

Team A Project



Stage Four: Heuristic Evaluation

Hardeep Kaler Chris Selinger Richard Chow Abigayle LeFranc Parker Siroishka

Project Description

Our mobile cookbook application, Cooky, is a simple tool that will help our users make life in the kitchen a little bit easier and less worrisome.

This application is customizable to the users needs. Users can search, filter and favorite new recipes using a high level search function that will personalize filters to avoid recipes with ingredients, filter based on diet and so on. Users can change serving sizes, substitute ingredients and follow step by step guidance for any recipe. Cooky also includes a select variety of tools that are needed in the kitchen. These tools will include a timer, translator, encyclopedia of cooking terms, and a unit converter for measurement conversions.

Finally, one feature that is unique to our cooking application will be two functions that will be a shopping list as well as a pantry. Users will be able to track items they have at home. This pantry function allows users to log and search for food items they have and users will have the ability to add expiry dates that the application will show is expiring and users can add them to them to the shopping list function. Using the shopping function, users can keep track of what they need to buy, as well as share this list with others. Anybody can use this application to make things simpler and more organized when in the kitchen.

Prototyped User Tasks

- Utilize included tools such as unit converter, timer, encyclopedia.
- Searching, including high level filtering through recipes
- Utilize a virtual shopping list and pantry
- Manage, Create, Save, Edit, and Share recipes
- Open and easily navigate a recipe in either standard or an expanded mode
 - Standard mode: Previewing a recipe
 - Expanded mode: Cooking with the recipe and instructions

Discussion of Heuristic Evaluation

Our heuristic evaluation was a useful process to determine what we need to prioritize in our final product in Stage 5. It showed us where we did a great job doing exactly what we intended, as well as showing us where we needed to make some iterative changes to improve our design. Something of interest that we found worth noting is that as we are all designers on our application, we didn't intrinsically think we needed documentation or a help guide because it was a "straightforward" application. However, our evaluators brought to light (through the use of ***Design Rules of Thumb***) that we in fact do not have a ***Help and Documentation*** feature so that was at the top of the list for both of our reviewers and in turn, was the first thing we changed on our prototype.

We also reflected on the structuring of some of our tasks by considering the ***Design Rules of Thumb: Flexibility and Efficiency of Use*** and ***User Control and Freedom***. We found that some tasks (Creating a recipe, stepping through a recipe) had no real way to link back to the landing page directly. So If a user decided to stop what they were doing they would have gone through a series of unnecessary steps to get to the landing page. We rectified this with a button that takes a user directly to the landing page.

Another finding that the heuristic evaluation alerted us to was our inconsistent use of imaging. We determined that a user would benefit from ***Recognition Rather than Recall*** when it comes to selecting which recipe to view (as seen on the landing page). However we initially did not have images present on our search page. But after a discussion we determined that having an accompanying image with each recipe removes the user having to recall what the recipe is as there is a picture to show you right away.

And our final change to our prototype noted by our evaluation was based on ***Visibility of System Status***. We found that when publishing a recipe a user may add pictures. However, with no size limit photos can take an extended amount of time to upload. Therefore, we added a modal that will disable user activity until the recipe is done uploading and publishing. This stops users from thinking their recipe is published and being unable to find it as it is not actually live yet.

Reflection

What went well

Our consensus was that the heuristic evaluation was a great success. We managed to contribute four updates to our high-fidelity prototype that we would have not noticed otherwise. We found that following **Jakob Nielsen's User Interface Design Guidelines: 10 Rules of Thumb Exercise** really cleared things up and assisted us in ranking and prioritizing additions or changes to the prototype. The changes brought forth real tangible changes that made us feel like we truly were improving our application, and narrowing areas that can lead to a poor user experience.

What went poorly

As a group we found that at times it was difficult to remain consistent with our styling conventions and aesthetic on the prototype. While we had a component library that acted as a referral point, it was easy to get excited and start styling and designing your own section. But that led to slightly different aesthetics in each section that we had to rectify.

We also found a significant bias within our evaluation which was expected as the evaluation is supposedly done by another group. That may have influenced our decisions of what to change. And it also may have completely hidden something that may have only been mentioned or discovered by a non-biased 3rd party.

What would we do differently

As stated above if we were to do this stage over, we would prefer to have another group tackle the heuristic evaluation for us. That removes any bias and allows us a look at how a potential user would view the application. Since there is an inherent bias being a designer of the application, we will miss things that users would notice.

We as a group would also create a component library of ALL components we are going to be using in the prototype instead of just some components. This removes any chance of misaligning our design practices throughout each section assigned to a different designer.

Appendix

[Heuristic Evaluation \(Chris\)](#)

[Heuristic Evaluation \(Richard\)](#)

[Heuristic Evaluation \(Hardeep\)](#)

[Heuristic Evaluation Review \(Parker\)](#)

[Heuristic Evaluation Review \(Abigayle\)](#)

[Online Portfolio](#)