Individual User Testing Reports

ESOF 423

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Josh Harvey

For this testing, I tested a roommate who graduated from an environment program a while ago, he is in his mid 20s and works at a grocery store.

I asked him to Check in a new guest, then assign them a bunk, then add a shelf in their day storage.

What occurred:
First when checking in he added the name correctly on the check in screen.

Second when assigning a bunk he double clicked the bunk assign section on the home screen taking him to the guest details section. It took him a moment to navigate to the Bunk assignment screen but after arriving the new guest did not show up so I instead prompted him to check in another guest.

Finally, he was able to add a shelf really quickly likely due to seeing the option when he was misdirected, however the delay upon entering the value caused him to believe the system had bugged, though he rectified this statement once it loaded.

What I learned:
The double click on bunk assignment should really lead to bunk assignment rather than guest details.

Additionally some sort of loading screen might be helpful for the shelf assignment, that or submitting it with a button rather than when the field changes.

What I changed:
Both of these issues are front end and I was low on time, as I was unaware this was a requirement until the day it was due so at the present neither has been changed, but I intend to share these findings with my group at our next sprint and work on finding efficiency solutions.

Rory Schillo

In Class

Testing of Our App:

The majority of the feedback we got was related to issues that we were already aware of. Many of the things they mentioned had already been talked about by Jenna. For example, we had several complaints about font size and important features not being clearly defined enough. One important piece of feedback was the confusion regarding the Guest Overview panel and the Guest Details page. Some people felt that it was redundant and that it led to confusion about what elements of guests to view/edit where. This helped with our team's later decision to remove the Guest Overview panel and instead consolidate those elements into the Guest Details page. Overall, those that tested our app seemed to really like the direction we were going in.

Testing Other Groups App:

The group we tested had a unique way of indicating different points of interest for checked-in users. Every time a user was checked in, a new rectangle would appear with the guest's name. The background color of the rectangle would change based on different flags that the guest might have. For example, if the guest had a no-trespass issued the rectangle would have a red background. If the guest had a no-trespass and a locker assigned the background would be split have red and half-blue or something similar. I noted that this often made the guest's name hard or even impossible to read. The team agreed with me, and we discussed solutions which included surrounding the name with a smaller white rectangle to increase contrast. Another issue was with the "Checkout guests" button. This button deleted all guests from the roster so that new guests can start being checked in. This was meant to be used at the end of the night in order to prepare for the next night. However, I was worried that someone might get confused and click on the button after checking in guests but before the night was over. This would remove all the guests and prevent anyone from assigning bunks, managing lockers, etc. for the rest of the night. I suggested changing the name to "Clear All Guests" or something similar to better reflect the action that would occur. The team also liked this feedback.

At Home

It was definitely difficult to stop myself from giving hints or suggesting what to do when having some of my friends test my app. But watching them struggle to navigate or complete tasks did give me great insight into how to improve our UI and make it more user-friendly. One issue in particular was that they were confused about how to check in a new guest. The place where you actually type a new guest name needs to be bigger and stand out more to make it draw the user's attention better. Another key issue they brought up was with bunk assignments. They thought it was confusing how bunks were listed as "Bunk 1 A" and "Bunk 1 B." Instead, they suggested that bunk selection and bed slot selection should be different. I had to agree as the only reason I went with the former method was to make coding easier which is admittedly a bad design philosophy. This feedback helped give me the push I needed to go back and implement a more user-friendly design.

Jacob Rivers

GENERAL USER TESTING COMMENTS

This assignment definitely gave me a greater appreciation for how hard it is to actually observe, test, and interpret user behavior in a way that is actually useful and actionable to the software developer. It is surprisingly hard to get good feedback and to distill it into discrete changes that will improve your software.

IN CLASS TESTING - Emma Keeley (ESOF 423 classmate, CS major)

I was careful to leave Emma to her own devices and simply sent her the link to our product website. She had no problem opening and running our software (once I gave her my laptop because she had a Mac and, although we decided to experiment and try anyway, it could not run our .jar file as other Mac's had failed to do before).

Emma clicked around the application for some time and tried lots of features out. Normally she had to do a fair amount of trial and error to figure out how to input something correctly or to find where she should do the input. There were times when she was confused as to what was an input field and what was a display field. This is something that we could address in polishing the app by perhaps using a consistent background color on input fields vs. display fields. Right now many of them are simply white so are hard to distinguish.

Emma also was stopped regularly by the fact that there are several features that are only partially implemented. So she would try something, and I would have to step in quickly and simply say that a particular thing wasn't working yet and she'd move on. It definitely made me conscious of the not-necessarily-short list of sticking points and partially finished components in our application.

She had a lot of positive feedback about our user interfaces, the overall organization of the application, and how well things which were fully implemented worked. This praise was of course slightly overshadowed by the rather choppy user experience I had just had to watch her work through. Overall this shows that our major priority, more than any UX/UI details, needs to be complete and tested functionality for the features we have already started.

AT HOME TESTING - Zach Rivers (my brother, construction worker, computer literate but not particularly tech savvy)

From the outset it was obvious that our software is so hyper-specialized to the HRDC warming center workflow and environment, that even after doing my best to explain the applications functionality and letting Zach read the documentation in full, he still said that he felt that it was not always easy to look at an element in the application and intuit what it was for or how to interact with it.

Similar to Emma, Zach tested everything in the application very thoroughly and consequently bumped up against each of the features that were incomplete and had to be told when he ran into one.

Observing Zach interact with the interface made it clear that there are several components of the application that could be easily broken if the user strays from a fairly strict input. If a user enters only a single name in the checkin field, the database will fail to create that guest, but it will also not notify the user that it has failed to do so. There were a few instances of a more-or-less similar kind as this which I noticed during testing. These types of possible unnoticed "user errors" that are not made obvious to the user are definitely worth trying to catch and bring to the user's attention or to exclude entirely by restricting the inputs.

Zach said that he found the guest details panel to be poorly organized and suggested that we consolidate it into a single view with tabs for behavior, warnings, and storage in the same place. Jenna also suggested this during the user testing on Friday's release candidate demo and so we already asked Alex to work on a redesign of that panel and have it ready when we meet to plan the sprint on Monday.

TAKEAWAYS

Overall the user testing was very beneficial, even if we may run out of sufficient time in the final sprint to address all of the issues that it exposed. We will likely have to prioritize the most glaring sticking points and try to create documentation that will help avoid the ones we won't have time to address.

Beau Baer

Tester: Toby, my roommate, Graphic Design major

Testing methodology:
Explain what the program is- A data organizing tool for the HRDC homeless shelter.
Ask the tester to try entering a new guest.
Ask the tester to try finding the help page.
Ask the tester to try editing a guest.

Results:
The tester was notably frustrated by the UI's occasional freezes. He often tried editing new items (clicking checkboxes, editing fields) while the UI was still frozen by syncing old items.

The tester noted some fields were especially problematic- freezing after every new character entered.

The tester tried to delete a guest by clicking its entry's button. When the entry didn't immediately disappear from this click, he quickly clicked again. This acted as a double-click, which took him to the corresponding guest details view. This is definitely unintended functionality.

The tester also noted that the 'Storage Details' button brings up the 'Create New Issue' window, which is incorrect to say the least.

During the entire testing period, I gave Toby essentially no guidance. He was able to find appropriate UI elements for the tasks I gave him, which shows the navigability of our UI. Unfortunately, much of the functionality was slow or buggy, which led to a subpar user experience overall.

Takeaways:
The main thing to change that this testing brought forward was just how poor the responsiveness of the UI was, to the point of seriously inhibiting the user workflow and experience.

Alex Maliziola

Tester: Ella Fleur (25), friend, history graduate & MSU interlibrary loan manager

Testing Methodology:
Explain program
Provide documentation
Ask user to check in a guest
Ask user to add guest to bunk

Ask user to report guest details

Results:
The user complained about the appearance, citing the fact that it resembled the library's own ILLiad program which we both detest. During check-in, she was noticeably confused after the program hung for several seconds while uploading the guest info, though this confusion was resolved when the upload completed.

General slow responsiveness was a complaint throughout, again citing how frustrating the library's own system latency is. Overall organization was complemented in spite of the stylistic complaints.

The user was generally able to navigate her way around the app easily, especially with help from the documentation, but the unresponsiveness of the app made actually accomplishing tasks difficult.