

Springwise newsletter | 12 November 2009

Spotted for you this week: personalized plates for kids, filming locations mapped by the crowds, spiral-shaped wine cellars that fit anywhere, and more. Our next edition is due on 18 November 2009. In the meantime, check out our daily postings on www.springwise.com, send us your [tips](#), and please don't forget to [tell your friends](#) and colleagues about us. Much appreciated!



Spiral-shaped wine cellars for every home

Private wine cellars are typically associated with the upper echelons of society, limited as they tend to be to large, old and expensive houses. A UK company aims to change all that, however, with a precast storage system that can be installed in virtually any room of any house.

[Spiral Cellars](#) are watertight storage spaces that can be sunk into the ground in an existing ground floor room or incorporated into the build of an extension or new property. Capable of storing almost 1,900 bottles of wine, the spiral-shaped systems rely on the surrounding earth for insulation but also employ a unique air-flow system to maintain constant temperature without requiring any power. Three size options are available, ranging from the Mini Cellar—capable of storing at least 650 bottles—up to the White Spiral Cellar, which can accommodate up to 1,870 bottles. Pricing begins at GBP 9,200. A variety of trap door styles and optional extras such as LED lighting are also available.

Spiral Cellars has installed more than 23,000 Spiral Cellars in France and the UK over the last 25 or so years; one to bring to the growing ranks of oenophiles in other parts of the world...? (Related: [Urban tasting room plays host to 8 local wineries](#) — [Wine selling & storytelling](#).)

Website: www.spiralcellars.co.uk

Contact: info@spiralcellars.com



Connecting buyers & sellers of locally grown food

Few would dispute the benefits of eating locally grown food, both for the environment and for human health. Access is the challenge, which is why we've seen such goods [sold in vending machines](#), [delivered by bicycle](#) and [packed in five-dollar bags for commuters](#). The latest spotting? [Local Dirt](#), a Wisconsin-based site that connects buyers and sellers of locally grown food nationwide.

Farmers and other vendors begin by creating a profile page to promote their produce, as well as listing the quantities and prices of the products they have to sell. Individual and organizational buyers can then search for local food sellers and products in their area—searching by address, ZIP code or via map—and browsing the listings of those near them. Once they've found something they like, buyers can order food for pick-up at farmers' markets or farms. A purchase order is automatically generated and mailed to them for use in picking up the food and paying the seller. Listing, ordering and bidding on items in Local Dirt is free; yearly memberships for more sophisticated features—such as wholesale capabilities—begin at USD 360.

Whether it's by bringing the food to the consumers or the consumers to the food, there's no doubt the resulting boost for local food consumption is a win-win for everyone—and the planet. One to emulate in your neck of the food-producing woods...?

Website: www.localdirt.com

Contact: www.localdirt.com/contact_us-a194.html

Spotted by: Cecilia Biemann



Wine search engine uses animation to portray aromas

Billed as a 'virtual taste search engine', [Aromicon](http://www.aromicon.com) lists thousands of wines categorised by every imaginable detail. Wines can be browsed by region, grape variety or food pairing, as well as searched by keyword. There's also the option to browse according to taste, featuring a huge range of subtleties to satisfy the requirements of the most practiced palette—everything from 'kiwi' and 'butter', to peculiarities like 'animal' and 'blood' (luckily you can opt to exclude those).

Although the site is in German, it's almost navigable by its icons alone—hence the name. And in a visually innovative twist, a short animation graphically displays a wine's unique blend of flavours, showing berries, chocolate, pipes, etc swirling around in a glass. The concept is a spin-off from the Burg Giebichenstein University of Art and Design, and features a vintage revenue model: the site essentially functions as a fully-featured affiliate sales portal linking to several German wine merchants. One to serve up for wine-lovers who don't speak German, or to partner with if you're in the wine business?

Website: www.aromicon.com

Contact: kontakt@aromicon.com

Spotted by: Franziska Luh



Connecting airline travellers for a shared cab

Back in 2007 we covered [Hitchsters](#), the New York site that combines social networking with ride-matching to help airport travellers share taxi rides and split the expense. Now, along very similar lines comes [Taxi2](#), a beta project from Virgin Atlantic that's currently being tested in New York and London.

Touting the financial and environmental motivations for sharing a cab, Taxi2 is a free service for passengers of any airline. Users simply log on to the Taxi2 site and input their flight and destination details. From there, the system matches them with suitable cab-sharing companions and provides a protected way to contact them, allowing the travellers to decide whether to agree to the match. The system offers a way for female travellers to be matched only with other female travellers; it also protects all personal details. Once travellers agree on a match, Taxi2 even provides a printable and foldable sign to help them find each other at the airport. A mobile version of the technology is coming soon.

Much the way carpooling makes sense as a way to reduce the cost and impact of commuting to work, so cab-sharing seems like a no-brainer for all the many travellers heading in the same direction. One to emulate at a heavily frequented airport near you...? (Related: [Londoners share lifts to Luton airport](#) — [Tweet to hail a green ride in London](#) — [Nationwide taxi booking & payment via mobile phone.](#))

Website: www.taxi.to

Contact: info@taxi.to

Spotted by: Raymond Kollau

P.S. Hitchsters is either temporarily offline, or permanently out of business. We'd love to know what happened to the company. If you have any information, please leave a comment. Thanks!



Crowds map filming locations across the world

[Filmaps](#) is rapidly creating a crowd-powered database of filming locations around the world. Users can search by location or film title to bring up a Google Map that features location photos from Panoramio and videos from You Tube. Since its launch in January this year 998 films have been mapped in 2363 locations. Filmaps adds social elements through Facebook and Twitter connections, as well as embeddable location widgets.

We've seen maps used for everything from [virtual jogging](#) to [erotic spending statistics](#). As [described by our sister-site trendwatching.com](#), "geography is about everything that is (literally) close to consumers, and it's a universally familiar method of organizing, finding and tracking relevant information on objects, events and people."

There are hints on the website that Barcelona-based Filmaps may have plans to offer film location tours, which would make sense. Its members are already mapping out the routes, and the site would be a perfect marketing tool. What other niches could you map your way into?

Website: www.filmaps.com

Contact: www.filmaps.com/contact.php

Spotted by: Leticia Pérez Prieto



Lipstick blog highlights products in real-life photos

Anyone who's ever tried on lipstick knows that the way it looks once it's applied can be dramatically different from what the manufacturer's colour guide would suggest. With that in mind, [BeautySwatch](#) aims to give consumers a true-to-life view of lipstick shades by showing how they look on real people.

Much the way [Stitch](#) highlights the outfits of real-life consumers in its street-style fashion blog, so BeautySwatch relies on uploaded photos from makeup fans to help uncover the true appearance of lipstick shades. A team of self-proclaimed "shopaholic bloggers" of varying skin colours and ethnicities are constantly adding new swatches to the site, featuring photos of themselves wearing various lipstick shades and brands. Readers of the blog are also invited to contribute their own photos, including not just product information but also a rating of their own lip pigmentation. The result is that BeautySwatch visitors can preview colours before they buy as well as participating in community discussions about lip products and related topics.

Akisa, the Australian site's founder, explains: "If you're like me, I always google the makeup product for swatch images before I purchase online. Most times I can't find the shade in high quality images, and other times a totally unrelated brand or shade appears in my search results on my favourite blogs!! Hence the idea sprung on me one day to start up BeautySwatch.com, and build a colour swatch library with high quality images."

With its focus on real-world consumers' experience of products—rather than manufacturers' descriptions—BeautySwatch is yet another testament to the power of [twinsumers](#) and web-enabled [transparency](#) in guiding consumers' purchase decisions. Next, we'd expect BeautySwatch to add e-commerce capabilities like those on Stitch's site, partnering with lipstick retailers or brands to capitalize on visitors' buying intentions. One to team up with, in Australia or elsewhere, to help make that happen...?

Website: www.beautyswatch.com

Contact: akisalove@gmail.com



Nutrition-style labels reveal companies' social responsibility

Nutrition labels already give consumers a quick summary of what their food contains. Hoping to bring the same transparency to the companies behind the products, [Project Label](#) creates "social nutrition" labels to track manufacturers' social and environmental responsibility.

Each company listed on Project Label is ranked according to various social and environmental criteria, including "people" issues such as community impact and worker treatment as well as "planet" issues such as waste management and treatment of animals. Unlike traditional nutrition labels, however, Project Label relies on the crowds to gather and weigh the evidence that goes into its rankings. Now in beta, the organization provides simple tools to allow consumers, businesses and organizations to add, discuss and vote on news, media and research that contains information relevant to its labels. Visitors to the site are invited to submit articles relating to companies' social or environmental impact, thereby opening the topic for voting by the site's community. As votes on particular issues accumulate over time, the social nutrition labels of the companies in question gradually change to reflect users' opinion of the impact of the news. When consumers are faced with a decision between two products, they can then use Project Label's updated reports to guide their choice. They can also track companies of interest to them and compare manufacturers of competing products. In addition, tools are available to help them track the impact of their purchase decisions.

For the growing masses of ethical and green-minded consumers out there, a company's social and environmental behaviour is just as important as the ingredients in its products. Recognize that—and cultivate a track record of good behavior, made plain for all to see—and the joys of [transparency triumph](#) can be yours. Fail to do so, and the torments of transparency tyranny will shadow your every step. The choice is yours! ;-)

Website: www.projectlabel.org

Contact: www.projectlabel.org/index.php?content=contact_us

Spotted by: Cecilia Biemann



Site tracks workout miles and friendly competitions

About a year ago we covered [Plus 3 Network](#), the service that tracks consumers' workout miles and then converts them into charitable donations. Danish [Endomondo](#) offers similar workout-tracking capabilities but with a focus on personal and competitive motivations instead.

Now in beta, Endomondo is designed to help users keep track of their sports activities, challenge their friends and then follow them live while they are working out. With a focus on distance sports—including running, biking, hiking and kayaking, for example—the site supports most GPS mobile phones and Garmin devices. Users begin by downloading Endomondo's free software onto their device. They then bring the device whenever they run, walk, bike or participate in any other distance sport. The technology automatically tracks their course along with their distance covered, end time, average speed, split time, calories burned, and more. Users can also choose to enter their workouts manually. Either way, they can then view their complete training log, challenge their friends and follow their progress, create teams, find buddies and follow their activities. They can also find new routes, draw new ones and share their favorite ones with others.

Launched about a year ago, Endomondo also offers corporate versions of its technology including company challenges, weekly status reports and superior technical support. Those in health and fitness: how about offering a like-minded service to your own paying members, possibly as a free perk...? (Related: [Site matches motivation 'buddies' with shared goals.](#))

Website: www.endomondo.com

Contact: feedback@endomondo.com

Spotted by: Jesper Lundgren

Food: Kajmak [\[edit\]](#)

★★★★★ [View](#) [Photos](#) [Widgets](#) [History](#)

About Kajmak [\[edit\]](#)

Kajmak or kaymak is a Serbian/Croatian/Macedonian unripened (not aged) cheese similar to clotted cream still made in many kitchens today.

Kaymak, kajmak, or kaimak is a creamy dairy product, similar to clotted cream, ... Kajmak is almost always produced in the traditional way.

[Add a Kajmak recipe](#)

Other Names: 凯马克 (Chinese), Каймак (Ukrainian), Каймак (Russian), Kajmakiem (Polish), Kajmak (Serbian) [All Translations](#)



Cooking wiki can be edited by anyone

We've seen the Wikipedia model applied to [car design](#), [a video dictionary](#) and [an online publishing platform](#). The latest? [Foodista](#), an online cooking encyclopedia whose recipes can be edited by anyone.

Launched late last year, Seattle-based Foodista is a collaborative project to build the world's largest, highest-quality cooking encyclopedia. The site says it is the first to organize and cross-link the basic elements of cooking: foods, or the basic ingredients; recipes, or combinations of ingredients; cooking techniques; and kitchen tools. Rather than include hundreds of recipes for the same basic result, however—the way many recipe sites do—Foodista aims instead to perfect a few key recipes through the collaborative editing process. Thousands of high-resolution photos from the Flickr.com Creative Commons currently illustrate the topics on the site—though not the results of specific recipes, as [TechCrunch points out](#)—and users can also upload their own photos. Content is fully editable, and a raft of tools aimed at food bloggers include embeddable widgets to forge automated links from Foodista to specific food blogs. Ultimately, Foodista plans to support itself through online advertising.

Will a thousand cooks produce a better recipe, as the site implicitly promises? Or will the collaborative process reduce each of the site's recipes to the most bland, lowest-common-denominator version, as TechCrunch suggests it might? Time will tell. In the meantime, one to watch—or get involved in? (Related: [52 recipe contests to spawn crowdsourced cookbook](#) — [Personalized cooking: recipes match cravings](#) — [Customized cookbooks stir in online recipes](#).)

Website: www.foodista.com

Contact: www.foodista.com/contact

Spotted by: Murtaza Ali Patel



Personalized plates and placemats for kids

There's nothing like a baby to inspire adults to seek new heights of design and personalization. Last week we covered [RoomsByYou's customizable fabrics](#) for baby rooms, after which we were happy to spot [Alphabet Plates](#), a line of plates and placemats that can be customized for young kids.

With bright, bold designs and BPA-free construction, Alphabet Plates can be personalized to reflect kids' favourite foods, sports, faces or monograms. Those approximating a child's face, for example, allow customization of the 10-inch melamine plate's colour as well as the child's hair, eye colour, skin tone and accessories; two small text boxes can accommodate the child's name and a phrase like "Big Sister." Food-themed designs include pizza and tofu, while volleyball and bicycling are among the sports represented. Alphabet Plates are priced at USD 22. The Florida company's personalizable USD 18 placemats, meanwhile, show where all the dishes and utensils go and are available in English, Spanish, French, Hebrew, Dutch and German. A portion of every sale is donated to the Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation.

It seems safe to say consumers will never tire of customization, especially when it comes to their children. What we can't wait to see is, who will make the first line of customizable—reusable or disposable—diapers...?

Website: www.alphabetplates.com

Contact: info@alphabetplates.com

Spotted by: [swissmiss](#)