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WILLIAMS-SONOMA

experience design

process book

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS





1

The team

Foundation

Domain

7

Exploration

Luxury industry

Exploring market trends

Insights from agencies

15

Client

Introduction

Business

Customer journey framework

Business problem

Innovation gap

Customer friction

Opportunities

35

Ideation

Framework

Constraints

Customer segment

Proposals

Metaphor

51

Construction

Form

Info architecture

"Flow" chart

Production

Customer journey framework

69

Conclusion

Value for business

Value proposition





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THE TEAM



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Nathan Lam





1

FOUNDATION

Domain

PITCH

Inspired by the vision of the perfect kitchen utility, we designed a digital platform for Williams-Sonoma's Open Kitchen line, targeting novice and aspiring cooks to support their passion and develop their culinary skills.

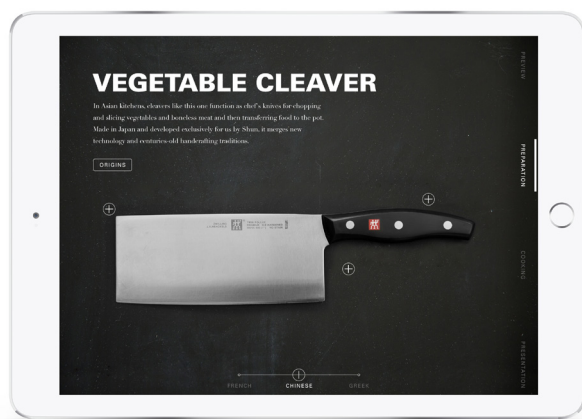




3

“Great products are only a part of the story...”
- Don Norman

FOUNDATION



Domain



USER EXPERIENCE

We used experience design as a tool to bring value to the business, moving it from producing only products and commodities to creating a memorable experience for the customers. Experience design combines the best practices from business, design, and research. Its relevance comes from the combination of the various elements in a customer-centric way.



5

FOUNDATION

Domain

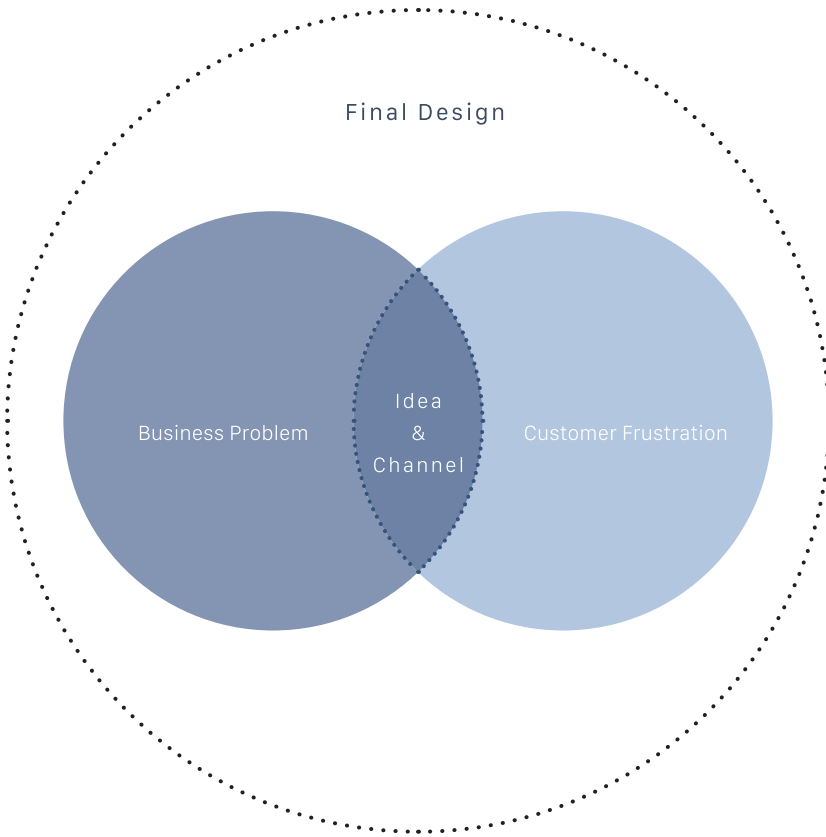
AKQA BUSINESS CLIENT DIAGRAM

In order to make the project useful, usable, and delightful, we considered the core business problem. We sought to reduce customer friction and add value to the business by looking into the core idea first, before considering the channel or the medium.





60





7

EXPLORATION

“Luxury is the expression of a taste, of a creative identity, of the intrinsic passion of a creator; luxury makes the bald statement ‘this is what I am’”

- Luxury Strategy

Luxury industry



∞

LUXURY

There are several practices that we found common within the luxury industry. First of all, luxury companies rarely compare themselves to another, preferring to represent and state a unique image. The luxury brand must work hard at maintaining this character, be it a specific style, or signature. This is so that the integrity of the brand remains strong and brand confusion remains at bay.

Channel handling is also a delicate task as the brand must refrain from selling overtly or up-selling their clients, both practices being common in regular companies. All in all, luxury companies must be especially careful in crafting and maintaining their image while 'orchestrating' the brand experience so that they become synonymous with desirable characteristics, traits, and goals that the audience may have.

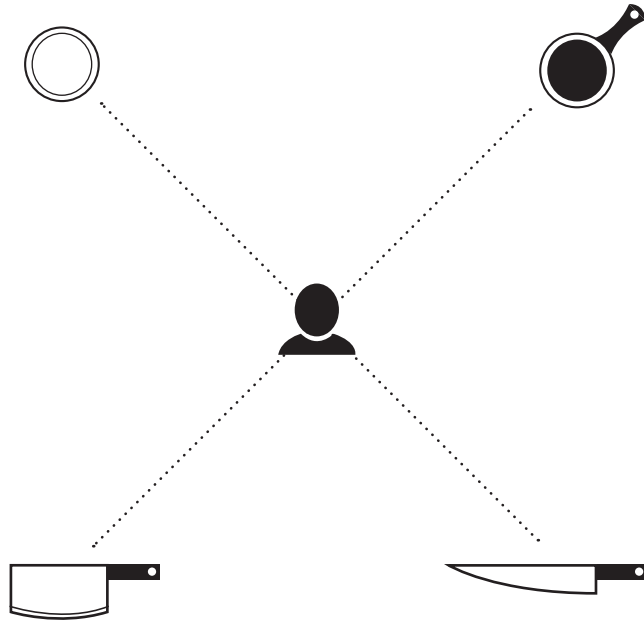




9

EXPLORATION

Exploring market trends





TRENDS IN COOKING INDUSTRY

There are few authentic connections and relationships despite being constantly digitally connected.

Consumers care about having a healthy lifestyle.

The general audience spends little time at home to eat with family and often has no time to cook.

Consumers often rely on foodie blogs, online videos and recipes to learn or find inspiration.

Showrooming is becoming a common practice, especially for luxury brands. Consumers may first research on the brand or products online and even buy the product online while using the physical store as a showroom.

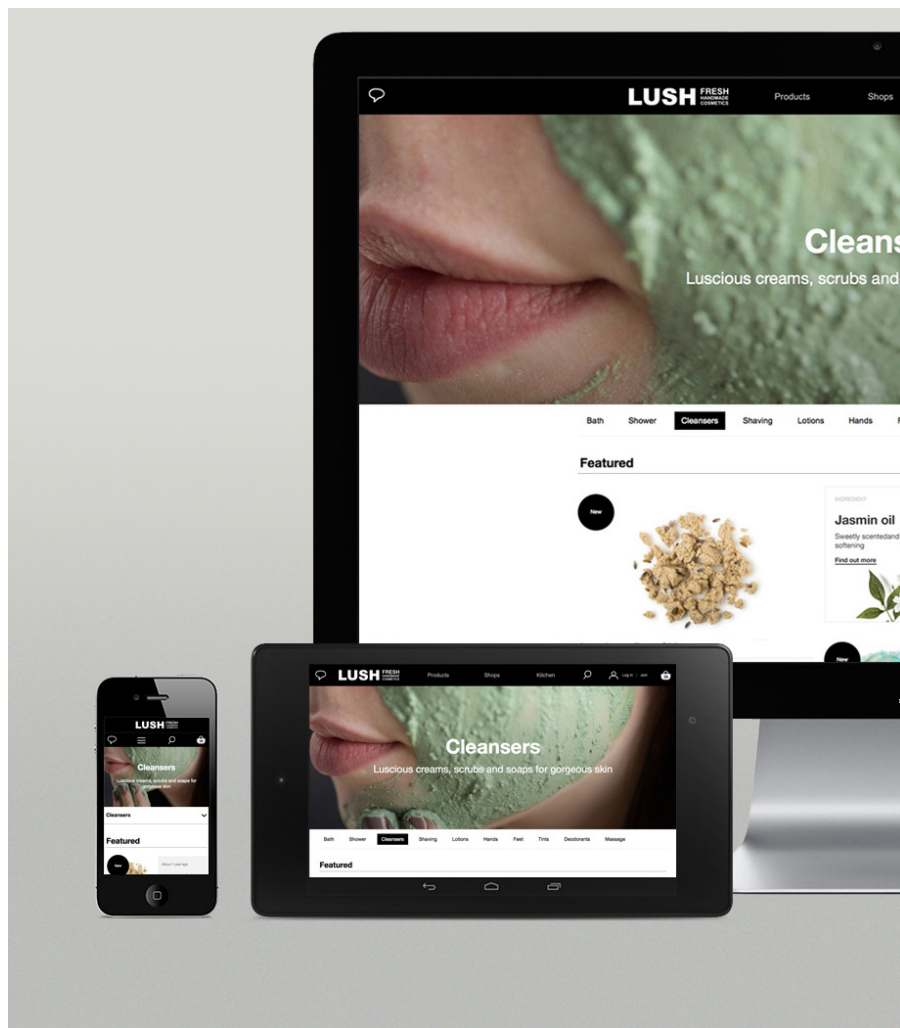
Tradition becoming something that consumers look for and find value in, emulating a friendlier, more personal time and society.



AKQA - AUDI

We gathered several insights from AKQA's project with Audi. One of the main ones being, give less of the platform and more of the brand or product. The details of the platform, such as layout, colors and interactions must reflect the brand as well. This would lead to the brand being communicated better and provide a more enjoyable experience for the audience.



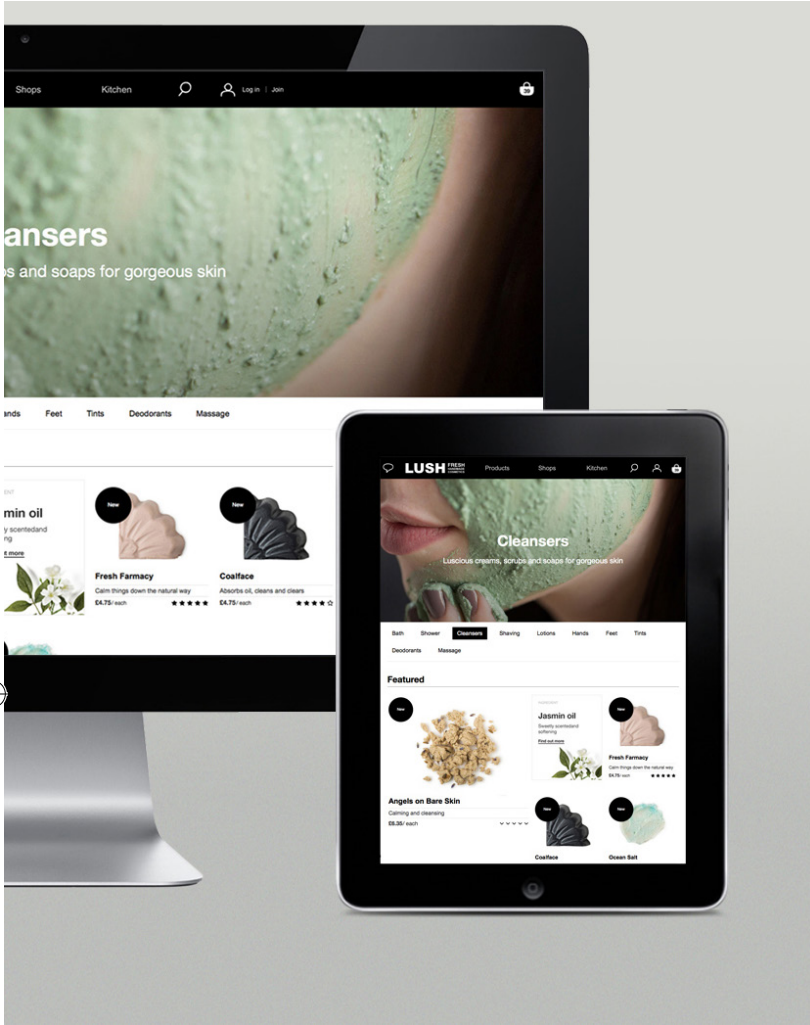


METHOD - LUSH KITCHEN

We came to understand that trust and transparency is paramount between business and customers now as we studied Method's project for Lush. Brand values should be communicated clearly in order to develop an authentic relationship between the company and the customer. Similarly, traditional ways of communicating brand and advertising are no longer effective. Instead, the best way is to let the customer feel like they are a part of the company and their culture.



14







Charles E. Williams founded Williams Sonoma in 1956 with a focus on customer-centric service and handpicking high quality culinary products, such as cookware, cookbooks, cutlery, informal dinnerware, glassware, table linens, specialty foods and cooking ingredients. Williams-Sonoma engages their audience and markets these products through retail stores, catalogs, and e-commerce.

Open Kitchen is a new line by Williams Sonoma. The line was introduced in January 2014 by Williams Sonoma for a casual, young, food-loving audience compared to Williams Sonoma's traditional audience of serious connoisseurs. Open Kitchen provides the same high quality and design while the price range is much more affordable.





BRAND MODEL

CLIENT

Business

STAFF

by

→ **PROMISE**

PEOPLE FIRST
ENHANCING CUSTOMERS'
LIFESTYLE AT HOME, FOCUSING
ON INSPIRATION RATHER THAN
PRODUCTS

guides



PRODUCTS

CULINARY PRODUCTS
E-COMMERCE
IN STORE COOKING CLASSES



— deliver —→

EXPERIENCE





SYMBOL

represents

WILLIAMS-SONOMA

represents

BRAND

can be

MEASURED

LUXURY PRESENCE

by

STAFF

builds

PERCEPTION

LUXURY
QUALITY

CRAFTSMANSHIP
HOSPITABLE

shapes





BUSINESS MODEL

CLIENT

CHANNELS

retail store
catalog
website
social media
word of mouth
advertisement

VALUE PROPOSITION

ASPIRATIONAL

enhance customer's
lifestyle at home.

INTANGIBLE

help make home a
reflection of who
the customer are.

TANGIBLE

food and cooking
related products.

**KEY RESOURCES**

Physical property
intellectual
knowledge
experience
relationships

KEY PARTNERS

various small factories
suppliers
retailers
local chefs
restaurant

KEY ACTIVITIES

production
design
education

CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

niche market
luxury market

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

personal treatment
automated services
co-creation





ANSOFF CHART



EXISTING MARKETS

NEW MARKETS

CLIENT

Business

Williams Sonoma is currently heavily focused on the top half of this matrix, where they bring existing and new products to their existing market while few of their resources are directed at introducing new products to the new market, or traditional products to the new market. Our design introduces a new market, young food overs, to a new affordable product line (Open Kitchen) at an early stage, so they will be introduced to the traditional, luxury products eventually. This will not only expand the audience of the brand but also create brand loyalty and keeps the company growing in long term.

**EXISTING PRODUCTS**

E-commerce

Traditional cooking lifestyle

Luxury cookware

Print (catalog)



Expanding internationally

Partnership with other chains
(Whole Foods)

Improve in-store merchandising

NEW PRODUCTS

Technology implementation

Cost cutting (shipping rates)



Affordable cookware for
everyday use
(Open Kitchen)



CURRENT ONLINE FRAMEWORK

PRE-SERVICE

SERVICE

awareness

exploration

What companies sell kitchenware and cookware?

How do I navigate?

Which brand should I choose?

What events are going on?

What do others say about Williams-Sonoma?

What do they carry?

What are other people using?

What is in all these categories?

Where can I go to learn more about Williams-Sonoma and their products?

Is there any guides, support, or help?

Do they have a store near me?

Where do I find the things I want or need?

Do they have digital platform that I can go to find out about them?

What are these products for?

How can Williams-Sonoma compete with other companies with similar products and lower price tags?

Does the website communicate the brand?

What are people saying about our brand?

Is the site easy for consumer to navigate and find what they are looking for?

How do we bring a potential customer to Williams-Sonoma?

**POST-SERVICE***consideration**purchase**post-purchase*

How do I use it and why would I use or need it?

Is there somewhere I can go to get a feel of the product?

What are the differences between these products?

What are other users or buyers saying about this?

Is this the best product for me to use?

Should I physically go see the product?

Should I buy it online?

How much is the total?

What types of payment are accepted?

How long will it take to ship?

What is the return, exchange, and warranty?

Can I add insurance to the package?

Can I track the package?

Was the website easy to use?

Did the package arrive on time?

Where can I find out how to use product?

Where can I find support or help with my purchase?

Did I buy the right product?

Is the product easy to use?

Is the product quality good?

Are we giving understandable product and information to the customer?

Are we supporting them and helping them in their decision process

Are we providing holistic experience

Is the checkout process easy?
Are we instilling trust in this process?

How can we provide support after our products are bought?
How can we reengage with customer?

How can we invite them to store?



CURRENT INSTORE FRAMEWORK

PRE-SERVICE

SERVICE

awareness

exploration

What companies sell
kitchenware and cookware?

How does the storefront
make me feel?

Which brand should I choice?

What do they carry?

What do others say about
Williams-sonoma?

Is there anyone to help me?

What are other people using?

What are these events they
are having?

Where can I go to learn more
about Williams-Sonoma and
their products?

What do you do and when is it?

Do they have digital platform
that I can go to find out about
them?

Are the staff knowledgeable
and willing to help me?

What is the product called ?

What are these products for?

How much is it?

How can Williams-Sonoma
compete with other
companies with similar
products and lower prices?

Is the store organized and
designed appealingly

Can customers navigate easily?

What are people saying about
our brand?

Do we have sufficient staff to
meet customers' need?

How do we bring potential
customers to Williams-
Sonoma?

**POST-SERVICE****consideration****purchase****post-purchase**

Is there more information available?

What is the difference between all these brand?

What is open kitchen?

How do I use it?
(What cooking method and technique?)

Do I need this ?

How is the quality?

Would I be comfortable and confident using these?

Is this really the right product for me?

Where do I pay, is there anyone to help me?

Is there a long wait and is there anything I can do while waiting?

What is the exchange policy?

Is there warranty?

How was the service?

Would I want to come back to this store?

Was the website easy to use?

Did the package arrive on time?

Where can I find out how to use product?

Where can I find support?

Did I buy the right product?

Is the product easy to use?

Is the product quality good?

Are the staff properly trained and well educated?

How can we provide customers with more information without overwhelming the original brand aesthetics?

How can we inspire trust and confidence?

Is the checkout process friendly?

Are we providing relevant information to customer?

How can we provide support after a purchase?

How can we reengage with customer?

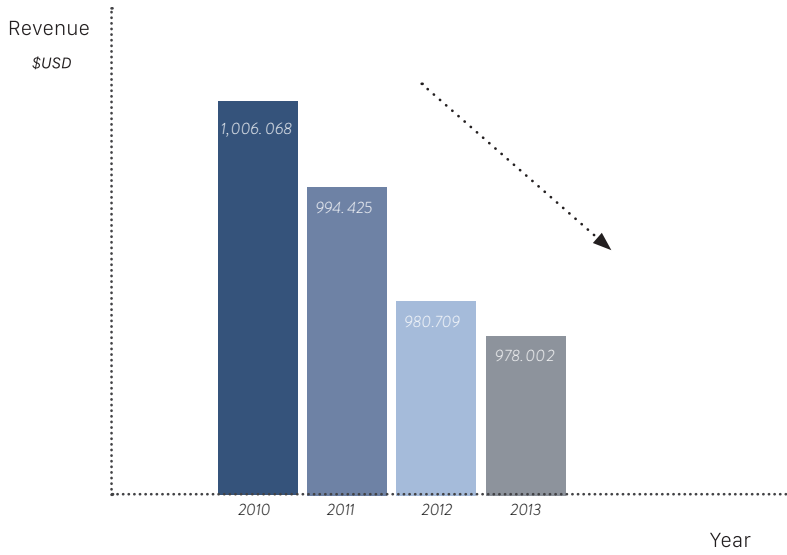
How can we invite customers to store?



CLIENT

Business problem

Williams-Sonoma's sales levels have been declining since 2010. There are multiple causes for declining sales including dilution of brand as they expand, poor communication of brand values and increasing levels of competition. Another issue is Williams-Sonoma's exclusive focus on traditional markets while new, younger audiences with buying power emerge. Williams Sonoma would eventually become obsolete if these problems are not remedied. The younger generation know about the brand from their family, but don't see enough value to buy products from the brand.

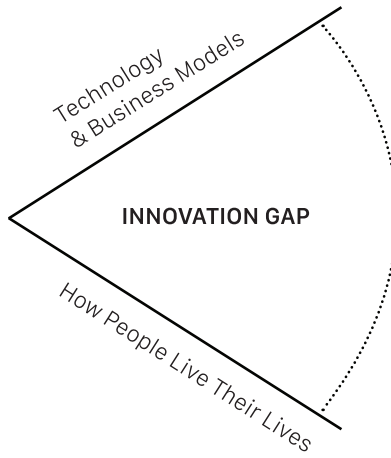


**CLIENT**

One of the issues stated was Williams Sonoma's expansion as they grew and introduced more products. In doing so, not only did their brand get diluted, they also lost sight of being customer-centric and meeting customers' needs. In this case, friction grew for customers as they found it harder and harder to approach the brand, this is especially true of inexperienced and novice cooks.



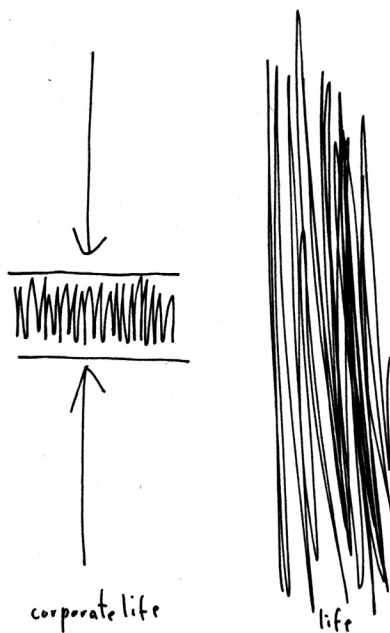
**ORGANIZATIONAL
KNOWLEDGE**





CUSTOMER FRUSTRATION

CLIENT



Customer friction

There are several friction points that customers face. One major friction is that the audience may have limited knowledge themselves to explore the culinary world. Similarly, the lack of a cohesive environment makes it difficult for them to learn, develop and grow their passion.





*“If you as a company, stay within
that limited emotional range, then you
are cutting yourself off from all the
possibilities in the larger world where
people actually live.”*

- Bruce Mau





Williams-Sonoma developed the Open Kitchen line in response to these issues. Open Kitchen has a clear identity and reaches back to Williams Sonoma's tradition of hand picking the best products. The new line also introduces a new audience to the brand, building loyalty early on. However, Open Kitchen has received limited attention from its target audience so far.

Hence we find an opportunity to design an experience for Williams Sonoma's Open Kitchen to introduce them to their audience.



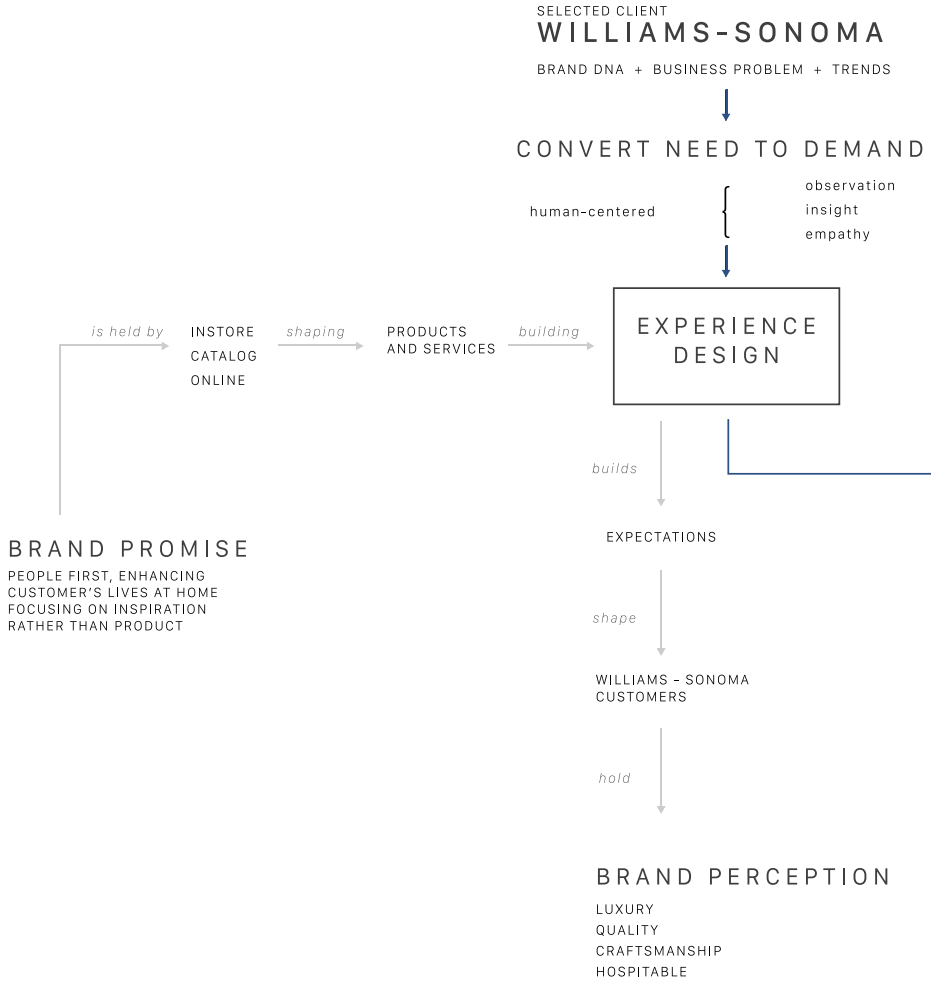


35

PROMPT PROJECT → EXPERIENCE DESIGN DOMAIN → RESEARCH → TRENDS →

IDEATION

Framework





ESTABLISHES
CLIENT SELECTION

GENERATE CLIENTS
BRAND VALUES AND
BUSINESS PROBLEMS

INDUSTRY
POTENTIAL
DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

36

DIGITAL INTERFACE

BRAINSTORM

no
yes

TOUCHPOINTS

no
yes

IS IT WORKING FOR
THE BRAND?

FEASIBLE + VIABLE + DESIRABLE

DEVELOP

REFINE

repeat until refined

no
yes

WITHIN DOMAIN?

yes

PRODUCTION → VALUE → ENGAGE → SUSTAIN

TANGIBLE + INTANGIBLE + ASPIRATIONAL

that will

keeps
customers

that will



37

IDEATION

Constrains

AVOID CLICHÉ

LUXURY & BRAND

DOMAIN BASED



Stay away from recipe dependent platforms

Stay within the luxury realm of Williams-Sonoma

Avoid using social media based interactions directly

Do not sell directly

Emphasize brand's traditions

Do not create an advertisement or campaign



AUDIENCES

We are targeting the younger generation (Generation Y) and other novice or aspiring cooks and food lovers. We are targeting them because Open Kitchen offers a culture appealing to this group that other similar price-ranged competitors don't offer.

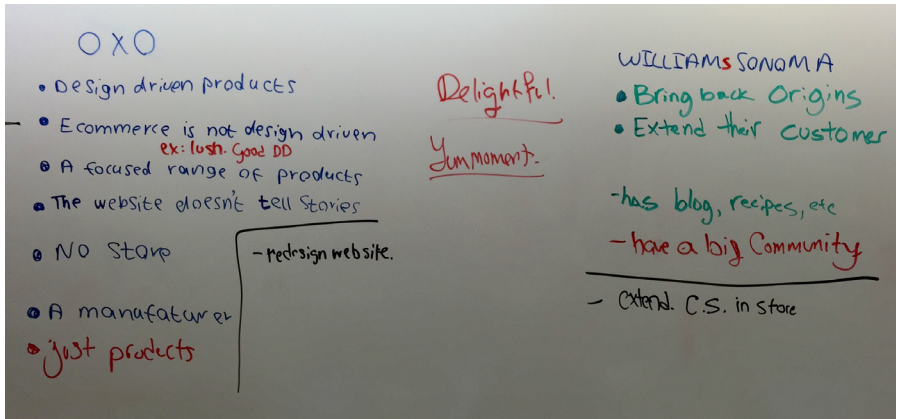
Similarly, they are an emerging market with increasing buying power and would constitute a new customer pool for Williams Sonoma.



NEEDS

Young and novice cooks may or may not have much experience in cooking. Hence their needs are unique and different from Williams Sonoma's traditional target. They need an experience that has low cognitive overhead, that allows easy control which inspires courage and confidence. Often times they may also need an audience or a mentor for companionship and guidance.

On the other hand, aspiring cooks and food lovers would be in search of inspiration and further knowledge to refine their culinary understanding.





Proposal 1 rejected

COOKING AS AN ENJOYABLE PROCESS RATHER THAN A CHORE.

This concept was to build a story with food, experience and lifestyle as the priority while the products take supporting role in creating these moments. However, we looked back at consumer trends and recognized that the larger part of the audience views food and cooking as something enjoyable already. Hence, our proposal did not provide sufficient value to the consumer and Williams-Sonoma.

*Proposal 2 rejected*

ENLIGHTENING THE COOKING PROCESS BY REINTRODUCING THE TRADITION OF PREPARING FOOD

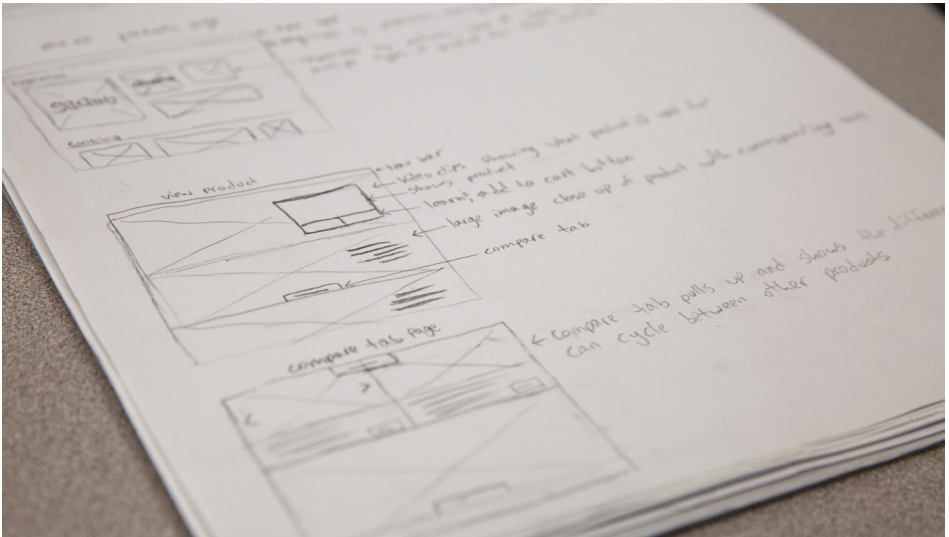
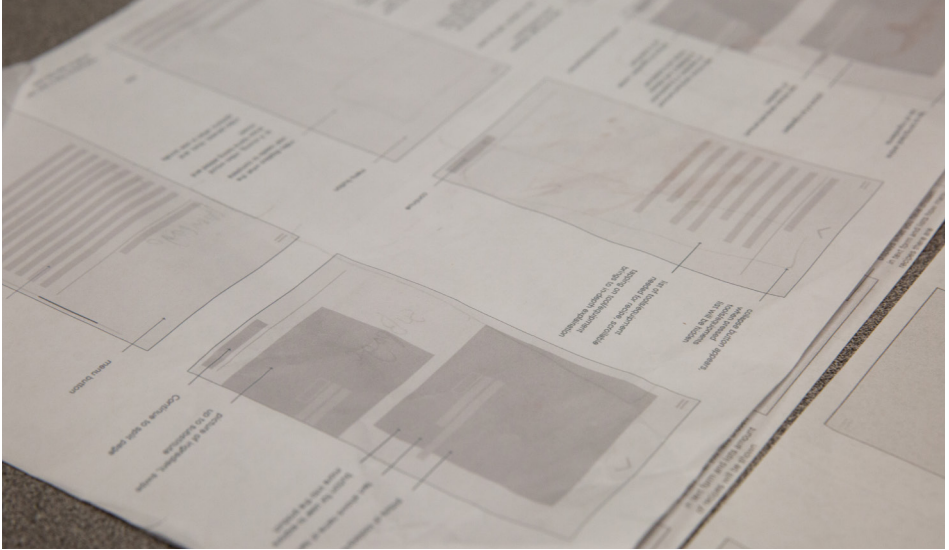
We focused on Williams-Sonoma's Open Kitchen, specifically their idea of 'Gather, Cook, Eat, Repeat' for this proposal. In iterating, we found our idea of cooking together with friends or family especially fit this concept. We explored this proposal further and found that it may be interesting but too much of the interactions depend on other participants. This would present a challenge in creating value for the consumer and Williams-Sonoma.

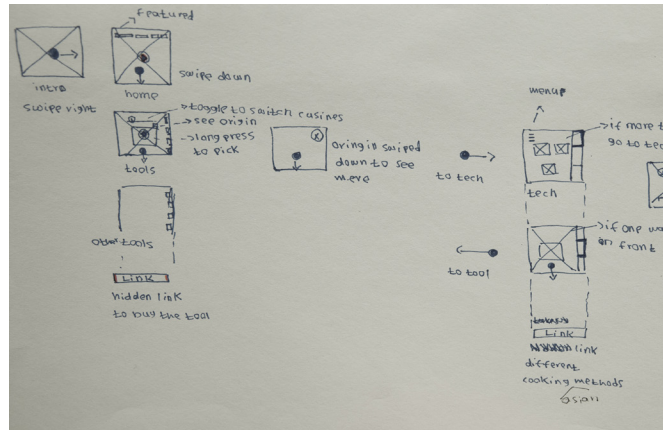


*Proposal 3* *rejected*

REINTRODUCING THE TRADITION OF COOKING BY **LOWERING THE** **INTIMIDATION OF COOKING**

Realizing the limitations of the previous proposal, we shifted our focus to address frictions that our target would experience. We identified intimidation as a major factor in preventing our audience from enjoying the culinary experience and so, set out to develop a platform that would give them guidance and develop their confidence in the kitchen. As we proceeded though, we branched out in our iterations and found greater opportunities.







Final Proposal **ACCEPTED** ✓

INSPIRING CULINARY PASSION THROUGH REINTRODUCING THE RIGHT UTILITIES AND CULTURE.

Following the idea of the proposal to lower the intimidation of cooking, we found that an even larger audience would gain value through inspirations rather than just strictly technical aspects. With this insight, we incorporated cultures and origins of different cooking methods, techniques and tools with proper terminology, encouraging the audience to explore the culinary world and expand their passion.



KITCHEN UTENSIL

Our design is a cooking utensil for the aspiring cook. It provides crucial support in the aspiring cook's journey while providing and supporting an enjoyable cooking experience, similar to the chef's knife. It is a must have in the cooking process.

IDEATION

Metaphor



HAND PICKING ELEMENTS

The information and knowledge within the application are 'hand-picked' to suit the audience's needs, reflecting Williams-Sonoma's tradition of hand-picking quality items for their customers.



USER INTERFACE ELEMENTS



CONSTRUCTION

We identified three stages of interaction, pre-cooking, cooking and post-cooking, throughout the entire process of cooking by observing actions and activities that the user may engage in. During the cooking stage, the user is faced with many time sensitive tasks and would have greater difficulty going through a large number of information. Recognizing this, our goal was to develop a simple, intuitive hierarchy and layout. Visually, the application needs to be clean, allowing users to quickly grasp essential techniques. We provided high interaction dependent actions during the post and pre-cooking process. We optimized the interaction so the application becomes an essential in the cooking process from inspiration to cooking and plating.

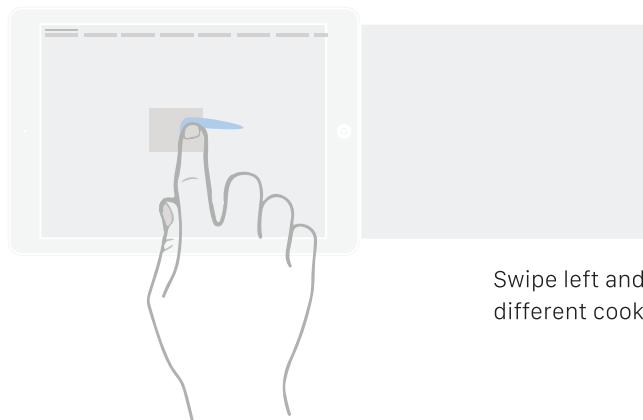


Observing people's behavior while cooking and using a mobile platform, we noticed the majority of touch interaction occur with wet or dirty hands. Users would often have difficulty with single touch interactions as it requires the user to touch a specific area of the screen in order to activate the interaction. If the user's hands were not dry and clean, the tablet would be unresponsive. On the other hand, a sliding interaction can occur in various points on the screen, making it easier to do with dirty hands.

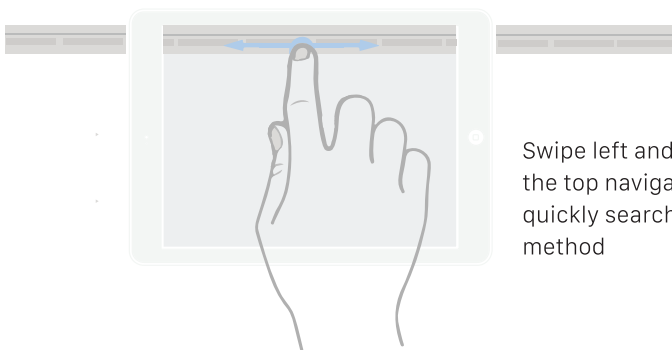




USER INTERACTION



Swipe left and right to view different cooking methods

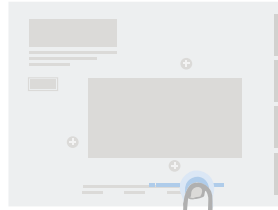
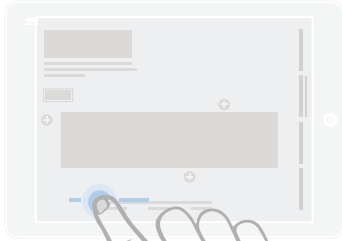


Swipe left and right of the top navigation bar to quickly search for a cooking method

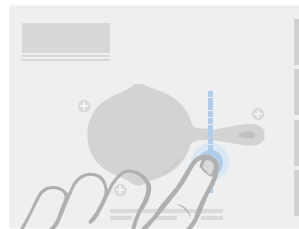
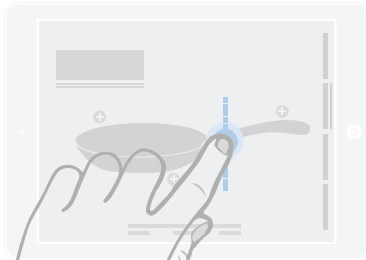


Swipe up to enter the equipment page of the cooking method

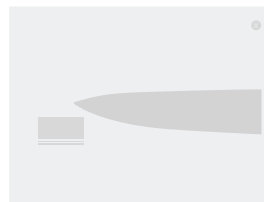
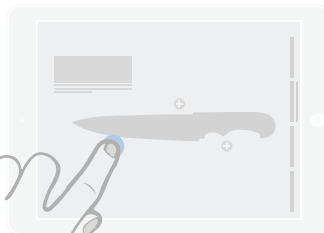




Drag the toggle to
select cuisine

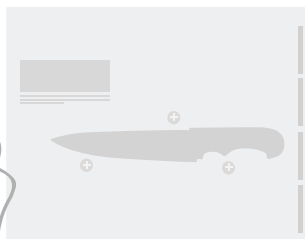
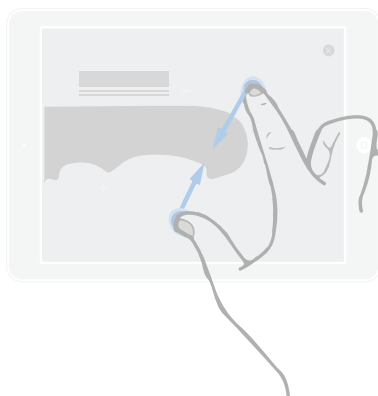


Drag or tilt the device to
view the equipment from
different angles



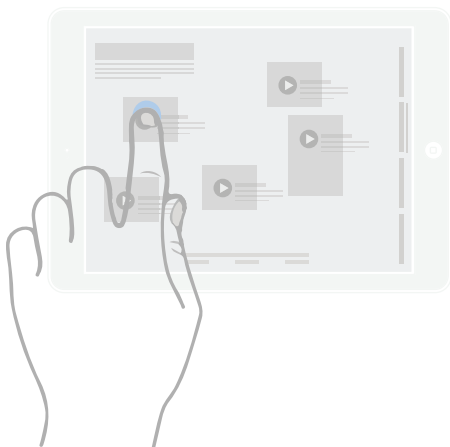
Tap a zoom icon to
view a close up shot at
corresponding text



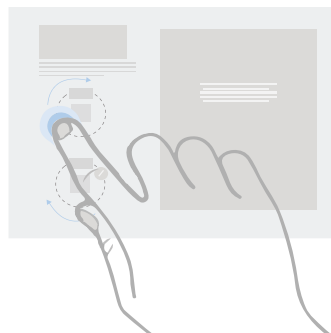
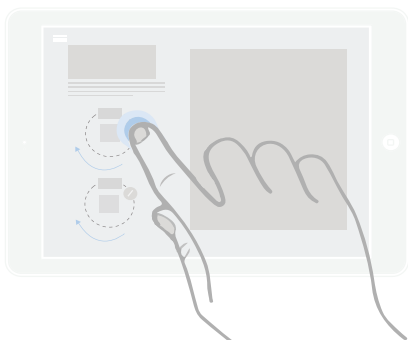
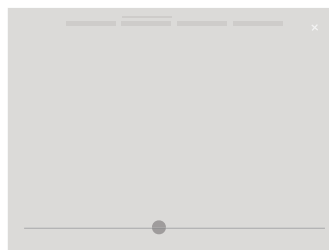


Pinch to exit or tap the close icon

Tap to initiate a video tutorial

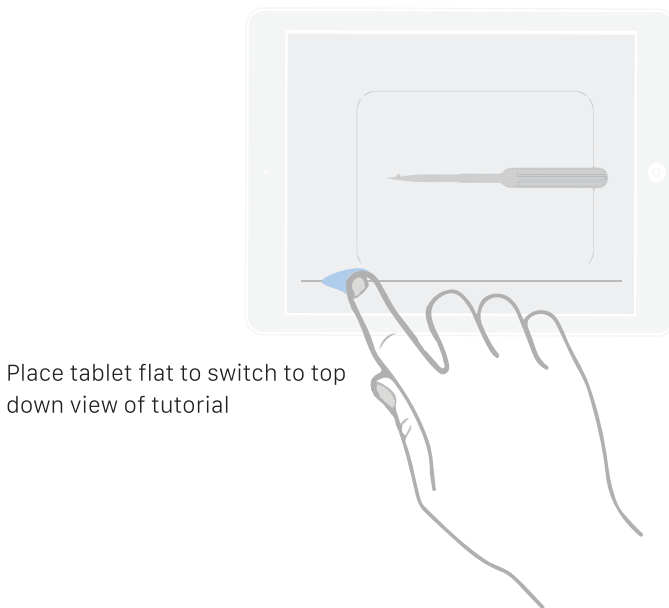
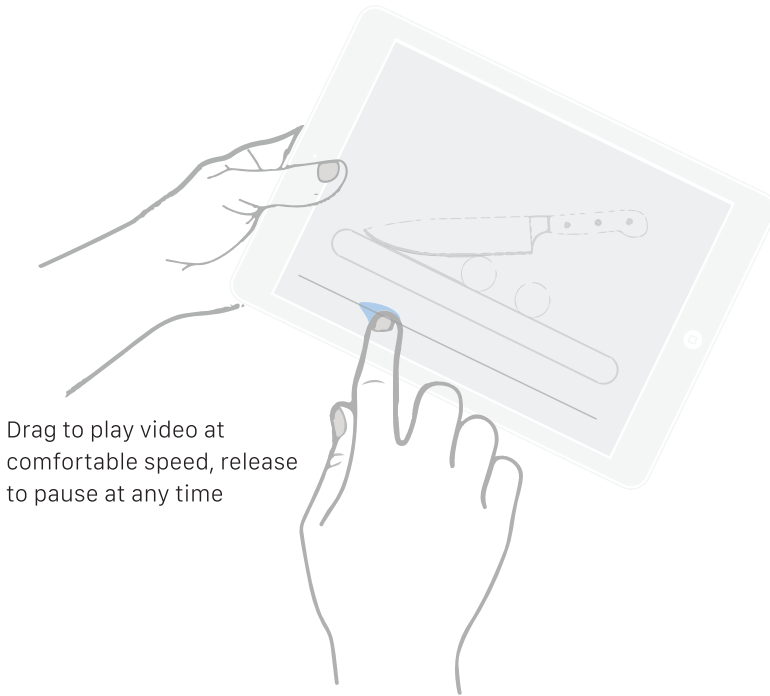


Tap the top navigation to skip segments



Drag the dials to reveal related information



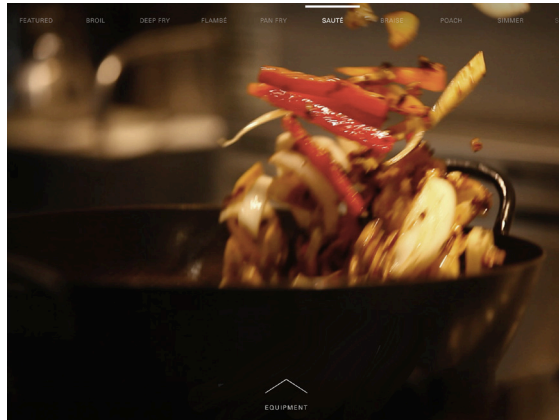




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USER INTERFACE

CONSTRUCTION

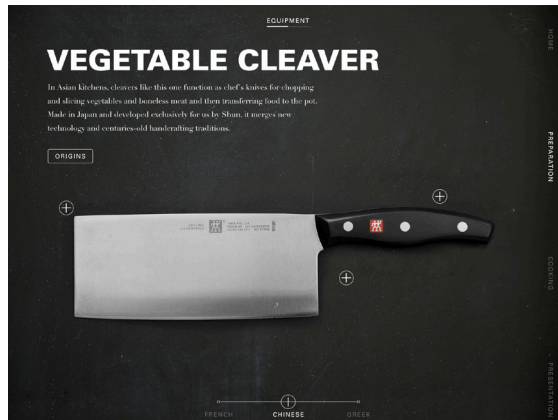
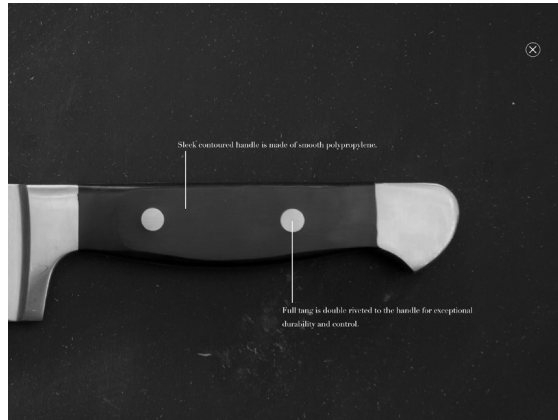


Form



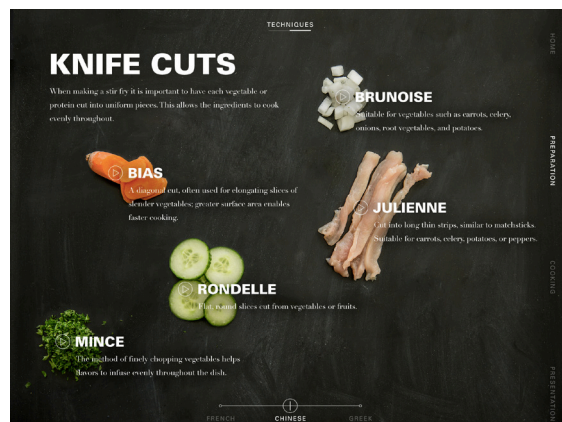


Designed for the kitchen in mind, the user interface is majority gesture oriented. When tapping, it correlates to post kitchen or pre kitchen viewing. Content is selectively chosen and follows a grid to provide visual structure.





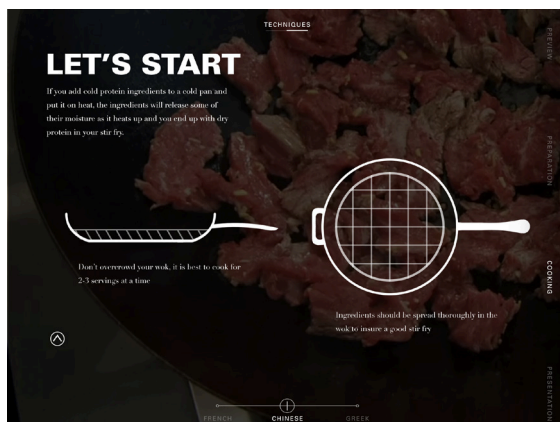
Interactive elements are indicated by outlines in a button or Slider. These are found in the equipment and technique pages of a cooking method.





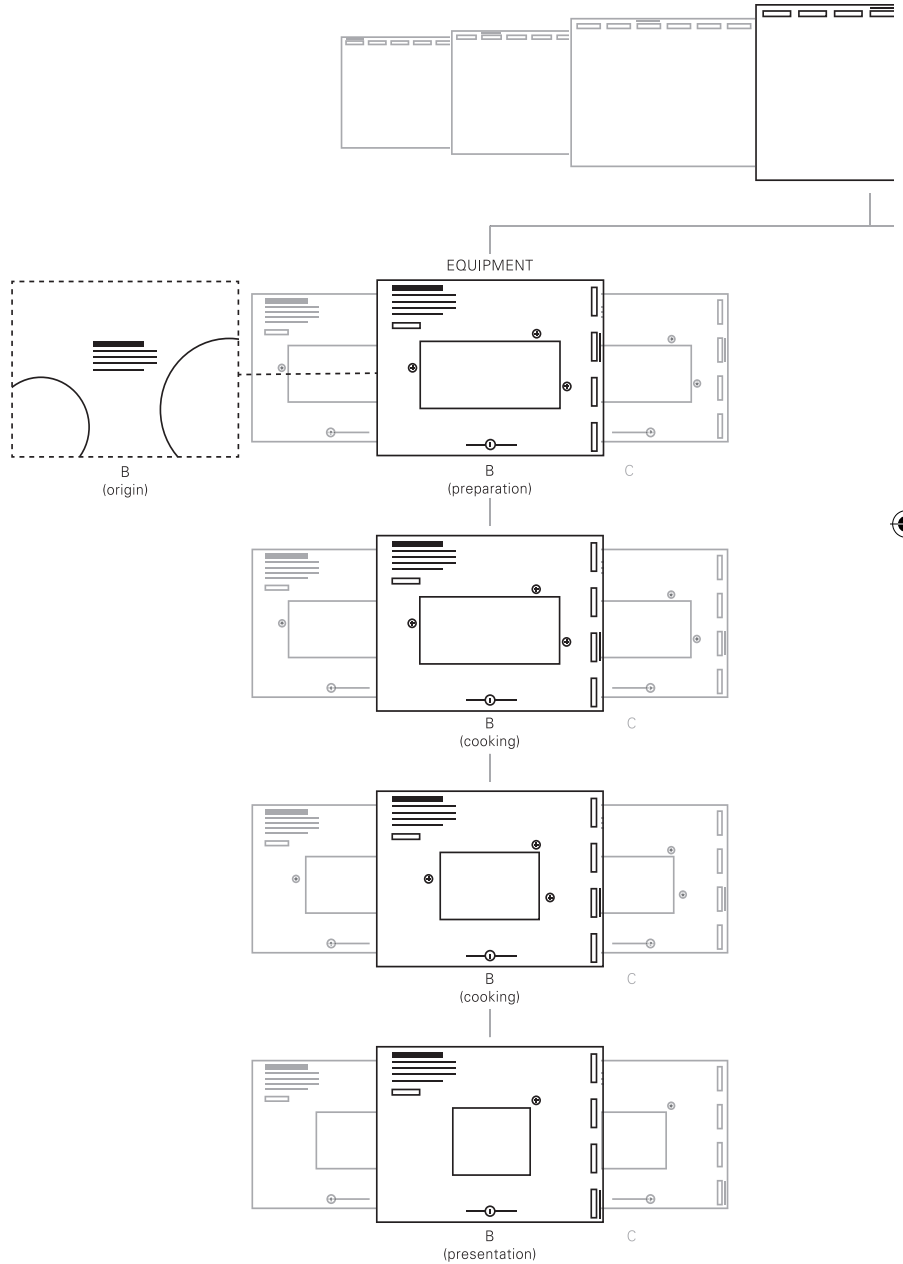
When presented with textual elements with white bars ovetop, users are able to jump to the specific page. These are used in the top homescreen menu, video menu, and page shortcuts.

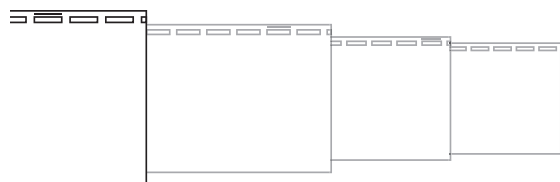
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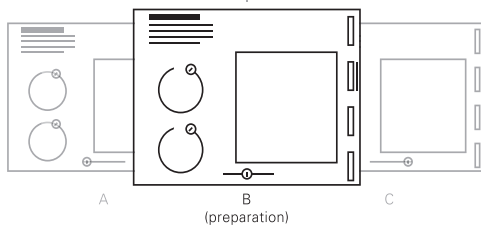
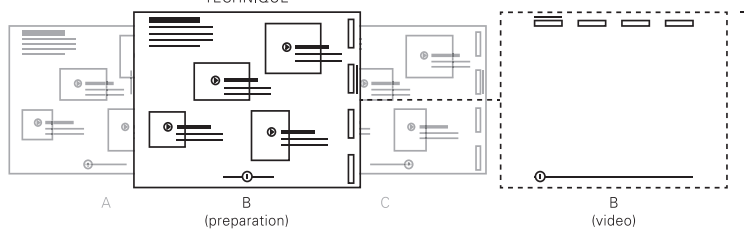
INFO ARCHITECTURE



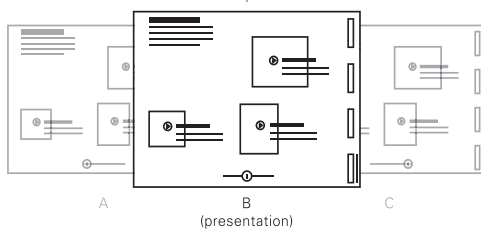
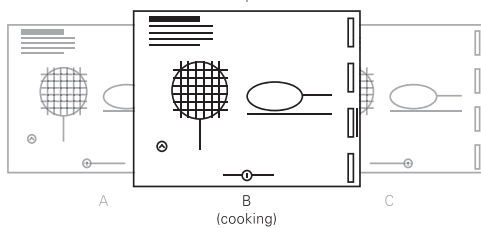


HOME PAGE

TECHNIQUE



CONTENT

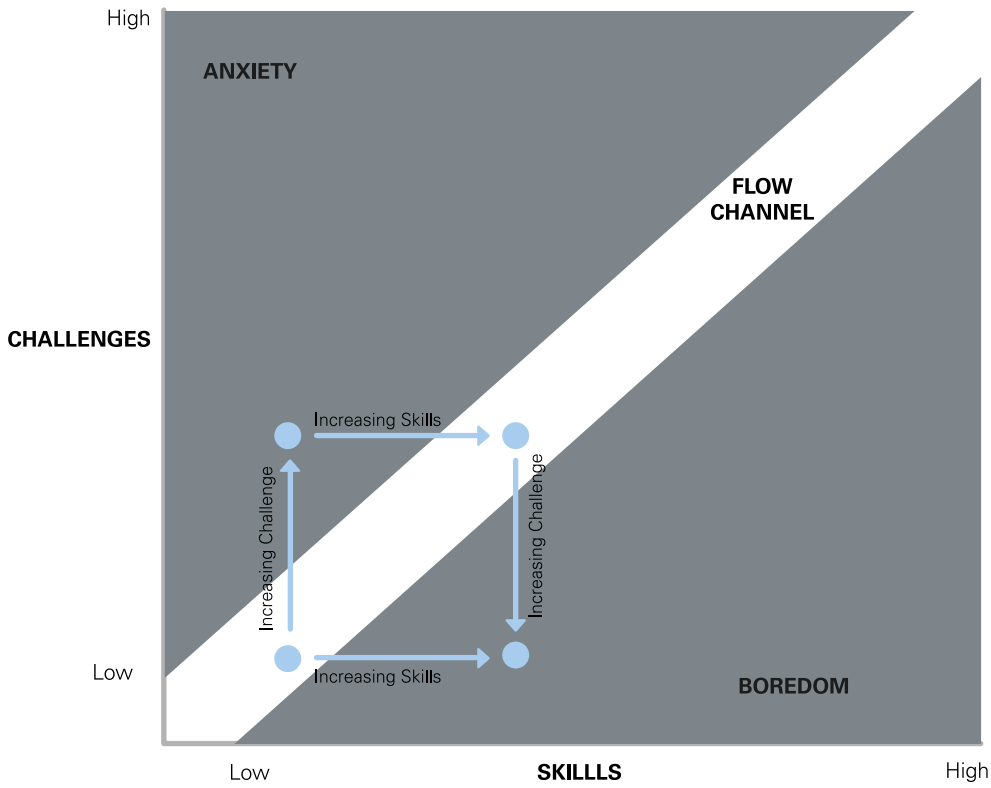




CONSTRUCTION

The condition of "flow" is characterized by the users being immersed and completely engaged in what they are doing. People who are in a state of flow "experience intense concentration and enjoyment, coupled with peak performance," says Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, psychologist. In our design we aimed to challenge the users at some level but leave a delicate balance so the audience feels confident to handle each cooking method with the technique learn, putting the audience in a state of "flow" where using the application becomes a memorable experience and therefore, the brand becomes memorable.

"Flow" chart



**CONSTRUCTION**

Production







DIGITAL PLATFORM

PRE-COOKING

before use● *first use*

Where can I learn about techniques and their origin?

Can I learn more about these cooking methods?

Should I download this app?

How do I navigate?

Will it have content that I'm interested in?

How many cooking methods are there?

What is this app for?

What is this being shown?

What is Williams-Sonoma?

Can I see the tool?

What is Open Kitchen?

Where can I buy them?

Where can I get it?

What's in the tools section?

What's in the techniques section?

Does it have content that appeals to me?

Where am I?

- Encounter the app through Williams-Sonoma website, print catalog and social media
- Introduced or recommended through word of mouth from other aspiring cooks and foodies



● *touch points*

COOKING

POST-COOKING

continued use

What cooking method do I want to learn about?

What tools do I need? Do I have them?

What is this "Origins" option about?

What are the differences in the method between the cultures?

Which culture method do I want to try out?

How do I do it? What techniques do I use?

Is it easy? Can I do it?

What should I cook?

What are the steps?

Exactly how do I do this technique?

Am I doing it right?

Do I understand the directions?

Can I use this while cooking?

Is it easy?

How does cooking with this app make me feel?

How was cooking with the app?

Will I do that again?

What other methods are there?

What other cultures are there?

Where can I learn about the method, techniques, origins and tools?

Where can I go to buy the tools?

- Navigational menus and process bars
- Relevant information on tools, techniques and origins.

- Videos demonstrating proper techniques
- Correct terminology
- Feel you have control over the cooking process and you can master each technique

- Explore the favored cooking culture





WHY THIS WORKS FOR THE BRAND?

CONCLUSION

Our project will introduce a new customer segment of casual food lovers to Williams Sonoma early on as they find their passion for cooking. Through continued usage the audience would be exposed to Williams Sonoma's culture and products, immersing them in the brand. By reaching to the audience early on and continued immersion in the brand, the user will feel connected to Williams Sonoma.

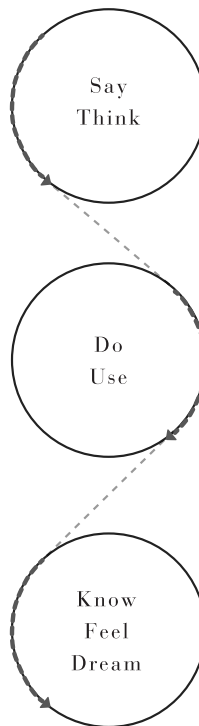


WILLIAMS - SONOMA
(Brand Knowledge)

ASPIRING COOK
(Target Audience)

SURFACE

DEEP



Discovery

Immersion

Connection





71

CONCLUSION

Value for business

FEASIBLE

VIABLE

DESIRABLE



Our project combines and uses technology currently available. Williams Sonoma will have the relevant information/knowledge within the company as a well established kitchenware company

Reduce material and labor costs Develops and supports sustainability measures
Increases sales levels, brings in a new customer pool and encourages brand loyalty

Makes the cooking process enjoyable for aspiring cooks, the UI interactions are optimized for convenient usage in and around the kitchen when cooking.



CONCLUSION

Value proposition





Our project provides the opportunity for the aspiring cook to learn and experience the right tools, techniques, and terminology. It inspires the user and supports their exploration of the culinary realm. Through continued use, our project will become a learning and cooking companion for the aspiring cook, developing an emotional connection with them. Our application encourages users to develop their own culinary tastes, satisfying their reflective and aspirational needs as they build the image of being a food connoisseur and belonging to the foodie community.



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