

Heuristic Evaluation Report

We exchanged prototypes with another team in our tutorial. We evaluated their prototype and they evaluated ours. The idea is to have them test the app out as users would and identify issues. We could then improve our prototype based on their feedback. However, we did not receive their feedback until the afternoon of Nov 24, ie. The day the deliverable was due. Because of this, our ability to fix the issues they identified was essentially nil. However, there was significant overlap between the important issues that they identified and what we found with the help of our TA in the final tutorial before the due date. Even though it was too late to be much help for this deliverable, there is still value in reviewing their feedback for improving the prototype for the final deliverable/presentation and for deepening our understanding of the User Centred Design process.

Time is always a constraint for any project, so prioritizing issues is key. More important issues should be fixed first and less important issues can wait. We can thus categorize the identified issues into three broad categories:

- Important – must be fixed before submitting prototype
- Less important – can wait to be fixed for the final deliverable
- Suggestions for future projects – lessons to keep in mind for our next design project

The two biggest issues the other team identified were lack of documentation/explanation of functionality and restricted navigation. While we tried to make the functionality of the app match common smartphone apps, it was useful to hear that others found it confusing. We thus added more text explanations of the various functions on each page. They also noted that there was no easy way to navigate back to the home page. It would take possible several taps of the back button to get home, depending on the page a user is on. To fix this, we made the “Green Thumb” logo on each page clickable for navigation back to the home page.

A third major issue that we identified with the TA was the basic nature of our virtual garden representation. Our brainstorming/ideation had given us the idea of having a full virtual and graphical depiction of a garden with the ability to drag and drop plants and plan the garden. Our lo-fi and initial hi-fi prototypes instead used a simpler rectangular grid representation. The TA Brandon felt that our original idea was innovative and impressive and that the simpler design dragged down the overall impact of our app. We thus implemented the more detailed and realistic virtual garden.

There were numerous other issues that ended up being broken/missing links in the Adobe XD project. While these were simple to fix, they were important since they needed to be fixed before submission of deliverable.

There were two main issues in the “Less Important” category: non-clickable elements on the main page, and lack of undo/redo. These would be nice to fix/implement given the time, but with the deadline looming and the late delivery of this feedback prevents everything from being addressed before submitting deliverable 4.

The category of “Suggestions for future projects” consists of the aesthetic issues raised by the heuristic evaluation. The two main ones were that the main page was busy/cluttered and that the background image was distracting and visually overpowering. While these issues are very subjective (we quite like

the background image and find the main page does a good job of presenting some relevant information) it is important to consider many different opinions since we hope to have many different users.

The feedback we received from the heuristic evaluation was very useful and we have already made some improvements based on the feedback. It was unfortunate that we received the feedback on the same day the deliverable was due and couldn't take full advantage of it.