

MealMates Heuristic Evaluation

General Information:

Before I get into the list of usability points, I figured I should let you know a few things first. I have an Android Incredible smartphone by HTC, which is running Android 2.3.4. The touchscreen is 4.3" with "WVGA" resolution (I actually have no idea what that means, but I can tell you the resolution is decent). I successfully downloaded the Opera browser and navigated to your site.

Some issues with running the mobile version prevented me from successfully finishing the tasks, so I also loaded the webpage in Firefox to see what was just being caused by my phone. I know the page isn't designed to be viewed in a computer browser, but it may be useful for you to know what was being manipulated in the mobile version vs. the standard webpage. All the usability points in the list below are from evaluation on the **mobile version**, while a short list following mentions some serious mobile vs. web discrepancies.

The usability list below isn't in any particular order (apologies for that), but if you're looking for them from increasing to decreasing severity, you can just Ctrl+F to "Catastrophic", "Major", "Minor", "Cosmetic", or "Positive Quality" and check those items. I mostly used the Nielsen list of heuristics, which you can find for your reference at the end of the document.

Usability Points:

- l) Homepage
 - 1) Homepage is simple (Nielsen #10; Positive Quality)
 - Successfully avoided seriously overcrowding the mobile interface
 - 2) "Create a New Meal" button hard to locate in current position and at current size (Tog #16: Visible Navigation; Severity: Major)
 - Button font smaller than logo font, makes it seem secondary and unimportant.
 - "New" object creation buttons typically located at the top of the menu
 - Hinder learnability overall
 - 3) Lack of Color (Nielsen #10; Severity: Cosmetic)
 - Homepage looks too plain, can barely see "Create a New Meal" button at the bottom since it's black on black.

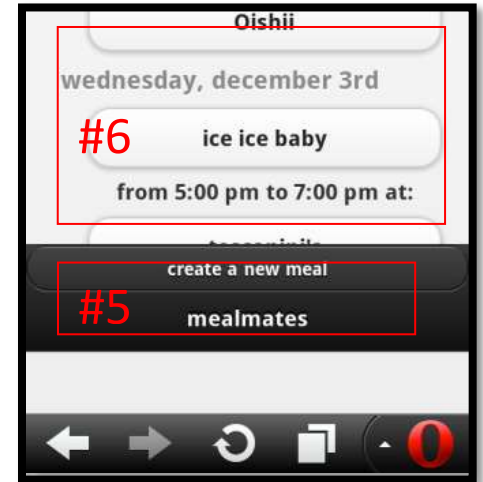


Screenshot for #1 - #4

- 4) Button margins for current meal plans seem off (Nielsen #10; Severity: Cosmetic)
- I see the buttons are meant to be left indented under their meal's date, but having the buttons off center looks bad. Perhaps make the right margin larger to make them centered?

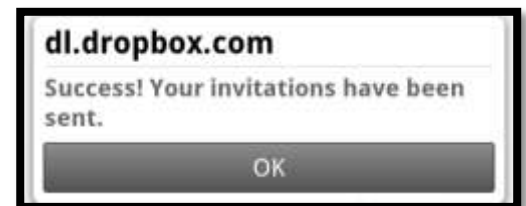
- 5) Top and bottom bar update while scrolling is delayed (Nielsen #10; Severity: Minor)
- When I have multiple meals planned and want to scroll between them, the top and bottom bars (Name/new meal button and logo) only stick to the top and bottom again after I stop scrolling. Obscures the entries in the list.

- 6) New event made is in all lower case letters (Nielsen #1/#2/#10; Severity: Major)
- Months, days of the week, restaurant names, and event titles need to be capitalized.



Screenshot for #5 - #6

- 7) Feedback when making events or cancelling them is good confirmation (Nielsen #5; Positive Quality)



Screenshot for #7

II) Meal Creation Tabs: General

- 1) 5-stage feedback bar is helpful, especially when coloring which one you are on (Nielsen #5; Positive Quality)
- Good, but would like a tab to stay colored while I'm on that specific page (sometimes breaks). Also, coloring tends to behave weird after I reach the "Where" tab.
- 2) 5-stage feedback bar looks off-center, right border clipped (Nielsen #10; Severity: Cosmetic)
- Could just be my phone, but the bar doesn't appear to fit within my screen width

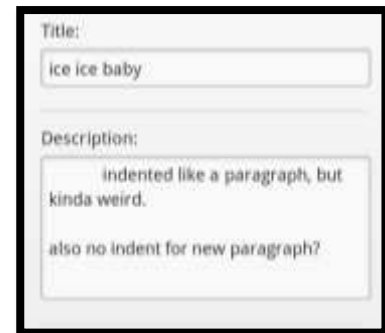


Screenshot for #1 - #2

- 3) Content of tabs occasionally inconsistent in their formatting (Nielsen #2; Severity: Minor)
 - For example: the “What” tab form labels (ex: “Title:”) are way smaller than the “When” tab form label (“Select a ...”), which seems pretty inconsistent
- 4) Overall lack of feedback when storing information about the meal (Nielsen #5; Severity: Major)
 - I understand that you probably do save information I enter in each tab when I switch tabs, but I’d like to get some kind of “Save” button or other control/feedback that my entries have been saved. For example, I’m tentative to leave the “What” tab after entering my information, because it looks very much like a form I need to submit or save.

III) “What” Tab

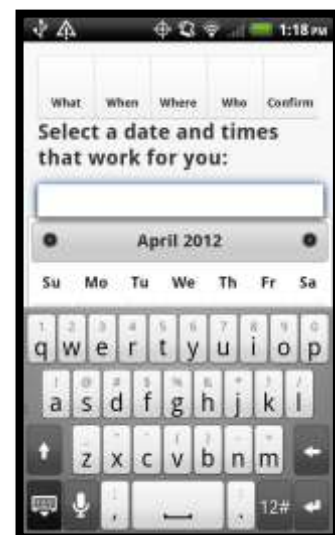
- 1) Input title and description lack alignment (Nielsen #2/#10; Severity: Cosmetic)
 - I see the description’s first line is indented to make a paragraph style entry, but the indent feels out of place with the left-aligned title input just above.



Screenshot of “What” tab

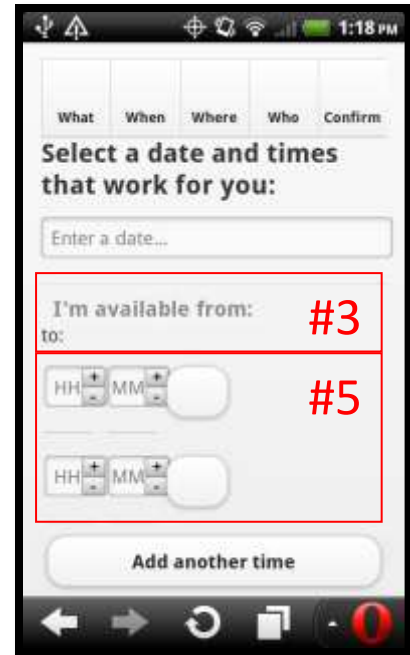
IV) “When” Tab

- 1) Good pop up calendar for choosing the date (Nielsen #1/#6; Positive Quality)
 - Very easy to select dates
- 2) Pop up calendar blocked or moved by my keyboard, which automatically pops up when I select the “Enter a date...” input field (Nielsen #4; Severity: Major)
 - I know this may just be a trait of my phone, but many Android phones automatically pop up the keyboard upon selecting a text field. You may be able to programmatically pop it down or prevent it from automatically popping up in the first place.



Screenshot for #2

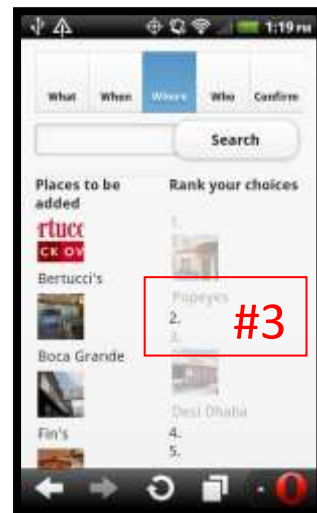
- 3) "I'm available from:" and "to:" labels look way out of place (Nielsen #2; Severity: Catastrophic)
- 4) Time selection input fields are interesting and potentially useful (Nielsen #4; Positive Quality)
 - Good idea when executed properly
- 5) Time selection input fields are too cramped for my fingers (Nielsen #4; Severity: Major)
 - Very hard for me to push the little "+" and "-" buttons while on my phone.
- 6) Lack of confirmation for inputted time and date (Nielsen #5; Severity: Minor)
 - Many sites that allows you to add multiple entries like the dates you're adding also allow you to "Confirm" a specific date, logging that as a single entry, which you could delete or edit later. Some feedback on this would be good.



Screenshot for #3-#5

V) "Where" Tab

- 1) Dragging and dropping is pretty neat (Nielsen #4/#6; Positive Quality)
 - Pretty cool to make a list this way
 - Objects snap back to regular position if dropped in wrong spot
- 2) Dragging restaurant icons had significant lag on my phone (Nielsen #2; Severity: Catastrophic)
 - Dragging lags well behind my finger, tracing exact path around
- 3) Drop target unclear (Nielsen #4/#7; Severity: Catastrophic)
 - Really hard to actually drop on the number you want. Provide feedback for which number I'm hovering over, make the numbers larger, or make the drop targets taller than a label.
 - Had a lot of difficulty dropping between two taken slots.
- 4) Could not figure out how to undo my selections (Nielsen #9; Severity: Catastrophic)
 - Dropped targets stuck where they are; if I dropped wrong due to small drop area, could not undo mistake.



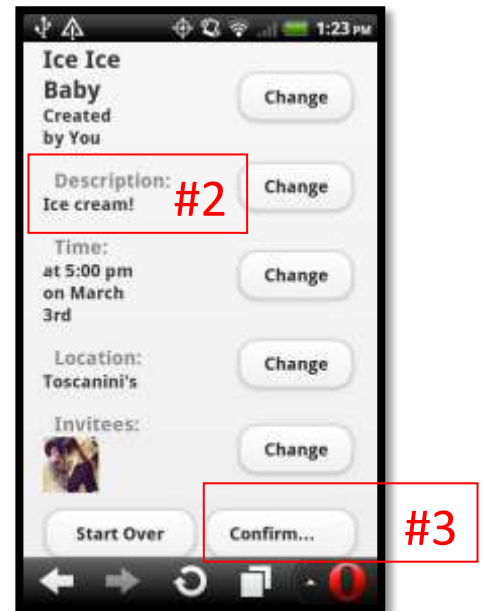
Screenshot of "Where" tab

VI) "Who" Tab (could not adequately display issues with screenshots)

- 1) Same drag lag as "Where" Tab, but dragging still a good idea.
- 2) Can undo my selections this time (Nielsen #9; Positive Quality)
 - Definitely do this for the "Where" tab
- 3) When dragging people out of invite list (undoing selections), the image does not drag, but does disappear from the invite list if I drop them on the friend list (Nielsen #2/#5; Severity: Major)
 - Should also see them getting dragged out of invite list.

VII) "Confirm" Tab

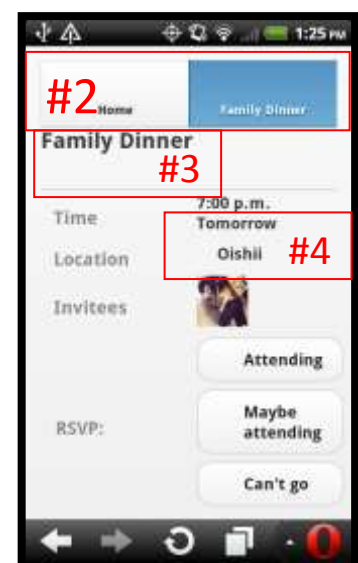
- 1) Good table layout to present information (Nielsen #10; Positive Quality)
- 2) Form labels (ex: "Description:") indented past left edge of actual entry, looks pretty odd (Nielsen #10; Severity: Cosmetic)
- 3) "Confirm..." button text doesn't fit on my phone (Nielsen #10; Severity: Cosmetic)
 - May want to change wording to just "Confirm"



Screenshot of "Confirm" tab

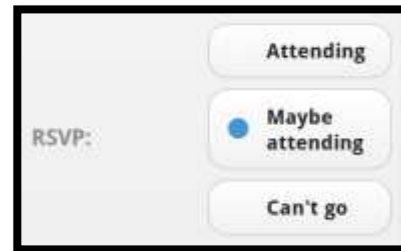
VIII) Changing RSVP for Meal

- 1) Good table layout again (Nielsen #10; Positive Quality)
- 2) Top tab/feedback bar is inconsistent/incorrect (Nielsen #2/#5; Severity: Major)
 - The tabs available are only the Home page and the meal you're currently viewing. I would think you would want to put all the meals available if you want it to be like tabbing through them, or just put a back button at the top if you want a quick jump to home. Doesn't work well the way it is now.



Screenshot for #1-#4:

- 3) Event title really close to the top bar buttons (Nielsen #10; Severity: Cosmetic)
 - Need some whitespace there to balance it out. Huge space below title but none above.
- 4) Location name is unusually indented (Nielsen #10; Severity: Cosmetic)
- 5) RSVP buttons are inconsistent with form standards, should use radio buttons (Nielsen #2; Severity: Major)



Screenshot for #5

Phone Issues:

These are several issues I saw that I believe are phone related, which really need to be fixed. They make the app pretty much unusable, so I guess they fall under the “Catastrophic” severity rating.

- Could not scroll on “Where” tab. Not really sure what could be causing this, but you may be consuming the touch events? Also, could barely scroll by running my finger down the right side of the “Who” tab.
- Once I reached the “Where” or “Who” tabs, could not navigate to other tabs.
- AM/PM button in “When” tab has no text on it until I press it once.

Nielsen Heuristics:

1. Match the real World (L)
2. Consistency & Standards (L)
3. Help & documentation (L)
4. User control & freedom (S)
5. Visibility of system status (S)
6. Flexibility & efficiency (E)
7. Error prevention (S)
8. Recognition, not recall (S)
9. Error reporting, diagnosis, and recovery (S)
10. Aesthetic & minimalist design