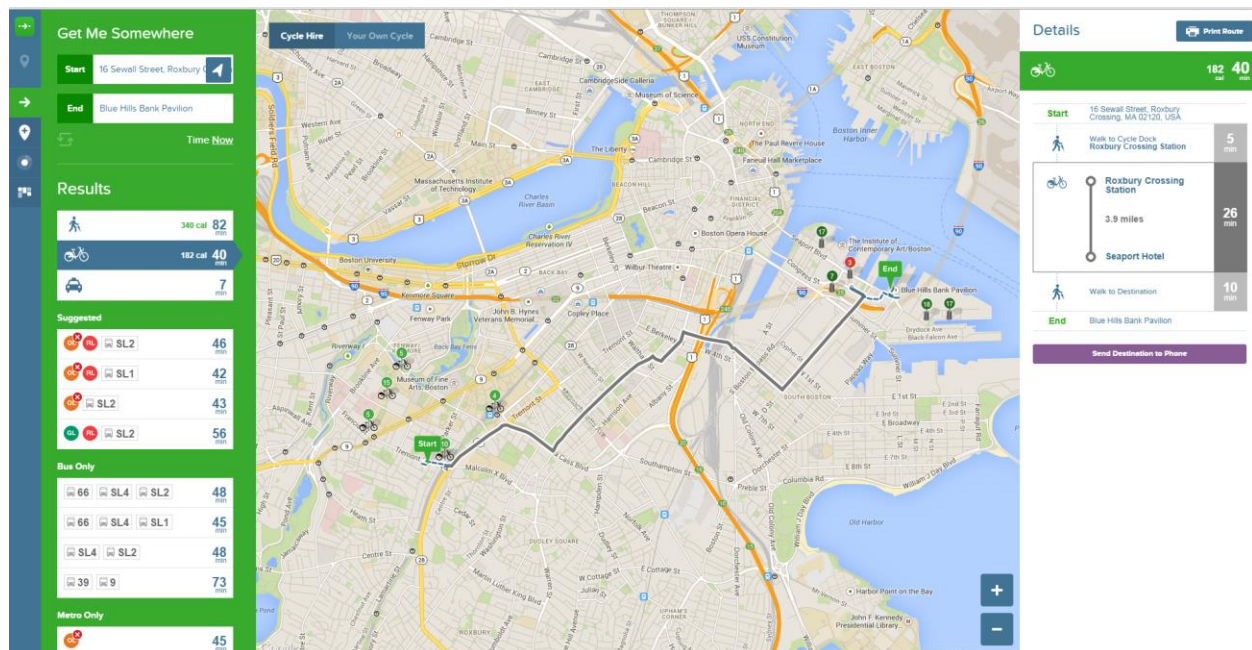Matt Schroer

HCI

Assignment 2

# Good UI

## CityMapper

CityMapper is an Android app used for navigation. There is also a companion website, from which I have taken screenshots. CityMapper bills itself as an alternative to Google Maps. By targeting select cities, including Boston, CityMapper is able to customize their experience to provide a superior urban navigation service.

The UI is simple, with two boxes provided for user input. The start location can be entered, or filled automatically using your current location. The user can then enter a destination, with an autocomplete option built using Foursquare.  Unlike Google Maps, the user does not have to choose which method of transportation they wish to use. CityMapper calculates all possible routes and means of transportation, including the Hubway, T, commuter rail, and water taxis. As seen below on the left of the screenshot, the user can quickly see how long each proposed route will take, and click on one to see it in the map view. Once a route has been chosen, you can send it to their mobile app using the "Send Destination to Phone" button.

## Details

[ Print Route ]

| OL ⊗  RL  🚌 SL1 | 15 🚶 min | 42 min |
|---|---|---|

**Start** — 16 Sewall Street, Roxbury Crossing, MA 02120, USA

🚶 Walk to Station
**Roxbury Crossing Station** — 4 min

### ⊗ Shuttle ⌄

**OL**
**Orange Line**

○ **Roxbury Crossing Station**
Platform Oak Grove

**6 Stops**

○ **Downtown Crossing Station**

10 min

🚶 Change Platforms — 1 min

**RL**
**Red Line**

○ **Downtown Crossing Station**
Platform Braintree

**1 Stop**

○ **South Station**

2 min

🚶 Walk to Bus Stop
**So Station Silver Line (Outb...** — 2 min

SL1

○ **So Station Silver Line (Outbound)**

**2 Stops**

○ **World Trade Center Station - Outbound**
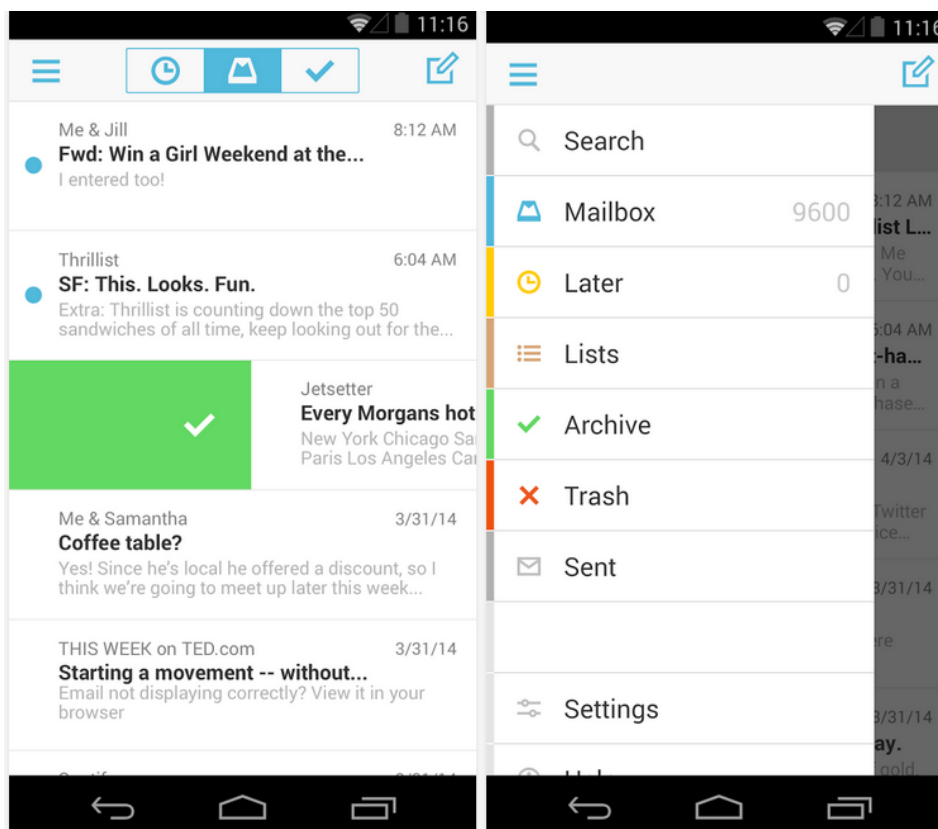
4 min

🚶 Walk to Destination — 6 min

Send Destination to Phone

## Mailbox Android App

Mailbox is a mobile app that attempts to redesign the email experience. Mailbox uses swipes of different directions and lengths to organize emails. There is a small learning curve with the app, the user having to learn which direction and how to swipe for different actions. This is eased by a brief tutorial in the app.

The app makes email less monotonous by encouraging the user to "Swipe to zero", which leads to an uncluttered mailbox and easily categorized mail lists. The brightly colored categories for mail allow for a much easier way to distinguish where the email is located.



# Bad UI

## Snapchat Android App

Snapchat is a mobile app used to send photos and videos to friends that expire after a specified number of seconds. The app is a few years old at this point, and was redesigned about 6 months ago to add a chat feature to the app. However, this addition of this new feature came at the expense of the existing features of the app.

Swiping left on the main screen opens the new chat screen for a specific screen. The small size of each row on the main screen makes it difficult to be certain which friend you are opening. I have unknowingly sent snaps to the wrong friend a number of times as a result of this.

The biggest issues with Snapchat are a lack of internal consistency between versions, and an unintuitive and confusing way to determine who a message is being sent to.

## VW Touareg GPS

My mom drives a 2012 Volkswagen Touareg. I have had the opportunity, or rather the misfortune to use the GPS unit built into the dashboard touchscreen of her car many times. The GPS is a useful feature in the car, and is operated via a touchscreen.

The biggest issue with the GPS is how an address is expected to be entered. The letter keys on the touchscreen are arranged in a square grid, alphabetically. This is externally inconsistent. The QWERTY keyboard layout is the standard layout for text entry, and is present both on other touchscreen devices and other GPS devices. This unique key arrangement, along with a fairly unresponsive touchscreen, hampers inputting an address into the GPS unit.

The easiest solution to the issues with the GPS would be a switch to a QWERTY keyboard layout.