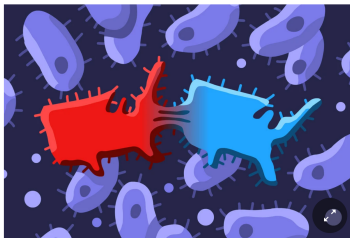




Why What's Cookin' ?

When we started What's Cookin' in 2019, we aimed to address problems of social isolation and fragmentation. Now at the end of 2020, it is clear that these issues are part of a fundamental threat to our society, along with disinformation and divisiveness. Broad agreement exists that a problem exists, that a new solution is called for.

The New York Times
Polarization Is Dividing American Society, Not Just Politics



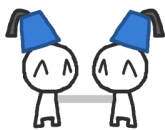
We believe that any approach to “fixing society” must arise from fundamental principles: **cooperation, trust, connectedness - and a commitment to complete transparency and genuine shared ownership, of whatever the solution is.**

“
Loneliness has the same impact on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, making it even more dangerous than obesity.

Douglas Nemecek, MD, chief medical officer for behavioral health, Cigna

”

Game theory has shown us the three things we need for the evolution of trust:



1. REPEAT INTERACTIONS

Trust keeps a relationship going, but you need the knowledge of possible future repeat interactions *before* trust can evolve.



2. POSSIBLE WIN-WINS

You must be playing a non-zero-sum game, a game where it's at least possible that *both* players can be better off -- a win-win.



3. LOW MISCOMMUNICATION

If the level of miscommunication is *too* high, trust breaks down. But when there's a little bit of miscommunication, it pays to be *more* forgiving.

How then to take the concepts of cooperation, trust and connection, and turn them into a thing? In today's world, an app, one that will have mass appeal in neighborhoods and communities worldwide? And how to make the concept of shared ownership into a reality?

Start with Meal Sharing

Food, the experience of eating a meal, is universal. Providing food for each other and sharing meals has been a fundamental driver for forming bonds since humans lived in small tribes depending on one another for survival. Breaking bread is a symbol of forging connections.



Yet, many food-related startups aim to create an anonymized marketplace around eating, reducing it to yet another consumer item. Increases in convenience from microwave dinners to drive-throughs and now delivery services have failed to deliver the missing value of genuine human connectedness that used to be associated with meals. Breaking bread is broken.

Not all values lend themselves to a marketplace model. One does not achieve genuine human connection by optimizing interactions on a moment to moment basis. And while tweaking algorithms and feedback loops to be more sensitive to deeper intentions of the users may help, the deeper intentions of the corporate owners must also be taken into account. Yet another startup trying to monetize human connection is not a recipe for authenticity.

At What's Cookin', our solution is a community driven model from the ground up, starting with the development team and the corporate structure itself - more about this below. Our app is centered around capturing the users' intentions, exposing searches as wishes and requests in community circles, and making it easy for cooks, makers and neighbors to offer what others actually want.

middle eastern



User A

Wishes
for
Middle Eastern
Food



add **middle eastern** to my wishlist?

Later...



User B

Offers to cook
Iraqi Cuisine



☰ **whatsCookin'** 🔔 🔍

Community Wishes

middle eastern Offer



whatsCookin'



What days/times are good for you? Any other notes?

Request

Iraqi Cuisine

Contact: **Maha Abduljabbar**

Iraqi Cuisine

Contact: **Maha Abduljabbar**

Next event: **Friday, December 4th,**
6:00 pm

[Join Event](#)

Because cooks are not holding open a restaurant, when they are making food it becomes a small event - fans of a particular home cook may pick up portions for each other, or even meet and eat together (after covid) when a favorite dish is planned.

Google Calendar integration provides an easy way for users to plan ahead.

Design Patterns for Cooperation

Beyond meal sharing, our larger goal is to make it painless and efficient for people to engage in any kind of cooperative activity. We are actively working with small user groups to find the best flow that facilitates making things happen.



Grocery Run
by **Golda Velez**



Fresh Produce
by **Joe Green**

Some insights so far:

- Searches are wishes - and are exposed to just a big enough circle, to have them filled
- Filling a wish becomes an Offer to anyone with a similar wish
- An Event starts with two users and becomes a public invitation in the circle
- Forgiveness not Permission - allow users to join circles as guests, then become verified
- Search by 'what, when, where and who' - expand outward in each dimension until filled
- One size will not fit all - different users have different preferences

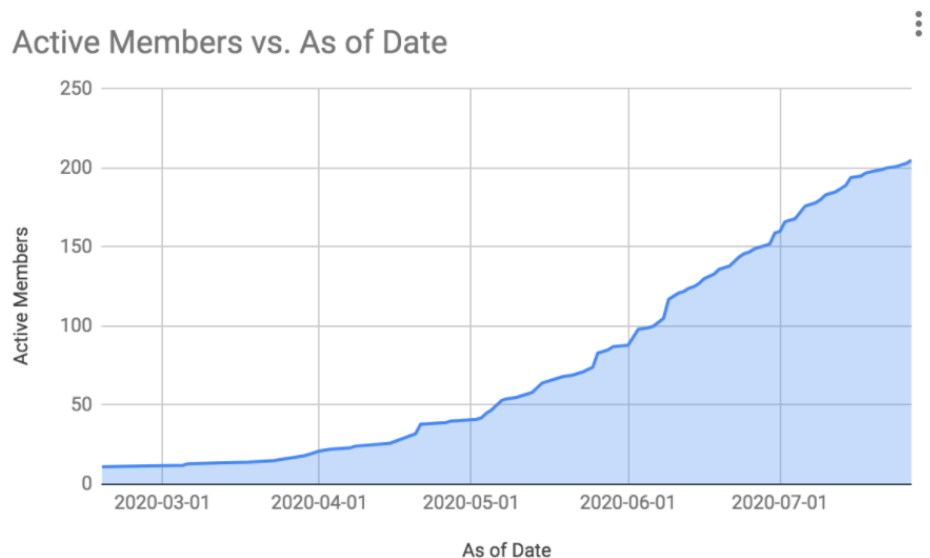
Decentralization is the Future: Users Dislike Silos

A key request we have heard from our users is to integrate their experience with all the other ways they already interact, from facebook groups to slack to simple text messages. Our goal is to serve users' intentions, rather than control or direct them. Thus while we are working to deliver an optimized in-app experience, we also intend to support decentralized messaging, possibly through the bluesky protocol, which some of our members [have been involved in developing](#).

In the meantime, a message bus with API plugins to reach users where they are comfortable will make it easier to form circles from disparate groups of users.

Traction and Growth

A vision and even a working implementation are nothing without users. Our MVP has been rolled out into a small circle of online activists, and during development usage of the app has doubled about every six weeks.



Our plan is to grow through partnerships with neighborhood associations, food hubs, community organizers and others with shared values in building community. Our goal is to be positioned so that as the pandemic ends and people are able to start gathering again, What's Cookin' will be the welcome catalyst to bring them together, starting with sharing of meals.

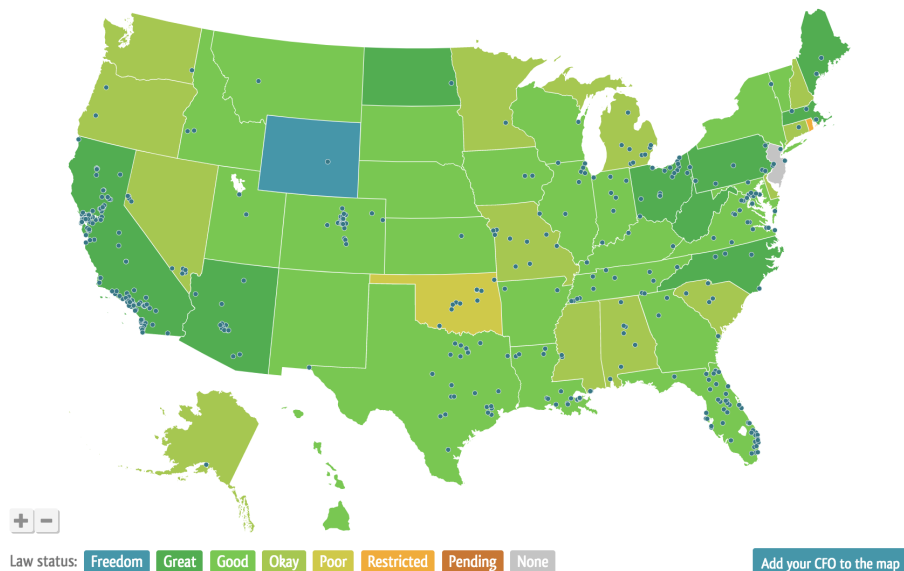


Neighbors in an early focus group were enthusiastic about the potential for What's Cookin'

For cooks, many of whom may be recent immigrants or refugees, we provide a needed source of secondary income as well as a way to interact with the community. Feeling valued and seen by their neighbors is something many newcomers have expressed a need for in our focus groups.

Legal Hurdles

Cottage Food Laws



<https://forrager.com/laws/>

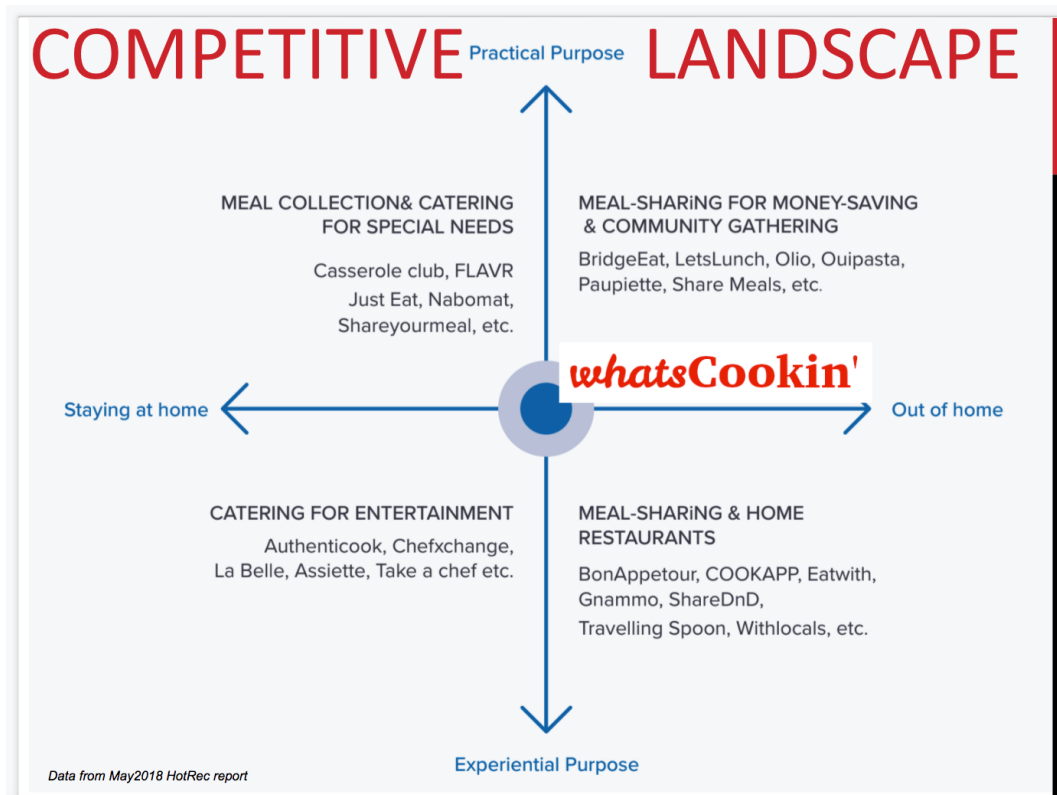
The laws regulating "cottage food" vary from state to state. We are currently in the process of working with state legislators in Arizona on a model law that we hope to bring forward in fall 2021 to expand permissions for home kitchens. In every state, meal and activity sharing is legal and fully supported; paid transactions will be enabled per-state where they are allowed.

In many locations, commercial kitchens are available to more serious cooks, either as rental spaces or free via churches and other community organizations.



Competitive Landscape

Relative to competitors, What's Cookin' offers a unique combination of community building and meal sharing. Most competitors treat home cooking or even dining experiences as a commodity, and other community building apps such as NextDoor are primarily just online talk rather than driving concrete cooperation. Some specialty community building food apps focus specifically on reducing waste, or pairing students and faculty for lunches, but we believe the community sharing sweet spot has not been hit yet.



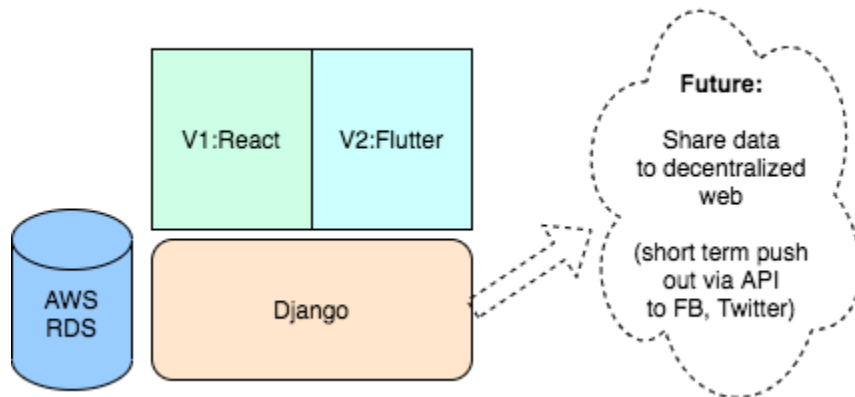
Team

Our community based approach has already attracted a highly skilled and dedicated development team, in which all contributors earn equity through slicingpie.com. Our team itself is a What's Cookin' circle, dogfooding the app to plan work pairing and explorations of new technology.

	Golda Velez, CEO Senior Software Engineer, author of Webglimpse search engine software and founder of Internet Workshop/Tucson.com. Co-founder of 501c3 Civ.works. Caltech AMa
	Sahra Hirsi, MBA, VP Business Development Founder of multiple businesses, including a translation service, catering, a community center and preschool focused on refugee children. Currently administers a statewide grant. MBA Eller
	Khailill Knight-Papaioannou, VP Marketing Air force veteran and founder of KP MadMan marketing and design firm. Community organizer, Khailill has successfully raised funds for Tucson neighborhoods (Dunbar Project). Univ of Arizona
	Michelle Zaremskas, Backend Lead Distinguished Software Engineer with over fifteen years of architecture and coding experience. Also a cook and foodie, as well as leading the way into the Flutter mobile experience.
	Sarthak Vijayvergiya, Frontend Lead Senior Software Engineer with Javascript, React and Android chops. Rapid study from Devops to API integrations.
	Joey Kilrain, Design Lead Over ten years of experience working on enterprise platforms. Joey leads projects from ideation and research through execution.
	Ryan Turner, Full Stack Developer React and Javascript machine, turns out code and solves problems as fast as we find them
	Mounir Benabderrahmane, Full Stack Developer Driven self-starter with professional adaptability, full stack web developer (MERN)
	Poonam Deshpande, COO Entrepreneur and IT professional, Poonam keeps an eye on our services and integrations.

Numerous other contributors and advisors have assisted along the way.

Technology Stack



For rapid development, our MVP was created in React over Django (Python). We are currently working on a mobile-first version of the front end in Flutter. We currently have implemented Google Calendar, Google Maps and Sendgrid integrations. Hosting and deployment is via AWS Amplify. The data store is Postgres using AWS RDS.

As graduates of the Founders Institute we have qualified for AWS startup credits for 2 years.

Possible future technologies:

For capturing user intention, voice recognition combined with GPT3 natural language interaction to clarify the user's wishes are an exciting possibility.

We expect to use AI models to optimize user feeds when presenting new items beyond their existing circles.

Decentralized protocols and event feeds may open new opportunities to interact with large communities of existing users.

Corporate Structure

What's Cookin' Inc is a Delaware Public Benefit Corporation. Our registered public benefit is to

create opportunities for sharing and commerce within communities, support local food production, increase neighborhood resilience, demonstrate methods of democratic corporate governance, and share equity with participants

We chose a Benefit Corporation over a C Corporation to create a real commitment to our values, including that of democratic corporate governance with work-weighted participation. While keeping bureaucracy at a minimum, as we grow we may experiment with DAOs, vote of confidence, and other mechanisms to ensure community control. We currently use SlicingPie.com to share equity and have a public warrant to split the Founder's Pool accordingly.

We chose a Benefit Corporation over a Nonprofit Foundation, because shared ownership is closer to our values than a board of directors overseeing employees. A Benefit Corporation also has the ability to grow and evolve as a living entity, including potentially joining a public stock exchange.

In Six Words or Less

Too much detail? Here is What's Cookin' in the form of "Like X, but Y":

Pinterest but you can eat it

Nextdoor without the gossip

Meetup when you feel like it

If Uber had a Soul

Join Us

We are looking for Co-Founders, Investors, Developers and Neighborhood Champions. Join us in creating the society we want to belong to.

website: <https://whatscookin.us>

instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/whatscookinco/>

linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/whats-cookin-inc>

email: founders@whatscookin.us

phone: (520) 440-1420