

DES02 : heuristic evaluations

=====overview

This is an individual assignment that you should complete on your own. You will get an individual grade. In this assignment, you will perform a heuristic evaluation of a user interface. You can select the application to review. You may not use the same application that you use for XCR01 (if you decide to do that assignment).

=====the assignment

You read Nielsen's notes on Heuristic Evaluation for class (see reading on 13 July). Now it is time to apply these principles to a concrete user interface. Find a smartphone application that you wish to evaluate. You do not have to use an Android app, but it must be for a smartphone. Install the selected application on your personal phone - any platform is fine (you may use your emulator if you don't have a smartphone, but a smartphone is definitely preferable!). Make sure you know how to take screenshots on your phone (iOS: menu+power/lock button; Android: <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/6-ways-to-take-screenshots-on-android/>). Games may be hard to evaluate using our heuristics - we recommend that you stick to other types of applications. You are free to choose the kind of app you study, but make sure you describe it in your report.

Your submission document should contain separate sections for each major part of the application (e.g., home screen, create event, filter events, etc., for a calendar app - the exact screens obviously will differ somewhat between applications). In each section, describe which heuristics the interface violated. For each problem, state:

1. Which of the Ten Usability Heuristics is violated.
2. How the interface violates the heuristic (1-3 sentences).
3. Your rating of the severity of the violation; explain your rating in one sentence (by referring to frequency, impact, and persistence of the problem as suggested by Nielsen).

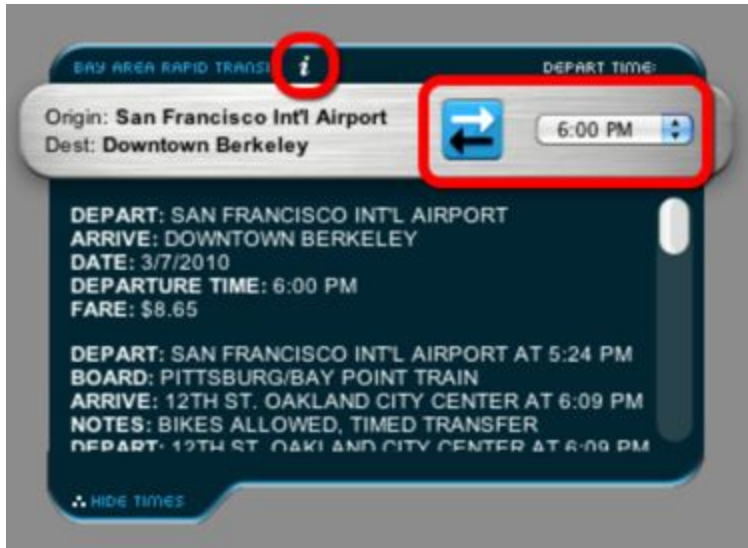
Note : for each violation, include screenshots in your description as evidence of the problem - you can grab these with the screen capture functions on your phone. Annotating screenshots with arrows or callouts can be especially effective.

For examples how Nielsen's heuristics apply to mobile applications, you may want to look at [Suzanne Ginsburg's iPhone App Usability Heuristics](#).

=====example

Here is an example of a heuristic violation in the [BART Planner Widget for OSX](#).

Main Screen



Heuristic: Consistency and Standards

Explanation: The interface offers inconsistent ways to change different trip options. While a dropdown box to choose departure time and a button to reverse stations are available on the *main* screen, the origin and destination stations cannot be changed on *this* screen. To change these options, the user must click on the "i" icon in the top bar (which only becomes visible on mouse rollover).

Severity 3 = Major usability problem: important to fix, so should be given high priority I rank this problem as major because it occurs *frequently* - every time the user wants to change stations; and because it is *persistent* - there is no way for the user to change application behavior to put all controls on the same page.

=====grading criteria

Criterion	Great solution 100%	Acceptable Solution 50%	Poor Solution 0%
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Is your evaluation based on Nielsen's list of heuristics? 5pts	Yes, evaluation clearly grounded in Nielsen's heuristics	Evaluation applies heuristics sometimes.	No, evaluation not tied to Nielsen's heuristics.
Do your arguments make sense? 5pts	Yes, correct application of heuristics.	Arguments are sometimes unclear.	No arguments, or totally off-base.
How many heuristics did you discuss in total for all screens? 5pts	>=5 violations	3-4 violations	0-2 violations
Did you give the found problems severity ratings? 5 pts	Yes	Sometimes, or unclear rationale	No severity ratings.

=====*submission instructions*

Please create a PDF of your solution and upload it to bcourses under this assignment.