

Heuristic Evaluation of Momentous

1. Problem

Momentous is an application that allows users to augment their daily journaling with insights derived from exterior sources (social media, fitness trackers, smartphone media library, etc.) and reflect on previous entries individually or in the aggregate through trends.

2. Violations Found

1. **[H2-2 Match between system & real world][Severity 1][A, C]**
 - a. The landing page uses the string “Begin” as its call to action. This wording is not necessarily indicative of the fact that clicking the begin button will lead to a journal entry. Given that the heading on the content card says, “See what you did today!” users may expect that the “Begin” button will lead to a more thorough or extended view of their activity for the day. Use a more specific call to action (e.g. “write”) that is more indicative of the desired action. Change the wording from “See what you did today” to “Journal about what you did today.”
2. **[H2-3 User control & freedom][Severity 3][A,B]**
 - a. The user cannot return to the initial landing page, which may detract from the user experience. Some users may want an explicit home page that they can return to. Add navigation to allow user to redirect to landing page or establish a home page.
 - b. When you start writing a journal entry for today, there is no clear way to exit the editing screen. I expected the “Done” button to take me back to a home screen of some sort but I’m stuck on the “Today” screen. What would you open up to if you already started an entry today? Where is the home base?
3. **[H2-7 Flexibility and efficiency of use][Severity 0][A, D]**
 - a. It is unclear how to append text to an existing journal entry. On the “Today” page, the user cannot add text after pinning an activity. This behavior is likely due to the constraints of the medium-fi prototype. Make sure that this functionality is implemented and perhaps include an “Add” button to append additional text.
4. **[H2-6 Recognition rather than recall][Severity 4][A, B, C, D]**
 - a. The content on the “Trends” page is not labeled. It is unclear for the user which metrics are being conveyed in the graphics. Thus, the user would have to remember exactly what is being displayed rather than gathering the information from the displayed content. Add headings to the graphics such as “application usage,” “physical activity,” etc.
 - b. The “Trends” page doesn’t make much sense to me at all. Because I’m familiar with the product, I assume the pie chart is time spent on each application but it’s unclear over what time period. I can try to assume by looking at the Nike data that the pie chart

spans a period of about a week and a half, but this screen really needs labels.

- c. Individual graphs can't be viewed on "Trends" page. The trend graphics can't be clicked.
5. **[H2-7 Flexibility and efficiency of use][Severity 4][A]**
 - a. It is unclear whether the search button on the "Trends" page is intended to be functional. It is also possible that having this functionality for the "Trends" page is unnecessary. The user would likely not want to be presented with an overwhelming number of trends, so it may not be necessary to have search functionality. Remove search feature from "Trends" page.
 6. **[H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 1][A, D]**
 - a. On the "Past entries" page, the content cards for different posts show various amounts of information. Some posts display multiple lines of text and a pinned activity, while some only display a single line of text. Have a uniform layout for posts that displays a consistent amount of information for each content card.
 - b. Preview for last entry way too short compared to rest; what is the consistent formula for what part of an entry is previewed?
 7. **[H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 1][A]**
 - a. "Pin Activites" header has a misspelling. Correct "Activites" to "Activities."
 8. **[H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 1][A]**
 - a. Inconsistent capitalization scheme across page titles, section headings, and menu bar. For example, page titles have all characters capitalized, while menu bar labels have all characters in lower-case. Unify capitalization.
 9. **[H2-3 User control & freedom][Severity 3][A, B, C, D]**
 - a. Pin button on landing page does not necessarily align with purpose of page as summary display of current day's activities. Either this page should allow direct editing of the post or the pin button should be removed.
 - b. I expected a Save or Post function in the pin's location. This contributes to the confusion over how to get out of the edit mode. Maybe a plus (adding) or paperclip (attaching) icon would be better.
 10. **[H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 3][A, B]**
 - a. Activities displayed on landing page have different format from those displayed on "Today" page after clicking the pin button. On the landing page, the activities do not have the frequency/usage textual summary and also cannot be expanded. Make the activity descriptions expandable to view more detailed summary. Otherwise, the landing page has limited functionality and adds an extra level of indirection to the journal entry process.
 - b. This could honestly just be a result of the prototype fidelity, but I expected that I would be able to click on one of the social feeds on the opening screen and begin a journal entry with that piece of data.
 11. **[H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 1][A]**

- a. The date headings on the “Past Entries” page are inconsistent. Some have a space between day and the comma before year, whereas some don’t (i.e. “September 29 , 2015” vs. “October 15, 2015”). Remove the space between the day and the comma.

12. [H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 1][A]

- a. In many places, the “X” icon is used as an exit button, but to exit search, there is a text button labeled “Cancel.” The action is similar, to some extent, in these situations, but the UI element is different. Use the “X” icon throughout.

13. [H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 1][A]

- a. All activities pinned in posts have a grey bounding box as a background, except for the photos from a Facebook post on October 15, 2015. Add the grey bounding box to this activity to make it consistent with the rest of the activities.

14. [H2-7 Flexibility and efficiency of use][Severity 2][A]

- a. When the user views a certain past entry, the sandwich menu is not accessible from the past entry page. Instead, it is replaced by a back button, which adds an extra level of indirection if the user wants to quickly navigate to the “Trends” or “Today” page. Keep the sandwich menu available on past entries and move the back button elsewhere on the page.

15. [H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 1][A]

- a. The application icons on the landing page and activities dialog are on the upper left corner of the content items, whereas on pinned activities for entries, they are located on the bottom right. Choose one location for the icons, and keep consistent throughout the application.

16. [H2-7 Flexibility and efficiency of use][Severity 3][A]

- a. When scrolling, the upper menu bar is not visible. This prevents the user from easily navigating or accessing the search functionality. Keep the menu bar fixed at the top of the page so that it remains visible even after scrolling down.
- b. Another fix would be to make the menu bar appear without having to scroll all the way up (like Safari)

17. [H2-5 Error prevention][Severity 3][A, D]

- a. There is no way for a user to delete a pinned activity from a page. In the event that a user accidentally pins an activity, he or she cannot reverse this action. Add a delete option for activities pinned to today’s entry.

18. [H2-1 Visibility of system status][Severity 2][A]

- a. On “Pin activities” scrollable, it is unclear that the summary content is a clickable button that will expand to a more detailed view. The user may not immediately be aware that he or she can see the more detailed content. Add a dropdown icon or other indicator that provides a visual affordance that this content is clickable.

19. [H2-3 User control & freedom][Severity 4][A, C]

- a. The README indicates that the user can pin insights from trends to today's entry. On the "Trends" page, there is no mechanism for doing so. Add additional flow to "Trends" page for pinning to today's entry.

20. [H2-5 Error prevention][Severity 4][A]

- a. When the user attempts to input text to a current entry, the pin button is still visible. Thus, the user might encounter errors if they accidentally hit the pin button while typing. Given that the user can easily exit the keyboard and access the pin button in the composer, it might not be necessary to have the button available while inputting text. Remove the pin button when the keyboard is open in current day's entry.

21. [H2-9: Help Users with Errors][Severity 3][B, C]

- a. What do I do if I want to jot something down from a previous day? I'm imagining a scenario in which a user has a really long day, gets back home after midnight and either tries to journal right then and there or wants to wait until tomorrow to write about what they did. I don't see a place currently where you can either edit past entries or change the date on the entry you're writing. Add an edit feature to past posts so users can pin photos to those entries at a later date.

22. [H2-3 User Control and Freedom][Severity 2][C]

- a. Starting the app, the user is encouraged to write their entry for today. The user may be opening the app because they want to reminisce about what they've written in the past. Give the users the ability to do either from the start screen.

23. [H2-4 Consistency & standards][Severity 2][D]

- a. After a search is made, the back arrow returns all the way to the entries page, when it feels like it should only go back one step, to the search menu. Return to search menu after exiting a post reached via search.

24. [H2-2: Match Sys & World][Severity 0][D]

- a. "Past entries" doesn't include today's entry, but anything you've already made today is by definition in the past, so it should be included. Display today's entry on "Past entries" page.

25. [H2-4 Consistency][Severity 1][D]

- a. All the media fonts are sans serif, but the journal font is serif. Unify font scheme.

26. [H2-8: Minimalist Design][Severity 1][D]

- a. Sandwich menu takes up way too large a part of the screen. Sandwich menu's "x" (to close) is awkwardly positioned. Make sandwich menu slimmer.

3. Summary of Violations

Category	# Viol. (sev 0)	# Viol. (sev 1)	# Viol. (sev 2)	# Viol. (sev 3)	# Viol. (sev 4)	# Viol. (total)
[H2-1: Visibility of Status]			1			1
[H2-2: Match Sys & World]	1	1				2
[H2-3: User Control]			1	2	1	4
[H2-4: Consistency]		8	1	1		10
[H2-5: Error Prevention]				1	1	2
[H2-6: Recognition not Recall]					1	1
[H2-7: Efficiency of Use]	1		1	1	1	4
[H2-8: Minimalist Design]		1				1
[H2-9: Help Users with Errors]				1		1
[H2-10: Documentation]						0
Total Violations by Severity	2	10	4	6	4	26
Note: check your answer for the green box by making sure the sum of the last column is equal to the sum of the last row (not including the green box)						

4. Evaluation Statistics

Severity / Evaluator	Evaluator A	Evaluator B	Evaluator C	Evaluator D	Evaluator E
sev. 0	50% (1/2)	0% (0/2)	0% (0/2)	100% (2/2)	
sev. 1	80% (8/10)	0% (0/10)	10% (1/10)	30% (3/10)	
sev. 2	50% (2/4)	0% (0/4)	25% (1/4)	25% (1/4)	
sev. 3	83% (5/6)	67% (4/6)	33% (2/6)	33% (2/6)	
sev. 4	100% (4/4)	25% (1/4)	50% (2/4)	25% (1/4)	
total (sev. 3 & 4)	90% (9/10)	50% (5/10)	40% (4/10)	30% (3/10)	
total (all severity levels)	77% (20/26)	19% (5/26)	23% (6/26)	35% (9/26)	

5. Summary Recommendations

Overall, the interface seemed to prioritize function over form in a positive way. Your interface is simple, and accordingly makes a lot of sense. Overall, the application was very well thought out and very easy to work with. The design is very minimal, straightforward, and doesn't include unnecessary bonus features that could distract from its true purpose.

The "Trends" page would benefit from some more thought and planning. I think the idea is really cool, but right now, it's not clear at all what the data represents or how the user is supposed to interact with it. The README stated that users would be able to pin trends to the current day's entry, but this functionality does not appear present. Additionally, the "Trends" page was much less stylized than other pages. Perhaps including more stylized labels for the information will help with the clarity of the information, as well as the aesthetic of the page. In addition, it will be important to integrate insights with the composer. Users can only view trends, which leads to a passive experience; in some respects, the primary value of trends is being able to derive insights into evolving user behavior over different time scales. In other words, a user might want to view the aggregated summaries of his or her digital footprint for the previous week but also have the capability to view his or her behavior over the past year. In terms of integrating trends into the composer, we recommend a similar mechanism as the pin button that allows the user to access trends directly from the composer. One possibility would be to have a filter in the activities scrollable that allows the user to switch between trends and activities. Another possibility would be to add an additional button that when clicked, opens up a dedicated trends scrollable from the composer view.

We also recommend that the Momentous team flesh out more the process of how users will pin media; for instance, pinning text messages may be complicated since a user will have to filter through a lot of content. Also, there exist some usability concerns that are critical to address, such as not being able to "add" a journal entry. If Momentous maintains the approach of automatically adding entries as long as the current day's post is not empty, then it will need to address the edge case where a user is editing at midnight and the day "ends."

Severity Ratings

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