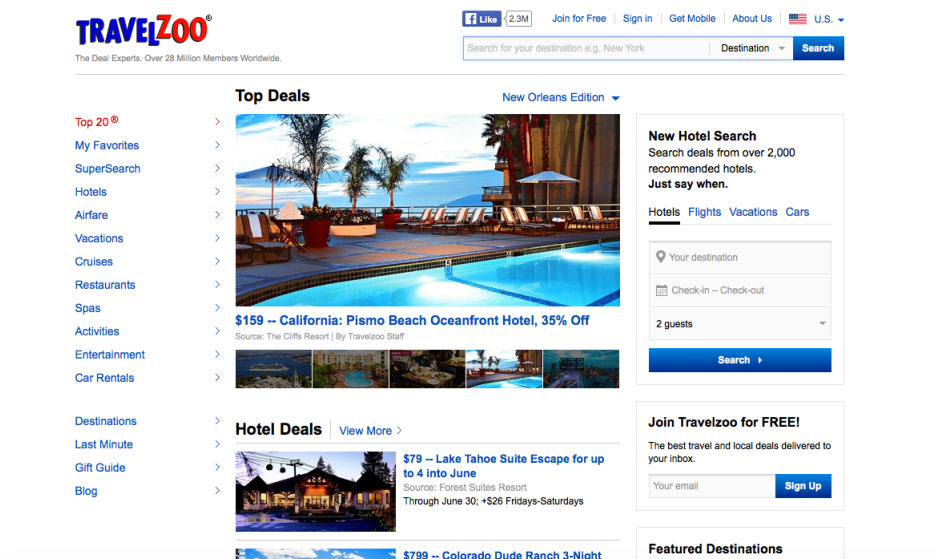


## HEURISTICS EVALUATION of **travelzoo.com**

To evaluate this website, I wanted to book a roundtrip airplane flight from New Orleans to San Francisco. I thought that one could book a flight directly from this website. It was only after testing it that I realized it really was for deals on different travel packages. But, after the horrible UX, I doubt I would even go back and use the site for even that purpose.

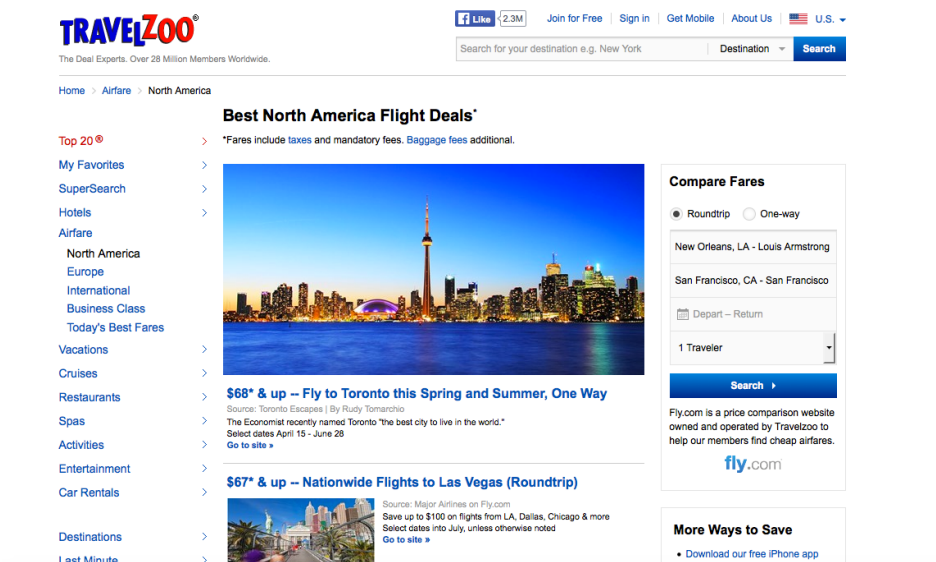
### SEVERITY SCALE:

- 0 - Not a usability problem
- 1 - Just a cosmetic problem
- 2 - Minor usability problem
- 3 - Major usability problem; important to fix
- 4 - Usability catastrophe; imperative to fix



**Screenshot 1:** Front page of the website - in order to book a flight one can either use the airfare navigation element or the search box on the right. But, the search box is labeled Hotel Search - it is only after seeing the flights tab, that I realized it could be used for flights, too.

**VIOLATES: Recognition** - travel sites usually have search box front and center on home page. Severity Rating: 2

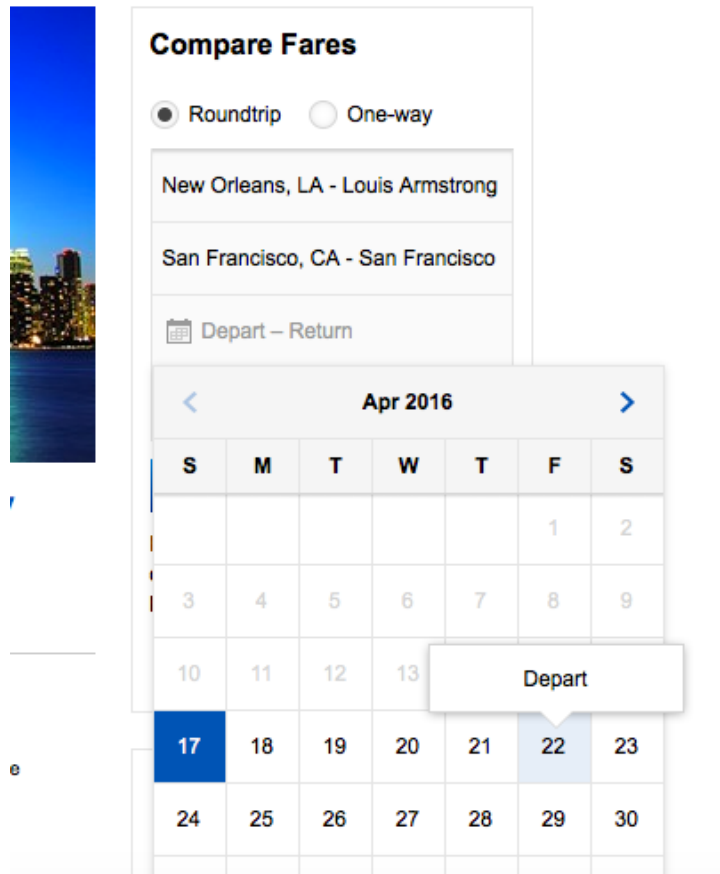


**Screenshot 2:** This is the flight page reached by using the airfare nav item. This page does not have the search box front and center, but puts it on the side. Also, the sub menu items under the airfare nav item are oddly defined. They are:  
-north america  
-europe  
-international  
-business class  
-today's best fares

**VIOLATES: Recognition** -

not how travel sites usually laid out. Severity Rating: 2

**Mapping** - sub menu items are not usually divided that way. Or, the way they are divided is confusing. Severity Rating: 3



The screenshot shows a 'Compare Fares' form with a calendar overlay. The form has a title 'Compare Fares' and two radio buttons: 'Roundtrip' (selected) and 'One-way'. Below these are two text input fields for flight routes: 'New Orleans, LA - Louis Armstrong' and 'San Francisco, CA - San Francisco'. A 'Depart - Return' label is positioned above the calendar. The calendar is for April 2016, with days of the week (S, M, T, W, T, F, S) as column headers. The date 17 is highlighted in blue, and a tooltip labeled 'Depart' points to the date 22. The calendar grid shows dates from 1 to 30.

Apr 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**Screenshot 3:** This form is too minimal in how it sets the depart-return dates. They are both in the same text field. But it is only via the tool tip that I know I am setting the depart date. Also, it is confusing because the current date [Apr 17] is set in blue and given that the depart date color is blue, I thought my depart date was 17 and my return date was 22.

**VIOLATION: Minimalism** - this feature is too minimal and leads to confusion for the users.

Severity Rating: 3

Roundtrip One-way Multi-city

From New Orleans, LA - Louis Armstrong Intl (MSY)

To Please enter a destination airport.

Depart 04/23/2016 Return 04/30/2016 Travelers 1

Also search for ☐ Hotels ☐ Cars

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**Screenshot 4:** I came to this screen after filling out the date and destination fields in the Compare fares forms in Screenshot 3. The screen opened up in a new browser window. It had my date info but did not have the destination info. And in that text field it raised an error.

**VIOLATION: Consistency** - The system did not keep all the information I had input into the form. Severity Rating: **3-4**

**Visibility** - Because of the [in]consistency, I did not advance in the process of searching for a flight. That is, I was still at step one (searching for the flight) even though I should be at step two (seeing the search results from the Compare form).

Severity Rating: **3-4**. The use of a pop up/new browser and not remembering all my information lead me to have a horrible user experience and it was something I would make me not use the site again.

Roundtrip One-way Multi-city

From New Orleans, LA - Louis Armstrong Intl (MSY)

To San Francisco, CA - San Francisco Intl (SFO)  
Please enter a destination airport.

Depart 04/23/2016 Return 04/30/2016 Travelers 1

Also search for ☐ Hotels ☐ Cars

Compare prices we find with (opens new windows):  
☒ Hotwire ☐ Expedia ☐ CheapOair ☒ BookingBuddy ☐ Priceline

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**Screenshot 5:** I re-input my destination and the compare checkbox area appeared but the red error did not disappear. Also, The checkboxes were defaulted to the first box and the fourth box. There was no rhyme/reason as to why just these 2 were checked.

VIOLATION: Error recovery - even though I fixed the error, I still had the red error text. Severity Rating: **2. UX fail** - this was my sixth screen/page on this site and still no search results with flights. I gave up out of frustration and left the site. Severity Rating: **4**