Deconstructing Sites

How and why

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Introduction

- Martin Stares
- Experienced designer of information rich solutions
- Goal:
  Show you there are two ways of looking at solutions, and why it is important to know both

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Two views of solutions

Experience and architecture

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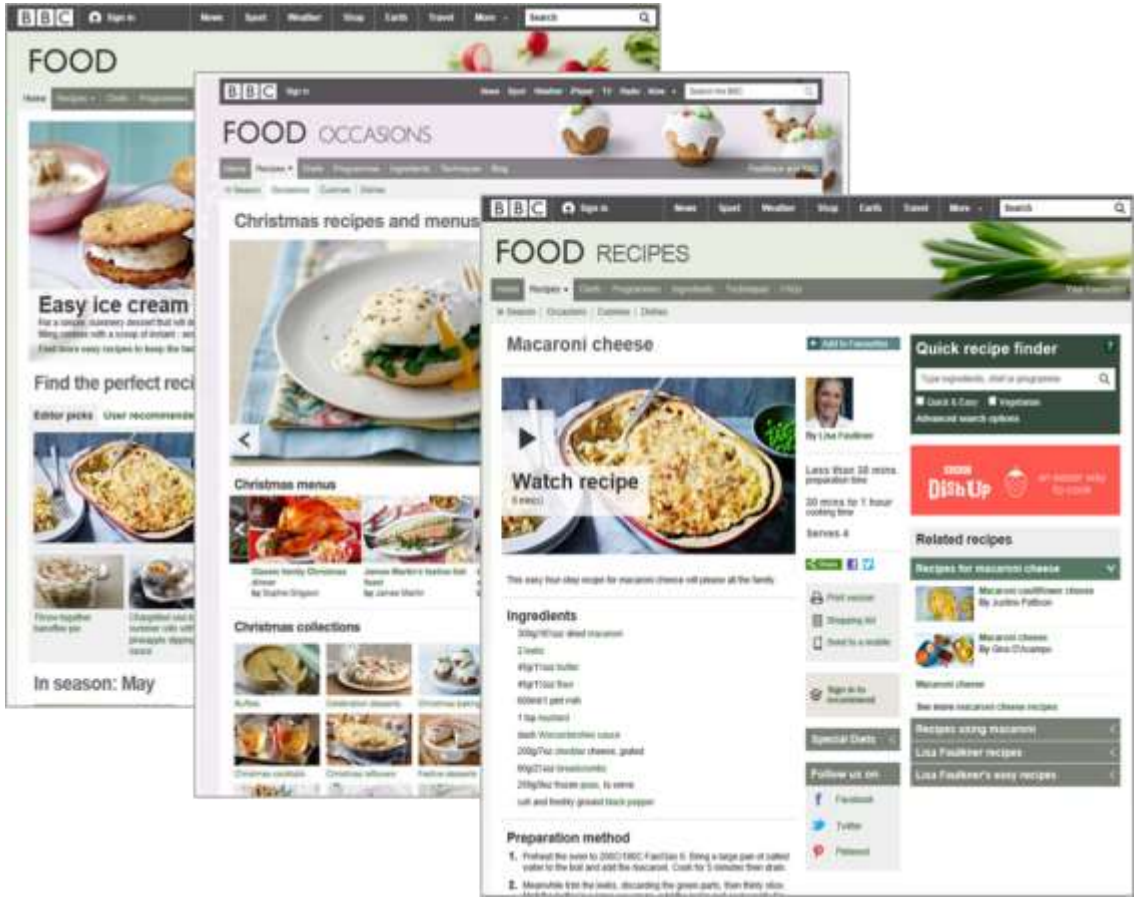
Our illustration



- BBC Food
- 12,000 + pages
- Richly connected
- Multiple information types
- Multiple types of user

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Why deconstruct?

- When
  - Doing a makeover
  - Moving flat pages to a content management system
  - Making a mobile version
- Why
  - Getting new design perspective

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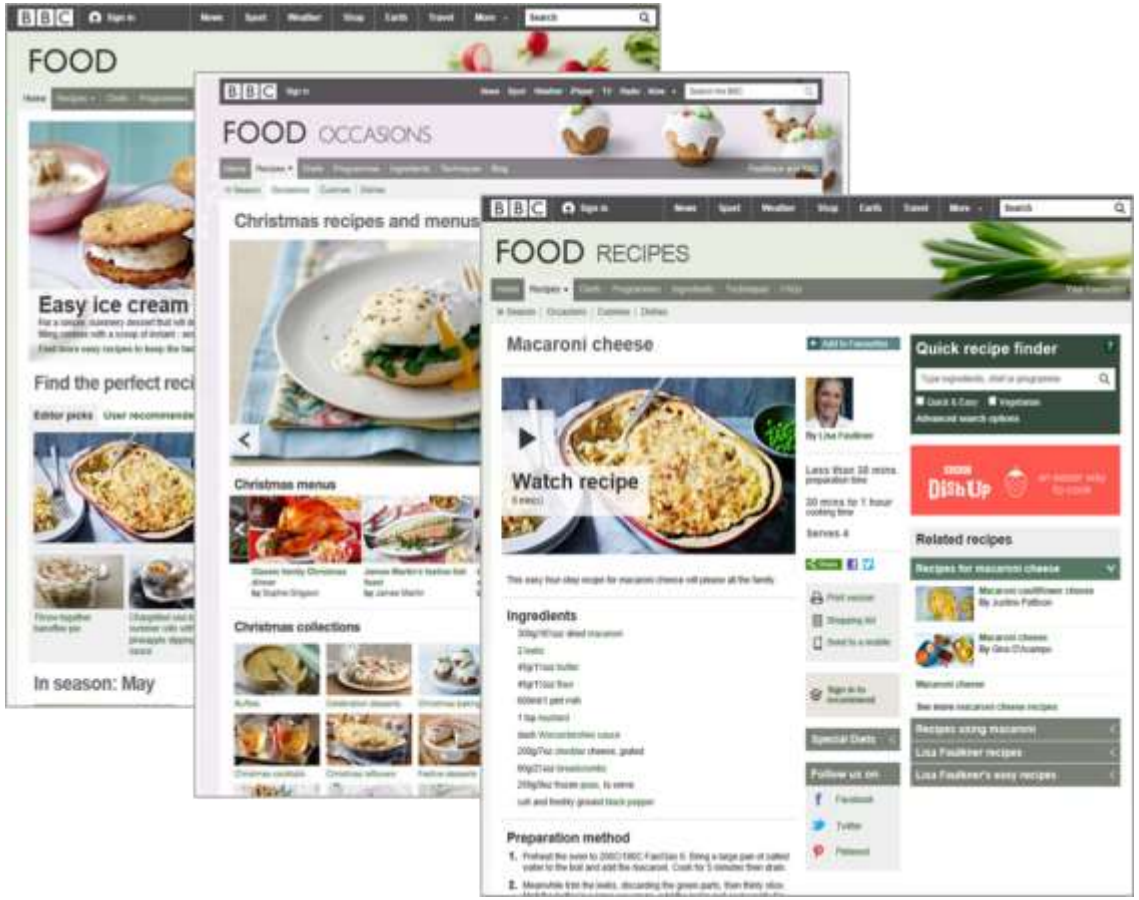
Surface view



- Hard to answer questions like
  - are we providing the right information
  - in useful ways
  - in understandable ways
- Hard to suggest improvements other than incremental

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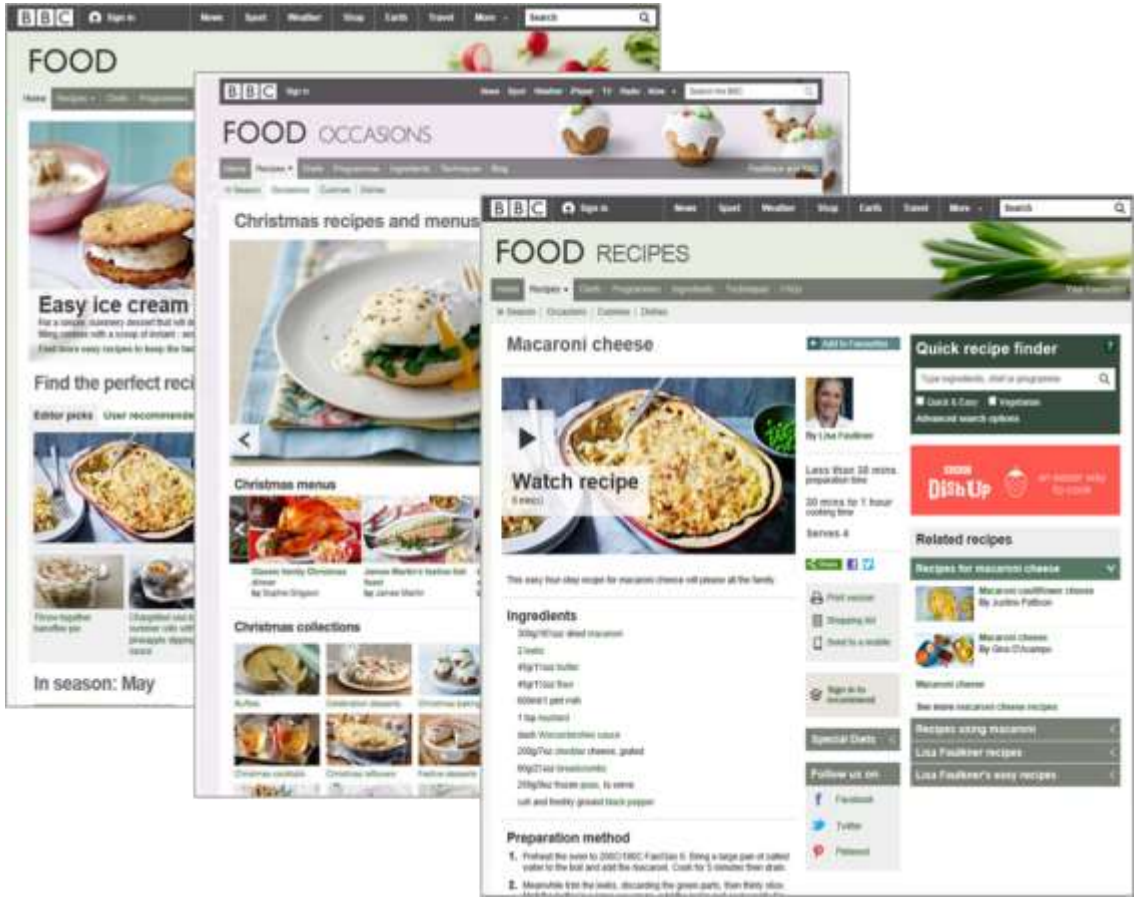
Surface view



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Why put sharing right in the middle of the screen?

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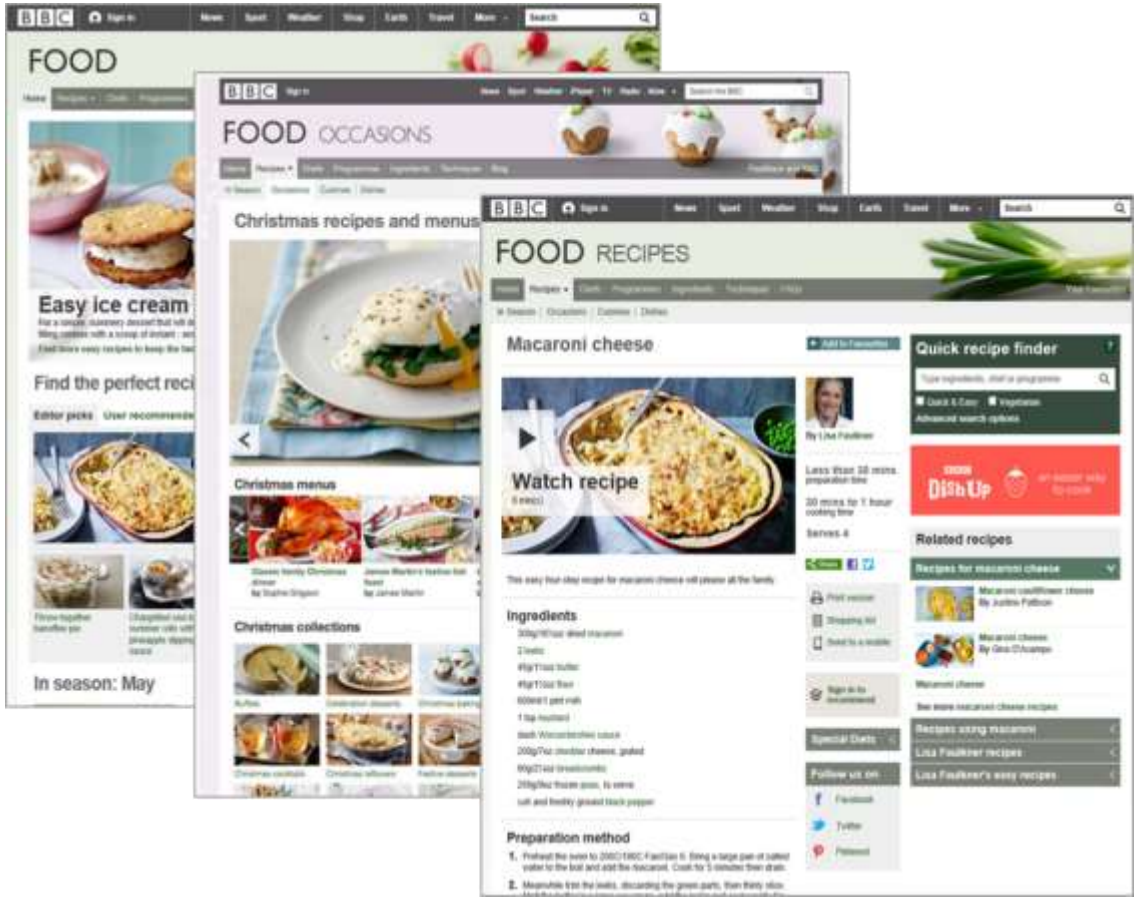
Surface view



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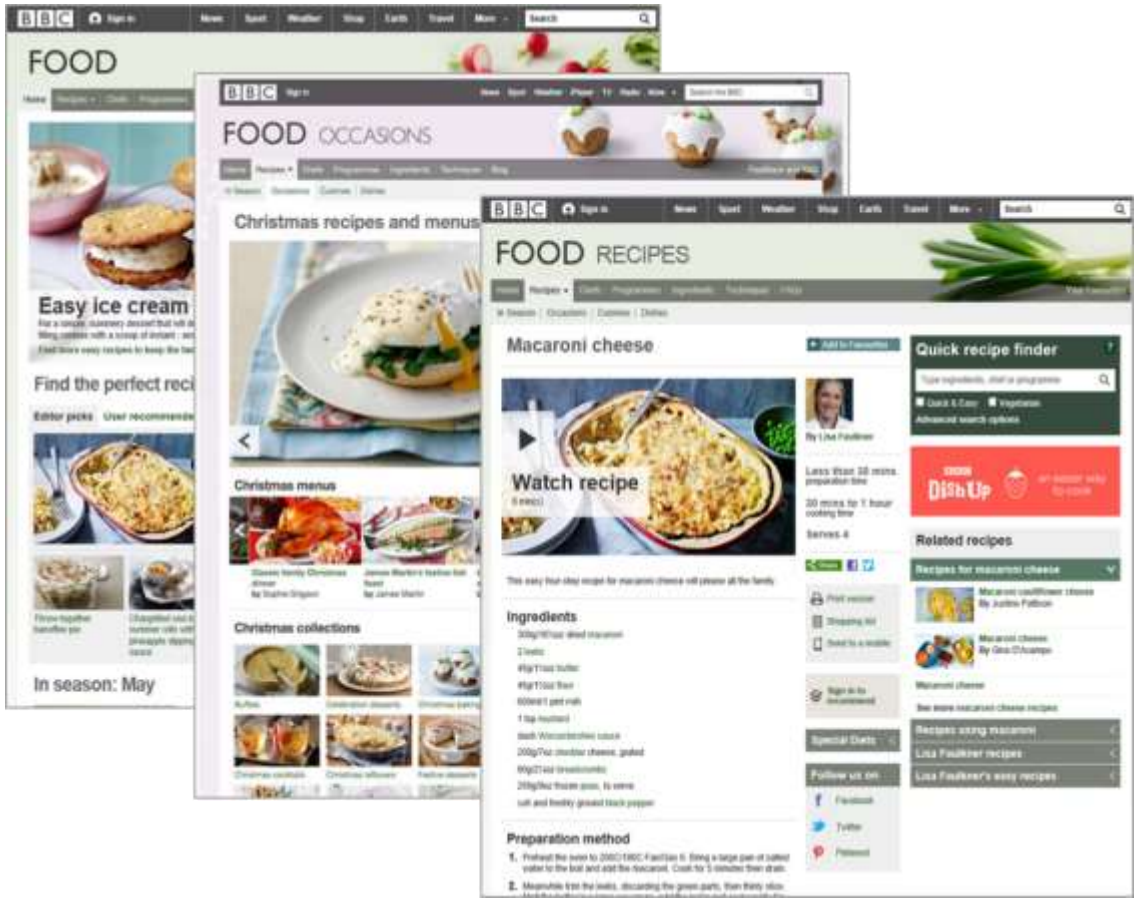
Let’s deconstruct



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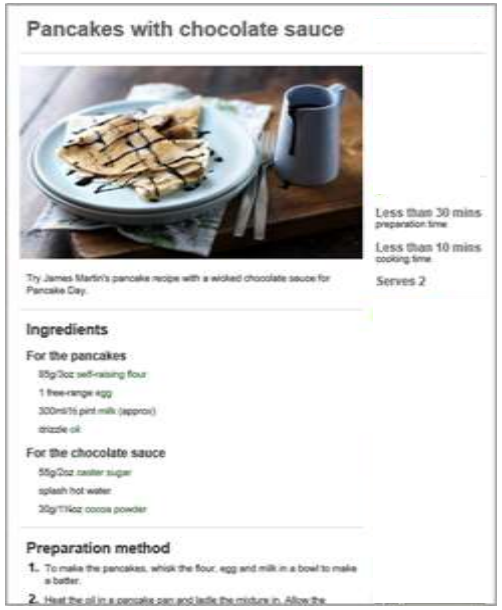
Let’s deconstruct

Chefs

Programmes

Recipes



Techniques

Ingredients

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Let’s deconstruct

Chefs

Programmes

RECIPE
An executable set of instructions for making a particular dish
Name
Ingredients
Instructions
Preparation time
Cooking time

Techniques

Ingredients

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Let’s deconstruct

CHEF
A chef who appears in a programme
Name
Photo
Description

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Let’s deconstruct

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PROGRAMME
A BBC Food programme
Name
Description
Image

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Techniques

INGREDIENT
An ingredient
Name
Description
Image
Buyer’s guide

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Let’s deconstruct

CHEF
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PROGRAMME
A BBC Food programme
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Description
Image

RECIPE
An executable set of instructions for making a particular dish
Name
Ingredients
Instructions
Preparation time
Cooking time

TECHNIQUE
How to execute a step in a recipe
Name
Description
Media (image, video)

INGREDIENT
An ingredient
Name
Description
Image
Buyer’s guide

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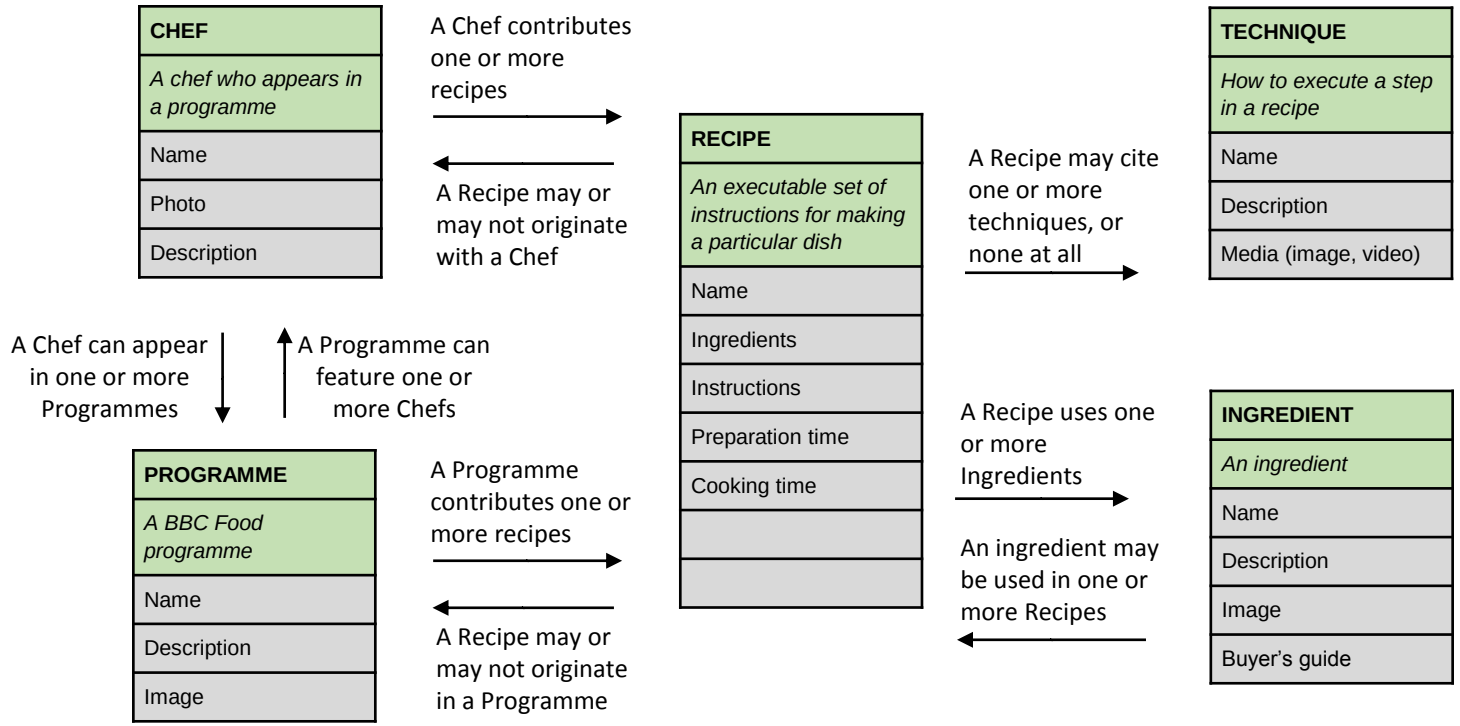
Our deconstruction



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Underlying information structure

- There is ALWAYS an underlying information structure
- We can model it visually as an information model
- It completely describes our solution's information universe
- It is NOT a database design; e.g. books have an information structure, but there is no database involved.

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Why information models are so useful

Tool for critique, exploration, and innovation

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Value of information model

- Basis for communication and critique
  - components: are we talking about the right things
  - attributes: are we saying the right things about the components
  - relationships: does the relationship structure allow user questions to be answered

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Value of information model

- Basis for communication
  - components: are we talking about the right things
  - attributes: are we saying the right things about them
  - relationships: does the relationship structure allow user questions to be answered
- Freedom to explore UI alternatives
  - for a given information model, there is more than one surface representation (mobile, personas)
  - elements of information model correspond one:many to UI elements

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Value of information model

- Basis for communication
  - components: are we talking about the right things
  - attributes: are we saying the right things about them
  - relationships: does the relationship structure allow user questions to be answered
- Freedom to explore UI alternatives
  - more than one surface representation for a given information model (devices, users)
  - better to start with information model (and user behaviour)
- Basis for innovation and ideation

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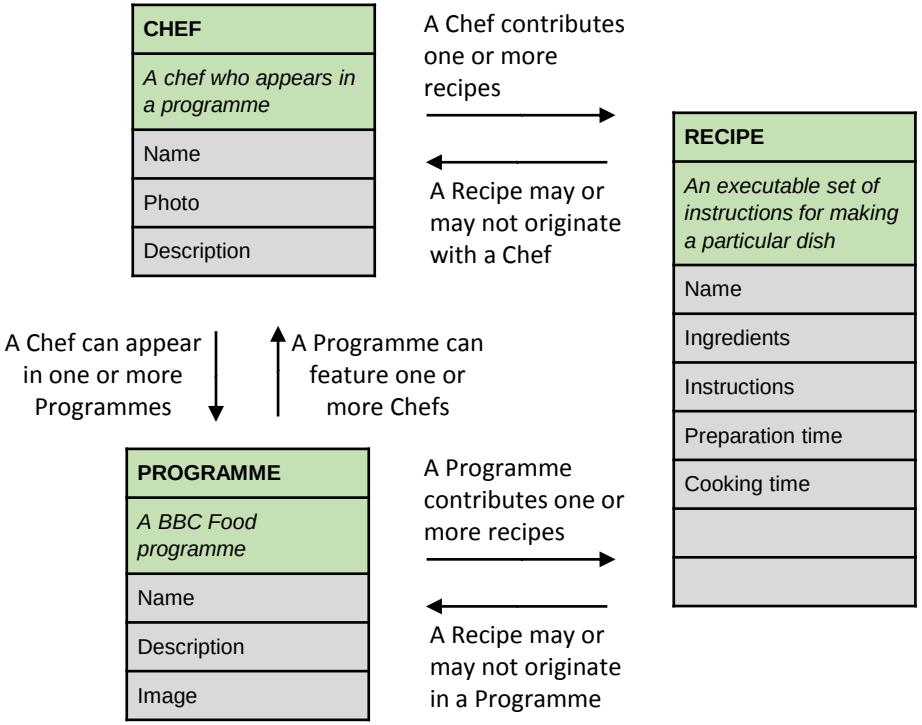
Ideation with the information model



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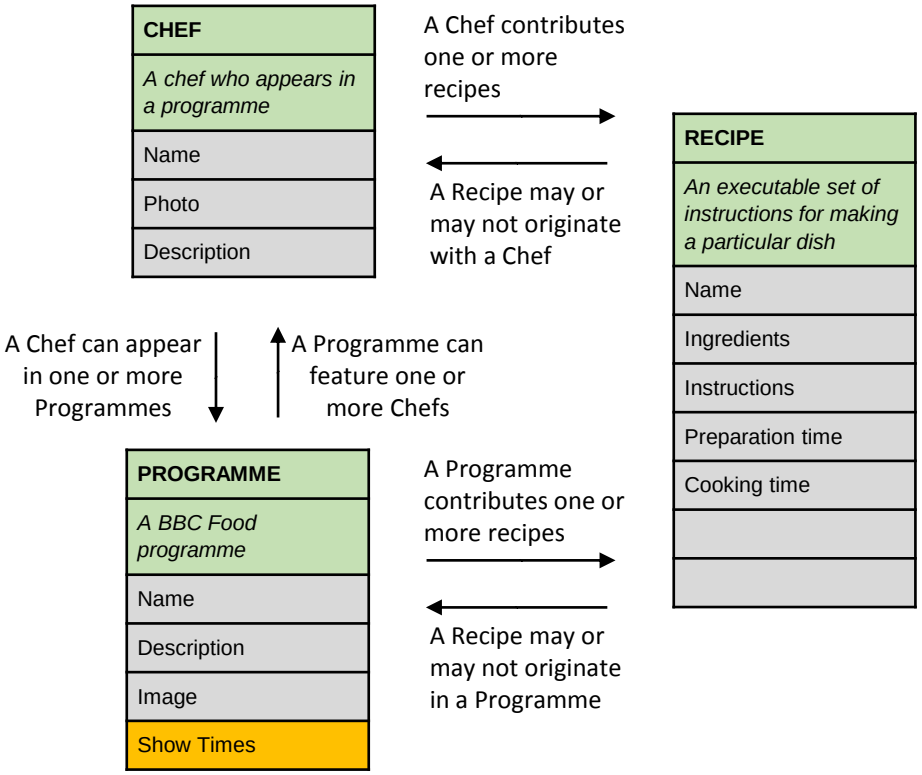
Ideation with the information model



- Action
  - add Show Times to programme
- Opportunity
  - calendars
  - notifications
  - foodies TV Guide

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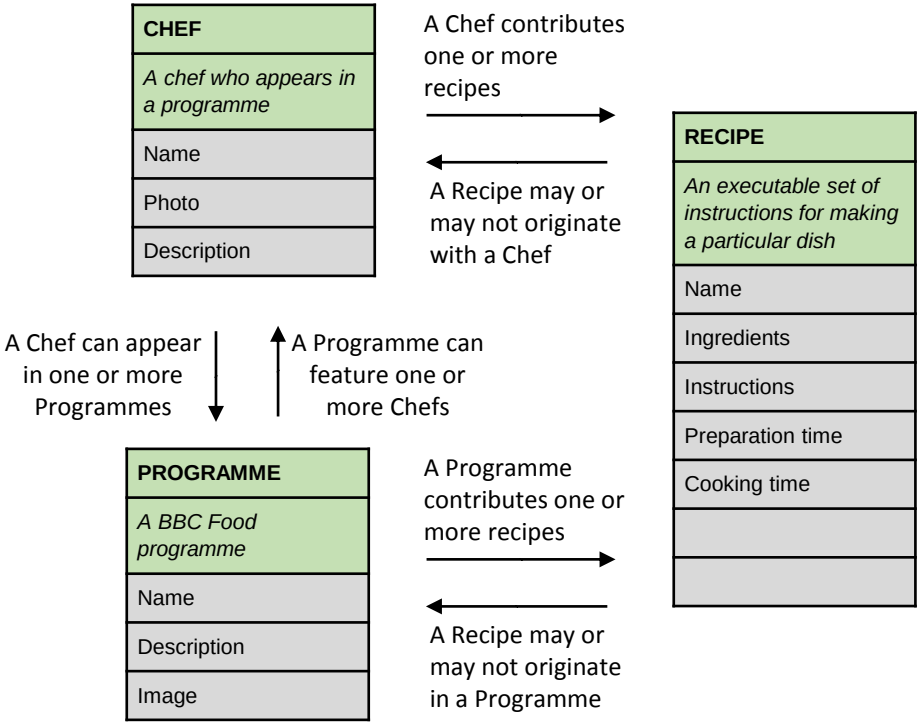
Ideation with the information model



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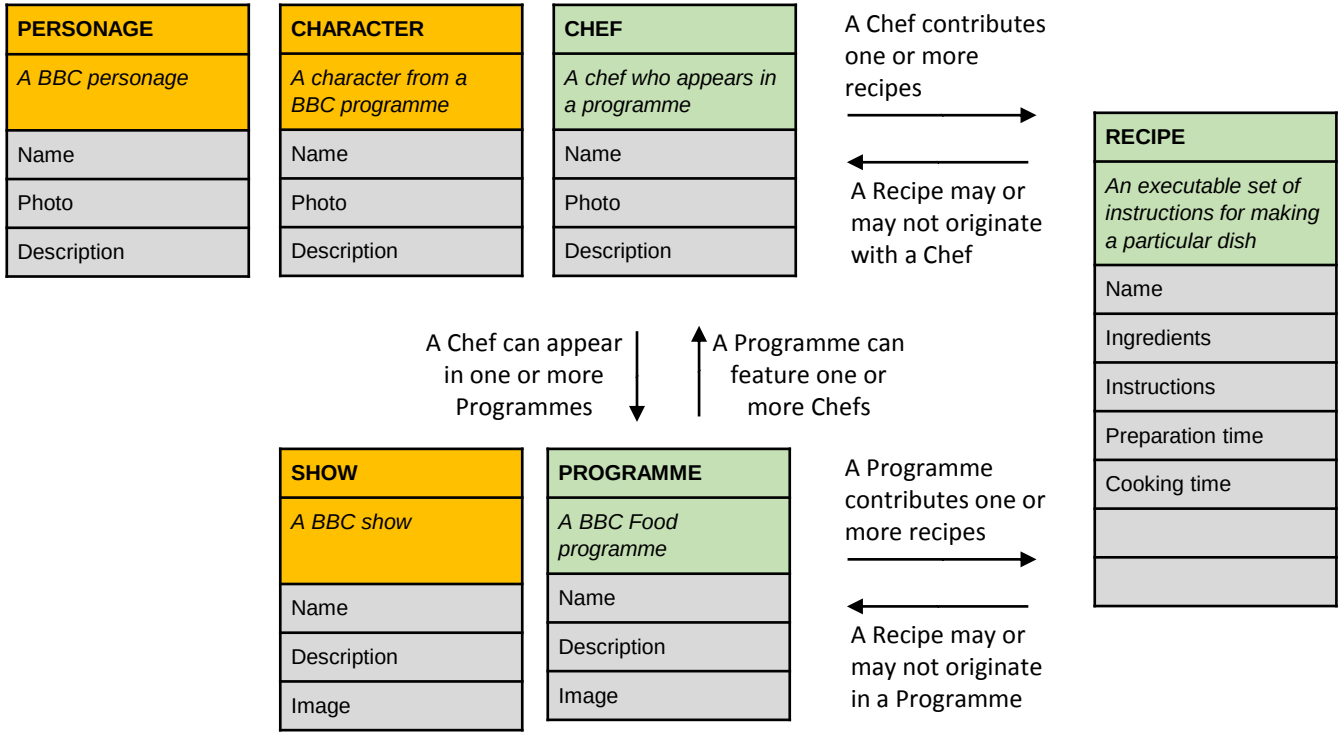

- Action
  - expand originator
    - other BBC people
    - characters in BBC shows
    - meals in BBC shows
- Opportunity
  - drive traffic
  - merchandising

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Exploring granularity

CHEF
A chef who appears in a programme
Name
Photo
Description

At 21, James opened the new Hotel and Bistro du Vin in Winchester

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Exploring granularity

CHEF
A chef who appears in a programme
Name
Photo
Description
Career event
Institution
Geography

At 21, James opened the new Hotel and Bistro du Vin in Winchester

- Action
  - exploit structure in description of chef
    - career event
    - institutions
    - geography
- Opportunity
  - timelines
  - new access methods
    - “chefs who have trained in Europe”

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Relationship between the views

Complementary or synergistic

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Complementary design domains

Experience

- Functionality
- Usability
- Interaction/Flow
- Brand

Architecture

- Scope
- Possibilities
- Re-use

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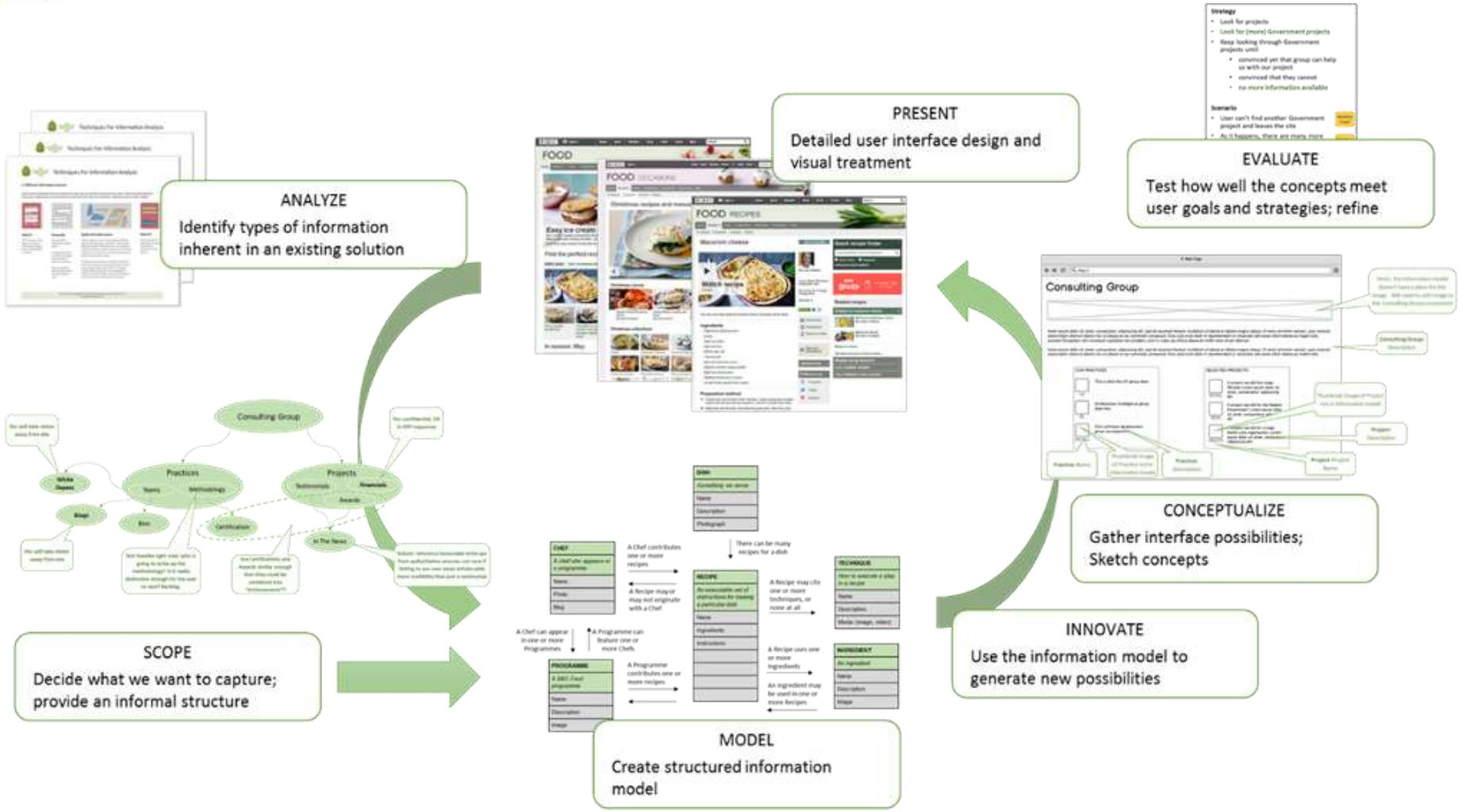
Synergistic design domains



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- Get one-on-one advice in exchange for coffee

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