

Visibility of System Status

The notification page is clear to me. I know what each option does and how to enable/disable it. The Spike page similarly communicates the system's functions (i.e. click the message Spike button to message Spike). I would like to see a small status of whether said individual is online or not as is found in all messaging applications.

The group and people pages come across as quite confusing upon first glance. It looks like a mobile news feed and the interactive elements aren't clear. If these people and groups are available to the user to connect with, then including a connect or add button to the right side of them would be effective. Or if this is the page that you reach after clicking on an add new person button, then include a small message at the top that communicates what the user should do (click on the user you wish to connect with/click on the group you wish to join).

Match Between System and the Real World

There is no weird jargon included in these pages. All the systems are familiar to anyone who has used a messaging app or a social media platform previously. The gear, the chevron, the notification toggles, these things match what users expect them to do. What I would recommend changing further would be to make the *message user* button an actual button that stands out.

User Control and Freedom

I see no issues regarding user freedom with any of the four pages. The user needs to be able to leave a page if they accidentally clicked on it and that is easily done using the left side navigation menu available on the notification and spike pages. On the people and group pages: if the top left symbol signifies a dropdown menu, then that works as well. However, I would probably make my navbar a permanent part of my desktop view rather than a dropdown. Especially so that the user can quickly navigate between the pages and never feel like their stuck.

Consistency and Standards

Overall, a great job in this regard. The chevron is used as is standard, so is the gear. The toggles on the notifications make perfect sense, especially with the addition of colored for when on. The only symbol that stands out to me as confusing is the three forward slashes used for the group and people pages. If this is intended to be the button for dropdown menu, then it should be changed to the standard three horizontal lines.

Error Prevention

Your app allows for people to connect both individually as friends and form communities around specific topics as groups. As such, there will be an element of adding and deleting groups and friends for your users. It's important to ensure that they can quickly undo it if they mistakenly delete their best friend. Also adding an extra layer of "Are you sure you wish to unsubscribe from X" would be helpful.

Recognition Rather Than Recall

All four pages do a good job on this. The Message Spike button ensures that no user is left wondering how to start a chat with Spike. The only button I would consider making more explicit would be the toggle button in the top-right corner of the group and people pages. Without context, it's hard to know what that button does. Is it a dark-mode toggle? Does it set your status as online or offline? Make it more clear to the user.

Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

Hard to tell while only looking at static images but incorporating the settings' gear icon at the top right of every page like the one in the individual page is great. One little shortcut that I feel apps like yours should have is a shortcut key for going back to the previous user channel. For example, if I were chatting with Spike and then Pete messaged me, I would love a shortcut that would take me back to the Spike channel after I've looked at Pete's message. Or if you ever incorporate voice chat as part of your application, adding a shortcut key for muting yourself is great.

Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

I would recommend readjusting the people and group page designs to increase the signal-to-noise ratio. As it stands, the mobile-friendly column design makes it so that not too many rows of people/groups can be seen at once. The large amount of text also requires you to read the full width of the page multiple times. This works on mobile when the width is still within about 15 degrees of your eyes, but on a desktop view, it can be distracting.

I think the Individual and Notification pages do a great job of incorporating the necessary blank space to draw user attention to where it needs to be. The only slight adjustment I would consider is to find an alternative to the black on blue text color for the selected menu option. However, overall great job.

Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

This one is hard to tell based off static images. However, I will mention what I would expect to see included if I were a user and encountered an error while interacting with these four pages. For the people/group/spike pages, I would expect some error in plain text if for whatever reason the application cannot connect to/load any of the people/group/individual page. Say the user clicks on Drake Graham but the app can't connect to the back end to load it or the user's internet disconnected. After a certain time, an error pops up saying "We're sorry, but the selected page cannot be loaded. Please check your device's internet connection and try again."

Help and Documentation

It seems standard across most messaging apps nowadays to not include a help/documentation page, and instead leave that for their website/forum which users can reach with a quick google search. However, it could behoove your users to include another page in your settings that at the very least links to a help/documentation page elsewhere.