



Feed Your Social Cravings

Brought To You By...



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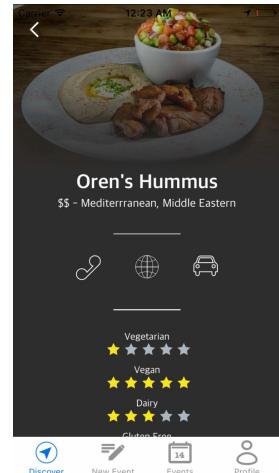
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It's Nice to *meetcheu*:

Three simple words, “let’s get lunch”, can be complicated if you have a restricted diet. You must be extremely careful of where and what you eat if your diet is restricted by food allergies, a medical condition, and/or for religious/moral reasons. Socializing over meals, or merely finding a meal away from home, can be a challenge. To meet this challenge, some people eat a full meal before going out, others conveniently arrive after everyone has eaten, and some people avoid these social settings and stop eating out and with friends. But there is an alternative, and *meetcheuthere* will put you in control.



meetcheuthere is redefining social eating. *meetcheuthere* builds trusted communities of geographically proximate people with common dietary restrictions, and provides a safe space to find restriction friendly restaurants and events to attend, as well as the opportunity to create and host social events.

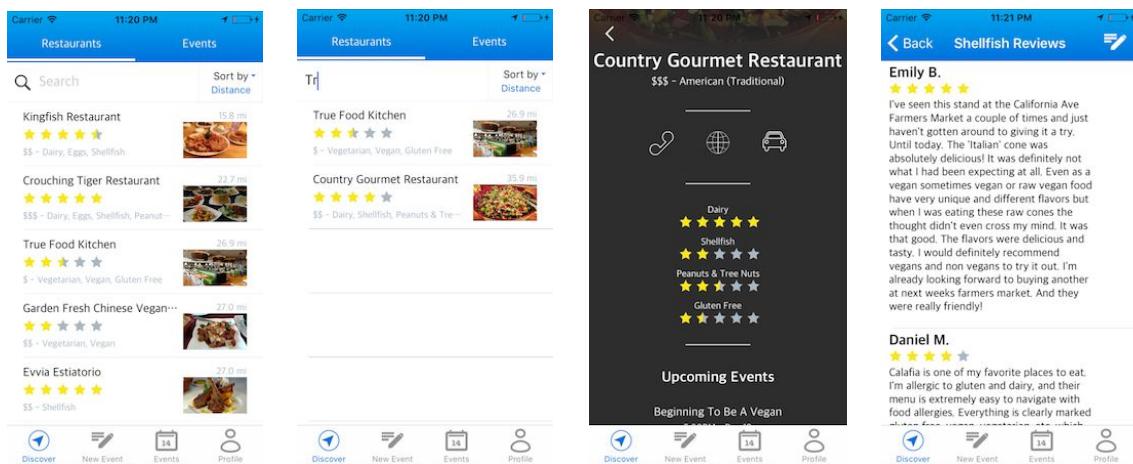
meetcheuthere. It's time to feed your social cravings

Meeting Your Needs: Task and Final Interface Scenarios

1. Find Food (Simple)

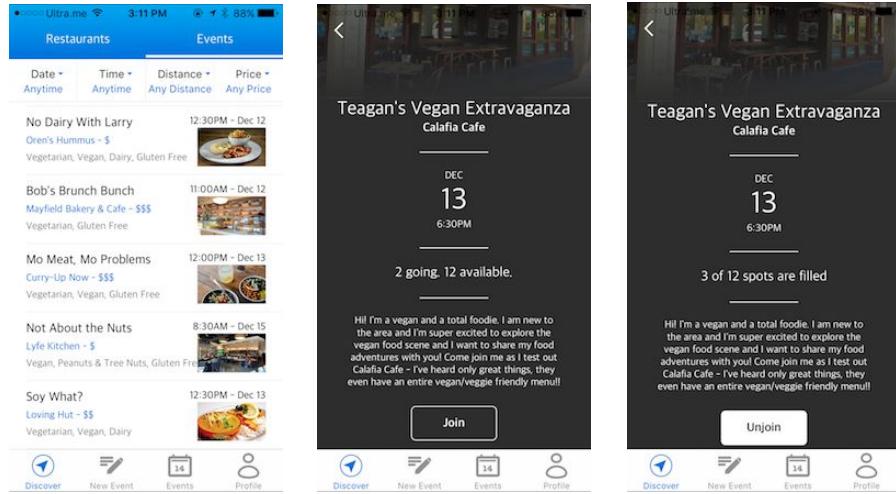
Selecting a LOCATION is a simple task for most people, but finding a safe place to eat can seem like an insurmountable task for people with restricted diets. We want our users to experience restaurant selection like the rest of us — a simple, worry-free task.

meet chewthere is more than a "Yelp" restaurant search list. meet chewthere maintains curated lists of nearby restaurants that cater to specific dietary needs that may be searched by keyword and filtered by price, average rating, and distance. All featured restaurants are reviewed and hand-picked by our app creators to ensure only trusted restaurants are recommended. If a user is curious about the recommendation, he/she can view details about a restaurant by selecting it from the search list. These details include restriction specific ratings and reviews from other meet chewthere users. This feature also reveals what other users with the same restriction have said about the restaurant, eliminating any uncertainty about the menu and the safety of the selected restaurant!



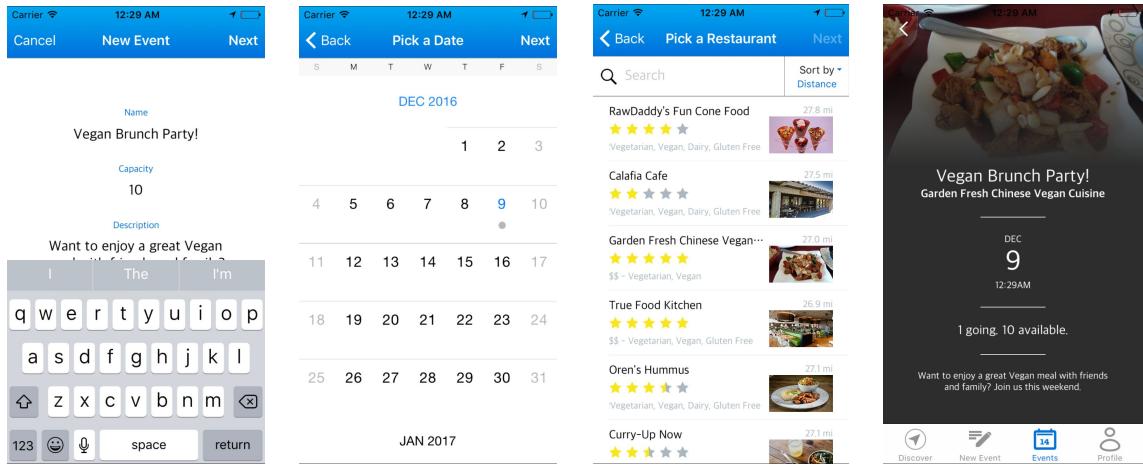
2. Join Events (Moderate)

Social eating is not very social without other PEOPLE! meet chewthere does more than just help users find restaurants that understand diet restricted eating. meet chewthere allows users to search a list of nearby restaurant based events hosted by other meet chewthere users that cater to their dietary needs by date, time, price, and distance. Alternatively, if a user has a specific restaurant in mind, he/she can use the restaurant search feature to view that restaurant's details and see a list of its upcoming events. Users simply reserve their spot for the posted events they would like to attend, show up, and meet new people or see old friends!



3. Make Friends (Complex)

Finally, the *meetchewthere* experience goes beyond finding restaurants and events; each user can take control and build their own community. To support this alternative, we provide users with easy event management and creation tools. Just as users can attend events, users can create and host their own restaurant based event for other *meetchewthere* users. Users simply give the time and description for their event, the name of the restaurant, the number of available guest spots, and their event is posted for the *meetchewthere* community. This feature also includes an events management platform to view upcoming events and retrieve information from past events, such as the name of the restaurant and the guests who were in attendance.



From Post-Its to Paper to Product: Design Evolution

The development process began with ten need-finding interviews, including one that drove the mission of *meetchewhere*.

We met...Jessica, the mother of a child with a life-threatening tree-nut allergy

We were amazed to learn...that her daughter's diet restrictions gave Jessica daily nightmares. Meals for Jessica were a stressful and emotionally taxing endeavor

It would be game changing if...the daily stress associated with eating did not consume Jessica's every thought and action

Jessica's story inspired us, but we needed to confirm she was not alone in her struggle. In a second round of targeted need-finding we meet a young woman still learning how to manage her severe gluten sensitivity, a young man who is allergic to nearly anything edible, a married man with a lifelong milk allergy, and a mother of two children who have a combination of life-threatening nut, egg, and dairy allergies. Our interviewees' conditions differed in severity, duration, and type, but they all longed to sit down to a meal with family and friends without judgment, special accommodations, or a trip to the emergency room.

We were convinced there was a real problem, and we wondered...

How might we...make eating socially and eating safely compatible?

We then developed a set of experience prototypes to test ways to make safe and social eating synonymous:

1. Tasting Tour Experience Prototype

Since eating out can be dangerous for our target users, we tested what would happen if we transformed this danger into a (safe) adventure by creating a tasting tour of curated diet friendly restaurants.

The screenshots show the following content:

- Home Screen:** "Bay Area Tasting Tour!" with a photo of a dish, "Your Guide Joey Tribbiani!" with a photo of him, and a welcome message: "Welcome to the Bay Area Tasting Tour, where there is always something for someone! I will be your guide for today, taking you around the amazing streets of San Jose!"
- Restriction Selection:** A card asking "Do you have any dietary restrictions?". Options include "So, do you eat meat?", "Or, do you eat only fruits and veggies?", and "Or, do you eat only gluten free?". Each option has a photo of Joey Tribbiani.
- Map Screen:** A map of San Jose showing the tour route from 11th and Market to 4th and Market. It highlights areas like Alum Rock, Monta Vista, and West San Jose. Text on the screen says: "A vegetarian, huh? I have got a great list of places to go! Recommended for vegetarians by vegetarians! We start at 11 and end at 4! (Btw, it's \$60 per head ☺)"
- Places Screen:** "The Places!" section with three items:
 - 1) The Italian Mini Quiche** at **Bertuchelli's La Villa**: "Bertuchelli's has been serving gourmet Italian food since 1968, pleasing even the most enthusiastic foodies!"
 - 2) Paneer Tikka Masala** at **Swaad Indian Cuisine**: "Bringing you the authentic flavors of India, a family owned restaurant serving the spiciest food in the land!"
 - 3) Vegetarian Tacos** at **La Costa**: "A must visit for everyone who loves Tacos! Enough said!"Each item includes a photo of the dish.



2. On-Demand Chef Experience Prototype

Since people with restricted diets cannot always share or eat the same food as their companions, we tried to make meal/food sharing easy by providing an in home on-demand chef service. Users could “order” a chef who would prepare a meal that was safe for the person with dietary restriction, as well as something everyone would enjoy eating.

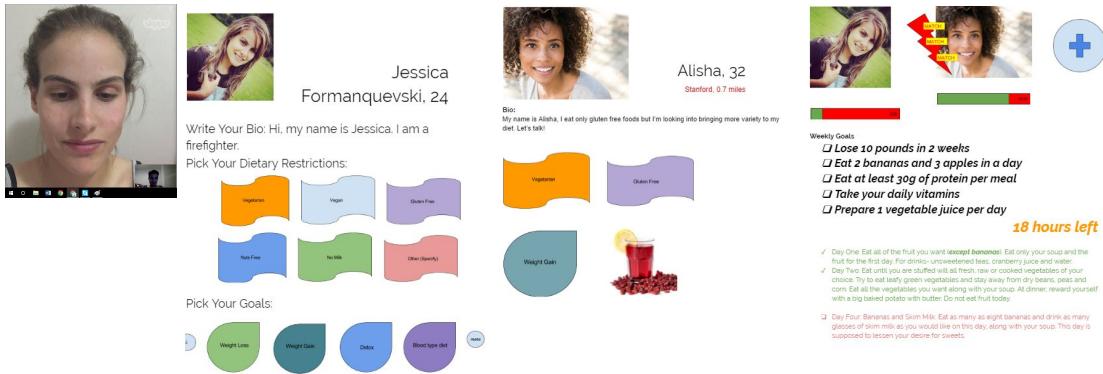
The screenshots show the following profiles:

- Chef John Jones:** Italian Vegetarian specialist. \$17-24 per person. Description: Chef John Jones has been in the restaurant business for 20 years. He was one of the head chefs at Tender Greens. Jones has been a pioneer in the field of vegetarian dining and has extensive experience in the realm of Italian food.
- Chef Juan Martinez:** Mexican Food Vegetarian specialist. \$10-14 per person. Description: Chef Martinez grew up in Mexico and has been cooking since he was a young boy. For the first part of his life he owned his own Mexican restaurant. His dishes are known for substituting tofu for meats while maintaining that authentic Mexican taste.
- Chef Smith:** Baker Vegetarian specialist. \$40-100 per batch. Description: Smith is famous for his cakes. He usually is hired for birthday parties. Anything from cupcakes to breakfast scones. Smith has done it all.
- Chef Chase:** Seafood Vegetarian specialist. \$20-30 per person. Description: Chef Chase can bring your dinner to the coast of France or the coast of California. He can bring you the best of both worlds in an unforgettable meal. He has worked in seafood kitchens for the last 15 years.

A woman is shown in the background looking at the chef profiles on a desk.

3. Group Diet Experience Prototype

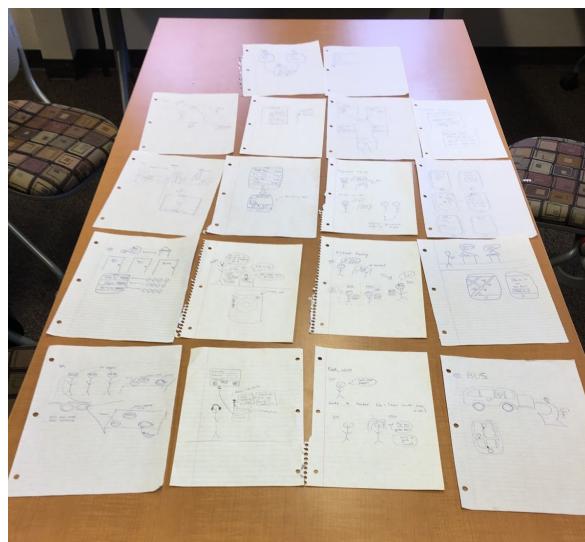
Finally, since there are many people with restricted diets, there is no reason to ever feel or be alone. Based on this premise, we tested a system that allowed users to find other diet restricted people for encouragement and motivation to maintain their diet and/or goals.



Although these solutions were flawed, the responses of our testers laid the groundwork for our ultimate mission and product. We realized we needed a solution that:

1. Facilitated **interaction** between people with common restrictions or, at a minimum, **empathetic** people;
2. Gave people the freedom to feel in **control** and not defined by their dietary restrictions; and
3. Created a bond with, and instilled a sense of **trust** in, our product

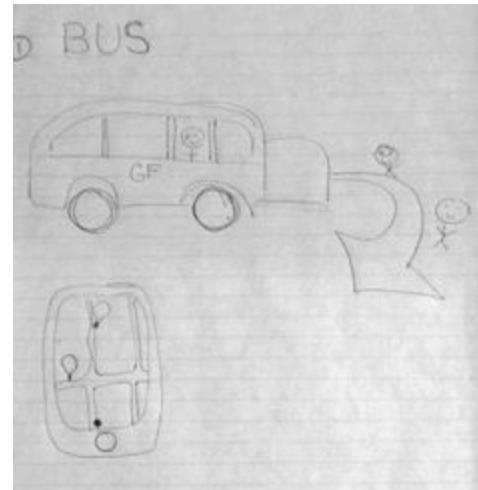
So we brainstormed and selected three key elements we believed would facilitate a solution along with many modalities to deliver this functionality.



Task 1: Find Food - users need to find safe places to eat.

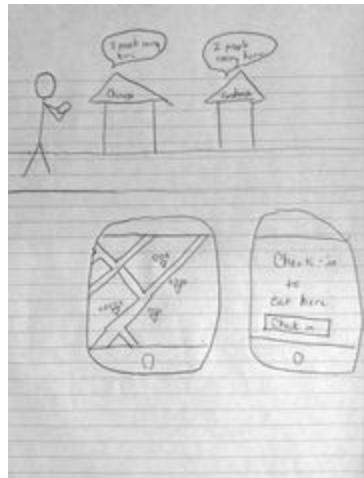


A drone flies by the user's side notifying him/her of safe eateries nearby as he/she moves

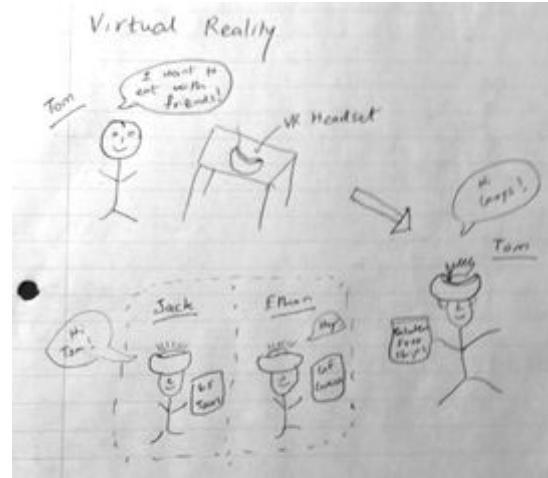


Users can request to be picked up by a restriction specific "magic" bus whose final stop is a diet friendly restaurant

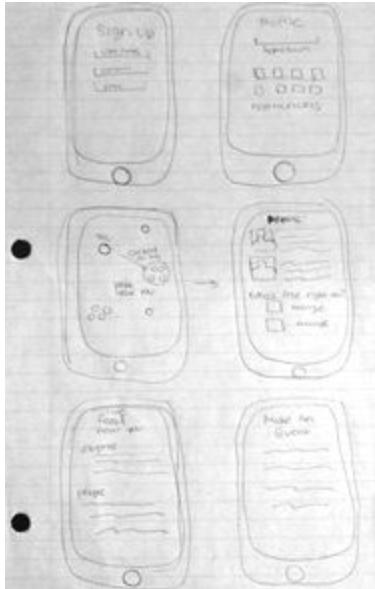
Task 2: Join Events - users need to find people to eat with.



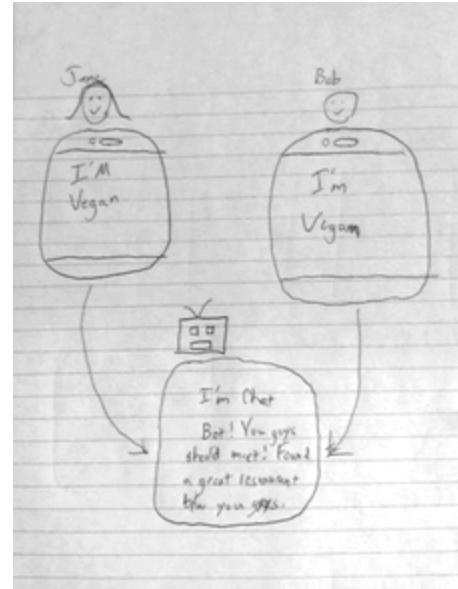
A mobile app sends notifications to users that indicate nearby users with the same restrictions who are currently at a restaurant and looking for a meal companion



Virtual reality goggles allow users with various or no restrictions to disguise their individual diet friendly meals as a common dish to simulate the meal sharing experience

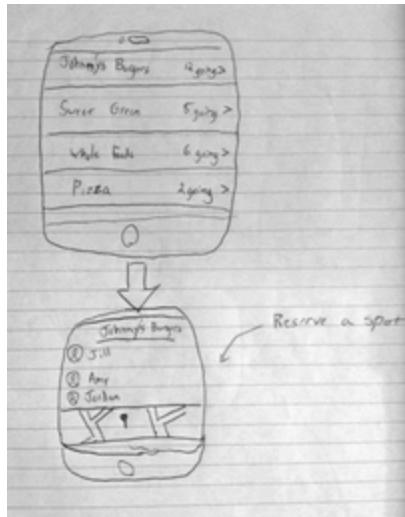


A mobile app provides a heat map and the ability to connect with nearby people and groups who share the user's restrictions

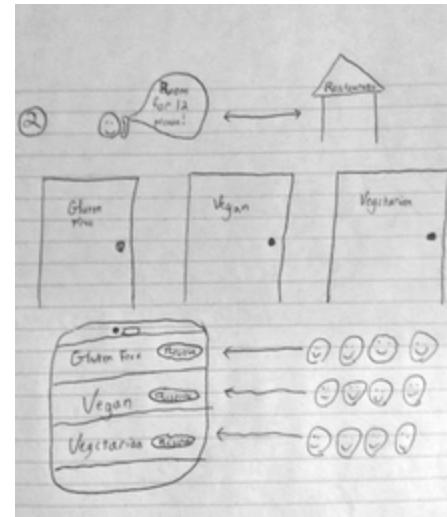


This chatbot crawls the web and finds people with common restrictions and connects them by facilitating conversations and suggesting places they can eat

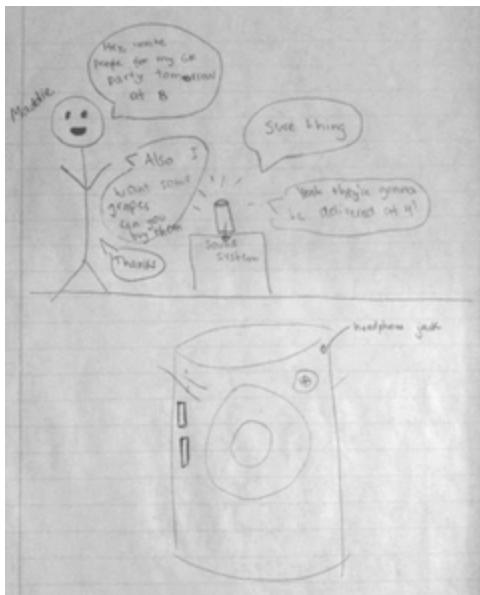
Task 3: Make Friends - users need to connect with each other and the app



This mobile app lets users enter their diet restrictions and meal plans/reservations for others to see and join



This mobile app lets users book joinable diet specific restaurant event venues for themselves and a group of other users

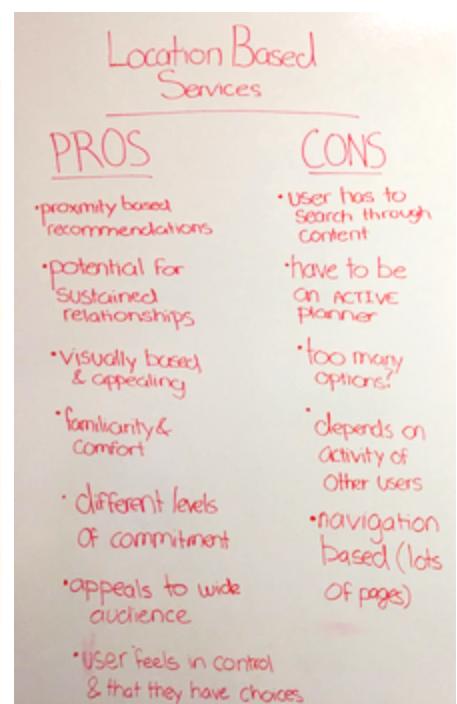
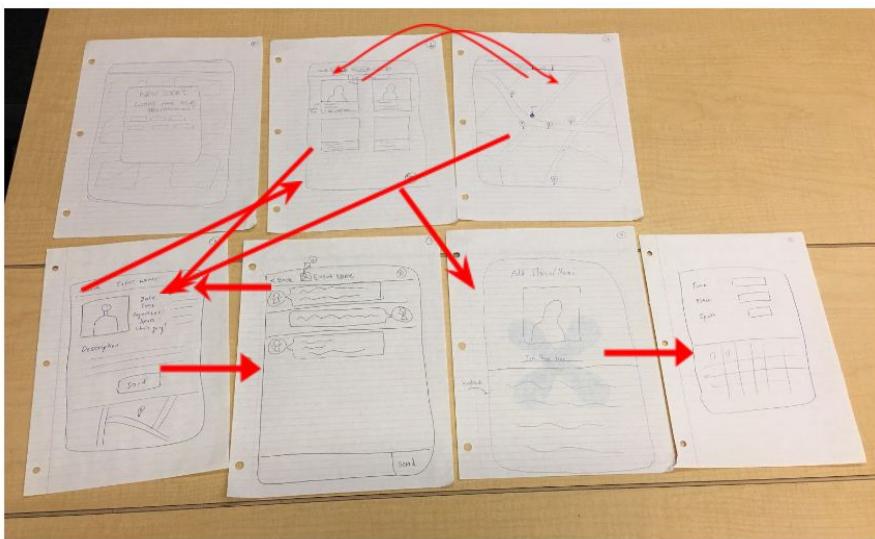


This Amazon Alexa inspired chatbot helps the user organize diet friendly food events by finding restaurants and attendees



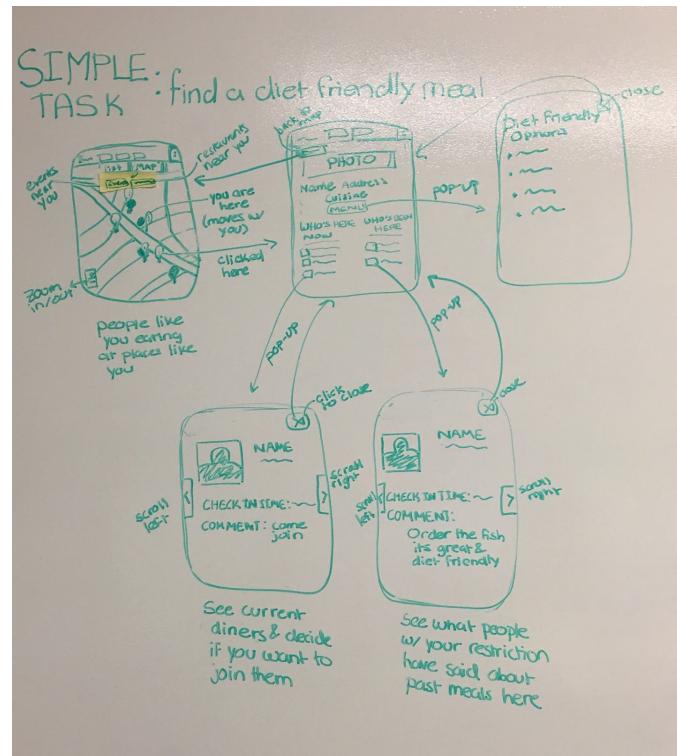
This "old-fashion" approach provides users with a dedicated section in the newspaper to post details for an event they wish to host

Ultimately, we decided that a location based mobile application, combined with elements from a few of our other sketches, was a minimally viable way to deliver our solution.

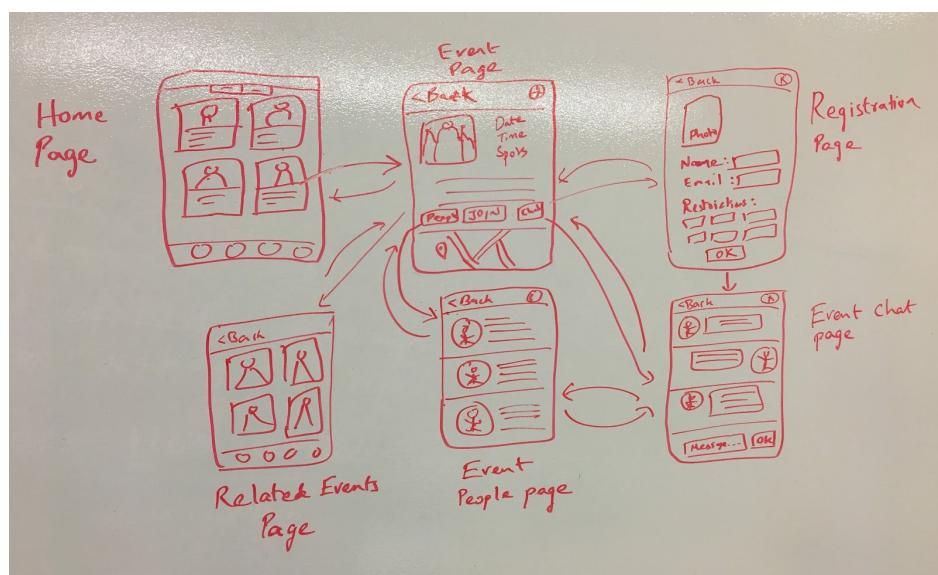


However, we only had a rough idea of what this solution would look like so we went back to the drawing board (quite literally) and flushed out our three task flows:

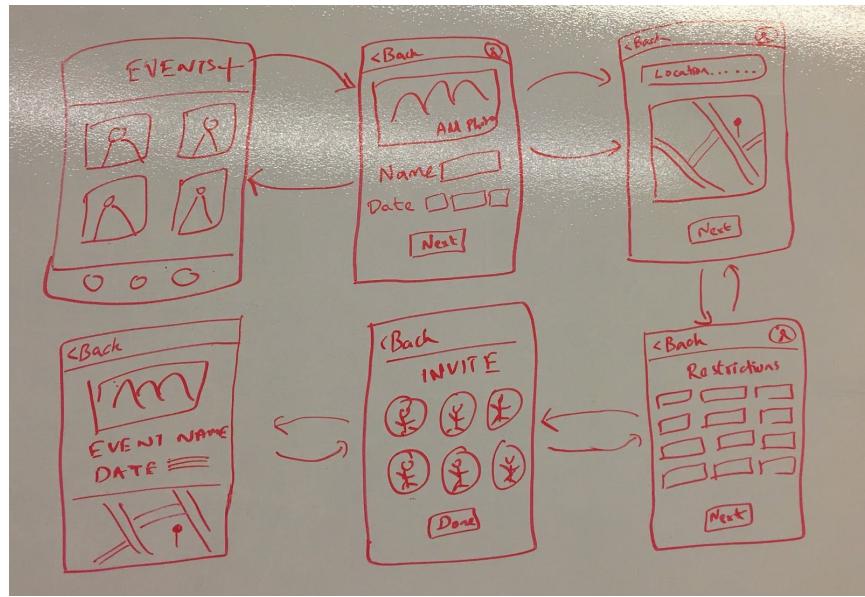
Task 1: Find Food



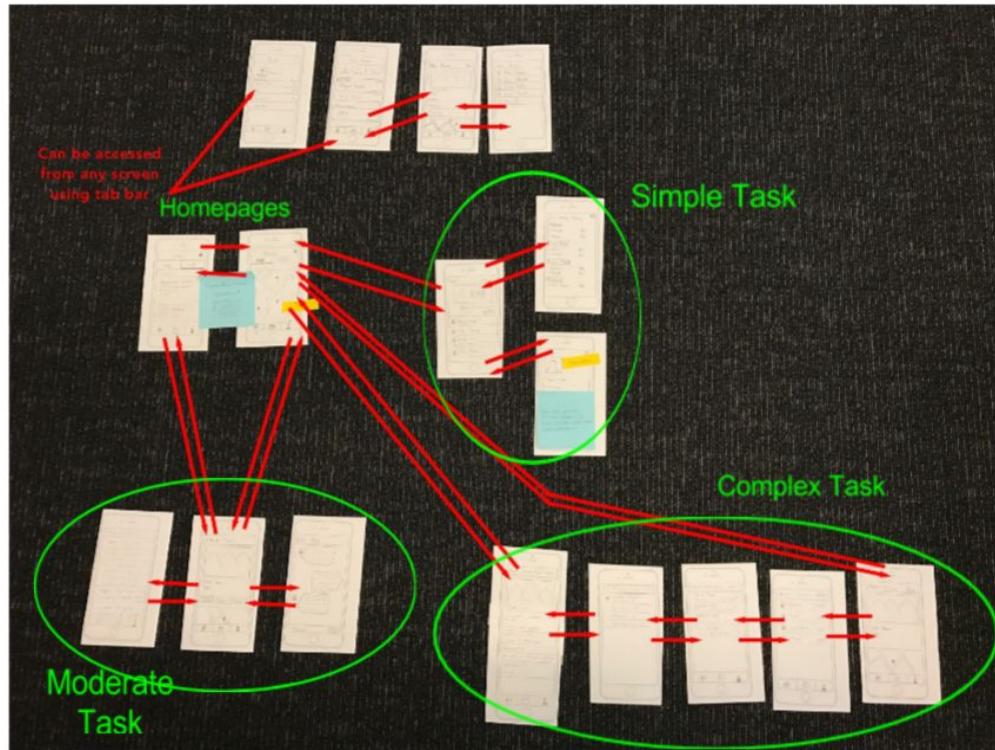
Task 2: Join Events



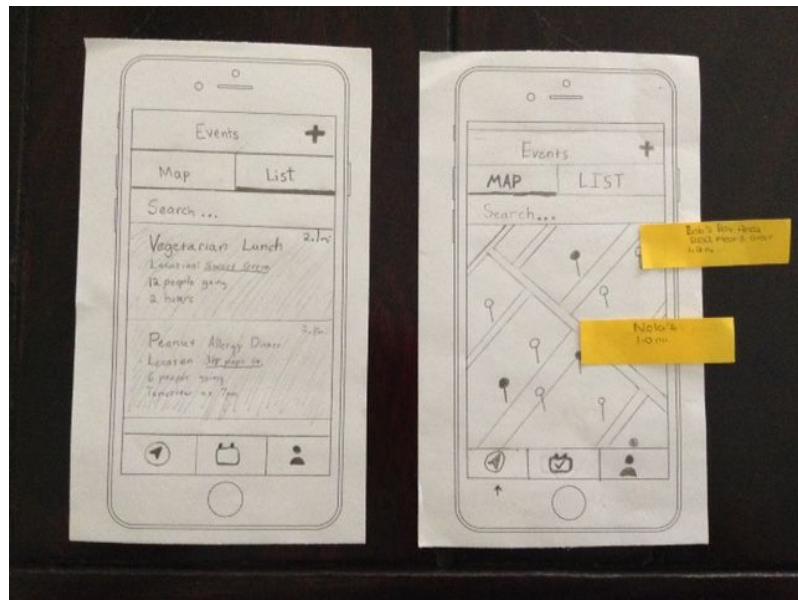
Task 3: Make Friends



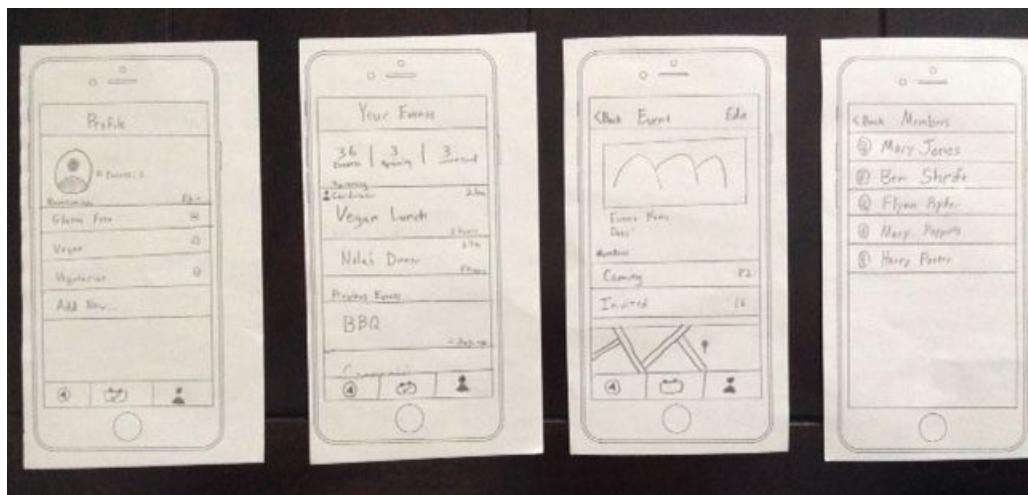
With our new design, some paper, a pair of scissors, tape, an abundance of post-it notes, and a single pencil, we crafted a low-fi paper prototype composed of 17 “mobile” screens.



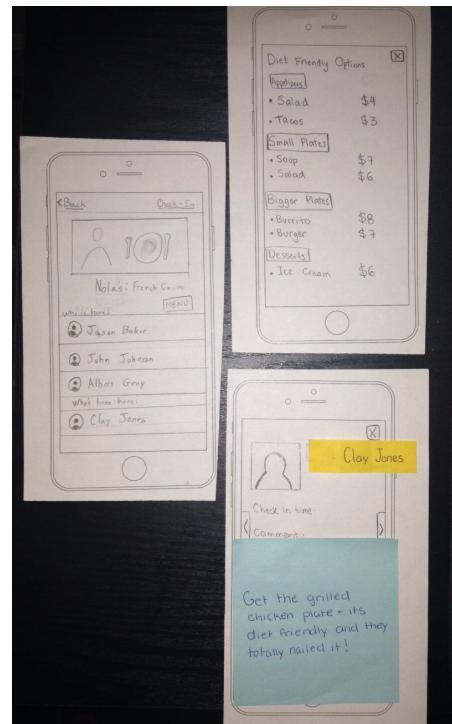
Homepages



Account Settings

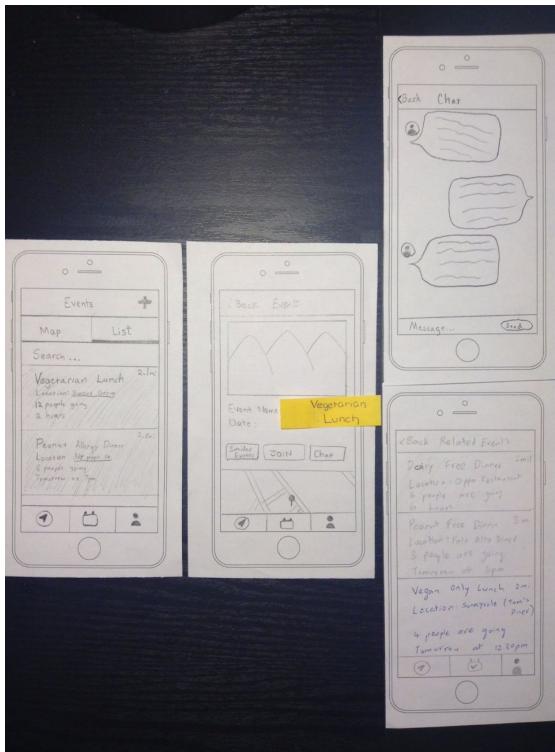


Task 1: Find Food (Simple Task)

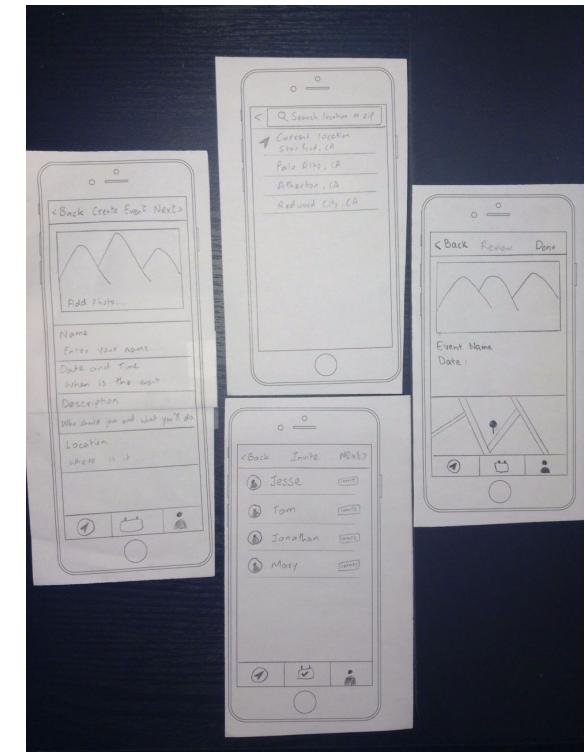


Task 2: Join Events (Moderate Task)

Task)



Task 3: Make Friends (Complex Task)

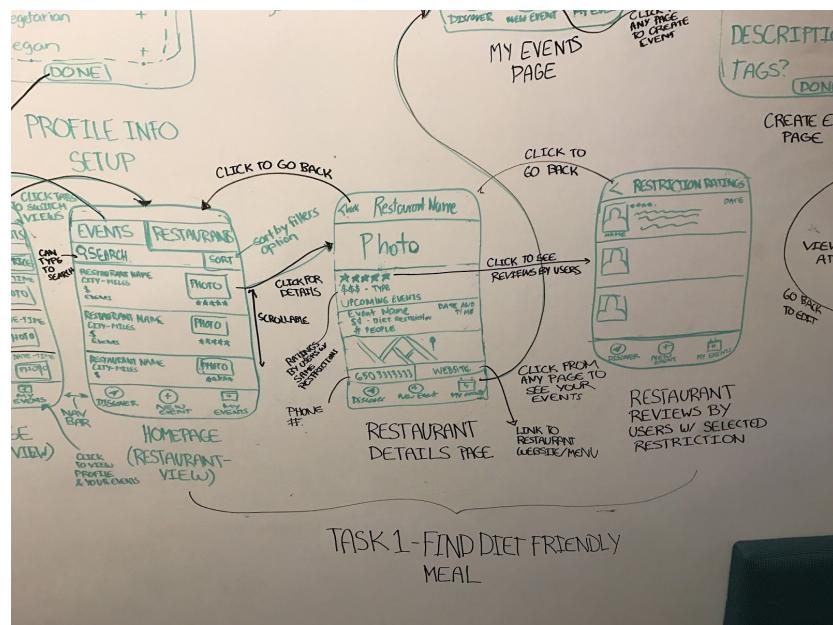


We tested our three (3) task flows with three usability testers who were recruited at Whole Foods and on Nextdoor.com. Our testers were gluten-sensitive, dairy-sensitive, caffeine-sensitive, and vegetarian, and they found the bugs in our prototype.

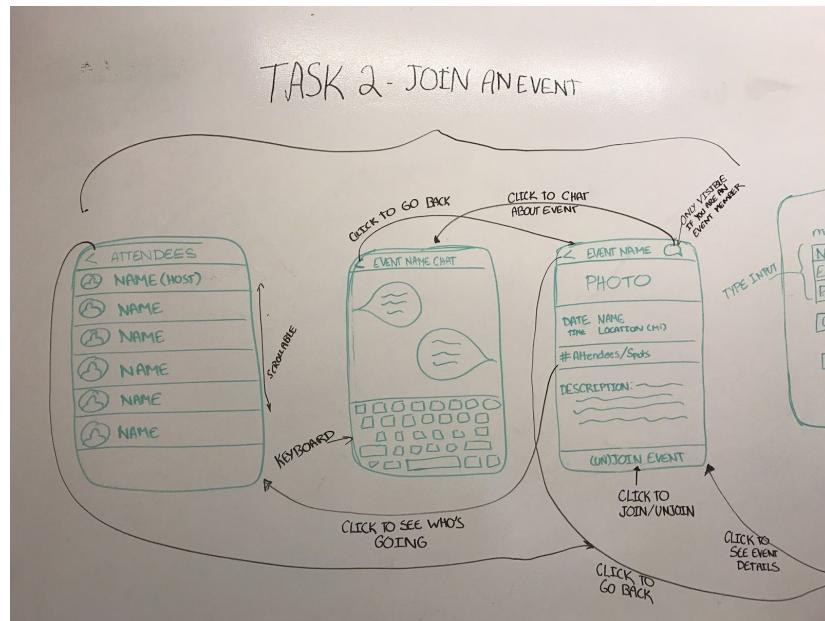
Our testers were initially confused. The app did not start with an express on-boarding/ sign-up process. Instead, our prototype featured a map view through which users could find events (dark colored pins) and restaurants (light colored pins), but none of our testers understood the purpose of the colored pins and struggled to interact with the map. Our testers also failed to notice and use the universal search bar to help find events and experienced a lack of control. They also struggled when they attempted to create an event. None of the testers could locate the "Create Event" button. While our prototype supported both home and restaurant located events, our testers indicated strong preferences for restaurant based events due to practical and privacy concerns. Finally, two of them displayed behavior that indicated a lack of trust in the information provided by the app. These testers continued to express doubt that a given event and/or restaurant could cater to their needs. That being said, the testers were generally excited with the prospect of a safe way to go out to eat and meet people like themselves, and were quite pleased when they were able to find restaurants that looked appetizing and safe.

Based on the testers' feedback, we concluded that our tasks were meaningful, but our implementation was inadequate. As a result, we drastically revised our UI and the design of our task flows:

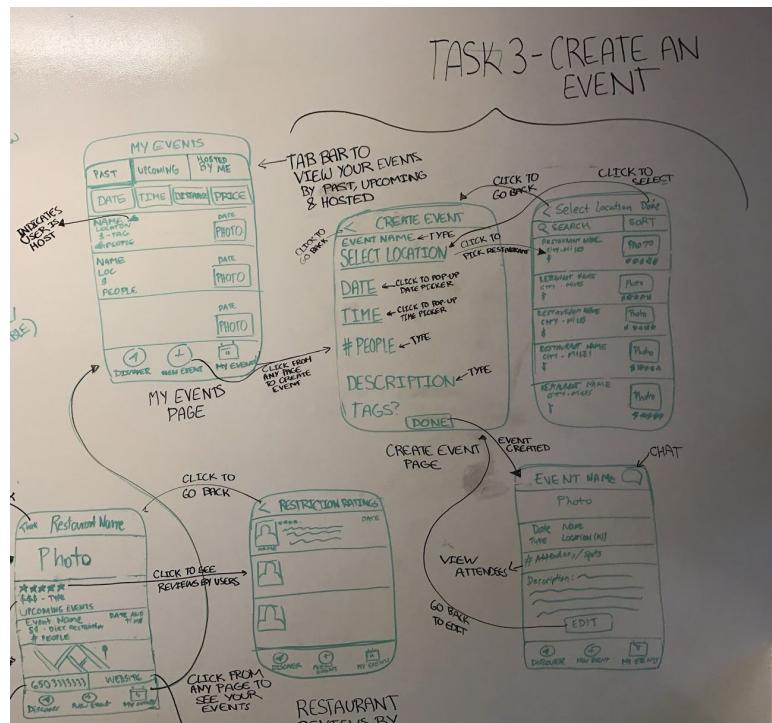
Task 1: Find Food (Simple Task)



Task 2: Join Events (Moderate Task)

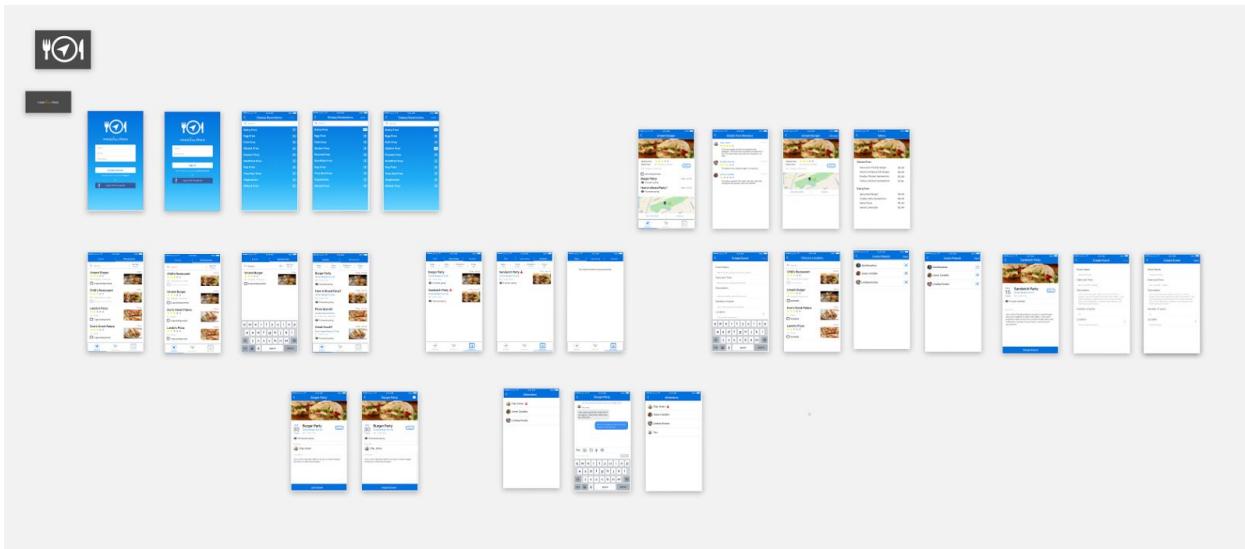


Task 3: Make Friends (Complex Task)





We then used a combination of Sketch to create a medium-fi prototype...



...and **marvel** to bring it to life

The screenshot shows the Marvel app interface for the MeetChewThere project. The top navigation bar includes links for Projects, People, Explore, Help, and a Slack integration button. Below the navigation, there's a "Connect with Slack!" button, Settings, Download, Play, and Share options. The main area displays a grid of mobile screen prototypes. The screens include:

- App icon
- Create Account
- Dietary Restrictions
- Discover (Restaurants)
- Discover (Events)
- Restaurant (Main)
- Restaurant (Reviews)
- Event (Join)
- Event (Unjoin)
- Event (Chat)
- Event (Attendees)
- Discover (Events)
- Create Event (Main - E...)
- Create Event (Invite)
- Create Event (Comple...)
- Comments

Each screen shows a different aspect of the app's functionality, such as creating accounts, setting dietary preferences, discovering restaurants or events, joining or unjoining from events, and managing event attendees.

Sign-in/Sign-up

Login or Signup w/ an easy 2-step process

Search and add dietary restriction(s)

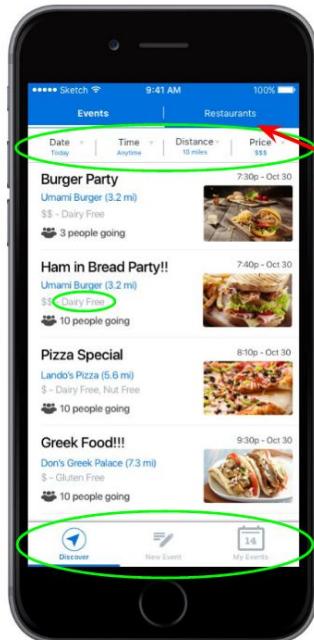


Directed to geographically filtered (based on user's location during sign up) event feed upon sign in

Home Screens

Search by scroll and filters

only events for user's restriction



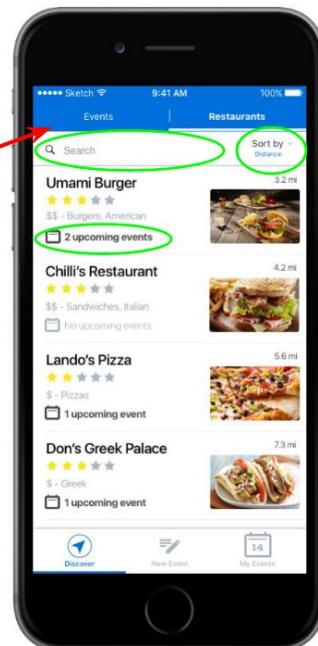
Tab-bar navigation to toggle between event and restaurant focused searches

search for events under events tab or see events at a specific restaurant using restaurant tab

Only shown events/restaurants within user's geographic proximity

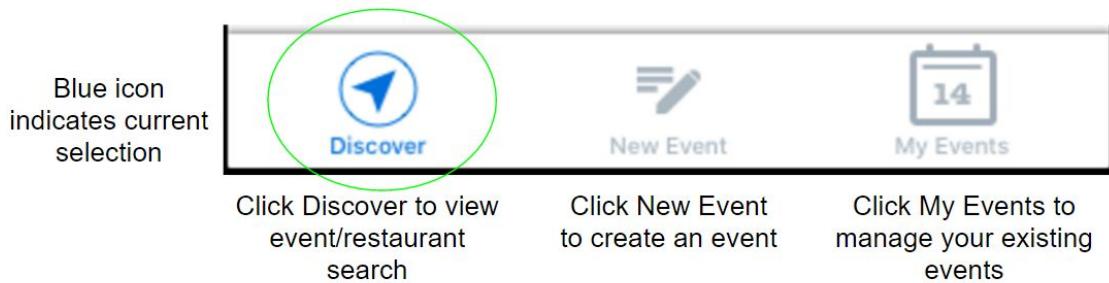
<- User directed to Events view upon login/sign-up

Search by scroll, typed search, and/or filter

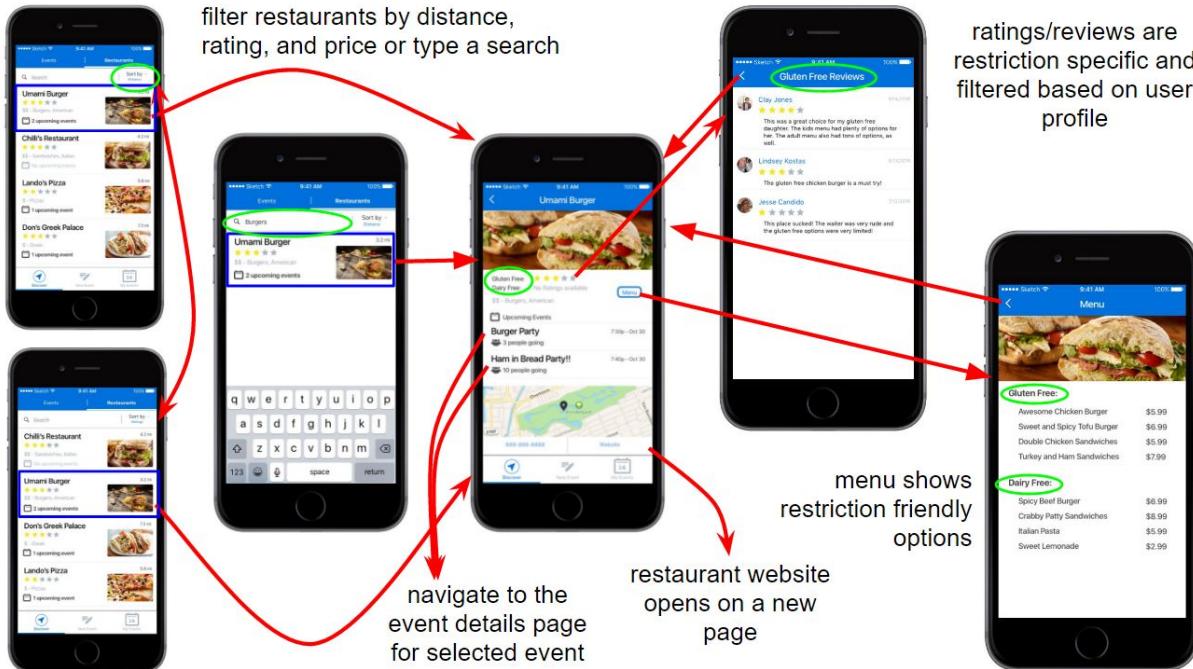


Global Navbar

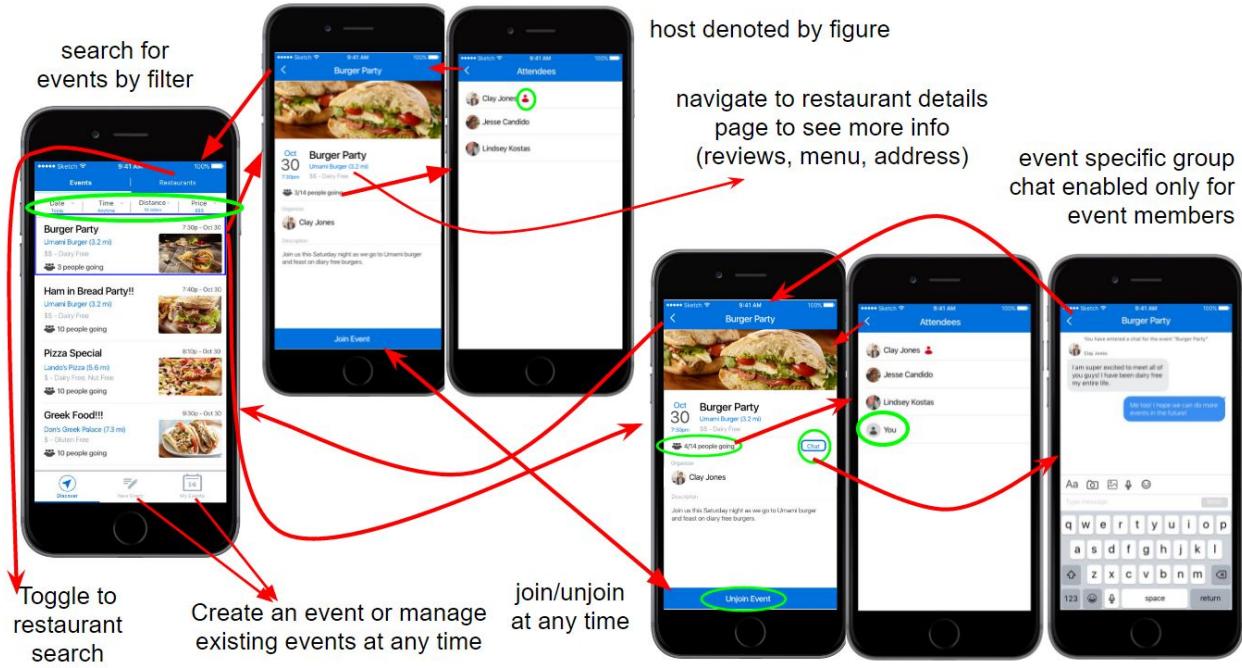
bottom of almost all screens
for convenient navigation



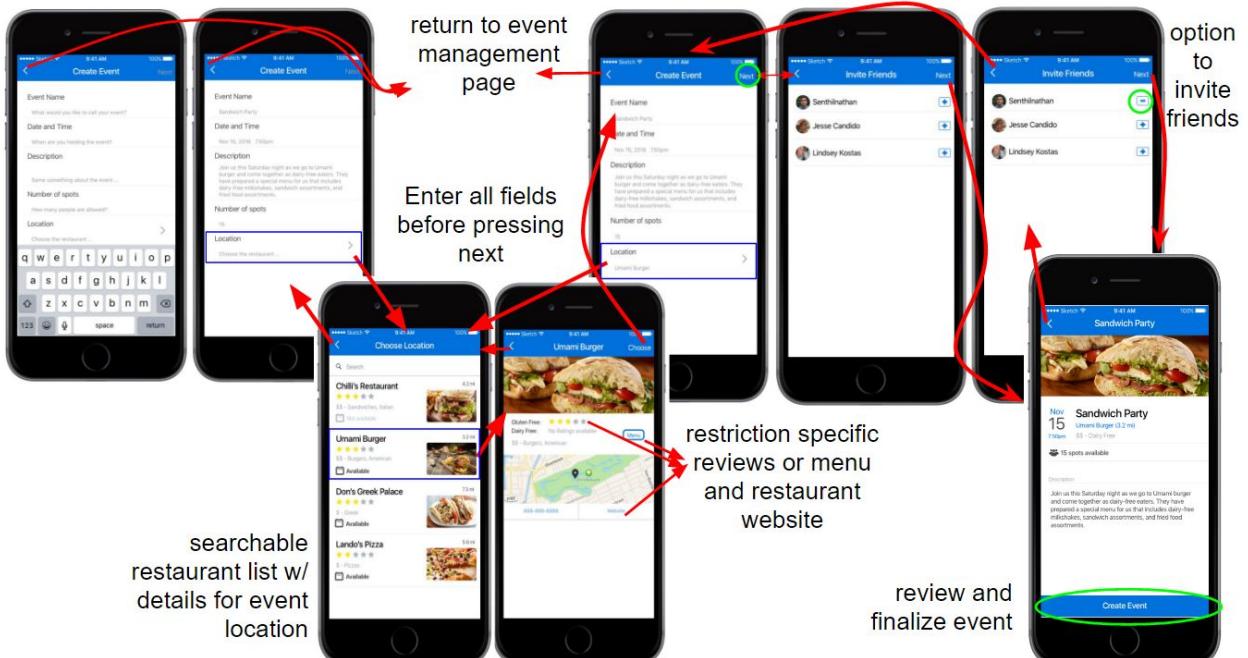
Task 1: Find Food (Simple Task)



Task 2: Join Events (Moderate Task)

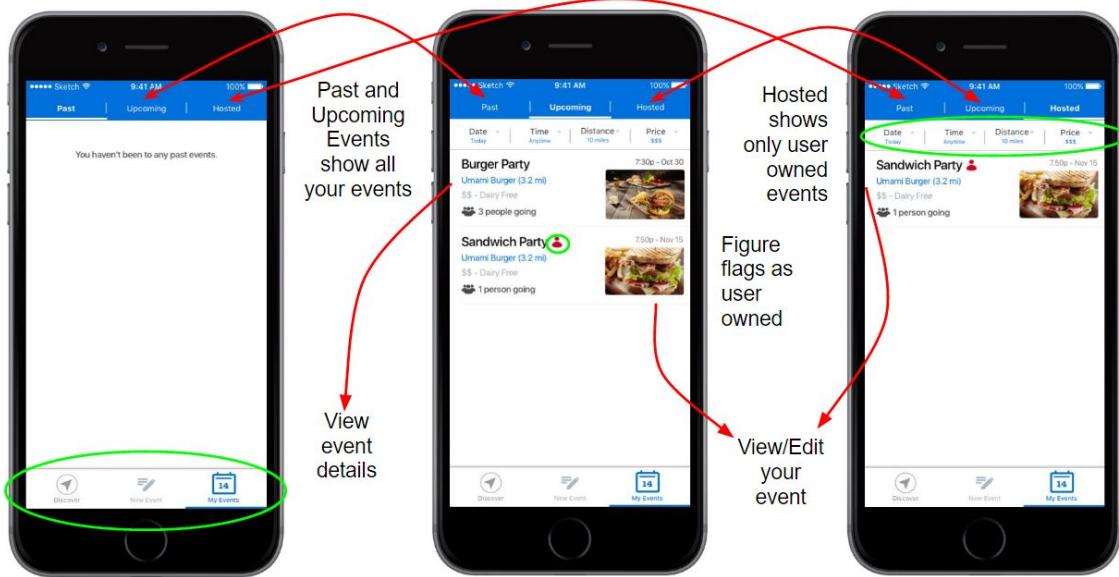


Task 3: Make Friends (Complex Task)



Event Management

Toggle between past, upcoming and owned events



Event Details

Event You Haven't Joined



Event You Created



Event You Have Joined

meet chew (not quite) there: Major Usability Problems & Revisions

Still unconvinced that our prototype was a minimally viable product, we subjected our work to a critical Heuristic Evaluation performed by the members of team Foodture using Nielsen's ten general principles for interaction design.

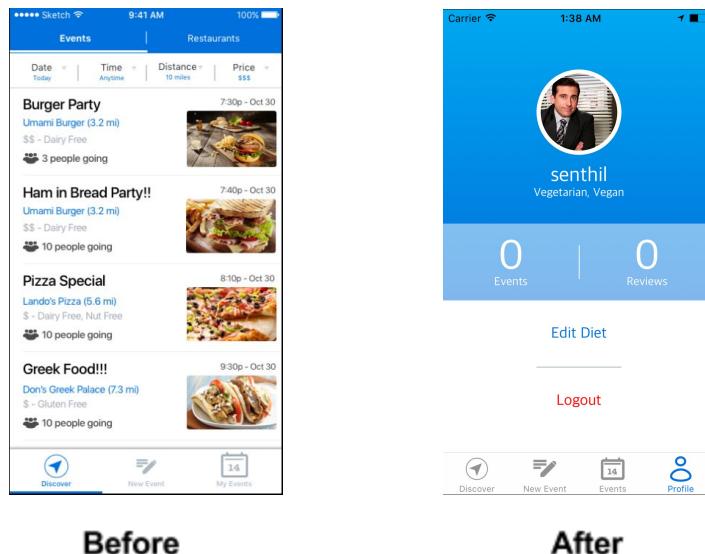
While we ultimately addressed many of the low-level violations, we paid particular attention to the level 3 and 4 violations:

Login/Logout:

1. **Violation:** H2-3 - User Control & Freedom / Severity 4: A user can never log out without re-launching the entire application. The absence of this feature is inconvenient, impractical and frustrating.

Fix: Added a logout button on the Profile page which is accessible through the global navigation bar

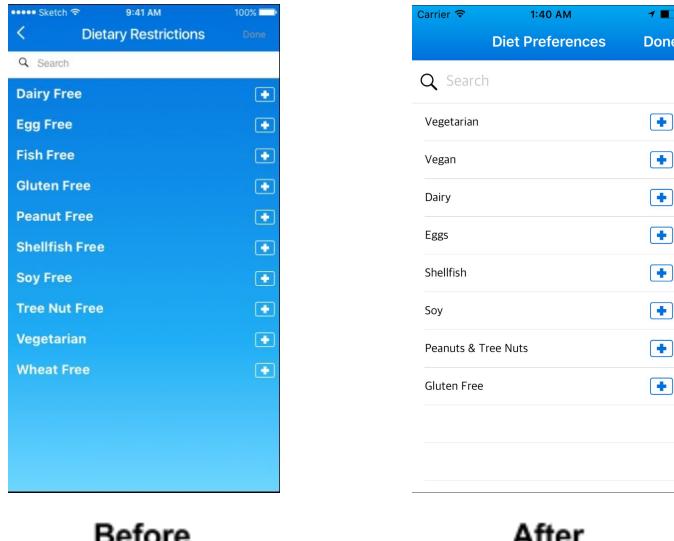
Rationale: This change provides the necessary logout functionality and keeps the app visually clean by locating the button in a place that is intuitive for the user.



2. Violation: H2-9 - Help Users with Errors / Severity 3: The “back” button leads to the main login screen prompting the user for their credentials. This may cause a user to question whether he/she is still logged in and if an account was ever created.

Fix: Removed the “back” button.

Rationale: Users should not be able to return to the login screen via a back button during account creation. This is confusing and counterintuitive.

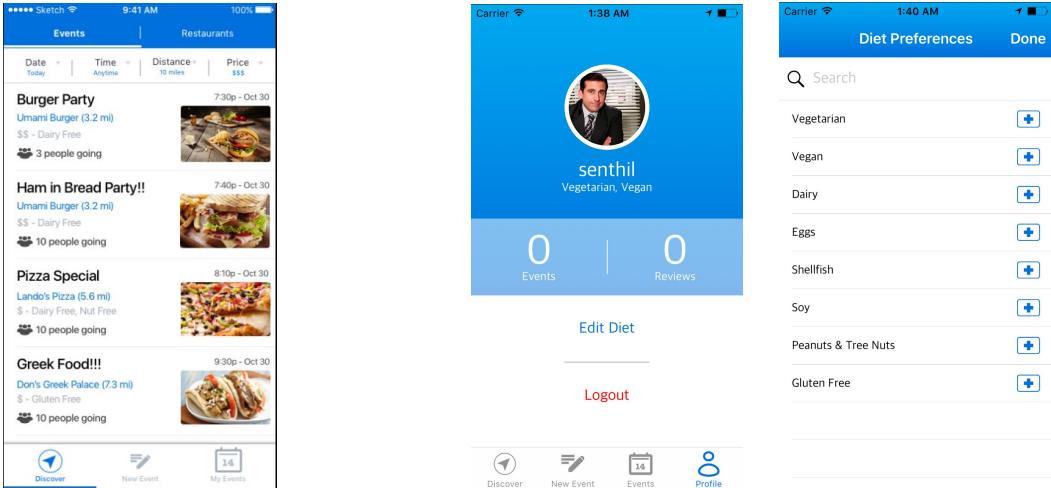


Account Settings

3. Violation: H2-3 - User Control & Freedom / Severity 3: A user cannot modify his/her dietary preferences after his/her account is created. This limitation is problematic if a mistake was made or his/her restrictions change.

Fix: Added an explicit profile page with editable account settings which can be accessed through the tab bar.

Rationale: The content of the app is driven by the user's dietary restrictions. If a user mistakenly creates their account with incorrect diet tags he/she will receive irrelevant restaurant and event suggestions. An existing user may also wish to update his/her account to reflect the dietary restrictions of their spouse, child, friend, etc..., so that they can see events and restaurants that cater to everyone's needs. In either case, users need to be able to edit their account information so that the displayed information is helpful and relevant.



Before

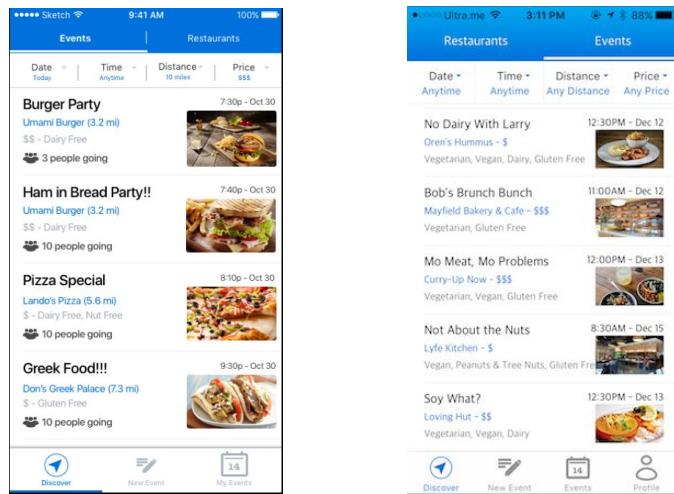
After

Find Events

4. **Violation:** H2-4 - Consistency & Standards / Severity 3: The Pizza Special event is listed as dairy and nut free in the Events view. The user is only dairy free so while the restaurant is also nut free, the inclusion of this tag and may call into question the reliability of the recommendation.

Fix: No change.

Rationale: After much thought, we believe that limiting the content to show only a user's specific restriction(s) does not promote the creation of an inclusive community of people who understand each other based on a dietary restriction, and not the specific restriction. A user is still only shown restaurants and events that meet his/her needs, but providing the full list of accommodated restrictions provides a sense of freedom and control. Users do not feel like they are forced to eat at a "special" restaurant, and this additional information enables the user to determine if their companions can be accommodated as well.



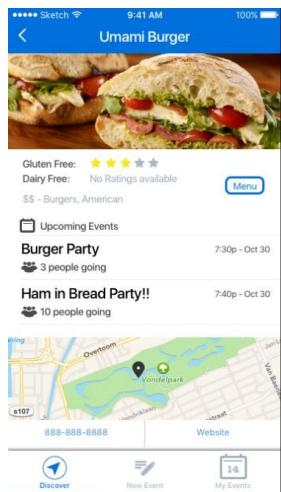
Before

After

Find Restaurants

5. **Violation:** H2-4 - Consistency & Standards / Severity 3: The relationship between the Restaurant List overall rating for each restaurant and the Restaurant Details list of ratings by dietary restriction is confusing and makes the sort by rating function unclear.
- Fix:** No change.

Rationale: One of the key features of the restaurant search, which differentiates our app from a standard search system, is that users can view restriction specific ratings and reviews by other users. This functionality lends credibility to our application, and helps build the trust of our users by allowing the user to verify the safety of his/her restaurant choice. As a result, we cannot eliminate this feature, but at the same time we believe that it is too cumbersome for users with multiple restrictions to filter their search by restriction rating. Since a user is only shown the ratings relevant to his/her restrictions, and the average used for the filterable search pertains only to these relevant restrictions, we feel that the availability of this information is appropriate and necessary.



Before



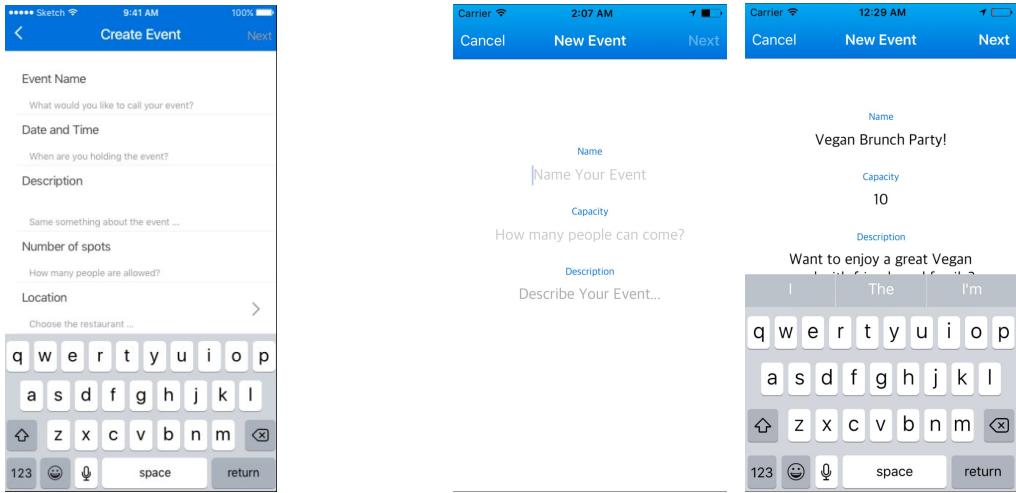
After

Event Creation

6. **Violation:** H2-1 - Visibility of System Status / Severity 3: The keyboard pops up once the page loads. As a result, it is unclear which field the user is interacting with, and if there are more options hidden below the keyboard.

Fix: A keyboard only pops up if the user clicks on a specific text enterable field.

Rationale: The appearance of the keyboard upon loading the page in the medium-fidelity prototype served to illustrate the overall functionality of the page. It was never intended that the keyboard be displayed when the page loads.



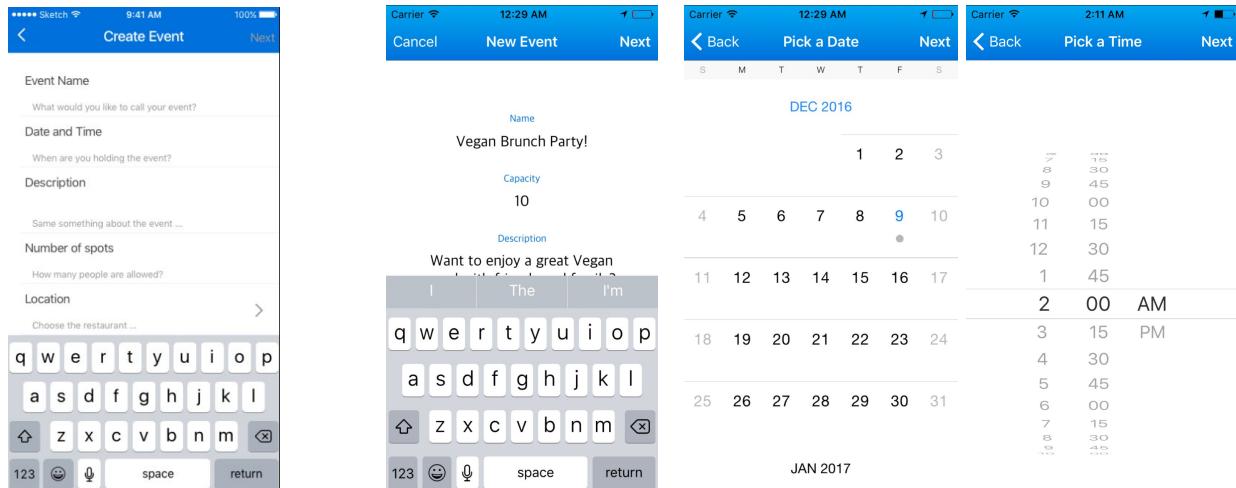
Before

After

7. **Violation:** H2-4 - Consistency and Standards / Severity 4: When creating an event, since so many fields are on the first page, the purpose of “Next” is not clear. The user must figure it out, by trial and error, how to make the “Next” button clickable and to determine where the button leads.

Fix: Keep the “Next” button but spread the process across multiple screens

Rationale: Since the “Next” button in the upper right corner of the screen is IOS standard, we believe it is important to keep the button and its current functionality. To eliminate any remaining uncertainty, we have separated each step of the event creation process onto individual sequential screens. This change produces a more intuitive and less error prone user experience.



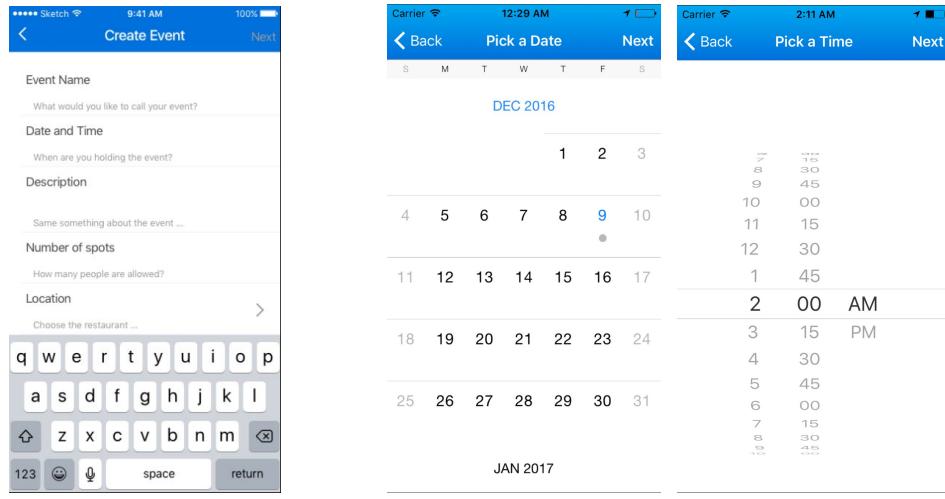
Before

After

8. Violation: H2-5 - Error Prevention / Severity 3: The placeholder text is helpful when creating an event, but this text is missing from the date/time field. This may result in the user entering invalid and/or difficult to parse content.

Fix: Force the fields to be set by date and time pickers.

Rationale: Date and time pickers avoid any errors due to unstructured text input by constraining the input to be a future time entered in a valid form.



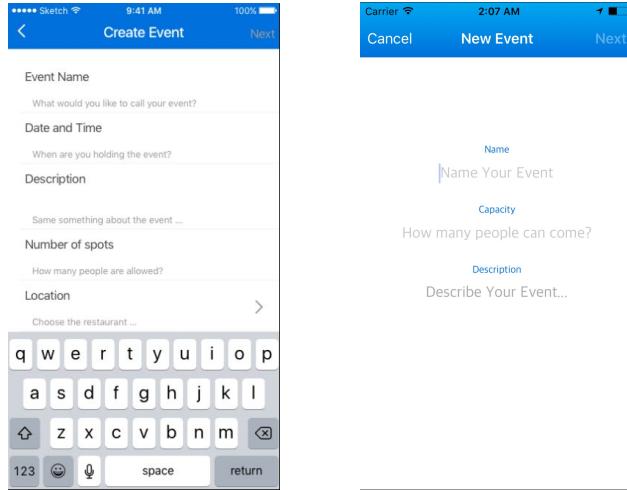
Before

After

9. Violation: H2-2 - Match System & Real World / Severity 3: A user must click the back to cancel the creation of an event. This does not match the real-world expectation of seeing an explicit cancel option.

Fix: Replaced the “Back” button on the first screen of the event creation page with a “Cancel” button.

Rationale: A user must be able to explicitly cancel the event creation process. The user must be confident that the system recognizes the cancellation. An explicit “Cancel” button on the first page of the event creation process remedies this issue. If a user does wish to cancel from a secondary screen, he/she must press the back buttons to return to the first screen. Since the process only four steps and a user who continues past the first step is likely to complete the process, we believe that it is much more important and functional to have back buttons that lead to the previous screen, rather than a global cancel button.



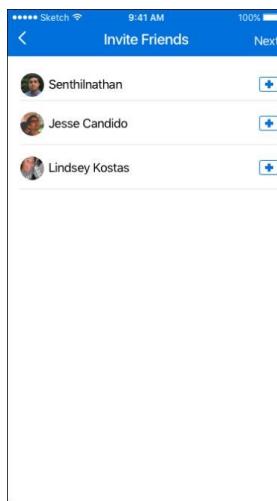
Before

After

10. Violation: H2-3 - User Control & Freedom / Severity 3: The app suggests a few friends as invitees for an event, but it is unclear how these suggestions are generated. This list is quite limited, and does not support the invitation of friends who are not app users.

Fix: We have temporarily removed this feature from the prototype.

Rationale: The original intent behind this feature was to provide users with a historical interface of users who attended the same event. While we believe this is a great community building feature, in light of time and data constraints, and the fact that this feature is not essential to conveying the event creation functionality, we have removed this feature from the current prototype. We will look to restore its functionality in some form in later iterations of the product based upon user demand/feedback.

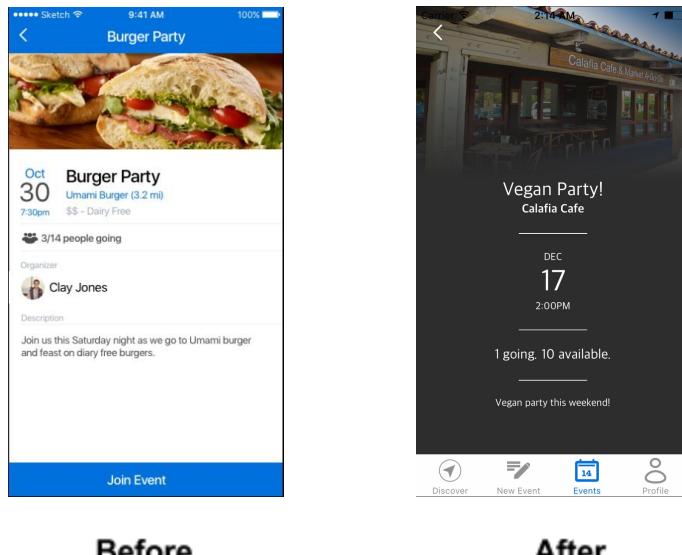


Before

- 11. Violation:** H2-8 - Aesthetic & Minimalist Design / Severity 3: The “number of spots” field is redundant, since the user selects which friends to invite to an event.

Fix: Improved labeling to improve user understanding and removed the invite feature.

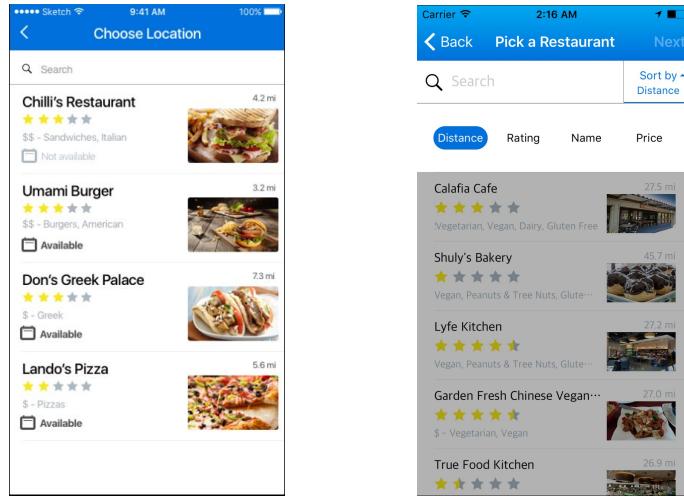
Rationale: The intent of our app is to facilitate inclusivity by allowing users to sign up for events on a first come-first serve basis. When still supported by the app, Inviting friends was a notification system as a result, the “number of spots” field was not redundant, but we could convey its meaning more clearly. We have changed the “number of spots” field to read as “capacity” as well as the capacity labels on the event details pages from “people going” to “_ of _ spots are filled”.



- 12. Violation:** H2-3 - User Control & Freedom / Severity 4: When a user selects the location for his/her event it is unclear why the displayed set of restaurants was selected, and an easy way to search for restaurants based on other metrics, including price, location, and cuisine is not readily apparent.

Fix: Expanded the restaurant database to feature fifty different eateries, and added the same search/filter bar that is used on the discover restaurants page.

Rationale: User's can choose to host their event at any restaurant supported by app and we believe that the aforementioned confusion resulted from the limited functionality of our medium-fi prototype which only featured four seemingly random restaurants. These changes will prevent any such confusion and provide greater user control over their search.



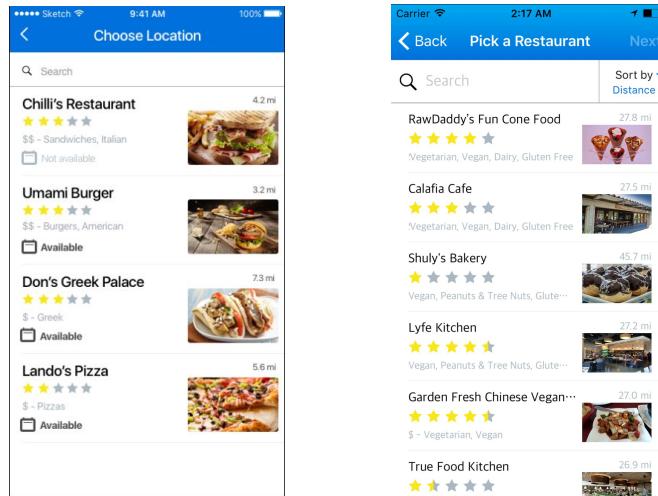
Before

After

- 13. Violation: H2-4 - Consistency & Standards / Severity 3:** It is not clear whether the available/unavailable tag that appears when choosing a restaurant to host an event refers to the restaurant's availability, the user's availability, or something entirely different.

Fix: Removed this labeling scheme.

Rationale: The original intent of this tag was to indicate which restaurants could accommodate the event's date, time, and size. It is not intuitive to display restaurants that are known to be unavailable. We recognize the potential convenience of displaying only restaurants that do have such availabilities, but the necessary data scraping and maintenance and the constraints of our prototype prevented the implementation of this functionality.



Before

After

- 14. Violation:** H2-5 - Error Prevention / Severity 3: The app does not have a "save draft" feature. Without the ability to save drafts, the user is required to re-complete the entire process after any interruption.

Fix: No change.

Rationale: Admittedly, the ability to save the draft of an event in progress is an important feature to facilitate ease of use, and it is something we intend to implement in future versions of our product. In light of our time constraints, we concluded that it was more important that core functionality of the prototype be fully realized before adding this admittedly necessary, but secondary, feature.

- 15. Violation:** H2-3 - User Control & Freedom / Severity 3: The image for a newly created event is automatically added. However, this image may not be how the user envisioned the event, and he/she may wish to supply his/her own image.

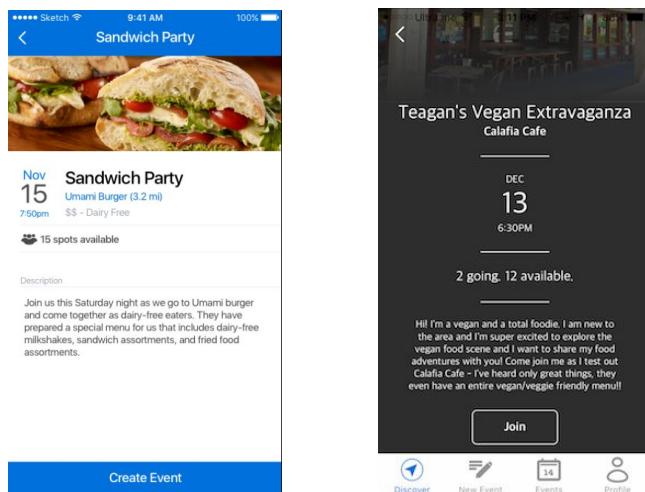
Fix: No Change

Rationale: The ability for a user to add and edit his/her own event photo is important and helps increase the user's engagement in the event creation aspect of the app. Although we recognize this feature has merit, and helps maximize user experience and engagement, it is not necessary in this version of the prototype.

- 16. Violation:** H2-4 - Consistency & Standards / Severity 3: It is unclear what determines the dietary restriction tags displayed with a given event. If it is the restrictions of the user, then the information is redundant and unnecessary. Alternatively, if it is an indication of what the restaurant offers, a user would expect more options listed for each event.

Fix: Develop a complete dataset in which most restaurants have multiple tags.

Rationale: The intent of the dietary restriction tags is to match those of the selected restaurant. We believe that the confusion about the source of the tags was a result of the sparse dataset featured in our medium-fi prototype.



Before

After

Modifications in addition to the violations mentioned in the heuristic evaluation of our prototype:

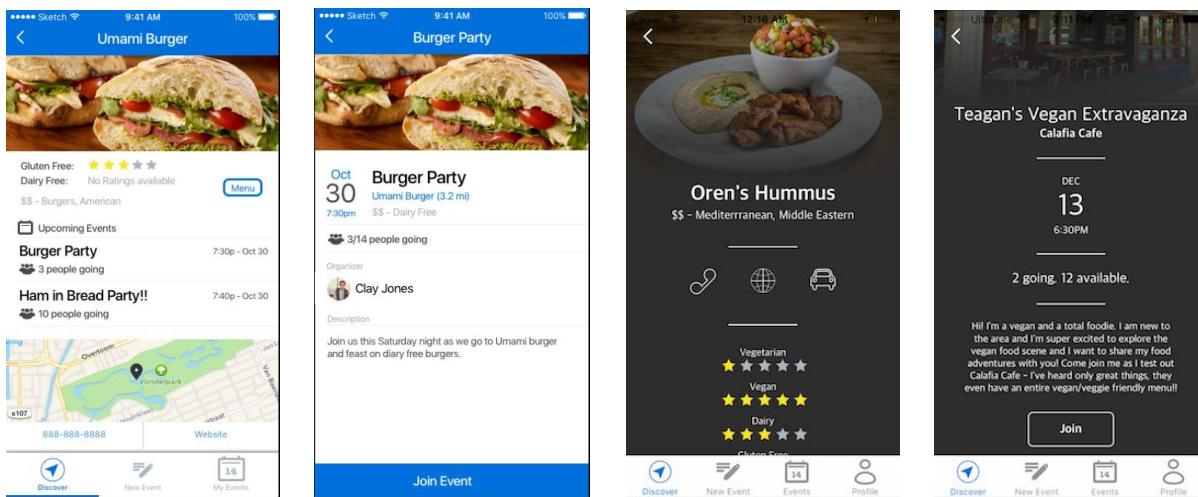
- New Logo** - Our logo never fully captured the essence of both the food and event characteristics *meetchewthere*. Cutlery contained in a well-recognized map pin symbol is sleeker, more engaging, and better captures the idea that there is something food related that is happening at these locations.



Before

After

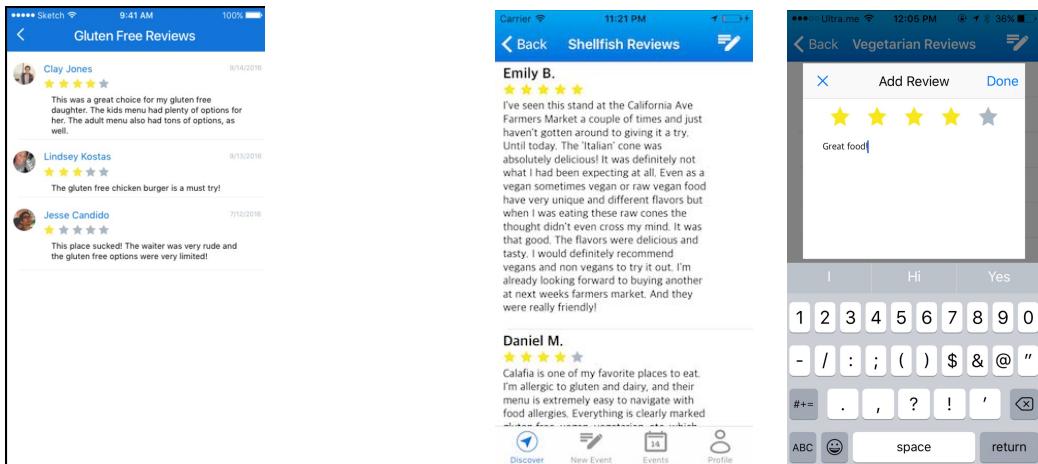
- Restaurant and Event Detail Pages UI** - We had a gnawing concern that our app lacked a defining personality, and appeared to be a generic search and event app. The new restaurant and events details pages UI of the restaurant are more sophisticated and unique with an added benefit of reduced the visual clutter.



Before

After

- Restaurant Reviews** - One of the key components to the success of our app is user engagement. To further facilitate user engagement, we added an obvious feature — a place to share restaurant reviews and ratings.



Before

After

Prototype Implementation

Finally, we brought the app to life.

TOOLS:

Guided by the past mobile development experience of one of our team members, we chose to work in Objective-C through XCode. While Objective-C was relatively painless to use, the primary obstacle we faced was that the software is not compatible with windows. Since one-half of our team uses windows for their personal computers much of the code development was performed by only two of our team members, while the two performed the data aggregation. The use of Cocoapods relieved some of the development burden by allowing us to embed snippets of fully functional code rather than write everything from scratch.

DATA:

meetthewhere is driven by data. The app provides lists of restaurants for which we need to provide names, geo-locations, cuisine, prices, photos, website links, dietary restrictions, ratings, and reviews and lists of events for which we must provide names, dates, times, locations with details, descriptions, host-name, and capacity. We also need to manage a list of dietary restrictions from which the user selects for their profile information and an overall list of existing users, their restrictions, the events they are attending/have attended, and their restaurant ratings and reviews. To display the functionality the prototype, we have hard-coded the entirety

of this data. With the exception of the restaurant data, the final implementation of our product will eliminate will be driven by user provided data (ie account profiles, events, and reviews).

Finally, the app is location based. In the final product, a user's "home" location will be self-selected during the account creation process; however, we "wizard of oz" this feature and assume this location is Palo Alto for the purposes of demonstrating the functionality of the prototype.

DID WE FORGET SOMETHING?

We are proud of, but not satisfied with, the current functionality that our app supports. There are significant improvements that can be made to this app to make the *meetthewhere* experience truly great. Some of the ideas we have brainstormed include:

1. Enhanced Event Creation Functionality: As mentioned above, we would like to add a save drafts of events in progress function, and a function that tracks and recommends other users to notify them of a newly created event. We also will provide a functionality that allows the user to view the details of each restaurant before making a selection during the location selection step.
2. User Interaction and Engagement: Ultimately, it is important that our users be able to develop and maintain relationships with each other and the app. To facilitate this connection we hope to build out some within-app user-user interaction features which may take the form of an app-wide discussion channel or event specific chat rooms. We also want to incorporate features which give the user a greater feeling of control via customizable options such as the ability to select and edit the photos of events they host as well as greater interaction and control over their profile information.
3. Optimizations for Frequent/Expert Users: The prototype provides all the necessary functionality and infrastructure for the average user; however, we have yet to implement optimizations which target frequent and expert users. For instance, features which monitor user activity to learn their preferences and tendencies may allow us to provide more applicable filters for searching restaurants and events. Users may also want, and even need, the ability to prioritize their restrictions. Specifically, the prototype currently shows users options that fit at least one of their restrictions; however, there may be users who always need a certain subset of their restrictions to be satisfied.
4. Improved Data Management/Industry Cooperation: While much of the currently hard-coded data will be user generated in the final product, we still must manually enter restaurant information. In a perfect world, we see the opportunity to partner with restaurants who actively accommodate dietary restrictions. This partnership could take the form of the restaurants providing up-to-date menu driven data entry, as well as

in-app reservation and order-ahead systems. These features would create a synergy between the restaurants, meetchewthere, and their common community.

What We Wish We Had Known Then: Summary

Although the ten-week design process was a grind, we produced a reasonably polished hi-fi prototype and left with a few design and life lessons:

1. Emphasize quality over quantity during needfinding. The goal of needfinding should be taken literally- to identify a specific need. But people have a lot of needs of varying intensity, and our initial attempt to interview many different people made it difficult to synthesize all their stories and pinpoint a single clear need which could drive the creation of an app to address a specific need. Strict adherence to this phase of the development process is critical to producing an app that will have targeted and competent core functionality.
2. Problem identification is critical. The product develops from a pervasive problem that requires a solution and not the other way around. A solution looking for a problem, even if it has lots of fancy code and a slick UI cannot produce a game-changing product. Diet restricted eating is a problem, or at least a prevalent concern, that requires attention. Our prototype is a good first iteration that with more iteration, and some pivots based on user feedback, could provide a useful service for our users and restaurants.
3. Scope of the tasks matter. The final product needs to be broad enough to provide meaningful functionality to its range of target users, but not too broad. An app should be targeted and cohesive, and have a high degree core competency. Although our prototype is functional and connected, it may attempt to solve too many problems. We wanted to create a platform where our users could satisfy their need to find safe places to eat and people to eat with. It may have been more prudent to build a more in depth set of functionalities around one of the problems represented by our tasks.
4. People often only notice what you don't do or does not function as expected. Many long hours and late nights were spent developing and debugging our hi-fi prototype. We wanted to ensure user navigation was intuitive, all the relevant buttons and fields were present and clickable when appropriate, features our users would desire were included, and a complete database of 50 restaurants, 100 reviews, 30 users, and 40 events was present to support full functionality. When we presented our final prototype we realized our users did not notice, or took for granted, all these seemingly insignificant, but time intensive, features we built into our app. People expect ease of use and intuitive functionality to be present, there are no brownie points for meeting this expectation, but it is a big deal if these features are deficient or absent.