

Usability Test Report

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Location of Test: Boston, MA

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Executive Summary

The main goal of this study is to evaluate the user interface of our web app, ‘Swap Pal’. The participants were given 3 tasks to complete using our paper prototypes of the web app screens. They were also asked to evaluate how user-friendly our interfaces were in order to complete their tasks.

There were 5 participants and the scenarios that the participants completed were:

- Creating a post
- Searching and Contacting the post author to initiate a swap
- Rating the swap

We asked our participants to meet us at the CCIS lab in WVH. We met each participant individually in-person and asked them to play two roles. One of team members was the Facilitator. She read out the briefing (see the **Briefing** section) and took their verbal consent before handing over the tasks. The 3 tasks (see the **Detailed findings and recommendations** section) were written on a slip of paper. The users were provided with a pencil to serve as a keyboard. One of our team members played the Computer and changed the screens in accordance to the input given by the user. The facilitator stepped in whenever the user was stuck or needed more information about an option. Occasionally, other members of the team stepped in to translate or clarify what the facilitator was talking about.

100% of the time, the participants were able to complete the 3 tasks in approximately 15 minutes. The tasks were simple and the participants were able to identify the correct flow to complete their tasks within our system. This report will include the overall impression of our system with the users, such as – the problems faced, suggested improvements and what went well.

Methodology

Who we tested

Five participants, having the following characteristics, evaluated Swap Pal.

Audience Type

NEU Grad Students	4
NEU Alumni	1
TOTAL (participants)	5

Computer Usage

26+ hrs. wk.	5
TOTAL (participants)	5

Age

18-25	3
26-39	2
TOTAL (participants)	5

Gender

Women	4
Men	1
TOTAL (participants)	5

What participants did

The participants met with the study facilitator for approximately 20 minutes and they completed 3 tasks. The participants were given an option to fill in the ~~textboxes in our web pages~~. They explored the system and clicked on some elements (unrelated to given task) to see what would happen. After the study, they gave their feedback and suggestions to improve our web app.

What data we collected

We collected task completion rates, verbal feedback, paths selected and steps user got stuck. We got to know the parts where the users got stuck while evaluating our system. One of the participants even took an unexpected path ~~just to see what would happen~~. The data collected are:

- Screens that the participants found confusing and needed extra clarification: User Profile and Create Post
- Unexpected path chosen unrelated to the task: Participant tried to swap a blender for a phone instead of an airbed.
- Common questions asked: What's a wishlist? Should there always be a wishlist? What is the title label in create-post page mean? Is there any in-app communication? Should the user always give a rating?

*they always do that
great feature by your user.*

The task completion rates was 100% for all 5 participants. Each participant took approximately 20 minutes to complete all the 3 tasks. The average rating given to our system, based on the ease of task completion, was 8 out of 10. The users spent more than a minute figuring out what to enter in the title textbox of the create post page.

Feedback given by users for the create post task, was to have two text fields with label *what do you have?* and *what do you want?* which would make it easier to fill in the details. One of the users also suggested having a popup with all the keywords of the wishlist when they wish to import wishlist from the user profile so that they could delete the keywords they do not want to import.

Major findings and recommendations

List major issues -

- There was confusion with the search functionality, the users were confused what to search for. They were confused if they had to search for what they need or what they have to offer? *?? This is search bar I guess I was getting work*
- One of the users, clicked on complete transaction button right after clicking on the send invitation button.
- Users wanted to edit a post after posting it *absolutely*
- One of the users pointed out to adding another option on create post page which lets the user add information if he/she wants to swap on-campus or off-campus.
- Users weren't clear about the wishlist

Identify solutions -

- To improve the understanding of the search functionality, one user recommended us to have a dropdown below the search bar giving options search by what you want and search by what you have to offer. This would make it easier for the users to characterize their search.
- In order to prevent a user from clicking on the complete transaction button right after the send invitation button, the post should be moved to the transactions tab with a cancel and complete buttons.
- Each post in the user profile page under the posts tab will have an edit button corresponding to the post to let the users edit their post.
- Add a dropdown on the create post page with the options swap on-campus and swap off-campus to let the users give information about where they would like the transaction to happen

*It's binary
use a switch*

*Ideally autocomplete Toys
(not necessary but idea for future work)*

Briefing

Informed consent: We are conducting a study to find out what people think about this. We will not record or publish any information with your name. This is for a course we're taking in Human-Computer Interaction from Prof. Sprague in the College of Computer and Information Science. Your participation is voluntary and you can stop anytime and ask that your data not be used. It should take about 20 minutes. Can you help us out with this?

Thank you! We're working on a product for a website called Swap Pal that lets Northeastern Students and Faculty to swap items. The purpose of today's session is for you to help us figure out how to make this interface more user-friendly before we finish developing it. But believe it or not, we aren't going to use a computer. As you'll see, we've actually created paper versions of the screens, and this guy named Sean will be playing the computer.

We'll give you some tasks that we think are representative of what people might do in real life. Such as swapping your item for something else, rating a swap, searching for an item, etc. Your job is to tell us what makes sense, what's confusing, whether it works the way you'd expect it to, etc.

The other members of the team will just be watching and quietly taking notes.

Keep in mind that we're testing the interface--**we're not testing you**--so if you run into any problems it's not your fault and it means that there's something we need to change. I'll be sitting next to you, and can help you.

The prototype still has some rough edges--we're still thinking through how it should work and some parts of it are incomplete. Before we cast it in concrete, we want to get feedback about how well this design works.

Sean here will be playing the computer. Sean may seem like a pretty smart computer, but he has no speech recognition and no artificial intelligence. Since machines can't talk, he's not allowed to explain anything. If you want to do something, you'll need to interact with the prototype just as you would on a computer. Use your finger to click on buttons. These pieces of tape indicate places where you can type something in, and here's your keyboard. It's OK to write on this.

Remember that we're testing the interface--we're not testing you. Are you ready to start?

OK, here's the first thing we'd like you to do. Take a minute to read this and let me know if it makes sense. If so, then whenever you're ready please show us what you would do first.

Detailed findings and recommendations

Introductory Questions & Tasks

Summary of introductory questions

Questions	Responses
Have you ever used any website to swap items?	None of the participants had been to or heard of such sites. 2 out of 5 participants required us to explain the concept of swapping items.
What would you use a swap website for?	Swap XBox or PS4 games. Swap household items.

Scenario 1 - Creating a Post

You are Anna. You need an airbed and you are willing to swap your blender for the airbed. Your task is to use a new website "Swap Pal" to achieve this goal. The credential to login as Anna is given to you as follow:

Username: anna.s@husky.neu.edu

Password: Swappal

Number of participants	5
Percent successful	100%

Findings	Recommendations
<p>All 5 participants completed the task with ease. 4 of them created a post by clicking the “Create Post” button on the top of the post listing page.</p> <p>4 participants searched for the item first, but only 1 of them created a post from the link provided in the “Search with no result page”.</p> <p>2 participants spent about 30 seconds to create title for the post. They got confused on whether to put the item he/she wants in the title or the item he/she offers in the title.</p> <p>1 participant didn't like the process to remove all unneeded items from the wishlist one by one after imported the wishlist from profile page.</p> <p>1 participant pointed out to adding an option which lets the user add information if he/she wants to swap on-campus or off campus.</p>	<p>Instead of entering a title, we require users to enter “Item you want” and “Item you have” respectively to make it more clear.</p> <p>Display all items in the wishlist as a checkboxes, user can check the item he/she wants instead of importing the entire wishlist from profile.</p> <p>Add a dropdown menu to give user options to choose whether the transaction is happen on-campus or off-campus when creating a post.</p> <p><i>Not critical BTW but Add all nice option or none?</i></p>

Scenario 2 – Searching & Contact

You are Ed. You urgently need a blender. You have an airbed. Your task is to obtain a blender using a new website, ‘Swap Pal’ to achieve this goal, without creating a post

Number of participants	5
Percent successful	100%

Findings	Recommendations
<p>5 participants completed the task with ease by finding the post for blender.</p> <p>1 participant tried to report the post. But this was not implemented in our prototype.</p>	<p>Implement <i>Report this post</i> button.</p> <p>Redesign search bar to allow users to differentiate the search between items they need and the items they want to offer.</p>

Scenario 3 – Take down a post and review

You're Anna. You are happy with the airbed you got, now take down your post

Number of participants	5
Percent successful	80%

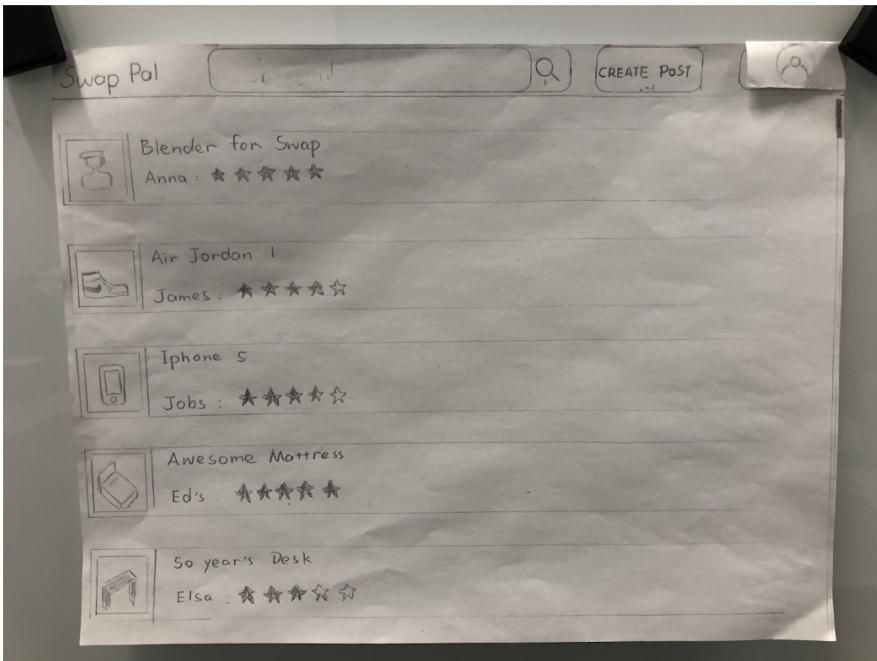
Findings	Recommendations
<p>4 participants completed the task with ease by finding the "Complete" via going to "Profile" page and click "Your Post" tab.</p> <p>1 participants did not complete the task, since the participant was looking for the "Remove" button to remove the post directly</p>	<p>User can edit/remove uninvited post (post is not in transaction);</p> <p>User should be notified that invited post(post in transaction) cannot be removed. User need to cancel the invitation then remove, or just complete it.</p> <p>For post not in transaction, our application will display "Edit" and "Delete" button;</p> <p>For post in transaction, our application will disable the "Edit" and "Delete"button, when user's mouse hover on the disabled button, a message "invited post should not be edit/cancel, try to cancel invitation first or keep completing the post" will bubble up.</p> <p>For our application, we will add the edit/remove functionality of post, which may influence the searching result.</p>

Exit Questions/User Impressions

User impressions by participant

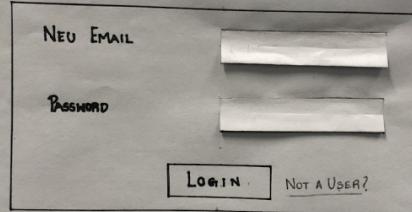
Participant No.	Like best?	Like least?	Improvements
1	Liked the idea of swap	User profile page could be better	Introduce categories for the search functionality and while creating posts.
2	Wishlist	No clear instructions while creating a post	Add information to let the users know more information example, why is the user asked to login to know the contact details of an owner of a post.
3	The idea of trading items with NEU students	The homepage should have more details of the post	Would add more details like posted date, a button to mark post etc
4	Main functionality for swapping	The title of creating post was confusing	Email Communication
5	The post details page was very clear with description, photo gallery etc	Create post page was confusing	In-app communication

Prototype photos



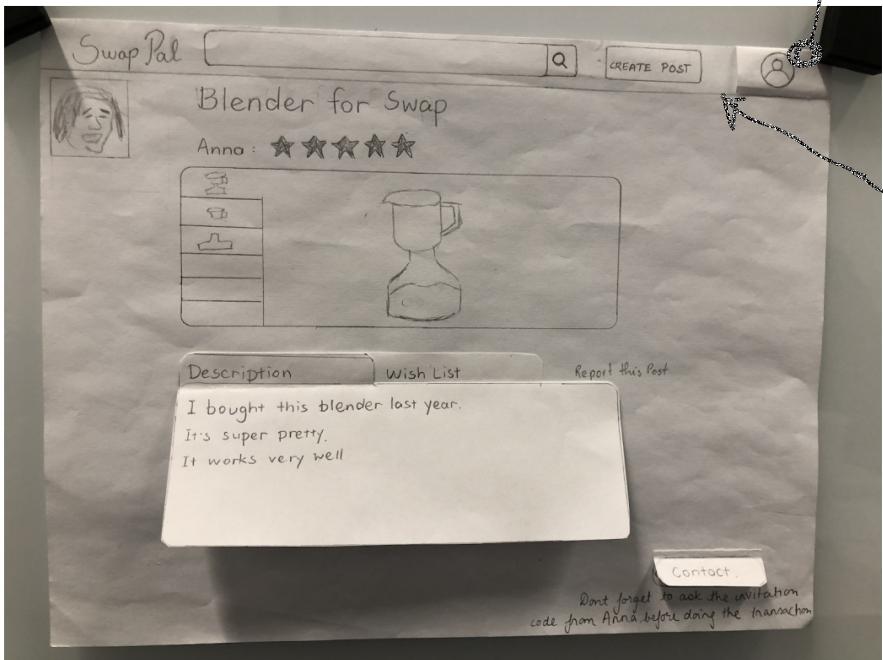
Post Listing Page

Swap Pal



A hand-drawn sketch of a login page. It features a large rectangular box containing several fields and buttons. At the top left, the text "NEU EMAIL" is written above a horizontal input field. Below it, the word "PASSWORD" is written above another horizontal input field. At the bottom left, there is a button labeled "LOGIN". To the right of the "LOGIN" button, the text "NOT A USER?" is written in a smaller font.

Login Page



Post Detail Page

update info
regarding
request
(theoretical)

current
items
#?
targets?

Swaf Pals

NAME	Ed
NEU EMAIL	@hurley
PASSWORD	B
RE-ENTER PASSWORD	B
REGISTER	

Registration Page

How was your experience with
XXX?



Leave comment ...

Great trans./bargain

Submit

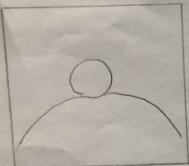
Review Page

↑
Should not
use about eight
star based rating scale

Swap Pal



(Create Post)



Welcome Back,

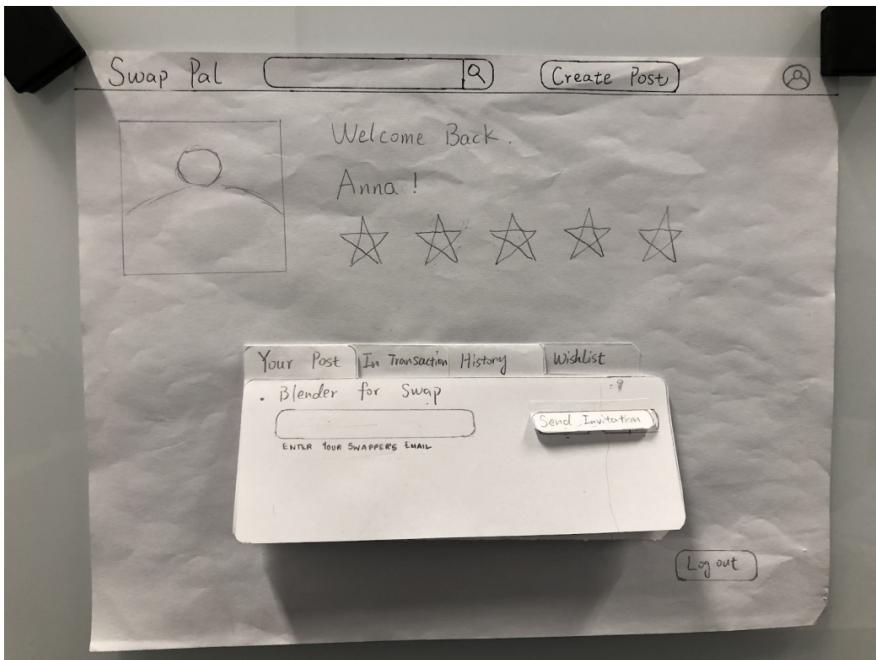
Edward!



My Post | In Transaction History | Wishlist

[Logout]

Profile Page



User Profile Page

Swap Pal

Av Bed

CREATE POST

②

UPLOAD*

TITLE*

Blender

DESCRIPTION*

Shop for an airbed

WISHLIST*

IMPORT WISHLIST FROM PROFILE

A.

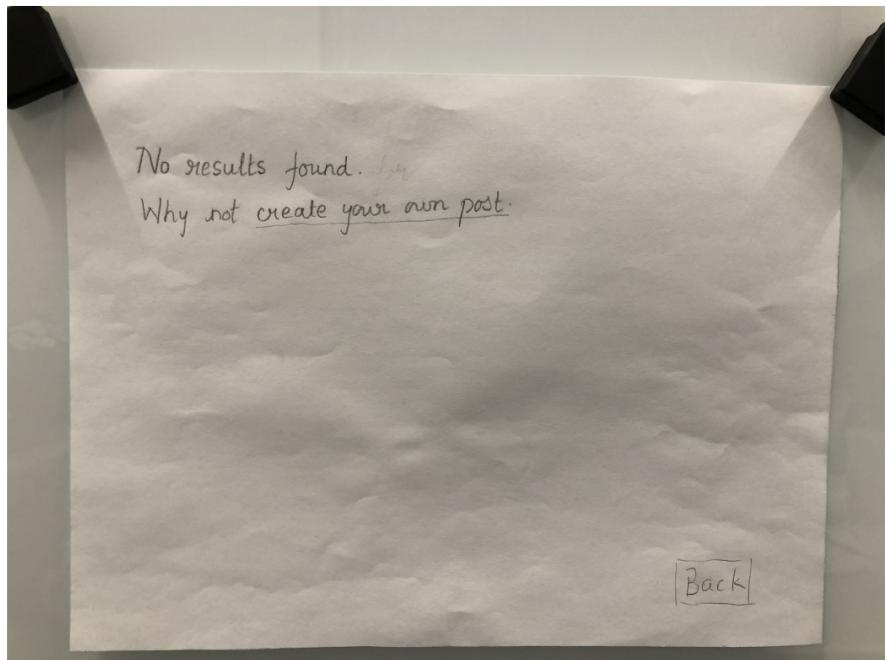
B.

C.

ADD MORE

POST

Post Creating Page



Search No Result Pop-up

No extra summary?
Overall, well done
eval. Nice work.