

Heuristics Report for Barkipedia

Heuristics for Barkipedia completed by Group 1.3

Summarization of Heuristics from group 1.3:

1. Visibility of System Status

- Users always knew where they were, and was able to familiarize themselves with the app quickly
- Suggestion: highlighting the icon corresponding to what page we are on (When on Profile Page, highlight the Profile Page Icon)
- Titles of each page helped the users navigate through the application

2. Match between system and the real world

- Language easy to understand and uses terminology appropriate to the topic of the application
- Any unknowns explained through the context of the application
- Only universally understood words were used in the application – like dog
- The menus are easy to understand and are laid out in a logical way
- Everything flowed well
- Mini Icons under a Subforum made left the impression that they were part of that subforum instead of links to other subforums. Recommended moving them somewhere else, potentially above the title

3. User Control and Freedom

- Missing back buttons when creating / adding a dog. Settings icon doesn't work on that page either
- Cannot delete or edit dogs
- Suggestion: being able to edit your profile on the profile page instead of having to go through settings
- Clicking on certain events showed pages with 2 back buttons.
- Mixed reviews on availability of back buttons

4. Consistency and standards

- "The entire app is very consistent, all buttons and words used are very consistent and overall the application is easily understandable. – Nothing to improve, it's perfect!"
- Overall very consistent with the choice of words, icons and style
- One user wanted the main pages to be designed like the Forum page
- Inconsistency with Back Buttons

5. Error Prevention

- On certain pages, if no input was submitted then a pop up would come out
- The design helped prevent problems and errors
- Great use of alerts to make sure the user puts a picture up.
- Can bypass adding a dog by going into settings

6. Recognition rather than recall

- The user can familiarize themselves with the app very easily. All icons are self-explanatory (and very cute)
- The menus and the buttons that are frequently used are large enough to see and placed in the right places
- When replying, the previous post should be visible so it's clear what the user is replying to
- The reply button in Forums is not intuitive

7. Flexibility and efficiency of use

- The app is very efficient to use, users with all types of backgrounds should be able to use this app with ease – which makes it also very flexible in terms of how fast an experienced user can interact – but it is also very explanatory for users with minimal experience
- Categories in Bark Overflow menu are on the top for easy access and the user does not need to go back to the menu to choose a category
- Switching through menus is easy with the icons at the bottom
- I liked the mini navigation bar in bark overflow but its maybe taking up too much space or should be a single bar
- Perhaps the “My Reviews/Posts/Events” pages could be used by power users to manage their plans in the app
- I was missing the ability to explore ALL events. Only the top 3 in 3 categories are presented on the events page. What if there's 100 events going on today and I want to attend a more low-key one?
- Efficient to use and figure out

8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

- The app is straightforward in terms of design – the consistency in the bottom icons helps with removing redundancies or even overcomplicating things
- Everything from the icons to the background of the design is perfect and overall aesthetically pleasing
- The background was slightly busy and was too similar in style with the rest of the app
- Great aesthetic but finding a way to incorporate the aesthetic without taking up that much real estate would be nice
- Titles for bark overflow were hard to read or find at a glance in the emojis
- Is view count and comment count necessary to display on bark overflow posts?
- Does owner birthday on the profile matter?
- Do the profile icons of the people who are attending an event matter?

- Why does the app need your phone number?

9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

- It lets you recover nicely from any mistakes you have made as a user
- Error messages with constructive suggestion is displayed when fields are left blank and submit is pressed
- Nothing to note, was not lost or found confused
- When I tried to submit forms without completing them, the app clearly told me the problem, and what to do
- All application icons are intuitive and related headings are logical

10. Help and documentation

- I do not think any documentation is necessary for this application because it is so self-explanatory. But if there was a short “info” page on what a user can do – it would be good to have? Not a must though.
- Help menu not needed, but if added, the settings would be appropriate
- Alerts helped guide me when I strayed from use. I found that helpful.

Important Problems:

- Fix formatting of text so it is more legible
- Fix back buttons throughout the app (consistency / remove redundancy / add where necessary)
- Delete / Editing / Viewing Dogs
- Edit Profile from profile page instead of settings
- Highlight bottom icon to show what page you are on

Less Important Problems:

- Change where mini icons under the subforum pages are placed
- Show post that user is replying to when replying
- Reply button in forums needs to be more intuitive

Suggestions to be taken for the future:

- “Help” documentation
- Make a simpler less “busy” background

In Summary:

Through the heuristics evaluation we have identified a series of problems. The most important problems concerning the legibility and aesthetics of our application, the issues with our implementation of back buttons, the activity and interactions with the user's dogs, and clearer indicators on icons for navigation. The less important problems include specific placement of icons, quality of life improvements like showing the post that the user is replying to, and more intuitive icons for replying and writing a review. Suggestions to be taken for the future that came from the heuristics report include adding a "Help" documentation and a simpler background.

Our group also split off into two groups (group of 2 and group of 3) and dedicated 45 minutes to combing through our application ourselves and logging and necessary changes or issues. We combined our log and the heuristics reports to create a checklist that is divided into High and Low Priority and have completed them accordingly. We found that there were a lot of similarities between the issues that the other group found, and the issues we found while doing a heuristic evaluation on Barkipedia.