Focus Group Interview

The goal was to properly select a group of people to debate on a new service. People have been chosen carefully such that they all enjoy cooking, but they have different styles, different tastes and cook different plates.

The discussion is divided into two main parts: first part is a warmup where each member introduces himself to the others and answer about few questions about him habits in the kitchen. This is made to make people think about the topic and also to let member of this group know each other a little bit better and establish empathy. The second part is the debate about the service and how they think it should work.

# The Group

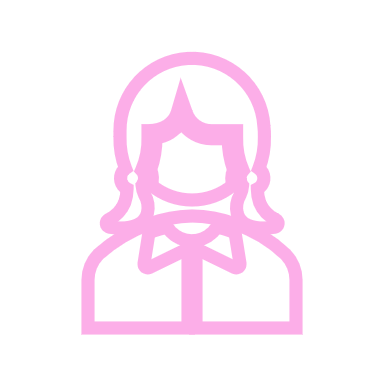


Name: Riccardo

Age: 24

Profession: Student

Lives in Belgium, alone

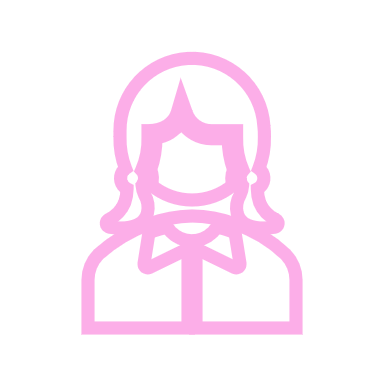


Name: Asia

Age: 20

Profession: Student

Lives in Italy with her parents

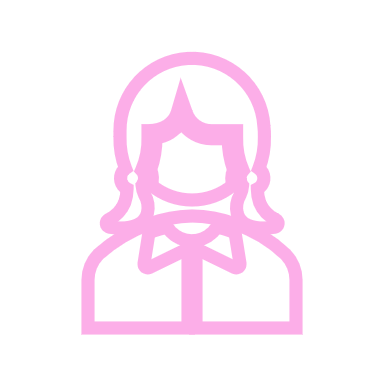


Name: Erika

Age: 23

Profession: Student

Lives in London, alone

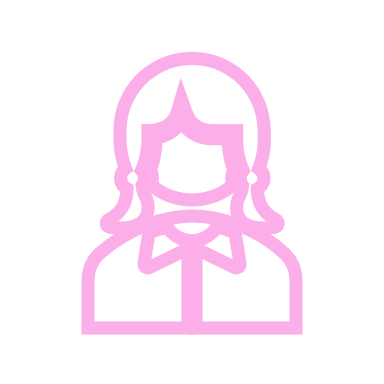


Name: Francesca

Age: 19

Profession: Student

Lives in Italy with her parents



Name: Antonella

Age: 21

Profession: Student

Lives in Italy with her parents

# Warmup

The moderator briefly introduces all the members of the group and the key principles that rules the talk.

**Question 1:** Do you like cooking? Why do you cook (pleasure, need)?

* **Asia:** I like to cook but I do not cook very often. Usually my mother cooks for all the family. The occasional time I cook I do it for fun, but I cook at most simple recipes that require not more than 30 minutes.
* **Riccardo:** I really enjoy cooking. I cook both for needs, since I live by myself in Belgium and I also do it for passion. Since I am doing the quarantine at my parents’ house, I like to cook for them and receive their (positive) feedback. Usually I cook what I really like without any time constraint.
* **Francesca:** I cook mostly for necessity, because my parents are out all day for work. Sometimes I cook for pleasure but mostly cakes.
* **Erika:** As Francesca, I also cook mostly for necessity but I started making cakes when I was a teenager
* **Antonella:** For me cooking is a hobby, I feel very relaxed when I am in the kitchen and you can imagine I do it very often.

**Question 2:** where you find inspiration for your recipes?

* **Asia:** When I cook cakes with my mother, we usually check on <misya.info>, if we check for a specific plate we go on <giallozafferano.it> or if I need general advices on how to cook fish, for example, I just search on Google.
* **Riccardo:** I definitely use <giallozafferano.it>, sometimes I search on Youtube, other times I just use imagination.
* **Francesca:** I mostly cook cakes and use <chefincamicia.com> but like the others <giallozafferano.it> is always an option.
* **Erika:** For me the inspiration came mostly from some facebook pages I follow and from my relatives.
* **Antonella:** No internet at all, I usually ask to my parents and my two grandmas.

**Question 3:** Have you ever had a few heterogeneous ingredients in the fridge and not knowing how to consume them together?

* **Asia:** I do not know how to answer since my mother oversees that.
* **Riccardo:** Usually yes, and I spent lots of time searching for recipes to cook them together.
* always an option.
* **Francesca**: if this happen, I avoid cooking.
* **Erika:** Yes, I mostly use google for that.
* **Antonella:** Not at all.

# Discussion

**Moderator:** Now I will introduce an idea we had, and you give me feedback on that.   
[ The idea is a search engine for recipes mainly based on ingredients. The main functionality is to put inside the ingredients you have and to retrieve a set of recipes ordered by ingredient matching. An example is: if I insert eggs, pecorino cheese and guanciale (pig cheek) the search engine must give me as first result carbonara since it match 100% of the ingredients. It should give me some alternative recipe, if exist, that also match 100% of ingredients but that is different from the first result, so I do not cook always the same dishes. At the end it should also give me recipes matching less than 100% but that I can cook if I can quickly go to the market. ]  
A similar successful service but with other field of application is Skyscanner, to look flights best fit my needs.  
The question is, would you use such a service? If yes tell why and how you expect it works. If no, why?

*The moderator invites the group to debate on each other’s opinions.*

1. **Asia:** what I really expect from a service like this one is an implicit search for ingredients. For example, if I search for carbonara, I would like that only the first result is the carbonara and all the others are dishes with same ingredients but that represent a different plate (in the carbonara case I would like the second result is pasta omelette with pig cheek and pecorino cheese).
2. **Riccardo:** I would expect from this service simplicity and ease of use. It must be very minimal but should give to me exactly what I expect. I do not want, for example, strange American recipes with ketchup instead of tomato sauce. I would like it collects and displays data from a variety of qualified sources. Also, I think that the app should not address people that does not know how to put together ingredients they have, instead it should give suggestion on what to buy to cook a nice meal.

**Moderator:** why do you think this service might be useful and what's more to the services that already exist?  
**Riccardo:** It all a matter of speed and centralization. If I have to search on google I got lost (too many blogs) and it takes a lot of time to do such a search and find something that match my needs. Instead I want find things quickly with a unified interface so that I can spend my time cooking.

1. **Francesca:** I would strengthen the point of view of Riccardo about speed and centralization and p.o.v. of Asia about discovering new plates, although I believe that I would use it to discover new recipes to consume the ingredients I have at home without going to the supermarket, differently from what Riccardo said.
2. **Erika:** I would like to point out that a focus should be about recipe difficulty.
3. **Francesca:** Erika is right. It occurs to me that, in addition to filtering the recipes by difficulty, one might think that the user enters their own skill level and they are offered recipes based on it. Each time the user completes the recipe, according to the degree of satisfaction, they are awarded points that allow him to advance in level.
4. **Riccardo:** Yes, it is a nice functionality but still should be separated from the difficulty filter for the search engine. Indeed, if I am a rookie I do not want complex plates to start, if I am a pro it might happen that do not want to cook amazing plates, but sometimes pasta with tuna is fine.
5. **Erika:** yes, I agree with Riccardo.
6. **Francesca:** I think they are both useful, one to improve the search mechanism the other to put users into a challenge with themselves to improve.
7. **Riccardo:** True Francesca, I agree.
8. **Asia:** Yes I agree, the two things must be separates. It is the case that during the week, if I am always hurry (to go to work for example, or I am tired at night) I won’t take any challenge. Instead I am encouraged to play during weekends, when I am relaxed, and I have time to spent cooking. It should also be useful to have a filter about how many times is required to accomplish the recipe.
9. **Erika:** even the price for recipe with ingredients you don’t have.
10. **Antonella:** I agree with all of you. Actually, I never do experiment since for me is boring search and spent time on internet to find stuff but indeed if somebody does it for me I would be happy to use it.
11. **Erika:** You should also give importance to vegan people or people with some food intolerance. [Everyone agrees and the discussion ends].