



# Better Together

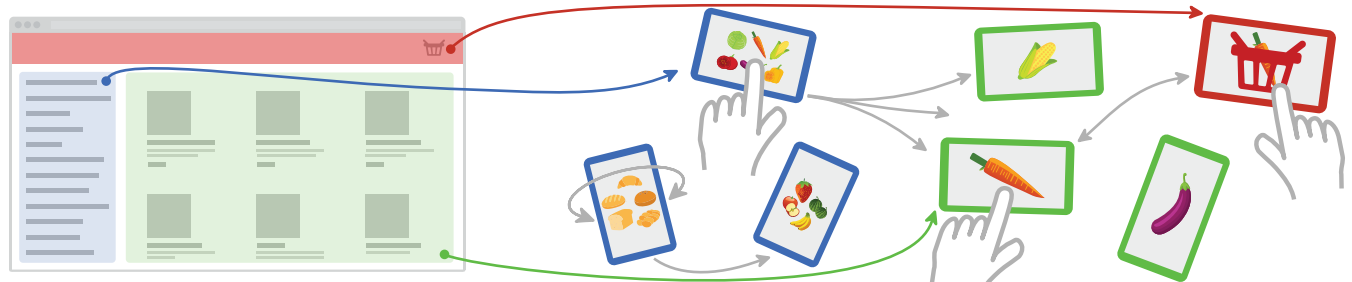
## Overview



Better Together is a plug-in based platform designed to disaggregate the components of complex services, allowing separate mobile phones to each represent and provide a single component of the overall interaction.

Mainstream mobile interactions are focused around individual devices, with any collaboration happening via 'the cloud'. We carried out design workshops with emergent users, revealing opportunities for novel collocated collaborative interactions. Better Together is a framework for disaggregating services locally, splitting interaction elements over separate mobiles. This distribution supports both sharing of resources (such as screen real-estate, or mobile data); and, scaffolding of inclusive interaction in mixed groups (e.g., in terms of literacy or prior technology exposure). We developed two prototypes to explore the concept, trialling them with emergent users in South Africa and India. The resulting platform is plug-in driven and is able to disaggregate any service.

## User Interaction



Better Together disaggregates existing services over multiple devices. Left: a shopping website on a laptop screen, with the familiar lists of categories and products, and a site-wide basket. Right: Better Together splits core components of a service onto separate phones - in this case there are seven - allowing them to be arranged according to users' preferences and interacted with independently. In the example shown, different phones are used for categories (highlighted in blue), products (green) and the basket (red) of the same shopping website. Users touch the screens to perform actions such as adding to (or removing from) the basket, or selecting a category to show; and, flip phones to switch to the next item or category.

**Plug-ins** |    [bettertogethertoolkit.org](http://bettertogethertoolkit.org)

This tool is part of the Digital Inclusion and Participation Toolkit. For more information see: [digitalinclusion toolkit.org](http://digitalinclusion toolkit.org)



Swansea University  
Prifysgol Abertawe

**IDC**  
School of Design



**EPSRC**  
Engineering and Physical Sciences  
Research Council