

LocaShare Heuristic Testing
6.813 – Spring 2012
Julia Boortz

Home Screen:

1. Major: Map doesn't fit on screen (visibility)

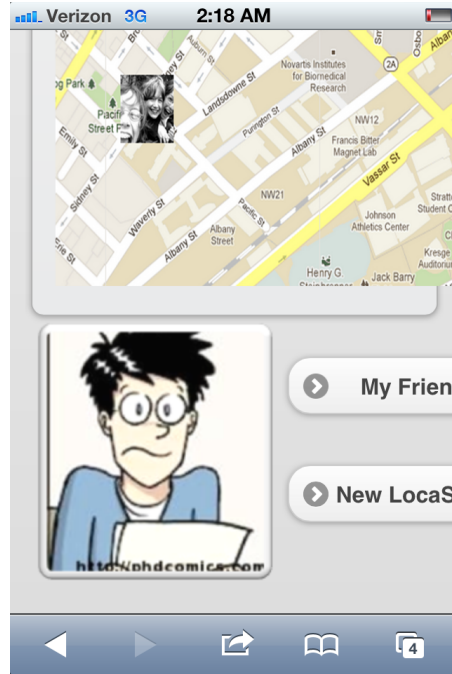
When you go to the homepage of LocaShare, the map doesn't fit fully on the home page. The right side of the map is off the screen and there is no way to get to it.

Recommendation: Scale the map so that it fits fully on the screen.

2. Major: Can't see entire buttons on first page (readability)

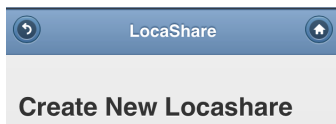
When you go to the homepage, parts of the buttons are cut off. This means that you can't read the labels on the buttons.

Recommendation: Get rid of the comic. It's not necessary and takes valuable screen space that makes it so that you can't read the entire label, which is important for the interface.



New LocaShare:

3. Cosmetic: "s" in LocaShare is not capitalized in "Create New LocaShare" (internal consistency)



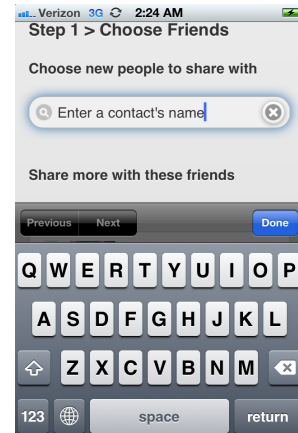
The "s" in LocaShare is capitalized everywhere except in "Create New LocaShare" creating internal inconsistency.

Recommendation: Capitalize the "s"

4. Minor: “Enter a contact’s name” does not disappear when clicking on box (efficiency, defaults)

In step one of the “New LocaShare” page, when you touch the box to “Choose new people to share with”, the text in the box does not disappear, nor is it highlighted so that when you begin typing it disappears. This means that the user must manually delete the default text, which creates an efficiency problem. A similar problem exists in Step 2 with Choose Location.

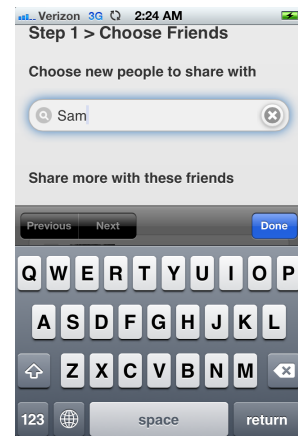
Recommendation: Have the text highlighted when you touch it so that as soon as you type a name, the text disappears.



5. Major: Choosing new people does not provide a list of people (external efficiency)

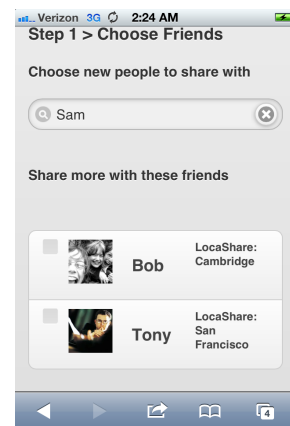
In step one of the “New LocaShare”, when you type in the first letter(s) of someone’s name, it does not provide a drop down box to choose from. Touching the hourglass icon also does not provide this. This is inconsistent with external applications, because the hourglass icon usually indicates that there is some kind of search. A similar problem exists in Step 2 with Choose Location.

Recommendation: Add auto-complete from a list, since this would make it more efficient and easier for people to know if their friends were on LocaShare



6. Catastrophic: No feedback when choosing a new friend to share with (feedback, help and documentation)

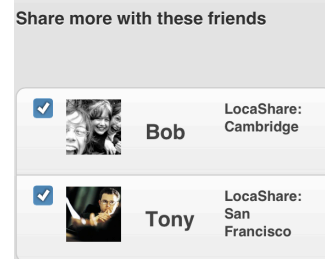
In step one of the “New LocaShare” page, when you type a person’s name in the “Choose new people to share with” nothing happens. Therefore, I don’t know if I have properly selected my friend, or even if they are on LocaShare. A similar problem exists in step 2 for choosing a location. It also appears that I can only choose one new person at a time even though I can select multiple existing users. It would be good to be able to add multiple new people at the same time. It is unclear if I can add one new user and several existing users or if those two sections are separate.



Recommendation: If the person exists, add a box like for existing friends with a checkbox checked to show that changes will apply to that person. If the person does not exist, add some kind of feedback that tells the user that they don’t exist (and possibly give them the option to invite their friend).

7. Good: You can select multiple friends to share with at once (efficiency, feedback)

In step one, you can select to share more with multiple friends at one time. The app also provides useful feedback in the form of a checkbox to make it so that you know which of your current friends you are sharing with.



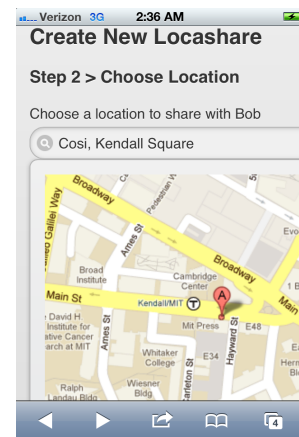
8. Major: App allows you to continue after selecting no friends (feedback, error prevention)

App allows you to continue from Step 1 to Step 2, even if you have not selected anyone to share information with.

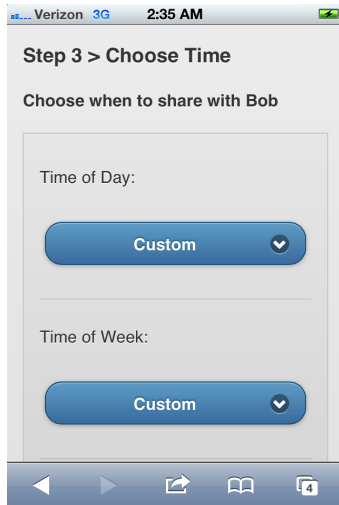
Recommendation: Don't allow users to proceed if they haven't selected at least one user. It is meaningless to share with no one, so this is presumably an error.

9. Major: Map doesn't fit on the page in Step 2 (visibility)

Recommendation: Scale it down so that it fits.



10. Catastrophic: No way to specify what custom means in step 3 of create new LocaShare (external consistency)



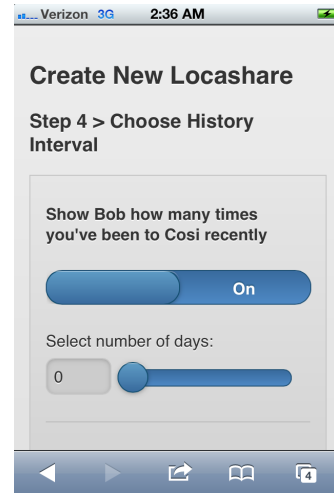
Normally when apps have custom as an option, they allow you to enter specific information that you want to use. In Step 3 of "Create New LocaShare", when you select "Custom" as the time of day and/or time of week, there is no way to specify which specific time of day/week you want. If "Custom" means something other than allowing you to enter specific information, the name needs to be changed. Otherwise, you need to actually be able to add the information.

Recommendation: Add a way for users to indicate what custom preferences they want.

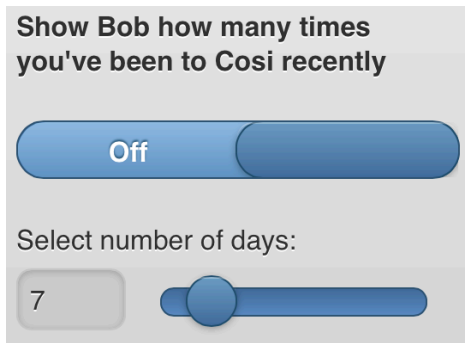
11. Minor: Default number of days is 0 for history interval (defaults, learnability)

In Step four of “Create New LocaShare”, there is an option to turn the history interval on or off and to select how many days it should cover. The default is set to on, but for zero days. This seems to be functionally equivalent to off, but I am not sure if this is correct since I can choose zero days with the function on.

Recommendation: If it zero is functionally equivalent to off, it would be best to just have the number of days. Alternatively, you could have the number of days slider begin with one. If they are not functionally equivalent, you need to clarify what zero means. The default should also be what the recommended or most likely number days.



12. Minor: Can change number of days when history interval is off (error prevention)



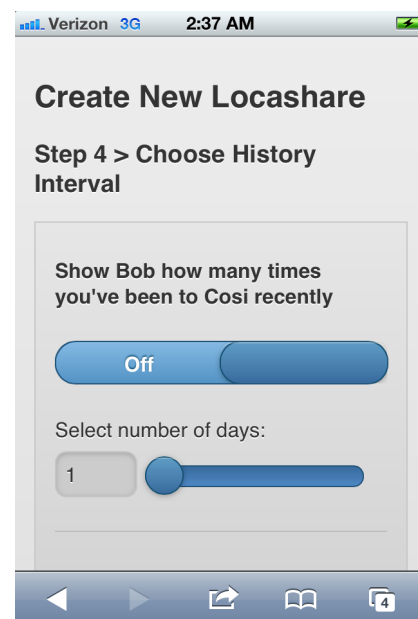
In step four of “Create New LocaShare”, you can adjust the number of days that the interval for sharing should be even if you have the feature off. This could result in a safety problem, since the user may not notice that they turned the feature off when adjusting the days.

Recommendation: Either get rid on/off feature and use zero days for off or disable the number of days slider when the feature is turned off.

13. Major: The “Select number of days” slider doesn’t provide a consistent number of days when the slider is in the same place (internal consistency, error prevention)

In step four of “Create New LocaShare”, the slider starts on the far left with the number of days set to zero. When I drag it to the right, it changes to 30, but when you drag it back, it can’t go lower than one. If I try to change the number to zero by manually typing it, the app changes it to one. This creates a problem, since I am not sure if zero is a valid answer

Recommendation: I would recommend just getting rid of the slider, because I don’t think it adds anything and is hard for the user to get the precise number of days anyway. If you keep the slider, the values it has should be consistent. If you get rid of the slider, you should somehow indicate that there is a maximum and a minimum number of days that users can enter.

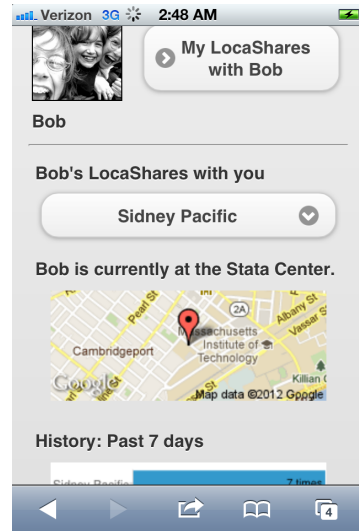


My Friends (?) – Friends who share with you and Friends who you share with:

14. Catastrophic: Unclear what “Bob’s LocaShares with you” and “Your LocaShares with Bob” dropdown box do (feedback, learnability)

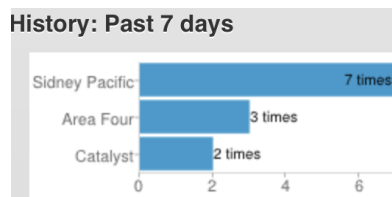
When I click on the selection box on either of these pages, I am able to select different locations, however, selecting different locations appears to do nothing. I’m not sure if it is doing something in the background or not.

Recommendation: If it doesn’t do anything, remove it. If it does, provide some kind of feedback to show the user what it did.



15. Good: History bar graph allows easy comparison (simplicity)

The bar graph showing history of where friends were is very simple and easy to read.



My Friends (?) – Friends who you share with:

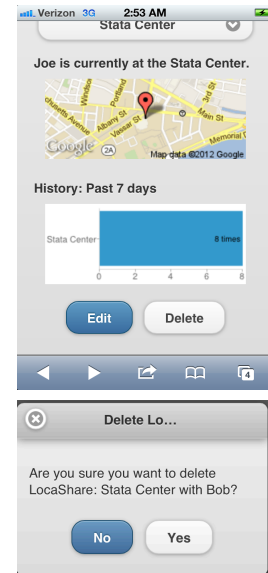
16. Major: I expect that when I click on one of these friends, I will be taken to the page that shows what information I share (efficiency, learnability)

When I click on the friends who you share with, I am directed to the same page as when I click on the friends who you share with. I would expect, however, that when I click on the friends who you share with, that I would be directed to the page about my shares, not about their shares. This presents a learnability problem (the interface does not behave as expected), and also presents an efficiency problem, since my LocaShares is an extra navigation level down.

Recommendation: Clicking on a person under the friends who you share with should navigate directly to the page where it shows your LocaShares with your friend.

17. Major: I expected “Edit” to only edit the History, not the entire LocaShare (graphic design)

Placement of Edit and Delete Buttons make me think that I am only editing or deleting the history, not the entire LocaShare. The fact that I am editing the entire entry doesn’t become clear until I poke around the edit page and realize that it allows editing of all attributes (the edit page has the same problems discussed on the create section, so I don’t duplicate them here). The delete doesn’t become clear until I get the confirmation message.



Recommendation: Move the edit and submit buttons somewhere so that it is clear that they apply to the entire page.

18. Good: Confirmation message before deleting an entry (error prevention)

It’s good that you make the user confirm before deleting things.

Recommendation: Full text should be displayed in header

19. Minor: Submitting edits take user back to homepage instead of LocaShares with friend (consistency, user control and freedom, efficiency)

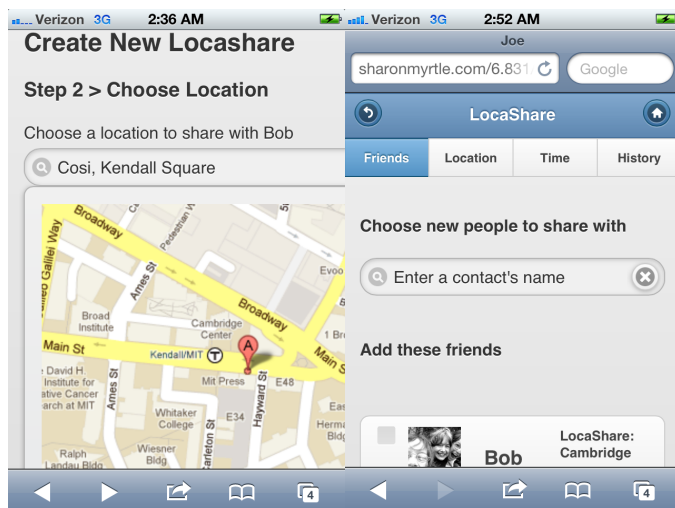
After submitting edits to a LocaShare, hitting submit takes the user back to the homepage, rather than to the page that the user was previously on. Often users will want to confirm their correct changes and continue viewing the same friend, so it would be better for efficiency to return to this page. This would also be more consistent with other applications, which normally return to the page that was being edited.

Recommendation: Always return to previous page when edits are submitted, rather than homepage.

20. Major: Creating a new LocaShare and editing use different interfaces (internal consistency)

When creating a new LocaShare, you navigate through the options one by one, whereas when editing, there is a navigation header. Having two interfaces makes it confusing that they are changing the same features.

Recommendation: Have the edit function use the same interface as the create function. This requires the user to go through each step, but I think this is much more learnable.



Navigation:

21. Minor: Some screens don't display the loading screen (internal and external consistency)
After seeing the normal loading of the website displayed in the URL on an iPhone, a loading screen is sometimes (but not always) shown in the middle of the screen, but other times is not. The loading screen makes it look like an app, but you see the URL like a website.

Recommendation: Since the browser load shows first no matter what (since your app is through a URL), just use that as your loading screen and treat your app as a website.

22. Minor: Clicking next shows same page after loading screen for short period of time before navigating to new page (external consistency, feedback)
After the loading screen is shown (when it is shown), then after the loading page closes, you see the page you were on before the loading screen, before the application navigates to a new page. This is confusing and is not consistent with other apps.

Recommendation: As soon as the loading screen disappears, the user should be on the new page.

23. Good: Adding a new LocaShare has back and next buttons (user control & freedom)
This allows the user to navigate back and forth to decide options without using the browser back buttons, which is nice.

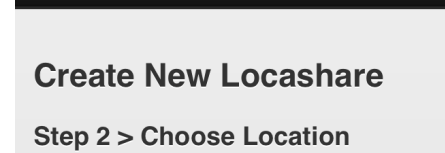


24. Good: Home button

It's very convenient to be able to navigate to the home screen (user control & freedom)

25. Header: Changes color and navigation buttons disappear on certain screens (internal consistency, user control & freedom)

Normally the header is blue and has a back and home button, but sometimes (for instance in Step 2 of creating a new LocaShare), the header changes to black and loses the back and home buttons.



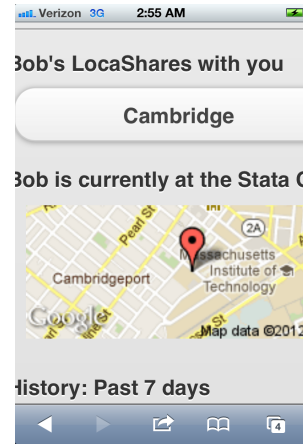
Recommendation: Keep the blue header with navigation buttons in all the screens.

General Problems (appear in multiple sections):

26. Minor: Drop down menus zoom screen (external consistency, efficiency)

When touching a drop-down menu, the normal iPhone drop-down interface appears as expected, but the app also zooms in on the screen. The screen then stays zoomed in after the selection is made. This is inconsistent with how apps normally work, but also creates efficiency problems since the user must zoom out after each selection.

Recommendation: Don't have app zoom in.



27. Cosmetic: Button color (internal consistency)

Some of the navigation buttons are white with black text and some are blue with white text. When clicking on a button, it shows that it has been clicked by switching to the color scheme that it didn't originally have.

Recommendation: Choose a color for the button and a color for when it is clicked on and stick with it.

