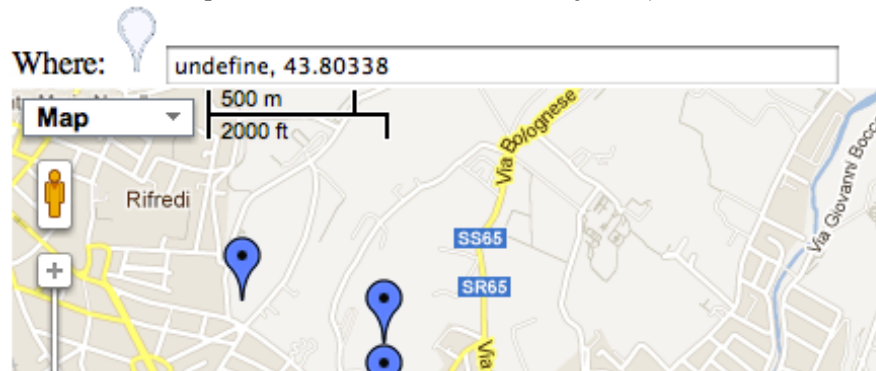


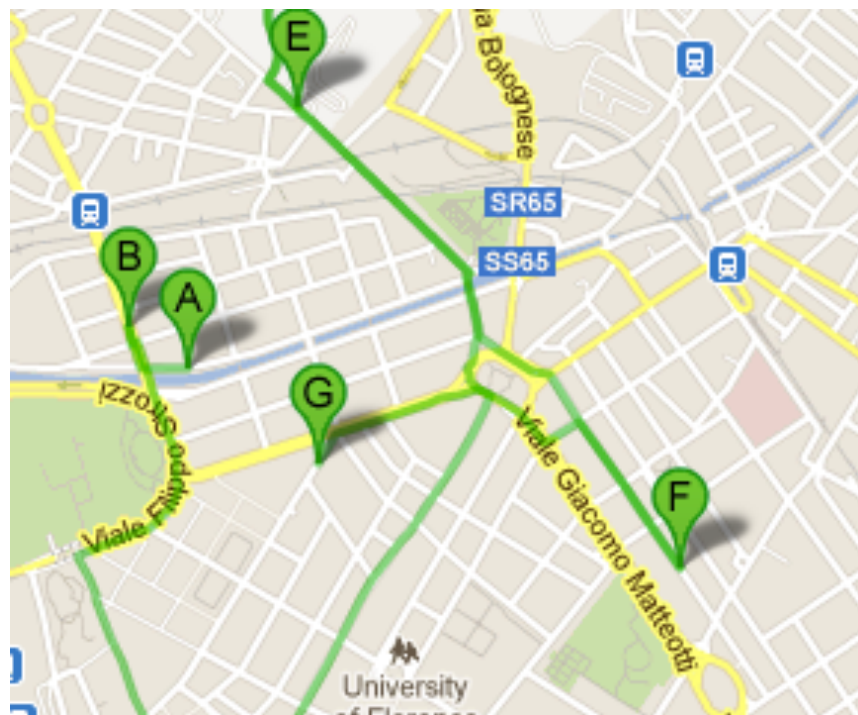
Neena Parikh
6.813 HW2: Heuristic Evaluation of SMak
4/22/12

Usability Problems:

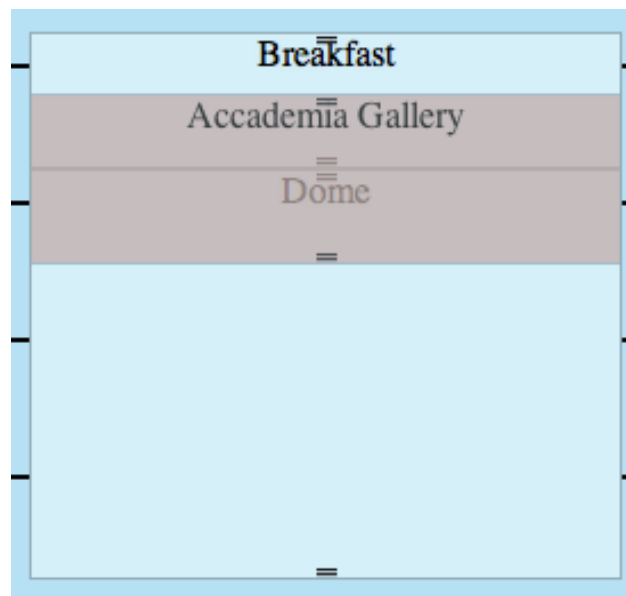
1. Very little “information scent” – it is unclear what many of the features do. Even after playing around with the site for quite some time, I am still confused about the function of the “Where” label and text field. Perhaps a couple words describing the feature (rather than just the word “where”) would be helpful. Nielsen heuristic: help & documentation. Severity: major.



2. It would be nice to have a popup box appear with the activity name when the user clicks on one of the icons on the map, especially since the site is geared toward travelers who are completely unfamiliar with the area. Nielsen heuristic: consistency & standards, help & documentation. Severity: minor.



3. Animating the boxes as you rearrange them in the schedule would be very helpful so that the user would be able to see the effects of each possible change. As a box is hovering on top of another (as in the picture below), sliding or repositioning the boxes below would allow the user to see where the “Accademia Gallery” box would fit. (jQuery UI has a nice drag-and-drop plugin that may be helpful.) Nielsen heuristic: visibility of system status, error prevention. Severity: cosmetic.



4. Lack of immediate feedback in map – when the user removes an activity from the schedule column or rearranges the schedule column, the map does not update to reflect the revised schedule. Furthermore, it seems that there is no button or other method of creating the schedule (aside from the “Auto Schedule” button). What if I only want to attend three of the activities? How will I be able to schedule my day around those? Nielsen heuristic: user control & freedom. Severity: major.
5. No customization – if for some reason the website’s algorithm does not create a schedule that the user wishes to follow, he/she might want to adjust the schedule to fit his/her own preferences. Currently it does not seem like there is any way of doing this on the interface. Nielsen heuristic: user control & freedom. Severity: minor.
6. Lack of title / brand – I almost forgot what site I was on! Maybe a small logo or title bar would be a nice touch. Nielsen heuristic: aesthetic. Severity: cosmetic.
7. No directions / instructions – since you are using Google Maps in your interface, I would imagine that there is an easy way of obtaining travel directions between each destination. If the user were in a completely foreign location, then he/she

would have no idea how to get from one place to the next. Nielsen heuristic: help & documentation. Severity: minor.

8. Lack of error reporting – there doesn't seem to be any method of error reporting or diagnosis. At one point, one of the activity boxes completely vanished (I don't recall the steps leading up to this point) and I was unable to retrieve it without refreshing the page (see picture below – no "Dome" box). Nielsen heuristic: error reporting, diagnosis, and recovery. Severity: major.

Activities

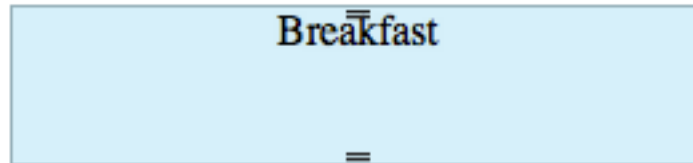
Schedule

Auto Schedule

9	Breakfast
10	Piazzale Michelangelo
11	Accademia Gallery
12	Dinner
1	Giotto's Tower
2	
3	Uffizi Gallery
4	
5	

Usability Successes:

1. Nice minimalistic design – absolutely no useless clutter or anything of the sort on the webpage, which allows the user to more easily discern the interface’s features. Nielsen heuristic: aesthetic & minimalist design.
2. Great drag and drop functionality – I really like how easy it is to move and resize activities in both the Activities and Schedule columns. The texture on each of the boxes provides a good visual cue to the user. Nielsen heuristic: match the real world, consistency & standards.



3. Integration of Google Maps – since it is familiar to most users, Google Maps is a good tool to use in your interface (rather than trying to create your own map). It is consistent with the majority of map interfaces on the internet. I also like that the map re-centers itself and zooms in at a specific location when the schedule is modified. Nielsen heuristic: consistency & standards.
4. Undo / redo – although there is no explicit “Undo” or “Redo” button in the interface, it is very easy to manipulate the schedule and the activities. This allows for ease of error correction. Nielsen heuristic: error prevention, flexibility & efficiency.
5. High visibility – all actions, objects, and options are visible. This is good because the user doesn’t have to remember information throughout the use of the interface. Nielsen heuristic: recognition, not recall.