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Defining the Problem

What is the problem?
Recent Miami graduates and current students, who would like to garden food but have limited space, don’t see it as an option because they don’t know where to start.

Defining Success

How will I know that I have succeeded?
Recent Miami graduates and college students will know how to start gardening in a limited space and will see it as an option no matter where life takes them after they graduate.
Where could you go to research this problem?
I have found so much information on gardening in books, internet, youtube, pinterest, and interviewing multiple people.

What forms could it take?
This could take many forms, from creating a school funded greenhouse for students to learning more about indoor growing so students can grow their gardens with little space in the comfort of their own homes.

Some ideas I have gathered from my research so far:
1. vertical gardens
2. Informational packets about gardening
3. A starter kit for those wanting to plant their own garden
4. A community of growers on campus
5. A place on campus that grows food all year round that students can put in time at and receive food in exchange
6. An event about gardening

How can you play to your strengths?
I am super excited about this project! I love getting my hands dirty and creating something. I think that this is a great opportunity to use photography, illustrations, and examples to show how easy gardening can be and how rewarding it is.

Is the topic challenging?
Yes it is challenging. Students want to party, do homework, and work. It is my wish to show them that they can not only have a garden but it can thrive as well.

Where will this take you?
Hopefully this will take me to a company that is hands on in creating solutions. Where they care about where they come from and want to create responsible employees.

There is so much to be learned from gardening like responsibility, self-reliance, and about where food comes from.

Who are you trying to reach with this work?
Miami students who live on campus and want to eat healthy but can’t afford it. Those who aren’t afraid to touch dirt.

Can you identify anyone in this audience that you can use for informal testing throughout your project?
Yes my friends at Miami. Along with others that are willing to participate.

How will your work stand out as opposed to other projects trying to reach this audience?
1: Research ways of gardening inside in colder climates, city gardens, and inside plants. Find best practices of farming resources and other people who are interested in gardening at school. Begin a group/club of gardeners at school.

Thesis 2: Research other universities to see if they have any community greenhouses or gardens. Look into what it would take for Miami to offer the same.

Create a print and social campaign promoting gardening on campus.

3: Research most used herbs in cooking and create a herb garden. Easy to maintain and small in size to hopefully spark interest in gardening. Also create a poster and social campaign to promote gardening.

4: Create an event about growing your own food. Create a campaign around it and circulate to students around campus through posters, facebook, instagram, twitter, and email.

Research Questions
Where do you need to go and what do you need to know in order to be ready to start solving?
- garden magazines
- garden at home websites
- gardening tutorials
- pinterest
- youtube
- blogs
- how to garden in small spaces
- how to use space efficiently

Who may you need to talk with so you can learn what you need to know?
- Miami student
- recent Miami graduates
- farmers
- gardeners

What do you need to examine or review in order to make sure you aren’t doing something that’s already been done?
- Gardening resources
- campus gardening programs
- gardening apps
- blogs
- campaigns on growing your own food

What items, schedules, or other logistics must be coordinated so you can begin designing and/or test your outcomes?
- Planting Season
- Growing material
- Group of Students
- Recent Graduates

Target Audience
- My target audience are students at Miami University who live away from home who are interested in gardening but not while at school.

Observations
- Isolate a problematic behavior that you want to change. Students and recent graduates don’t have space or know how to garden. Observe to see how the environment affects this behavior. They buy expensive produce at the store. Do not consider gardening as an option. They do not have the space to garden. They do not have the time to garden. They do not know how to garden.
- Develop a strategy for disrupting this behavior. Get attention through signs and social media. Get them information. Passing out informational packets. Also use social media. Get them supplies.

Create an event in which I have a “come and plant day” or something along those lines. Maybe a starter kit for planting their own indoor garden. Leave them excited. Create excitement and the sense of I can do this in those who participate.
RESEARCH // Brainstorming, Sketches, Interviews
Mood Board: Plant Your Own Produce
Interview Questions
1. Have you ever considered gardening?
2. Do your Parents garden?
3. Do you live away from home?
4. Do you own your own land?
5. How much produce do you eat weekly?

Interview Summary
My research consisted of a total of 20 interviews. You can get the main themes on this spread. Many people did not consider gardening while they are at school for a number of reasons. Most were because they don’t think they have enough time, space, or know how to garden.

Interview 1
1. “Not now, I mean I would like to in the future but I don’t have the time or space to garden now so I haven’t really thought about it.”
2. “My parents do garden and I do too when I am home for the summer.”
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. “I have a salad every day. I really like fruits and fresh veggies.”

Interview 2
1. “Not at school.”
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. “I like to get as much greens in as possible. I have a gluten intolerance and what I can eat is limited already so I eat a lot of produce.”

Interview 3
1. “I can see myself gardening in the future when I have a family and I’m not at school.”
2. Grandma does.
3. Yes
4. Dorm
5. “I am on a meal plan so I really only eat what I can get with that. I eat salads all the time.”

Interview 4
1. “Yes, my roommates and I actually have three lettuce heads started.”
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. A lot

Interview 5
1. “I don’t really have anywhere to garden and I am not really good at growing things so not really.”
2. “I am on a meal plan and I eat a lot of salads but I am on a meal plan so I really don’t just buy bags of vegetables or anything.”

Interview 6
1. “Not now I don’t have any time to take care of a garden.”
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. A lot

Interview 7
1. “No I don’t have any space of my own to garden.”
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. Almost only produce.

Interview 8
1. “No I don’t have any space of my own to garden.”
2. Yes
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. Eat a lot of produce. “I wish I could eat more but it is not in my budget.”

Interview 9
1. “I am interested in gardening but I don’t have the time or space to garden. Plus I don’t really know how.”
2. No
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. Quite a bit

Interview 10
1. “Yes but when I tried to grow a plant I forgot to water it and it died.”
2. Yes they have a huge garden
3. Yes
4. Rent
5. A lot
More than Interviews

Apart from interviews, I had to do a lot of research on how to garden myself. I have never had my own garden. I decided that it would be best to start my own garden. This allowed me to see what would be useful information for students and what is unnecessary for students. Along the way, I talked to long time gardeners to get their advice. I also did a lot of research on the different vegetables I was growing. I learned from trial and error as well as tutorials online. Bloggers, YouTube, Pinterest, Farmers Almanac, and other websites were all very helpful in gaining knowledge about gardening. Gardening is a lot easier than you think.
DESIGN // Initial Prototypes, Feedback, Testing
Concept
A planned event that would happen once a year. At this event people would get to design their own pot and plant a vegetable in it. Then they would get to take that pot home with them and watch it grow. Along the way they could post to social media outlets and see everyone else’s progress as well. They when it was time to harvest they would get a recipe that uses the vegetable that they planted.

Feedback
- How do you promote it?
- How do you get it to interrupt people’s lives in what they are doing now?
Concept
Planting Hacks is basically the idea of taking what you already buy in the grocery store and replanting it so that you can eat it again. Using the element of surprise, stickers, magnets, buttons, key chains, and Instagram to pull it off. This would be an easy way for students to use what they already have and regrow it into so they can enjoy it again. This would show how easy it is to grow plants and hopefully spark interest in gardening while at school.

Feedback
- Unexpected
- Needs more contrast especially in logo
- Take the roots and make them a hashtag since it is social media centered
Concept

Plant Your Own Produce is centered around the idea of making growing easy in order to spark the interest in Gardening. It is not a full fledged garden but it is a step in the right direction. It would consist of a jar that comes with a surprise seed inside that you get to plant and watch grow. Then when the time is right you find out what the plant is and you would get a recipe that uses the plant.

Feedback

- Need something that tells them how to do it. How often to water...
- Want to see more contrast in logo it gets lost
- How do people get their hands on this?
- Is it a gift?
I tested my final concept, Plant Your Own Produce, in two ways. First through interviews of students around campus to get top level information. These were very insightful to the product as a whole in the way it looked, felt and what was missing that they believed would be useful. I also gave four kits away to have people test them on a deeper level to see how this would work in peoples homes and how the plants react to different environments while still in the same container.

Interviews

In the end I was able to interview 25 people. 5/25 people said they had absolutely no interest in gardening and that didn’t change when they saw my product. 4/25 people who said they had never considered gardening would consider using Plant Your Own Produce. 14/20 said that they thought about gardening but not while in school. Of those 14, 12 said that they would try something like Plant Your Own Produce. 2/25 said that they already grow plants at school but would love to add a plant from Plant Your Own Produce.

Overall everyone liked they look and feel of the Plant Your Own Produce. They really enjoyed the idea of it being a gift and being able to send it anywhere. Most thought it was a fun easy way to start growing their own herb gardens.

An interesting theme I found in my research was most of those who said they would use Plant Your Own Produce were Seniors and Juniors and had an apartment or house. Most of the younger students live in dorms and had never thought about gardening.

Those with their own kitchens really like the recipe aspect. However they wanted a place to put the recipes that would keep it together with the rest of their recipes. They also said that they would want a website that they could go to order the kits from.

Those with Kits

Out of the four kits that I gave out all are still alive as of now. They continue to grow at an exciting rate. Each week they grow larger and some are almost ready to harvest.

As far as feed back goes, everyone says it is really easy to take care of their plant. They really only need water every three days or so. As long as they get enough light they grow really well.
SUBMIT // Final Design Solution in all Applications
REFLECT // What's Next?
Where would I take this?

I would want to get more long-term feedback. I would also like to push this idea further to include a gardening club at Miami where people can have garden boxes outside. I would like to push it out to more people through social media and the web. I would also like to look more into posters and promotional pieces in general. I feel like I developed the product really well but the next step would be to develop the packaging and advertising it out to the students.