

Establishing feasibility of a Seafood Age
prototype with UK stakeholders:

Developing the use of Facebook to share experiences of fish and seafood product consumption

29 Mar 2021

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Image on front cover: Original illustration designed for the Facebook group (Seafood-AGE - Sharing experiences of fish & seafood product consumption)

Introduction

The collective aim of Seafood Age is to create a new Ready to Cook (RTC) fish product prototype using novel circular economy methods. These methods underpin how the ingredients are sourced, how and with what materials the product is made, packaged and monitored for safety throughout its lifetime. As an academic partner in this pan-European Atlantic Area project, the aim at Lancaster University is to: inform prototype development and support stakeholder buy-in across RTC value chains in Atlantic Area regions; establish feasibility and identify regional barriers to buying, preparing and eating a Ready-To-Eat fish and seafood product such as the Seafood Age prototype among people who are 65 and over. Our key objective is to help establish this feasibility through the design and delivery of research methods and tools that can be deployed across European Atlantic Area regions.

¹ <http://imagination.lancaster.ac.uk/update/mapping-feasibility-with-stakeholders-on-miro-a-new-prototype-research-method-for-seafood-age/>

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns has challenged us to think how digital, online platforms can support us to carry out work with stakeholders from a distance with a view to parity and ease of translation and delivery in the different regions. Our previous report, ‘Establishing feasibility of Seafood Age prototype with UK stakeholders: Developing use of Miro for mapping feasibility with stakeholders’¹ (8 Feb 2021) describes the design development of the first of the two methods we’ve developed so far. This report describes the design development for the second of those two methods, a prototype Facebook ‘social learning group’ designed to support would-be RTC fish product consumers to reflect on and exchange their thoughts and experiences around fish and seafood product consumption. Insights emerging from the data we generate through the Facebook group will feed into feasibility mapping work, providing additional data points for stakeholders to consider upstream.

Rationale for method design

Perceptions of fish reflected through prompts for specific recollections of RTE and RTC fish and seafood product consumption

To begin developing a prototype research method for work with would-be older buyers of the fish RTC product, we carried out an initial workshop last year with the Active Minds group at Blackpool Carers, (see report, '[Workshop with the Active Minds Group: Blackpool Carers, 13 March 2020](http://imagination.lancaster.ac.uk/update/seafood-age-workshop-with-active-minds-at-blackpool-carers/)'¹). This workshop produced a number of insights for us to take into a next version of the method. These were:

- Food tasting and images provided useful prompts to generate conversation about the memories, sensations and experiences participants associate with eating fish and seafood.
- Research tools designed to explore participants' fish and seafood cooking were less productive than research tools that enabled conversation focussed on their day to day practices related to fish and seafood ready to eat and ready to cook products. The reasons for this can roughly be summarised that, conversation quickly revealed that participants were not cooking and eating fish and seafood regularly from scratch. Therefore an inquiry into the nature of what they do rather than what they do not do, seemed more likely to produce an understanding of barriers to eating RTC fish and seafood products.
- Nutrition was important to those taking part, and far more so than matters of sustainability. Their perceptions of ready to eat products were that they are 'processed' and therefore less nutritious and less appealing. Fish, in particular, given our common understanding that it is best to eat when it is fresh, suffered in particular from this perception.

Using these insights, we described in the report cited above how the next version of the research method should ideally support participants to explore the values, perceptions and practicalities they associate with eating fish and seafood ready to eat products through specific recollections. We saw the method as including visual prompts and probes that support conversation about the practices of fish and seafood RTC product buying, preparing and eating day-to-day.

¹ <http://imagination.lancaster.ac.uk/update/seafood-age-workshop-with-active-minds-at-blackpool-carers/>

Using design speculation to test the Seafood Age RTC product prototype

In parallel to Lancaster University's work, Seafood Age partners have been continuing to develop novel circular economy based methods and materials that form the Seafood Age fish RTC prototype. These include the kinds of fish sourced and used, smart labelling, algae based sauces and packaging. Ascertaining the responses of would-be buyers of the products to these novel innovations is a challenge that could be addressed using a design-speculative approach. A design speculation is a fictional artefact that stimulates response to a concept by supporting viewers to experience something of the artefact and the context in which its encountered. These responses can potentially inform the work of Seafood Age partners. They could also, importantly, give future stakeholders some idea of whether this product truly addresses a gap in the market and, what retailers and manufacturers might need to do to bring about acceptance and adoption.

Using Facebook to support engagement and generate added value for older research participants

¹ <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/10146-target-older-demographics-social-media.html#:~:text=Facebook,-Many%20of%20the&text=According%20to%20Pew%2C%2062%25%20of,users%20in%20these%20age%20ranges>.

² <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/feb/12/is-facebook-for-old-people-over-55s-flock-in-as-the-young-leave>

³ <https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/blogs/how-are-older-people-adapting-digital-technology-during-covid-19-pandemic>

In addition to the rationale for what we want to explore with research participants, the question of how we carry out the research has been especially pertinent following the Covid-19 global pandemic and subsequent lockdowns in the last year. The older demographic we are particularly interested in engaging have been especially effected by the need to shield and socially distance. Our response was to develop a method that uses remote, digital means.

In our last report (see footnote on p4), we outlined how digital approaches need to address issues of access and inclusivity. We believe that one possible solution to ensuring the lowest possible threshold to access is to use a commonly used platform. Facebook in particular is used with increasing frequency by older demographics^{1 & 2}. This together with freely accessible or device-specific video conferencing platforms like Zoom, Skype, FaceTime and WhatsApp, will have increased considerably in the last year. That said, as Nayarra Tabassum at Kings College London and the Centre for Ageing Better wrote in July 2020³, many older people will have been forced by the pandemic to use the internet for the first time to access services that had switched to online-only. For instance, Tabassum cited that 47% of people aged 75 and over had never used the internet according to 2019 ONS figures on internet users in the UK. Given this new reliance on the internet, we saw that added value could be generated if the research method were designed in a way that was simple to use and supported the development and familiarisation with digital and online skills.

Description of method design

The last section described three key elements that we needed to address in designing a research method for exchanging experiences of fish and seafood product consumption. These are: to reflect on perceptions of RTE and RTC fish and seafood products through prompting for individual recollections; using a design speculation to test a seafood age 'prototype', and to use an accessible, low-threshold platform to support engagement and bring added value for older research participants. The method is designed to do this through facilitated conversation and exchange supported and documented by a private Facebook group. Video conferencing is used in conjunction to carry out the conversation. The following section describes how we have used Facebook to construct this research method.

This method is designed to be used by people who have a Facebook account. If they are a member of the group, they can add their own responses, see and respond to each others comments. However, as a conversation tool, used in conjunction with the facilitator screen sharing on video conferencing software, the participant does not necessarily need to have a Facebook account, nor do they need to become a member of the group as the facilitator can write comments on their behalf.



Seafood-AGE - Sharing experiences of fish & seafood product consumption

Private group · 11 members

+ Invite

About

Discussion

Guides

Rooms

Members

Events

Media

Files



About this group

Hello

Thank you for joining this social learning group! We hope you enjoy exploring and contributing! Please read the information below before you start and note that by taking part, you consent to whatever you contribute being used for academic research as described in the next section. Should you have any queries about taking part or otherwise, please don't hesitate to email the group owners:

Hayley Alter (h.alter@lancaster.ac.uk)
Dr Emmanuel Tsekleves (e.tsekleves@lancaster.ac.uk)

Seafood Age project at ImaginationLancaster
Lancaster University, UK.

PURPOSE

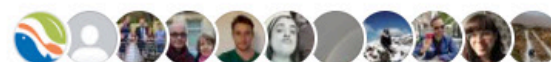
is for everyone taking part to share

The private Facebook group appropriates functionality built in to a type of group design available on Facebook called a “social learning’ group. This kind of group enables navigation via static units or modules known as “Guides”. This is a favourable structure to normal Facebook navigation via dynamic posts which change order according to the latest comments and additions.



Seafood-AGE - Sharing experiences of fish & seafood product consumption

Private group · 11 members



+ Invite

About Discussion **Guides** Rooms Members Events Media Files



GUIDE 1 · Optional

Word Association



1. Fresh fish and shellfish
Image



2. Fish in portions prepared for cooking
Image



3. Main meals - ready to cook
Image



4. Main meals - ready to eat
Image



5. Main meals - meal kits
Image

See 2 more ▾

Guides

Let people know what they can learn from your guides.

[Add a description](#)

Create Guide

Progress

0 of 5 required guides completed



Guides are navigated via the third option in the menu across the top of the page. The facilitated conversation structure is comprised of six Guides.

Comment

About this group

Hello

Thank you for joining this social learning group! We hope you enjoy exploring and contributing! Please read the information below before you start and note that by taking part, you consent to whatever you contribute being used for academic research as described in the next section. Should you have any queries about taking part or otherwise, please don't hesitate to email the group owners:

Hayley Alter (h.alter@lancaster.ac.uk)
Dr Emmanuel Tsekileves (e.tsekileves@lancaster.ac.uk)

Seafood Age project at ImaginationLancaster
Lancaster University, UK.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the group is for everyone taking part to share different facets of their experiences and practices in buying, preparing and eating fish and seafood products. It is part of a research project called Seafood Age*. This is a pan-European EU INTERREG Atlantic Area* Research and Innovation funded project in which industry, academic and community partners from across Atlantic Area Europe are working together to create a new Ready to Cook fish product prototype in which all parts of the product, including sourcing ingredients, making the product and packaging are being developed using circular economy* methods. This group has been designed and co-ordinated by the Seafood Age team at ImaginationLancaster*, the Design Research lab at Lancaster University. Please note that only your contributions will be kept beyond the lifetime of this group and your identity will be anonymised in any research reports publications or other forms of dissemination.

HOW IT WORKS

This social learning group is split into 6 guides. Guides are much like key topic areas, modules or units. We ask that you work your way through each guide, responding through comments to as many or as few of the posts as you wish. You are currently on the group home page. From here, you'll see a selection of tabs you can move to starting with 'About', 'Discussion' and 'Guides'. Select the 'Guides' tab so that you can work through all of the group Guides in order.

We anticipate that working through all the guides should take approximately 30 minutes but you are welcome to spend more time using it, and return to it to respond to other contributors' comments in your wish. The information you shared in this group will be periodically deleted from the group and stored on securely with the Seafood age research team.

Please note, this group is private but members are not anonymous to each other and everyone is kindly giving their time. We ask that you remain polite, courteous and generous in your comments and replies to each other.

* FOR MORE INFORMATION...

...visit the following sites:

Seafood Age
<http://seafoodage.eu/> www.facebook.com/SeafoodAgeProject

EU Interreg Atlantic Area
www.atlanticarea.eu/

ImaginationLancaster
<http://imagination.lancaster.ac.uk/>

Circular economy
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Circular_economy

Thank you again! See less

In the first tab- the “About” section- explains how the conversation is going to work, how data is generated, collected, stored and removed, and how people’s identities are shared within the group, but anonymised outside of the group.

Following testing, we will make use of the banner image to convey the information in a visual format as a reminder throughout.

×

f

Seafood-AGE - Sharing experiences of fish & seafood product consumption > Guides

Reorder


Guides

0 of 5 required guides completed


New Guide

GUIDE 1 · Optional


Word Association



1. Fresh fish and shellfish
Image



2. Fish in portions prepared for ...
Image




3. Main meals - ready to cook
Image


See 4 more

GUIDE 2

Describe the last fish or seafood ready-meal or product you ate...



1.
Image



2.
Image

The Guide navigation pane is situated on the left hand side of the screen. Each guide is comprised of posts. While it is possible to add any number of posts to each guide, testing has shown that that as few posts as possible: helps to save considerable time ; prevents participant fatigue; enables participants to see at a glance what and how much is expected of them. This style of facilitation can encourage a lot of response. Without the participant being able to see how much there is to go, the researcher needs to be aware the participant will want to share as much as possible. However their energy, patience and will to provide the same level of detail throughout will be quickly spent and the conversation will run over time.

The First guide is Word Association. This is a series of images to prompt discussion as described in the Guide explanation

There are 7 posts in this guide as product images are split into categories according to the amount they appear to have been 'processed'. At the time of writing, each post shows a gallery of images which the participant can scroll through. However, it is not necessary to respond to every image. This will be revised by changing the existing images in each post into a single collage so that the participant can respond to them as a whole.

GUIDE 1 · Optional

Word Association

There are seven posts in this guide. Each post has a set of images and brief written descriptions of fish and seafood products prepared and packaged to different extents, from freshly caught fish in the first post, to ready-to-eat tinned products in the seventh post. Take a look at the images of fish and seafood products in this guide. They are separated into seven posts. Go through each image and add a comment (or more if you wish) in response as many images as you like. Comments can be a word, story, thought or experience that spring to mind by looking at that image. There is no right or wrong answer. Feel free to like and/or reply to other people's comments.

0/7 POSTS COMPLETED


Create Post

Create Quiz

Like

Comment

1. Fresh fish and shellfish



+7

© Can Stock Photo - csp21018463

1. Fresh fish and shellfish



Done

Seen by 1

Like

Comment

2. Fish in portions prepared for cooking



Done

3 comments Seen by 1

Like

Comment

3. Main meals - ready to cook



Done

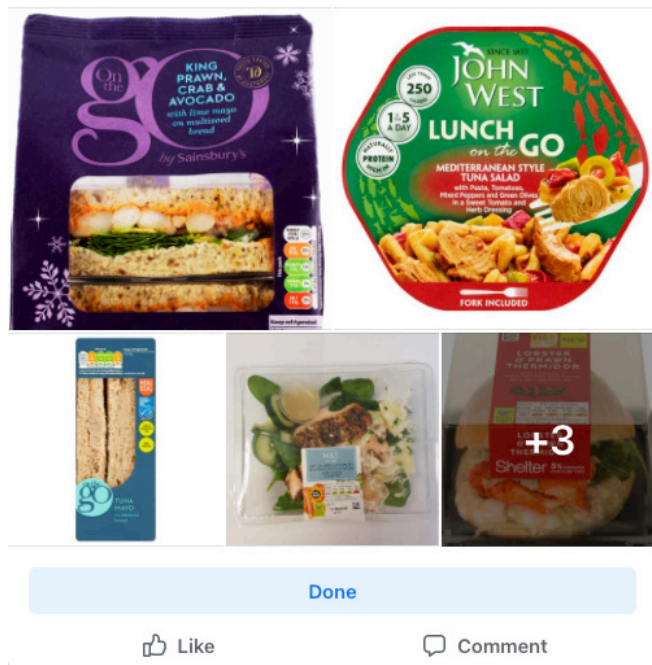
Seen by 1

Like

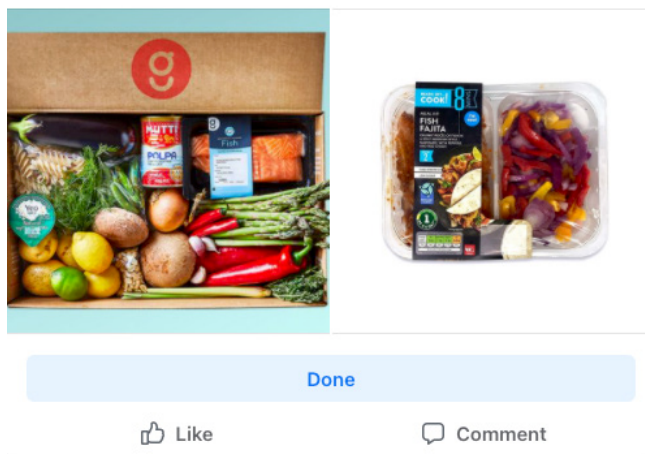
Comment

Guide 1 - Word Association
Posts 1 to 3

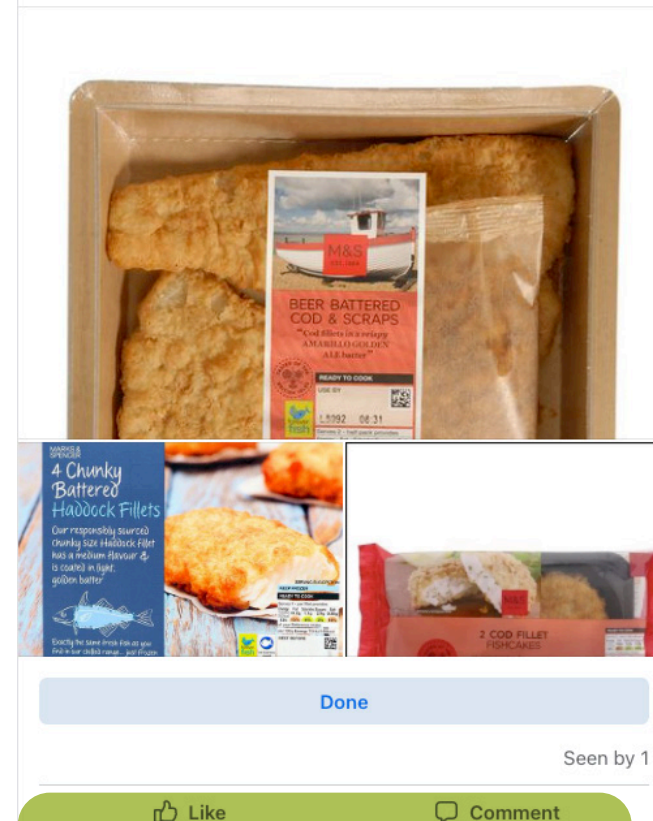
4. Main meals - ready to eat



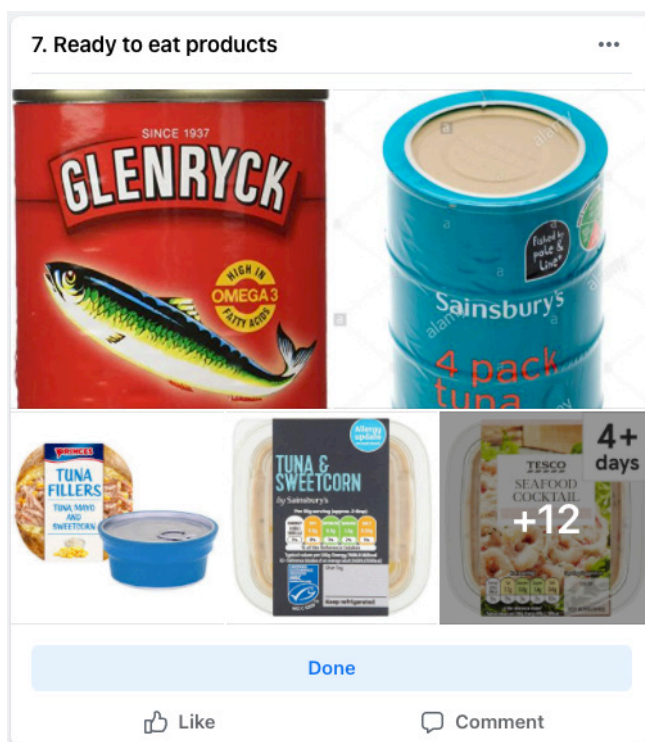
5. Main meals - meal kits



6. Ready to cook products



Guide 1 - Word Association
Posts 4 to 6



Guide 1 - Word Association
 Post 7

The second guide is a set of questions that prompt the participant to describe the last fish or seafood product they ate. Following testing, this will be revised by changing the existing images which are displayed as separate posts as 1 post with a gallery of 6 images.

By reflecting on a specific instance of when participants have eaten fish and seafood products, we can prompt richer recollections and talk about specific practices as opposed to generalisations.

This page shows posts 1-3.

GUIDE 2

Describe the last fish or seafood ready-meal or product you ate... ...

0/7 POSTS COMPLETED


Create Post Create Quiz

1 comment Seen by 1

Like Comment

1. ...

THINK ABOUT THE LAST FISH OR SEAFOOD READY-MEAL OR PRODUCT YOU ATE...



WHAT WAS IT? *Can you see it here?*


Done

2 comments Seen by 3

Like Comment

2. ...

WHY DID YOU BUY IT?




Done

2 comments Seen by 4

Like Comment

3. ...

HOW AFFORDABLE WAS IT?



Done

3 comments Seen by 3

Like Comment

Guide 2 - Describe the last fish or seafood product or ready meal you ate
Post 3 and 4

3. ...

HOW AFFORDABLE WAS IT?

£££

Done

3 comments Seen by 3

Like Comment

4. ...

HAVE YOU BOUGHT IT BEFORE?
IF SO, ROUGHLY HOW OFTEN?

Illustration of a stack of four fish and chips in paper containers.

Done


2 comments Seen by 4

Like Comment

Guide 2 - Describe the last fish or seafood product or ready meal you ate
 Post 5 and 6



5. ...

HOW APPEALING WAS THE LOOK, TASTE AND SMELL?




Done

2 comments Seen by 3

 Like
  Comment



6. ...

WHAT PREPARATION DID THE PRODUCT NEED?



Done


2 comments Seen by 4

 Like
  Comment

Guide 2 - Describe the last fish or seafood product or ready meal you ate
Post 7

7. ...



HOW DID YOU EAT IT?



For example, did you eat it hot, cold, with extra spice, or with any sides?

[Done](#)

3 comments Seen by 4

 Like  Comment

The third guide (to the right), 'Kitchen Cruises' is designed, like guide 2 as a proxy for observing people's practices around fish and seafood product consumption by asking people to describe the products they currently have in their kitchen. Following testing, this will be revised for participants to describe rather than provide visual images.

The fourth guide (far right) is designed to explore people's responses to a range of concepts like "affordability, "family", "health" and "sustainability". These are designed to give a greater sense of who would be potentially buying the product and what they are more likely to buy based on the values that product reflects. This is currently split into 12 posts. Following testing, the words will be put into a collage for 1 post and participants can respond to whichever word they wish rather than feeling obliged to respond to each word in turn.

GUIDE 3

Kitchen Cruises

Take us on a cruise of your kitchen. What fish/ seafood products and meals do you have in your fridge, freezer and larder or kitchen cupboards? Roughly when did you purchase them? Will you need to throw any of them away soon? Roughly what proportion of all your food are fish and seafood products? Photograph, film, sketch or write a description of your kitchen answering these questions and leave it in the comments.


0/1 POSTS COMPLETED

Create Post Create Quiz

Like Comment

Welcome to your kitchen cruise

Take us on a cruise of your kitchen. What fish/ seafood products and meals do you have in your fridge, freezer and larder or kitchen cupboards? Roughly when did you purchase them? Will you need to throw any of them away soon? Roughly what proportion of all your food are fish and seafood products? Photograph, film, sketch or write a description of your kitchen answering these questions and leave it in the comments.



GUIDE 4

The things that are important to you



The following posts will each present a word to you relating to a particular value or aspect of life. For instance, 'family' and 'health'. Leave a comment on each post rating how important that value is to you on a scale of 0 to 10. 0 being least important. 10 being most important. If any of the words bring a particular thought, story or memory to mind, please share it.




0/17 POSTS COMPLETED

Create Post Create Quiz

Seen by 1

Like Comment


[Explore more at Sainsbury's.co.uk](#)
[Help Centre](#)
[Store Locator](#)

[Log in / Register](#)
£0.00

[Sainsbury's](#)

[Search a list of items](#)

[Groceries](#)
[Favourites](#)
[Offers](#)
[Discover](#)
[Recipes](#)
[Delivery Pass](#)
[Aldi Price Match](#)



Ocean Kind Minced Fish Fillet Patties with Sauce
x2 240g

★★★★☆ [Read reviews \(85\)](#) [Write a review](#)

Ready to boneless minced fish fillet patties with a spicy algae, lemon, tomato and herb and sauce

£3.25
£13.54 / kg

[Add](#)

[Product Details](#)
[Reviews](#)

Description

Succulent minced fish fillet patties with a spicy algae, lemon, tomato and herb and sauce

Ready to heat in the microwave or oven

Sourced and made using circular economy methods

Algae based sauce.

Algae based tray can be composted.

Spray on algae coating dissolves when cooked.

Keep refrigerated. Scan the QR code for live information on whether the product is still safe to eat.

Hayley Alter
19 March at 12:45 · 🌐

Imagine we are living in 2022. In that year, Sainsbury's post this product on their online store. Take a look at it and read the description. Please describe your response .

[Edit](#)

2 comments · Seen by 6





[Like](#) [Comment](#)

Hayley Alter · you said you would be put off by the word "algae" unless by 2022 there was sufficient publicity to explain that algae tastes good and does you good. You would be attracted by the brand name, "Ocean Kind" even though on reflection, the p... [See more](#)

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 1 d · Edited

Why the fish vector on the patties - like why? what does ready to boneless mean? Algae is interesting and also like ohhhh exiting in the first sentence but then its too much algae-based sauce etc - small print including the sustainable bit. i feel you ... [See more](#)

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 19 h

[Write a comment...](#)    

The fifth guide, 'What do you think about this product?' asks for participants responses to a fictional online supermarket product listing. The product is a speculative interpretation of the Seafood Age prototype based on conversations with Seafood Age partners. Participants are asked to carefully read the advert and respond with thoughts on whether or not they would buy it, what they think of it, and specifically what they think about the use of algae and smart labelling. Following testing, this will be divided into 3 more posts to help better guide participant responses. Further revisions will be made following feedback from Seafood Age partners.

The sixth and final guide hanks participants for their time and asks for feedback.

Your thoughts

Thank you for taking part in this social learning group. We have one more question.
 We are very interested in developing ways of sharing and exchanging online as a means of working with others and undertaking research together. Please could you tell us about your experience of using this social learning group: what did you enjoy, not enjoy, did you learn anything new, were there any surprises and so on...



TENOR

Done

1 comment Seen by 7

Like

Comment

Emerging insights from the design

1. This is a facilitated conversation

The following are insights emerging from the series of tests that have been run so far on the Facebook group.

Guided by the needs of the project, the constraints of the platform, and testing with participants, we have found that the best way to use the method is through facilitated discussion with one or two participants at a time, provided they are in the same room. However, the method also provides scope for working with more than 2 people, and in person, when social distancing constraints are lifted. While we initially thought that this method could be used asynchronously (as an alternative to a survey, for instance), testing has revealed that facilitation by the researcher brings about richer responses, gives the participant support and helps to provide a more enjoyable experience overall for the participant. Without the researcher's facilitation, the method lacks incentive for the participant to engage.

The design of this facebook group is neither a proxy for a workshop, focus group or interview in person, neither is it a tool that participants should be expected to complete on their own. The most value is generated from facilitated conversation where Facebook is being used as an accessible and shared platform. Additional structure like sharing screens on video conferencing can be also be used to help the facilitator/ researcher and participant guide each other around. The researcher, however, should be supported by the structure of the group and the data generated comes directly from the comments added against the images in each post. The platform and structure should likewise give parity for data generated across Atlantic Area regions. However, support will be needed to translate it into different languages and replace the collages of products in Guide 1 in different regions.

2. Avoiding participant fatigue

The number of posts in each guide are being revised in the next version as described throughout to help participants see at a glance how much they need to contribute. The test have shown so far that participants are keen to engage and keen to describe stories and memories about their experiences of eating fish and seafood. This provides for a rich engagement, however, the facilitator must be mindful of the participants energy and strictly limit the time spent on each guide to support participants to complete the guides within an hour.

Summary and next steps

This report has described the method design for sharing and exchanging research participants' experiences of fish and seafood product consumption using Facebook as a tool for supporting and documenting facilitated conversation. Next steps are to complete the revisions described in the last section. We intend to work with local networks, community groups and existing gatekeepers to engage new participants, generate data through the platform and use that data to feed into the Miro-supported conversations with stakeholders upstream. We will do this initially with UK based research participants and look to have the tool translated for use in other Atlantic Area regions

Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone that has kindly tested the Facebook tool during design development. Particular thanks go to Franziska Pilling and Matthew Pilling.

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DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION

Work Package	WP3 and WP5
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DOCUMENT HISTORY

DATE	AUTHOR/EDITOR (PARTNER)	DESCRIPTION
29/03/2021	ImaginationLancaster, Lancaster University	Report on research activity