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Pack Planner Heuristic Evaluation  
6.813 Spring 2013

### Collaboration Statement

I did not discuss this assignment with anybody.

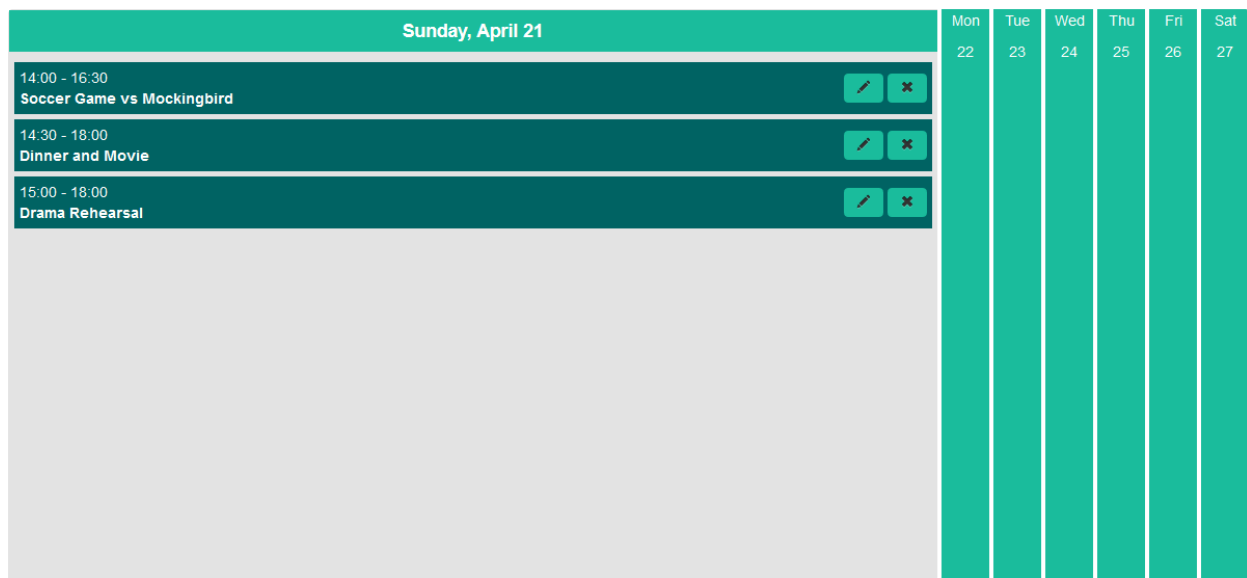
### Heuristic Evaluation

#### 1. Calendar Expansion

Heuristic: Visible Navigation (Tog's First Principles)

Severity: Good

I love the way the calendar expands! It is a cool design and not confusing at all. The vertical bars marking the days provide the user with a clear affordance, and they respond exactly as I expected them to respond.



## 2. Navigation Bar

Heuristic: Visible Navigation (Tog's First Principles)

Severity: Good/Cosmetic

The navigation bar at the top is very clear and well-labeled. My only suggestion is that you somehow make the “Pack Planner” title for your website even more different from your navigation buttons. While the size of the font is larger, nothing else differentiates it from the other tabs. It is still in line with the other tabs, has the same font style and same colors, which gives it the potential to be another link or tab. Because it is essentially in the navigation bar, it also seems like there could be some affordance for the user to click on the label and expect to get redirected to a “home” page. A suggestion would be to allow the user to click on it, and redirect the user to the Calendar page, which seems to be the core of the website.

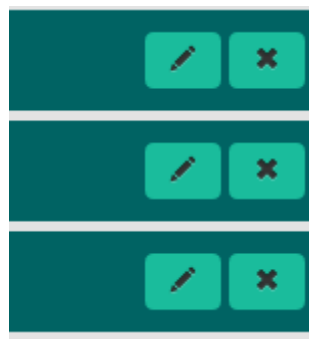


## 3. Buttons for Interacting with Calendar Events

Heuristic: Consistency, Learnability (Tog's First Principles)

Severity: Good

Buttons are externally consistent with other applications and easy to understand. The “New Event” button obviously creates a new event in the Calendar, and the pencil icon seen with each event in the calendar obviously means “Edit Event.” The “X” icon is obviously a delete icon, giving the user a clear affordance for deleting events. Good job using intuitive icons—it’s something other groups struggle with, including mine.



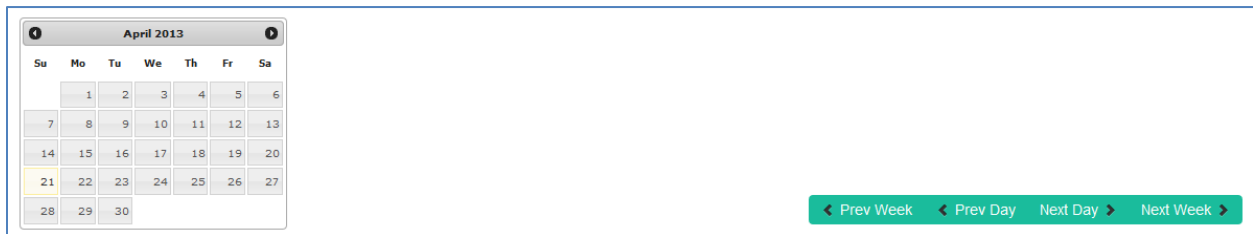
#### 4. Calendar Module and Navigation

Heuristic: Consistency & Standards, Aesthetic & Minimalist Design (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: Minor

While the date navigation is clear and consistent with the rest of the calendar design, it seems redundant to have in addition to the calendar module you use. The calendar module is extremely flexible and lays out all of the days in each month, so I wonder if it is really necessary to give the user separate buttons to navigate through days and weeks individually.

As for aesthetics, the calendar module is also very obviously taken from somewhere because it has its own design and color scheme. It stands out a lot and feels a little bit out of place, giving your prototype low fidelity in look. In addition, these two components are far apart from each other—the module being on the left and the nav bar on the right with nothing in between, as shown in the screenshot below (I removed the other components so that you can see the true distance between these two components – they look like they belong to two different websites).



#### 5. White Space above Calendar (Layout)

Heuristic: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design (Nielsen Heuristic)

Severity: minor

There is a lot of awkward white space, which makes your webpage very low fidelity in look and feel. I get the impression that something is missing from the webpage, maybe an unimplemented feature. A suggestion would be to space out the buttons that represent different members of the family, or add something that you think the user would like to see in the application.



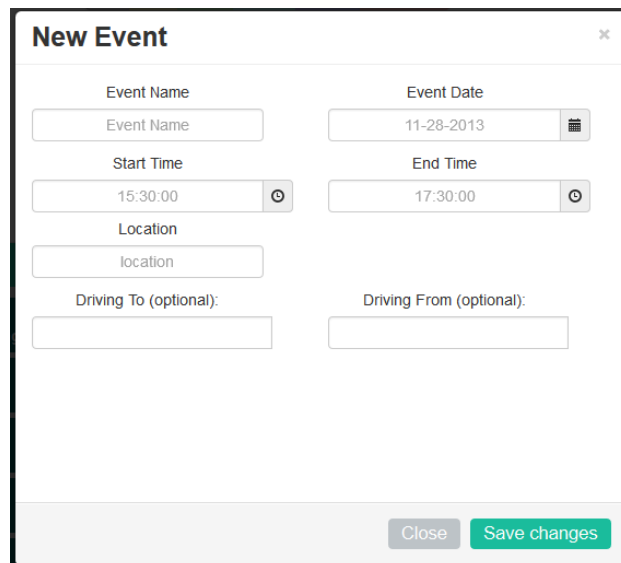
## 6. Not Enough Fields for Inputting Information

Heuristic: User Control and Freedom (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: Major

I imagine that the user will want to keep track of more information for each event. In particular, you are trying to solve the problem of keeping track of many people's schedules, so there should at least be a field to input the appropriate child's name. Which child has a rehearsal or practice?

What about notes? Reminders? "Bake sale! Remember to bring the chocolate chip cookies." I think these are important because the idea of your webpage is to help people keep track of details, but the user does not seem to have enough freedom to add these details.



The image shows a 'New Event' form with the following fields and controls:

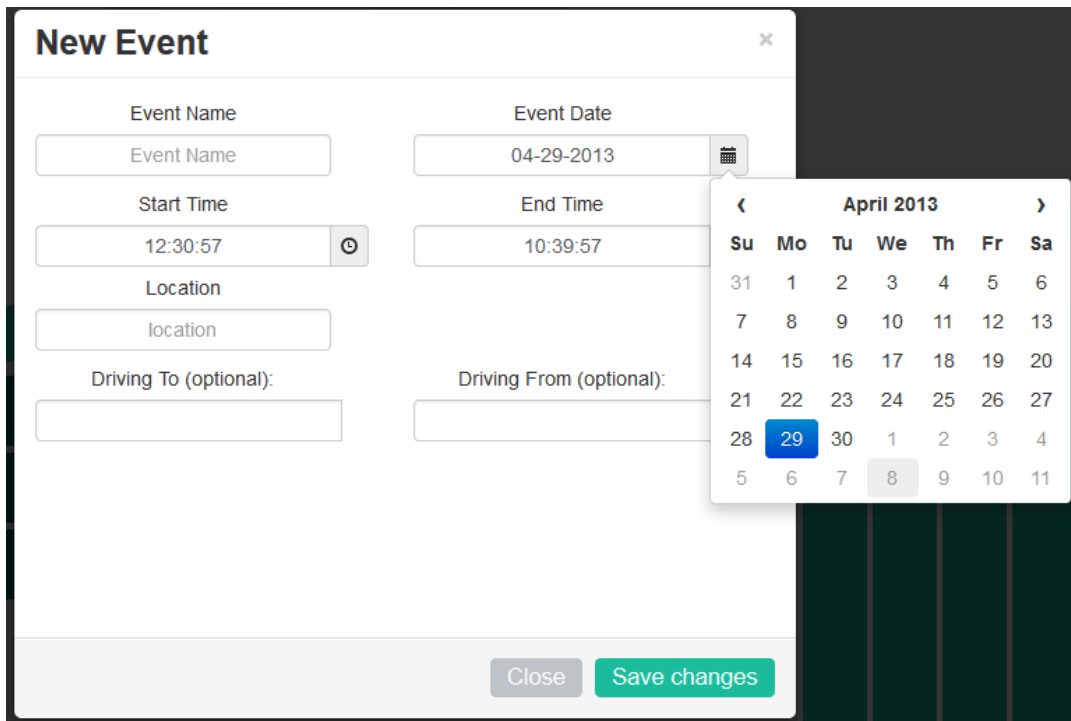
- Event Name:** A text input field with the placeholder text 'Event Name'.
- Event Date:** A date input field showing '11-28-2013' with a calendar icon on the right.
- Start Time:** A time input field showing '15:30:00' with a clock icon on the right.
- End Time:** A time input field showing '17:30:00' with a clock icon on the right.
- Location:** A text input field with the placeholder text 'location'.
- Driving To (optional):** A text input field.
- Driving From (optional):** A text input field.

At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: a grey 'Close' button and a green 'Save changes' button.

## 7. Closing Date and Time Picker Modules

Heuristic: Efficiency (Tog's First Principles)  
Severity: Minor

I cannot find a way to close the modules after I have picked the date or time for my event. Closing the modules automatically might be a good idea since it is not difficult to change the time or date if it was entered incorrectly. As you can see in the screenshot, I have picked a future date, which is highlighted, but the module is still open.



The screenshot shows a 'New Event' form with the following fields and a calendar overlay:

- Event Name:** Input field with placeholder text 'Event Name'.
- Event Date:** Input field with value '04-29-2013' and a calendar icon.
- Start Time:** Input field with value '12:30:57' and a clock icon.
- End Time:** Input field with value '10:39:57'.
- Location:** Input field with placeholder text 'location'.
- Driving To (optional):** Input field.
- Driving From (optional):** Input field.

The calendar overlay shows the month of April 2013. The date 29 is highlighted in blue, and the date 8 is highlighted in grey. The calendar has navigation arrows and a close button.

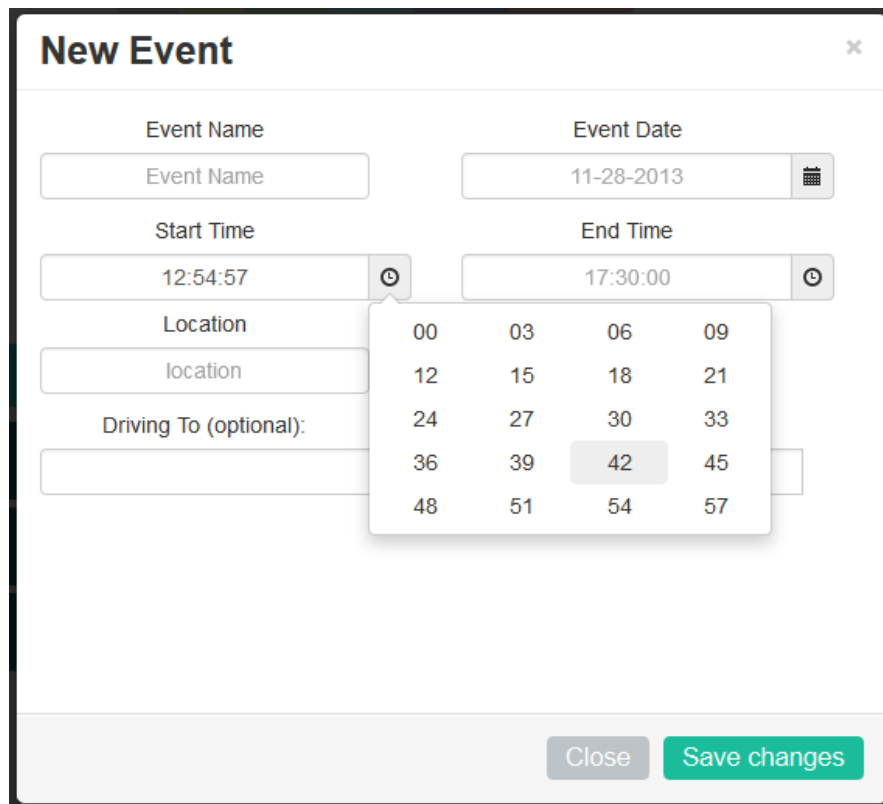
At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Close' and 'Save changes'.

## 8. Create New Event Modal – Select Time Module

Heuristic: Match the Real World (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: Major

I am confused as to how the minutes were chosen for me to select from. A lot of events in the real world start and end at “:05” or “:55”, but there is no option for either of these times. It is very rare for me to schedule events that start at 12 minutes past the hour. This is extremely inefficient and somewhat mind-boggling. I would suggest giving options for every five minutes as opposed to three—I think people would find it more useful and less confusing.



The image shows a 'New Event' modal window with the following fields and a dropdown menu:

- Event Name:** Input field with placeholder text 'Event Name'.
- Event Date:** Input field with value '11-28-2013' and a calendar icon.
- Start Time:** Input field with value '12:54:57' and a dropdown arrow.
- End Time:** Input field with value '17:30:00' and a dropdown arrow.
- Location:** Input field with placeholder text 'location'.
- Driving To (optional):** Input field.

The dropdown menu for the Start Time field is open, showing a grid of minute options:

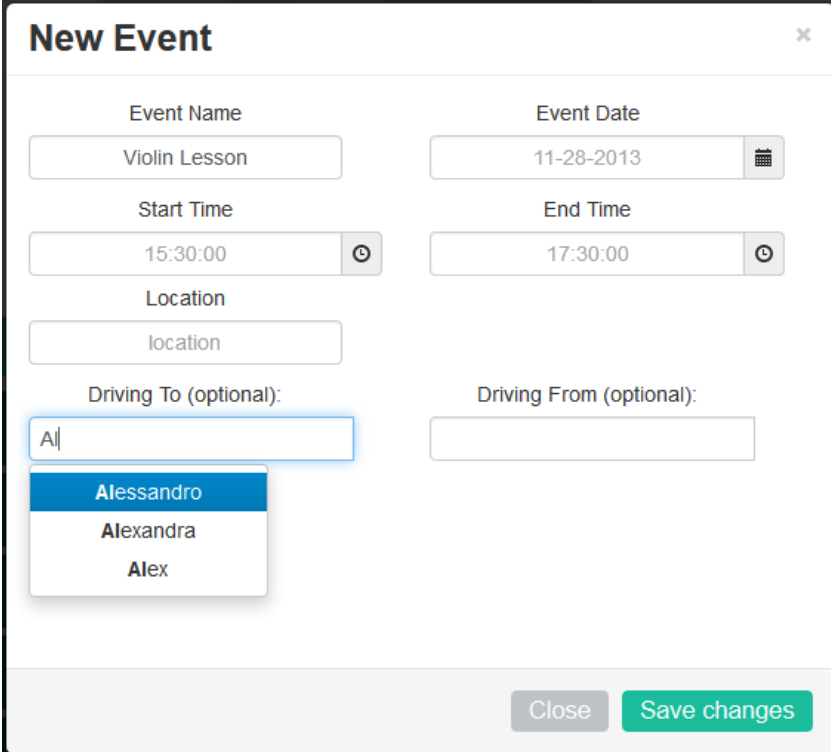
00	03	06	09
12	15	18	21
24	27	30	33
36	39	42	45
48	51	54	57

At the bottom of the modal, there are two buttons: 'Close' and 'Save changes'.

9. Autocomplete of Driver Fields in New Event Modal  
Heuristic: Recognition, Not Recall (Nielsen Heuristics)  
Severity: Good/Cosmetic

Good autocomplete for the driver's names. However, I wish that I could have seen this in the "Edit Event" modals as well and not just the "New Event" modal – something to remember for GR5.

When you provide autocomplete, it might be a good idea to provide a subheading for each name that you have. I assume the names come from a list of parents that could drive, which means that it may be difficult to recall which parent knows which if the user's children. If parent, maybe subheading of "Mindy" could be "Jane Doe's mom"; and if there's a caretaker or babysitter, maybe a name could be "Samantha" with a subheading of "Babysitter."



The image shows a "New Event" modal window with a close button in the top right corner. The form contains several input fields:

- Event Name:** A text input field containing "Violin Lesson".
- Event Date:** A date picker input field showing "11-28-2013" with a calendar icon.
- Start Time:** A time picker input field showing "15:30:00" with a clock icon.
- End Time:** A time picker input field showing "17:30:00" with a clock icon.
- Location:** A text input field containing "location".
- Driving To (optional):** A text input field containing "A|". Below it is a dropdown menu with three options: "Alessandro" (highlighted in blue), "Alexandra", and "Alex".
- Driving From (optional):** An empty text input field.

At the bottom of the modal, there are two buttons: "Close" and "Save changes".

## 10. Looking at Event Information

Heuristic: Visibility of System Status (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: minor

I wish I could click on the event title in the calendar so that I could see its details. As you see in the screenshot below, there is no affordance for the user to click on the time or the title to see details about the event. Double clicking just highlights the name. Who is driving to and from the event? Whose event is this? Where is the event?

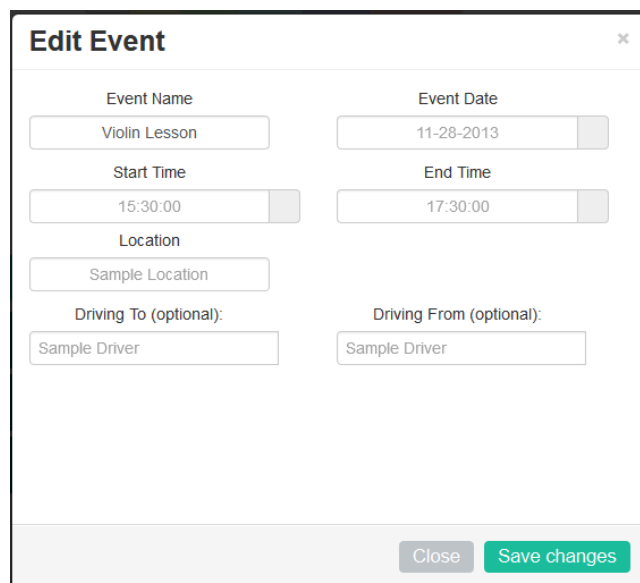


## 11. Saving Changes When Editing Pre-made Events

Heuristic: Defaults (Tog's First Principles), Feedback (Norman Principles)

Severity: Catastrophic

When trying to edit the pre-made events, I was unable to change the actual event name; however, the information I left in was saved so that when I tried to edit the next event, the name field was not blank as I would expect the default to be. In the first screen shot, I have already tried to edit one of the pre-made events and change the name to "Violin Lesson." I do not see the change, so I try to edit another event. When the modal opens, the Event Name field is already filled with what I had typed in for another event as shown in the screen shot of the modal.





While these edits did not show up immediately, they showed up as new events after I created a new event (bug?). You can see the result in the screenshot below. The title for these events is blank, but the canned dates and time do appear. The new event shows up at the bottom titled “Violin Lesson.”



14:00 - 16:30	 
14:30 - 18:00	 
15:00 - 18:00	 
14:00 - 16:30 <b>Soccer Game vs Mockingbird</b>	 
14:30 - 18:00 <b>Dinner and Movie</b>	 
15:00 - 18:00 <b>Drama Rehearsal</b>	 
16:30 - 17:30 <b>Violin Lesson</b>	 

I created another new event titled “Another Violin Lesson” and get the following result where the number of blank events doubled.



14:00 - 16:30	 
14:30 - 18:00	 
15:00 - 18:00	 
14:00 - 16:30	 
14:30 - 18:00	 
15:00 - 18:00	 
16:30 - 17:30	 
14:00 - 16:30 <b>Soccer Game vs Mockingbird</b>	 
14:30 - 18:00 <b>Dinner and Movie</b>	 
15:00 - 18:00 <b>Drama Rehearsal</b>	 
16:30 - 17:30 <b>Violin Lesson</b>	 
16:30 - 17:30 <b>Another Violin Lesson</b>	 

These blank events disappear after I switch days in the calendar. However, this list of events is really long and reveals that your margins are obviously not large enough at the bottom of the page. The screenshot shows the scrollbar already at the bottom of the page; it looks like there could potentially be events after “Another Violin Lesson,” but the user cannot tell because you cannot scroll down beyond that last event.

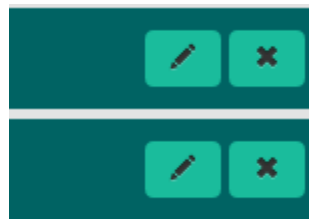


## 12. Accidentally Deleting an Event?

Heuristic: Error Prevention (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: Minor

What happens if I accidentally click the “x” icon instead of the pencil icon when I am trying to edit an event? The two buttons are really close to each other, as shown in the screen shot. The event would get deleted from the calendar, but is there a way of retrieving it? Do you have an undo button?

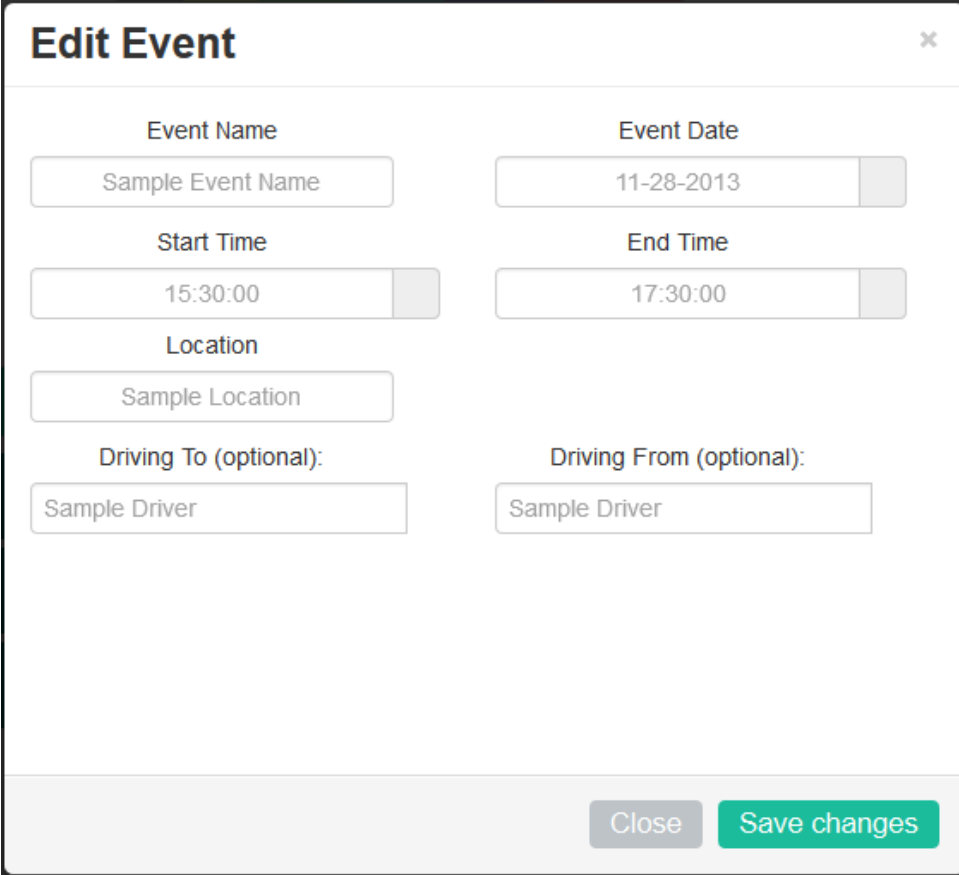


### 13. Defaults for Editing Existing Events

Heuristic: Recognition, Not Recall (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: Minor

When I want to edit an event, do I need to refill all of the details? Which fields get replaced and which do not? I suggest having the fields pre-filled based on the details already stored in each of the events. This way, the user can know what fields need updating instead of looking at another blank form.



The image shows a screenshot of a web form titled "Edit Event" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The form contains several input fields, each with a label above it and a pre-filled value. The fields are arranged in two columns. The first column contains "Event Name" (Sample Event Name), "Start Time" (15:30:00), "Location" (Sample Location), and "Driving To (optional):" (Sample Driver). The second column contains "Event Date" (11-28-2013), "End Time" (17:30:00), and "Driving From (optional):" (Sample Driver). At the bottom right of the form, there are two buttons: "Close" (grey) and "Save changes" (green).

Field Label	Pre-filled Value
Event Name	Sample Event Name
Event Date	11-28-2013
Start Time	15:30:00
End Time	17:30:00
Location	Sample Location
Driving To (optional):	Sample Driver
Driving From (optional):	Sample Driver

#### 14. Color Scheme

Heuristic: Aesthetic & Minimalist Design (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: Minor

The color scheme confuses me a little bit because the color for the calendar could potentially be the same as one of the colors used to represent a family member. If the calendar itself incorporates colors for events of particular family members, then the calendar should probably be a more neutral color. Moreover, all of the colors of the family members are extremely bold and therefore hard on the eyes, even if it is just a small strip that contains all of the color. Some of the text is also difficult to read (black text on purple button) so that should be fixed, especially when all of the buttons are toggled as shown in the screen shot of the family members below.



#### 15. Toggling Members of the Family

Heuristic: Visibility of System Status (Nielsen Heuristics)

Severity: Minor

The toggling of colors is confusing. I am not always sure when I have “selected” a family member and when I have not because the colors are not very consistent, as shown in the screenshot below where some members are toggled and some are not. It looks like multiple family members can be selected simultaneously, which I assume was done intentionally so that you can see overlapping schedules. Because I do not actually see any change in your prototype as a result of the selection, it would be nice to see how the selection and the colors affect the calendar and the website.

As a suggestion for the toggle and the color scheme, you might want to make the calendar gray/silver while making the colors for the family members different colors. It would be very similar to Google calendar where different calendars can be seen simultaneously but represented by specific colors. This will give some external consistency.



## 16. Help/Documentation

Heuristic: Help & Documentation

Severity: Cosmetic

There is no help or documentation. I don't know if you really need this, but if there are extra features to the calendar that you plan on implementing, it might be a good idea to add a help tab in your top navigation bar.

## 17. Contacts Tab

Heuristic: Track State (Tog's First Principles)

Severity: Major

I wish I could have seen the Contacts tab so that I know what kind of contacts I have – are the contacts other parents? Other families? If by parents, do you group the mom/dad of the same family together? What kind of information do you have for them? Shared activities with your own kids? I hope that this will all be implemented in GR5 because it seems to be a crucial part of the webpage.

There is no screenshot for this because the Contacts tab is not active in the prototype.