

UW Finds

Part I: Basic Evaluation Plan

Scenario

You are a freshman student at the University of Washington who is looking for a used Chemistry textbook selling for cheaper than retail price. You want to meet a seller that is fast with communication and have a safe secondhand buying experience.

Task 1 (Uploading listing)

In this task, we ask the participant to create and upload a listing of an old textbook they are no longer using. The participant will fill out basic information about the listing, upload pictures of the listing, then publish the listing on UW Finds. The criteria for measuring this task is examining whether they clicked extra buttons to complete the task, and then interviewing them on what was easy or difficult about completing the task. The task is successfully completed when they have uploaded the listing.

Task 2 (View listing and its seller profile)

In this task, we asked the participant to view an available listing and listing's seller profile. The criteria for measuring the completion of this task included the user clicking on a listing and then navigating to the seller's profile page. If/when the user reached the seller's profile page, the task was considered completed.

Task 3 (View listing and chat with seller to purchase)

In this task, we ask the participant to view an available listing and message the seller to purchase the item. The participant will select the "Message Seller" button and communicate with the seller regarding exchange logistics. The criteria that this task is measured with is whether the participant is able to successfully complete the purchase, and after completing the task, they will be able to share their experience and any difficulties.

Participant Profiles

Our target audience is anyone from the UW community who wishes to buy or sell secondhand materials, especially things that are specific to UW.

Participant 1: A 20 year old student studying psychology and sociology at the University of Washington who utilizes secondhand stores to find materials on occasion. She has had multiple successful previous experiences with selling items on online secondhand platforms such as

Curtsey. Her main priorities are good buyer-seller communication in order to make sure the transaction process is seamless and safe.

Participant 2: A 19 year old female who is currently a student studying visual communication design at UW. Her experience with buying secondhand includes using Etsy and Facebook Marketplace, and have had pretty good turnouts with both platforms. Her main concerns with buying second hand mostly revolves around safety, as she knows of people who have been scammed.

Participant 3: A 20 year old student studying Public Health-Global Health Major at the University of Washington who has utilized Facebook Marketplace a few times. Her experience with purchases and meeting up with the seller has been good every time and encourages people to use secondhand platforms.

Participant 4: A 27 year old who majored in Computer Science and has used various secondhand platforms such as Facebook Marketplace and Offer Up. His main pain point with other secondhand platforms was running into old listings that sellers had forgotten to take down, resulting in lots of wasted time and frustration.

Methodology

To conduct our evaluation, each member of our team recruited a participant to test the three tasks and asked them for feedback regarding their experience.

1. Our team members introduced the goal and functionality of our product, and also gave them a scenario to complete the task in.
2. We gave our participant the low-fidelity interactive prototype of our app to complete each task.
3. During each task, we observed the participant navigating through the app and also prompted them to verbalize their thinking as they were completing the task.
4. We then took notes of their actions to complete the task, and also recorded their live reaction throughout the process.

After the task was complete, we conducted a post-interview to gather more feedback. For each task, we asked our participants what difficulties and confusions they encountered, as well as their likes and dislikes during the process. Then, we asked if there were any additional features they wished were available to them to better complete the task at hand, and if there were any other thoughts they wished to share.

Part II: Simple Evaluation

What Worked

Users found the task to upload a listing was clear and straightforward to understand. Furthermore, users thought that the placement of the plus button being in the middle of the navigation bar was easy to access. In the home page, users found it useful to have the option to search, filter, or just scroll through all the options (top being the most recent listing uploads). As for the buyer and seller communication, users gave feedback saying they liked the ability to bargain through the chat function and liked the pre-written chat prompts so that they can just click and it automatically sends the message.

Findings

Finding 1: Users would like to easily access the seller profile to view their information.

While some users liked being able to access the seller profile from a popup on the main listing page, others mentioned that the extra step felt unnecessary and they didn't need an intermediary preview to the seller information only to click "view more." They also mentioned being confused by the animations associated with the pop-up being a slide motion as they thought that they were being taken to a different page.

Suggestion 1:

Remove the popup to view a seller's profile and replace it with just a direct link. This would streamline the process of being able to gain necessary information regarding the seller. Additionally, the rating that was previously in the popup could be added under the seller information section of the individual listing. This would allow the users to get a more detailed preview of the seller's information without requiring an additional step of clicking into a popup. The users also suggested having a "View more" option or an additional page dedicated to reviews that could be accessed from the seller's profile.

Finding 2: Streamline the chat feature to better facilitate purchases

Some users found the pre-written purchase and negotiation chat prompts at the bottom of the chat unclear and confusing. The purpose of the prompts were not immediately clear and lacked detail and specificity to facilitate a clear understanding of their purpose. Additionally, one user stated that they didn't feel prompted to complete the purchase confirmation and didn't understand the need for it.

Suggestion 2:

Redesign and rewrite the prompts to make their purpose clear. Rewording the prompts could help users better understand what clicking these button prompts in the chat do. A clear confirmation upon clicking the purchase button that outlines next steps such as waiting on the seller to accept or reject the purchase offer could help make the purpose even clearer. Additionally, adding other pre-written prompts that buyers can click such as one that asks the seller what their preferred payment method is could make this feature more useful.

Finding 3: Action buttons need to be more accessible

Users found that some of the action buttons for individual listings, such as the edit and delete buttons, were too small and hard to access. This prompted frustration because users found it challenging to accurately click the desired button on their first attempt. In addition, users also thought that having multiple buttons on one listing card cluttered the view, making it hard for the user to both see the information of the listing and also use the buttons.

In addition, users found that the add a listing button to be easy to find as it is placed in the middle of the navigation bar, but since it is very similar to the other icons on the navigation bar, it did not stand out as much. The user would like to see that button being highlighted so that action is prompted.

Suggestion 3:

Redesign the buttons to take up more screen space so that there is a larger surface area for the user to click on, and by doing so, it would also prompt the redesign of the layout of the listings screen. The cards for individual listings can be made bigger to take up the entire page, so that there is room available to place larger buttons on. Another idea would be to nest the edit and delete listing buttons within the detailed listing information page, so that it is not cluttering up the listing previews. To highlight the “Add Listing” button, users suggest making it bigger and bolder so that it stands out amongst the other icons in the navigation bar.

Future Steps

Based on our evaluation, we will make changes to our design according to user testing feedback to offer a better experience. One of the main changes we will focus on is simplifying the process for users to view other user profiles, specifically the case where potential buyers are viewing the seller profile. To do this, we intend to remove the existing Seller Details popup from the “View Listing” page and replace it with a more detailed description on the listing itself and a direct link to the seller’s profile. This will allow users to be able to more easily navigate through different profiles and listings, and make key information such as reviews more accessible.

Another change we would like to adopt is redesigning the chat feature to foster clear communication between buyers and sellers and also ensure that buyers have additional reassurance that their purchase was successful.

Lastly, we would like to update the buttons throughout the application to be more accessible and intuitive, so that users can easily navigate the app. For example, from the seller’s perspective, we could have the trash icon (delete listing) only appear once they have clicked the edit icon rather than having both appear at first glance.

Overall, this evaluation has informed us of which current designs were strong, and which features need further improvement.