum on 23 of June, 2016. This political action, also known as Brexit, will result in the loss of workers, students, and economic support from European countries which have a negative impact on immigration, the economy and education.

Since one of our goals is to facilitate cultural exchange among students, Brexit may result in the decrease of European students. This could reduce cultural diversity and prevent access to a variety of users and cuisines for our service.

To deal with the lack of cultural diversity, we can place more advertisements and promote the service on social media like Facebook and Instagram or at school in order to attract students out of the UK.

2.3.2 Economic factors

In 2008, Britain suffered from great recession (Economicshelp.org, 2018). It resulted in low economic growth, low inflation rate, low interest rate and high unemployment rate.

Currently, the recession is still recovering (Bank of England, 2018). According to the UK inflation report (BBC, 2018), the increase in wages cannot catch up with the inflation rate due to the drop of British currency followed by the vote of British' manifesto to exit the European Union. Moreover, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) stated that the GDP growth of the UK is the slowest among G20 in 2018.

The weak economic growth and high inflation rate may result in the reduction of the British citizens' purchasing power and willingness to spend. This will give an advantage to our service as it encourages people to cook at home instead of dining out, and the sharing of expenses to buy ingredients for cooking which can save users money. Nonetheless, the slow economic growth may cause people to be less influenced by the advertising and partnerships we introduce to them. This results in reduced purchases and reduces upstream revenue.

2.3.3 Social factors

Before the rise of Internet, people had more face-to-face interaction and mobile devices were treated as luxury products at the time. Emails were sent as letters and social networks were limited to people situated locally to an individual.

Now, it is more common for people to own a computer or a mobile device. The instantaneous delivery of information anywhere through the Internet gives rise to a phenomena of people communicating more in the virtual world rather than the real physical world. People are more likely to stay connected with friends on their mobile device instead of going out to socialize with people in the real world. Additionally, people can interact with international friends and widen cultural perspectives.

Given the rapid pace of technology advancement, it is still unknown how social networks will evolve. Social issues involving security of the users could be already solved through blockchains and algorithmic monitoring meaningsocial networks could be much safer than the current situation. Besides that, the current obesity rate in the UK is the highest in the world (Siddique, 2017). In the near future, people will want to take better care of their health and change their diet habits for a healthy lifestyle. Our service would benefit from this phenomena as people would prefer healthy food and encourage their friends to join them.

Our strength focuses on cooking and dining as food is a necessity and would generally be consumed every day. However, just because users socialise with people in the virtual world, this does not mean they will social with them

in the real world. Some users may have social anxiety and are afraid of meeting people. Also, people may be hesitant about meeting new people because of security fears.

Those who do not want to be social can still use the app to improve their culinary skills. In time, they will trust our service more and through social comparison or having a fear of missing out, they might be able to come out of their comfort zone and meet up with other users eventually. Also, if we are able to get more sponsors, we can give out some kind of incentives such as discount coupons to motivate users to attend user-hosted events. Thus, users will be more active to participate and socialize.

2.3.4 Technological factors

In the past, purchases were made offline and people were limited to goods sold locally. Furthermore, there was less reliance on technology to provide information on the products or services.

With the rise of smartphones and the internet, people can easily communicate to each other anytime and anywhere. Companies and developers can globally promote and sell their products and services efficiently on the internet. However, review sites and bloggers play a larger role in providing ratings. This is a potential threat as a single negative impression of a product can result in a damage to reputation, especially if they have a wide influence over consumers.

In the future, advanced technology such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data and Virtual Reality will be more developed and pervasive. This could bring another revolution to the social networking industry on how users find information on products and purchase them. It would also affect the way in which companies deliver their services to their customers.

Due to the highly increasing number of smartphone users and the success of social networking sites, more companies intend to replicate similar business models by providing similar services. For example, Tinder focuses on social dating, TravelPal focuses on social travelling, while Uber focuses on social transportation. The similarity in these businesses is they provide a platform that relies on users to generate content instead of selling a product to users. As there is a significant increase in the amount of social apps, our service faces strong market competition. Nevertheless, our service combines industries of social dining and cooking, as well as offering unique ideas such as cooking classes and sharing ingredients, which is currently not available in the industry.

To deal with the strong market competition, we need to speed up the development cycles using agile methodologies, push in features with frequent updates and provide tight security measures in trend with the new technologies. In the future, we can enhance our user-matching system with Artificial Intelligence and Big Data to provide better social experiences.

3 Market Validation

3.1 Methodology

The survey used was designed by the Foodle team on Google Forms with 1707 responses in total. It was conducted between February 25th and 17th March 2018 with the majority of the responses coming from users of the subreddit EatCheapAndHealthy. Other participants include users of the subreddits: cooking, AskCulinary, SampleSize, Assistance, UKUniversityStudents, businessschool and the Facebook friends of the group members. Since exposure on social media is partly luck based, the post on the subreddit EatCheapAndHealthy generated the vast majority of the responses through the momentum of upvotes on that particular subreddit. This can introduce bias into the data. For the most part this is ok because people who are interested in eating healthily and cheaply are part of our target customer base. Our app is designed to help people cut costs and try a variety of cuisines in the process. However, it will unfairly skew our data regarding how much people enjoy cooking and participate in it. Since eating cheaply is part of the subreddit's title, it is fair to assume that the users will cook at home to save money and could also enjoy cooking more. Despite this, the key questions that we want answering are more focused on social cooking and whether participants are interested in other cultures cuisines. These things should not be influenced so much by

eating cheaply and healthily.

3.2 Questions

We would like to see whether our product idea Foodle is viable. To do this, we need to assess whether there is a market for such a service. We need to know:

1. Whether people want to cook in groups more than they currently do.
2. What age range is most interested in doing so?
3. What countries do these people come from?
4. Are people comfortable group cooking with strangers? What demographic is most comfortable?
5. Are people comfortable with hosting events in their home?
6. Whether people enjoy eating/cooking a wide variety of cuisines.
7. Do people find themselves with leftovers often? Do people waste food often?

3.3 Key Findings

- 50.6% of participants said they would like to cook with other people more often.
- Ages 0-17 and 18-25 were most interested in cooking more with other people with 81.4% and 56.4% respectively checking yes.
- Participants in Sweden and Germany are most interested in cooking more with other people with 71.4% (10 out of 14 respondents) and 68.2% (15 out of 22 respondents) respectively checking yes. The United Kingdom has the lowest interest with 44.2% (53 out of 120 respondents) checking yes.
- 31.9% of participants said they would be comfortable cooking with strangers.
- On average participants like 5.5 different types of cuisine with 113 different types of cuisine represented.
- 47.3% of respondents find themselves with leftovers 'every couple of days'.
- The greatest proportion of participants (36.5%) throw away food 'every week'.

3.4 Detailed Findings

3.4.1 Respondent Profile

The participants were predominantly from the U.S.A, with 67.6% of them being from there. Canada with 8.7%, the United Kingdom with 7.3% and Australia with 3.4% are the next three highest represented countries.

90.6% of respondents were between the ages 18-40, with 43.9% between the ranges 18-25.

The participants were mainly White (78.0%) with a significant number East Asian (9.0%).

Participants top five favourite cuisines were Mexican, Italian, American, Chinese and Japanese with 70.2%, 68.8%, 67.4%, 61.7% and 57.1% checking them respectively.

40.3% of respondents are currently in higher education.

The majority of participants privately rent their accommodation (51.4%). 3.9% live in University halls.

Almost half of the respondents share a kitchen with one other person (49.7%). 16.7% share with two other people and 16.2% don't share with anyone else.

3.4.2 Extrapolations

From our key findings and respondent profile we can draw some tentative conclusions to the questions in section 3.2.

Question addressed: Whether people want to cook in groups more than they currently do. What age range is most interested in doing so?

The majority of the respondents (50.6%) wanted to cook with other people more often. With younger people more interested than older people at 57.3% of participants in the age range 0-25. Cooking with other people is at the core of the Foodle app. For the app to be compatible with a customer, the customer should be already interested in doing so. This allows us to narrow down our target demographic to younger people since they have the most interest in cooking with others.

Question addressed: What countries do these people come from?

Respondents from Sweden and Germany were most interested in cooking with other people, which means expansion into Europe could be feasible for the future. The UK had the lowest interest out of all the big countries but at 44.2% (53 out of 120 respondents) checking yes, that is still a significant chunk of interest. This should allow us the flexibility to launch in any major country in the developed world.

It was also found that respondents who live with their parents or in university halls are most likely to want to cook with other people with 59.3% (140 out of 236 respondents) and 58.2% (39 out of 67 respondents) respectively checking yes. 48.7% of the participants that are living with parents are students, on top of the students living in university halls. This gives a good indication that out of younger people, students are most interested in cooking with other people and could potentially form our target demographic.

Question addressed: Are people comfortable group cooking with strangers? What demographic is most comfortable?

The most popular reason why students would like to cook more is to socialise at 84.4% (314 out of 372 respondents). However, students are the least comfortable with cooking with strangers. Out of a random sample of 50 respondents, the most popular reason for not wanting to cook with strangers is because of some form of social anxiety at 22.0%. This shows the app we design needs to help alleviate the awkwardness of meeting new people in social situations.

Question addressed: Whether people enjoy eating/cooking a wide variety of cuisines.

65.6% (244 out of 372 respondents) of students stated that they would like to cook more to try new cuisines. Participants also enjoy a wide variety of cuisines - 5.5 different types of food were favoured on average. These two statistics suggest that the population, particularly students are interested in trying new cuisines. Our app could be a good facilitator for that experience.

Question addressed: Do people find themselves with leftovers often? Do people waste food often?

With a lot of the participants being left with excess food (47.3% 'every couple of days') and often having to throw that food away (36.5% 'every week'), there is clearly leftover food going to waste that could be shared in a larger group. Our app could help reduce these statistics and save people money by sharing this leftover food in a larger group.

The only question we couldn't address with our survey, without asking directly, was whether people would be comfortable hosting events in their own home. We will address this question in our secondary research where we can get a more detailed answer and follow up with specifics of our app that might make hosting more desirable.

3.5 Secondary Research

3.5.1 Methodology

To gain more personal data from people who are not necessarily interested in cooking, we gathered some secondary research in the form of 1-on-1 interviews. These were with friends and family members of the Foodle team. 10 interviews were conducted in total during April 2018. We asked the participants similar questions to the survey but in a more informal, conversational fashion. Audio from these interviews was recorded for review later.

The focus of this research is to hone in on why people want to cook with other people and what context they most enjoy doing so. This is because we already know there is interest in group cooking from our primary research. We also still want to know how comfortable people are cooking and eating with strangers. Questions asked included:

- Questions relating to the participants demographic.
- Do you enjoy cooking? More or less with other people?
- How often do you cook? How often with other people? How long do you cook for roughly per session?
- What type of food do you like cooking? What type of food do you like eating?
- How often are you left with leftovers? How often do you have to throw away food?
- Do you enjoy dinner parties? Do you like cooking for other people? Or do you prefer that everyone who's eating participates in the cooking?
- Are you comfortable cooking with strangers? Why or why not?
- Would this be something you'd do in preference to cooking with people you know? Why or why not?
- Would you enjoy eating with strangers? Does it seem like a good way to get to know people?
- If not, would you prefer the atmosphere to be more of a casual cooking class? Would you be willing to pay for this service?

3.5.2 Results

The results are not formalised, since these interviews were carried out fairly casually. The interview recordings were listened to and the responses summarised into the following sections:

Participant Demographic

7 of the participants were university students, studying in the UK, between the age of 20 to 24. The other 3 were middle aged between 40 and 50 living in the UK. 2 of the university students originate from East Asia with the remaining five being born in the UK. The three middle aged participants all grew up in the UK also. Our middle aged participants are all homeowners and our students all rent privately.

Social Cooking

Most of the participants said they enjoyed cooking. 5/7 of the students said they did and all of the middle aged participants also did. However, the middle aged participants said that time was a concern for them with busy working lives. The students generally enjoyed cooking with other people but admitted a lot of the time they cook and ate alone.. The middle aged participants mainly cooked with their partners and felt this was a good time to bond after the working day was finished.

Dinner parties with just the hosts cooking were generally preferred by the middle aged participants. Students were not as keen to have formal dinner parties or cooking for other people but still liked the idea of cooking with their friends and housemates. Since dinner parties were not a frequent event in the middle aged participants households, they were more willing to spend a lot of time preparing a special meal for their guests.

Food Preferences

The students we interviewed seemed to enjoy eating a wide variety of foods but they were restricted from cooking more lavish meals because of the expense of ingredients. However, they were more prone to ordering takeaways than the middle aged participants, particularly the students that said they enjoyed cooking less. Students often had leftovers and also had to throw expired food away regularly - especially vegetables. Nonetheless, most of the students would still cook at least one meal a day from home.

The middle aged participants had money to spare on more premium ingredients but were less adventurous with their types of cuisine - generally preferring to stick to a few consistent recipes. They were less interested in takeaways

but more likely to cook quick meals to fit in around their busy lifestyles. This is most likely why they prefer to stick to the same sets of recipes, as they know how long they take to make. The middle aged participants said they would often intentionally make enough food to have leftovers for lunch the next day. They also said they would occasionally have to throw away food. Most days, middle aged participants would cook breakfast and dinner at home however, they would occasionally have a dinner meal out if they were late home from work.

Cooking With Strangers

4 out of 7 of the students said they would be comfortable cooking with strangers. Those that didn't were not adverse to the idea of it but said that they may not feel safe going to a stranger's house alone to do so. They said if there was some guarantee of safety, they may consider doing it. Another common reason against cooking with strangers was social anxiety. Again, most of the the participants want to socialise with strangers to make new friends but felt it may be too 'awkward' to do so. Most of the students could see the benefit of cooking with other students at their university, particularly during first year when everyone is keen to socialise. The students were mainly interested in cooking with strangers for the social benefits, so were not as interested in doing cooking class, especially if they had to pay for them.

Only one of the middle aged participants was interested in cooking with strangers. They were more interested in the casual cooking class idea to improve their cooking skills. Again it would be preferable if this service was free. The other two middle aged participants said they were happy cooking with their partner and were not interested travelling to a stranger's home to cook. They were generally content with the friend they already have and didn't want the hassle of cooking with people they don't already know.

3.5.3 Conclusion

This research has highlighted further how useful our service could be, specifically for students to socialise with other students. It has the potential added benefit of cutting down the amount of wasted food, which was also more of a concern for students than the middle aged participants. It could allow students access to more expensive ingredients, since less food will be wasted and the cost of the meal will be split between multiple people. Students preferred more of a casual atmosphere with everyone cooking together, since this will be the best way to encourage socialising. This secondary research has supported the view that our target demographic should be students, but has made us aware of some of their concerns relating to cooking with strangers. These include security concerns and anxiety surrounding meeting new people. We will have to ensure that our app has features to address these concerns so we can reach as wide an audience as possible.

3.6 Industry Insight

How does our service match up to competitors in the same industry or neighbouring industries? Our service is fairly unique in such a way that we do not have many direct competitors at this time. However, there are some large scale companies that can each provide part of what we are offering.

Facebook is a social media juggernaut with over 2.2 billion active users currently. Although they are not specifically involved in cooking in any way, they do possess tools to allow users to easily organise events with their friends and even strangers through groups. Despite this, Facebook does not make much effort to alleviate social anxiety in face to face interactions. It facilitates virtual connections to organise real life events but does nothing to encourage it. Our app can help those who want to socialise but struggle to do so by encouraging them to meet new people through cooking.

Both Deliveroo and HelloFresh involve food delivery in fashion and are widely popular services. Deliveroo has a wide network of restaurants affiliated with it and can deliver premium food to your door quickly. HelloFresh has connections with lots of food suppliers, which allows them to deliver just the right amount of food needed to cook their recipes in your own home. However, they both lack the social aspect that our service can provide. Their services are not about socialising, they are just about getting access to the food in some way. Also, they are fairly

expensive services. With Deliveroo and HelloFresh you are paying for convenience, not a sociable experience. Our app can provide this with the ability to organise cooking sessions with friends and strangers alike.

In a sense, Tinder may be our most direct competitor. They offer socialising with stranger through profile matching. Although similar, their app is more concerned with the romantic side of relationships. Foodle is more interested in helping people find friends through the medium of cooking. This may appeal to a different subsection of society than Tinder and therefore sets Foodle apart from it.

4 Market Strategy

4.1 The Legal Status and Structure of the Business - General Partnership

In the event of a successful start-up, the decision was made to make the legal structure of Foodle a *General Partnership*. A general partnership involves each member contributing to the business equally. This means all initial risks, responsibilities and liabilities are shared between members. As each partner has an equally shared investment in the company, each would own 20% of Foodle.

This decision was made as a general partnership utilizes each partner's individual skills and talents to give a higher chance of creating a successful business. As demonstrated in the next section, our team has a comprehensive coverage of skills, allowing us to cover others weaknesses.

As we all equally contributed to the development of Foodle and the ideology around it, a general partnership ensures that all individual views on the future and direction of the business are considered, and no partner is ignored. The division of responsibilities and liabilities means that no single partner will feel overwhelmed, and in order to maintain and share a profit, each partner must contribute an equal amount. In the event of a partner leaving the business, this legal status provides the highest likelihood of business survival. Although this is unlikely, it must be accounted for, and this legal structure provides the most protective measures.

When deciding this legal status, the disadvantages of general partnership were heavily considered. One of the main disadvantages of a general partnership is that in the event of a single partner's negligence, all individual partners are held responsible. Additionally, disagreements with two partners can lead to a dissolution of the whole partnership.

As we have all been involved with the preliminary development of this app, Foodle, and have experienced very little conflict issues this far, the advantages this structure presents severely outweigh the disadvantages. Consideration of other structures occurred, such as setting up the structure as a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) or Private Limited Company (LTD), but we ultimately decided general partnership was the most attentive status to our needs.

That being said, this structure is not permanent. In the event of overwhelming financial pressure, we may decide to change to a *Private Limited Company* (LTD), as this structure provides more financial protection in the event of substantial investment being required.

4.2 Team Roles and Capabilities

4.2.1 Roles Required

To develop and launch the app many jobs will need to be assigned. Most of the roles can be done in house but others will require extra help. Different roles are required at post and pre-production of the app. The roles required pre-production include: product visioning, development, testing and quality assurance and operational manager.

Whilst the app is in production other less critical roles includes: admin and finance. Lastly, once the app has been built: legal and marketing. See Figure 4 for a breakdown of tasks required for each role.

Role	Tasks
Product visioning	Coming up with a mission statement and map out a clear direction we want our app to go down, a 'Vision'
Development	UX design - information architect, user research, interaction design, scenarios UI design - visual design, graphics, layouts and typography Architecture - Consider the device it will be platformed on, bandwidth, navigation methods
Testing and QA	Continuously test the code
Operational manager	Deal with day to day operations, planning and recruitment
Administrator	Responding to emails and calls
Finance	Manage finances, decide how many new staff we can hire
Legal	Consider the data protection issues and security measures needed on the app Write up the terms and conditions
Marketing	Promoting the app Continuously analyse the market to recommend improvements

Figure 4: Required tasks for each role

4.2.2 Role assignment

The roles will be assigned taking into account experience and interest. Due to financing, roles will be kept between our 5 team members in the early development stages. This means some members will have multiple roles but the roles will not consume much time and when the workload increases more help will be hired.

The product visioning will be completed by everyone as a team as it is important to agree on the final product if we are going to start a business together. Together we will assess what the 'gaps' in the market are, what we want to achieve and what we believe in to come up with a mission statement. This mission statement will be the backbone of our business and decisions to come will be made in light of it. As a team we agreed that Alex would be the best to manage our day to day activities given his organisational skills.

More technical roles like testing and development have been assigned to the most experienced group members in that area, this took into account previous degree background and project experience. Kimberley has experience designing user interfaces for two games made for university projects, Ray and David have experience with testing a game and Alex experience with logical design of software. The marketing role was given to Jessica because of her degree background, dissertation choice and interest.

Other smaller roles were given based on time constraint. Jessica would take the administrative role since the rest of the group have their hands full and she also has finance administrative knowledge from work experience. Finally the legal responsibility was given to David since he did the initial background legal research. However, the legal role will be replaced during development since none of the team members have experience, David will help the operational manager (Alex) find a replacement.

Please see Figure 5 for a full list of roles and capabilities. The capabilities reflect degree experiences and projects completed during study. We all have game development experience from working together to develop a game for a software engineering model at Bath university.

Name	Roles	Experience (capabilities)
Alex (ag2303)	Development (Architecture) Operational manager Product visioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MORSE (Mathematics, Operational Research, Statistics and Economics) background • Logical design • File management • Experience making music software (learnt through completing dissertation) • Coding: C, Python, Java, Haskell, AnsProlog • Game development experience
Kim (klzc20)	Development (UI) Product visioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Computer Interaction background • Experience with UX and UI design • VR experience with mental health (learnt through completing dissertation) • Coding: C#, Java, Python • Game development experience
David (dh731)	Testing Legal Product visioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Science background • Algorithm design • Testing experience • VR experience with physical health (learnt through completing dissertation) • Carried out legal research for business plan • Coding: C#, Java, Python, VB.net • Game development experience
Ray (chc217)	Development (UX) Product visioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Science background • Testing • Coding: Java, C++, Python • Game development experience
Jess (jl2332)	Marketing Finance Administrator Product visioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics and Statistics background • Coding: C, Python, Java, Haskell, R • Logical thinking • Analysing data (learnt through completing dissertation) • Finance and admin experience • Game development experience

Figure 5: Roles, Experiences and Capabilities

4.3 Operational Plan

Objectives	Actions/Strategies	Targets	Accountability	Timeline
Find initial investment	Ask friends and family	Raise enough money for 2 months runway, excluding market costs, roughly £28,000	Financial Administrator (Jess), with all members seeking investment.	Sep 18-Oct 18
Create a prototype	Choose design layout	User friendly design layout based on research	UI developer (Kimberley)	Oct 18-Dec 18
	Choose desired features	Choose features based on market research	Marketing and development teams (Alex, Jess, Kimberley, Ray)	Oct 18-Dec 18
	Code backend of the app	Create the foundation of the app to build off Include the chosen features of app	Architecture developer (Alex)	Oct 18-Dec 18
	Code the design (frontend) of the app	Create the chosen design	UX and UI developers (Kimberley, Ray)	Oct 18-Dec 18
	Test the prototype	Verify that the design of the app is adequate for presentation Verify that the features of the app represent are intended product	Tester (Dave)	Nov 18-Dec 18
Find external investors	Create a Kickstarter campaign	Raise enough money for 6 months, roughly £90,000	Financial Administrator (Jess), with all members involved in pitching.	Dec 18-Jan 19
	Apply for government grants			
	Pitch to angel investors			
Create a fully functioning app	Repeat the development process to create a beta version of the app	Improve the app design and functionality	Marketing and Development teams (Alex, Jess, Kimberley, Ray)	Jan 19-Mar 19
	Test the app again	Verify the design of the app is suitable with focus groups Verify the features of the app with focus groups	Tester (Dave)	Feb 19-Mar 19
	Make the app live on the App store and Google Play store	Successfully launch the app and be able to download it	Development team (Alex, Kimberley, Ray)	Mar 19
Market the app	Work with advertisers to increase popularity of the app	The app is visible on the app store and a significant amount of users are successfully using the app	Marketing team (Jess)	Mar 19-Apr 19
Make the app profitable	Add functionality that will create revenue	Allow advertisements to run on our app. Specifically advertisements users are likely to be interested in, to maximise revenue. Develop the app to display advertisements. Decide on the placements and frequency of the advertisements.	Marketing team (Jess)	Apr 19-May 19
Improve the app/add more functionality to the app	Add more functionality to get closer to our vision	Develop the app to add in new features Release the new version onto the App store and Google Play store.	Development team (Alex, Kimberley, Ray)	May 19 onwards

Figure 6: Operational Plan

4.4 Financing Plan

In order to bring our service to the market, we need a source of funding. We will not have any initial funding, so we are going to limit our costs by paying our own salaries and developing the application with all the marketing and operation done by ourselves. At the same time, we are going to use the friends and family approach to seek funding. Most successful businesses use this approach because it has the highest feasibility and the lowest risk. It is flexible in terms of the amount given and the time for repaying them. These investors will become our moral support and the motivation to make our business grow. To achieve that, we can simply sort out a list of potential lenders and ask them one by one.

After we have developed a beta version mobile application, we can expand our business by adding more features, making it more user friendly with marketing to increase the number of users. However, this will result in more costs. It includes our salaries and employees salaries which are about £2100 per month per person. If our company has 5 people, then the payroll will be £10500 per month. In addition to the cost of the renting an office (£2000), marketing (£1000), equipment (£1000) and maintenance costs (£500), the total cost per month will be £15000. Due to our application being based on the freemium pricing strategies, it is hard to make profit at this early stage due to the lack of users. Thus, we need to use other financing approaches such as crowdfunding, grants and angel investment to get more funding and keep our service operating. We can put our service on crowdfunding websites like Kickstarter and Indiegogo which are platforms for startups to seek for investment globally. The advantages of this approach is that it is easier to get funded, and the requirements for uploading to the website is low. The risks are low because it is more of a donation model, so there is no obligation to repay the donators if the business fails. However, the limitation is that the investment size is lower compared to other approaches. Another approach we can do is to seek for government grants. The benefits of using this approach is that we do not need to repay the fund and there are plenty of grants for different fields, locations, and specific goals. However, the whole funding application process may be slow and competitive due to too many applicants - and it may have a lot of restrictions, such as the location of the company and the usage of the funding. At the same time, we can also apply for angel investment. The requirements of this approach are highest compared to the above approaches and the lenders are selective because they seek a very brilliant, profitable and innovative business like uber, which held a angel investment in 2010 and raised 1.25 million pounds. We believe with our innovative mobile application, getting funding from the approaches is achievable.

After we modify our application and put it in the app store, the next stage is the period of when our efforts versus revenue break even and start making profits. In order to retain and increase the revenue, we can apply for venture capital funding to expand our business further. Since we have got a successful application and promising revenue at this stage, it further increases the chance of getting funded by the ventures. The advantage of this approach is that they always provide a large amount of investment which is a huge support on expanding our business. The disadvantage of this approach is that they may get equity in the company or even request a seat on the company board of directors which may decrease the flexibility of the company and thus, make it harder to make decisions in which the ventures do not approve of.

4.5 Sales and Marketing

4.5.1 Sales

To project how much income the business will gain, we use a **bottom-up** approach that is based on our collected data to forecast actual revenue.

Based on our first survey from Reddit, 0.0363% were people living in the UK studying Higher Education. Our market population is then estimated to be 609,013 people who are subscribed to the EatCheapAndHealthy subreddit (source of majority respondents) at the time of writing. We can then generalize our leads to be at least 22,000 people who matches with our targeted audience due to the large sample size. To estimate how many people are interested in our app, we assume our first customers are people who wants to socialize and are comfortable cooking with others. We take the responses of the targeted audience who said “Yes” to the question “Would you like to cook with other people more often?” The initial rate of people who would use the product is calculated to be approximately 42% (about 9000 people) who were studying Higher Education in the UK.

Having a population of potential users, the sales strategy applied a focus on generating income through advertising. These ads can come from companies interested to advertise with us and from our partners. We assume that ads are to be displayed on every page and that a user will click at least one advertisement when using the app. Estimating that each ad willbring in £0.30 per click (Google Adsense) and every user will click on at least one ad, we would gain a revenue of £2700 from ads.

4.5.2 Marketing

Product

Referring to our questionnaire where respondents shared their interests towards cooking with others, interest to socialize and their fear of social anxiety. The marketing strategy focuses on branding the app to promote trust. To do this, we emphasize five points: accessibility, reliability, honesty, value, and consistency. In terms of accessibility, we will encourage our users to communicate with us about the issues and give feedback through the communication channels. Although all the users would be students in Higher Education, we will take precautions towards anti-social behaviour by allowing users to report a host or an attendee. This could be done so peer review could be conducted to provide security by improving reliability. As the app may collect personal information, we would need to be transparent about the information we collect and emphasize customers’ safety and satisfaction.

Price

To penetrate the market with a new industry of both cooking and dining and compete with similar industries, the app is freely available to users. This would attract more users to use the platform and test the service before future pricing plans are offered. It would result in a high market share with a high volume of traffic within the app, and protect the app from new entrants into the market, as other companies would find it too expensive in terms of market shares.

Place

Our app will be selectively distributed on the two mainstream app stores, which are the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Although the competition in app stores is strong, a similar app in our specific industry does not exist and so we would be able to get the spotlight.

Promotion

Partnerships, affiliations and social media advertising that offers sales promotions and discounts will pull users to visit our app and boost revenue income with advertising and commission sales. In contrast, we can also push our app to users by having promotional booths on campus, to cooperate with the campus and promote a healthy diet by cooking their own food, with other students in the university halls, through the use of our app.

5 Analysis of the Inherent Risks

The security risks and privacy issues of users are one of the major concerns for our service. We have to make sure the users will trust the service and protect their personal safety. To protect the data of our users; personal information will not be disclosed to other parties, privacy policies for our service will be transparent, and the latest data encryption techniques will be practiced. User's profiles will be initially set to private; their information can only be viewed after they have accepted a friend request. We will also implement a review and report system to ensure the safety of users, allowing them to decide whether or not a person is trustworthy before meeting.

There is concern that an established social media platform may decide to implement a group meetup system that can compete with ours more directly. This would be detrimental to our business since they already have a large active user base that they would use those services over a new one, such as ours. A way to mitigate such a risk is to either develop our product as quickly as possible so it meets the market demand before a larger company can develop a similar product, or pivot our idea to set it apart from competition when the time comes.

Another potential risk is not gaining any funding for our business idea. Since the team does not have much experience developing a smartphone app and without funding, we would not be able to hire other developers to help us with this. Also, we would not have principal for promoting and marketing our app. To prevent this risk from playing out we would need to teach ourselves the necessary programming skills to develop the app ourselves. Our marketing model would have to be low cost and efficient. These two things are possible but very time consuming and would be good to avoid.

Furthermore, assuming that we can get the start-up going, we would have to be wary of the team dynamic going forward. If members of the team are not comfortable with the trajectory of the project is going, then conflicts in the team can cause the business to be unsuccessful by wasting time and money. To ensure this does not happen, the team will have clear channels of communications with frequent progress reviews.

Another potential risk is the skills gap. Since we have similar backgrounds, we may have skill sets that are too similar. However, a business requires people with a variety of experience and knowledge in different areas. Although we all have programming skills, we lack financing, administration, legal, marketing skills. The risk here is that we reach a point in the business in which we do not have the skills to proceed appropriately, and lack the financial budget to recruit people with these necessary skills. The only way to address this issue is to develop the necessary skills as we develop the app so we are prepared for this situation.

One of the biggest market risks is the initial user response. Users can write unbiased reviews about their experiences on the app store. If the initial release of the app is not fully optimised, users may write bad reviews steering prospective customers away from the app. Bad reviews can be extremely difficult to recover from, and repairing a bad reputation is a lot more difficult than ensuring a smooth release of the app.

6 References

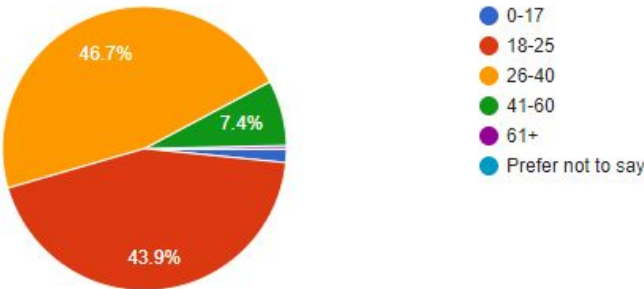
- Bank of England. (2018). *Visual summary - Inflation Report February 2018* | Bank of England. [online] Available at: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/inflation-report/2018/february> -2018/visual-summary [Accessed 15 Mar. 2018].
- BBC News. (2018). *UK growth 'to be slowest in G20'*. [online] Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-43384718> [Accessed 15 Mar. 2018].
- Danovich, T. (2016). *Why No Dining App Is the 'Airbnb of Food' (Yet)*. [online] Available at: <https://www.eater.com/2016/3/31/11293260/airbnb-for-food-apps-eatwith-feastly> [Accessed 25 Apr. 2018].
- Economicshelp.org. (2018). [online] Available at: <https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/7501/economics/the-great-recession/> [Accessed 15 Mar. 2018].

Siddique, H. (2018). UK is most obese country in western Europe, OECD finds. [online] The Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/nov/10/uk-most-obese-country-in-western-europe-oecd-report-finds> [Accessed 15 Mar. 2018].

7 Appendix

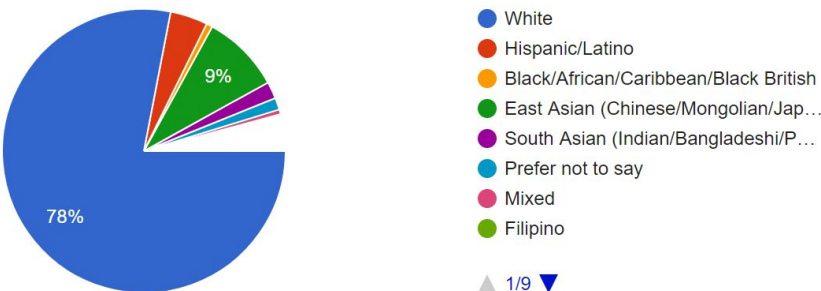
What is your age?

1,707 responses



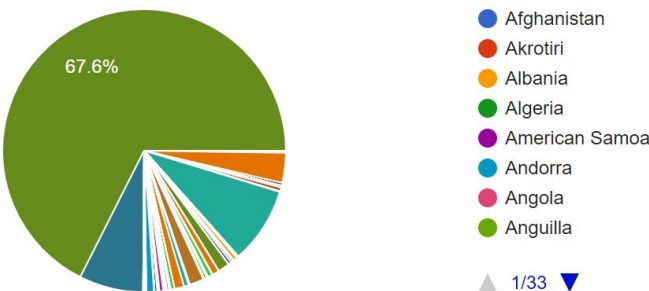
What is your ethnicity?

1,707 responses



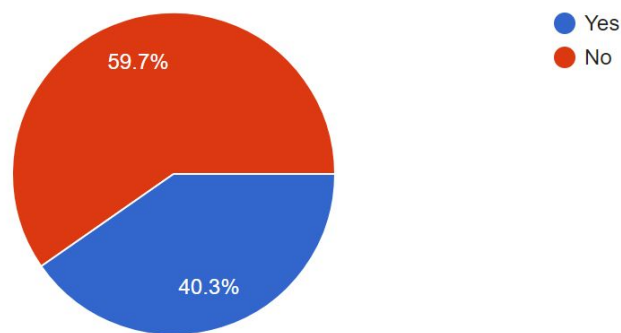
What country do you live in?

1,637 responses



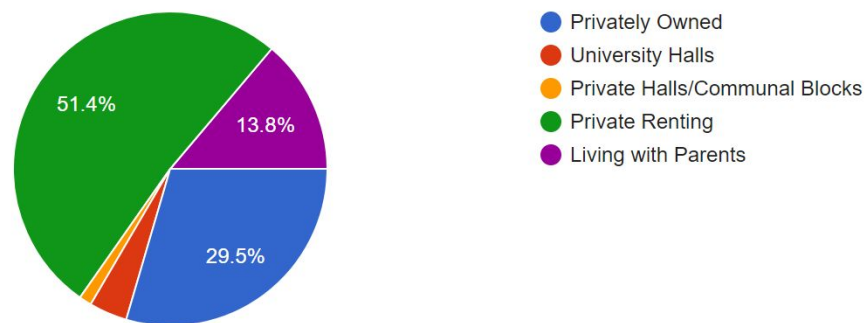
Are you currently in higher education? (eg. University, Higher National Diplomas etc.)

1,707 responses



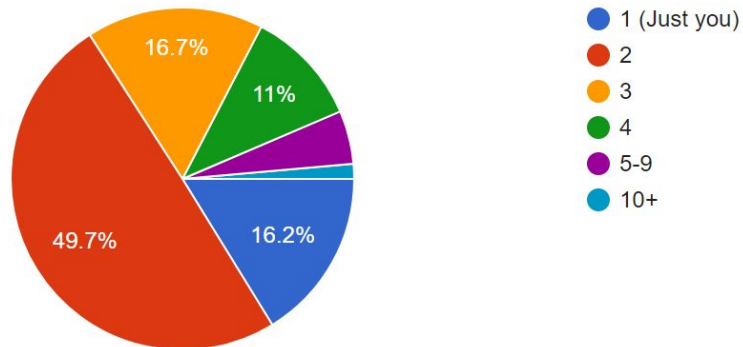
What kind of accommodation are you currently living in?

1,707 responses



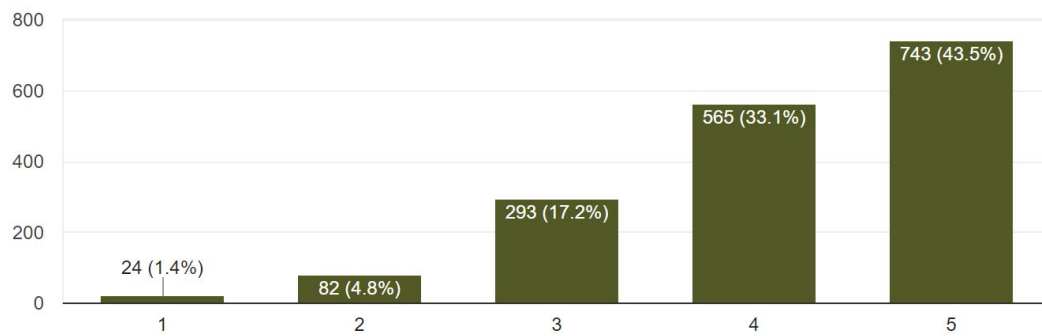
How many people do you share your kitchen with?

1,707 responses



How much do you enjoy cooking?

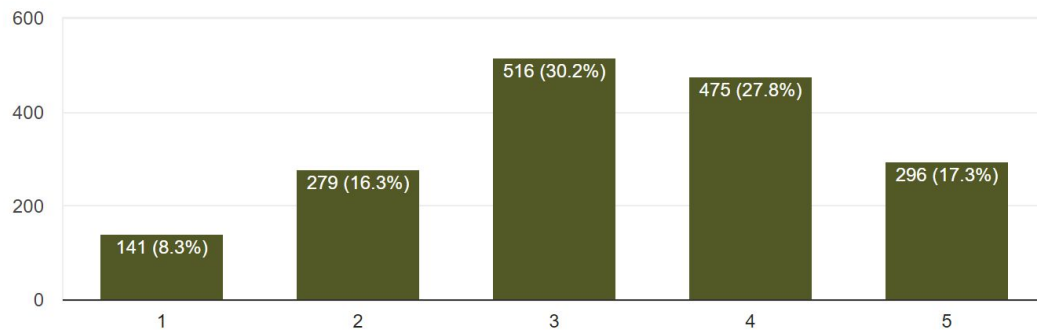
1,707 responses



How much do you enjoy cooking with other people?

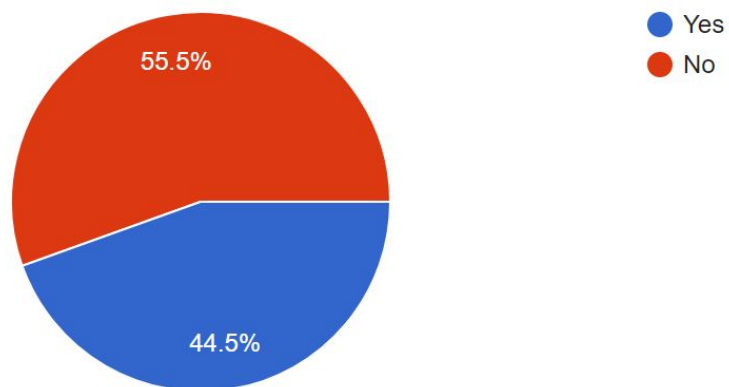


1,707 responses



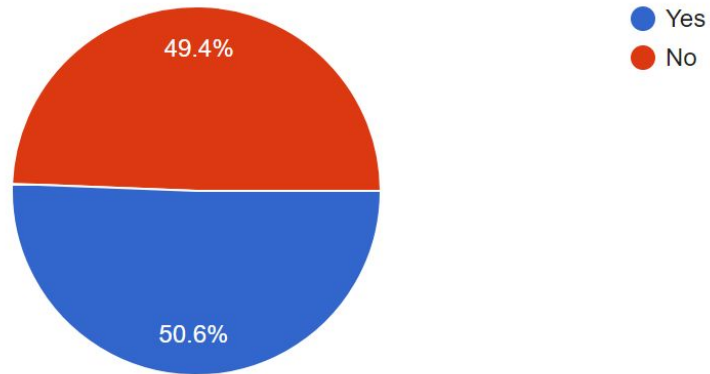
Are these exclusively people you live with?

1,707 responses



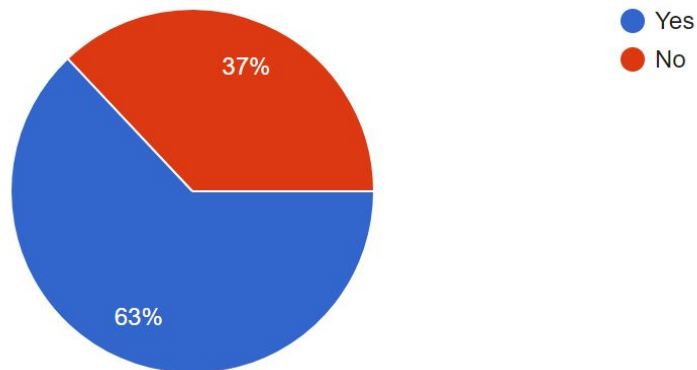
Would you like to cook with other people more often?

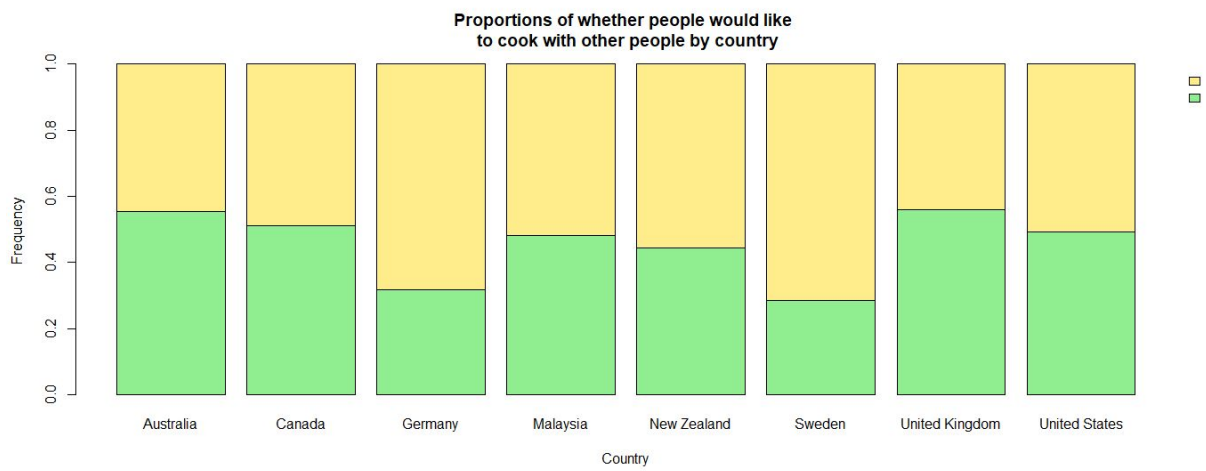
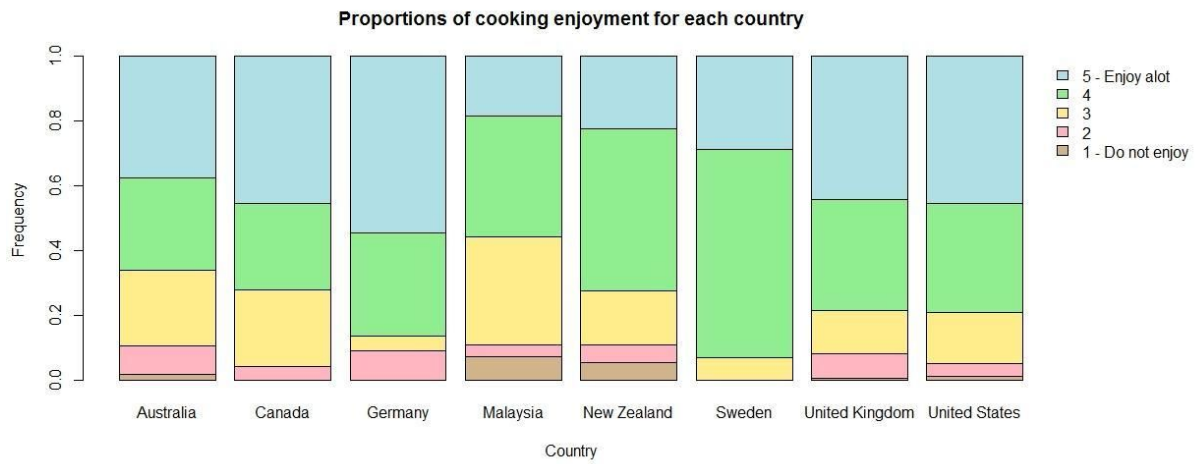
1,707 responses

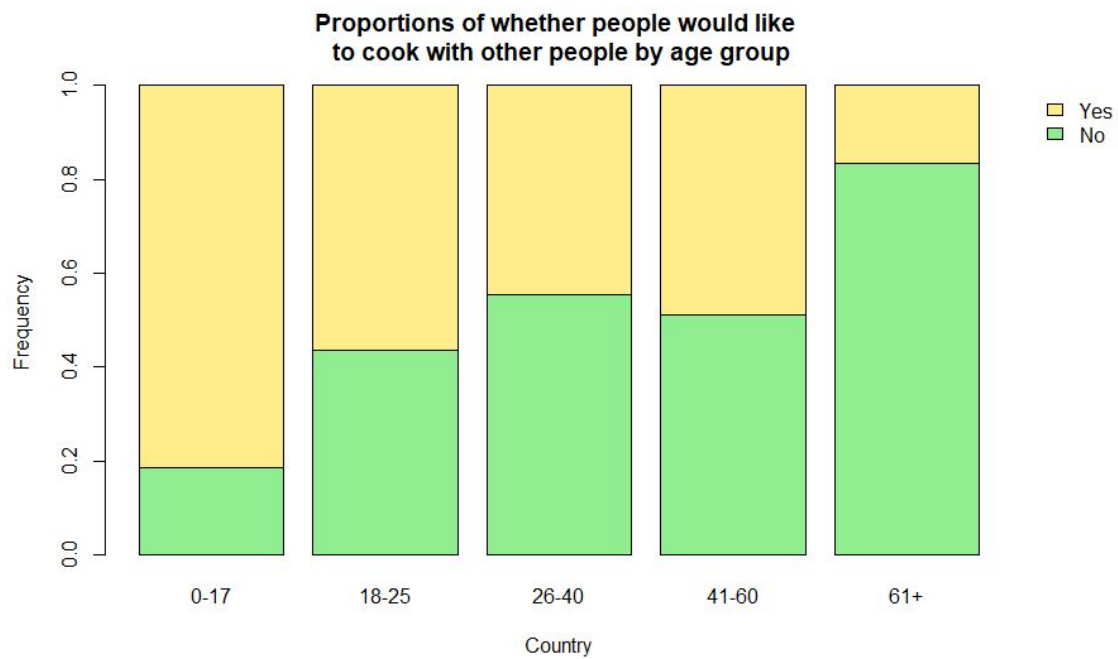


Would you be comfortable cooking with people you have never met before?

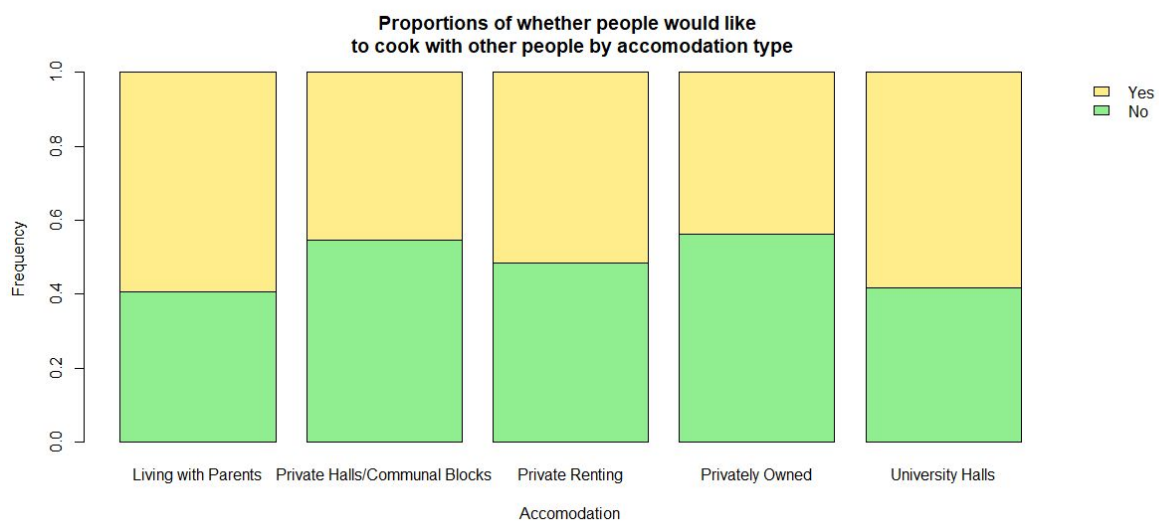
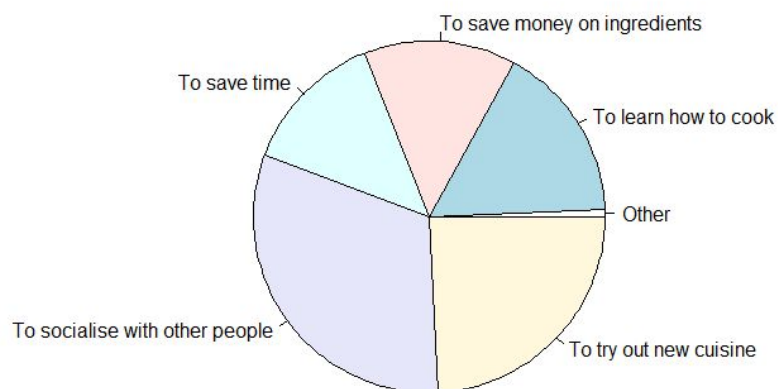
864 responses







Why students would like to cook with others



SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strength</u></p> <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help people save money on food ingredients • Not many direct competitors <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets the customer need well • Can help people overcome social anxiety • people like making friends online <p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces food waste if people cook together 	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible competitors are popular and versatile e.g. nearly everyone has Facebook • May not be a market for group cooking <p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inexperienced development team <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society is becoming more antisocial
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers are health conscious • Everyone has a smartphone • People care about their body image • Could expand to social media where people share photos of their meals which would be good publicity <p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google play and app store can help with publicity 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BREXIT, if there is less immigration then there could be less cultural influence <p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food changing price • Fast food gets cheaper • growing economy makes more people to dine out <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People become antisocial • More introverts <p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apps become redundant • New app is created for group cooking or similar <p>Environmental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme weather affecting food supply <p>Legal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security issues with meeting strangers • Tight regulations on the app store

PART B: Individual Work Submissions - Cheuk Hei Chan

My most important individual contribution is to determining the strategy of financing approaches. This is the component 4d section. Firstly, I have a problem understanding what the word financing means.

There are a few problems that I faced. The first one is about what does the word financing actually means. At first, I think it is about how to make profit. But after going to the lecture, I believe that it should be about how to get funding to make our service go to the market and understand what money we need. So I list out the direct and indirect costs of our business and talk about different approaches we can do about financing our business. Second problem is to define “bring that service to market”, it can be defined by making a working application and put it on apps store. But I think there is not much to write about it. Thus, I talk about different stages of our business may have different financing approaches. The third problem is that it is hard to choose a single approach to finance our business. So I choose multiple approaches which apply on different stages. Because most of the approaches can be used simultaneously.

I individually did some research on different financing approaches such as angel investment, crowdfunding, government grants. I browse the internet and find out how it works, what are the advantages and limitations between them and how they can apply in different stages of our business. And I found out that there are a lot of successful company such as Uber, Deliveroo, skype have used these approaches when they were small companies. These funding help them to grow and succeed at the end. So I start to look at their stories and understand how they succeed.

PART B: Individual Work Submissions - Kimberley Chong

Our approach in this task is to revise our own sections and split up each subsection of Component 4 to each individual. My most important contribution to the coursework is analysing the different sales and marketing strategies and deciding on which strategies to use. To use a bottom up approach, I have analysed the results of the questionnaires and made assumptions based on that as it gives us a quantitative estimate of revenue that we can expect from advertising. I have also revised the Component 2 (Industry) and Component 5 (Risks) from the draft business plan based on the feedback given and have collapsed the sections into paragraphs for appropriate sections. I have also looked up on previous similar industries again in which an article have reviewed why a similar industry has failed to stay on top. The amount of contribution I have made would affect Component 2 and Component 4 the most.

The use of sales and marketing strategies was a relatively new area for me. A problem I face is to keeping the length of the component to be short and comprehensive. There were also overlapping concepts between sales and marketing which were a bit confusing. Another problem I faced was finding the part in Component 2 in which the feedback mentioned the features in Component 2 should be mentioned in Component 1. In the previous draft, the industry was unclear as there was not much information to be found. Many of the companies had already closed down or was not successful.

To analyse the sales strategy, other social networks like Facebook have used advertising for their main revenue income. To understand advertising further, I researched on the the differences between cost per click (CPC) and cost per million (CPM). The possible clickthrough rate of our app was unknown so I had to make believable assumptions such as based on those who responded to our questionnaire. As our company could bond partnerships with existing companies such as supermarkets like Tesco or Co-Op, this benefits us to rake in further revenue. In terms of marketing strategies, I found that there are further extensions of the 4Ps to 7Ps and 4Cs that are commonly used in planning marketing strategies. In promotion, I have learned about push and pull strategies which were helpful in realizing how we can get mutual benefits with other non-commercial parties such as the school campuses. I have also revised the Component 2 (Industry) by looking up on EatWith and found out that there are not many existing social dining companies due to the lack of participation and focus just on social dining without relevance with hobbies or interests. However, since the app we come up with promotes cultural exchange and allows connection by mutual interests or universities, the business would not face the same issue as EatWith.

To cope with the page limit, the extended elements of 4Ps to 7Ps and 4Cs were not mentioned in the plan. Furthermore, the calculation of the exact CPC and CPM was simplified and generalized. In terms of revising Component 2, I asked David who did Component 1 to have a look through and omitted the recurring features of our app. I have also added a short description of similar industries of social eating into Component 2 based on the feedback to analyze similar industries.

PART B: Individual Work Submissions - Alex Gooding

My most important contribution to the team coursework was to source most of the responses to our online survey. The survey got 1707 responses, which I think is a good population size for crowdsourced market research. This mainly affected component 3 of the coursework, market validation. It gave us lots of data to work with and helped us gain insight into the way different demographics of people thought about social cooking.

Getting enough responses to an online survey can be difficult. There were two obvious problems that needed to be solved from the start:

1. Method of outreach
2. Survey design

At first Facebook was considered to be the most obvious way to source some survey responses (and was used for a minority of the responses in the end). However, even with every member of the group sharing the survey on their profile, the potential number of participants was still quite low – as a maximum we could reach a few thousand people. Therefore, the outreach had to be more public. As well as having a large user base, Reddit's design is to house lots of smaller interconnected communities called subreddits. This allowed me to target communities of potential respondents that would have more interest in taking a survey related to cooking. I submitted the survey to a number of subreddits and it managed to gain traction on r/EatCheapAndHealthy. The post containing the survey made its way to the front page of the subreddit with a subscriber base of 626,899 (as of 20/03/18). This allowed the survey to have lots of exposure to potential participants.

To get people to actually complete the survey, the title of the Reddit post and the survey design had to be considered. Making a suitable Reddit post to attract as many participants to the survey as possible involved research into gaining exposure on social media. Being honest about the context of the survey, whilst not being too specific about the actual business idea, proved the most effective way to get people interested but not skew their thought process going into the survey. In the title the survey was described as being short and for a final year university project. In the body of the post it was mentioned that it was for gathering potential customer data on cooking preferences, particularly social cooking.

The design of the survey itself was important to gain responses too. This part was not done just by me - the group as a whole sat down to discuss this. We researched the layout of standard respondent profile questions and discussed which questions would be necessary to include. I discovered that it was possible to section the survey on Google Forms so that conditional questions can be asked based on previous responses. This allowed for a more logical and personalised design of the questionnaire.

Additionally, secondary research needed to be conducted. I designed the general layout of what questions needed to be asked and the direction each interview needed to go. This was important as we needed to hone in on specific details that the general survey missed. These included questions on the setting and atmosphere participants would be comfortable group cooking in, and also gathering more detail about why they may or may not be comfortable cooking with strangers.

With solutions to the two outreach problems, and the generosity of the Reddit community, our primary research survey was a success, with more than enough data collected to aid our market validation. Also, our secondary research allowed us to gain further insight into the results from the survey.

PART B: Individual Work Submissions - David Hurst

a) Your most important individual contribution to the team coursework

I was initially tasked with introducing the product in the draft business plan. After revisiting this section, I made multiple changes which better incorporated the further work done in the market validation, and accounted for the suggestions from Christof.

To do this, more security measures were added in Component 1: manual confirmation of potential matches and integration with Facebook. I also revised the product description to make it more detailed, as it was too vague.

In terms of the addition of strategy to the final business plan, we decided as a group to split Component 4 individually, do research then write up and proof read together. I was tasked with researching the legal status and structure of the business.

b) The part of the coursework most affected,

Component 1 and Component 4

c) A brief summary of the problems and decisions that you faced in that area of the coursework

It was difficult to figure of a way to increase user security when we already had discussed location based and user ID checks. Furthermore, deciding a legal structure was difficult.

d) The personal research undertaken (individually) in response to those problems and choices,

I looked at ways another application that was similar (Tinder - matches people) addressed security issues. For the legal structure, I researched multiple business websites that provided the advantages and disadvantages of different types of legal structures.

e) the choices that you made in response to c) and in light of d).

This is mainly discussed in A, however I had to decide which legal structure to implement based on the advantages and disadvantages they presented. I went with a general partnership, however Private Limited Company was heavily considered due to the inexperience we currently had in entrepreneurship.

PART B: Individual Work Submissions - Jessica Lok

a) Your most important individual contribution to the team coursework,

My most important role was to analyse the data collected from google forms. I used the data to look for answers to our market validation questions. I picked this role because I was familiar with the questionnaire and what we wanted to achieve from it. I also made a significant effort to learn the strengths of every team member to assign roles dependent on capability.

b) The part of the coursework most affected,

Component 3 was affected the most, specifically when noting down the key findings and in the conclusion when thinking about the industry insight. For the conclusion we needed to think about what our customers wanted and compare what we have that our competitors don't. This meant we needed to draw from the answers found in our data. Component 1 was also affected as the problems found in the market research needed to be addressed in the description of the app.

Additionally, the roles and capabilities and the operational plan was contingent on what roles will be assigned to whom.

c) A brief summary of the problems and decisions that you faced in that area of the coursework,

I initially tried to use excel to draw the graphs but it proved to be too difficult to sort through all the data and create the right formulas for what I wanted to present. Instead, I found that R is the best software to create the graphs we needed and analyse large data sets.

Since there was so much data to sort through I had to make decisions on how much of the qualitative data to read and also the best way to sort through it. Since I was analysing the data alone I chose to look at sample sizes of 50 and looked for key words to categorize responses into groups.

I needed to make decisions on what data is significant and how we can directly use the data to answer our questions. For some statistics it was necessary to analyse different demographics groups to compare whether a statistic is significant.

d) The personal research undertaken (individually) in response to those problems and choices,

I used google to learn how to write R scripts to sort through the data and output graphs in the fashion we needed.

e) The choices that you made in response to c) and in light of d).

- The software to use to look at the data.
- What graphs to include in the report.
- What key findings to include.
- How the data should be displayed.