# COOK EAT! EXPLORE, LEARN, ENJOY
# FROM FOODIES TO FOODIES

**Christina ALVAREZ[1,2], Filippo ZAFFARONI[1,2], Felix H. ARION [2,*]**

[1]L'Ecole supérieure des Agricultures. Master of Science Food Identity, 55 Rue Rabelais, 49000 Angers, France
[2]Department of Economic Sciences, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Cluj-Napoca, 3-5 Mănăştur St., 400372, Cluj-Napoca, Romania,
corresponding author: felixarion@usamvcluj.ro

RESEARCH ARTICLE

**Abstract**
*In today's interconnected world, Cook Eat! offers an innovative solution for culinary and cultural discovery through a community-driven mobile application. Far beyond being a repository of recipes, Cook Eat! serves as a dynamic bridge connecting people with unfamiliar food items they encounter in markets, local stalls, restaurants, and more. Users can take a picture or describe any unknown food product, and instantly access a wealth of information provided by a global community of food enthusiasts familiar with it. This crowdsourced knowledge is curated and reviewed by food experts, ensuring accurate and culturally rich insights into the origins, uses, and preparation methods of various food items. Cook Eat! fosters an interactive platform where users can share their culinary experiences, offer tips on how to cook or consume different foods, and go deep into the cultural context behind them. The app supports a global exchange of culinary know-how, taking advantage of technological connectivity and the innate human curiosity to explore new culinary frontiers, .promoting inclusivity, authenticity, and creativity. This abstract outlines the strategic framework behind Cook Eat!, including its development guided by the Business Model Canvas, SWOT analysis, Porter's Five Forces, and PEST analysis. These tools collectively ensure that Cook Eat! not only addresses the needs of modern consumers eager to explore global foods but also positions itself as a leading resource for understanding and appreciating the diverse world of food.*
**Keywords**: Technology, food, cultural , foodies, community.

## INTRODUCTION

In a world in continuous transformation it has been quite impossible to avoid the fusion of cultures, in which everybody finds themselves interconnected through several different ways. This link has growth due to many factors, such as immigration, industrialization, technology development, among other. For instance, between 2000 and 2023, intercontinental emigration has grown significantly due to various factors, including globalization, economic opportunities, political instability, and environmental changes. According to the World Migration Report (WMR) the percentage of international migration has increased from 2.8% in 2000 to 3.6% in 2020. The number of international migrants has increased notably in Asia (from 48.2 million in 1990 to 85.6 million in 2020) and in Europe (from 49.6 million to 86.7 million in the same period). In general, International migrants across the globe amounted to 281 millions in 2020, and the number is destined to increase during the following years (WORLD MIGRATION REPORT, s.f.). Likewise, data collected by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has shown that the number of people traveling for tourism has been steadily increased. Tourist arrivals worldwide has rose from 211,716,851 in 2010 to 367,927,907 in 2019. On the other hand, it is not only people moving but also products of all kinds. The FAO (2020) has reported that global agri-food trade has more than doubled since 1995, amounting to $1.5 trillion in 2018, with emerging and developing countries' exports on the rise and accounting for over one-third of the world's total. About one-third of global agricultural and food exports are traded within a global value chain and cross borders at least twice. The rise of global value chains is driven by income growth, lower trade barriers and technological advancements, which have transformed markets and trade processes, linking farmers to traders and consumers across regions and countries.

Emigration, tourism, global trade and industrialization have significantly impact on the integration of food and culture worldwide. This integration has been manifesting itself in different ways, such as the introduction of diverse food goods in the market, new recipes, the blending of cultural practices, the enrichment of local traditions and the interest of people to explore different food and culture. However, the immense amount of information available out is not totally accurate or linked properly to the cultural value to truly enhance the culinary experience.

With this in mind, Cook Eat! was conceived as an application that promotes food exploration alongside cultural insights provided by foodies around the world who want to share their knowledge while learning from others. By curating a wealth of information and cultural insights from a global community of food enthusiasts, Cook Eat! aims to fill this gap and provide users with a more enriching and authentic culinary journey. Through collective knowledge sharing and community diversity, this platform serves as a gateway for meaningful connections and cross-cultural knowledge exchange, enriching lives and fostering a more connected world regarding food culture.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

Human beings have the willingness to share knowledge, especially regarding their identity and culture. As Rizzo and Herrero (2024) stand, cultural heritage includes traditions that are passed down from generations to generations. Some of these traditions are closely linked to food. Expressing the core of a culture through different traditions leads to create an identity, bringing the past to the present. Using food as an expression of that statement leads create connections, fostering empathy, appreciation and mutual respect. Nowadays many application are available but no one with the aim of let cultures talk through food.

Cook Eat! is looking forward to take the best of human value and cultural heritage in order to promote authenticity, inclusivity and creativity though the exploration of food worldwide by the awakening and creation of a community that shares a same goal.

In order to achieve the correct and objective development of CookEat! As a business idea, various tools were used such as business model canvas, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, PEST (political, economic, social and technological) analysis and Porter's 5 forces.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As the first tool used there is the Business Model Canvas (Figure 1, Annexes). This model serves as a strategic tool for developing Cook Eat! by providing a clear and structured framework to outline and align all essential components of the business. It helps identify key partners, resources, and activities necessary for

building the app, while also defining the value propositions towards diverse customer segments. By detailing customer relationships and channels, the canvas guides effective engagement and outreach strategies. Additionally, it highlights the cost structure and revenue streams, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the financial aspects and facilitating decision-making. This view enables Cook Eat! strategically integrating technology with culinary exploration, promoting cultural exchange and community involvement, ultimately driving the app's growth and sustainability.



**Figure 2 SWOT Analysis for Cook Eat!**

The SWOT analysis (Figure 2), functions as a crucial business tool for Cook Eat! by systematically evaluating the app's internal strengths and weaknesses, alongside external opportunities and threats. By recognizing strengths such as expert reviewed content and cultural authenticity, Cook Eat! can build a solid foundation of trustworthiness within the community network. Addressing weaknesses like the overload of content reviewing helps in consider key operations and managing resources effectively. Identifying opportunities, such as expanding into educational markets enables Cook Eat! to leverage its unique value propositions and drive growth. Understanding threats, including content approval delays, allows the app to develop proactive strategies and actions to mitigate risks. This assessment facilitates strategic planning, ensuring that Cook Eat! can effectively take advantage of its strengths, overcome challenges, and capitalize on market opportunities for sustainable development and user engagement (Benzaghta et al., 2021).

***Using Strengths to Maximize Opportunities***

- Maximize growing interest in global food goods through the content from the foodies community worldwide reviewed by experts can attract users interested in authentic global recipes with cultural insights.
- Offer a diverse range of recipes alongside cultural aspects allows users to explore and appreciate various culinary traditions, enhancing their culinary knowledge and satisfaction.

***Using Strengths to Minimize Threats***

- Expert validation ensures the accuracy and reliability of content, reducing the risk of misinformation.
- Active user participation helps maintain fresh and diverse content without just relying on complex technological solutions, ensuring continuous engagement.
- Foster a sense of community and transparency, Cook Eat! can build trust, encouraging users to share data and interact with the app.
- Reenforce the authentic content to reduce the probability of cultural misrepresentation, enhancing the app's credibility and user trust.
- Provide a comprehensive database which allows the app to continue offering valuable content while awaiting new contributions to be reviewed and approved.

***Minimizing Weaknesses by Taking Advantage of Opportunities***

- Develop partnerships and collaborations can provide financial support or shared resources, balancing the costs of maintaining the app.
- Take advantage of the trend towards global food exploration can motivate both the community and experts to contribute actively, ensuring a steady flow of content and engagement.

***Minimizing Weaknesses by Avoiding Threats***

- Organize the moderation process by involving multiple experts can help minimize delays, ensuring timely updates and maintaining user engagement.
- Establish clear guidelines and fostering a culture of authenticity can encourage community members to provide accurate information, reducing reliance on experts.

Another crucial step used to assess the potential of the business is the PEST analysis, a strategic business tool used to identify, analyze,

and monitor the external factors that could impact an organization. The acronym stands for Political, Economic, Social, and Technological factors. These factors are examined to understand their influence on the organization and to inform strategic planning and decision-making.

From a *political* standpoint, the situation analyzed is quite uncertain. The rise of nationalist ideas and governments around the world could lead to changes in the laws regulating the trade of food products. This could negatively impact the availability of products on the market, but this is a prediction that cannot be made with certainty.

The *economic* side of the analysis has been assessed as ranging from uncertain to positive. Higher tariffs on imported products and increased energy costs could affect the overall cost of food. However, as shown by the data collected from the 'Our World in Data' portal, there is a very positive global trend regarding the increase in GDP and food availability and Main sectors as agriculture, tourism. HoReCa may contribute to a robust increasing food culture.

*Social* factors have been labeled as favorable. Living standards, education and healthcare concerns are improving worldwide emphasizing quality of life including food choices and related content, culinary knowledge and experiences. The world is getting increasingly globalized. Everywhere there's people coming from all over the world. Room for cultural exchange. which increases the possibility for culture exchange. Understanding these social dynamics could allow the app to tailor its content, features, and marketing strategies to reach the target audience effectively.

*Technological* factor has also been labeled as favorable. Technological innovation will foster the trade of more and more products, and the creation of others. The development of artificial intelligence could represent an important opportunity to implement in the app's search system. Its use would make it easier to recognize recipes and food products.

To evaluate the business plan, a tool that plays a key role is the Porter's Five Forces, a framework for analyzing the competitive forces within an industry and understanding its attractiveness in terms of profitability. Developed by Michael E. Porter, it helps businesses identify the strengths and weaknesses in their competitive environment. In recent years, its validity has been questioned due to changing markets, with the emergence of new forces and tools. According to a 2014 publication, Porter's Five Forces still analyzes many concepts that remain valid in today's market world. the Five Competitive Forces model cannot be considered as outdated. The Five Competitive Forces are still applicable, but it is necessary to know the limitations of the model. Globalization, Deregulation and Digitalization have an impact on the existing forces but they do not develop a new one (Goyal, 2020). The five forces analyzed are:

1- Competitive rivalry: this pressure has been assessed as minimal, since no other company is currently interested in providing a similar service.
2- Supplier power (or bargaining power of suppliers): minimal, the company is not selling any products, so the only input needed is labor force. The company can choose between many alternatives, so the force is low.
3- Buyer power: this force has been assessed as considerable, as the customer can uninstall the app or switch to another service at any time. The countermeasure for this problem is to apply an efficient marketing strategy and make the app's interface accessible and easy to use for everyone.
4- Threat of substitution: Considered high due to the risk of other companies with higher means entering the same market with an already expanded customer base. The actions to take to prevent this risk are again building a good app with a strong branding that can build trust in the users.
5- Threat of new entry: As well as the precedent, this force is considered considerable. The reason and the countermeasure actions are the same.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Cook Eat! successfully addresses the gap in tools for identifying and understanding unfamiliar food items by benefit from the power of community engagement and validation from experts in the field. The app offers a platform for users to explore diverse foods, understand their cultural significance, and share their culinary experiences with others through a community network. By integrating modern technology with a user focal design, Cook Eat! enhances global culinary exploration and fosters a deeper appreciation of the world's food cultures.

By taking advantage of technology advance and fostering an active user community,

Cook Eat! not only enhances the user's food knowledge but also strengthens cross cultural connections through food. The app's focus on authentic, expert reviewed content and a community interaction, positions it as a leading resource for those willing to explore and understand the richness of global food culture.

As Cook Eat! continues to evolve, it is poised to become an essential tool for culinary enthusiasts, travelers, and anyone interested in the cultural stories behind the foods they encounter, providing a unique and valuable resource for culinary exploration and cultural exchange. Through the strategic use of development frameworks and a solid community network management system it has resulted in an app idea that not only meets user needs but also positions itself as a leading resource for food and cultural discovery. It is positioned to capitalize on the growing interest in food and cultural exploration by offering a unique blend of expert reviewed content and community involve contributions.

The implementation of various business tools and methodologies provides insights into customer needs, market dynamics, and operational requirements. This ensures that Cook Eat! evolves in alignment with user expectations and market opportunities. The organizational recommendations focus on building a capable team, adopting agile practices, fostering community, forming strategic partnerships, and planning for scalability and risk management.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following aspects were not covered in the study: the appreciation of customers towards an application like Cook Eat!, alongside the market and financial situation. Potential tools for implementation include:
- Customer Development Framework, which enables the systematic understanding and validation of customers' needs, preferences and behaviours.
- Market Research and Analysis, which supports the understanding of the real target market size, trends, competition and user profile.
- Financial Modelling, which enables the forecasting of revenues, costs and financial viability.

## ACKNOWLEGMENTS

## REFERENCES

Benzaghta, M. A., Elwalda, A., Mousa, M., Erkan, I., & Rahman, M. (2021). SWOT analysis applications: An integrative literature review. Journal of Global Business Insights, 6(1), 55–73. https://doi.org/10.5038/2640-6489.6.1.1148

FAO. (2020). Obtenido de Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations : Global trade in food and agricultural products more than doubles in last two decades.

Goyal, A. (2020). A Critical Analysis of Porter's 5 Forces Model of Competitive Advantage. JETIR, 149-152.

Rizzo, I., & Herrero, L. (2024). Economics and Archaeological Heritage. Academic Press, 617-625.

UNWTO. (04 de 06 de 2024). Obtenido de Global and regional tourism performance: unwto.org/tourism-data/global-and-regional-tourism-performance

WORLD MIGRATION REPORT. (s.f.). WORLD MIGRATION REPORT. Obtenido de Migration and Migrants: A Global Overview: https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/what-we-do/world-migration-report-2024-chapter-2/international-migrants-numbers-and-trends
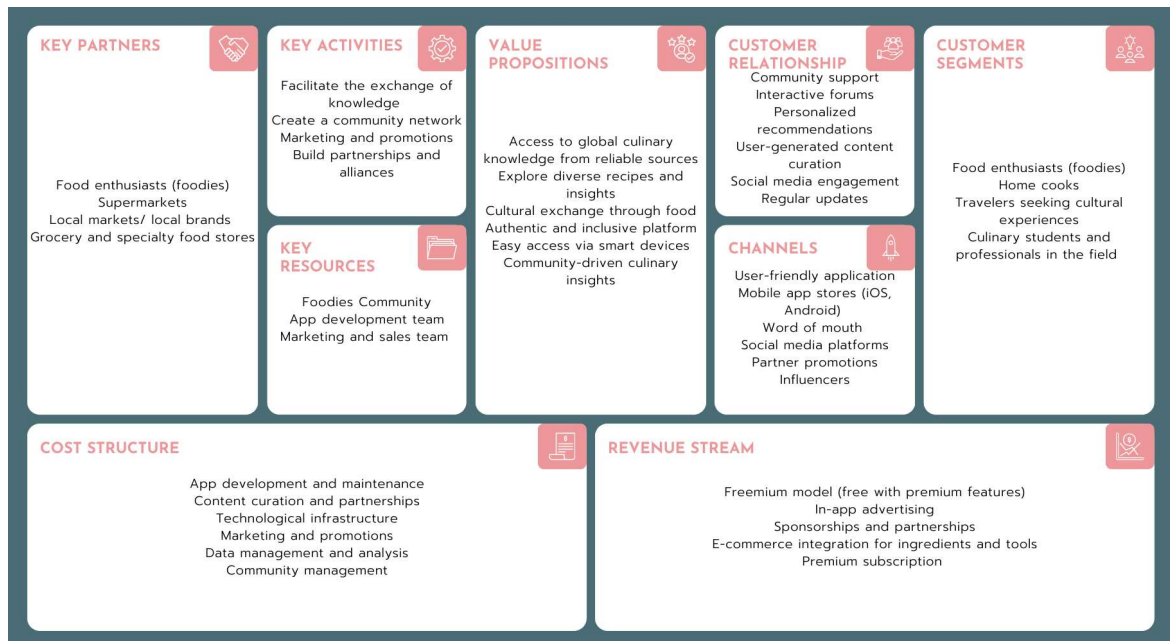
## ANNEXES



**KEY PARTNERS**

Food enthusiasts (foodies)
Supermarkets
Local markets/ local brands
Grocery and specialty food stores

**KEY ACTIVITIES**

Facilitate the exchange of knowledge
Create a community network
Marketing and promotions
Build partnerships and alliances

**KEY RESOURCES**

Foodies Community
App development team
Marketing and sales team

**VALUE PROPOSITIONS**

Access to global culinary knowledge from reliable sources
Explore diverse recipes and insights
Cultural exchange through food
Authentic and inclusive platform
Easy access via smart devices
Community-driven culinary insights

**CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP**

Community support
Interactive forums
Personalized recommendations
User-generated content curation
Social media engagement
Regular updates

**CHANNELS**

User-friendly application
Mobile app stores (iOS, Android)
Word of mouth
Social media platforms
Partner promotions
Influencers

**CUSTOMER SEGMENTS**

Food enthusiasts (foodies)
Home cooks
Travelers seeking cultural experiences
Culinary students and professionals in the field

**COST STRUCTURE**

App development and maintenance
Content curation and partnerships
Technological infrastructure
Marketing and promotions
Data management and analysis
Community management

**REVENUE STREAM**

Freemium model (free with premium features)
In-app advertising
Sponsorships and partnerships
E-commerce integration for ingredients and tools
Premium subscription

Figure 1 **Business Model Canvas for Cook Eat!**

This Business Model Canvas outlines the strategic approach for Cook Eat!, focusing on leveraging technology to facilitate culinary exploration and cultural exchange, and capitalizing on the growing interest in diverse food experiences by creating a solid community.