

# Usability Study: Spoiled Tomatillos

Coders Unltd. (Team 26)

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February 2, 2018

## Introduction

This is a report on user experience testing for a social media website that is under production called Spoiled Tomatillos. Spoiled Tomatillos will be a social media platform in which users can share feedback on movies, rate them, and view suggestions for movies to watch based on algorithms driven by friends' movie preferences. This report specifically outlines a case study for an end-user on a prototype website.

## Methodology

Before showing participants the UI, they were introduced briefly to the concept of "Spoiled Tomatillos", e.g. "It's a social media platform intended to merge the database features of IMDB with the social aspects of Facebook". Then, they were given a more specific description of the user profile they would be testing, e.g. "The platform allows for users to create groups with other users, similar to Facebook. Group moderators are users who make sure the content within the groups stays appropriate".

The mock-up UI was implemented in PowerPoint and designed to look like a web browser so there would be some element of familiarity to the participants. The prototype had links implemented so the participants could click in the interface and it would behave essentially like a real website. Participants were told directly what task to perform, (e.g. "Access the group moderator dashboard") but no specific direction was given as to how to perform each task, not even to "click" anywhere.

If participants agreed to having video taken, video was taken so their actions could be further analyzed later. Otherwise, detailed notes were taken.

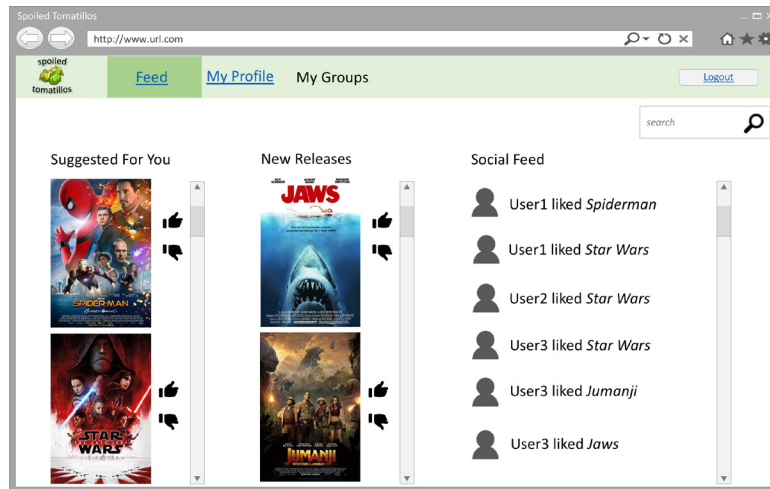
Post task, participants were debriefed; they were asked to provide general comments on their experience with the UI, and they had access to the mock-up to aid them in commenting on specific UI elements.

# User Profile: End User

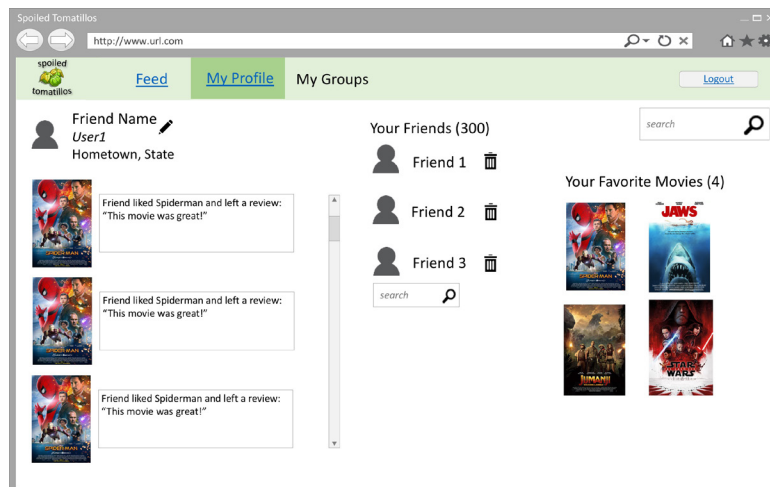
## Prototype



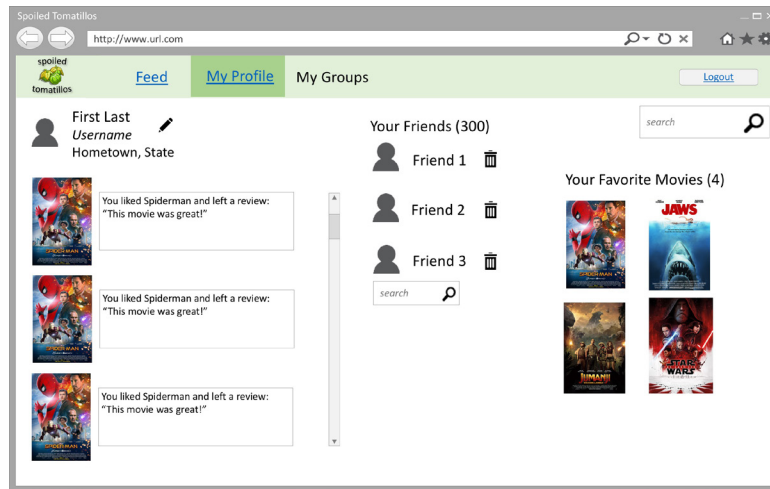
Group 26  
End User



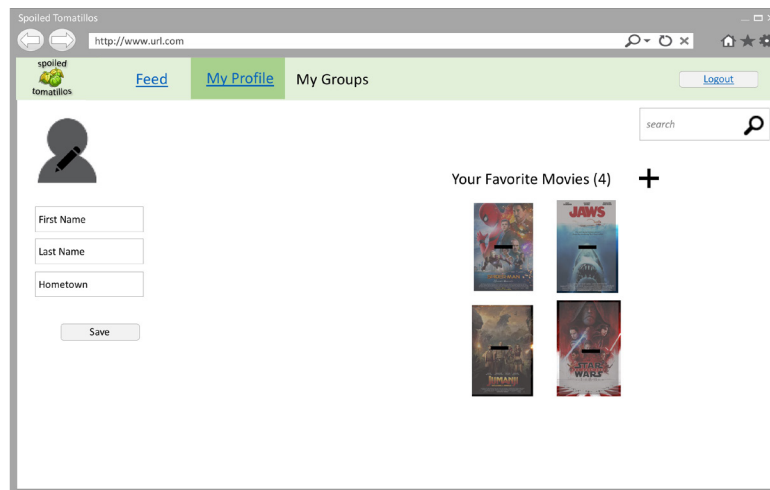
Group 26  
End User



Group 26  
End User



Group 26  
End User



Group 26  
End User

## Participant

Age Range: 20-29

Gender: Female

Education Level: Undergraduate Degree

Occupation: Clinical Patient Data Analyst I

Industry: Pharmaceutical

Technical Ability: Average

The end-user has no experience with this project other than the main concept that was explained to her as a study participant.

## Tasks

1. Navigate to friend 1's profile
2. Navigate to 'my profile'
3. Navigate to 'edit information'

## Test Results

The end-user reported that she liked the simple interface and suggested that if advertisements were implemented they should be banners on the sides of the page

The end-user reported that this page looked strikingly similar and had most of the same elements of a friends profile. This is partly because the newsfeed is visible from both pages.

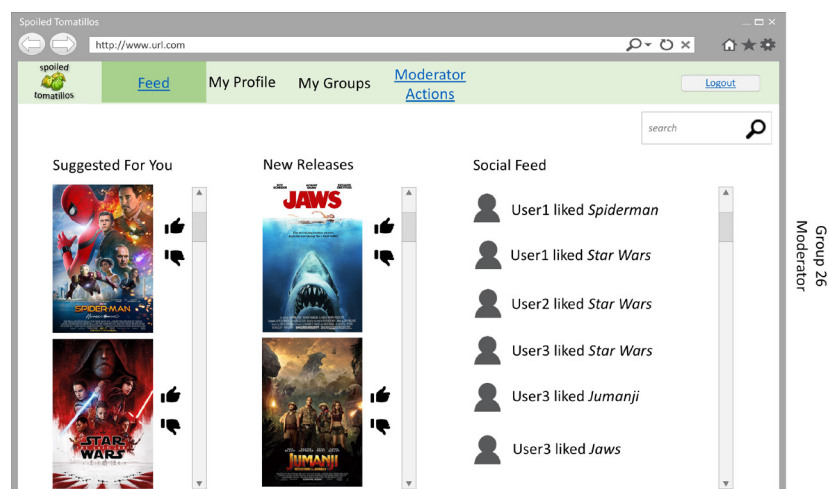
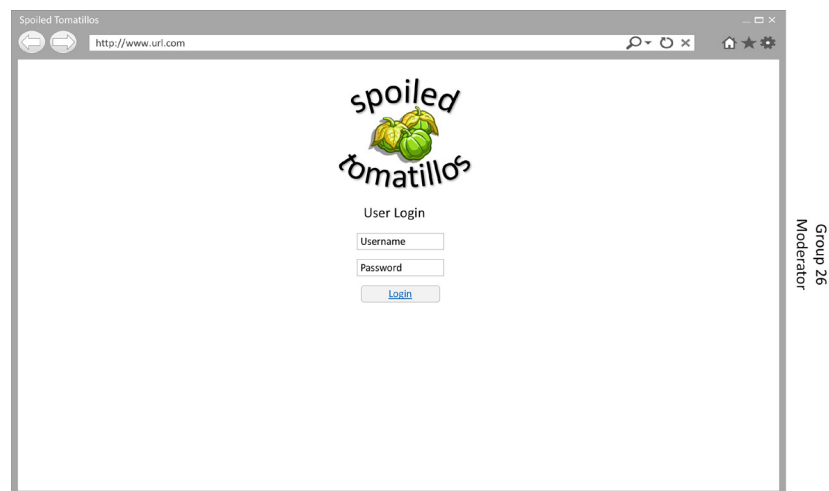
The end-user suggested that rather than bringing the user to a new page upon selecting button to edit information, a window pops-up with fields where information can be entered and the fields updated

## Discussion

The end-user did have several suggestions. One was that clicking on a movie review that appears in the newsfeed should bring up a pop-up with a synopsis and more information about the movie as well as a direct link to the trailer; she said that if she doesn't know what a movie is about, she would not want to look up the trailer on Youtube. The end-user also suggested a facebook model of adding a biography to the profile. Rather than the individual user being able to write anything on the profile, which would have to be vetted, a series of questions appear and questions and answers should be formatted in a profile type display.

## User Profile: Group Moderator

### Prototype



Spoiled Tomatillos

http://www.url.com

Feed My Profile My Groups Moderator Actions Logout

Review Flagged Comments

Username	Comment	Review?
User1	"This movie sucks!"	✓ ✕
User2	"I didn't like this actress"	✓ ✕
User3	"F&@*#^!!"	✓ ✕
User4	"I'm not a fan of this movie"	✓ ✕
User5	"I don't like you!"	✓ ✕
User6	"This was bad."	✓ ✕
User7	"I hate tomatillos."	✓ ✕

Group 26  
Moderator

Spoiled Tomatillos

http://www.url.com

Feed My Profile My Groups Moderator Actions Logout

Review Flagged Comments

Username	Comment	Review?
User1	"This movie sucks!"	✓ ✕
User2	"I didn't like this actress"	✓ ✕
User3	"F&@*#^!!"	✓ ✕
User4	"I'm not a fan of this movie"	✓ ✕
User5	"I don't like you!"	✓ ✕
User6	"This was bad."	✓ ✕
User7	"I hate tomatillos."	✓ ✕

Review User3's Comment

"F&@\*#^!!"

Delete Cancel

Group 26  
Moderator

Spoiled Tomatillos

http://www.url.com

Feed My Profile My Groups Moderator Actions Logout

Review Flagged Comments

Username	Comment	Review?
User1	"This movie sucks!"	✓ ✕
User2	"I didn't like this actress"	✓ ✕
User4	"I'm not a fan of this movie"	✓ ✕
User5	"I don't like you!"	✓ ✕
User6	"This was bad."	✓ ✕
User7	"I hate tomatillos."	✓ ✕
		✓ ✕

Group 26  
Moderator

## Participant

Age: 20

Gender: Male

Education: Undergraduate degree in progress

Occupation: Student/Musician

Industry: Music

Technical ability: Average

Prior experience with product: None

Notes: Has no experience designing software, spends 2-10 hours a day on the computer, encounters 3 to 5 new websites a month.

## Tasks

1. Access the group moderator dashboard
2. Recognize an inappropriate comment that should be deleted amongst a list of comments flagged for review
3. Delete the inappropriate comment

## Test Results

Participant completed all 3 tasks within 1 minute with one error.

Participant did not agree to have video taken.

Participant was told: “Access the moderator panel”. Participant was unsure how to login at first, due to being presented with “Username” and “Password” boxes. In an attempt to figure their way out they clicked the username box and that advanced the slide. (It became apparent at this point that because these were PowerPoint slides, clicking anywhere other than the linked text would advance slides, possibly to a slide that wouldn’t make sense in context. This was not mentioned to the participant but noted in case the use of PowerPoint is continued.)

The next slide the participant saw was the moderator’s feed. While they were mousing over the page just exploring a bit, they accidentally dragged two fingers across the trackpad, which reversed the PowerPoint to the login page (Again, a quirk of PowerPoint, noted). But they remembered clicking on the username box took them to the feed page before, so they did that again, and were taken again to the feed page.

They almost immediately noticed the “Moderator Actions” text at the top of the page, and very quickly clicked on it, taking them to the moderator panel. They were told they completed the first task.

Before the participant could be told to complete the second task of recognizing an inappropriate comment, they verbally noted the comment with the text “F&@\*#^!!” seemed inappropriate. This was essentially the intended outcome of the task, so they were told they completed the second task.

Participant was then told: “Delete that comment.” The participant hesitated for a second, then quickly clicked the “x” button to the right of the inappropriate comment. This was not the intended button for them to click - it was intended that they would click the check button instead. But, luckily, they were taken to the page with the “Review Comment” dialog box anyway because of the order of the PowerPoint slides, so no comment was made. Once there, they clicked the “Delete” button without hesitation, and

were then taken to the page with the inappropriate comment removed. They were then told they completed the third task.

In debriefing, the participant noted:

The login page was lacking some familiar elements, like “forgot password” and “register” buttons, that they probably would have clicked on first when they were trying to figure out how to log in.

When searching for the moderator panel, the fact that there was a tab at the top of the page titled “Moderator Actions”, which included “moderator” in its name, helped them find it.

If there were more options to click in the top bar, finding “Moderator Actions” would have been more confusing

He understood the check and x symbols on the Moderator Actions page to mean “this comment is actually fine, remove it from the queue” and “delete this comment”, respectively. He came to that conclusion very quickly, which is why he clicked on the “x” button.

## Discussion

Firstly, we learned PowerPoint has features that make it a less-than-optimal prototyping tool, without taking the time to work around those features. But, other than that, the fact that the participant managed to complete all 3 tasks within 1 minute with only one error means the UI is moderately successful.

In particular, the word “moderator” should be kept in any UI element intended to take the user to the moderator panel, as it aids in finding it when the user is looking for moderator tools. The number of tabs across the top of the screen should also be kept to a minimum, as the more that get added, the more difficult it is to find the tab needed.

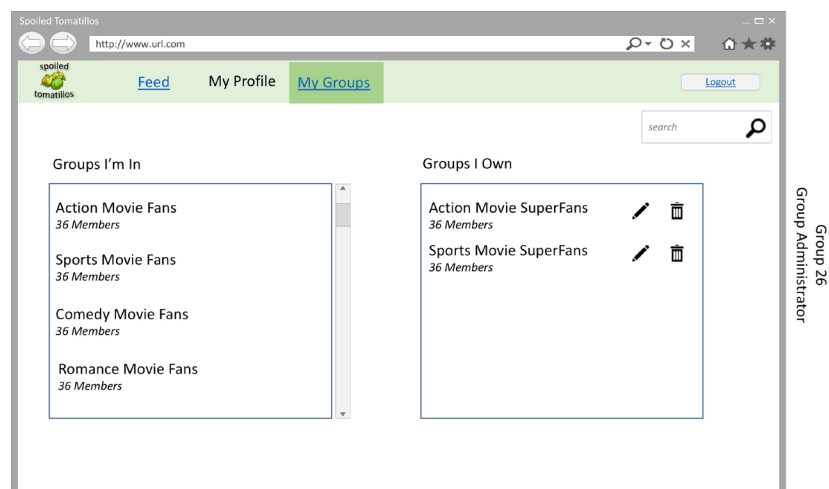
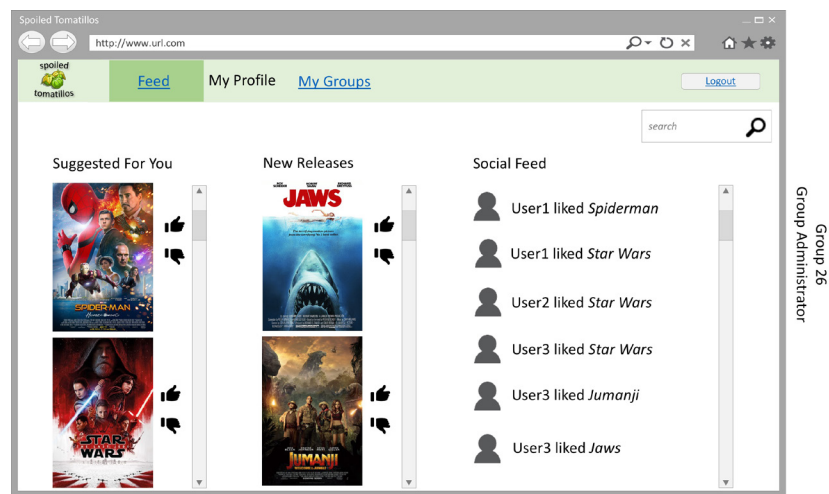
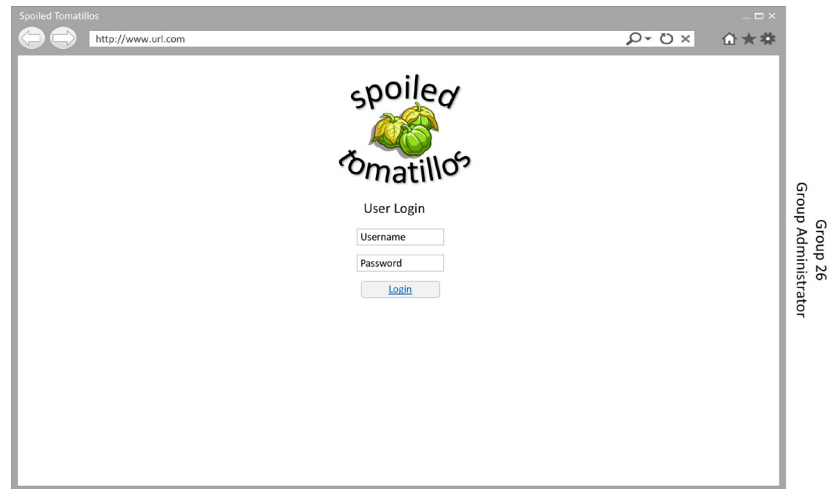
Presenting empty username and password fields probably made the user think they needed to be filled before they could successfully login; in future mockups, having those fields filled with dummy text would probably help disambiguate what to do.

In the case of the user clicking the “x” when it was hoped they would click the check, it is apparent the user naturally associated a check with the “good” action, or approving action, i.e. this comment is fine,

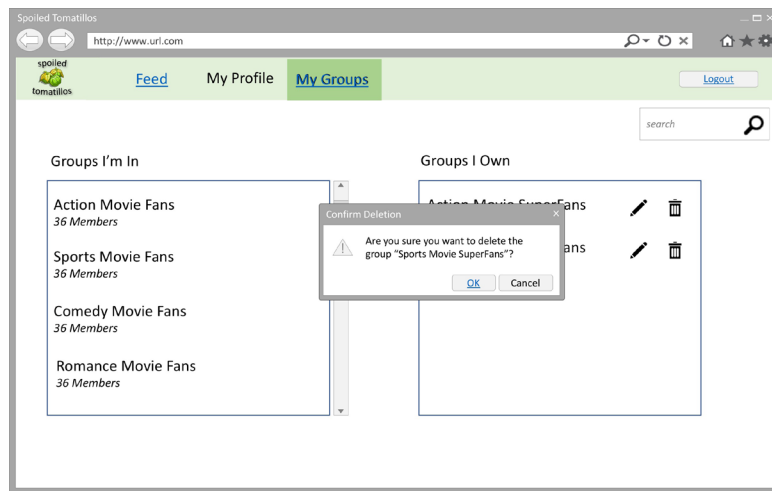
and the “x” with deletion, as x’s are commonly used in other UIs. The function of those buttons should be changed to match what users will naturally interpret the check and x shapes to mean.

## User Profile: Group Administrator

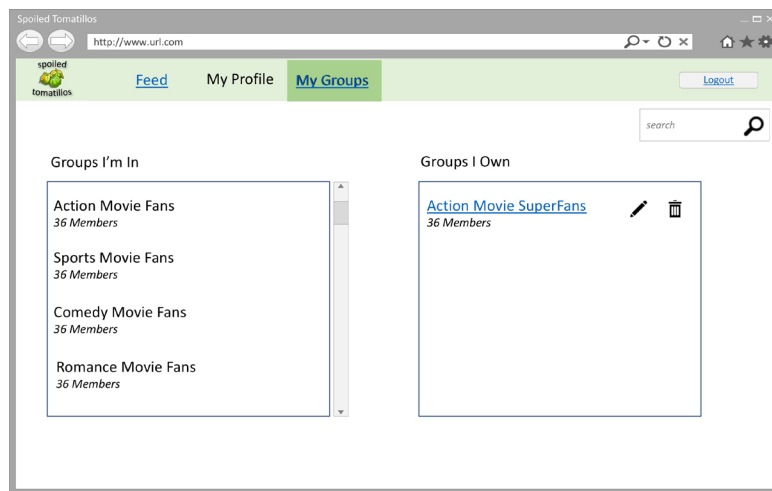
### Prototype



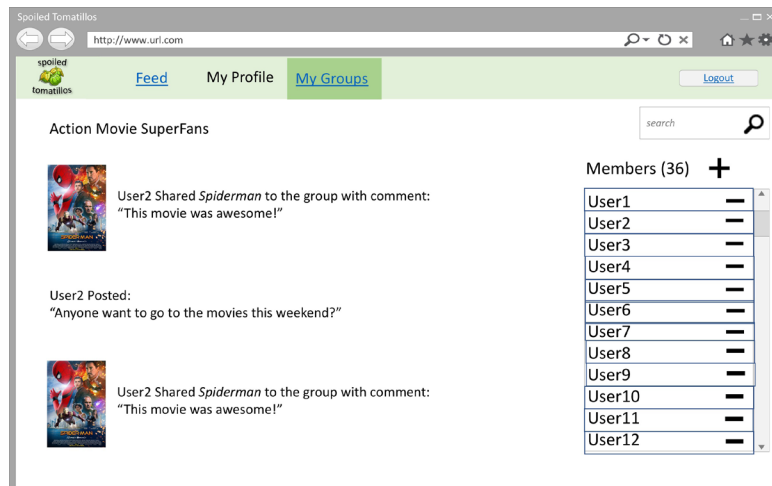




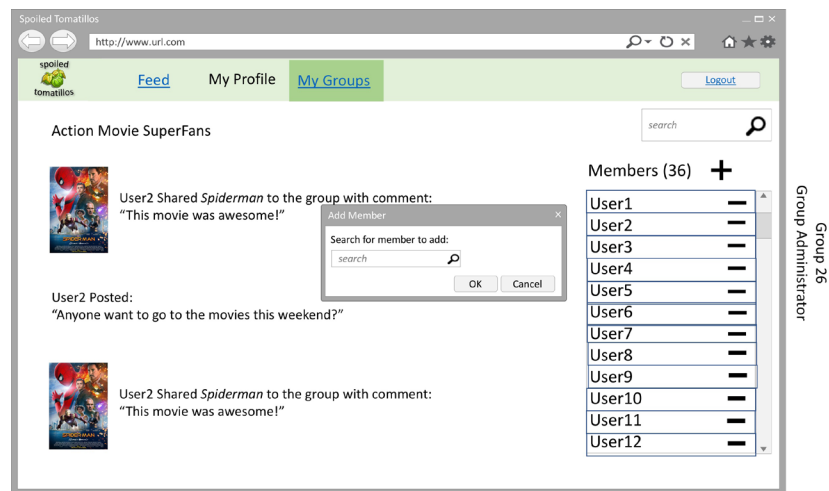
Group 26  
Group Administrator



Group 26  
Group Administrator



Group 26  
Group Administrator



## Participant

Age: 22

Gender: Male

Education Level: Bachelor's degree from Northeastern

Occupation: Research assistant at Mass General Hospital

Industry: Behavioral Neuroscience

Technical Competency: Average

Prior Experience with Product: None

## Tasks

1. Visit their groups
2. Delete their group "Sports Movie SuperFans"
3. Add another user to their group "Action Movie SuperFans"

## Test Results

The first task was to ask the subject to visit his groups. The subject was given a mockup in PowerPoint starting from the login screen and was told to proceed to login, which was deemed to be trivial and not worth being a specific task, and then navigate to their groups from there. As the administrator of this task, I was specifically looking at how quickly the subject was able to recognize how to do this within our UI and navigate there himself. He was able to do so basically immediately after he was instructed, which was a good sign.

Something he questioned was about how many groups we expect an end user to join and how many groups we expect a user to act as a group administrator for. He seemed to think that a user might only be a part of a handful of groups, so it may not warrant its own tab at the top.

The second task was to ask the subject to delete a group that he is the administrator for. He was also able to accomplish this quickly, as he noticed the garbage can logo right next to the group and clicked yes when the dialog prompt asked him if he was sure he wanted to delete the group. The one thing he wondered about was whether or not this could be undone in the future if he, for some reason, wanted to reactivate the group.

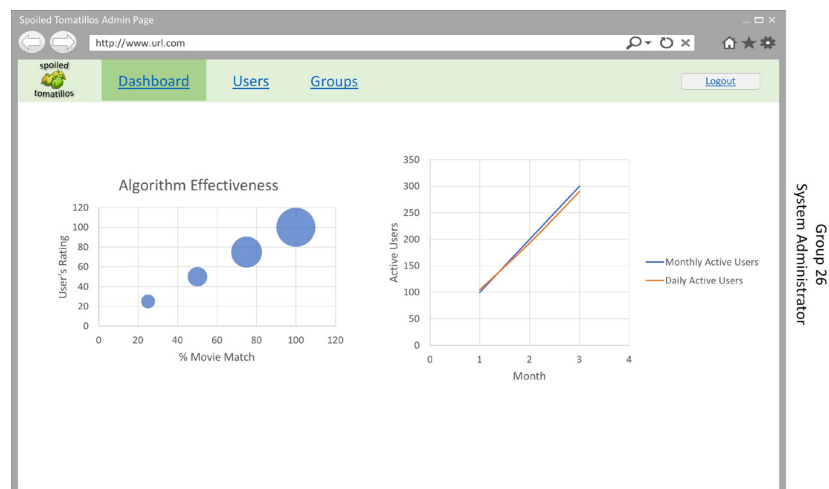
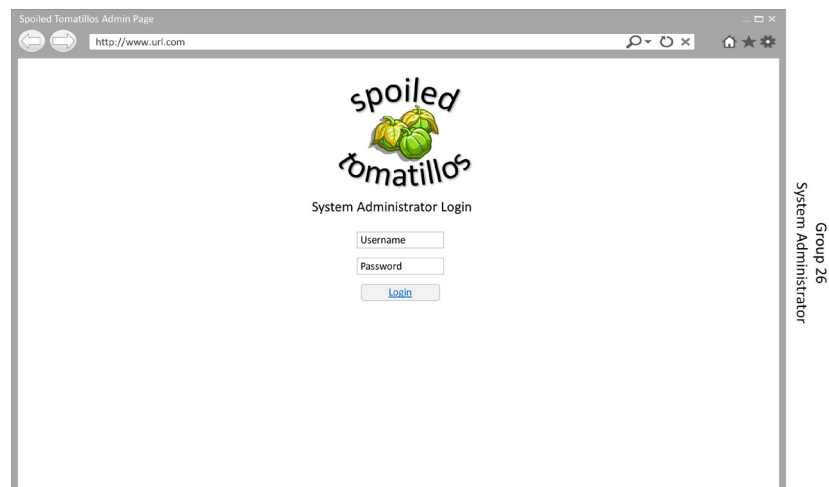
The third task was to ask the subject to add another user to another one of the groups he administrates. He wasn't totally sure right away about what to click for this one, but eventually realized that the correct button was the pencil logo. Once the dialog box popped up to ask him to input another user's name, the prototype was finished. But he said aloud that he knew what to do next.

## Discussion

The biggest feedback he gave was that he liked how Facebook has their group implementation, and that the ones that the user accesses most frequently are on their homepage. He suggested that maybe we could consider that in our implementation. He also said that maybe, like Facebook, when you access a group's homepage the system could be smart enough to render the UI that is specific for that type of user. Like a group administrator would see buttons to delete/edit the group on the group homepage and that an end user on the same page wouldn't since they don't have those privileges.

## User Profile: System Administrator

### Prototype



Spoiled Tomatillos Admin Page

http://www.url.com

spoiled tomatillos

Dashboard Users Groups Logout

Username	Flagged Comments	Edit User	Delete User
User1			
User2			
User3			
User4			
User5			
User6	"This movie *@#\$% ! sucks!"		
User7			
User8			
User9			
User10			
User11			
User12			

Delete Confirmation

Are you sure you want to delete user "User6"?

OK Cancel

Group 26  
System Administrator

Spoiled Tomatillos Admin Page

http://www.url.com

spoiled tomatillos

Dashboard Users Groups Logout

Username	Flagged Comments	Edit User	Delete User
User1			
User2			
User3			
User4			
User5			
User7			
User8			
User9			
User10			
User11			
User12			

Group 26  
System Administrator

Spoiled Tomatillos Admin Page

http://www.url.com

spoiled tomatillos

Dashboard Users Groups Logout

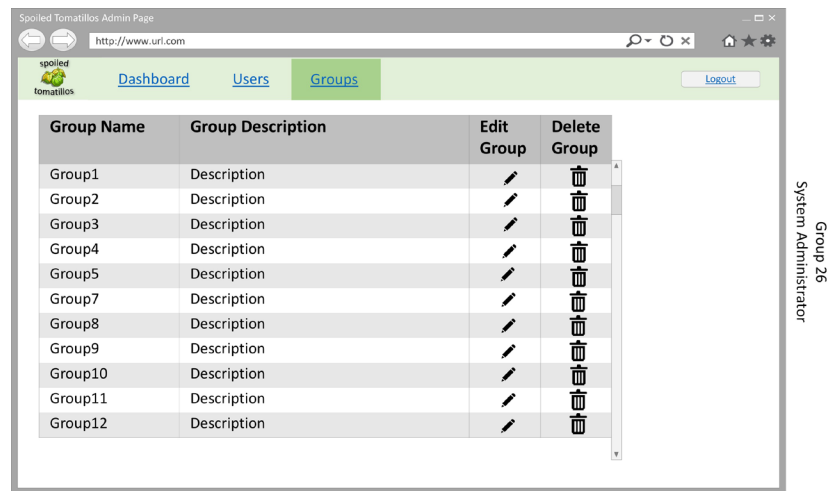
Group Name	Group Description	Edit Group	Delete Group
Group1	Description		
Group2	Description		
Group3	Description		
Group4	Description		
Group5	Description		
Group6	"This group *@#\$% ! sucks!"		
Group7	Description		
Group8	Description		
Group9	Description		
Group10	Description		
Group11	Description		
Group12	Description		

Delete Confirmation

Are you sure you want to delete group "Group6"?

OK Cancel

Group 26  
System Administrator



## Participant

Age: 22

Gender: Male

Education Level: Bachelor's degree in progress

Occupation: Student

Industry: Engineering

Technical Competency: Average

Prior Experience with Product: None

Notes: Participant is familiar with IMDB, Rotten Tomatoes, and various social media, and has an interest in film critiquing, both personally and through film courses taken as electives in school.

## Tasks

The System Administrator tester was asked to perform three tasks: View the dashboard page; delete a user with an inappropriate comment; delete a group with an inappropriate description. The users, groups, and dashboard were designed so that there was only one User and one Group with an inappropriate comment or description. The tester was presented the tasks one at a time, and each task was completed without guidance before the next began.

## Measurements

The System Administrator test subject was measured for ease of finding the proper page to complete the tasks and ease of deletion of users and groups. The tester was allowed to ask questions for clarification, so those questions were also measured. Finally, the tester was asked to provide verbal feedback after the test was over.

## Test Results

The tester found little interest in the dashboard page and had a hard time understanding the need for that data. The tester was easily able to navigate to the Users and Groups pages and delete the appropriate User and Group via the delete icon. Additionally, he found the confirmation dialog when deleting to be helpful in preventing mistakes as well as confirming deletion of the correct user. The tester asked no questions during the test.

## **Discussion**

The System Administrator interface is meant to be simple and familiar to many basic technology users. The hardest part of the test for the tester was knowing what was “clickable” and what was not - at one point, he tried to maximize the slide, which is not functionality in PowerPoint but was not clear to him. However, the tester validated the ease of navigation of the dashboard, user, and group pages. The dashboard page will need to be further flushed out to display more functional data to the client.