

# Heuristic Evaluation of Team Velveeta's Prototype

For the Cheese That Melts the Best

Evaluators: Alex Dorsk, Kathy King, Nick Zola

## Overview

Overall, we are all very happy with the way your design looks. It has a streamlined feel to it and appears professional. We realize that much of the functionality is not there yet, especially the interaction between Groups, Tasks, and Calendars. Still, we appreciate what was available to us and we believe we can see where you're headed. Some of what we've included below we assume you already know, but we figured it would be helpful to list whatever we found. We have evaluated what we could and asked questions about areas that we considered to be missing. We added an 11<sup>th</sup> heuristic, that of functionality, as there didn't appear to be a category for this and we didn't know where else to place much of what we wrote.

## Compiled Heuristic Feedback

Title	Heuristic	Severity	# of times found
Incorrect Display	H1: Formatting	4	3
	The most immediate reaction is that each of the panels appears one below the other instead of across the screen, forcing me to scroll down to interact with the calendar or tasks portions. I am assuming this is because I have a lower resolution computer than the laptops that it was tested on. I imagine the designers are not aware of this, however, so it is a serious issue that makes the calendar basically unusable for me.		
Text Readability	H1: Formatting	2	2
	This isn't a big deal, but I find the chosen colors on the left Groups panel to be distracting, especially the red. Do they all need to be different colors? How about two alternating colors that go well together (blue and silver?)? The book has something to say about using too many colors. The text is small and hard to read. The colors (especially for groups) make some text hard to read		
Removal of Completed Tasks	H6: Clearly Marked Exits, H11: Functionality	3	2
	What happens to tasks that were completed on previous days? What if we want to check on tasks that were already completed? What if all tasks were not completed for yesterday?		
Editing Tasks	H11:	4	3

	Functionality		
	We couldn't edit or add tasks		
Creating New Groups	H1: Appearance, H11: Functionality	3	3
	When we create a new group, it doesn't look like the other groups. It's not colored, and we don't know how to add people to it. This is inconsistent with the current groups.		
Editing Groups	H11: Functionality	4	3
	We can't edit existing groups		
Date Format	H4: Consistency, H2: Users' language	2	2
	The date format (dd/mm/yyyy) didn't match the date format we were expecting (mm/dd/yyyy)		
Undo?	H6: Clearly marked exits	2	1
	Is there an option to undo recent commands? We thought this would be something some users expect.		
Event Creation	H9: Preventing Errors	3	3
	When creating a new event there are a few errors and confusions. First nothing happens when I click on Event Type or undefined, and I'm not sure what the open box to the left of it is supposed to do. Also, the pictures links are broken for the Favorites and Private options in Privacy Level. Once I've clicked on Repeat, it's not clear to me how I cancel that option if I don't want it anymore. I figured out that I have to keep clicking the period of repetition (day, week, month, year), but I don't find that intuitive. Alert me by SMS? What's SMS? I can't yet schedule an event for a specific group. I assume you know this. What if I'd like to schedule something on the quarter hour? There's no way to do that right now. Those are my initial thoughts going through making an event.		
Deleting Event in Calendar	H6: Clearly marked exits	2	1
	Is there another way to delete calendar events besides opening them? I didn't know that the 'delete' key would work.		
Scheduling ¼ hr?	H2: Speak the Users' language	2	1
	I didn't see how to schedule on :15's & 45's.		
Indicating of	H1: Simple,	2	1

what Today is in week/month view	natural dialogue		
	We would have liked the date for 'today' to be highlighted in the week/month views.		
Adding Calendar	H11: Functionality	2	1
	We couldn't add new calendars.		
Group Scheduling	H11: Functionality	2	1
SMS	H11: Functionality, H2: Users' Language	2	1
	What does SMS mean (for non techie users). How do you use your cellphone for calendaring?		
Calendar Title	H1: Dialogue	2	1
	We didn't see a title for the current calendar. We think this would be important when multiple calendars are being used.		
Reminders for shared events	H11: Functionality, H2: Users' Language	2	1
	We were wondering how this would work.		
Task Sharing	H11: Functionality, H2: Users' lanuguage	4	
	We were wondering how task sharing would work.		
Adding tasks to a non-listed day	H11: Functionality, H2: Users' language	4	2
	We didn't see how we would add tasks to a non-listed day.		
How to stop adding a group	H6: Clearly Marked Exits	3	1
	We noticed that when we started to create a new group we couldn't stop		
Hitting Enter to finish creation of group/date	H3: Displaying Options	3	1
	Some of us found that hitting the enter key did not give enough feedback when we finished making an entry. We weren't sure if we were still editing.		
'Today' button	H4: Consistency	3	1

	The function of the 'today' button is not consistent. I expected the 'today' button to take me to a day view for 'today', rather than the current view that included 'today'.
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### **Recommendations**

Many of our comments above are concerned with implementation/functionality issues, which we realize there was little time to implement in this first prototype; they are mentioned simply because they are things that prevented us from using your scenarios. If you do not plan to implement them at all, that is fine, but then you should probably create new scenarios that can be used to test your design.

Beyond these issues of functionality, we would like to draw your attention to three aspects of your design that we recommend be changed before bringing this design to your users. First, please make it possible to view this design correctly on lower resolution monitors; even having a scroll bar across the bottom would be preferable to having to scroll up and down between the sections. Second, in the group section of the interface, please consider making the text larger and be careful with the colors you choose. The small size and the darkness of the red highlighting make readability a significant issue here.

Thirdly, you may want to reconsider the task interaction. Since the functionality for adding tasks is not yet present we were not able to experiment with how this works. However, based on the fact that "Add task" is an option next to particular days, we wonder how one would go about adding a task that is due on a day in the near future that does not already have a task assigned to it. If the "Add task" option next to each particular day does not automatically create a task due that day, then why is it next to that particular day? Also, it is unclear from looking at this interface how it will be possible to view old tasks; what if I want to see what was due last Friday? And what happens if I don't complete a task on time? Is there a section for overdue tasks? And finally, how does one edit or delete tasks? If you have already considered all of these interactions, then that's good. However, you may want to make your interface a little bit more transparent, since there is currently no way to know how these features would work.

## **Appendices: Individual Heuristic Evaluations**

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### *Alex Dorsk's Individual Heuristic Evaluation*

What I like:

Style: It looks clean and the text is easy to read.

Floating tool-tips and event descriptions: I found that these were useful and they kept the calendar view simple.

Ease of navigation: I found that the 'Day', 'Week', 'Month' were well-placed and useful

Expanding Groups: I like that I can use the '+'s to expand the group information when I want. This keeps the layout clean.

Drag-and-Drop for events: I think this is useful and intuitive. The dragging pointer that appears helps make it clear that dragging and dropping is possible.

Highlighting of current view in bold: I was easily able to tell what mode I was in.

Heuristic Review:

1: Calendar Title [H3 Memory Load] (Severity 2)

I see that there is an option for multiple calendars, but that the calendar being viewed does not have a title. I think that a title (or highlight the current calendar) should be added if multiple calendars are implemented.

2. Editing Groups [#X Missing Functionality] (Severity 4)

It looks like there is no way to edit an existing group (add members, remove members, change name)

3. 'Today' button [#H4 Consistency] (Severity 2)

I was confused by the 'Today' button at the top of the calendar. It looks like it takes you to the current view mode (day, week, month) that includes today. I expected it to take me to the 'day' view for today.

4. Recurrence Types [#X Intuition. #H4 Consistency] (Severity 3)

At first I did not understand how to change the type of recurrence (weekly, daily, monthly) in the add event dialogue. I discovered later by randomly clicking (clicking where the 'Day' label is changes the recurrence type). For consistency I recommend having a tooltip that appears when the mouse is over the 'day' label that tells the user to click the label to change the recurrence type.

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### *Nick Zola's Individual Heuristic Evaluation*

1. [H1 Simple Interface] (Severity 4)

The most immediate reaction is that each of the panels appears one below the other instead of across the screen, forcing me to scroll down to interact with the calendar or tasks portions. I am assuming this is because I have a lower resolution computer than the laptops that it was tested on. I imagine the designers are not aware of this, however, so it is a serious issue that makes the calendar basically unusable for me.

2. [H1 Overuse of color] (Severity 1)

This isn't a big deal, but I find the chosen colors on the left Groups panel to be distracting, especially the red. Do they all need to be different colors? How about two alternating colors that go well together (blue and silver?)? The book has something to say about using too many colors.

3. [9 Error] (Severity 3)

I cannot add a task. Maybe you know this already, but I couldn't find it in your documentation, so I thought I'd let you know. I click and the page reloads but nothing has changed.

4. [4 Consistency] (Severity 3)

When I create a new group, it doesn't look like the other groups. It's not colored, and I don't know how to add people to it. This is inconsistent with the current groups. Again, I'm sure you know this already, but I thought I'd better write it anyway.

5. [4 Consistency] (Severity 2)

The date is listed as 10/30/05 which is opposite traditional American dating (10/30/05), and opposite the top of the calendar (October 30, 2005). I think this should be consistent. When it's a date like 10/12/05 you might not know which way it is.

6. [9 Error] (Severity 3)

When creating a new event there are a few errors and confusions. First nothing happens when I click on Event Type or undefined, and I'm not sure what the open box to the left of it is supposed to do. Also, the pictures links are broken for the Favorites and Private options in Privacy Level. Once I've clicked on Repeat, it's not clear to me how I cancel that option if I don't want it anymore. I figured out that I have to keep clicking the period of repetition (day, week, month, year), but I don't find that intuitive. Alert me by SMS? What's SMS? I can't yet schedule an event for a specific group. I assume you know this. What if I'd like to schedule something on the quarter hour? There's no way to do that right now. Those are my initial thoughts going through making an event.

7. [4 Consistency] (Severity 2)

It's not clear to me how I would add a task for a day that didn't already have a task. Right now you have the option to add a task next to each day listed under tasks. But what if I want to create a task for a new day? If you give the option to choose a day in the new task dialogue, then maybe you should just have one New Task button at the top instead of one by each day.

8. [5 Feedback] (Severity 2)

What will happen to previous days' tasks? Do they get moved to future days? Do the days stay there until I check them off? If I've checked them all off, does the day just disappear once it's past? What if I want to go back and see a task I had completed last week to remember what assignment it was or something like that? Also, do I get to decide what a long term task is, or does it just depend on the date? I would like it more if

I got to decide which tasks were categorized as long term. These are some questions to think about.

9. [6 Clearly Marked Exits] (Severity 3)

I can't stop adding a Group once I've started. And I can't see a way to delete groups yet.

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*Kathy King's Individual Heuristic Evaluation*

General comment: This looks really good. I really like the calendar that you chose; its functionality seems simple, but also able to cover everything I want to do. I'm also a big fan of the task sharing idea for groups – that would be really nice to have for SCOPE right now.

1. Interface display [1 – Simple and Natural Dialog] (Severity 4)

The interface does not display correctly on my monitor. Your user information says that it will draw correctly when I click on some portion of the screen. For me, nothing happens until I click in the middle of the screen; then the elements of the interface move closer together, but they are still vertical. This makes the interface very difficult to use.

2. Text size [1 – Simple and Natural Dialog] (Severity 2)

The text for group information is pretty tiny on my screen; what is it like if it has to be even smaller to make everything fit across the screen? Making the text a little larger would make it a lot easier for me to read, and there seems to be plenty of space for it.

3. Deleting tasks and groups [6 – Clearly Marked Exits] (Severity 3)

How do I make completed tasks, or simply tasks I no longer want to complete, go away? There doesn't appear to be any option for deleting tasks. Similarly, there doesn't seem to be any way to get rid of groups.

4. Screen shifting [4 – Consistency] (Severity 2)

When you click to open or close a day (under tasks) you get popped back up to the top of the screen. This is annoying. The same thing happens if you try to add a task. This will probably be resolved when the screen display is fixed, but it's still something to watch out for, since it totally jerks the user out of context when the screen changes so suddenly and unexpectedly.

5. Undo [6 – Clearly Marked Exits] (Severity 2)

What happens if I delete something by mistake? Can I get it back? This would be really nice, if it were possible, although the interface would still work without it.

6. Deleting calendar events [6 – Clearly Marked Exits, 3 – Minimize User Memory Load] (Severity 2)

Can I delete an event without double clicking on it and then choosing "delete"? That would be nice, especially since I didn't immediately think to double click.

Below are issues that arose when I was working through your scenarios. Many of them are functionality issues; however, I tried to record the questions that popped into my mind when I tried to imagine the potential interactions, in case you have not already considered these issues. (I did not give severity ratings for aspects of the design that are not yet functional, since I am not sure whether these will become part of your final product or not.)

Ophelia #1:

7. Today's date [3 – Minimize User Memory Load, 1 – Simple and Natural Dialog] (Severity 2)

In the week or month viewing mode of the calendar there is no way to determine what today is. It would be nice if the current day were highlighted somehow.

8. Printing [1 – Simple and Natural Dialog] (Severity 2)

How does your interface make printing easy? (I tried to print, but had issues; I'm not sure if it was your prototype or the network that caused the problem.) The scenario seems to imply that this will be part of the functionality. If this is so, having a "print" option in the interface would be a nice way of indicating that this is an option. Perhaps the option could also allow users to indicate what parts of the interface they wished to have printed. (I imagine that I would often want to see both my calendar and my tasks on print outs, but not my groups.)

Ophelia #2:

9. Creating groups [11 – Functionality] (Severity N/A)

There is not currently any way to create a new group. This makes running through this scenario somewhat difficult.

10. Adding calendars [11 – Functionality] (Severity N/A)

There is not currently any way to add a calendar. Also, I'm not sure that I understand how this interaction would work. How will I distinguish between different calendars? How will I select a particular calendar or switch between them?

11. Cell phones [11 – Functionality] (Severity N/A)

Can you interact with this system via cell phone? This is not clear from anything in the interface. If this will be possible, what will the interface to the cell phone look like?

Pete #2:

12. Viewing multiple calendars [11 – Functionality] (Severity N/A)

What does it look like to view all of the members calendars at once? Is it the regular calendar, just colored when somebody is busy? Can you see the whole week? Whole month? Does it show what the people are doing? (This could be a privacy issue, but would help to show what's high or low priority.)

Pete #3:

13. Task sharing [11 – Functionality] (Severity N/A)

What does task sharing look like? Where would I add a task if I want to share it with a group? And what if I have a task that is relevant to some group to which I belong, but I don't want to share this particular task; there is a way to protect these, right?