

Revolutionizing Food Delivery Services with Home Cooked Meals
(Technical Report)

**The Social and Health Consequences of Relying on Food Delivery
Applications**
(STS Research Paper)

An Undergraduate Thesis Portfolio
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Sociotechnical Synthesis

Technical Abstract

Food delivery services take advantage of consumers' desire for convenience, allowing them to stay at home and not worry about cooking for themselves. Consumers have increasingly ordered food from delivery services and avoided preparing food from scratch, even though home-cooked meals provide a more nutritious and well-rounded diet. The goal of the Capstone project is to develop a food delivery service, called HomeEats, that is hosted as a web application specifically for delivering home-cooked meals. HomeEats was developed using the Python Django Framework and the site is hosted on an AWS server for production purposes. The capstone team followed the scrum agile methodology to develop the web application.

This application will give at-home chefs the ability to create a HomeEats cook account and post a list of home-cooked meals as a menu. Customers can make a HomeEats customer account to view and order meals from the application. This web application combines the consumer's desire for convenience while also providing passionate at-home chefs the opportunity to cook.

The HomeEats site administrator has the ability to oversee customer and cooks' activity, such as customer's orders, cook's dishes, and revenue reports. HomeEats provides safety features such as mandatory administrator approval for all menu items and customer reviews of dishes. HomeEats also requires all menu items posted by a chef to be approved by the administrator before the dish can be ordered by a customer.

The customer review feature allows customers to write a review on a previously ordered dish and give a numerical rating on a scale from 0 to 5. Reviews will help to inform other customers and site administrators about the quality of the food. When chefs post a dish, they

must list all of the ingredients and any possible allergies. Dishes are associated with cuisine types which can help customers to more easily find the chefs that they would like to order from. Customers can contact and message cooks about their order, which is especially helpful for customers who have allergies or dietary restrictions. During the checkout process, customers will also have the ability to tip the cook and the checkout page precomputes possible tipping percentages for easy tipping. The HomeEats web application has been designed to help customers obtain home-cooked meals easily and to ensure the safety of its patrons through the use of a review system, administrator monitoring, and approval systems.

Conference Abstract

As food delivery applications are rapidly emerging in society, making it convenient to delivery takeout food straight to your door, how do we continue to promote healthy food consumption? In order to tackle this problem, our research team is building a web-based food delivery application, HomeEats, which specifically targets the sector of freshly made home-cooked meals. While the companies behind food delivery applications try to boost user engagement and increase the number of users on their app, there are plenty of potential health and social implications from using the applications go unnoticed. By promoting takeout food, food delivery apps are discouraging consumers from preparing freshly cooked meals. Furthermore, eating out is often a face-to-face social interaction, and these services may be indirectly promoting isolation and laziness. I will be analyzing these unintended consequences of food delivery apps using the socio-technical integration framework. To conduct my research, I will be utilizing interviews and surveys to capture meaningful insights directly from the college students who use food delivery applications as well as representatives from companies who build the applications. Through my research, I expect to either contradict or verify claims that food

delivery apps are promoting unhealthy food options and if they are in fact reducing social interactions. I also want to understand how consumers are making use of the time saved by ordering food via the app, the healthiness of the food being ordered, and if these services are actually contributing to an overall healthy, or unhealthy lifestyle. The connection between the technical and social aspects revolves around the value that specifically homecooked meals provide. HomeEats solves the health concerns by allowing customers to enjoy a variety of freshly prepared meals without having to spend time buying groceries or cooking.