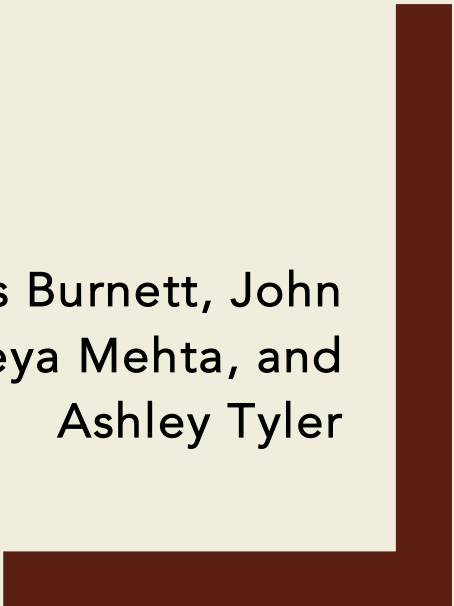




Goodreads Usability Test Report

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Executive Summary

This report documents the results of a usability test for the Goodreads app over the course of 5 weeks. We conducted the usability test on Kennesaw State Universities' Marietta Campus, as this usability test was conducted for a school project under the supervision of our Usability Testing course professor, Dr. Jonathan Arnett.

Our test goals were

- To study where users struggle with the iPhone application of Goodreads
- To study what functions are not understood and cause friction
- To theorize solutions, primarily cosmetic

The metrics we used to measure our tests were application experience and how often our participants read books. We had 5 participants with each testing session lasting 30 minutes. Our methods for the test were Think Aloud Protocol, System Usability Scale, and Product Reaction Cards. Our participants were all college aged who enjoyed reading.

Positive aspects of the app

- Idea of the app
Most of our participants found the app an interesting and innovative idea. Many felt that this app was very useful.
- Navigation on basic elements
Our participants had no issues navigating the basic elements of the app. The app uses many similar conventions from other apps, so navigating the basic elements was easy for them.

Issues with the app

- Unclear Links and Buttons
The biggest issue for our participants were finding the correct buttons and links. Many parts of the apps that are meant to be links or buttons don't look like links or buttons, so many of the participants looked over them.

- No Confirmational Cue

Once the participants completed the tasks, many of them were confused on if they completed the tasks or not. This is because after a change has been made to books that the user has read, whether it be changing the dates read or the edition of the book, there is no way to tell unless the user goes to the shelf and find the specific book after updating the information.

- Confusing Order of Books

Many participants were confused when trying to find specific book editions. They couldn't find the book as they would in a library, in alphabetical order. The order of books is by latest date updated, which many participants felt was a trivial way to order the books.

- Multiple Search Bars

In the app, there are 3 search bars, one for books, one for added friends, and one to add new friends. Each of these search bars are located in different places in the app. This led to confusion for many of the participants as they initially went to search for their friends on the main book search bar of the app.

- No Option to Undo Friend Request

In the app there is no way to undo a friend request. One of our participants accidentally added a random person on the app and was not able to remove their request.

Recommendations

- Search bar should encompass users and books.
- Undo button for friend requests should be added.
- Confirmational cue should occur after changing the dates and editions and reviews of books.
- Books should be in alphabetical order.

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Introduction

Our usability testing project was on the Goodreads mobile app. Goodreads is a social media style app for those that enjoy reading. Users can track their reading and their friends' reading, as well as discover new books. Our goal in this usability test was to seek ways to improve the use of the Goodreads application, specifically the iOS version.

The team chose Goodreads for our topic based off our collective interest in the subject. Goodreads was also one of the main topics chosen by our class during pitch presentations in a class for Kennesaw State University. Our group was formed due to an interest in the app as many of us currently use the app personally and read frequently.

Methodology

For our testing we utilized user interviews of volunteering participants which we incentivized with cookies one of our team members had baked. We recruited our 5 participants by asking members in book clubs and mutual friends. We tested two types of users; those who were either familiar or unfamiliar with the Goodreads app. We made sure to have our participants sign a consent form. For our actual testing methods, we used a camera to capture the video and audio of the user going through the scenarios the team had the participant complete. We conducted the usability test by using Think Aloud Protocol, System Usability Test, and Product Reaction Cards methods.

1. Think Aloud Protocol

In this methodology, we met with our participants and gave them an iPhone to use for testing the Goodreads App. This methodology involves giving the participant a scenario and having them complete a task based off the scenario. The participants then think aloud and explain each step they complete to perform the task in the scenario.

2. System Usability Scale

The System Usability Scale is a 10 question Likert scale which goes from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The system usability scale asked questions about the participant's opinions on the app. We had our participants complete this after they did the Think Aloud Protocol.

3. Product Reaction Cards

The Product Reaction cards are a set of 118 cards that has adjectives and adverbs on them. We displayed these cards in a digital format and had the participants pick out 5 cards that resonated with them the most when it came to interacting with the app.

Test Goals and Objectives

- study where users struggle with the iPhone application of Goodreads
- find what functions are not understood and cause friction
- theorize solutions, primarily cosmetic

Metrics

Application Experience

We asked each participant what experience they had with the Goodreads app. The participants fell into two categories when asked "What experience do you have with the iPhone app Goodreads?"

- No experience- had not used the app before that day
- Current user-had previous experience and was currently using the service

How often read books

We asked if the participants read books. The Goodreads app is targeted to avid readers. We can value avid readers. We asked the participants how they would rate themselves.

- Never-This participants never reads books for personal pleasure
- Rarely- This participant reads for fun but is not consistent
- Sometimes- This participant has reading as a good pastime but is not a priority in life
- Often-This participants reads books constantly

Commonalities of our Participants

Every single one of our participants were young, all in the 18-25 range. All our participants were tech literate enough to use the application and most were contacted through messaging services. No participants had a physical disability that would limit their usage of the app.

Participants

For our usability test, the team wanted to ensure that the team had a varied group of participants. Goodreads the app is mainly geared towards those that enjoy reading, so we asked participants who we knew were part of book clubs or enjoy reading. Our participants also varied from gender and race.

User	Sex/Age	Books Read
1	F 18-25	Often
2	F 18-25	Sometimes
3	F 18-25	Often
4	M 18-25	Rarely
5	M 18-25	Sometimes

Table 1 Participant, Sex, Age, and Books Read

Tasks/Scenarios

The way that we conducted our Think Aloud Protocol of the test was by reading a scenario to each participant to help them set the scene of which tasks they would need to complete. This helps the participants understand the intentions of the user.

Scenario 1

You are an avid reader who just discovered the Goodreads app. Now, you want to try adding all the books you have read to find more books in your favorite genre. You remembered you read a book called [Insert Book Name] and you've just added it to your list of My Books. You started on the 5th of May, and you completed it on the 18th of August in 2020. From the home screen, use the app to navigate to the book you already added and edit the dates that you read it.

Tasks

1. Find the book
2. Edit the dates read of the book

Scenario 2

You are someone who loves to read books and discuss what you've read. You enjoy talking about the plot, if you liked the characters or not, and how good you thought the book was. You downloaded the Goodreads app to provide reviews of the books you've read and to read reviews of other books for recommendations that align with your favorite genres. You have just joined a new book club and you want to add the members. Using the app, explain how you would add your new friends.

Task

1. Find user
2. Add Friend

Scenario 3

Imagine you have just completed reading [Insert Book Title Here] that you thought was one of the best books you've ever read. You want to share those thoughts with as many people as possible so they can also see how good this book is. Use the app to show how you would choose the book and add your personal review of it.

Tasks

1. Find book
2. Add review

Scenario 4

Imagine you've read the [Insert Book Title Here] and have added the book to your Goodreads. However, you realize that the book you have added to your virtual library is the wrong edition! The edition of the book you read has [x] pages, but the book you want is published by [Insert Publisher Here] and is [x] pages. This means you can't track your reading properly. Use the app to show us how you would change the edition.

Tasks

1. Find Book
2. Change Edition of book read

Findings and Test Results

This section goes over each result of the methodologies that were tested. Overall, we had a positive outcome. Our negative results were consistent throughout our participants, as each participant had similar issues when navigating the app. The participants also picked similar terms in the product reaction cards. The participants SUS scores were also all in a close range except for two outliers.

Think Aloud Protocol

In this section, we will summarize our main findings. We have gathered results from the five participants and below is the raw data of the results. We have split up our table by scenario and participant.

Participant	Scenario 1 (Edit dates read of a book)	Scenario 2 (Add Friends)	Scenario 3 (Add review)	Scenario 4 (Change edition of book read)
1	SUCCESS: Participant searched for the book instead of going through past books read shelf. There was some confusion about how to confirm dates.	SUCCESS	SUCCESS	SUCCESS
2	SUCCESS: The participant struggled to find the button but eventually	FAIL: The participant couldn't find the button that linked to the	SUCCESS	FAIL: The participant struggled to find where to change the

	was able to find it.	page to add friends.		edition of the book and was lost.
3	SUCCESS	SUCCESS	SUCCESS	FAIL: The participant struggled to find where to change the edition of the book and was lost.
4	SUCCESS: The participant struggled to find the button but eventually was able to find it.	SUCCESS: The participant initially searched for friends under the search bar for books and search bar for already added friends, eventually found the correct one.	SUCCESS: The participant struggled to find the book but once it was found, they were able to add the review.	SUCCESS: The participant struggled a lot to get to the editions page, once they found the page, they were confused on which edition to pick, as the page isn't very descriptive.
5	SUCCESS: There was some initial confusion on what the task was.	SUCCESS:	SUCCESS:	SUCCESS: The participant struggled a lot to get to the editions page.

Table 2 Participant Scenario Success or Fail

System Usability Scale (SUS)

The SUS provides a quick tool for measuring the usability of a product. It is a 10-item questionnaire with a Likert scale that ranges from one to five, with Strongly agree to strongly disagree as the ratings. Table 3 shows the average score each participant

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rated the app. Table 4 shows each question with the individual rating for each participant.

Participant	SUS Score	Description
User 1	55	Fair
User 2	92.5	Best Imaginable
User 3	90	Best Imaginable
User 4	67.5	Good
User 5	92.5	Best Imaginable

Table 3 System Usability Scale Individual Participant Rating

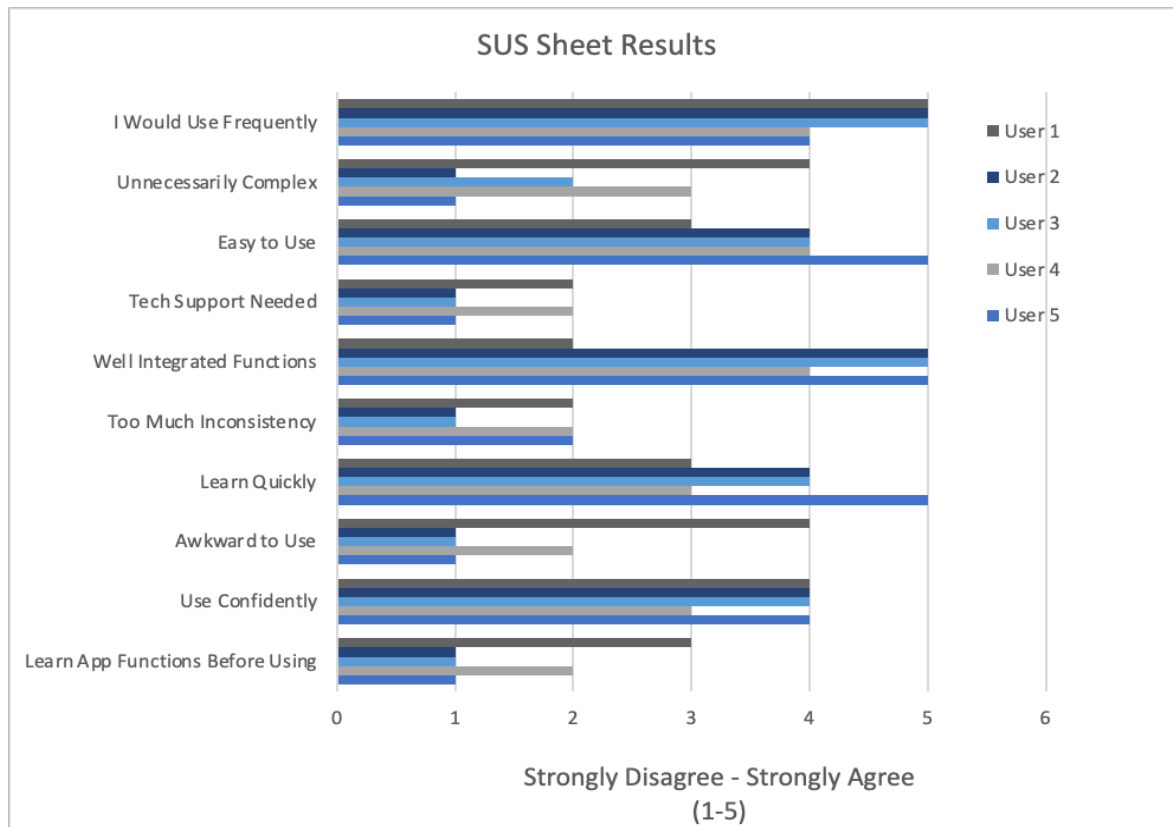


Table 4 System Usability Scale Participant Scores

Product Reaction Cards

Product reaction cards are a collection of 118 cards that gather participants' qualitative feedback and display the most often chosen words. They are designed to measure the user's desirability of a product after using it.

The five participants were asked to choose five out of the 118 terms on a digital screen that best described how they personally felt about the app. Table 3 displays the cards chosen, along with Table 4 displaying the number of times the cards were chosen.

Participant	Reaction Cards Chosen
User 1	Old, Distracting, Useful, Dull, Essential
User 2	Innovative, Useful, Complex, Effective, Clean
User 3	Innovative, Reliable, Useful, Organized, Satisfying
User 4	Innovative, Inspiring, Straight-forward, Organized, Inviting
User 5	Simplistic, Innovative, Easy to Use, Convenient, Fast

Table 5 Product Reaction Cards, Participants Feedback

Term	Number of Times
Useful	3
Innovative	4

Table 6 Most Chosen Product Reaction Cards from Participants

Recommendations

After carefully reviewing the findings, we have decided to recommend the following changes, which are listed according to the task performed.

Edit the dates of a book

- There should be a confirmation banner to show the dates were changed, as our participants didn't know when they had finished the task of changing the date.
- "Done" should be listed above "+ Add dates read" and this title should be changed to "+ additional dates" to be less confusing. This is because most participants tried clicking the "+ Add dates read" button to complete the change in dates, but it just opened up another slot to change the dates for a second time.

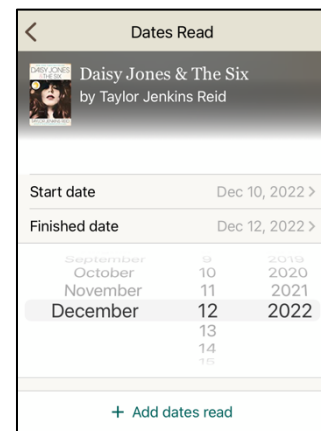


Figure 1 Screenshot of Dates Read page

Add friends and view their reviews

- Search bar on home screens should have other options to search for besides books as many participants' first instinct was to search the user's name in the book search bar.
- Search bar on Add Friends page is confusing. Keep it to "search for a friend already in contacts", place additional option under "invite" to find users by name or email.
- An undo button is needed if added person by mistake.

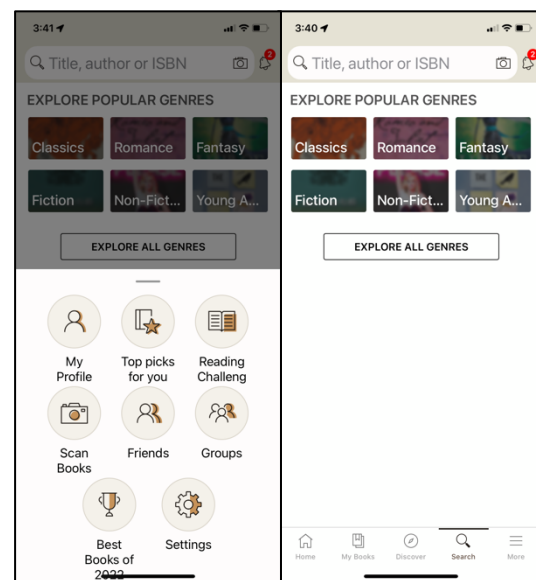


Figure 2 Screenshot of More popup page

Figure 3 Screenshot of Book Search page

Add personal reviews to books

- The My books page should be auto sorted by book title alphabetically, as participants are used to seeing books being ordered in alphabetical order.
- The My Books page needs a search bar to find specific books, so user does not have to scroll through so many books.
- The text box to write a review should be more prominent.
- There should be a confirmation banner that the review was updated.

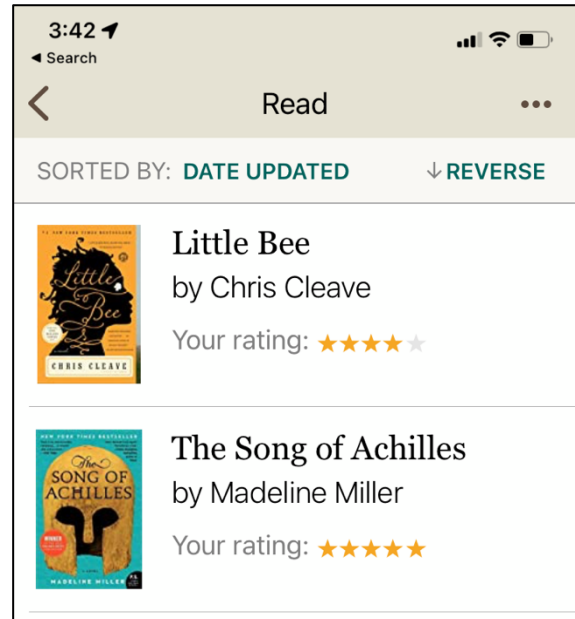


Figure 4 Screenshot of Read Items in order of date updated

Change book edition

- Details and Editions page should have clickable links more prominent, such as a call to “click here to see more editions” as many participants skipped over book editions when viewing the page.
- There should be a confirmation banner to show the book edition was changed, as many participants weren’t sure if they had successfully completed changing the edition.

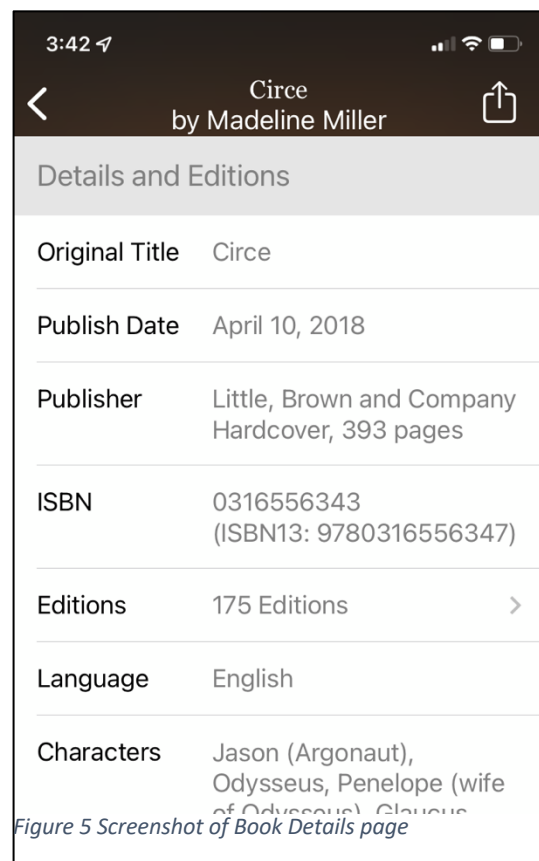


Figure 5 Screenshot of Book Details page