Alex Banning

November 24, 2024

UW Bothell – CSS 545 Mobile Computing

Checkpoint 4 – Focus Groups

“MeetMeHalfway” v1.1 Beta Testing Report

I conducted user beta testing with the “MeetMeHalfway Beta Testing Questionnaire.docx.” Users were given an overview of the application and its purpose, then explored the app by following the instructions in this testing questionnaire. After messing with the features and exploring the UI, they were asked to respond to some questions with comment sections available.

Here is a summary of the results:

**How would you rate the design of this app (visual appeal)?**

**AVG: 3.33/5.00**

Comments that agreed across testers:

* The information presented was simple and intuitive, but certain aspects of the UI like the saved trip details and the nearby result details were lacking in visual appeal and sometimes confusing
* Generally, it was easy to follow the UI path and figure out what to do, but not super interesting or information dense at first sight

Other comments:

* Some bugs in the info circle display functionality. Doesn’t come up right away.
* When you mess around with the reactive map, tapping on a different location does not trigger the correct map response. It only works if you leave the map alone.

**How would you rate the performance of this app (speed)?**

**AVG: 4.33/5.00**

Comments that agreed across testers:

* The processing is relatively fast, wasn’t waiting around for things to load
* Some bugginess in the nearby results functionality, both with the info circle action not loading data immediately and the map as mentioned above

Other comments:

* Really easy to quickly find results nearby
* Unintuitive to have Hotels and Food and Activities in separate sections because we don’t know to scroll down for that info, add some sort of indication there’s more below or filters for what you’re looking for

**How would you rate this app compared to other methods of planning a trip?**

**AVG: 4.33/5.00**

Comments that agreed across testers:

* It is really quick and easy to find a meeting point and results nearby
* A very useful starting tool when planning a trip
* I would still probably use Google and other methods when planning a trip for more dense and useful information
* This app would be better if it integrated Yelp to see reviews of places

**Was this app intuitive to use?**

**100% agreed yes**

Comments that agreed across testers:

* It’s very straightforward and useful, just wanting more from it in terms of information about specific places

Other final likes:

* “I like that everything is in one app and I don’t have to switch around”
* “Good purpose and concept, simple design and intuitive to use”
* “Love the concept”

Other final dislikes:

* “I would like to have more choices of meeting points, maybe not major cities but more along the route”
* “Fix the bugs with the map and info circle”
* “Place and activity options need to be fine-tuned, especially in more remote locations (i.e. I don’t want to hangout at a local high school)”

**Key Takeaways:**

It is clear to me that my potential users, which represent a wide range of tech savviness, age, and other demographic factors, see the initial value in an app like this. They love the idea and generally have a consensus that it is easier to use than searching it all on Google and keeping track of results in their heads or on paper, but there are some aspects lacking in depth.

For example, the map and info circle bugginess leads users down a confusing path because they don’t really understand why it’s happening, they just see weird things happening and don’t know what to do about it. Things like the info circle not displaying correct information right away and the map bugginess need to be fixed in order to keep users interested in the process of completing a trip plan in this app.

Furthermore, any information displayed when pressing the info circle should be actionable. If a website is displayed, it should be clickable because that is the intuition of the user to find more information about a place. I was already planning on connecting the info circle to the Yelp API to be able to show details, website, contact info, and reviews, so my users can benefit from input by other people about the place they’re interested in, but this beta testing has shown me that is the very first necessary next step.

Another key takeaway is that my users find the UI simple and intuitive, which is good for getting value from the app, but also bad in terms of keeping users interested the longer they spend using the app. Modern UI principles need to be implemented in the nearby results section that makes the tappable areas of nearby results rows more intuitive than 3 separate button areas. The more details sections will naturally upgrade if I’m using the Yelp API simply because of so much more information being present. I can also copy the Yelp design in this section so it looks familiar to the user.

Finally, something needs to happen when the user selects save trip. It currently saves the file, but nothing happens on the UI, so I found that users spammed the button repeatedly not really knowing what to do next. I should create a finishing screen to tell them they are done with the current trip plan.

Overall, this testing really helped me see how people who are not familiar with my app interact with it, and gave a lot of useful perspective on what to do next. Here is the to-do list following testing:

1. Implement the Yelp API for more details
2. Fix map and info circle display bugs
3. Add a “finished” screen when saving a trip
4. Add to the logic when searching for a midpoint to find more results when the starting locations are close
5. Update major cities list (sometimes it would skip over)
6. Fix bugs in nearby results (showing results that are super far away)