

Reviewer: Christopher W. Fletcher

Project: Schnap It!

This review is divided into the five major screens of the application (shown and labeled in Figure 1, in the order of their flow. For each screen, items are sorted by severity (most severe come first).

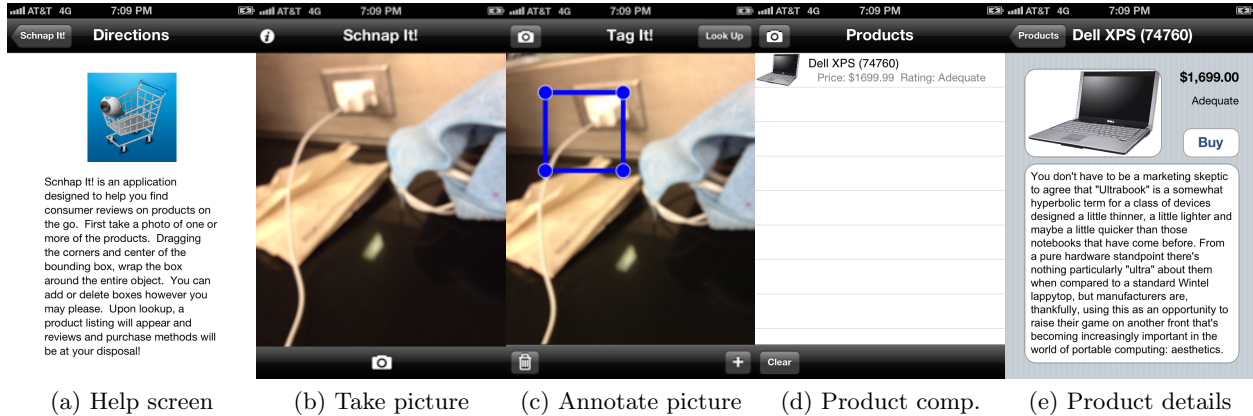


Figure 1: Screens in Schnap It!

Help Screen

1. Minor: “Bounding box” may not be understandable to ordinary users (Match the real world).
Rec: “Surround each product that you are interested in in a box.”
2. Minor: The help does not say that products surrounded by boxes will be used in the product comparison (help and documentation). **Rec:** “Upon lookup, products within boxes will be listed with their user reviews.”

Take picture

1. Major: users must annotate each picture with boxes before snapping another picture (flexibility, efficiency and freedom). **Rec:** Save all pictures that are snapped.
2. Good: the design is simple with only a single button to take a picture, and that button is where iPhone users would expect it (aesthetic and minimalist design, matches the real world).

Annotate picture

1. Major: the camera button undoes all work annotating the current picture (error prevention).
Rec: Save all pictures that are snapped.
2. Major: products identified with bounding boxes are not saved in the “Product comparison” screen unless the “Look Up” button is pressed (error prevention, efficiency and flexibility).
Rec: add a save button to the annotate picture screen. This will allow the user to quickly save, yet still go back and snap another picture without worrying about cluttering the product list if he/she does mean to not save boxes.
3. Minor: the + button does not have enough scent (recognition, not recall). **Rec:** add a short label alongside the button to indicate function.
4. Minor: since boxes are resized at corners only, it is not clear that you have to drag from within a box (consistency, user control and freedom). My instinct was to drag at the edges.
Rec: add gap space at the edges to let users drag from inside or at the edge of boxes.
5. Minor: the ball vertex grab/drag points on a selected box are small for finger manipulation—it is easy to mis-click and de-select the box (efficiency and error prevention).
6. Minor: new boxes are added at a fixed location and with a fixed size, which makes them hard to distinguish; see Figure 2 (visibility of system status). Good: the color affordance per box helps but does not completely fix this issue. **Rec:** tile each new box with a small offset off from the origin.
7. Minor: when a small box is within a larger box, you cannot select the smaller box without moving the larger box (flexibility and efficiency). See Figure 3.
8. Cosmetic: if a box A is selected, why does A get unselected if you click outside of the range of all boxes (flexibility and efficiency)? It would seem that clicking outside of all boxes is a mis-click.
9. Good: boxes are transparent, edges are thin, and selected box corners have good visual affordances for grabbing and dragging (learnability, visibility of system status).

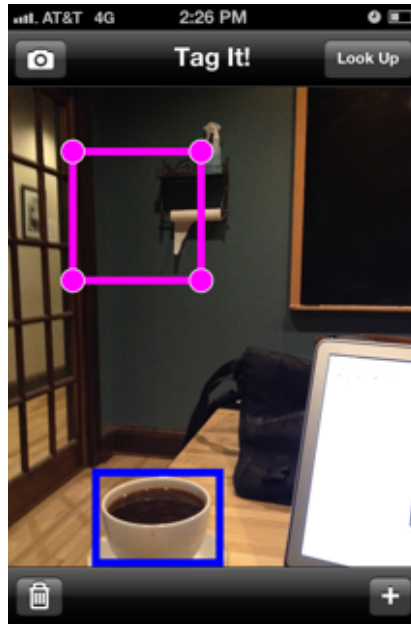


Figure 2: User cannot tell how many boxes are on screen because of overlap (there are five in this picture).

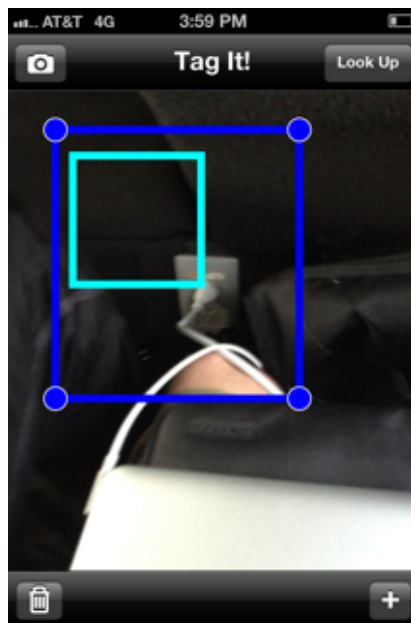


Figure 3: The cyan box cannot be selected without moving the dark blue box.

10. Good: the resize feature is natural and consistent with bounding boxes (consistency and standards).
11. Good: if the user needs to drag an unselected box, the user does not need to click the box and then drag—i.e. this action requires one click (efficiency).

12. Good: when the user clicks the trash icon, the currently selected box is removed and no other boxes gain focus (error prevention).

Product comparison

1. Catastrophic: the “Clear” button is not reversible (error prevention). Accidentally clicking this button causes the most damage of any button in the entire application. Multiple pictures-worth of boxes are potentially eliminated.
2. Minor: the list of products cannot be manipulated/sorted/etc by users (user control and freedom). This is more of a feature, but impacts usability as well if your target audience is meant to take multiple pictures and record multiple products per picture.
3. Cosmetic: change the rating metric from an english word to a number of stars (visual efficiency/affordances, consistency and standards).
4. Good: the price and rating are both good and important metrics to use in a context like this (visibility and system status). If you must pick two for screen real-estate reasons, they are good options. **Rec:** turn the product comparison into a table that shows more stats (weight, dims, etc) if the phone is turned sideways.

Product details

1. Minor: The “Buy” button is too easy to access (error prevention). The interface does not take into account the price of a product if the user is in a store (say best buy for laptops). **Rec:** There should be some mechanism to prevent the user from purchasing the item online, if the store price is actually better!