HW2 – Heuristic Evaluation of *VenView*

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Overview of Problems and Successes

No.	Usability problem	Heuristic(s)	Severity
1	The "End date" calendar does not prevent end dates that occur before the begin dates.	Error Prevention	Catastrophic
2	There is no validation of city inputs.	Error Prevention	Catastrophic
3	The venue size options do not seem to include all possibilities.	User Control + Freedom, Matching the Real World	Minor
4	The different types of path are still ambiguous and hard to discover.	Help + Documentation, overall Learnability	Major
5	The screen was much taller than necessary.	Aesthetic + Minimalist Design	Cosmetic
6	It is unclear how to remove a city from along my route.	User Control + Freedom, Error Recovery	Minor
7	I am not sure of the difference in $ versus $$ or $$$.	Help + Documentation, overall Learnability	Major
8	The "book me, click me" button must be pressed.	User Control + Freedom, Error Recovery	Major
9	The colors of the venue times are unclear.	Aesthetic + Minimalist Design	Cosmetic
10	The $$ buttons change color oddly.	Visibility of System Status, User Control + Freedom	Catastrophic
11	The time overlay for the venue booking is distracting.	Aesthetic + Minimalist Design	Cosmetic
12	Gigs that span multiple days?	Match the Real World	Catastrophic

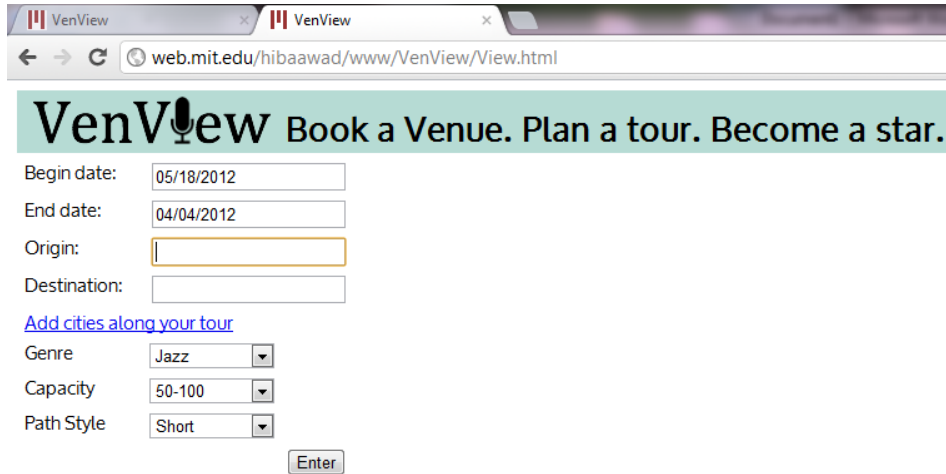| No.	Usability success
1	Calendar to enter begin/end dates
2	Layout for additional cities' entry
3	Clear when the venue was available

The usability problems and successes are listed, for the most part, in the order in which I encountered them. I accessed the site on my Windows 7 machine using Chrome. I think the idea is very interesting, and I'm excited to see where you go with it in GR5!

~Tanya

Usability Problems

1. The "End date" calendar does not prevent end dates that occur before the begin dates.

Screenshot/description

I was able to select an end date that was before the start date (and even one in the past).

Usability Heuristic
Error Prevention

Severity
Catastrophic

2. There is no validation of city inputs.

Screenshot/description

There seems to be no validation of inputs into the city text boxes, so I can safely type in anything, including numbers, into the boxes.
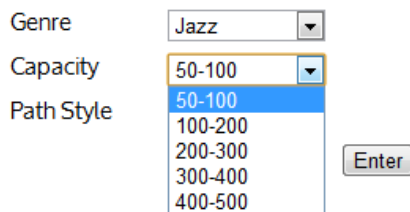
Usability Heuristic
Error Prevention

Severity
Catastrophic

3. The venue size options do not seem to include all possibilities.

Screenshot/description

I am not familiar with venues in general, but I expected there to be smaller venues (maybe like coffee shops with <50 people) and larger venues in addition to the ranges given, for example adding <50 and >500 as other options.
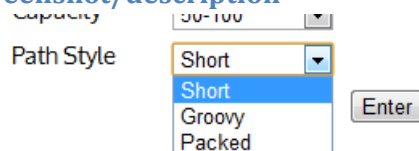
Usability Heuristic
User Control + Freedom, Matching the Real World

Severity
Minor

4. The different types of path are still ambiguous and hard to discover.

Screenshot/description

It did not seem to me that there was a way to tell what the different Path Style options were from the interface. I know that in GR3 people apparently just experimented with the options, but because of the canned nature of the data, there was no option to simply explore, and nothing else about the interface seemed to give hints as to what these options mean.
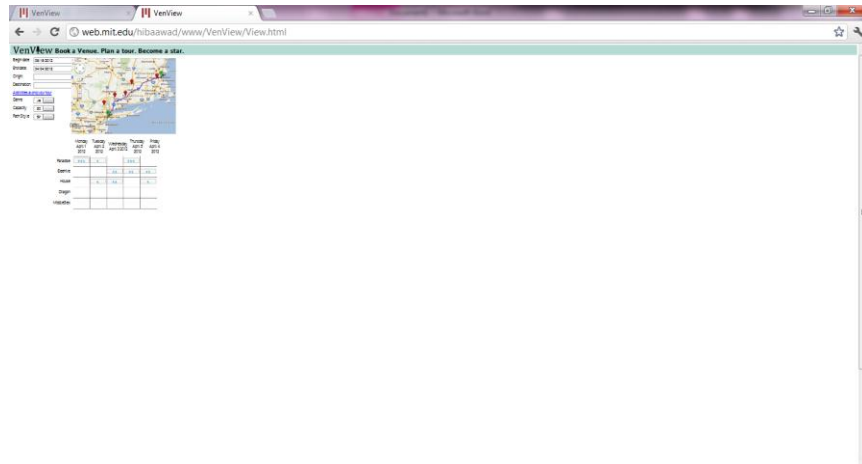
Usability Heuristic
Help + Documentation, overall Learnability

Severity
Major

5. The screen was much taller than necessary.

Screenshot/description

I'm not sure what caused this, but there was a ton of empty space beneath the actual visible part of the interface, so I could scroll down through a lot of empty space. (It might have been related to the overlay times for each venue option, but I address that elsewhere.) The above image shows how I zoomed out and there was still a scrollbar because there was still more white space.
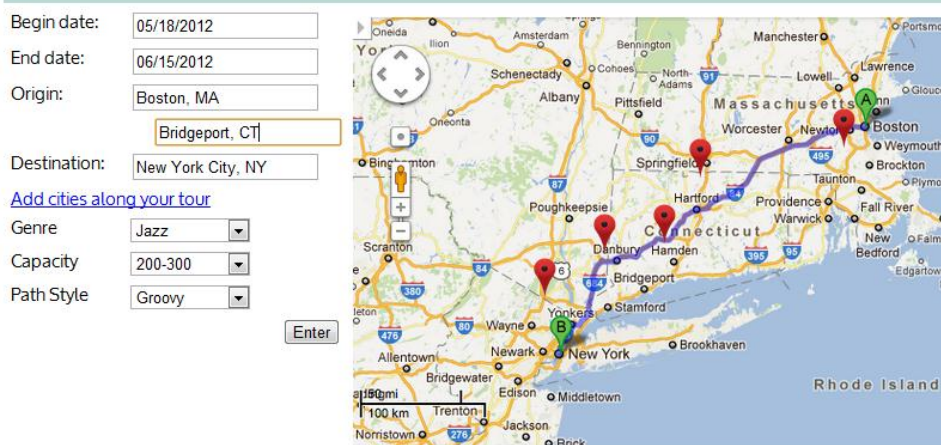
Usability Heuristic
Aesthetic + Minimalist Design

Severity
Cosmetic

6. It is unclear how to remove a city from along my route.

Screenshot/description

There does not seem to be any way to remove cities from along my route. It's possible that it would work to just clear the text field, but it's impossible to tell with only canned data. Perhaps it would be useful to add an 'x' to the side of the text box?

Usability Heuristic
User Control + Freedom, Error Recovery

Severity
Minor

7. I am not sure of the difference in $ versus $$ or $$$.

Screenshot/description

	Monday April 1 2012	Tuesday April 2 2012	Wednesday April 3 2012	Thursday April 5 2012	Friday April 4 2012
Paradise	$$$	$		$$$	
Beehive			$$	$$	$$
House		$	$$		$
Dragon					
MiddleSex					

From the interface given, I can not actually tell if $ versus $$$ means I would make more money by playing there, or that it would cost more (in money or effort) to play there.

Usability Heuristic
Help + Documentation, overall Learnability

Severity
Major

8. The "book me, click me" button must be pressed.

Screenshot/description

When I click on a $$ button in the table and the time overlay appears, it doesn't go away until I click the button blow the "book me, click me" text. I imagine this means I am booking the venue, but I am unsure of how to cancel at this point.

Usability Heuristic
User Control + Freedom, Error Recovery

Severity
Major

9. The colors of the venue times are unclear.

Screenshot/description

At first, I thought that perhaps the colors corresponded to the number of $ in the button label. It wasn't until taking screenshots for this write-up that I noticed the venue names were colored at these

moments to match the times did it actually occur to me that the color was venue-dependent. I'm not sure how to fix this, but I was definitely making assumptions like playing at Paradise on Monday was bad (because it was red and had $$$).

Usability Heuristic
Aesthetic + Minimalist Design

Severity
Cosmetic

10.   The $$ buttons change color oddly.

Screenshot/description

The images are the table after clicking on the $$$ and $ button for Monday at Paradise and Tuesday at House. On the left, I have just selected both venues, and on the right, I have moused over the buttons (without clicking anything), and the color has changed back to blue.

I had taken the color scheme change to orange to imply that the venue was booked, so I was pretty confused when the color scheme changed back to blue, which made me assume that I had somehow lost the booking. Is this a feature or a bug?

Usability Heuristic
Visibility of System Status, User Control + Freedom

Severity
Catastrophic

11. The time overlay for the venue booking is distracting.

Screenshot/description

It's distracting to have the entire 24-hour period pop up for the time overlay. It'd be nice to have that scroll within its own little area. Also, are all gigs really around 1 am? I would be confused to see a bunch of empty times just to get to 10pm.

Usability Heuristic
Aesthetic + Minimalist Design

Severity
Cosmetic

12. Gigs that span multiple days?

Description
I don't see that the interface would be flexible enough to handle gigs that span multiple days, for example something from 11:30pm to 1:00am of the next day.
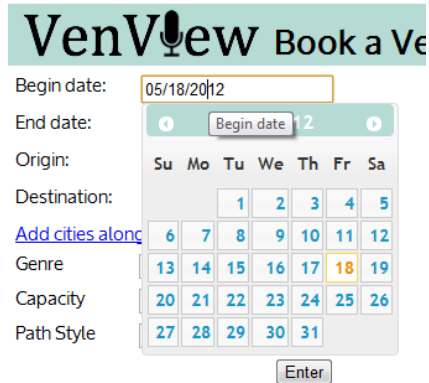
Usability Heuristic
Match the Real World

Severity
Catastrophic

Usability Successes

1. Calendar to enter begin/end dates
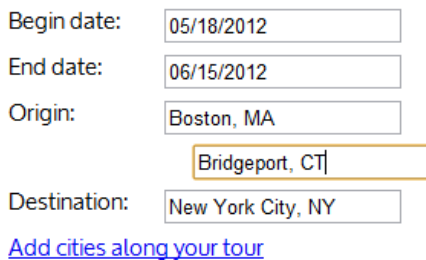

I was really impressed when the calendar popped up as soon as I entered the box. I had seen the drop-down boxes for genre/capacity/path style and assumed the input boxes would all function like that, and the calendar was very easy to use.

2. Layout for additional cities' entry

I really appreciated the different formatting for cities along the tour. When I clicked on the "Add cities along your tour" link I wasn't really sure what to expect, and the fact that the new text box was indented and unlabeled on the left side (i.e. nothing in between "Origin:" and "Destination:" appeared) made it clear that it was not replacing an endpoint, that it was in between the two, and that it was somehow different.

3. Clear when the venue was available

The overlay image for the venue booking made it clear what part of the day the venue was available, and the colors made the timeslots very clearly stand out.