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Homework Assignment 2: Heuristic Evaluation of SitterPlan

Collaboration: I have not discussed this assignment with anyone

I. Babysitter tasks: edit your schedule, apply for a job

1. **Confusing slider in schedule editor (minor):** The schedule editor view (also used in the parents' job creation interface, which by the way is good consistency) has a scrollbar with two thumbs as an affordance to limit the view to particular hour range across the week (*Figure 1*). The thumbs are not spatially aligned (row wise) with the start and end of the calendar and miss the necessary AM/PM indicator (also see *Figure 8*) although they cover 24 hours (**direct mapping, consistency** issues). Since the user hide a selected portion of the schedule, it may be better to remove the scrollbar and present the whole weekly calendar (with a traditional scrollbar, as in Outlook/Google Calendar), for **minimalistic design**.

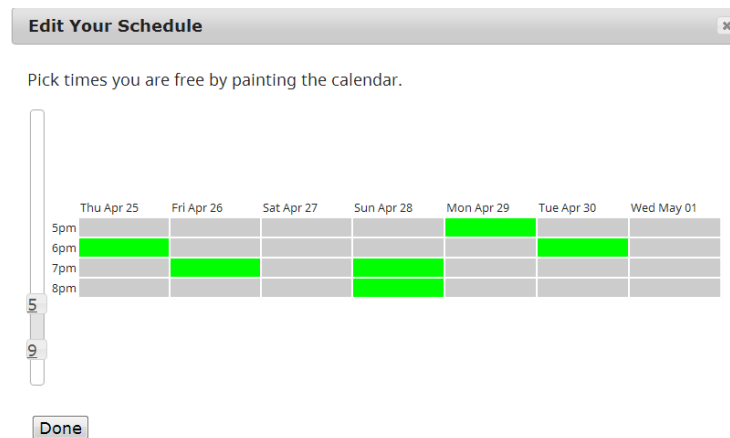


Figure 1

2. **Dates missing in calendar view (minor):** actual dates (i.e. Apr 24) are missing (*Figure 2*), unlike in the Edit Schedule menu. This might require the user to think a bit and it would be better to add it.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
6:00pm						Evans	
7:00pm		Smith	Frank		Wu	Evans	Goldstein
8:00pm		Smith	Frank	Anderson	Wu	Evans	Goldstein
9:00pm		Smith		Anderson	Wu	Evans	Goldstein
10:00pm					Wu		Goldstein
11:00pm					Wu		Goldstein
11:00pm					Wu		Goldstein

Figure 2

3. **Color mapping in calendar view (major):** the same color is currently used for different families (*Figure 2*), which can be seen as an **internal consistency** issue. At first glance, the sitter may associate the same color as representing a single Family. Also there is no clear reason why the unfilled slots of a particular day (Wednesday in this view) are yellow instead of white, maybe the intent is to highlight the current day, but then it wouldn't be as visible for days where most of the slots in the schedule are filled (**standards**).

4. **Hard to read black text on blue or gray background (major):** to ensure **error prevention** and proper readability, the interface should increase contrast by avoiding these combinations of color (*Figure 2*).

5. **Unclear Pop up header and message (major):** The popup has title name “applyJobPopup” which is not informative (*Figure 3*) and should be replaced – as should the generic content (“you’ve applied to the job”): with a descriptive message confirming *which* job the user actually applied will be more thoughtful (**feedback**).

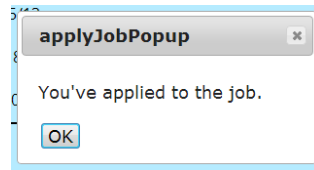


Figure 3

6. **No safety buffer before applying to a job (major):** It is too easy for sitter to apply to a job by mistake by clicking the corresponding button on the main view, given the lack of confirmation dialog afterwards. While efficiency is important, it has to be carefully balanced against safety and the need for **error prevention**. Since the available jobs are stacked quite tightly together in rows (column separation), sitters may end of clicking on the apply button for a job while their intention was to apply for one immediately above or below it (right hand corner of *Figure 4*, and *Figure 3*).

7. **Missing status of jobs already applied to (major):** The main view has a section for mutually accepted, scheduled jobs and a section for Available Jobs to apply to, but visibility as to which jobs the sitter has applied to (*Figure 4*). This is a **visibility of system status and recognition, not recall** issue. Without such visibility, a user can apply to the same job more than once (**error handling** issue). Solutions include adding a “Jobs applied to” section or indicating a status change by replacing the corresponding “Apply” button with text “Applied”.

Family	Date	Time	Notes
Frank	Monday, 4/15/13	7:00pm - 9:00pm	
Wu	Thursday, 4/18/13	6:00pm - 12:00am	
Goldstein	Saturday, 4/20/13	7:00pm - 11:00pm	

Family	Date	Time	
Smith	Monday, 4/15/13	7:00pm - 10:00pm	<input type="button" value="Apply"/>
Anderson	Wednesday, 4/18/13	8:00pm - 10:00pm	<input type="button" value="Apply"/>
Evans	Friday, 4/19/13	6:00pm - 9:00pm	<input type="button" value="Apply"/>

Figure 4

8. **Poor distinction between heading and content (minor):** The table headers of the main view (*Figure 4*) should be more contrasted against the text entries underneath to improve **readability**. Hierarchy can be made clear through the use of larger size and/or different hue (color).

9. **Inconsistent Menu navigation (minor):** Among the button of the main navigation bar, the destination menus for “manage contacts” and “edit schedule” lead to pop-ups from which the user must infer how to come back to the main view (still visible behind). Conversely, the destination of “calendar view” makes access to the main view

a little clearer through the navigation layout (“back to my jobs”) and doesn’t use a pop up. **Aesthetic and minimal design, consistency** should be enforced for navigation.

II. Parent tasks: create and post a job

10. **User visibility regarding number of steps (minor)**: the job creation is a two process, but the current doesn’t surface how many steps are left in the setup (**visibility**). Putting an indicator at the bottom center (step 1 / 2) will comfort the user that this is a quick process. But overall, this process is clear and easy to understand and the user can navigate back (**good with help and documentation, as well as user control and freedom**).

Create Job

First, pick times for the job by painting the calendar.

	Thu Apr 25	Fri Apr 26	Sat Apr 27	Sun Apr 28
1pm				
2pm				
3pm				
4pm				
5pm				
6pm				
7pm				
8pm				
9pm				
10pm				
11pm				

12

I want a babysitter for the entire time I've painted. I want a babysitter for only part of the time I've painted:

Figure 5

11. **Text boxes in job setup are misaligned (cosmetic)**: The job title and details text boxes should be aligned to obey to **consistency, standards, and aesthetics**. In addition, whitespace should be used to separate the various fields (job title, time, details).

Create Job

Now, add a description to your job and send it to your babysitters.

Job title:

Time: Fri Apr 26 7pm to 10pm

Details:

Babysitters to tell about the job:

Jimmy Peterson
 Susie Smith
 Mark Williamson
 Jennifer Wu

Figure 6

12. **Improve formatting of time and date display (minor)**: layout of time and dates in the interface for parents (*Figures 6 and 7*) present a **consistency and standards** issue resulting in bad readability. Instead the layout should probably reuse the clear format of the sitter view (Friday 4/26/13 7:00pm – 10:00pm) with proper spacing between time and date.

13. **Parents can create empty job (major)**: The job creation interface let parents go through submission of a job with no time slot assigned and/or no description and/or no sitter selected (*Figure 7*). Users may think that they properly generated a job posting even though critical information is missing. **Error prevention** (safety) needs to be implemented to prevent such situations from occurring, by checking that all necessary fields (first desired time

slots, then description and possible sitters) are selected properly. If the required information is not entered at each of the two steps of the job creation setup, a message should be displayed indicating which data is missing (e.g. red text next) and prevented to proceed to the next stage.

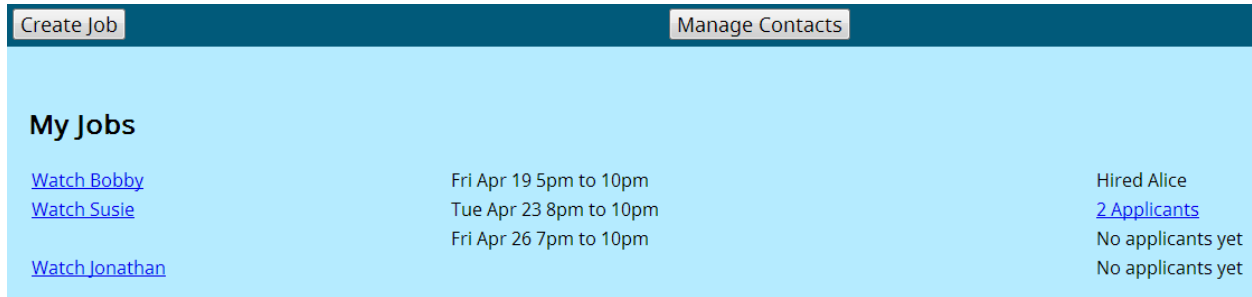


Figure 7

14. **Incorrect display in the confirmation of the date selected (major):** consider the situation of overnight baby-sitting job for which continuous time range spanning the midnight date boundary (Figure 8) is selected in the first step of the job creation. The interfaces for the second step (as well as the updated main menu listing jobs) still displays only one date (the first date) and the start and end times (Fri Apr 26 7pm to 2pm), which is both incorrect and very (confusing!). This is an issue of **error reporting and recovery**.



Figure 8

Now, add a description to your job and send it to your babysitters.

Job title:

Time: Fri Apr 26 7pm to 2pm

Details:

Figure 9

15. **Inconsistent logic after requesting blocks of time (major):** After selecting non-contiguous blocks of time for a job (Figure 5) and selecting “I want a babysitter for the entire time”, the feedback display the user get is that either one of those (full blocks) can be accepted (implying that the entire time doesn’t need to be covered), see Figure 10. Clearly this may be a corner case, and we may want to prevent users from entering non-contiguous

slots as one single job. However allowing such situation currently yields a learnability problem for users (**match the real world, consistency and standards**)

Now, add a description to your job and send it to your babysitters.

Job title:

Time: Fri Apr 26 6pm to 9pm or Sat Apr 27 6pm to 9pm

Details:

Figure 10

16. Selecting entire days on time slot calendar quickly (minor): while time slots selection is quite flexible, **efficiency** could be improved by allowing the whole day to be highlighted in one shot.