

## Practissimo: Usability Test Report

YuetLong Leung, Jasmine Moran, Zachary Wong

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### What Happened During Tests

During the usability tests on April 7th, 2016, our web application, Practissimo, underwent tests with the help of students outside of GUI II. Students who came to test Practissimo were first explained that Practissimo is a tool designed for those who wish to be motivated into practicing vocals or instruments. Following our brief introduction, we then explained the main features of Practissimo and afterwards allowed them to begin using our application.

The login section was typically tested first. Users would create an account for Practissimo, sign in with their email and password, and then log in successfully. The only issue that arose was when one user attempted to break the login section by creating an account with only the at symbol (@). This was a valid email and the user was able to log into the account. We were recommended to fix the validation for this.

The interface for the timer was confusing for users, as there was very little instruction on how it would be used. The reason for this was because rather than the timer working in minutes, it was working as a full 24-hour clock. When users wanted to enter one minute of practice, the timer would assume that that the user wanted to practice until 1:00am. A few users pointed this

out and suggested that this should either be changed or a tutorial on how it is used should be given when it is initially prompted.

Some users had trouble activating the sound detection. The sensitivity of the microphone was set to low and there were no prompts showing that sound detection was on. Users were told to “drum” on the test machine so that the microphone can pick up sharp spikes of sound.

There was also some difficulty with the use of the scheduler, as the scheduler would not render on the screen properly. Users fixed this either by resizing the window or by clicking one button on the scheduler. Once that was done, the scheduler was then fully rendered into the application.

One of the users pointed out that the clock picker, which is the jQuery component to pick the end time of practice, confuses users instead of assisting them by using a graphic user interface to assist time input. Another user tried set up one hour for practice, expected the countdown display started from 1 hour instead of 59 minutes. Our user interface omitted the seconds part and didn’t round up the time remaining and display it. This is something we could not have foreseen.

### Changes for Post Test

Based on the feedback from user tests, we plan to further improve on the appearance of our site as well as fix some of the bugs that were pointed out. As a top priority, the user interface will need to be updated so that users are able to access and use Practissimo without much hassle while still giving the site a good appearance and smooth transition between screens. This involves giving proper instructions and stylistic changes for the timer and the scheduler. We also may consider changing the options button that is currently not in use and instead provide the user a tutorial section that will teach them how to use Practissimo.

We also plan an overhaul with the timer UI. We will add forms that allow duration input for practice time. This form is binded with the clockpicker. That is, if the time is 12:00pm, and user changes the duration of practice from 1 hour 15 minutes to 1hour 30 minutes, then the time display in the clockpicker will change from 1:15pm to 1:30pm. If the end time changes by the clockpicker, the form will work in the durations too. The rationale behind this is that it will increase flexibility for the user to setup the timer, as well as clarity.

We decided to scratch one of our goals to provide bug-free scheduling feature. We did not anticipate the technical complexities to modify the scheduler we imported. We decided to set the calendar to view-only. It's only feature will be displaying user's practicing history. We will also implement the progress page that allows users to sort and filter their practice history.

We can also use a router to separate the login and register functionality to a separate page instead of using the default UI component. It will polish the UI and make it look nicer. But this will be put on lower priority.

### Conclusions About Quality of User Interface

The majority of the user interface was functional and is a huge improvement compared to the build presented during the alpha stage. Current bug issues will be taken care of swiftly and more fixes will be implemented.

The user interface during the test was in a good state and definitely reflected a style that was closer to the end product we envisioned. The current color palette for the website is pleasing to look at and does not hurt the eyes, but we intend to make a few adjustments to the palette once more while further stylizing the page.

### Overall Impression of Testing Day

The usability test proved to be helpful. The feedback from users who participated in the testing process gave us insight on what we would need to improve, both functionality and user interface. Users' intuitions could lead them to misinterpret the instructions we gave in the webpage, as visually, certain functionalities in Practissimo would leave users confused as to what to do. Obvious bugs arose when running Practissimo, such as the initial section for the scheduler not being shown properly.

We also underestimated the importance of giving user sufficient directions to use this app in the app itself. We simply did not aware of that our users are not aware that the sound detection was on, and he or she simply needs to say something a little bit louder in front of the screen, and the microphone will capture it. Some users were not aware of that sound detection was what made this app possible.

### Evaluations: Notes and Forms

The following is what we said prior to the user testing Practissimo:

“Hello. Before we begin, we want to thank you for testing Practissimo. To start, Practissimo is a music practice manager that tracks your duration of practicing instruments by using our sound detection algorithm.”

The following were tasks we briefly asked the user to keep in mind of while testing:

- Sign up for an account via login section and log in
- Use the timer by adjusting the length of time to practice, then attempt to see if sound is being picked up during practice
- Use the scheduler to pick a date and time of when they will practice

When we conducted our tests, users were left to test the site while we observed their interactions with Practissimo. Once they had gone through the login, timer, and scheduler, we then approached them once more and asked the questions below:

- What do you think of our user interface?
- Is there anything you think could help improving our website?
- Do you prefer the touch and feel of our custom user interface instead of a Bootstrap boilerplate? (only when we knew test subjects are web developers)
- Do you think using a clock to pick the end time instead of two number dials for the time selection is a good idea?

All questions in regards to Practissimo were asked verbally and were then written down.

User Notes:

Ramon M

- Timer was weird.
- What does this app do?
- Sound detection didn't seem to work at some points.

Bunchhieng S:

1. What is this app for? (He asked after the test)

Donavan P:

- Was the one to purposely break the login section

Susan S.

- UI had pretty animations
- Un-intuitive timer selector and weak instructions on how to use sound detector
- Weird login
- Scheduler didn't seem to render correctly

Michael F:

- When drumming on the keyboard, the sound detection sometimes paused.
- GUI seemed a bit plain
- Scheduler didn't render

Son N:

- What does the timer do?