

Critique

Summary assessment from user's perspective

The user interface looks simple and clean. The two main buttons, Lend Request and Return Request, are bigger than all the rest of the buttons and centered in the middle of the page to catch the users attention. Items are listed in easy to read tables, with buttons on the side corresponding to the row of the lent or returned item. Buttons are colored to reflect what their actions do. For example, the cancel button is red, indicating that deleting this entry is “dangerous” and cannot be undone. Email reminders make it simple for users to track their statuses. The verification process is also quick and requires no extra effort on the user's part.

However, users may be confused about the actual status of lending, given that there are many different states of an item being returned, such as “open”, “closed”, “returning”, “pending”, etc. Also, they can be confused at times about where their requests or items actually will show up, possibly not knowing to look at their Activity page.

Summary assessment from developer's perspective

Separation of concerns and the MVC pattern were kept on a whole. Code is generally well commented, and broken into appropriate sized methods. The design is also thought out to allow for easier construction and maintenance of the code.

Most and least successful decisions

One of the most successful decisions was to create the two types of requests (lend and return requests) as separate objects. This was a successful because it allowed the user to initiate return requests even though they did not borrow something for the site. This is good in the situation where users borrowed money or lent other things on the spot without using the site. Also, it might be better for future extensions or transformations of the site to be able to have more features.

One of the least successful decisions was to create a list of lend requests as the main page of the site. This decision was not that successful because there is not a high incentive to look on the main page for things that other people want. It would have been better to just have users post what they had, instead of posting a lend request asking for an item that they want.

Priorities for improvement

One main area of improvement is to improve the UI so that it is more intuitive for the user to complete the lend and return flow, as well as immediately know the status of their lends and returns.

Reflection

Most and least successful aspects of project

The most successful aspects of the project include the simple user interface and design choice of separating lend and return requests.

The least successful aspect of the project is the inability to let users create lend requests for items that they have, or to create a return request for an item they need to return.

Basically, each request can currently only be made by one side, not by either. This may produce

What we learned from it and can improve on next time

We learned how to work together as a team. We also learned that communication is important, and everyone must have a clear idea of the design before getting started or else people will become confused. We learned more technical knowledge, such as how to send automated emails through rails and how to integrate different gems (such as the calendar picker and images).