

Heuristic Evaluation

Evaluation of Desktop prototype of the group User-Centered/ Urbanhub project

Part I:

Samaneh Gharehdagh Sani S309100

Part II:

A project focused on urban trip planning that considers user-specific elements such as budget constraints, preferred dates, and the number of individuals in the group.

Part III: Evaluation Execution

I performed an in-person heuristic evaluation, engaging with the group and assessing their Desktop prototype, which was presented through paper prototypes. Throughout the evaluation, I actively sought clarification from the group when encountering uncertainties in the platform prototype. The information provided by the team about the project, including the general overview and the three specific tasks covered in the prototype, was clear and met my expectations. The prototype was presented in printed form, and the interaction involved collaborative efforts with the group to ensure a comprehensive evaluation.

Part IV: List of Violations

1. H1 Visibility of system status

Where: Trip overview-add attraction

What: the system should display a message indicating that the attraction has been added and an updated view of their trip overview.

Why: This information should be presented in a visual and accessible manner, such as a pop-up window for the user to make sure that the modification has been done.

Severity: 2

2. H1 Visibility of system status

Where: My trips-

What: the system should display a message indicating that the trip has been deleted successfully by clicking on Delete.

Why: This information should be presented in a visual and accessible manner, such as a pop-up window for the user to make sure that the modification has been done.

Severity: 2

3. H1 Visibility of system status

Where: Trip overview-is there anything I can do for you

What: the system should display a message indicating that the Message sent successfully by clicking on send.

Why: This information should be presented in a visual and accessible manner, such as a pop-up window for the user to make sure that the modification has been done.

Severity: 2

4. H2 Match between system and the real world

Where: My Trips-Delete trip

What: Use of "Don't Delete" for cancel deleting a whole trip it should be something like "Cancel"

Why: Consider using plain language and simple, recognizable terms that align with users' common knowledge and mental models.

Severity: 3

5. H2 Match between system and the real world

Where: Plan your next trip-Heading

What: Instead of Plan your next trip as a heading I preferer to use "Plan your trip".

Why: it's a current trip that the user is planning for not the next one.

Severity: 2

6. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Choose your destination

What: The app doesn't have any "Cancel" to exit planning for a new trip.

Why: Clearly label and place "Cancel" buttons in the user interface, so the user quickly understands how to exit or return to a previous stage.

Severity: 2

7. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Plan your next trip- How many people are going

What: The app lacks the option to include kids (0-17 y/o) when adjusting the number of people.

Why: Fails to address families as potential users.

Severity: 3

8. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Plan your next trip-How much do you plan to spend on this trip.

What: The platform restricts budget adjustments to only increasing or decreasing 1 euro by 1 and lacking the option for specifying non-round numbers.

Why: Optimal user experience would involve allowing users to input their exact budget directly, avoiding inconvenience for those with specific, precise budget requirements.

Severity: 1

9. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Plan your next trip-add attraction

What: When selecting the hour, the platform offers only half-hour time ranges.

Why: Users may prefer a more precise time selection to adhere to a strict timetable.

Severity: 1

10. H3 User control and freedom

Where: Plan your next trip-which meals would you like to include

What: Limited meal options provided (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) without considering other possibilities like morning or afternoon coffee or snacks.

Why: Given the diverse culinary offerings in various cities, integrating additional options aligns with the platform's AI capabilities, accommodating user preferences more comprehensively.

Severity: 2

11. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: Plan your next trip- How many people are going

What: The platform permits users to adjust the number of people, but the placement of the + and - buttons is reversed from the conventional user expectation.

Why: Inverting the button order deviates from established design standards, potentially causing confusion for users.

Severity: 2

12. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: Trip overview

What: Typically, users expect the back button in this position on other pages.

Why: Inconsistencies in design elements can lead to user confusion; maintaining a standard placement would enhance user experience.

Severity: 3

13. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: My Trips-Clicking on previous trips

What: The action of clicking on previous trips within the "My Trips" section lacks consistency and adherence to standards, as it results in an unintended consequence.

Why: According to established design standards, clicking on a previous trip should typically lead to a view-only mode, allowing users to review the details without the risk of unintentional modifications. However, in this instance, it appears that the action may lead to unintended modifications, violating the principle of consistency and user expectations.

Severity: 3

14. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: Plan your next trip

What: The absence of a home button on this page departs from the expected consistency, as typically, a home button is anticipated to be present at the top of every page.

Why: Ensuring a uniform presence of the home button across all pages is crucial for maintaining a consistent and predictable user experience.

Severity: 3

15. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: Trip Overview - Delete Attraction

What: The confirmation prompt for deleting an attraction is on the left side of the window, contrary to the common practice of having it on the right in web applications.

Why: Deviating from established norms in button placement could cause confusion for users accustomed to standard web application interactions.

Severity: 2

16. H4 Consistency and standards

Where: Trip Overview - Add Attraction

What: The confirmation for saving an attraction is on the usual right-side placement in web applications.

Why: Consistency in button placement aids user familiarity and deviating from this standard may lead to confusion.

Severity: 2

17. H5 Error prevention

Where: Trip Overview - Add Attraction

What: The system lacks a mechanism to prevent users from selecting time-consuming attractions that might be challenging to insert without modification.

Why: Implementing an error prevention feature would assist users in making more informed choices, avoiding the selection of attractions that could disrupt the scheduling process.

Severity: 2

18. H6 Recognition rather than recall

Where: Trip Overview - Add Attraction

What: The system showcases a list of the most viewed attractions based on the city and user input for preferred activities during the attraction addition process, demonstrating a commendable application of "recognition rather than recall".

Why: This feature simplifies the user experience by presenting familiar options, derived from popular searches, eliminating the need for users to recall specific attractions.

Severity: 1

19. H7 Flexibility and efficiency of use

Where: Preferences

What: While the platform allows users to address "more questions" related to preferences, a more user-friendly approach would involve integrating all preference options directly in the initial preferences step.

Why: Placing preferences in a dedicated box during the first step would streamline the process, eliminating the need to navigate to "more questions" and respond to potentially unnecessary queries.

Severity: 2

20. H10 Help and documentation.

Where: Trip overview

What: The absence of direct links to websites for purchasing tickets is a missed opportunity for user convenience.

Why: Integrating direct links to ticket purchase websites in the trip overview would enhance user convenience by providing quick access to relevant information.

Severity: 1

Part V: Summary and Recommendations

| Heuristic | # violations |
|---|--------------|
| H1: Visibility of system status | 3 |
| H2: Match between system and the real world | 2 |
| H3: User control and freedom | 5 |
| H4: Consistency and standards | 6 |
| H5: Error prevention | 1 |
| H6: Recognition rather than recall | 1 |
| H7: Flexibility and efficiency of use | 1 |
| H8: Aesthetic and minimalist design | 0 |
| H9: Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors | 0 |
| H10: Help and documentation | 1 |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| HN: Non-heuristic issue | 0 |
|-------------------------|---|

Summary:

In the heuristic evaluation, numerous violations across various usability heuristics were identified, with visibility of system status, user control and freedom, and consistency and standards being the most affected areas. Issues such as the absence of a home button on certain pages, inconsistent button placements, and limited flexibility in adjusting budget and meal preferences were observed. While commendable features like error prevention and recognition rather than recall were noted, there is ample room for improvement to provide users with enhanced control, clarity, and a consistent experience.

To optimize the interface, it is recommended to systematically address the identified violations. This involves ensuring a consistent presence of a home button across all pages, refining button placements for conformity, and allowing more flexibility in budget adjustments. Additionally, incorporating a broader range of meal options and integrating user preferences directly into the initial steps can enhance user control and streamline the planning process. Considering the impact of attraction modifications on the overall timetable and integrating AI capabilities to suggest activities based on user age can further elevate the platform's efficiency and user experience.

In summary, while the platform demonstrates efficiency and clarity in certain aspects, implementing the recommended improvements will contribute to a more user-friendly, consistent, and flexible urban trip planning experience.