

USABILITY EVALUATION

Product Name : Snapchat

About:

Snapchat is an American multimedia instant messaging app and service developed by Snap Inc., originally Snapchat Inc. One of the principal features of Snapchat is that pictures and messages are usually only available for a short time before they become inaccessible to their recipients. Roughly 150 million people use Snapchat every day, and they consume around 800 hours of video per second.

Affordances:

The major affordance of the application are:

- Photo sharing: Users may quickly capture and exchange photographs and videos with friends
- Filters and Lenses : Users can add a range of filters, lenses, and augmented reality (AR) features to their images and videos.
- Instant messaging: Users can communicate with friends in real-time chats and send text messages.
- Memories: Users can save and revisit their previously sent snaps.

Signifiers:

The above mentioned affordances are signified to the user with intuitive icons, buttons, and labels. Users can take snaps or videos by pressing the camera button. The buttons for the filters, lenses, and stickers are found in the home screen. All these help users to clearly identify and inform.

Constraints:

Users of the Snapchat application are constrained by the design of the product in several ways:

The main feature of Snapchat is its ability to send pictures and videos that can be viewed only once. However, it can be a constraint for users who want to keep or reference content for longer durations. They have to manually go set the snap to be allowed to save which are not known for many users in general.

While text-based messaging is available on Snapchat, there are restrictions on how much text can be written in a single message or caption. This limits users from typing long messages or captions for a video or a photo.

While visually appealing, Snapchat's user interface can be complicated and less user-friendly for beginners. For those looking for a simple experience, the learning curve associated with using new features, filters, and settings may be a barrier.

The privacy-focused design of Snapchat puts restrictions on users. When users wish to return or save important photos, the inaccessibility of snaps shared to friends can be a restriction. Additionally, it may be difficult to understand the app's privacy settings, which could result in unintentional data breaches.

While Snapchat offers a wide range of filters or lenses for taking photos, finding filters can be challenging for new users, as frequently used filters are not saved. Moreover, without an internet connection, only basic filters are available for taking snaps.

Design of the product:

What I Like:

The fundamental idea behind Snapchat—sending instantaneous pictures and videos—is unique and innovative. Without the stress of maintaining an online presence permanently, it promotes informal and open conversation. This design decision supports the app's original appeal to a younger population looking for privacy.

The numerous tools, filters, lenses, and stickers that Snapchat provides make content creation fun and engaging.

The user interface is lively and visually appealing. Once users get used to it, the app's mix of icons, colors, and swipe motion for navigation gives it a modern and user-friendly feel.

The messaging experience is improved with features such as read receipts and real-time typing notifications.

What I Don't Like:

Users occasionally desire to save snaps after the allotted viewing time has passed. But unless they have not changed the timer settings, they can't save them. This is difficult due to the design of Snapchat.

The accessibility features on Snapchat should be expanded. Accessibility of the app may be restricted for users with disabilities due to navigational challenges.

Advertisements playing between friends' stories or other content, can negatively impact the user experience.

Although appealing, Snapchat's interface might be challenging for new users. This is because it was primarily designed for a young audience. So older people could take some time to learn and comprehend all the functions and settings.

There's a lot of privacy concerns with Snapchat. For example, on opening the application by default it goes to a camera which if the user is not aware may lead to taking a snap of someone else without their knowledge.

The app uses a lot of data, especially when activating filters or lenses. Users with small data plans may find this to be a restriction.

Designers perspective:

The user experience that Snapchat has created places a high value on privacy, creativity, spontaneity, and engagement. It sees its target audience as young adults who prefer non-traditional social media platforms. The designers have done a good job in creating the application to the most of what it should be. But the overloading of features and privacy concerns can be intimidating. Hence, the application should be improved focusing on these issues.

Human centered design:

Snapchat demonstrates human-centered design by meeting the needs of its users, which are primarily young people who want to be creative, authentic, and have fun. Snapchat uses an iterative design process to ensure that the product is always improving and meeting the needs of its users. In general, Snapchat is a well-designed platform that offers numerous examples of human-centered design. However, there are a few areas where Snapchat's platform could be made more accessible, users could have more control, and it could be more transparent.