

Homework 2: Heuristic Evaluation

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In this document, we review the positive and negative points of the user interface for the ElderConnect application.

1) Add Contact: Call screen matches the real world cellular phones

Severity: positive, good

Principle: learnability, matches the real world

The call screen mimics the iPhone user interface and other phones that users are accustomed to. This is ideal for users who already have cellular phones. However, the authors should note that the ElderConnect application is targeted towards people who do not have phones, so this positive point is limited in usefulness. In fact, this point may be detrimental to usability because users may have trouble understanding dial pads. The dial tone is an excellent addition.



2) Add Contact: delete button does not match standard icons for delete

Severity: negative, severe

Principle: learnability, standards

The delete button on the Add Contact screen is written in ASCII and the button's function is not clear until it is pressed. The authors should change the button to simply read "Backspace" in order to match intuition.

3) Cannot delete contact

Severity: negative, severe

Principle: safety

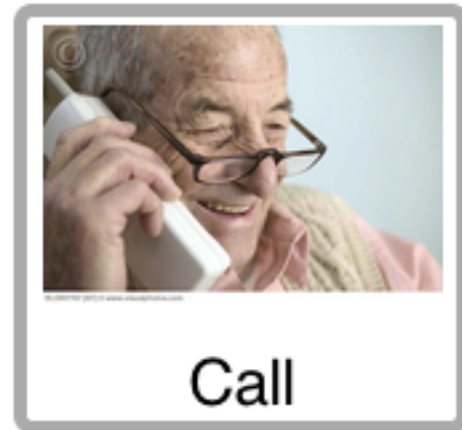
There is currently no way to delete a contact. If I type in the wrong number, I am stuck with the person on my contact list. There needs to be a mode to delete contacts.

4) Call screen requires extra button click

Severity: negative, minor

Principle: efficiency

When clicking on a contact and then pressing “Call”, it pops up a screen where users can further in numbers. This interface is inefficient since the number is stored and should dial automatically.



5) No back button when choosing to leave message

Severity: negative, minor

Principle: safety and visible navigation



This screen should have a back button to allow the user to make a call instead. Otherwise, the user must restart the process over entirely.

6) Count down is not readable

Severity: negative, severe

Principle: readability

When leaving a voice message, there is a red count down to indicate to get ready to talk. However, the red does not contrast well with the gray background.



7) When leaving voice message, it is not clear when it is recording.

Severity: negative, severe

Principle: safety, visibility of system status

When leaving a voice message, a recording indicator should show to inform the user that their voice is being recorded and they should speak.

8) User interface has progress bars during latency

Severity: positive, good

Principle: latency reduction

Sending message...



During operations that may require significant of time to execute, the user interface correctly shows a progress bar.

9) Design is minimal and only includes key functions

Severity: positive, good

Principle: aesthetic and minimalist design

There are no extra buttons or functions in the interface, increasing the learnability and efficiency of the user interface. The design is aesthetically pleasing.

10) There is no help or documentation.

Severity: negative, minor

Principle: help and documentation

The interface lacks any help or documentation. Since this application is targeted towards senior citizens, there should be clear instructions on how to use the application. Fortunately, the interface seems quite learnable, so this is only a minor severity.

11) Buttons are large and close together

Severity: positive, good

Principle: efficiency, Fitts' law

All the buttons in the interface are large and close together. This means the interface is highly efficient since it matches Fitts' law.

12) Emails are saved even user cancels job, then changes mind to email again

Severity: positive, good

Principle: safety, protect user's work

When crafting an email, canceling, then changing one's mind to send another email, the interface correctly remembers the previous email, thereby increasing safety.

13) Colors that are important will not confuse colorblind users

Severity: positive, good

Principle: color blindness

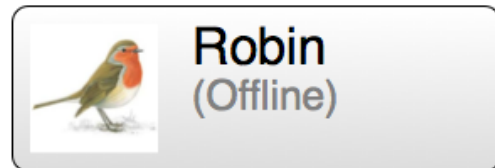
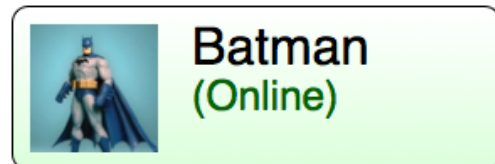
Since the colors do not convey anything particularly important (or are redundant with text), there are no issues with color blinded users.

14) There are default contacts to teach users how to operate the interface

Severity: positive, good

Principle: learnability, defaults

There are a few default contacts that teach the user about the interface. It quickly reveals to the user that the contacts are shown in the book format. These defaults are reasonable, and follow something similar to a Skype test call. However, the defaults need to be easy to delete (see above).



15) Buttons and layout across screens is consistent

Severity: positive, good

Principle: consistency

The dialing screens are very similar, which maintains consistency. Moreover, the task screens have similar button layouts, which maintains consistency.

16) Interface should track state and show hints based off state.

Severity: negative, minor

Principle: learnability, track state

Upon launching the application, it is not immediately obvious how to use the application. The system should track the state and show hints for actions that the user has never performed before. This would drastically increase the learnability of the application.