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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of this project was to acquire the information needed to improve the usability of the Urbanspoon Web site. The project team first prepared a list of research questions, and then selected six user experience research methods to address the questions: survey, usability test, interview, competitive analysis, task analysis, and observation. This report discusses how we conducted the research methods, the results we gathered, and the recommendations for improving Urbanspoon’s functionality and design. The user experience research methods we used produced the results that reflect the advantages and disadvantages of the Web site, and these results act as the evidence for our recommendations.

To begin our user research, we created an electronic survey that received 88 responses. From the survey, we learned that 93% of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 34, and although 25% of the participants preferred not to indicate their annual income, only 20% of those who did answer indicated that they make above $35,000 per year. We used this demographic information to target younger people with lower annual incomes for our interviews and usability tests, where we received strong opinions and suggestions for improving Urbanspoon.

Our survey also revealed that 50% of the participants have used Yelp and Metromix in the past three months, while only 10% of the participants have used Urbanspoon in the past three months. Our survey also indicated that users like Yelp primarily because of the user reviews, Opentable and Time Out because of the content they provide, and Metromix because of its design aesthetic. Because of the small sample size of Urbanspoon users, we believe that our survey should be revised to only receive responses from people who have used Urbanspoon in the past three months. Changing the eligibility criteria for the survey would produce more accurate results that can directly reflect Urbanspoon users and their opinions about the site.

We conducted four usability tests with four users to help determine if any problems are present in Urbanspoon. The usability test participants completed four tasks using Urbanspoon and then provided their suggestions for improving the Web site. Overall, it was not too difficult for users to complete a task using the features provided by Urbanspoon. They liked the Top Neighborhoods category on the home page, the chart that displays the meals served corresponding to the time of day, and the voting feature related to user reviews. However, the aspects of the site that participants thought could be improved were: the search function, the layout and categorization of information on the home page, and the chart about meal times. The participants also stated that they would like to see more information about individual restaurants and an improved rating system that provided a more specific ranking of each restaurant.

After each usability test, we conducted individual interviews with the same four participants. They primarily provided their suggestions for improving Urbanspoon during the usability test, so the interviews mostly allowed us to learn about their habits when ordering in and eating out and other demographic information. All the participants were between the ages of 18 and 26 and are currently students or recent graduates. Three of the participants occasionally use the Web for finding restaurant information, primarily using Yelp, Metromix, and Google Maps, while one participant does not use restaurant review Web sites but relies on word of mouth to learn about restaurants. Their preference for finding information seems to be based on simplicity or habits they have used for an extended period of time. For example, Googling restaurant names and choosing
Yelp because it was returned as a top search result; or using Metromix, Google Maps, and word of mouth because they have worked in the past and have provided satisfactory results.

We conducted a competitive analysis to provide us a quick way to gauge where Urbanspoon stands in the market and where opportunity for improvement might lie. By taking a deeper look at Urbanspoon along with each competing site (Yelp, Metromix, Time Out, and OpenTable), we evaluated features/functionality provided, categories for organizing restaurants, design elements used, and potential usability issues experienced by visitors. Urbanspoon’s percentage rating system was found to be a differentiating point of the Web site as all other sites used a star rating system instead. It may be an advantage to offer users both rating systems as a reference depending on user perception of the importance of either rating system.

From the competitive analysis, we found that most of the layouts on the sites were fairly complex and somewhat confusing or overwhelming. The pages tended to get text-heavy, so attractive imagery is important to balance out the effect. The organization and layout of lists, including basic restaurant-specific information, is also key to readability and scanability--it should be helpful and informative but also kept concise and straight-forward, letting the reviews do the talking. A more minimalist look with beautiful, compelling imagery and clear navigation would stand out amongst the competition and create an overall more pleasant user experience and increased customer satisfaction.

From conducting a task analysis, we found that when a user declares the completion of the task, he or she has found a restaurant which meets most of the preset criteria, whether those criteria have been written down or just kept in mind. Users also have the option of setting a maximum amount of time to use, and choose the most ideal restaurant among several candidates when time is up. We also found that the following features are potentially frustrating to users: searching; indexing some restaurants in categories “Top Neighborhoods,” “Top Types of Food,” and “Special Features”; user reviews; and the description/highlight of special features in the restaurant page.

This is because those features are important while users look for a restaurant by either browsing or searching, but it seems that Urbanspoon does not provide very robust support for those features (more concrete explanations for this can be seen in sections Surveys, Interviews, and Competitive Analysis).

For our final user research method, we collected data from 13 user observations. We observed these participants use Urbanspoon to find a restaurant at which they wanted to eat. We recorded their actions and discovered that Urbanspoon lacks detailed information about restaurants; so many users had to go to other Web sites to look for it. Also, some of the menus were not shown on Urbanspoon, and the hours of operation are not clearly shown on the restaurant pages. We have also observed that some users had to go to other sites to find reviews and maps for some restaurants.

After carrying out all research tasks, we analyzed the collected data to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the current Urbanspoon Web site, and proposed some recommendations on improving its features and design. In terms of functionality, Urbanspoon needs to increase the number of restaurant features, including photos, general restaurant information (e.g., restaurant description, hours of operation, and wheelchair accessibility), a star rating system, and to enhance its search capabilities. In terms of page design, the Urbanspoon needs to enhance the readability of
its pages, improve the font number of index pages, remove the unclear maps on the index pages, improve the links on the home page, and remove redundant information on the home page.

In addition to these recommendations, Urbanspoon should continue to conduct user research methods to improve the site's usability and user satisfaction. Continuing to employ the user research methods discussed in this report will provide the information needed to improve Urbanspoon as more people choose the Internet to learn about restaurants. Further improvements to the site will not only improve the experiences of current users, but will also help promote Urbanspoon to better compete with Web site's like Yelp and Metromix, which represented Urbanspoon's biggest competition during this research project.
INTRODUCTION

Urbanspoon is a restaurant review Web site that people can use to find and learn about restaurants in their area based on customer-specific conditions. Recently added, customers can also make online restaurant reservations through the Urbanspoon system, though this feature is currently only available via mobile or iPad applications. As there are several other similar Web sites including Yelp, OpenTable, Metromix and Time Out, it is important for Urbanspoon to monitor where it stands with users in the restaurant review market in order to take the appropriate actions to stay competitive. The usability of its Web site is one of the most important factors which affect its competitiveness.

The goal of our user experience research project is to acquire the information needed to improve the usability of the Urbanspoon Web site. This information includes:

- the types of people who already use, or might use in the future, restaurant review Web sites like Urbanspoon,
- what features users find important when using Urbanspoon and other similar Web sites,
- how satisfied users are with Urbanspoon and other similar Web sites, and
- the problems users encounter when using the Urbanspoon Web site.

The following sections discuss the research methods we used to gather data about Urbanspoon, its potential users, and current users; the results we gathered from these research methods; our recommendations for improving Urbanspoon; a conclusion about our results and recommendations; and appendices that contain raw data and documents from our research. This user experience research project was carried out by four graduate students in Humanities Department of Illinois Institute of Technology during September 15 - December 7, 2010.
METHODS & RESULTS

For this user experience research project, we selected six methods that we used for comparing Urbanspoon with its market competitors, understanding the advantages and disadvantages of Urbanspoon, and learning what can be done to make improvements for users.

Table 1A (see Appendices - Goals) presents the questions we proposed to answer and the research methods used to address each question.

Through our initial brainstorming process, we found that focus groups could also be a candidate method; however, we expected this method would answer almost the same questions interviews would answer. Because a focus group could take much more time and effort to arrange than individual interviews, we decided not to carry out a focus group study.

SURVEYS

To begin our user research, we created an electronic survey that received 88 responses. Because we suspected that many people might not use Urbanspoon, we wanted to ask them questions about other similar Web sites, and also about how often they eat out or order in from restaurants. Learning this information provided us with a general understanding of the participants’ demographics, eating tendencies, and relevant Web site use and preferences. From conducting a survey, we hoped to answer the following questions:

- What demographics use Urbanspoon?
- How often do people use Urbanspoon?
- What features do users actually use?
- What features do the users like?
- What features are frustrating to users?
- How do users find what they are looking for (e.g., browse, search)?
- Are there similar sites that users use?
- Why do users like those sites (better)?
- How satisfied are our existing users?
- How can we retain our current users?
- What features should we improve, add, or remove first?

USER DEMOGRAPHICS

Learning about user demographics primarily helped us target people of a particular age group with similar annual incomes for our interviews and usability tests. To determine if there were correlations between user demographics and their preferences for Web sites, we calculated correlation coefficients using the participants’ ages and annual income. We calculated the correlation coefficients for the participants’ ages and how important they consider having the ability to write and read reviews on restaurant review Web sites. Our calculations revealed that there is a relationship between the participants’ ages and the ability to write a review (correlation coefficient = .052486), but no relationship between the participants’ ages and the ability to read a review (correlation coefficient = -.02439).
We also calculated the correlation coefficients between the participants’ annual income and if they have used a particular Web site in the past three months. Our calculations revealed the there is a relationship between the participants’ annual income and if they have used Yelp, Open Table, Urbanspoon, and Time Out in the past three months; each correlation coefficient was greater than .05, revealing a relationship between the variables. There was no significant correlation (correlation coefficient = -.0311) between the participants’ annual income and if they have used Metromix in the past three months, revealing that these two variables are unrelated.

Initially, we suspected that participants with moderate or lower annual incomes (e.g., students) may be more interested in learning about restaurants to lower the risk of spending money at a restaurant they find dissatisfying. Although 25% of the participants preferred not to answer the annual income question, only 20% of those who did answer indicated that they make above $35,000 per year.

From the demographic questions, we also discovered that 58% of participants were between the ages of 18 and 24, 35% were between the ages of 25 and 34, and 64% were male. The occupational results were very mixed, containing 21 different responses, which made it difficult to calculate and decipher a meaningful correlation coefficient. However, the following occupational areas included the most participants:

- Education/Research = 14%
- Engineering = 17%
- Student = 20%

Because the average annual income of the participants is fairly low, and only 7% of the participants are above the age of 34, we believe that younger people with lower annual incomes comprise a large part of those who use restaurant review Web sites. Furthermore, because 20% of those who answered the occupation question are students, it is likely that they fall into the category of younger people with lower annual incomes. We used this demographic information to target particular people for our interviews and usability tests, where we received strong opinions and suggestions for improving Urbanspoon. We suspected that people in the lower-annual-income demographic would reveal specific reasons why they are satisfied or dissatisfied with Urbanspoon, which is information we used when forming our final recommendations for improving the site.

### ADDITIONAL SURVEY FINDINGS

After conducting an online survey on Urbanspoon and similar restaurant review Web sites, we were able to draw a few conclusions for the proposed questions from our project plan based on an analysis of the 88 survey responses we received. The following table lists the number of total survey participants and the percentage of the 49 Web users (56% of total participants) who have used specific restaurant review Web sites in the past 3 months. Note that usage here is not mutually exclusive. Participants were asked about each site individually and therefore a user may have used all five sites recently or only one site.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web site</th>
<th>Number of total Participants</th>
<th>Percentage of 49 Web Users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yelp</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metromix</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Table</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanspoon</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Out</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Maps</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yelp and Metromix have been used the most by these participants. Our survey also indicated that users like Yelp primarily because of the user reviews, OpenTable and Time Out because of the content they provide, and Metromix because of its design aesthetic. Additionally, according to the second free response question that asks what Web site the participants prefer and why, 5 of the 15 who answered the question stated Google Maps (not on the list of sites we provided), while 8 answered Yelp, and only 1 answered Metromix. Four participants who prefer Yelp stated that they like the large number of reviews available, while two other participants stated that Yelp’s popularity draws them to the site. Additionally, one participant stated that he uses Yelp “simply because it’s the first one that shows up in [G]oogle when [he] search[es] for restaurants.” However, other Yelp users also stated that they like the site’s layout, navigability, and rating system, so Yelp’s popularity among these participants is not completely based on its large Web presence.

**SURVEY REVISIONS**

In addition to the information we gathered about the survey participants, we believe a major finding in this analysis were some of the shortcomings also discovered during the evaluation. Mainly, it was found that the majority of our respondents were not in our target market. Of the 88 survey responses, only 9 respondents answered that they had used Urbanspoon in the last 3 months. Based on this data, several questions (specific to Urbanspoon) cannot be sufficiently answered due to the small sample size. To better answer these questions, we should change the eligibility criteria for the survey using a screening question such as “Have you used Urbanspoon in the last 3 months?” Users would have to answer “yes” to meet the requirements for full survey participation.

Alternatively, we might salvage some of our data by assuming (though not proven) that even though only 9 respondents actually used Urbanspoon, the remaining respondents might still be representative of the population of potential Urbanspoon users. That is, why might
Yelp/Metromix/OpenTable/Time Out users be any different from our target market? However, upon looking closer, of our 88 respondents, our sample size of people who used any of the 5 sites within the last 3 months is still only about half (53% to be exact) and only 56% selected the Web as a method they use to determine where to eat. Therefore, we are again in the situation where we should change the eligibility criteria to fit only people who use the Web for restaurant searching purposes.

In addition to altering the survey in the future, we also used usability tests to determine the specific aspects of Urbanspoon that need improvement. To determine how we can use this information to improve Urbanspoon, we asked users during the usability test about their satisfaction and perception of various aspects of the site while completing certain tasks. Based on the users’ reasoning for their satisfaction, and their suggestions, we were able to determine what features need to be changed, removed, or added. The results of the usability tests can be found in the next section, Usability Test.

Although our survey results did not directly answer “How can we retain our current users?” and “What features should we improve, add, or remove first?” I think we can extrapolate some reasonable answers based on the results from other survey questions. We can reasonably conclude that Urbanspoon must

- improve the quality of user reviews, the features for entertainment, the organization of Web site, the quality of photos of the food, and the number of online menus;
- add a "search by address" feature and the information about restaurants’ business hours;
- remove none of the existing features.

Overall, the survey shows that compared to its competitor Web sites, Urbanspoon has fewer users and its features have received moderate level of appreciation from its users. To retain the existing users and catch up with the popularity of some other sites like Yelp, Urbanspoon still needs to improve its features such as support for the user review feature.

USABILITY TEST

We conducted four usability tests with four users to help determine if any problems are present in Urbanspoon. From conducting a usability test, we hope to answer the following questions:

- How do users react when completing tasks?
- Are there specific points where users have breakdowns or encounter problems?
- What features are frustrating to users?
- What features work well for users?
- What features do users like?
- What features do users dislike?
- Where is the system inefficient?
- What features should we improve, add, or remove first?

The tests provided specific measurements in regard to a user’s behavior when completing specific tasks. While conducting the tests, we recorded how long it took users to complete each task and
how many errors they committed (i.e., how many times they clicked the wrong link or back button)
The participants were asked to complete the following tasks:

- Task 1. From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, find the address and telephone number of the Fat Cat restaurant in the Edgewater neighborhood by first using the listing of Chicago neighborhoods.
- Task 2. From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, determine if the Hopleaf restaurant in Andersonville serves breakfast on Thursdays.
- Task 3. From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, find a restaurant that plays live music in the Logan Square neighborhood.
- Task 4. From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, determine if you would eat at the Earwax Cafe in Bucktown/Wicker Park. Then, please explain the factors that influenced your decision.
- Task 5. Describe your experience and overall perceptions after using Urbanspoon. Recommend improvements to the Web site that you might find useful.

Note: the raw data from the usability tests are located in the Appendices--Usability Test.

From the results we can infer the following:

- **How do users react when completing tasks?**

  They would be generally not very satisfied with the time they have to spend to complete certain tasks, especially after knowing that they were expected to use some features which could save them much time.

  Overall, it was not too difficult for users to complete a task using the features provided by Urbanspoon; however, it is usually not easy to recognize some of the features, even if they may need to be frequently used by general users. As a result, users may very likely waste some time during task completion.

- **What features are frustrating to users / do users dislike?**

  The following features could be frustrating to users:

  - The categories such as "Top Neighborhoods," "Top Types of Food" and "Special Features": the vertical list of links is too long, and the text is a bit too small to read.
  - The chart which shows whether a restaurant serves breakfast/lunch/dinner/late-night meals: it does not include explanation about what this chart is used for, whether the green squares means the type of meal is served, and what the cut-off times between meals are.
  - The search function: it works only when users input keywords which are part of the restaurants' names; if the keywords are only part of the restaurants' description but are not included in the names, the search function will fail to locate the result.
  - User reviews: the number of user reviews is low compared to some other restaurant-review Web sites (e.g., Yelp), and there is not a star rating system which helps user to get a general idea of each review quickly.
• **What features work well for users / do users like?**
  o The Top Neighborhoods category: it is good to have, and can be helpful if user is familiar with the neighborhoods of Chicago.
  o The chart which shows whether a restaurant serves breakfast/lunch/dinner/late-night meal: it is very useful if user is familiar with its layout.
  o The voting feature related to user review is useful.

• **Are there specific points where users have breakdowns or encounter problems? / Where is the system inefficient?**
  o Users were overwhelmed by the large amount of information displayed on the home page; in particular, it is difficult to recognize which part of information is the most important.
  o As indicated previously, the search function is not robust enough and may always return "No result found" if users do not use appropriate keywords.
  o There is not enough information about each restaurant. For example, for many restaurants there is no menu information.
  o When a category includes several pages of restaurant information, the links to other pages are too small to be noticed, so that users may mistake that there are no more pages.

• **What features should we improve, add, or remove first?**
  o The following features should be improved: search function; the layout and categorization of information on the homepage; the chart about meal times should be updated to be more easily comprehensible.
  o A star rating system should be added on top of the user review feature.
  o No features need to be removed at the beginning of Web site redesign process.

Note: the script used for the usability tests can be found in section [Appendices – Usability Test](#).

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**INTERVIEWS**

After each usability test, we conducted individual interviews with the same participants. We chose to interview the participants after the usability tests so that they would provide unbiased opinions to Urbanspoon while completing tasks.

The interviews were primarily used to follow up on the participants' responses during the usability tests and to also learn about their habits when ordering in and eating out and other demographic information. From conducting an interview, we hoped to answer the following questions:

  o What demographics use Urbanspoon?
  o How often do people use Urbanspoon?
  o How long have users been using Urbanspoon?
  o Why did they stop using the Urbanspoon (if applicable)?
  o How long does it take to accomplish a certain task?
  o What additional features do users want?
  o What features do users actually use?
  o How do users react when completing tasks?
  o What features do the users like?
What features are frustrating to users?
Are there specific points where users have breakdowns or encounter problems?
How do users find what they are looking for (e.g., browse, search)?
Are there similar sites that users use?
Why do users like those sites (better)?
How satisfied are our existing users?
How can we get users to stay longer?
How can we retain our current users?
What features should we improve, add, or remove first?
What other methods other than Web sites are used and why?

Participant 1 is a 25 year-old full-time graduate student who currently works part-time as a pharmacy technician. He stated that when looking for a restaurant to eat or order in from, he usually uses the Web and Googles the name or type of restaurant. He stated that Google almost always returns Yelp as one of the top Web sites, so he opens Yelp and reads user reviews about the restaurant, whereupon he decides on that restaurant. Because participant 1 uses the Internet around 20 hours per week, he seemed to be able to quickly recover from the errors he committed during the usability tasks. For example, noticing Urbanspoon’s grid of meal times after clicking the wrong link and then the back button. Even though participant 1 had never used Urbanspoon before the usability test, he still stated that he does not like the site and prefers Yelp. He likes Yelp’s use of tabs on the home page and the organization of restaurant pages, specifically Yelp’s listing of business information and its star rating system.

Participant 2 is a 26 year-old full-time graduate student. He stated that to decide which restaurant to eat in, he always relied on word of mouth; he used Internet to look up only the location of the restaurants if needed, so that he did not actually use any restaurant-review Web sites. He did not eat out very often (about twice a month), which would be one of the reasons why his method worked well for him. He also indicated that he did not like to spend any effort on searching for restaurant information by himself, while he could always trust the advices given by his friends, who usually have similar tastes and criteria for choosing a restaurant as his. Also, he felt that in the information received from word of mouth, there would usually be more information available about the specific restaurant which might not be posted online (e.g., where would be the best place to park near the restaurant). However, he admitted that with his method, he had too few chances to explore new restaurants; also, sometimes he received recommendations from someone who he was not too acquainted with, and it would turn out that the type of food was not something he liked.

Participant 3 is a 23 year old recent graduate who recently started full-time work at a marketing agency. Typically, she only eats out 3-5 times per month and hardly ever orders in (usually only pizza once a month). Her process for choosing a restaurant depends mostly on her location (i.e., favorites in the area like close to home, or sometimes she will try a new place elsewhere like downtown). Besides location, she considers price, cuisine and word of mouth to be important factors for her decision. Of the Web sites we looked at in our usability research, she is most familiar with Metromix, which she has used for about two years and currently uses approximately twice a month. She uses it because two years ago there were no other similar resources and she has had good experiences, grown accustomed to it, and used it to find some good restaurants. She likes the ease of the neighborhood search to find places as well as using meal categories (brunch/lunch/dinner).
Participant 4 is an 18 year-old student who likes playing online games in her spare time and shopping with her friends. She likes to go to Chicago's Chinatown once or twice a week to have dinner if she decides to eat out. She mentioned that she sometimes uses Google maps when searching for restaurant information. She usually wants to know about the restaurant's name, address and pricing of dishes. Additionally, she does not care much about other people's comments on restaurants when using Google Maps. Even though she rarely uses restaurant-review Web sites, she thought Urbanspoon was easy to use but lacked photos of restaurants and their dishes.

Note: the guide used for the interviews can be found in section Appendices - Usability Script and Interview Guide.

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

We conducted a competitive analysis to provide us a quick way to gauge where Urbanspoon stands in the market and where opportunity for improvement might lie. By taking a deeper look at Urbanspoon along with each competing site (Yelp, Metromix, Time Out, and OpenTable), we evaluated features/functionality provided, categories for organizing restaurants, design elements used, and potential usability issues experienced by visitors. Each evaluation criteria was given a rating for each of the Web sites on an appropriate scale of measurement. Each Web site’s ratings were used to draw a competitive analysis graph. We compared Urbanspoon’s graphs to those of the other sites to identify its strengths and weaknesses, providing insight on what areas to change and/or capitalize on. These areas of opportunity were then further explored using the additional usability research methods that follow.

Specifically, we used competitive analysis to help us answer the following questions:

- What features do our competitors have?
- What features should we improve, add, or remove first?
- What categories of organization do our competitors use?
- What is working visually for our competitors' sites?
- What usability issues exist for our competitors' sites?
- Where is the system inefficient?
- How can we attract new users?

See Appendices - Competitive Analysis for the graphs of Urbanspoon and each competitive site.

The results indicated two main findings:

- Urbanspoon’s percentage rating system was found to be a differentiating point of the Web site as all other sites used a star rating system instead. The results identify it as a feature worth further exploration in other usability research methods. It may be an advantage to offer users both rating systems as a reference depending on user perception of the importance of either rating system.
- There is much opportunity in making design improvements. Based on graph 3, the following areas appear to be lacking within all sites:
  i. navigation usability
  ii. aesthetic design
iii. layout
iv. imagery
v. user satisfaction (likely influenced by those points above)

Most of the layouts on the sites were fairly complex and somewhat confusing or overwhelming. This sometimes made it difficult to understand where to find specific information on where to click next as well as just making it hard on the eyes. These pages tend to get text-heavy so attractive imagery is important to balance out the effect. The organization and layout of lists, including basic restaurant-specific information, is also a key to readability and scan-ability--it should be helpful and informative but also kept concise and straight-forward, letting the reviews do the talking. This seems to be the challenge: to deliver so much information using a simpler design. However, a more minimalist look with beautiful, compelling imagery and clear navigation would stand out amongst the competition and create an overall more pleasant user experience and increased customer satisfaction.

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**TASK ANALYSIS**

By conducting a task analysis, we planned to answer the following questions:

- How do users react when completing tasks?
- What features are frustrating to users?
- Are there specific points where users have breakdowns or encounter problems?
- What features should we improve, add, or remove first?

The result from task analysis shows that

- Normally, when user declares the completion of the task, he or she has found a restaurant which meets most of the preset criteria, whether those criteria have been written down or just kept in mind. Users also have the option of setting a maximum amount of time to use, and choose the most ideal restaurant among several candidates when time is up.
- The following features are potentially frustrating to users:
  - searching
  - indexing some restaurants in categories “Top Neighborhoods,” “Top Types of Food,” and “Special Features”
  - user reviews
  - description/highlight of special features in the restaurant page

  This is because those features are important while users look for a restaurant by either browsing or searching, but it seems that Urbanspoon does not provide very robust support for those features (more concrete explanations for this can be seen in sections Surveys, Interviews, and Competitive Analysis).

- Users will possibly encounter problems when using
  - the search feature. It can be noticed that when user types some key words and search, the search results would include only the restaurants which have the key words as part of their names. For example, though there is an entry "live music" in
category "Special Features," if user enters "live music" in the search bar as key words, the search would return no results.

- the user review feature. Though for some restaurants there are over 30 reviews, for most of the restaurants there are only fewer than 10, in which case users will not actually be able to use this feature. Also, the user reviews are only labeled with “Likes it” or “Doesn’t like it,” but it does not tell how strongly the reviewer recommends a restaurant; using star-rating system to label them can make it more user friendly.

- Urbanspoon should first improve the following features:
  - the search feature. A way to improve it would be adding an “Advanced search” feature, or enhancing the search engine so that if a user enters some related information rather than names of restaurants, the restaurants would still appear in the search results as long as any part of its description contain those key words.
  - the user review feature. The number and quality of user reviews are essential for this feature, so that Urbanspoon needs to find a way to improve both.

Also, Urbanspoon should add a star-rating system to enhance the user review feature. It can be also regarded as a way to improve the usability of user reviews.

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**OBSERVATION**

We collected data from 13 users during the observation research method. By conducting user observations, we planned to answer the following questions:

- How do users react when completing tasks?
- How do users find what they are looking for (e.g., browse, search)?
- How can we attract new users?
- What features should we improve, add, or remove first?
- Where is the system inefficient?

For people who were observed (mentioned as “sample users” below), their goal was to find a restaurant they liked to eat in. As the sample users were searching and browsing on the computer, the conductors of the test recorded the entire process. The sample users could browse other sites for more information that Urbanspoon did not provide. This allowed us to find out how users perform the tasks and what confuses or attracts them when they search for information.

The observers recorded the following types of actions:

- clicking one of the links on the page (the observers would record the name and the property of the link, such as category links “by neighborhood” or the name of the restaurants)
- clicking the back button
- scrolling up or down
- zooming in or zooming out of the map (the observers would record which map they are looking at, like “zooming in the map beside the restaurant description and looking for the address on the map”
- keeping the mouse pointing at something for over twenty seconds
- staying on one page or one part of the page for over two minutes
● commenting on page at which they are currently looking
● leaving Urbanspoon and opening another Web site (the observers would record what information they were looking at on the other Web site, like “the user leaves the website and goes to Google to search the name of the restaurant ‘Triple Happiness’.” If some useful information can be found in other Web pages but not on Urbanspoon, it may indicate which type of information Urbanspoon lacks.)
● the pages that cannot be opened during the observation
● users’ reactions upon completing the tasks

The raw data recorded during the observations are located in section Appendices - Observation section.

Most of our sample users declared that they found the restaurant at which they wanted to eat. Users liked to use “Neighborhood” and “Type of Food” as specific categories to search for restaurant. They would check the menu after they went to the restaurant page. However, some of the menu pages were not available online. Five sample users left Urbanspoon to look for more information in other websites.

Some of the information did not display on Urbanspoon. For example, not all menus and photos of food are available for users, and several users wanted to read some “useful” reviews and details of the restaurant like the hours of operation. Although Urbanspoon provides the opening times in terms of “breakfast”, “lunch”, “dinner” and “late”, users still cannot know the exact time a restaurant opens.

Overall, Urbanspoon lacks detailed information about restaurants; so many users had to go to other Web sites to look for it. Also, some of the menus were not shown on Urbanspoon, and the hours of operation are not clearly shown on the restaurant pages. We have also observed that some users had to go to other sites to find reviews and maps for some restaurants.
RECOMMENDATIONS

After conducting our user research methods, we learned about the features and aspects of Urbanspoon that users like and dislike. To help improve the usability and user experience of Urbanspoon we have formed a list of recommendations, below.

ABOUT FEATURES

- Add more descriptions about each restaurant. For example, hours of operation, wheelchair accessibility, and attire.
- Improve the quality of photos of the food, user reviews for each restaurant, and the number of online menus.
- On each restaurant page, add some explanations to the chart which shows whether the restaurant serves breakfast/lunch/dinner/late-night meals; this will allow the chart to be more easily understood.
- Add more information about what types of food are served in each restaurant, as well as more photos for both the restaurant and food.
- Enhance the search function: when users enter a keyword that is included in the restaurant description but not in its name, the search system should still be able to find the restaurant.
- Add a star rating system. Although the percentage rating system displays the number of people who like a particular restaurant, Participant 1 of the usability test stated that the rating system was not very informative. He suggested that Urbanspoon use a star rating system to add more specificity to user ratings. Additionally, we recommend having a star rating for every review. As it is now, individual reviews only specify if the user “likes it” or “doesn’t like it,” which is pretty vague and does not state how much the user likes or dislikes the restaurant. Adding a star rating system would provide a more detailed rating.

ABOUT DESIGN

- Redesign the layout of the whole site to make it easier to go through the information on the site. For example, using a bigger font for the body text and simplifying the look (i.e., adding more white space).
- Improve the imagery: many of the current images need to be replaced with more visually pleasant ones; also, Urbanspoon should add more new and attractive images to make the pages less text heavy and more balanced.
- In the index page of the restaurants, delete the map showing at the top. They are not really informative but just make the pages looking cluttered.
- On the home page, the links can be shown as buttons, instead of links (just like what Metromix does). This would provide a more interesting design and also make the links easier to click.
- On the home page, replace categories such as “Top Neighborhoods” and “Top Types of Food” with tabs at the top of the home page. The current design presents too much information that is spread out across the home page.
- When a category includes several pages of restaurant information, the links to other pages should change from numbers to letters. For example, restaurants organized by location are listed alphabetically, but the links at the bottom of the page are numbers that send the user
to additional pages. These links should be changed to letters to make it easier for the user to navigate to pages by name.
Despite the number of improvements we have recommended for Urbanspoon, we also received positive feedback about the site through our user experience methods. Aside from the percentage rating system, our interviewees and usability test participants did not believe that any feature should be removed from the Urbanspoon. After learning about other restaurant-review Web sites, we have also come to appreciate the inclusion of Google Maps to show the location of restaurants and the fact that Urbanspoon focuses specifically on restaurants, rather than several businesses like Yelp and Metromix.

By conducting additional user research, we believe we can gather additional information for improving Urbanspoon. Our interviews and usability tests provided the most specific and useful information, so we believe conducting these methods with additional participants would be essential in further enhancing the site’s usability and user satisfaction. Further improvements to the site will not only improve the experiences of current users, but will also help promote Urbanspoon to better compete with Web site’s like Yelp and Metromix, which represented Urbanspoon’s biggest competition during this research project. Increasing Urbanspoon’s popularity would bring more traffic to the site and potentially boost the number and quality of restaurant reviews, which was also a concern for usability test participants. Ultimately, continuing to employ the user research methods discussed in this report will provide the information needed to improve Urbanspoon as more people choose the Internet to learn about restaurants.
APPENDICES

This section is for reference purposes only. It includes the raw data from some of the user experience study methods. For example, a collection of responses to the survey, a mark-up scheme for recording users' actions during observations, and records from the usability test.

GOALS

Table 1A:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>survey</th>
<th>interview</th>
<th>competitive analysis</th>
<th>observation</th>
<th>usability test</th>
<th>task analysis</th>
<th>focus group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What demographics use our site/product/service?</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How often do people use our site/product/service?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How long have users been using the service?</td>
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<td>Why did they stop using the service (if applicable)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How long does it take to accomplish a certain task?</td>
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<td>What additional features do users want?</td>
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<td>What features do users actually use?</td>
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<td>How do users read when completing tasks?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What features do the users like?</td>
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<td>What features are frustrating to users?</td>
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<td>What features work well for users?</td>
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<td>Are there specific points where users have breakdowns or encounter problems?</td>
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<td>How do users find what they're looking for (e.g., browse, search)?</td>
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<td>Are there similar sites/products that users use?</td>
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<td>Why do users like those sites (better)?</td>
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<td>What features do our competitors have?</td>
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<td>What categories of organization do our competitors use?</td>
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<td>What is working visually for our competitors’ sites?</td>
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<td>What usability issues exist for our competitors’ sites?</td>
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<td>How can we attract new users?</td>
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<td>How satisfied are our existing users?</td>
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<td>How can we get users to stay longer?</td>
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<td>How can we retain our current users?</td>
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<td>What features should we improve/add/remove first?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where is the system inefficient?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What other methods other than Web sites are used and why?</td>
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</table>

SURVEY

This is the spreadsheet containing all responses for the online survey:
Participant 1

He stated that his initial perception of Urbanspoon was organized and colorful, though there was a lot of information on the home page that could be better organized through menu tabs across the top of the page, instead of menu categories placed throughout the page.

Participant 1 was able to successfully complete each task without assistance, though he did commit several errors. While completing each task, participant 1 also had specific opinions and suggestions about Urbanspoon’s design and functionality. For task 1, he was not able to find Edgewater listed in the neighborhoods sections, so he clicked the Chicago link to choose a location, which was an error because he was currently on the Chicago page. After expanding the list of neighborhoods, participant 1 was able to find the Edgewater neighborhood, but he thought the additional pages should be listed alphabetically (e.g., A, B, C, D), rather than numerically (e.g., Page 1, 2, 3, 4), to make it easier to find a restaurant by name. He completed task 1 in 59 seconds.

Participant 1 did not have any problems with task 2, completing it in 25 seconds. However, after locating Hopleaf restaurant from the “Best Fine Dining” menu on the home page, he clicked “view menu,” then the back button, and did not immediately see the grid displaying meals and their corresponding days of the week. He thought that the grid was confusing because it does not specify what the color green means or specify cut-off times between meals throughout the day.

Task 3 posed the greatest problem for Participant 1, taking him 2 minutes and 35 seconds to complete. Because he did not know that live music was listed under the Special Features category, he first typed “live music” in the search bar, which returned no results. He then clicked back and spent about a minute looking at the home page until he located the live music link. He stated that it would be better if “the site had tabs for top neighborhoods [and] special features at the top of the page, so you don’t have to scroll down.”

Participant 1 completed task 4 in 55 seconds, but he stated that he wished each user review had a star rating, similar to Yelp’s, so that he could gain a more specific understanding of the restaurant. Even though participant 1 had never used Urbanspoon before this usability test, he still stated that he does not like the site and prefers Yelp. He likes Yelp’s use of tabs on the home page and the organization of restaurant pages, specifically Yelp’s listing of business information and its star rating system.

Participant 2

Task 1: he used 1 minute and 22 seconds to complete it without any errors (e.g. clicking backspace). But he did not browse the list of neighborhoods; instead, he used the search function because he was reluctant to look carefully at the long list of “tiny” links displaying the name of neighborhoods.

Task 2: participant 2 used only 32 seconds. But again he typed “Hopleaf” in search bar and found the result instantly.

Task 3: he spent 3 minutes and 50 seconds searching and browsing, and declared that he would give up this task. He did not notice the link “Live Music” under category “Special Features,” so at first he randomly viewed a few restaurants in the page “Logan Square Restaurants” without finding the result; then typed “Live Music” in the search bar, but the search returned no results. After giving
up the task, he checked out whether it was easy to find the information in Google, and was able to find the results within 30 seconds.

Task 4: he used 1 minute and 30 seconds, completing it without any errors. Once more time he used search function to find the restaurant, but could not find much information about what types of food are served, and the reviews were not really helpful for making a decision. So he looked at the four pictures of the food and the cafe, and then decided that he would not eat there, because the environment and food are very possibly not of the type he likes, and that there is not really much information available for making a better judgment.

Overall suggestions: participant 2 hopes that Urbanspoon could have more information about what types of food are served in each restaurant, as well as more photos for both the restaurant and food. Also, he thinks that the search function of Urbanspoon should be enhanced.

**Participant 3**

Initial perception:

very busy, nothing jumps out; it will take time to figure out what to do; colors are drab; imagery is unappealing

Task 1: 40 sec.

Scrolled and browsed by neighborhood. Edgewater was not in top so selected See All.

Scrolled through alphabetical listing and paged through until Fat Cat restaurant came up. Clicked restaurant. Found address and telephone number.

*Disliked vertical scrolling needed in complete neighborhoods listing -- at first thought there was only center and north. Cluttered layout, “a lot going on.” Nothing jumps out except the title/name of the restaurant. Liked voting, but only noticed on second look.

Task 2: 1 min.

Scrolled and browsed by neighborhood. Selected Andersonville at top of list. Selects Hopleaf from #1 position on Best list. Scrolls down -- “I don’t see anything on hours. I’d go to the Hopleaf website... Oh, now I see this thing. Really confusing.” Hard to find; Didn’t know what it was.

*Would otherwise search by neighborhood and cuisine without name.

Task 3: 30 sec.

Scrolled down and selected Logan Square from neighborhood listing. “I don’t know how I’d do this. I wouldn’t look on here I’d go to Google... unless I searched...” Searches “logan square + live music.” “Nope.”

Task 4: 1 min 15 sec.

Tried searching. None. Browsed by neighborhood and selected Bucktown. Scrolled and paged through until Earwax Cafe came up. Selects restaurant. “Don’t have menu.” Coffee? International? Vegetarian? Says probably wouldn’t eat there. “Guess I’ll look at pictures... Based on Urbanspoon, I wouldn’t eat there. If I heard from someone else, maybe.”
Overall Experience/Perceptions/Recommendations:

Good resource to find restaurants but probably wouldn’t use it over sites like Metromix with more information. “Appearance turns me off.” Could be greatly improved design-wise. Recommends easier way to find info, use of buttons vs lists, trendier -- more like Metromix, clever, more informational about restaurants.

Participant 4

Task 1

1. From the main page, scrolled down and up. Clicked “see all (under the all neighborhoods)” ---1’14”
2. Scrolled down. Clicked “Edgewater” ---31”
3. Scrolled down and up. Said “the page number is too small”. Click “2” ---26”
4. Scrolled down and up. Click page number “3” ---7”
5. Click “Fat Cat” ---3”
6. Find the address and the telephone ---5”

In this task, the sample user indicated that the numbers of the pages in the index pages of the restaurant are too small. And there is no number of pages index the at bottom of the page(I think she was not carefully see though the page, because at the end of the index it was an advertisement, however, the index of the page numbers are after the advertisement ). She claimed that she scrolled all the way down and need to scroll back because there is no index at the end of the page.

She also claimed that there are no photos and the menu of the restaurant. So she cannot decide whether eat in this restaurant just by the review. She said that others’ favors cannot stand for her favor.

Task 2

1. Use the search bar to search “Hopleaf restaurant ” ---16”
2. Find the restaurant schedule ---3”

She said that if she does not know the restaurant name, she will go to browser by neighborhood to search in the map around the area if she knows the address approximately.

Task 3

1. Use search bar search “live music” ---12”
2. No search result page. Click “back” ---5”
3. Scrolled down. Click “live music” ---17”
4. Scrolled down and up. Click “more neighborhoods” ---28”
5. Click “Logan Square” ---14”

The sample user claims that the search bar can only find the name of the restaurant. She cannot find any other categories in the search bar like the special environment “live music”.

She thinks that the map on the top of the index page needs to be more easy to use, for the landmarks are all together when she opened up the index of the restaurant.

Task 4
1. Use search bar search “Earwax” ---15”
2. Scrolled down and up. Clicked on photos ---39”
3. Decided not to eat at the restaurant.

The sample user indicates that she didn’t see the menu of the restaurant, and the photos are not clear. And she thought through the photo in the website, she does not like the restaurant. “The restaurant does not have any other advantage except its price.” She does not like to read the reviews because “they are always too long”.

She said she like to use the search bar because it is simple, easy and usually precise in searching within the websites.

--------------------------------------------------
USABILITY SCRIPT AND INTERVIEW GUIDE
--------------------------------------------------

1. **Preparation**

   Before beginning the usability test and interview, prepare the following:
   - Environment that is quiet and comfortable for the participants, with a table and at least two chairs
   - Gift or other forms of compensation
   - Computer with Internet access
   - Pen and notebook
   - Stop watch

   Make sure the Urbanspoon Web site is loaded on its home page, but turn the monitor off until it is time to begin the usability test.

   **Opening Statement**

   “Hi, thank you for participating in this usability test and interview for the Urbanspoon Web site. How are you? (How was the traffic during your commute here? How has your week been?)

   I’m _______, and I’m helping Urbanspoon understand how they can improve their Web site for users like you. The usability test will allow us to see how easy or difficult it is for you to complete specific tasks, which will reveal how Urbanspoon’s features and design match with user behavior. The interview is designed to understand how people choose what restaurants to
eat at or order in from, and how these choices have affected their experiences when using these methods.

Learning this information will help us improve Urbanspoon, even if you have never used this Web site or others alike. We will begin with the usability test, which will take between 20 and 60 minutes to complete, and then go on to the interview, which will take between 15 to 30 minutes to complete. Your personal information and responses will remain confidential. Please also know that you can ask questions and choose to stop tasks at any time. You may also leave the room at any time. Do you have any questions?”

2. Usability Test

“I have a list of tasks that I would like you to try and complete. These tasks have been designed to analyze various features of Urbanspoon. Please don’t feel that you have to successfully complete every task. We are looking to improve the Web site, so nothing you do will be incorrect or wrong.

While completing the tasks please think aloud and describe your actions and reasoning behind the decisions you make. This will help us better understand how and why something can be improved. Please also indicate anything you like, dislike, or find troublesome about the site, its features, and design. Do you have any questions?”

Prepare your stop watch. Turn on the monitor and reload the Urbanspoon page. Ask the participant to give his or her first impressions of the site. Remember to note anything they like, dislike, or find confusing.

Do not help the participant complete a task right away. Encourage him or her to continue working on the task until it is likely that he or she will not complete the task. If the participant is still unable to complete a single task after ten minutes, move on to the next task.

Measure how long it takes users to complete each task, while also noting how many errors they commit (i.e., how many times they click the wrong link or have to return to the previous page).

Ask the user to complete the first task.

Task 1

“From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, find the address and telephone number of the Fat Cat restaurant in the Edgewater neighborhood by first using the listing of Chicago neighborhoods.”

Ask the following questions when appropriate:

- What do you think of the listing of neighborhoods? Is there anything confusing about it?
- What do you think of the layout and design of the restaurant page?
● Is any information difficult to find or read?

Return to the site’s home page after the participant completes the task.

Task 2

“From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, determine if the Hopleaf restaurant in Andersonville serves breakfast on Thursdays.”

Ask the following questions when appropriate:

● If you couldn’t remember the name of the restaurant, how would you find this information using Urbanspoon?
● What do you think of the layout and design of the restaurant page?
● Is any information difficult to find or read?

Return to the site’s home page after the participant completes the task.

Task 3

“From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, find a restaurant that plays live music in the Logan Square neighborhood.”

Ask the following questions when appropriate:

● How did you decide to use the _________ method/category to find this information?
● What do you think of the layout and design of the restaurant page?
● Is any information difficult to find or read?

Return to the site’s home page after the participant completes the task.

Task 4

“From the home screen of Urbanspoon Chicago, determine if you would eat at the Earwax Cafe in Bucktown/Wicker Park. Then, please explain the factors that influenced your decision.”

Ask the following questions when appropriate:

● How did you decide to use the _________ method/category to find this information?
● What do you think of the layout and design of the restaurant page?
● Is any information difficult to find or read?
● What factors influenced whether you would or would not eat at this restaurant?

Return to the site’s home page after the participant completes the task.

Turn off the computer monitor.

Wrapping up the Usability Test

“Please describe your experience and overall perceptions after using Urbanspoon.”
Ask follow-up questions, like why the user liked or disliked certain features.

“What recommendations do you have for improving the Web site?”

Ask follow-up questions, like what that recommendation would allow him or her to do, or how it would improve his or her experience while using Urbanspoon.

“Thank you for participating in the usability test. We will now move on to the interview”

3. **Beginning of the Interview Guide**

The following pages are a guide, not a script, for conducting the interview. The guide should not be read verbatim. It provides suggestions for how the researcher can conduct the interview, depending on the participant’s responses.

3.1 To transition into the interview, ask some general questions to help the participant become more conversational. For example:

- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- (If friends are mentioned,) *What do you and your friends like to do together?*
  *If sharing meals together is mentioned, it is a good time to introduce more focused questions about restaurants.*

3.2 (not getting method-specific yet):

- Which cuisine do you like most?
- What do you normally do for meals?
- How often do you eat out?
- How often do you order in?
- What is your typical process for deciding where to eat out or order in from?

3.3 Continue the interview by asking the following:

- If the participant mentions specific restaurant information or search criteria in his or her search process (i.e., “looking for restaurants of desired cuisine/located in specific neighborhood”), confirm: “I’m hearing that you usually search by cuisine and location when you’re deciding on a restaurant -- is that right? Is there other information you search by that is important when making your decision?”
  If not mentioned, just ask: “What criteria do you use when searching for restaurants?”

- If the participant mentions specific features such as photos, ratings, or user reviews, confirm: “You mentioned looking at the restaurant’s photos and reviews, do you find such features affect your decision of choosing a restaurant? Are there other features that help you narrow down your choices?”
  If not mentioned, just ask: “What features or extra information influences your decision?”
● If the participant mentions specific methods/resources are, confirm: “You said that you have used the Web/magazines/friend referrals to find restaurants. What other information is important when making your decision?”

If not mentioned, just ask: “What methods or resources do you use when choosing a restaurant?”

● If the participant does not mention the restaurant review Web site method, then ask: “Do you use any restaurant review Web sites for choosing a restaurant?”

If not, “Have you ever?”

● If yes, proceed to Scenario B) in the next section
● If never used, “Why not?” Then proceed to Scenario A) in the next section

3.5 Middle of the interview

Two scenarios:

A) The participant does not use any restaurant review Web sites at all.

● How do you usually choose a restaurant?
  ○ Explore the given answer: “What makes it _ (ex: easy to use) _?”
● Can you recall and explain any positive experiences you have had using this method?
● Can you recall and explain any negative experiences you have had using this method?

B) The participant uses at least one restaurant review Web site.

Ask about the participant’s attitudes, expectations, assumptions, and experiences with the Web site(s). For example:

● Which Web site do you use most often or are most familiar with?
● How often do you use this Web site? How familiar are you with it?
● What stands out or is different about the Web site from other restaurant review sites?
● Can you recall and explain any positive experiences you have had using this Web site?
● Can you recall and explain any negative experiences you have had using this Web site?

Then, the researcher should ask which features of the Web site(s) are most important to them and why.

4. End of the Interview and Usability Test

● Ask the participant to summarize his or her final thoughts on the overall experience, and, if applicable, on Urbanspoon and other restaurant review sites.
● Thank the participant for participating and ask if he or she has any questions.
● Remind the participant of the purpose of the interview and explain that his or her participation will contribute to improving Urbanspoon.
● Give the participant any compensation if needed.
**COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS**

**Graph 1:**
- What features do our competitors have?
- What features should we improve, add, or remove first?
  - Evaluate all features on breadth of feature: does not exist to robust/extremely helpful?

1. Restaurant address and contact information
2. Restaurant location on a map
3. Photos of the restaurant
4. Menu of the restaurant
5. Star rating system
6. Percentage rating system
7. Write a review
8. Read a user review
9. Reservations
10. Search bar/results
11. Overall website-provided content
12. Overall user-generated content
13. Restaurant categories/organization

**Graph 2:**
- What categories of organization do our competitors use?
  - Evaluate categories on placement/precedence -- not present/visible/not noticeable to immediately captured attention?
1. By neighborhood
2. By cuisine
3. By cost
4. By popularity
5. By special features, such as outdoor seating, attire, romantic atmosphere, etc.

**Graph 3:**
- What is working visually for our competitors' sites?
- What usability issues exist for our competitors' sites?
- Where is the system inefficient?
- How can we attract new users?

1. Navigation usability: confusing to easy to navigate?
2. Design: aesthetically pleasing?
3. Layout: simple to complex/overwhelming?
4. Imagery: effective/helpful?
5. Organization of restaurant-specific content: readability?
6. Entertainment factor: fun to use/explorability?
7. Overall user experience: intuitive?
8. User satisfaction/loyalty: low to high?
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OpenTable

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Observation Data Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Clicked neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Clicked type of food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Clicked back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Clicked on map</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>Clicked on review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Clicked on photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dn</td>
<td>Scroll down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up</td>
<td>Scroll up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu</td>
<td>Clicked on menu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Select Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNF</td>
<td>Page Not Found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS</td>
<td>Left Site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Observer 1**

1. Dn “main page”
2. N “Chinatown Restaurant”
3. User browsed the Chinatown Restaurants page for approximately 15 seconds
4. S “Three Happiness”
5. User scrolled through the Three Happiness page for approximately 20 seconds; the page displayed the critics reviews

**Observer 2 (Repeated - Observer 5)**

1. He opened the homepage of Urbanspoon
2. He browsed the homepage for a while N
3. He chose his neighborhood and moved his mouse on the map
4. T
5. S China Work II
6. He moved his mouse around the vote block
7. B
8. S Little Bangkok Thai Cuisine
9. He decided where to eat
Observer 3

1. P
2. Chose a restaurant for review from 'Best Fine Dining'
3. P photos of establishment and food
4. Verbal cues designated positive first impression of restaurant
5. Menu
6. Entered phone number in cell phone to make a reservation

Observer 4

1. Open the site
2. look at the left sidebar
3. scroll over
4. R below "cheap eats"
5. look over (links and map)
6. Up and Dn
7. decided where to eat

User 2: Jing G.

1. Skimmed through the text in the center pane.
2. Dn and N
3. "Chinatown."
4. M.
5. S "Three Happiness" link.
6. On the main restaurant page, she glanced at the restaurant information,
7. Dn quickly skimmed reviews.
8. On the left sidebar, she rolled her mouse over the links under the "Nearby Restaurants,"
9. Up to the top
10. decided where to eat

Observer 5

User said he wanted to find a place to eat near his house in Mt. Prospect.

1. looked at the opening screen.
2. Dn to the bottom and back up.
3. N see all
4. Dn to Mt. Prospect and clicked on it.
5. Dn and Up
6. T Chinese
7. S China Wok II
8. Looked at the “China Wok II” page.

9. B twice

10. M

11. S “Little Bangkok Thai Cuisine" from the “Best in Mt. Prospect” list.

12. Declared that he had found a restaurant.

Observer 6

1. Open the site
2. Dn
3. N “Hyde Park”
4. Up and Dn
5. S Giordano's Pizza
6. M
7. PNF
8. B
9. LS Giordano's web site
10. M
11. Decided where to eat “ok, this looks good” and then closed the browser.

Observer 7

1. N 20 seconds
2. M
3. S
4. Read the reviews
5. B
6. S
7. Read the reviews
8. Determined “close by to his house and had favorable reviews”

Observer 8 (Repeated - Observer 9/User 1)

1. Open the site Urbanspoon
2. N "Andersonville."
3. Dn
4. he says he's looking for the category "types of food."
5. Dn and Up
6. T “sandwiches” link.
7. LS Adam clicks on Metromix link.
8. B
9. Adam clicks on link "Centerstage," which is a review of JB's Deli.
10. Adam spends about 1 minute on page and says “this place looks beautiful”
11. Adam has completed task.
Observer 9

User 1: Adam

1. Started on Urban Spoon home page
2. N Andersonville
3. Dn
4. T sandwiches
5. Dn Scrolled down
6. S J.B.'s Deli
7. Dn
8. Clicked on Metromix Full Review
9. PNF
10. B
11. LS
12. Clicked on Centerstage, which opened in new tab
13. Looked at page
14. Dn
15. End of the task

User 2: Ed

1. Started on Urban Spoon home page
2. N Park under
3. Dn
4. S Giordano's Pizza
5. M
6. PNF
7. B
8. LS Clicked on www.giordanos.com
9. End of task

Observer 10

User 1:

1. N Edgewater
2. Scans type of food
3. M zooming
4. Selecting and browsing pinpoints on map
5. Moves around map
6. B type of food
7. T Ethiopian
8. Rolls over info
9. B
10. T
11. B
12. T
13. Circles rating with pointer
14. Dn user reviews
15. Clicks send to phone, sent
16. Looking for restaurant hours, “How do I make a reservation?”
17. LS Google search
18. Results show restaurant hours

User 2:

1. Rolled over link in center module
2. Scans best fine dining
3. S
4. P
5. B
6. Mouses over #, address
7. “Where is menu?”
8. Dn
9. M –“nice and small”
10. Writes down #