|  |
| --- |
|  |
| HCI - COMP 171 |
| Assignment 7 |
|  |
| **Aswathy Dinesh** |
| **4/6/2012** |

**Prototype**

Below are the forms I made for my medium fidelity prototype

****

**Medium Fidelity Prototype Video Demo**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jk8igp5cLEA>

**Description & Discussion**

My new design allows for the customer to update or cancel their current reservation without calling the restaurant. It also has the feature to check seat availability in any restaurant of customer’s choice. I think all these additions along with layout changes make the system more user friendly as well as absolute.

During this phase I redesigned my previous system which was built using “Visual Studio 2008”. In my new design I tried to fix most of the problems found during usability testing. I also added three additional functionalities requested during usability testing such as option for checking the seat availability, cancelling and updating reservation. In the new design when a user makes a reservation, the system will display call number on the screen and will also trigger an email with call no and reservation details to the users mailbox. With the new changes user can also Cancel and Update their current reservation using the call no. Beside this I also updated background images to make the system look more lively than before.

Below are the changes I made to the previous design:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Screen | Earlier Design | Current Design |
| 1 | Home Screen | When a user clicked on the cuisine name label, system displayed a pop-up error message “Click the image to continue” | I felt pop-up was obstructive to the user so I changed the message box to label and changed its visible property to *false*. Now if user tries to click on Cuisine Label instead of Cuisine image the label property will turn to *True* and will display a message *“\*Click the cuisine image to continue”* |
| 2 | Review Screen | Newly added reviews were added at the end of the review box so some customers had difficulty finding their reviews. | The new design shows the newly added reviews on top of the review box i.e most recent reviews at the top. |
| 3 | Menu Screen | Menu categories were in button format | In the new design I changed “Buttons” to “Linked label” to make the system more user friendly. |
| 4 | Menu Screen | No heading over each menu category. | Gave headings to each category of items (Ex. APPETIZER, SOUP, etc.) |
| 5 | Menu screen | Some users commented that wordings were too small to read | In new design I increased the font size. |
| 6 | Application | In the usability testing one user commented to increase the tab size. | Increased all the Tab sizes to make it better readable. |
| 7 | Reservation screen | Had no option to see the seat availability at the restaurant | I added a button to check the seat availability. If the seats are not available it will show a message “*Seats are not available*” otherwise it will show “*Seats are available*” |
| 8 | Reservation Screen | No option to update and cancel the reservation | Added separate form to cancel and update reservation based on Call Number. |
| 9 | Reservation Screen | Previous design wouldn’t allow reserving more than 10 seats. | I changed the “Text Box “to “Numeric Up Down” allowing user to reserve up to 100 seats. |
| 10 | Direction Screen and Search screen | Allowed user to type within the medium of transportation and cuisine type fields. | Changed combo box property such that it doesn’t allow the user to type within the medium of transportation and cuisine type fields. |

Due to some limitations in visual basic I was not able to incorporate few user suggestions like Item price on Menu Screen. I tried to add item price next to menu items but I kept getting layout issues so I did not add item prices along with menu items.

Besides this currently I see the application flickering when switching between different screens/forms which may be due to multiple images and panels in a single form.

**Analysis of New Design**

Based on the previous usability testing and my personal experience of using the new system below are some Pros and Cons of my new design.

Pros:

* Ease of use: The positions of labels and buttons are easily visible and guide the user to use the system easily.
* Cuisine and Restaurant Images give user visual representation of the restaurant ambience and its food.
* Pop-up and error messages help the user to easily identify their mistakes.
* All the required fields are identified by a “\*” sign pointing user to fill the required information. For Ex: On the reservation screen if a user clicks on Make Reservation button without filling the required information the system show a error message prompting user to fill the required fields.

Cons:

* In absence of a Review Approval system currently there is no way to filter out Bad words in reviews this can result in the system being misused.
* In the current system user has to keep looking through dates and times to find Seat availability, it would be very user friendly if the system displays the available times once the user selects a date.

Overall I feel that the major strength of this system is that it provides user a unified interface where a user can look through all the information about a restaurant and can then make his selection. System is not just limited to searching but also provides for reserving seats too. New design even allows user to cancel or update the reservation without calling the restaurant. Besides this the new design provides one more advantage by allowing users to check the seat availability.

New design still has a few weaknesses such as no option to rate the restaurant. Currently user can only write reviews but not rate the restaurant. A new user has to read through the reviews before making his decision, including ratings stars would have made the decision making much easier. Additionally currently user has to type all the text such as Location on Search screen or Start Address on directions screen. It would have been better if the system auto suggests when user starts typing in these fields.

**Changes Not Included**

Below are some updates I wanted to add to the Restaurant Locator application but due to the time constraints and additional setups I was not able to incorporate.

Seat map:- I wanted to display restaurants seat arrangement similar to an airline seat map which would help the user to select a seat of their choice. I dropped this change since every restaurant would have its own arrangement and won’t be a standard arrangement like on an airplane.

Alert Notifications: - Once a customer has made a reservation Restaurant Locator will trigger an email on the day of reservation to remind him. Since this is out of scope of current application I did include this change.

Upcoming Events: - If there any deals going on in a restaurant it will be displayed on the restaurants homepage.