

# HEURISTIC EVALUATION

of “rhythmic.” - a redefined music player

**CS348 - Human Computer Interaction**

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## 1. VISIBILITY OF SYSTEM STATUS

The design should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within a reasonable amount of time.

- The users of *rhythmic*. will be immediately notified with appropriate messages when they register as a new user for the first time. The user will also be notified similarly when a new playlist is created or a song is successfully added to a playlist of their choice.
- There are clear and visible icons for global navigation like Search, My Playlists, Karaoke, Settings and Home and the status of the current playing song is displayed on every screen.
- *rhythmic*. intends to keep its users motivated while running or working out by matching the track to the user's pace. In this case, the user's steps per minute will be captured at regular intervals (every 10 seconds) and visible on the screen to keep them notified of their status.

## 2. MATCH BETWEEN SYSTEM AND THE REAL WORLD

The design should speak the users' language. Use of words, phrases, and concepts familiar to the user is preferred over internal jargon. Real-world conventions are to be followed, making information appear in a natural and logical order.

- *rhythmic*. uses the English language as its mode of communication. It uses words like 'trending' and 'recommended' that are familiar to widely used by the general public. They are also accompanied by images and icons, to further drive the message home.
- The users can also search for their favourite artists, playlists or songs using their voice via the app's voice search assistant.
- On the music player screen, the play/pause icon is located in between the 'previous' and 'next' icons, following the real-world convention of forward and backward, so that users can quickly navigate through the playlist.

### 3. USER CONTROL AND FREEDOM

Users often perform actions by mistake. They need a clearly marked "emergency exit" to leave the unwanted action without having to go through an extended process.

- *rhythmic*. always has an option to undo an action in case of an emergency exit situation.
- To exit the Search, My Playlists, Karaoke or the Settings screen, the user simply has to click on the already selected icon again (deselect the icon). To exit from the music player or the song queue screen, the user simply has to swipe as directed.
- Additionally, a 'Home' icon is provided on every screen to leave the current screen and navigate to the home page directly.
- Users have the freedom to choose their preferred languages. Searches and recommendations will appear based on the user selection.

## 4. CONSISTENCY AND STANDARDS

Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing. Platform and industry conventions are to be followed.

- *rhythmic*. makes use of the standard icons for previous, next, play and pause icons that are familiar to everyone and conform to any music streaming service conventions.
- The music player screen appears on swiping left from any other screen on the app and swiping right back from the player directs the user to the previously opened screen which indicates internal consistency.
- However, unlike most streaming services, *rhythmic*. provides the icons to play/pause the currently playing music on either the left or the right side of the screen (dynamically adaptive) for ease of use.

## 5. ERROR PREVENTION

Good error messages are important, but the best designs carefully prevent problems from occurring in the first place. Either eliminate error-prone conditions or check for them and present users with a confirmation option before they commit to the action.

- *rhythmic*. notifies the user and asks for permission before letting the user perform a critical action.
- Critical actions include changing the settings, deleting a playlist or removing a song from a playlist. For example, if a user wants to delete a user-created playlist, then the user will be presented with a confirmation pop up asking if the user is sure about deleting the playlist. The action will be performed only if the user selects the 'Yes' option and the request to perform the action will be discarded if the user selects 'Cancel'.

## 6. RECOGNITION RATHER THAN RECALL

It is best to minimize the user's memory load by making elements, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the interface to another. Information required to use the design should be easily retrievable when needed.

- *rhythmic*. provides a user's recent searches list in the search box to recall old search history and hence reduces the user's memory load.
- The home page hosts a list of the user's recently played songs and playlists in case they wish to revisit a playlist.
- It also provides the user with trending playlists to help the user discover popular tracks that they might have heard in another context.

## 7. FLEXIBILITY AND EFFICIENCY OF USE

Shortcuts — hidden from novice users — may speed up the interaction for the expert user such that the design can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users.

- Users are provided with shortcuts, icons being the shortcuts, to various end goals.
- *rhythmic*. lets users add/delete multiple songs to/from a playlist via the 'add' icon.
- It does the same with downloading music offline in that users are allowed to download multiple tracks at once via the 'download' icon.
- *rhythmic*. is extremely flexible to use. For example, users can make use of the voice assistant by selecting the 'voice' icon to search for a song or artist of their choice.



## 8. AESTHETIC AND MINIMALIST DESIGN

Interfaces should not contain information that is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in an interface competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.

- *rhythmic.*'s interface is ad-free which keeps the app free of a great deal of clutter.
- The entirety of the app's background uses a palette of pastel colours which has been proven to be a great way to inject colour without overwhelming the content on the screen.
- The app's background colour can change to suit the user's current mood. The colour red is energizing and motivates us to take action since it signifies strong ambition and determination. The colour blue encourages better mind flow and performance, it also lowers blood pressure and slows down the heart rate, promoting a relaxing atmosphere to study or work in. Yellow is a bright colour that is often described as cheery, warm and closely associated with happiness.
- Only a minimal set of frequently needed icons and options are displayed on the screen for easy, informative, hassle-free usage of the app. For example, the option to choose preferred languages is not required on every screen since it is a rarely used feature. Hence, it is present in the 'settings' section of the app.

## 9. HELP USERS RECOGNIZE, DIAGNOSE AND RECOVER FROM ERRORS

Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no error codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

- There are not many critical errors that a user may encounter on *rhythmic*.
- However, appropriate flashes and messages will be displayed on the screen in case of failure. For example, in case of a network issue, the user will be notified that the app is not able to connect to the internet and the user will be suggested to reload the app or check their device's connectivity status.
- Appropriate error messages will be displayed to the user in case of sign-up or log-in failure due to various reasons like incorrect credentials and mismatched OTP.

## 10. HELP AND DOCUMENTATION

It is best if the system doesn't need any additional explanation.

However, it may be necessary to provide documentation to help users understand how to complete their tasks.

- All first-time *rhythmic.* users will be introduced to the app by a simple tutorial that displays the actions performed by each icon on the screen and the basics of navigation.
- A recurring user can access the app's documentation in the form of FAQs in the 'settings' section.
- *rhythmic.* also provides 24x7 email support to the user in case of any enquiries. ([help@rhythmic.com](mailto:help@rhythmic.com))