

HomeWork I: Individual Heuristic Evaluation

Overview

This is an individual assignment that you should complete on your own. You will get an individual grade.

In this assignment, you will perform a heuristic evaluation of a user interface. You can select the application to review.

Instructions

We have talked about design principles and heuristic evaluation in class. Now it is time to apply these principles to a concrete user interface.

Find an application that you can run on your cell phone, tablet or computer. You are free to choose the kind of app you study, but make sure you describe it in your report.

Your submission document should contain separate sections for each major part of the application. In each section, describe which principle or heuristics the interface violated. For each problem, state:

1. Which of the 15 principles we covered in class (see *lecture slides*) or [Ten Usability Heuristics](#) is violated. You can pick either 15-principle-set or 10 heuristics as your “golden standard”.
2. Argue why the interface violates the heuristic (1-3 sentences).
3. Rate the [severity](#) of the violation and explain your rating in one sentence (by referring to *frequency*, *impact*, and *persistence* of the problem as suggested by Nielsen).

Include **screenshots** in your description as evidence of the problem - you can grab these with the screen print function on PCs or Macs. Both Android and iOS devices

also have methods for saving screenshots ([iOS Screenshots](#), [Android Screenshots](#)). Annotating screenshots with arrows or callouts can be especially effective.

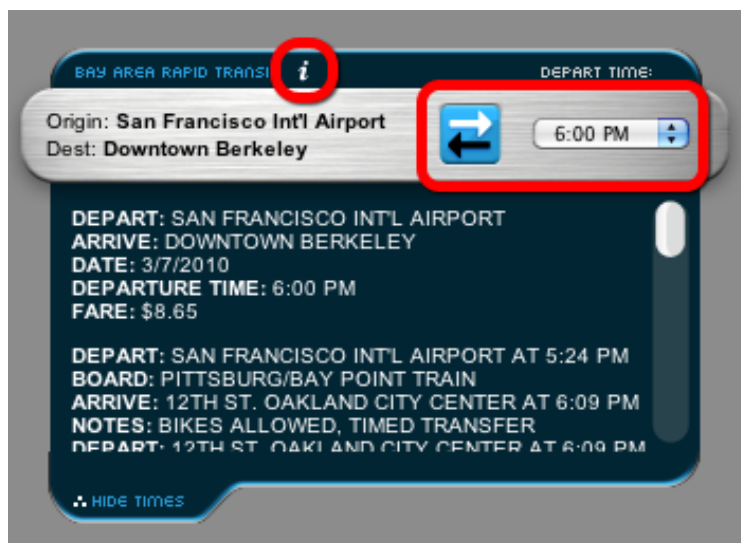
Hints

For examples how these heuristics apply to mobile applications, you may want to look at [Suzanne Ginsburg's iPhone App Usability Heuristics](#).

Example

Here is an example of a single violation in an interface - the [BART Planner Widget](#) for OS X.

Main Screen



Heuristic: Consistency and Standards

Explanation

The interface offers inconsistent ways to change different trip options. While a dropdown box to choose departure time and a button to reverse stations are available on the main screen, the origin and destination stations cannot be changed on this screen. To change these options, the user must click on the "i" icon in the top bar (which only becomes visible on mouse rollover).

Severity

3 = Major usability problem: important to fix, so should be given high priority

I rank this problem as major because it occurs *frequently* - every time the user wants to change stations; and because it is *persistent* - there is no way for the user to change application behavior to put all controls on the same page.

Grading Rubric

Criterion	Great solution 100%	Acceptable solution 50%	Poor solution 0%
Is your evaluation based on Nielsen's list of heuristics? 25pts	Yes, evaluation clearly grounded in Nielsen's heuristics	Evaluation applies heuristics sometimes.	No, evaluation not tied to Nielsens heuristics.
Do your arguments make sense? 25pts	Yes, correct application of heuristics.	Arguments are sometimes unclear.	No arguments, or totally off base.
How many heuristics did you discuss? 25pts	>=5 violations	3-4 violations	0-2 violations
Did you give the found problems severity ratings? 25 pts	Yes	Sometimes; or unclear rationale.	No severity ratings.

Submission

This homework will be turned in an electronic format (PDF, Word, ...).