

Interface Evaluation

Application chose: LINE

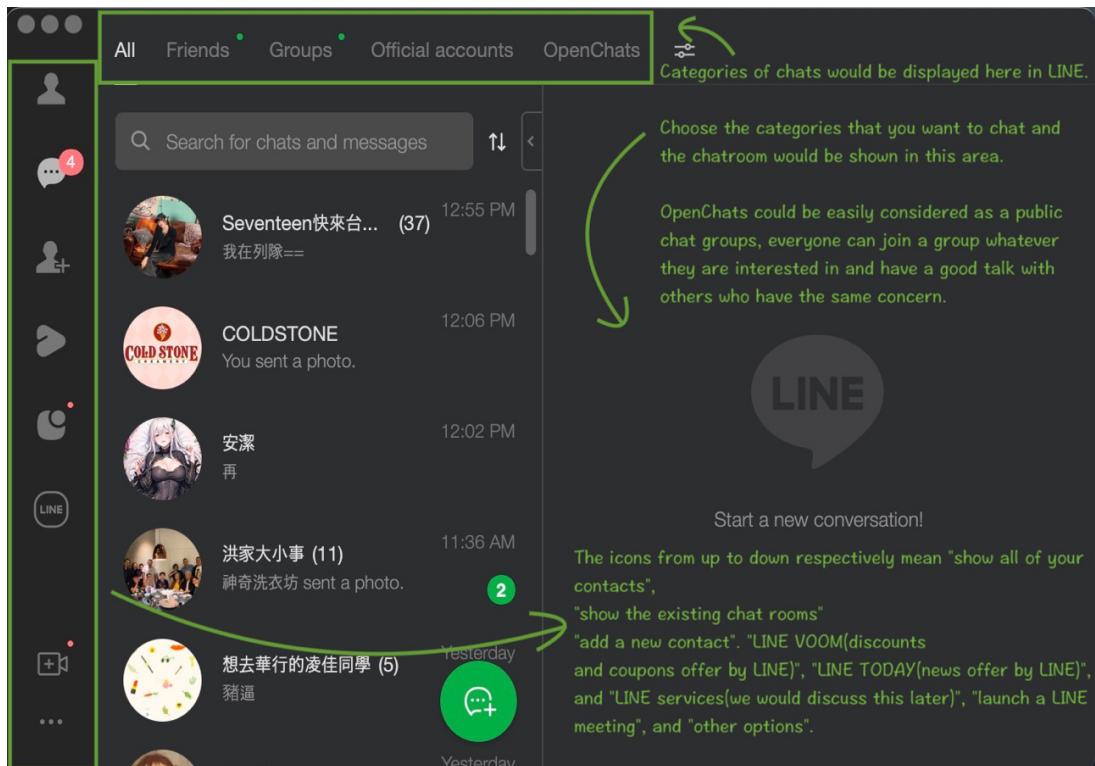
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Overview

- A brief introduction of LINE and its main page would be given.
- Use Nielsen's ten usability heuristics singly to evaluate LINE, including screenshots and explanations.
- Elaborate my conclusion about LINE and some potential improvements.
- References list.

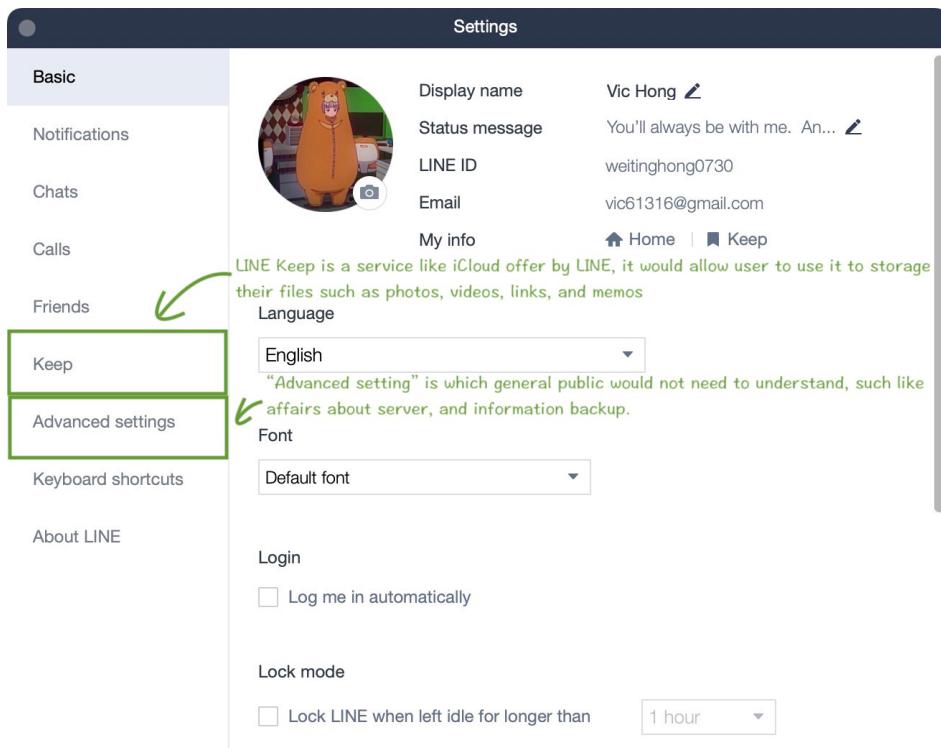
Brief introduction of LINE



LINE could be considered as the most common SNS in Taiwan. According to the image of the MOST-USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS (DIGITAL 2022: TAIWAN, 15 February 2022.), 95.7% of Taiwanese public use LINE as their main SNS.

Screenshot above is the main page of LINE. Overall, the design of it is tidy and clean, does not contain much information which is not needed. In addition, some brief explanations of main page are printed into the screenshot.

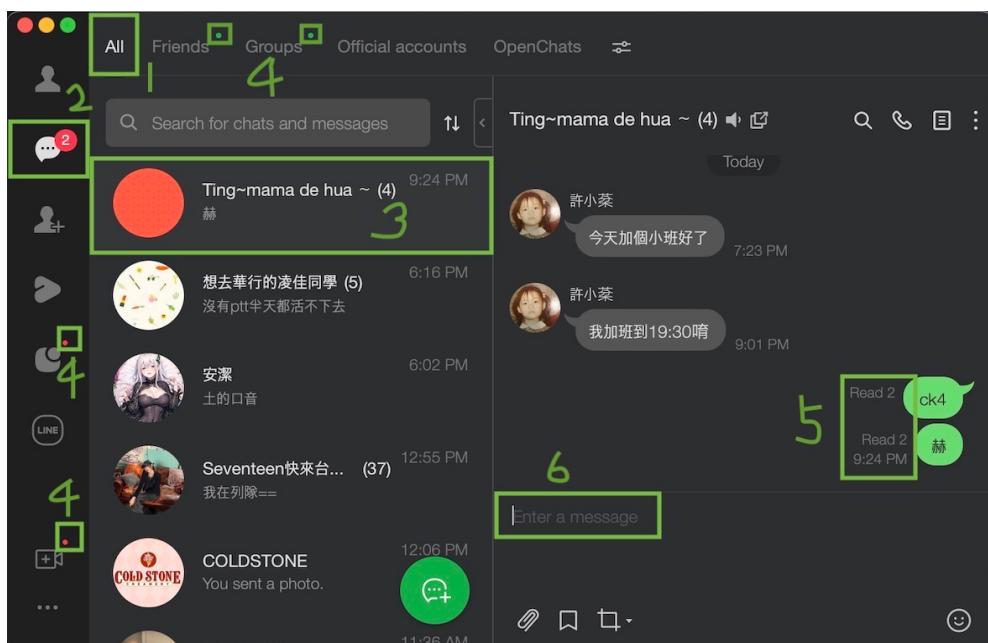
When people attempt a new application, most of them would tend to browse “setting” page first to understand the features of the application. Furthermore, “setting” page also allow users to customize the application as their wish, for instance, disallowing the notification, or changing the notification sound...etc.



Same theory in LINE, “Basic”, “Notifications”, “Chats”, “Calls”, “Friends” can obviously be observed in setting page, these features are clear and intuitive enough for users to figure out the basic terminology of LINE, which could be consider as eighth heuristic of the Nielsen’s ten usability heuristics.

Evaluation by using Nielsen’s ten usability heuristics.

1. Visibility of system status

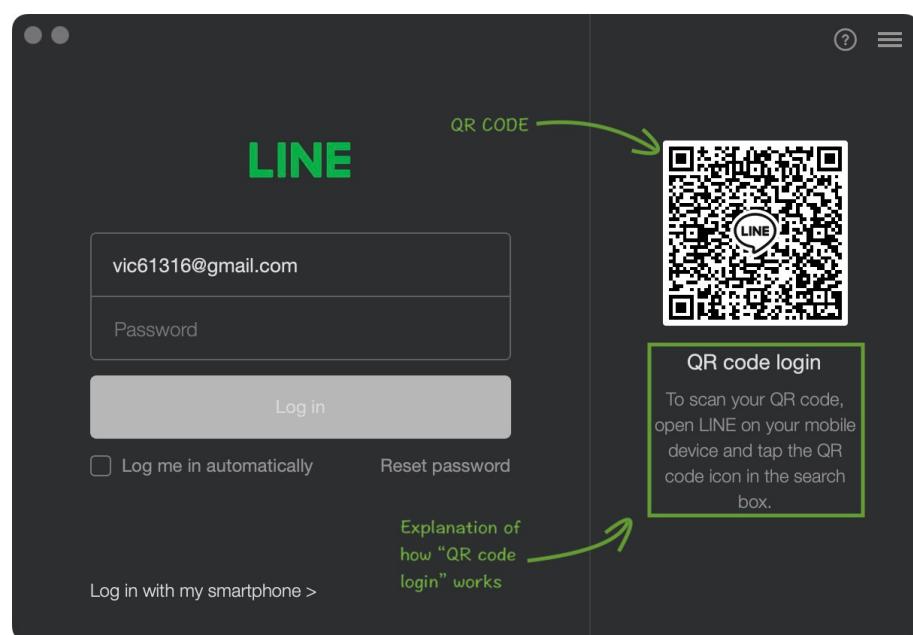


In area 1, 2, and 3, LINE slightly change the color of “All”, icon of chat bubble,

and chat room background to make users know what they are SELECTING. In terms of area 4, LINE shows a little dot at the right-top of the categories or icon to imply users that there is something UNREADED. In number 5, “Read” status demonstrate if people have seen the message or not. Number 6 is a familiar icon for internet users, when the icon like “I” is shining in the entering area, the application is implying you that you are now typing, if you type on your keyboard, the alphabets will appear responsibly.

The visibility of system of LINE is pretty complete, not only the examples which was mentioned above, but also much more situations that present it, such as “Unsent” status, progress bar...etc., almost whenever LINE has run a command from users, LINE will tell users the command is completed or not by different methods.

2. Match between system and the real world



QR code is familiar to us who have use Internet for a long time. However, this technology may be a relatively new for elder people, they may have no idea about what this complicated diagram is it or even think this is a demonstration of error. Therefore, at this time, explanation would be useful here. It gives some instructions of using QR code and also mentioned the keyword, “scan” it.

Basic

Notifications

Chats

Calls

Friends

Keep

Advanced settings

Keyboard shortcuts

About LINE

LINE Terms of Service | Legal notices

Update history

v7.16.1

- Check out every album from all chats in a single place.
- You can now report inappropriate notes from others.
- You can now choose whether or not to see the camera preview before joining video calls.

v7.15.0

- We improved notifications for calls made in private chats.

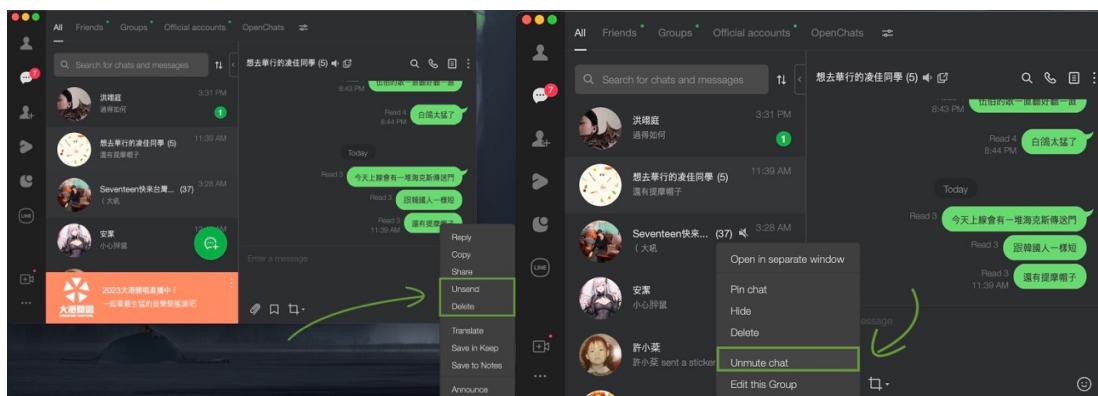
v7.14.1

- When you send up to 3 emoji at once, they automatically enlarge to appear like stickers.
- We revamped video call filters.
- We upped security measures to keep LINE even safer.

We are the users of the application not the developers, nothing can be clarified by just giving us the version number. As a result, every time when LINE is corrected the bugs or have something new, it would announce them at the home page or we can access the information of them by ourselves at above page.

Also, LINE presents its match between system and the real world in many situations, including the explanations about “keyboard shortcuts”, simple comment of every icon which is used...etc.

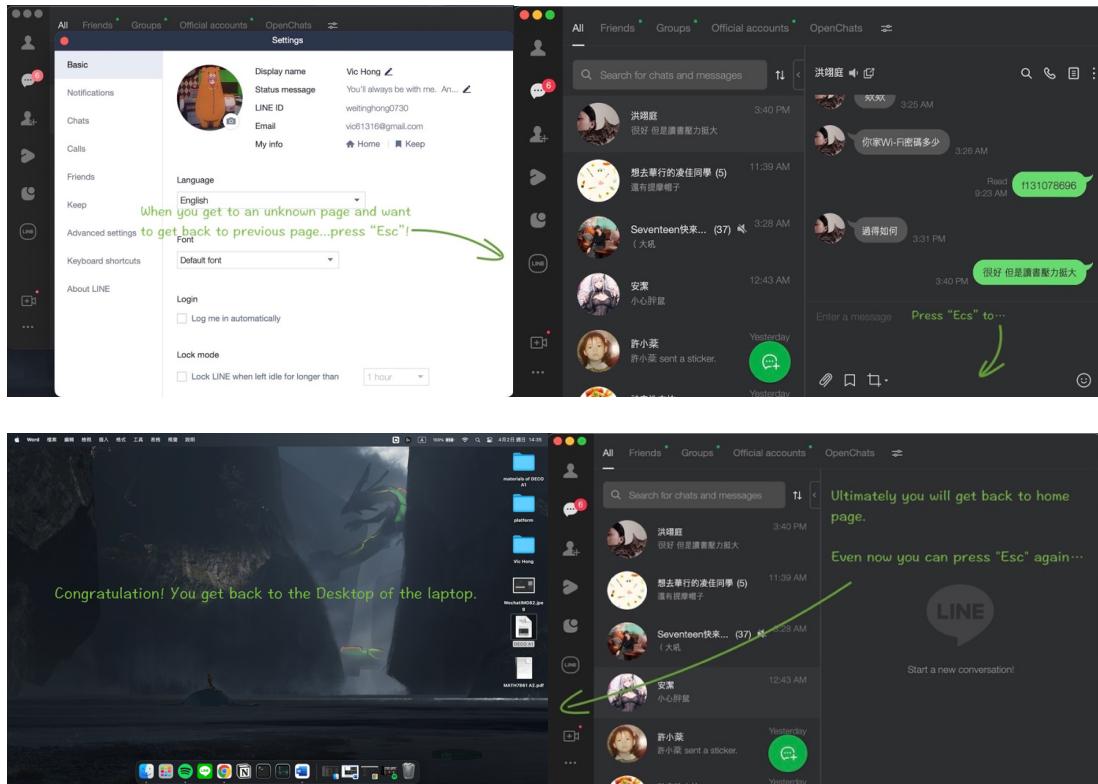
3. User control and freedom.



Sometimes when people using LINE, they would encounter a situation that need do undo or delete a text or picture. LINE supports all of these functions for people to compensate or correct their mistakes.

In addition, “Esc” button means go back to previous page in LINE, providing

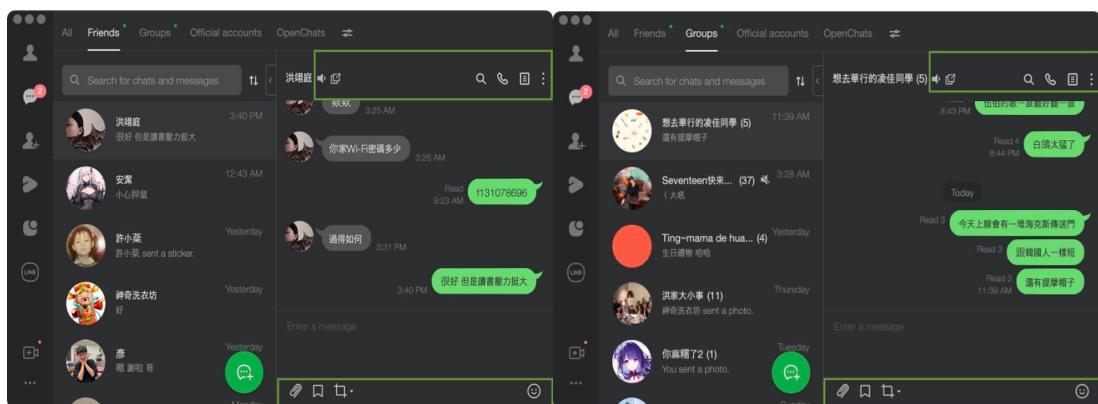
users an approach to get back when they accidentally go to the interface that they are unknown.

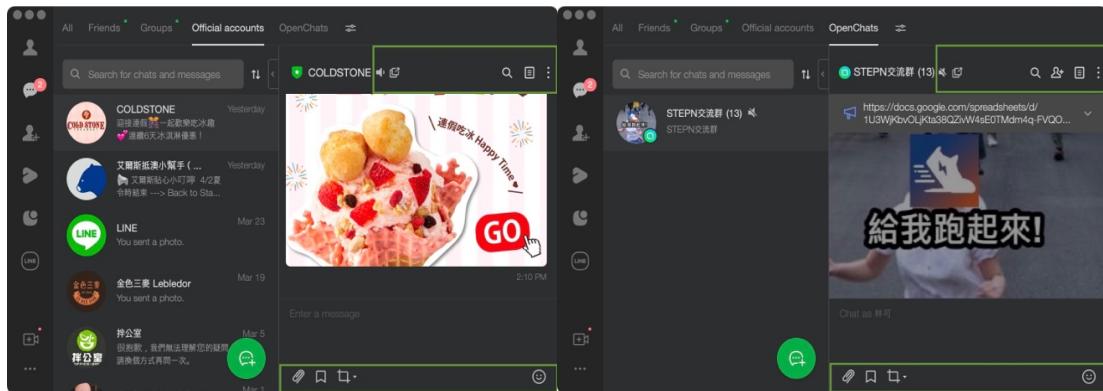


The functions of “undo” or “get back” are considered as vital roles in modern applications. LINE would be said that have a pretty well development in this field, it offers several ways for users to control the system by themselves.

4. Consistency and standards

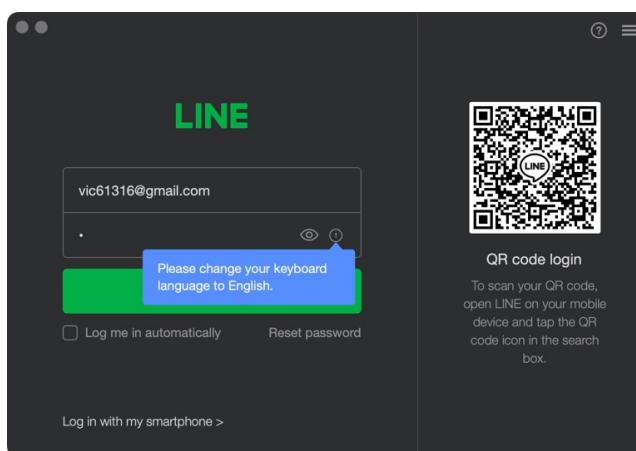
A good interface should always be displayed as a constant form, otherwise the users may be confused about it.





LINE was design well at the Consistency and standards, no matter what categories that users are chatting with, the position of buttons of, for instance, notification status, stickers library, LINE KEEP, send files are the same. Users do not need to spend extra time to adapt the different positions of them.

5. Error prevention

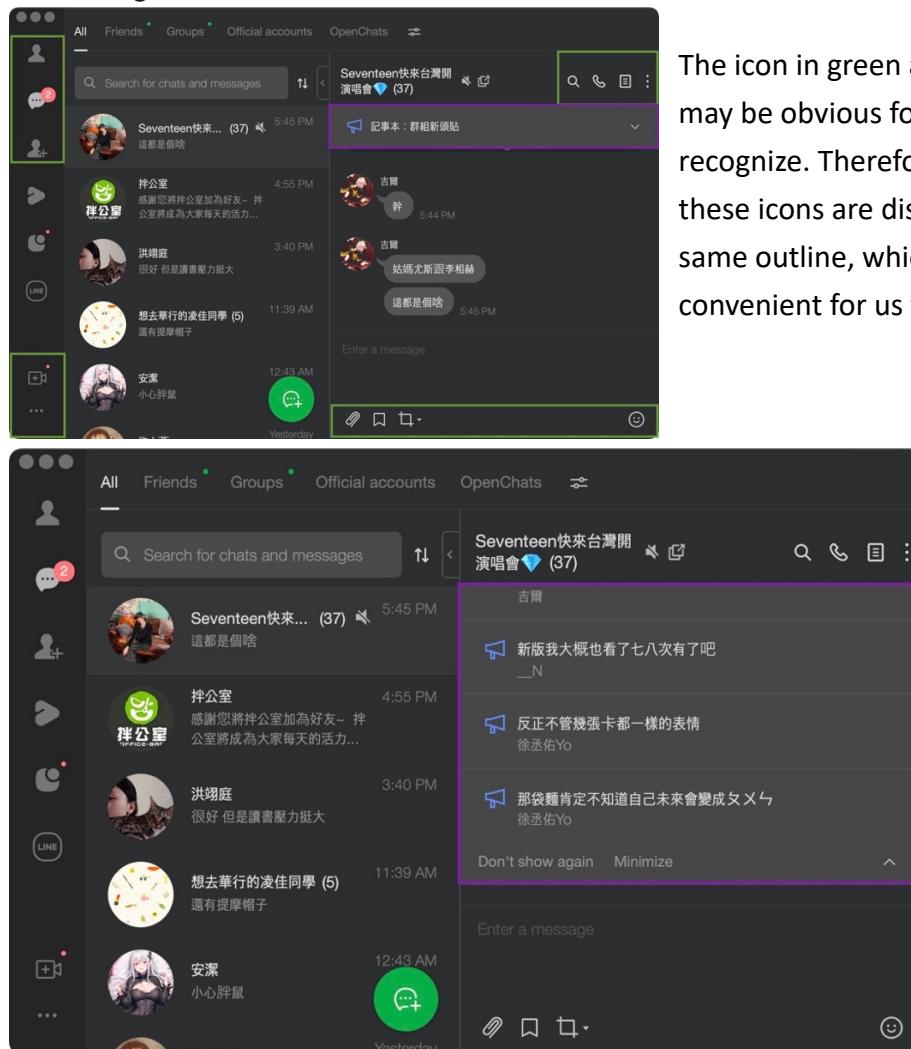


Taiwanese use unique alphabet to type mandarin, if we don't change our input method to English, we could not type English alphabet. Correspondingly, what users type would be detected by LINE and automatically bounce this tip when we use wrong keyboard to type English.



When users are chatting with AI robot (for example, this is an ordering food AI), LINE offers several most frequent options for users to choose, instead of type by users themselves, declining the occur possibility of some specific situations lead to an error. Errors may contain such as AI cannot identify what users want...etc.

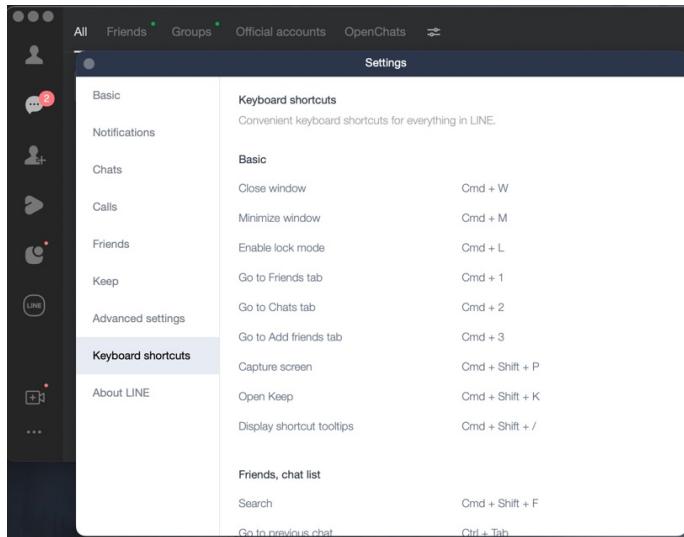
6. Recognition rather than recall.



The icon in green area, which may be obvious for us to recognize. Therefore, in LINE, all these icons are displayed at same outline, which are convenient for us to use.

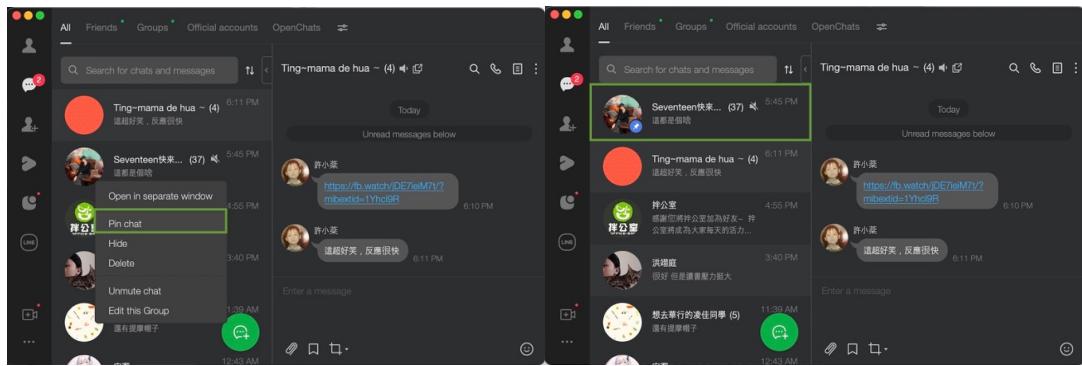
The purple areas in both screenshots are the function called “Announcement”. Whatever what categories you chat, any text can be set as an announcement text by other individuals or you. The announcement texts would be shown at the top of the chatting room, convenient for everyone to find when it was sent and would never disappear until someone cancel it. Announcement text also accompany with this megaphone icon, thus everyone would know that these messages may be important.

7. Flexibility and efficiency to use.



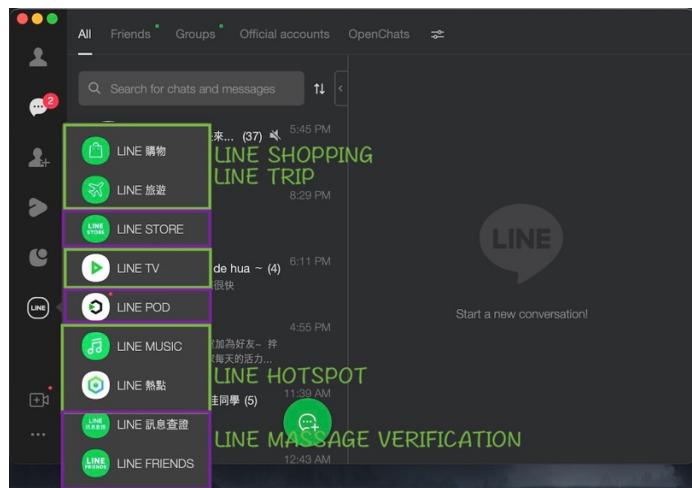
Keyboard shortcut perfectly present the flexibility and efficiency to use. LINE definitely have keyboard shortcut for users to efficiently cut the time while they are using.

As other present on flexibility and efficiency to use, the specific contact or chat group, official account, and openchat can be pin on the top of the window, or more easily, users can pin a single contact or a chat group on the top than others.



8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

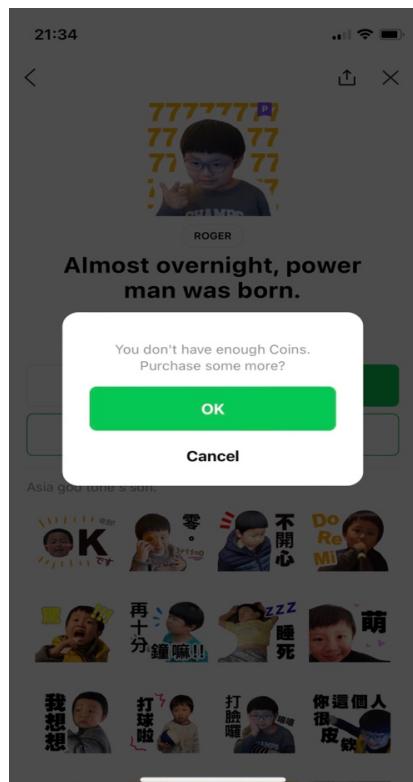
Design of the application may involve personal opinion. In my opinion, there is not much redundant information or many functions in LINE. The most frequent function could be easily accessed while using. However, a little part in the home page may contain something that general public would not use it.



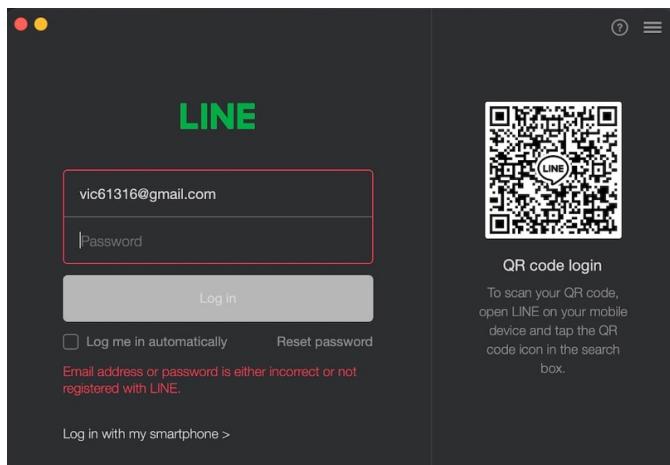
For example, the green area of LINE SERVICES, in Taiwan, people usually use another websites or applications to complete these stuffs instead of using LINE. In terms of purple areas, maybe general users should even search online for what it is.

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

Inevitably errors may be caused by users while using an application. At this moment, content of the error massage may be important. Only giving error code or complicated jargon could be considered not an ideal result in this situation. Overall, LINE avoid this situation and always give some useful solutions to resolve these errors.



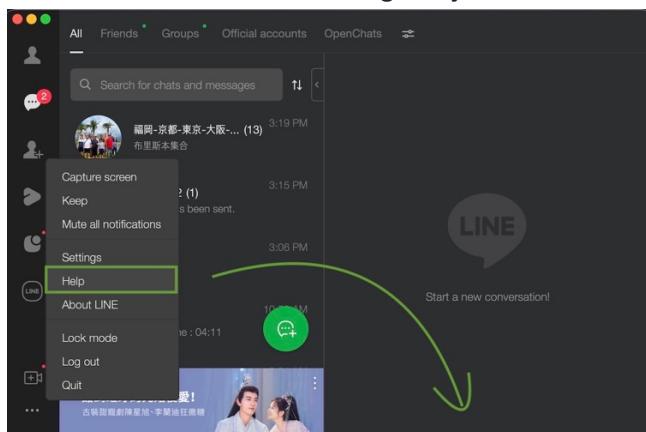
This is the LINE stickers store, if you have insufficient coin that could not buy a sticker, error massage would bounce out to remind the user, and ask them whether they want to recharge coins now.



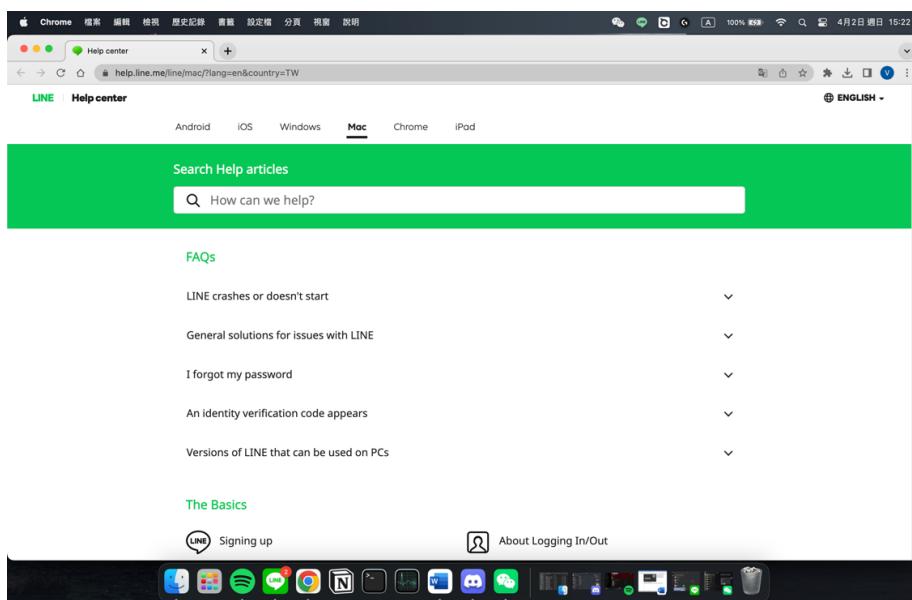
If users encounter a difficulty to log in, red outline and red error massage would be showed obviously to user about why, where, and what to do next.

10. Help and documentation.

Ideally, users do not need to check further inductions of any functions while using, however, sometimes users would still need to have a complete illustration about something they concern.



In the home page of LINE, “Help” button is designed for users to link to an external website that contain the illustrations of all functions of LINE.
The external website named “Help center” and its screenshot is showed belong.

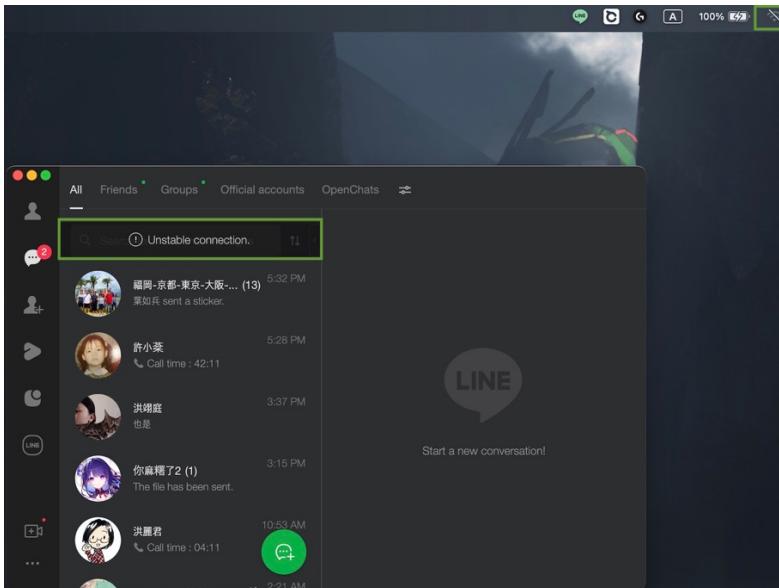


Conclusion

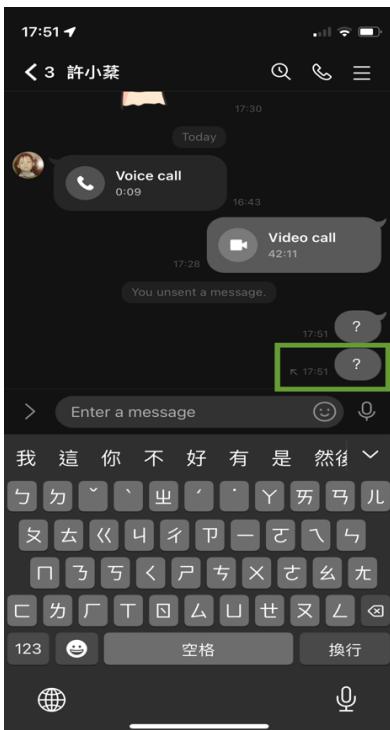
Worthy of the name, LINE unquestionably can be seen as the most common SNS used by Taiwanese and one of the top SNS in the world. There may not many main mistakes or drawbacks that can be found in LINE, not to mention that LINE is kept improved by its development team. Most of the users may have good experiences while using LINE.

However, from my point of view, there may have some potential blemishes could be proposed:

The text to inform users that Internet connection could be more precise.



This message would be present immediately whenever the laptop does not connect to any Internet. Users can quickly recognize that something occur on the Internet.



However, when user use smartphone to access LINE and face a difficulty on Internet, only a little arrow is displayed to imply that the phone is disconnected from Internet.

Showing only an arrow in this case might confuse users because when LINE is dealing with other command, this arrow will also appear to present that this command will be delt later (command in list).

In this situation (device is not connected), the imply should supposed to be observable, clearly show that for now the smartphone is not connected or the connected Wi-Fi or Cellular does not work.

References List

DIGITAL 2022: TAIWAN [report] (15 February 2022). Retrieved from.
<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-taiwan>.

This is the end of my report, thank you!