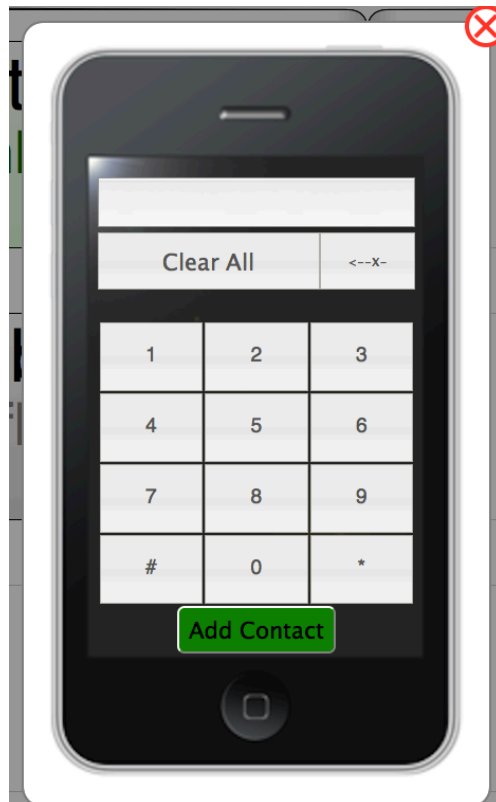


Heuristic Evaluation: "ElderConnect"

Problems



1. iPhone graphic used for adding contacts
 - 1.1. Visibility of system status, Consistency and standards
 - 1.2. When this image appeared upon choosing "Add Contact", I was a little confused because until I noticed the "Add Contact" button I thought that after I typed in the phone number the program would then dial this person. It didn't seem consistent with the look and feel of adding a contact to other communication platforms I've used, such as email clients or social networking sites.
 - 1.3. Severity: major
 - 1.4. Maybe use a view that looks more like turning to a new page in an address book. This would be more consistent with the book framework you have on the home page, and it would be more familiar to senior citizens (your target users).



2. Home button on iPhone graphic for adding contacts
 - 2.1. Match between system and the real world
 - 2.2. This is a hardware feature that exists in the real world on the iPhone, a device with which many users may already be familiar. In the real world this button provides functionality for returning to the home screen, but in this UI it does not. In fact it is a functional button at all. This may confuse novice users, and may lead them to believe there is something wrong with this view, or that they've done something wrong.
 - 2.3. Severity: minor
 - 2.4. A solution would be to mimic another phone's UI, or to remove the button from this image and replace it with more black space at the bottom of the phone



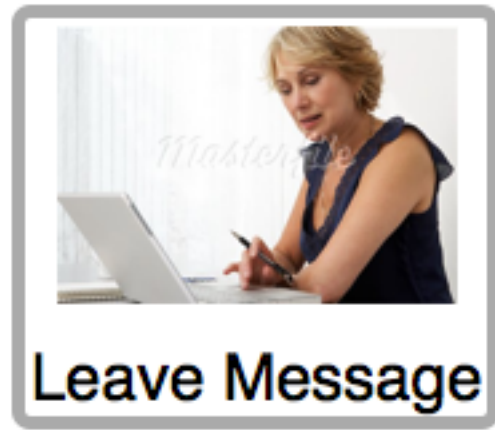
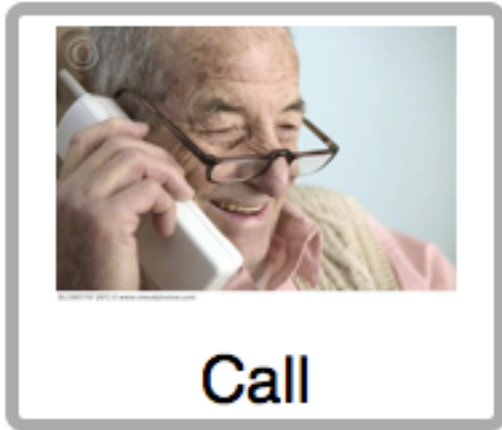
3. Green “Add Contact” button

3.1. Consistency and standards

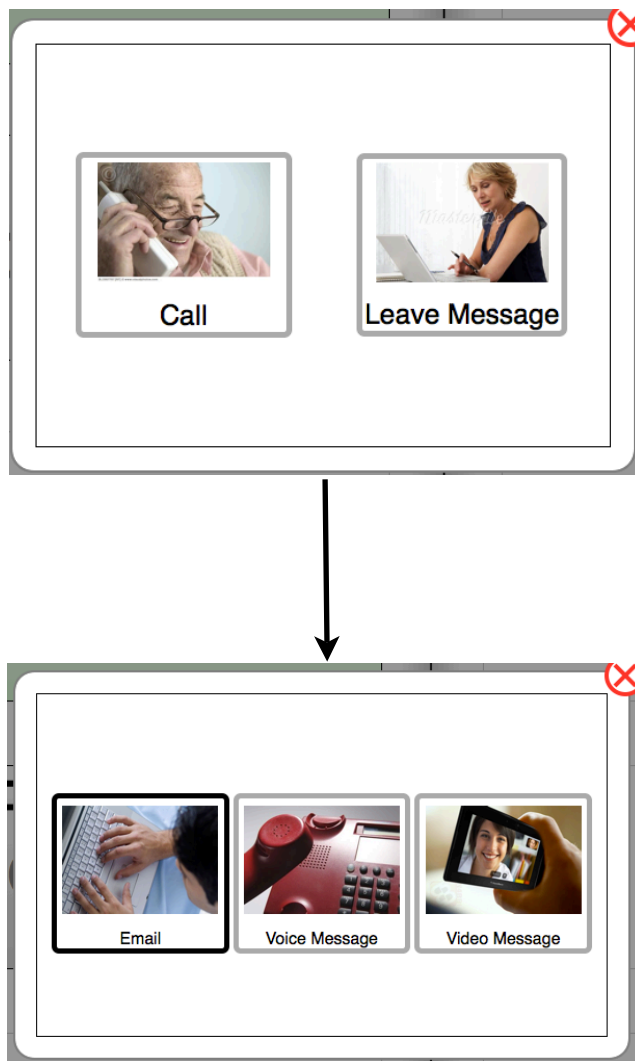
3.2. Usually when I see a green button on a phone I think of “Send” or “Go”. This could exacerbate Problem 1, wherein this UI for adding a contact suggests that after entering the number the program will dial this person

3.3. Severity: cosmetic

3.4. My suggestion would be to make the button a different color, or better yet change the enter view as suggested in 1.3.



4. Images on the buttons for “Call”, “Leave Message”, etc.
 - 4.1. Aesthetic and minimalist design
 - 4.2. These particular images do not contribute to the users’ understanding of what these buttons are for, and are blatantly “stock” photos, which is unappealing aesthetically. In particular the “Leave Message” button doesn’t communicate to me the idea of leaving a message at all. The image of the woman using a computer actually makes me think of sending an email.
 - 4.3. Severity: cosmetic
 - 4.4. I don’t think these images are necessary at all if you display the captions clearly enough, but if you want to use graphics then I would go with more traditional icons instead of photos.



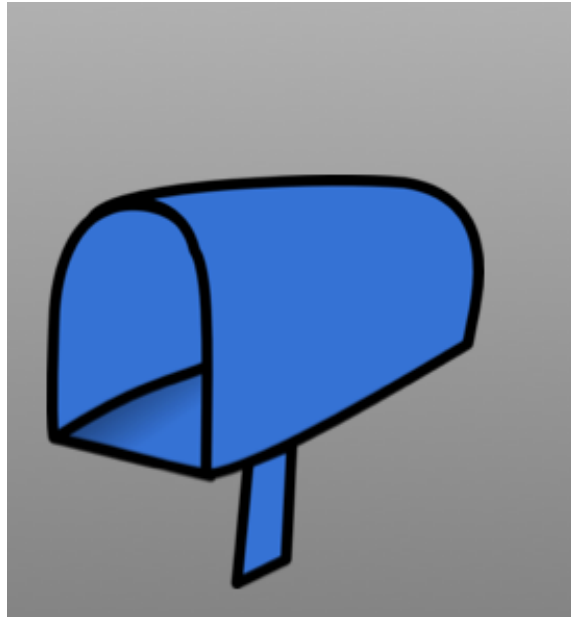
5. No “undo” or “back” functionality between views for leaving messages/calling

5.1. User control and freedom

5.2. Once you choose to either leave a message or call one of your contacts, there is no way to return to the previous screen other than exiting and starting over. This could be frustrating for seniors who are not seasoned at using a mouse or touchpad and are prone to errors.

5.3. Severity: minor

5.4. A left-pointing arrow icon at the top left corner of the pop-up window would do the trick!



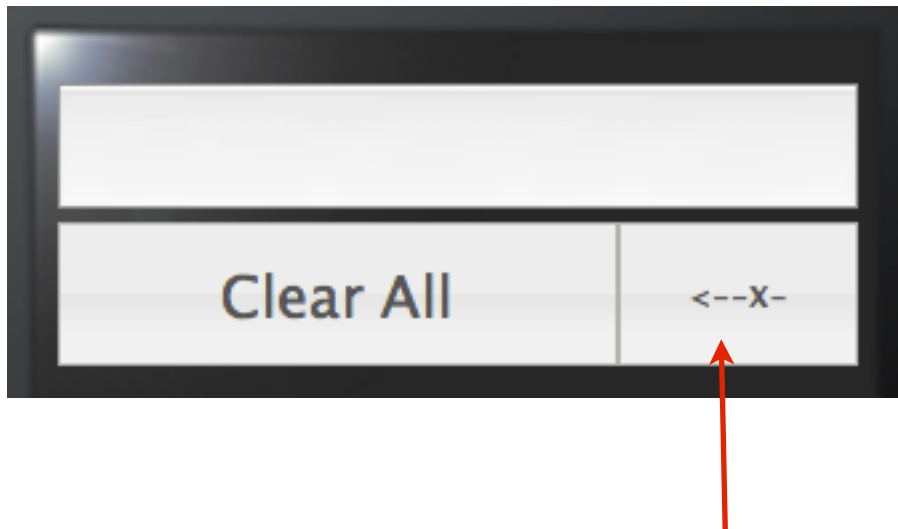
6. Mailbox image on home screen

6.1. Affordance

6.2. When I saw this image I thought that clicking on it would take me to a new portion of the site, like an “Inbox” view. However after hovering and trying to click it became evident that this image was not actually clickable. I deduced that maybe this was because I did not have any messages. In that case this becomes an issue of unnecessary display content. Either way this image and its function on the site is confusing.

6.3. Severity: major

6.4. There are two messages that you want to convey in the use case displayed in the prototype: first that there are no messages in the inbox, and second that because the inbox is empty this image is not clickable. To accomplish this I would overlay a “No New Messages” caption over the image, and I would “grey out” both so it is clear that they cannot be clicked.



7. "Delete" button on view for adding a contact
 - 7.1. Consistency and standards
 - 7.2. This series of ASCII characters is not only bulky and unappealing aesthetically, but also breaks with what one has come to expect from software or mobile UI's for deleting single characters of input. There is also a lack of consistency because the "Clear All" caption is spelled out, but this delete button is labeled symbolically
 - 7.3. Severity: minor
 - 7.4. I would simply spell out the word "delete" so that it looks similar to the "Clear All" button



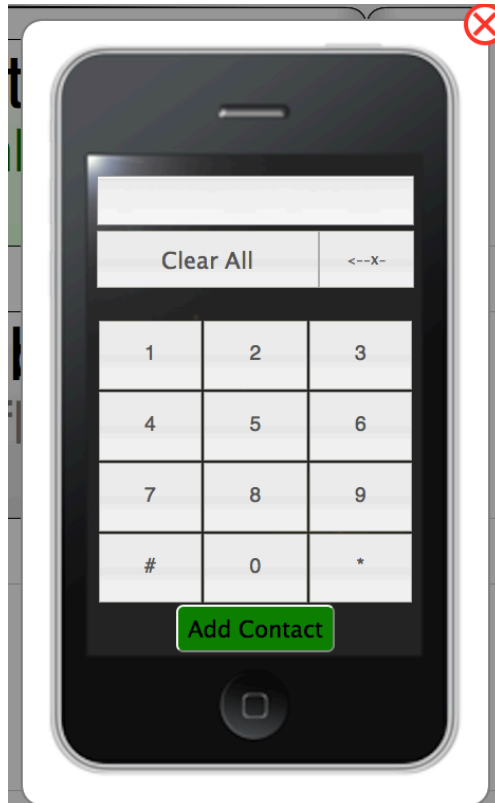
8. Negative numbers representing time when leaving a message

8.1. Visibility of system status

8.2. I honestly have no idea what the negative numbers mean when they appear during a message. Are the positive numbers a countdown to when the message begins, and then the absolute value of the negative number displays the length of the message so far? Either way this notation is very confusing, in fact the negative value even suggests that something might have gone wrong...

8.3. Severity: major

8.3. I would display the time on a message in standard 0:15 (for 15 seconds) notation, as this is what most users will be used to.



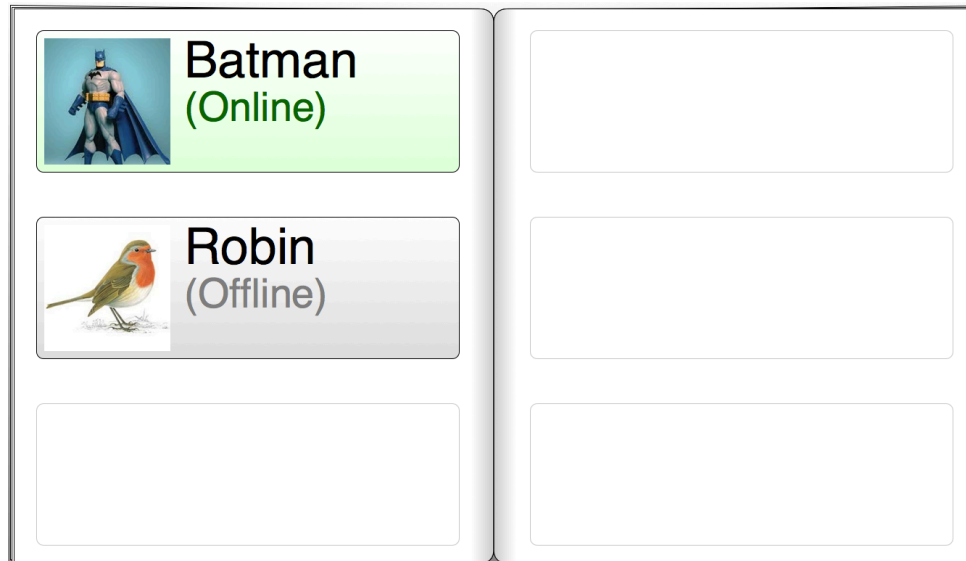
9. Unable to use keypad when typing phone number for new contact

9.1. Flexibility and efficiency of use

9.2. It would be much faster for a non-novice user to enter a phone number using their keyboard as opposed to clicking each of the numbers on the phone view. Also this is more intuitive for any user, as it is standard for the primary method of input to be the keypad.

9.3. Severity: major

9.4. Simply allow for both manual and keyboard input to the phone view



10. Lack of search functionality for address book

10.1. Flexibility and efficiency of use

10.2. Since the address book only displays 6 contacts at a time, it is conceivable that once more contacts are accumulated a search bar would be useful for traversing the list, especially since it is not overtly obvious whether or not the contacts are listed/sorted in any set order, and if so how.

10.3. Severity: major

10.4. I would add a search bar to the far top right of the home page, with the default text "Search Contacts" inside.



11. Greyed-out stop button during message

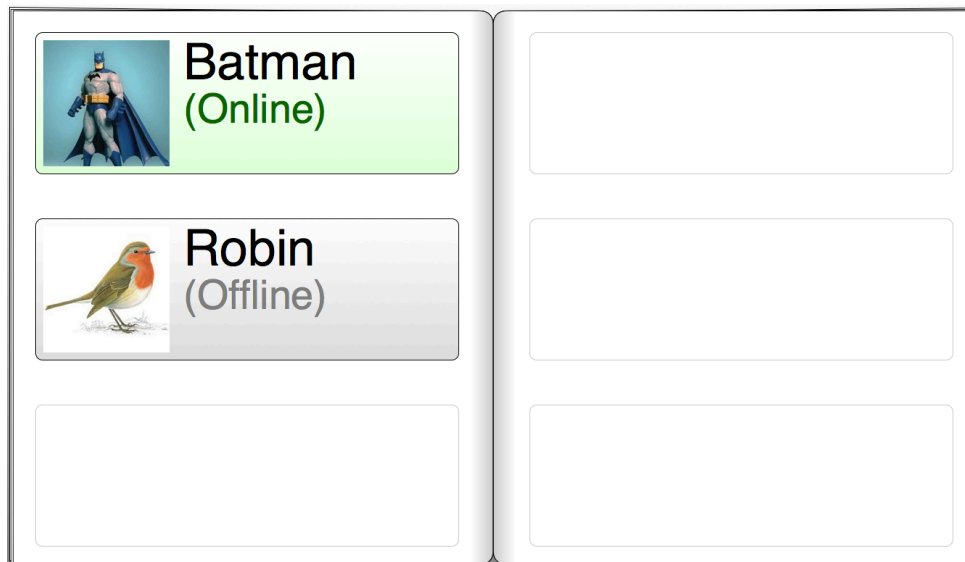
11.1. Affordance

11.2. The fact that the button is visible but greyed-out while recording a message suggests that it is not clickable. This is a problem because the user may be confused about how to stop the recording process without losing what they have recorded so far.

11.3. Severity: major

11.4. Simply change the color of the stop button to red, as is industry standard

Positive:



12. Address book view for contacts

12.1. Match between system and the real world

12.2. The traditional address book view is a good choice for your target users (senior citizens), because it hearkens back to the “analog” version of performing this task.

12.3. Severity: good!

12.4. No recommendation



Batman
(Online)



Robin
(Offline)

13. Color coded indication of contacts' online/offline status

13.1. Consistency and standards

13.2. This is an industry-standard way of representing when contacts are online in the context of an application such as email or instant messaging. It is subtle and understated, yet the distinction is clear.

13.3. Severity: good!

13.4 No recommendation



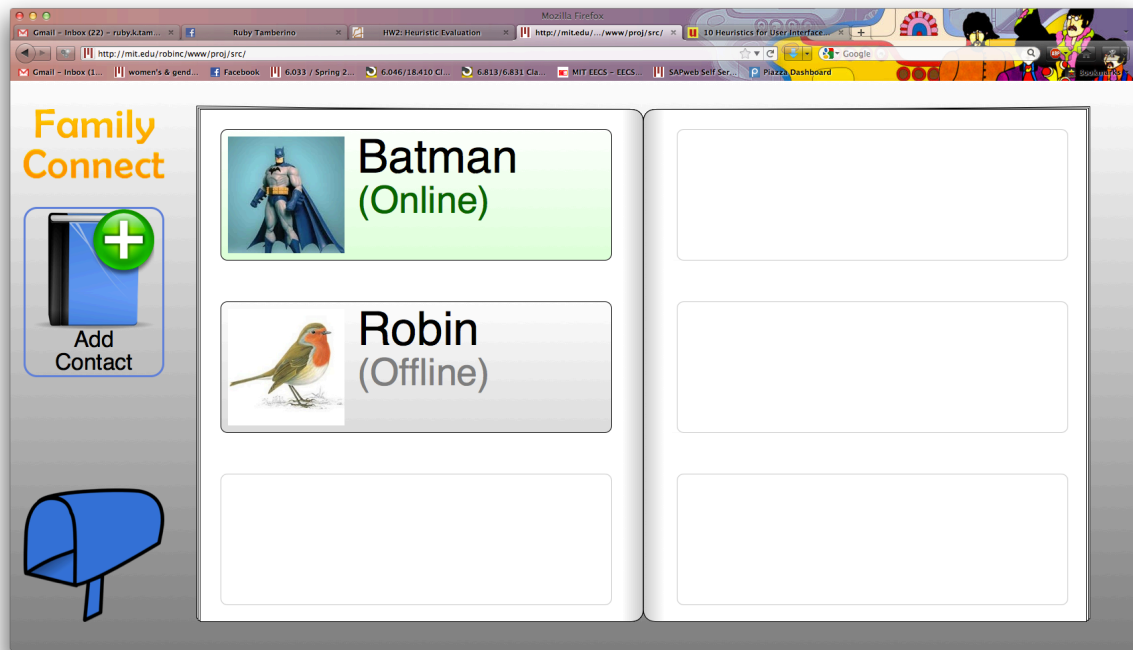
14. Exit symbol on pop-up windows

14.1. Affordance

14.2. The symbol for exiting out of pop-up windows is clearly displayed and adheres to industry standards.

14.3. Severity: good

14.4. No recommendation



15. Buttons, images, and font are large and clear
 - 15.1. Aesthetic and minimalist design
 - 15.2. Given that senior citizens are your target audience, the large font and simple, clear imagery on the site are effective and appropriate. Well done!
 - 15.3. Severity: good
 - 15.4. No recommendation.