

Heuristic Evaluation of InstaGator

1. Prototype

Instagator is an application designed to simplify organizing and preparing for group travel by aggregating all of the important details, tasks, and documents into one place where it is easily accessed by the group's travellers and managed by the planner.

2. Violations Found

1. [H2-8 Aesthetic and minimalist design][Severity 1][Found by: C]

“Simply Group Travel” on the home screen doesn't tell me much about what the app does. It takes away from the minimalist design if it's not providing additional information.

Fix: use “Simple Group Travel” instead.

2. [H2-9 Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors][Severity 2][Found by: C]

The red text saying the number of alerts after you click into a trip doesn't tell me what's wrong. I'm confused what the alert is referring to. I would guess that it's referring to the number of users who haven't finished their tasks, but I'm not entirely sure.

Fix: Use “# Users with Unfinished Tasks” or another more detailed description.

3. [H2-4 Consistency and standards] [Severity 2][Found by: C]

“Requires Premium” on the page after you click onto a trip is in the same color as the alerts text. This gives off the impression that it is an alert, but it isn't.

Fix: Change the font, the effects on the font (bold, italic, underline, etc.), or playing around with font sizes to show that it is separate from the rest of the regular text but is not an alert.

4. [H2-4 Consistency and standards] [Severity 2][Found by: C]

On the screen where you can contact someone, after you click “Generate Reminder,” the button changes to “Generate Message.” It seems like “Generate Message” does the same thing however.

Fix: Make both messages the same if they provide the same functionality, or it should be made clear what the difference is between “Generate Reminder” and “Generate Message.”

5. [H2-3 User control and freedom] [Severity 3][Found by: C]

After sending a message, there's no way to see how recently/frequently you've contacted someone through the app about the trip. This should be shown on the same page as the member's status page so that you know if you should send another reminder or if sending the reminders isn't doing anything.

Fix: Create an inbox and sent messages folder.

6. [H2-4 Consistency and standards] [Severity 2][Found by: C]

On the screen where you can see a member's status on a trip, there is a line between “waiver” and “payment” but not between “passport” and “waiver.”

Fix: Line should be added to keep the separation of different items consistent.

7. [H2-4 Consistency and standards] [Severity 1][Found by: C]

There is no button to “Generate Message/Reminder” for people who have already submitted all their documents even though this button exists for people who have not submitted their documents.

Fix: Keep this button and have it automatically generate some sort of thank you message to let someone know that their documents have all been confirmed and received since the option to contact these people is still available.

8. [H2-2 Match between system and the real world] [Severity 3][Found by: C]

On the screen where you can add a calendar event, the button to add a photo is an image of 4 uneven lines. Generally, picture uploading is portrayed with an image of a camera or an up arrow or an outline of a photo. This would match what users already understand versus trying to have them learn what the 4 lines mean.

Fix: Make the poll button go to the poll screen.

9. [H2-5 Error prevention] [Severity 3][Found by: C]

The screen where you can add calendar events has no option to click “save” with the keyboard open. This could potentially lead to people clicking the “back” button, thinking that that will get rid of the keyboard to then see the save option.

Fix: Add a “save” button in the upper right hand corner of the screen while the keyboard is up.

10. [H2-2 Match between system and the real world] [Severity 2][Found by: B, C, D]

On the “My Trips” screen, the “Planning” and “Attending” words seem like they’re referring to some kind of error/success message due to their colors since red/green are generally used for user feedback. Fix: Change the colors to something more neutral, like blue.

11. [H2-6 Recognition rather than recall] [Severity 4][Found by: C]

Users can’t see a list of the friends that are being polled when you click on poll my friends after adding a new trip. This requires them to remember what friends are already on the app, which might require them to navigate around a bit or else to try and remember whom they’ve added.

Fix: Provide a list on the screen of who will be polled when you click “save.”

12. [H2-4 Consistency and standards] [Severity 2][Found by: A, C]

On the itinerary page, some events have “reservation confirmed” written under the event description. For those that don’t, I’m not sure if that’s because there is no need for a reservation or if the reservation just hasn’t been confirmed yet.

Fix: Reservation status should be written on all events, and the language should be consistent.

13. [H2-5 Error prevention] [Severity 2][Found by: C]

Users have to go in and check what the due dates are for various documents for various trip attendees, but the due dates don’t pop out too much unless you are looking for them.

Fix: Make the due dates bolded or in a different color.

14. [H2-3 User control and freedom] [Severity 4][Found by: C]

There doesn’t seem to currently be a way to delete an itinerary item once it’s added.

Fix: Add an X next to the edit button to allow users to delete (but make a popup confirmation so they don’t accidentally delete).

15. [H2-6 Recognition rather than recall] [Severity 3][Found by: C]

On the itinerary page, I can see how many guests have confirmed but not how many guests in total were invited. In order to see that, I would have to navigate back to the attendees page.

Fix: Write “8/8 guests confirmed” instead of “8 guests confirmed” so users can quickly know how many total guests were invited.

16. [H2-10 Help and documentation] [Severity 2][Found by: C]

There is no walkthrough when users create a new trip. Since this isn't a very common type of app, when a user first creates a new trip, users may not know what they can do.

Fix: Add a tutorial to guide users with what they can do with popup messages such as “Next, create an itinerary.” or “Check the status of your guests here.”

17. [H2-7 Flexibility and efficiency of use] [Severity 2][Found by: C]

There is no easy way to navigate back to the all trips screen except for continually clicking back.

This can be inefficient particularly when you're nested many screens into a trip.

Fix: Add a home button could be added to the lower left hand corner of the screen.

18. [H2-7 Flexibility and efficiency of use] [Severity 4][Found by: C, D]

Users have no way of getting people to respond to polls or reminding them to respond except through the contact screen. This could be an issue because there may not be enough responders for a decision to get made and an attendee could have overlooked the notification that they were invited to respond to a poll.

Fix: Add a button from the polls results page to send out a mass reminder to everyone who hasn't responded yet.

19. [H2-2. Match between system and the real world] [Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: The “< Back” button on the Home screen (Upcoming Trips) returns to the Sign In/Sign Up screen when clicked. Users may be confused by this labelling because it does not match up with its functionality. For example, if they have returned to the Home screen from a different screen, they might think “< Back” will take them back to the previous screen they were on, rather than logging/signing the user out of their account.

Fix: Use “Log Out” or “Sign Out”.

20. [H2-8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] [Severity 2][Found by: B, A]

Problem: The Add New Trip overlay that comes up on the Home screen (Upcoming Trips) when the user clicks on the “+” is not large/visible enough. Given how much content is in the background (i.e. trip images, dates, etc.), this overlay gets lost and its value is diminished.

Fix: Either gray out/blur the background and content behind the overlay or move the user to a new page in response to clicking the “+” on the Home screen where they can toggle between tabs with user input screens for creating a new trip with a known destination or a polled destination.

21. [H2-6. Recognition rather than recall] [Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: The current titles of the two New Trip options - “Destination Known” and “Poll my friends” - are pretty intuitive but could be made more interesting and enticing. “Poll my friends” is a distinguishable feature but the titling is not compelling enough to make users want to click that over setting their own destination.

Fix: If this selection process is moved to a new page (per the suggestion in #2), there is more space to use a title and a tagline or brief description that explains the difference between the two New

Trip options. For example, “Want to go on a fun trip with friends but not sure where to go? Poll your friends!”.

22. [H2-3. User control and freedom] [Severity 4][Found by: B, A, D]

Problem: On the New Trip Poll screen, there is only the option for the trip organizer to add locales to the survey, but no option to allow for invited friends to add to the options. Users may want to contribute their destinations to a trip they have been invited to but have no visible way of doing that.

Fix: Add a checkbox labelled “Allow friends to suggest locales” (or some caption to that effect) that offers users the option to allow friends to contribute their suggestions to the survey.

23. [H2-4. Consistency and standards] [Severity 3][Found by: B, A]

Problem: There is only a “Cancel” option on a few pages, but the ability to exit a current action is missing on most pages. For example, on the Add New Trip screen for “Destination Known”, there was no “Cancel” so I had to use “< Back”, which is not as intuitive. Users may want to stop in the middle of inputting information and right now there is no consistent way to do that, given that some pages have “Cancel” and others only have “< Back”.

Fix: Always include a “Cancel” button alongside “Save” on all screens where users are inputting information that is going to be stored (i.e. Add New Trip, Add New Activity, etc.)

24. [H2-4. Consistency and standards] [Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: The “< Back” button does not always take the user back to the previously viewed page like one would expect it to. For example, on the Add New Trip screen for “Destination Known”, I clicked “< Back” (as there was no “Cancel” button) and it took me to a list of my activities for another trip, rather than the Home screen, which is what I was expecting because that was the screen that I was on before that one. Users will be confused by this terminology and function if they are not being sent back to their previous screen, as expected.

Fix: Only use “< Back” when the intention of the button is to allow the user to go to the previous screen and add new buttons with accurate/descriptive labelling to take the user elsewhere.

25. [H2-8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] [Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: On the Add Guests screen, Sarah Lazydoer’s name is in red text and there is a share button instead of a “+” in order to tell the user that she is not an Instagator user and encourage them to invite her to use the app. While users would probably understand the share button as a way of inviting someone to the app, the red text makes it seem like there is an error, rather than simply drawing attention to a nonuser’s name.

Fix: Use a different, non-error-like color to highlight nonuser’s names or clearly segment the list of guests one can add into Instagator users and nonusers.

26. [H2-8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] [Severity 3][Found by: B, D]

Problem: On the Add Guests screen, clicking and unclicking the “+”s does not match up with the expected response. For example, clicking Dan Hangoverton turns both his and Bob’s “+” into blue checkmarks and then unclicking Dan’s checkmark returns it to a “+” but makes Bob’s “+” disappear. Also, sometimes clicking Jenny causes the overlay about inviting Sarah rather than making Jenny’s “+” become a blue checkmark. Users will be confused by the illogical ordering of these changes and responses.

Fix: Making this process less complicated by using simple checkboxes that can be intuitive and can be easily checked and unchecked rather than more complex graphics that change type and color and that have the risk of not functioning as expected.

27. [H2-2. Match between system and the real world] [Severity 3][Found by: B]

Problem: Users can select friends to add to a trip on the Add Guests screen but does not give users a way to save those that they've added. (Note: A "Save" button is initially there but disappears when selecting users.) Users may be confused by there being no way to ensure that their selections have been saved by the system.

Fix: Add a "Save" button (and a "Cancel" button, for consistency) on the bottom of the Add Guests screen.

28. [H2-1. Visibility of system status] [Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: On the Check Status screens for each guest, users can toggle the green checkmarks and red x's on and off - specifically, if a green checkmark is clicked, it will disappear, leaving a blank space. Users may be confused by the purpose of this given that it does not change from green checkmark to red x but instead leaves a blank space when clicked. Also, the "Requested" and "Submitted" text below each task item make it seem like the app is automatically managing this status process rather than it being a process that the planner needs to manage.

Fix: Either make it automatic (the app determines if each task has been completed or not) and, therefore, unchangeable by the user in order to avoid inconsistencies or errors, or allow only the planner to decide if the task has been completed or not by toggling between only the green checkmark or the red x (no blank space) so that the status is accurately displayed.

29. [H2-7. Flexibility and efficiency of use] [Severity 2][Found by: B, D]

Problem: When sending a message to guests, the user can click "Generate Message" to use a template message; however, after this pre-generated message fills the textbox, the "Generate Message" button is still present, even though it does nothing, and users still have to click "Send Message". Users might be confused with continued presence of the "Generate Message" button because the message has already been generated and it will detract from their next necessary step of having to click "Send Message".

Fix: Either overlay a message that says "Would you like to send this message as is or edit it?" with the options of "Edit" or "Send" or simply eliminate the "Generate Message" option after the message has been generated so the next step of clicking "Send Message" is clear to the user because it is the only button left.

30. [H2-4. Consistency and standards] [Severity 3][Found by: B]

Problem: When clicking on the poll tab on the Itinerary screen, the calendar screen is displayed. Users might be confused by the illogical response to their click.

Fix: Make sure the tabs match up with the right content - i.e. make the tab with the poll icon have content about activities that have been voted on by guests.

(Note: I was never able to view the poll/survey tab.)

31. [H2-8. Aesthetic and minimalist design] [Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: The difference between the calendar tab and the list tab on the Itinerary screen is not clear and this separation seems unnecessary. Users might not want to toggle between two different tabs and might prefer to see all of this information on one tab.

Fix: Combine the calendar and list tab by having a calendar on the top half of the screen with a list of all events or events for the selected day below.

32. [H2-10. Help and documentation][Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: On the Add New Itinerary Item screen, a poll icon is next to the “Save” button. Users may be confused by the purpose of the poll icon and might need help in order to understand why that is there and what it does.

Fix: Incorporate the polling option in another way, such as including a checkbox after “Description” on this screen that allows users to select if they want to poll the guests on this activity or just add it to the itinerary.

33. [H2-4. Consistency and standards] [Severity 2][Found by: B]

Problem: The congratulatory screen that appears after a user sends a message, creates a survey, etc. sometimes has a “< Back” button in the top lefthand corner while others do not. Users might be confused by the inconsistent presence of this button on these types of screens. It is also not intuitive to have a “< Back” button on these types of screens because it would make more sense for the user to click the larger button in the middle of the bottom part of the screen with the expectation of being appropriately redirected.

Fix: Omit the “< Back” button from all congratulatory screens (similar to the congratulatory page for “Message Sent”) to avoid user confusion.

34. [H2-4 Consistency & Standards] [Severity 2][Found by: A]

The interface uses “Check Status” as a button for a trip which the user is planning instead of See Details. If the purpose is to distinguish between planning and attending, there is already a field to the right that does this. Even then, why do these need to be distinct? “Check Status” and “See Details” feel very similar, and users know which trips they are planning or will know once they see they have control over it.

Fix: Either make them more distinct, or make them the same.

35. [H2-2 Match Between System and the Real World] [Severity 4][Found by: A]

The interface lists each trip in “My Trips” as either “planning” or “attending.” Is it the case that there is only 1 planner on a trip, or will multiple people be delegating different tasks? In the real world, it might be that one person is in charge of collecting payment but another is in charge of finding the hotel. It’s also probably reasonable for anyone to be able to suggest an activity.

Fix: Change this schema to assignments, or not having emphasized on this page.

36. [H2-2 Match Between System & Real World] [Severity 3][Found by: A]

Polling doesn’t really seem like the appropriate way to decide. A lot of picking a destination within a group isn’t a purely democratic system. Vacations cost a lot of money, and people have different levels of preferences based on how badly they do or don’t want to go on a trip, and what kind of trip it will be (relaxing, adventurous, party-centric).

Fix: Add functionality/ comments/ or a totally different interface to make this more realistic.

37. [H2-3 Use Control and Freedom] [Severity 2][Found by: A]

When the user has the ability to add a cover photo, they should likely also have the ability to modify that cover photo’s positioning so that it is representative of what they want others to see.

Fix: Let users tweak their photo.

38. [H2-8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design] [Severity 2][Found by: A]

The “Send Message” button is a final action, so it would make more sense if it was at the bottom of the field.

Fix: Move it to the bottom.

39. [H2-8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design] [Severity 2][Found by: A]

“Generate Message” is the same size/shape as “Send Message”, but is a very different action.

Fix: Make buttons visually distinct, in the way that most send message buttons are. This is better portrays their relationship visually.

40. [H2-6 Recognition Rather than Recall] [Severity 2][Found by: A]

The layout of the itineraries page doesn’t give any visual cues to differentiate between activities or jog memory of what is happening next.

Fix: Pictures / Maps / Icons / Categories would help with both picking out differences and recall.

41. [H2-6 Recognition Rather than Recall] [Severity 4][Found by: A, B, C, D]

It’s unclear to me whether the button of the sideways bar chart clearly conveys that the option is for a poll.

Fix: Create a new button, or just use text.

42. [H2-7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use] [Severity 3][Found by: A]

Why is it that you add an existing activity to create a poll, then can add more activities from a separate poll screen? It seems like extra steps and a confusing design.

Fix: User should make a survey and then add activities to it instead of the other way around.

43. [H2-2 User Control & Freedom] [Severity 3][Found by: A]

Poll interface is lacking for activities. I think a straight vote also isn’t the way that discussions usually work in the real world. People propose a lot of ideas, and the concept of the idea is a lot more important than the date and time, at least at first.

Fix: If you want people to be able to choose what to do, and plan from there, then I would recommend changing the interface that focuses on types of events / event ideas first and specifics much later.

44. [H2-6 Recognition Rather than Recall] [Severity 3][Found by: A]

When sending a task reminder, the only way to get the information you are reminding them about is to generate an automated message. For those not wanting to get an automated message, they have to go back and see the information and then remember it, instead of it being present on this page.

Fix: Have the information that they need to submit on the message page.

45. [H2-5 Error Prevention] [Severity 5][Found by: A]

Right now everything seems to be dummy data, but “breaking” some functionality – like adding something to a non-existent poll is still possible. Users can send messages with no content, which is probably not a feature you would like for them to be able to do.

Fix: Throw an error. Just make sure that as features are added that there is still error checking and clear messages / error-prevention.

46. [H2-7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use] [Severity 3][Found by: D]

In order to send a message to a member, the user needs to go to the trip's member list, then click on "Check Status" and then click on "Contact Member". This takes 3 steps, and it's too many since very often the trip planner will know beforehand who to contact and what to say. I think users might feel like contacting members is too complicated.

Fix: In the "Trip members" screen, there could be a button to contact the member next to the member's name. This way, we save one extra click.

47. [H2-2 User Control & Freedom] [Severity 3][Found by: D]

In the "Invite Members" screen, there are + signs to the right of each user. This is confusing since + generally signal a way to "add info" or "edit" a resource. In this case, it's a boolean decision (either the user is invited or not).

Fix: Change the + buttons to a checkbox next to each user.

48. [H2-3 Use Control and Freedom] [Severity 4][Found by: D]

There is no way to abandon a trip. Users might want to abandon a trip, and they should have the ability to do so.

Fix: In "My Trips" screen, add a button to abandon a trip.

49. [H2-1: Visibility of System Status][Severity 3][Found by: D]

There is no way to know if a user is "maybe" going on the trip. With regards to a long trip, many users might be debating whether to attend or not. Thus, this "maybe" in-app status is very important to reflect the real-world status.

Fix: Use a Facebook approach ("Attending", "Maybe", and "Cannot Attend")

50. [H2-8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design][Severity 2][Found by: D]

The user should have specify trip invitees (or at least have the chance to do so) when creating a trip. The reason is that people are the most important, and "invitees" are a core component of a trip. Thus, they should be specified as early as possible. In contrast, "Itinerary" is a trip descriptor (instead of a core component) so it makes sense to postpone its assignment.

Fix: When a user creates a trip, give him/her the chance to add invitees. Then, in the "Trip Dashboard" screen take out the "Guests" tab. Instead, add a table with the guests right there in the "Trip Dashboard". This also makes sense because in general I would expect not more than 10 invitees to a trip, so it would be easy to invite them when the trip is created. In addition, assuming you follow suggestion #4, this would make it really easy for the organizer to send reminders (since the "Reminder" button would be next to each user's name). Thus, the whole flow would be greatly simplified.

51. [H2-7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use] [Severity 2][Found by: D]

When creating a trip with "Destination Known", the "Cover Photo" option would take a long time relative to everything else (since the user needs to find a photo online). This would slow down the creation of trips.

Fix: Postpone the assignment of a “Cover Photo” to after the trip is created. This way creating trips will be much more efficient.

52. [H2-7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use] [Severity 2][Found by: D]

The app should not have the two options: “Destination known” and “Poll My Friends”. I’m not saying the problem is the “Poll my friends” feature, I’m saying the problem is having the 2 options is an unnecessary confusion. As explained in violation #6, invitees are the most important component of a trip (even more that the trip’s destination). Thus, the destination should not be assigned until after the invitees are assigned.

Fix: Don’t have 2 options to create a trip. Instead, in the “My Trips” screen, when a user clicks on “+” just go into the “New Trip” screen. Then in the “New Trip” screen give the option to set the destination, or “To be decided”. This way, the focus is on choosing the trip’s people, and then choosing the destination is second priority.

53. [H2-4: Consistency & Standards][Severity 2][Found by: D]

In the “COMPLEX Surveys” screen (as called in proto.io), the user is notified via a message saying “New Responses” inside of a green circle. However, red color and no circle has been used throughout the screens in the app (such as in the “Guest List” and “My Trips” screens).

Fix: Use distinguishable color and get rid of the circle

54. [H2-7 Flexibility and Efficiency of Use] [Severity 2][Found by: D]

All “Success” screens are unnecessary. Besides all “Success” screens having the same image, there is no reason to lead the users into these screens just to force them to click on “Return”.

Fix: Just get rid of them, and let the user know that the task was successful by giving positive feedback such as as showing a pop-up message

55. [H2-4: Consistency & Standards][Severity 2][Found by: D]

In the “New Trip Poll” screen it would be clearer to refer to the options as “Destination” instead of “Locale” because “Destination” is a common word and it’s commonly used when referring to trips.

56. [H2-8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design][Severity 2][Found by: D]

The font in the “COMPLEX Survey” screen is al gray. It’s a problem because the lack of contrast is the color monotony makes it hard for the user to draw his/her attention to the important sections of the information displayed.

Fix: Make the activity title bold and a different color such as black

3. Summary of Violations

Category	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (sev 5)	# Viol. (total)
[H2-1: Visibility of Status]	0	0	1	0	0	1
[H2-2: Match Sys & World]	0	2	5	1	0	8

[H2-3: User Control]	0	1	1	3	0	5
[H2-4: Consistency]	0	1	9	2	0	12
[H2-5: Error Prevention]	0	1	1	0	1	3
[H2-6: Recognition not Recall]	0	2	2	2	0	6
[H2-7: Efficiency of Use]	0	5	2	1	0	8
[H2-8: Minimalist Design]	1	7	1	0	0	9
[H2-9: Help Users with Errors]	0	1	0	0	0	1
[H2-10: Documentation]	0	2	0	0	0	2
Total Violations by Severity	1	22	22	9	1	55

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D
level 1	0	0	2	0
level 2	7	9	9	9
level 3	5	5	3	4
level 4	3	1	3	4
level 5	1	0	0	0
total (levels 4 & 5)	4	1	3	1
total (all levels)	16	15	18	18

Evaluator # Ex. C	# problems found Ex. 7	# Unique problems remaining & problem IDs Ex: 5 (1, 7, 11, 13, 17)
A	16	11 (34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45)
B	16	15 (19, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33)
C	18	15 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17)
D	14	11 (46 - 55)

5. Summary Recommendations

A: I think that the interface is very clear, and that the user always knows what they're trying to accomplish or the information they are inputting. InstaGator as it stands seems to be a useful tool for collecting a group's travel information, itinerary, and other documents for everyone attending the trip that leverages existing conventions for ease of use. I think the largest challenge that the interface still has to overcome is the process of making group decisions, which currently lacks the most important

part of the process – some sort of discussion. Although some functionality may be unique to InstaGator, most of the interface aspects aren't particularly different from what already exists and often rely on well-established interfaces.

B: I very much enjoyed the simplicity of the Instagator interface; however, I found it challenging to engage with because of the many illogical screen changes and nonfunctioning buttons. Some of these functionality errors included "< Back" buttons that did not work or incorrectly traced my previously viewed screens as well as being stuck on the calendar tab of the itinerary page with no ability to view the other two tabs. These 'programming' errors also impacted my ability to accurately test all of the task flows and pages given that some of them I was never able to view without manually finding them on the sidebar of proto.io (i.e. the tab on the Itinerary screen where all surveys were displayed and the list view of the Itinerary screen).

Beyond my feedback regarding logic errors and nonresponsive pages/buttons, my major recommendation is to improve consistency and to make sure everything is intuitive for users, especially new ones. For example, all screens that are collecting user input (i.e. Add New Event, Add Survey, etc.) should have both a "Cancel" and "Save" button while some of the screens did, most did not. In addition, I think the "< Back" button should not appear on the congratulatory overlays that the user sees after sending a message or creating/adding an activity or survey again, while this button was not on some of the screens, it was on most.

Furthermore, I think that the naming and labelling needs to be more accurate and descriptive in order to make everything easy to understand for new and existing users. Specifically, the "< Back" button on the Home screen should be labelled "Log Out" or "Sign Out", given that is what it does; and also, the two screen options for creating a new trip (i.e. "Destination Known" and "Poll") should be better tilted and explained so that new users can understand why there is even more than one option.

Additionally, I think that the app can include more novel, fun, and interactive features for all users. First, it would be great for there to be a way for guests of a trip to contribute suggestions to surveys/polls for trip locations and activities, encouraging more interaction with the app from both the planners and the invitees. Secondly, it would be fun to explore the possibility of a spontaneous or random destination option that provides the planner with a suggested location based on some criteria that they can select (i.e. price, hemisphere, duration, etc.). Lastly, I think that there should be a stronger community aspect to the app. This could include allowing and encouraging guests to invite their own friends, creating a chat system for guests to use while planning and travelling, and also creating an easy way for all InstaGator users to connect with one another, share travel destination and activity ideas, and even plan trips together.

Overall, I recommend: (1) sticking to the simple look and feel of the interface (which pairs nicely with the "Simply Group Travel" value proposition); (2) focusing first on working out all logic errors, and then tackling consistency and descriptiveness of all components of the app involved in the task flow so that the user has no doubts about what any part of the interface does or why it is there; and (3) pushing the bounds of the app's capabilities to offer more innovative and interactive features for users, like those that I mentioned above.

C: Overall, each individual screen of the app is fairly intuitive to use, but I would like to see a more deliberate or consistent flow from screen to screen. The most important change I would like to see that I think a lot of the violations fall under is that the app isn't one that's very common, so I think it requires a little more hand-holding for the user than an app whose functionality is already well-established. As a result, the current app feels a bit hard to explore, in the sense that I'm not entirely sure where to navigate next or what I'm able to do with the app. One solution to these kinds of issues would be to have some kind of mini tutorial or even a checklist for each trip where users can see what they can potentially do. For instance, a checklist could consist of invite guests, poll guests on interesting events, create itinerary, and ask guests for documents. This would be a non-intrusive way to let users quickly see what functionality the app provides so that they know to look for those functions. Otherwise, some of the functionality might be lost. Had I not known that polls were a huge part of the app, I don't think I would have known where to look for them or what I could poll. Helping users better understand when and how they can poll would help users understand the value add of an app like this. I also wish there was a bigger focus on less clicking and allowing users to see more information on whatever page they are on. This includes allowing users to see what guests a poll will be sent to, how many total guests were invited to a certain event, and whether reservations are still needed for certain events. By providing more information on a single page, users don't have to remember as much and figure out how to navigate the app at the same time as trying to find information. Aside from those two recommendations, the last thing I would recommend is to play around more with font sizes and bolding/italicizing. Most of the differences in statuses right now is shown through color. The usage of green/red often doesn't make sense in this app, as people tend to see green/red as progress or error, but the app uses it to contrast two different kinds of status messages. Sometimes, statuses are even reported in the same color when they are two different kinds of status messages (such as "alerts" and "go premium"). Instead of color, words could be placed in bold or italics or even a smaller/larger size to show contrast or bring attention to it.

D: Firstly, I appreciate that Instagator's is very consistent, well put together, and minimalistic. I like the color, spacing, and overall application idea. Most of my major "violations" are related to the application flow because I believe that in terms of flow Instagator has a big potential for improvement in order to become mobile user friendly. One issue that Instagator must address, and didn't quite fit into the violations, is the question of how many active trips are users going to be involved at a given time. This is an issue because I would predict that a user's "Trip List" would be empty the great majority of the time. Since every other task is centered around being actively involved in a trip, then the application would be useless for those users who are not involved in trips. Thus, it would be worth considering the addition of a socially focused task that would maintain users using the application even when they are not involved in a trip (for example, letting users see the trips that their Facebook friends are planning). In addition, the way of thinking behind violations (#5, #6, #8) is that I see a "Trip" is as a list of people with the goal of going somewhere and having fun. Thus, choosing invitees takes priority over choosing a trip destination. Finally, I am a large proponent of having few screens, which was a motivation for violations (#1, #4, #9, #10). Great job!

Severity Ratings

- 1 - don't agree that this is a usability problem
- 2 - cosmetic problem
- 3 - minor usability problem
- 4 - major usability problem; important to fix
- 5 - usability catastrophe; imperative to fix

Heuristics

[H2-1: Visibility of System Status]

- keep users informed about what is going on

[H2-2: Match Between System & Real World]

- speak the users' language
- follow real world conventions

[H2-3: User Control & Freedom]

- "exits" for mistaken choices, undo, redo
- don't force down fixed paths

[H2-4: Consistency & Standards]

[H2-5: Error Prevention]

[H2-6: Recognition Rather Than Recall]

- make objects, actions, options, & directions visible or easily retrievable

[H2-7: Flexibility & Efficiency of Use]

- accelerators for experts (e.g., gestures, kb shortcuts)
- allow users to tailor frequent actions (e.g., macros)

[H2-8: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design]

- no irrelevant information in dialogues

[H2-9: Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, & Recover from Errors]

- error messages in plain language
- precisely indicate the problem
- constructively suggest a solution

[H2-10: Help & Documentation]

- easy to search
- focused on the user's task
- list concrete steps to carry out
- not too large