

CSE 403 Project Proposal
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Meals for Lonely Soul

-- A simple way to make new friends while eating

Vision

Engineering students complain that they always eat alone. *Meals for Lonely Soul* application solves this problem by simplifying meal-scheduling process to provide students with opportunities to eat with friends or even make new friends by eating with them. More specifically, the UI provides a virtual dining room, where users can either privately schedule meals with their friends, publish their own dining plans to seek companies or join other people's plans. They can also locate users who are nearby on campus and seeking company to schedule their meals instantly. The App will also allow users to search for certain groups of people to eat with by, for example, age, gender, college major or even favorite movies.

Target customers

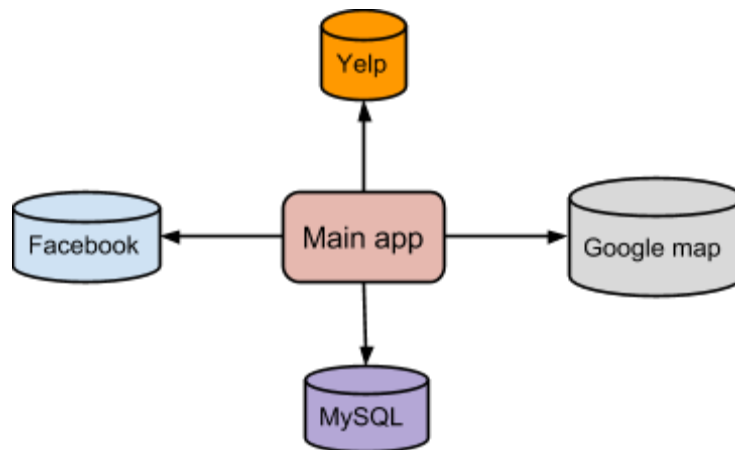
Students, especially engineering majors. This App is targeting students who wants to eat with friends and who wants to make new friends but are too busy with courses or simply too shy to do so.

Alternatives and differentiators

Although there seems to be many alternatives in the market for social networking, for example, Facebook, Tinder and WeChat, there has never been an App that helps people build connections in real world through their meals. It gives people a simple but perfect reason to engage in real-world communication, enhance friendships and make new connections.

Software architecture

Meal for lonely soul is a mobile application that integrates front-end view, back-end database, Google map API, Yelp API and Facebook API. Back-end database will be implemented using MySQL. It will record user profiles and log usage history. Google map API provides the location and possible route to the restaurant. Yelp API provides the review of that particular restaurant. (Even By George cafe has a review at Yelp). Facebook API allows user to invite friends to join this application.



Challenges and risks

We expect many challenges during developing process. One challenge is that we need to familiarize ourselves with Android programming environment in a short time. Despite its similarity to java, there are various custom packages worth studying. Another challenge is to incorporate third party APIs into our application. We need to invest time to understand those interfaces so that we can use them properly. As we develop this application module by module, we may encounter problems when putting them altogether. In terms of the applications itself, there are some challenging functionalities worth mentioning. What if a user did not come to the lunch? Is there a way to kick a person out of a table? We are still discussing how to implement those features. In terms of risk, people may use our application to do things other than scheduling meal, for example, illegal transactions. That's why we limit our users to college students at this moment.