



Facebook Marketplace: Usability testing report

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SO, WHAT IS FACEBOOK MARKETPLACE?

“Buy or sell new and used items easily on Facebook Marketplace, locally or from businesses. Find great deals on new items shipped from stores to your door.”

- Facebook

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This usability testing aims to understand the necessary improvements that Facebook Marketplace should implement to keep consumers engaged and increase the customer retention rate through a set of predefined scenarios.

This report will provide the list of adjustments (e.g., use icons and web-page layout strategically) that Facebook Marketplace could make to keep and attract (more) customers.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



The study revealed that there are **6 positive** and **5 negative** features that Facebook Marketplace could address to improve user experience

Positive

- (P1) Image-centric display
- (P2) Geographic-based
- (P3) Easy recognize filter function
- (P4) Recognizable search box
- (P5) Linkage to other Facebook functions
- (P6) Clear visibility system of status

Negative

- (N1) Design conflicts
- (N2) Search function problem
- (N3) System status problem
- (N4) Problem with pre-populated messages
- (N5) Preview page problems



METHODOLOGY

THE TWO METHODS ...



Used similar scenarios that came with pre-determined set of tasks for the two testing studies.

Part I. Moderated Testing

- + N = 5
- + Semi-structured Interview

Part II. Unmoderated Testing

- + Likert-scale and open-ended questions

USER EVALUATION METRIC



Used the Nielsen Heuristic Evaluation as a guideline for the analysis and group the findings



- H1 Visibility of System Status
- H2 Match Between the System and the Real World
- H3 User Control and Freedom
- H4 Consistency and Standards
- H5 Error Prevention
- H6 Recognition Rather than Recall
- H7 Flexibility and Ease of Use
- H8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design
- H9 Help Users Recognise, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors
- H10 Help and Documentation

DEMOGRAPHIC



ID	Gender	Experience on Facebook Marketplace
P01	M	None
P02	F	Some
P03	M	Some
P04	M	Frequent user
P05	F	Some

THE PREDETERMINED SCENARIO

Scenario 1. Search for an item

Scenario 2. Contact a seller about the listed items

Scenario 3. Listing an item for sale

THE PREDETERMINED SCENARIO 1



Description: Search Facebook Marketplace for a TV you like that is under \$150. Adjust the filters to find ones closer to you and in a certain price range

Goal: Search for an item



The only difference between moderated and unmoderated testing was that in moderated testing, we asked participants to search for **a type of item that they previously mentioned liking**

THE PREDETERMINED SCENARIO 2



Goal: Contact a seller about the listed items



Description: In this scenario, imagine you want to contact the seller about the selected item that will answer these questions:

- + Delivery method
- + The condition of the item
- + Negotiate for discount

The only difference between moderated and unmoderated testing was that in unmoderated testing, we asked participants to focus on a **monitor** that they like

THE PREDETERMINED SCENARIO 3



Goal: Listing an item for sale



Description: In this scenario, imagine you are the seller because you are moving to another city for work. You want to list your ACER computer monitor. The condition is: Used-Like New, color: Black, and the price: \$100. Due to the cost of shipping, buyers will need to pick up locally. You also want to hide the listing from friends on Facebook

The only difference between moderated and unmoderated testing, we asked participants to list a **different item with fixed criteria** (i.e., device condition, color, price, delivery method)



FINDING SUMMARY

POSITIVE FINDINGS



What the participants
enjoyed

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(P1) Image-centric display

Users could easily compare products with pictures of products



“I think I like the most the ways the items are displayed is very like image-centric, so it was easy for me to scroll through and not wasting time looking on things that I did not want because I can see them clear and I knew right away if I like it or not.” - P02

Marketplace

Search Marketplace

- Browse all
- Live shopping
- Notifications
- Inbox
- Cart
- Buying
- Selling

+ Create new listing

Filters
State College, Pennsylvania · Within 40 miles

- Categories
- Vehicles
- Property Rentals

Today's picks

State College · 40 mi



\$375
Couch/Sofa for sale
University Park, PA



\$500
Grey Sectional Couch
Bellefonte, PA



\$1,500
2 Beds 1 Bath Apartment
Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) Housing...



\$800
2 Beds 1 Bath Apartment
Bellefonte, PA



\$175



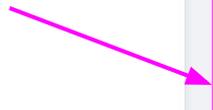
\$100



\$40



FREE



TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(P2) Geographic-based design

Users could easily compare products with pictures of products



“The one like the listings that say that they can be shipped to you, overall, I like that. You know it's still geographic or like location- based so like I can look at things that are available nearby and you know it's probably like all the shipping ones it's probably more a function of like we're state colleges and like what's available in State College as opposed to like”.

Marketplace



Search Marketplace

Browse all

Live shopping

Notifications

Inbox

Cart

Buying

Selling

+ Create new listing

Filters

State College, Pennsylvania · Within 40 miles

Categories

Vehicles

Property Rentals

Apparel

Classifieds



22 items were just added to your buy and sell groups.

3d

Today's picks

State College · 40 mi



\$1,500
3 Bedroom Home for rent
State College, PA



\$1,495
3 Beds 2 Baths Townhouse
State College, PA



\$19,900
3 Beds 1 Bath House
Moshannon, PA



\$20
Move out sale!
State College, PA



\$750
1 Bed 1 Bath Apartment
State College, PA



\$1,468
3 Beds 2 Baths Apartment
State College, PA



\$90,000
1 Bed 1 Bath - House
New Millport, PA



\$165,000
3 Beds 2 Baths - House
Duncansville, PA



TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(P3) Easy recognize filter function

“Consumers can set a range of filters, some primary filter such as distance and price are useful. The search feature is great and relevant.”



Marketplace



Search Marketplace

Inbox

Cart

Buying

Selling

+ Create new listing

Filters

State College, Pennsylvania · Within 40 miles

Categories

Vehicles

Property Rentals

Apparel

Classifieds

Electronics

2

Change location



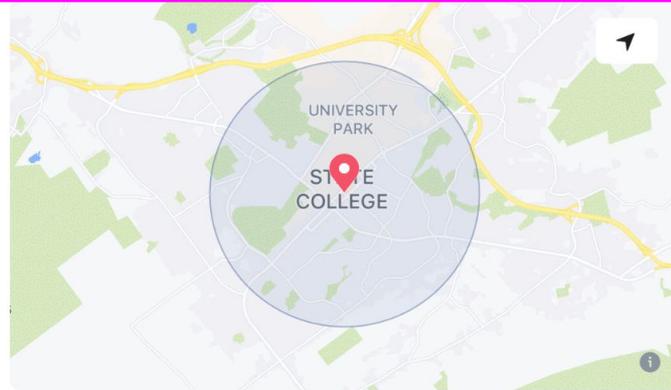
Search by city, neighborhood or ZIP code.

Location

State College, Pennsylvania

Radius

2 miles



Apply

\$850

1 Beds 1 Baths
State College, PA

FREE

Baldwin piano
State College, PA

\$750

2171-3 Mountainview Ave in State
College
State College, PA

\$92,000

Perry County Paradise
Loysville, PA

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(P3) Easy recognize filter function -from **unmoderated testing, question:**



“Overall, in a few words or more, please describe your thoughts on which part of the Facebook Marketplace you like?”

Participants answer:

Participant 2

21 Apr 2022 10:06 PM UTC

I like how many ways that you can filter you can filter results

Participant 3

21 Apr 2022 10:04 PM UTC

It was a little difficult to work on my iphone but i figured it out quickly

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM

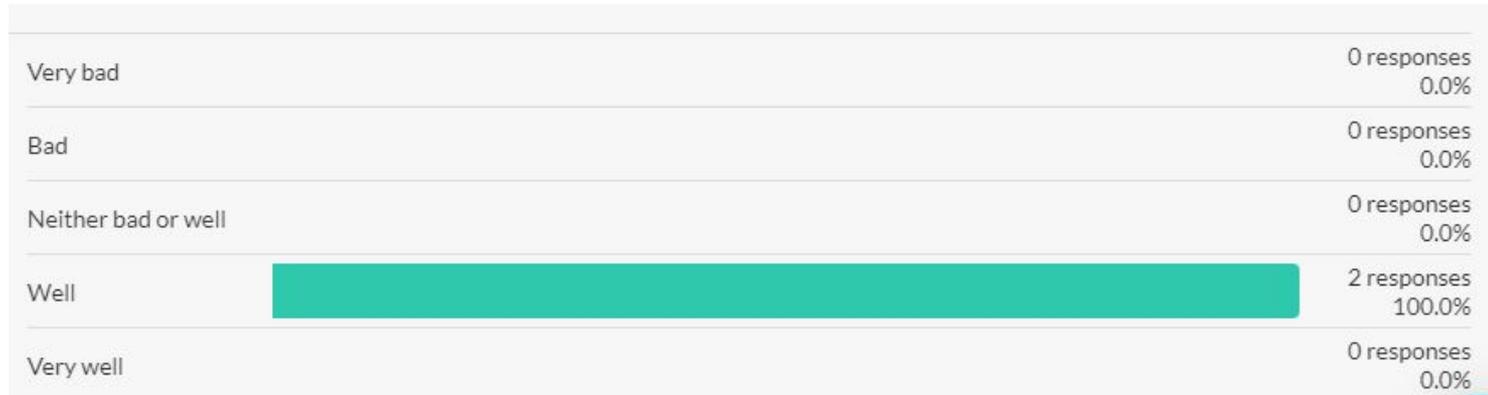


(P3) Easy recognize filter function -from **unmoderated testing, question:**



“Do you think filter functions for location and price works well?”

Participants answer:



TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(P3) Easy recognize filter function -from **unmoderated testing, question:**



“Overall, how easy was it to find an item on the Facebook Marketplace?”

Participants answer:

Extremely difficult	0 responses 0.0%
Difficult	0 responses 0.0%
Neither easy or difficult	0 responses 0.0%
Easy	0 responses 0.0%
Very easy	3 responses 100.0%

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(P4) Recognizable search box

“I think I liked the straightforwardness of it, I like how you have a list of things that are on sale right in front of you, and when you visited the website, the search bar is very clearly on the left” - P03

Marketplace



Q Search Marketplace



Browse all



Live shopping



Notifications



Inbox



Cart



Buying



Selling

+ Create new listing

Filters

State College, Pennsylvania · Within 40 miles

Categories



Vehicles



Property Rentals

COVID-19: Buyers and Sellers

Please follow local guidelines about physical distancing and staying home.

Learn more



New for you



22 items were just added to your buy and sell groups.

• 3d

Today's picks

State College · 40 mi



\$1,500

3 Bedroom Home for rent

State College, PA



\$1,495

3 Beds 2 Baths Townhouse

State College, PA



\$19,900

3 Beds 1 Bath House

Moshannon, PA



\$20

Move out sale!

State College, PA

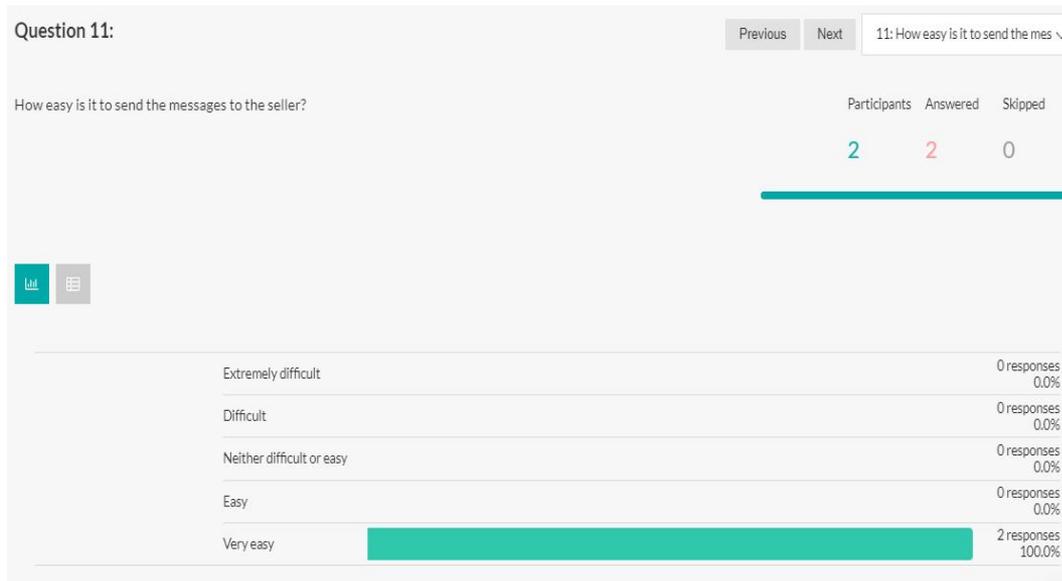


TASK 2: CONTACTING A SELLER



Overall Easiness of Sending Messages to Sellers - from unmoderated testing

According to unmoderated testing result, overall, users think it is very easy to send messages to the seller.



TASK 2: CONTACTING A SELLER



(P5) Linkage to other Facebook functions

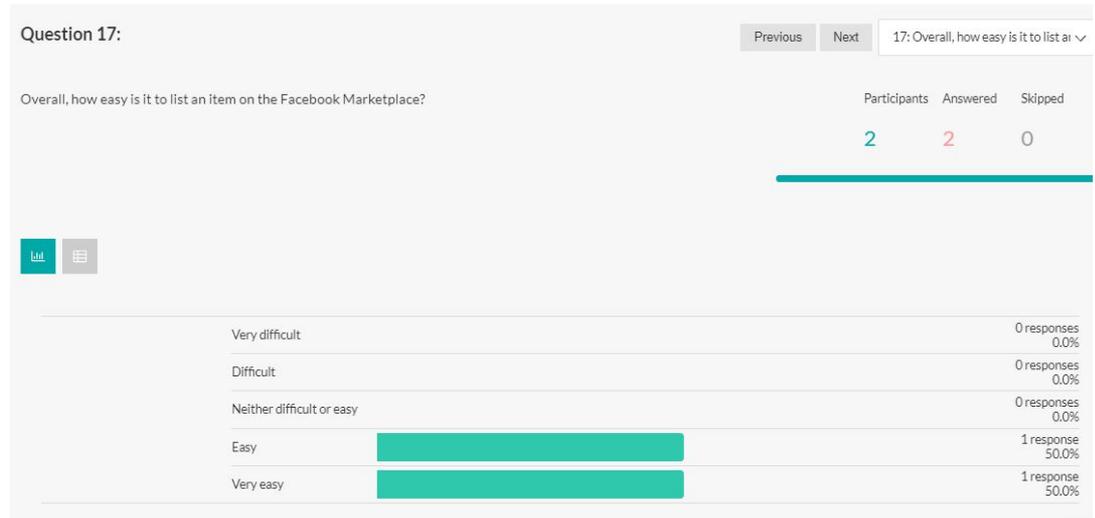
“I think the integration with Messenger, it is an app, is interesting, and I think also in that way having it linked to Facebook accounts. If it was maybe less anonymous than using eBay or something. So it does feel different than those because of the Messenger integration... theoretically you're buying from actual people instead of just accounts.” - P01

TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



Overall Easiness of Listing an Item -from unmoderated testing

According to unmoderated testing result, overall, users think it is easy/very easy to list an item on Facebook Marketplace

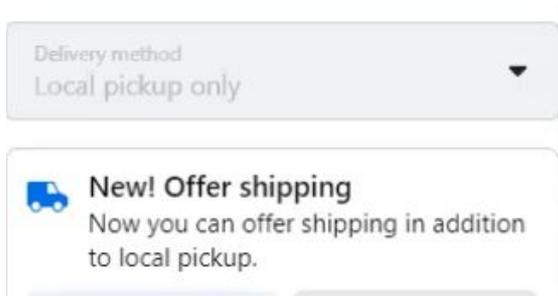


TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



(P6) Clear visibility system of status

1. The use of grayed-out box and other option below it to prevent errors



2. The preview of listed item for sale

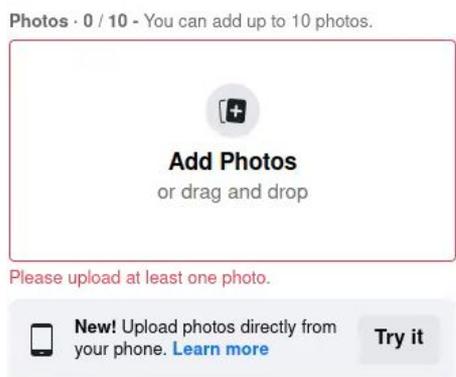
“You can see a preview of your ad here, so that’s a plus.” - P05

TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



(P6) Clear visibility system of status

3. System provided feedback when users did not fulfilled certain tasks



“I **clicked it**, even though it was **blanked out**. Seems I’m missing a **photo**.” - P03

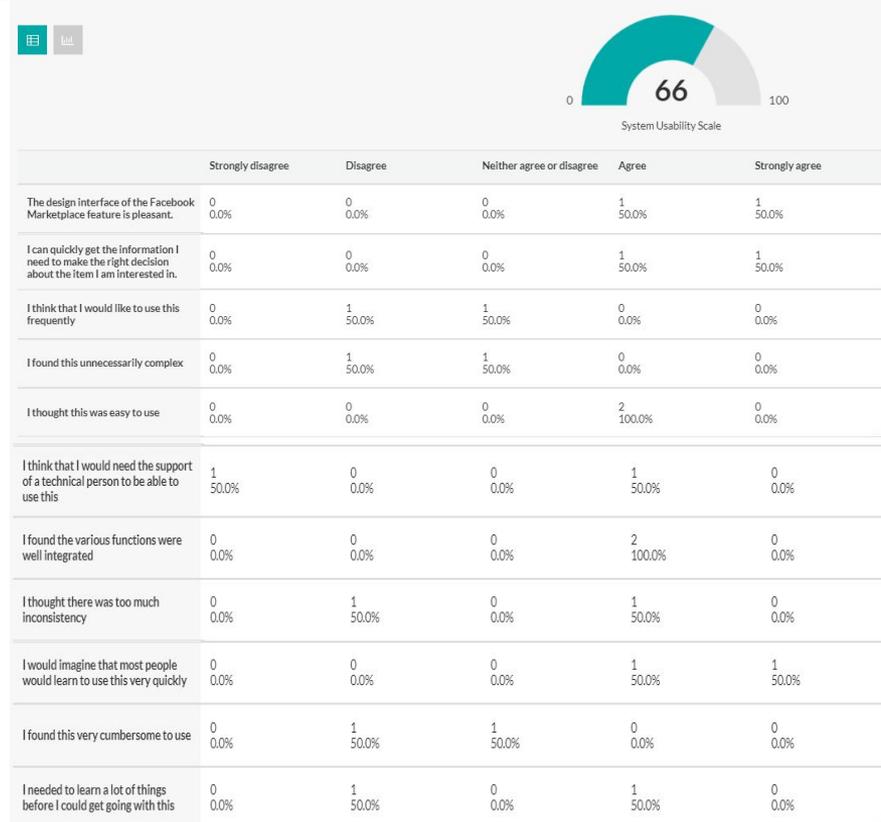
OVERALL EXPERIENCE



Overall Using Experience - from unmoderated testing

In the unmoderated testing, overall, users responded that the experience of using Facebook Marketplace is kind of easy and pleasant.

However, although it is easy to use, users did not indicate that they would use it frequently.



NEGATIVE FINDINGS



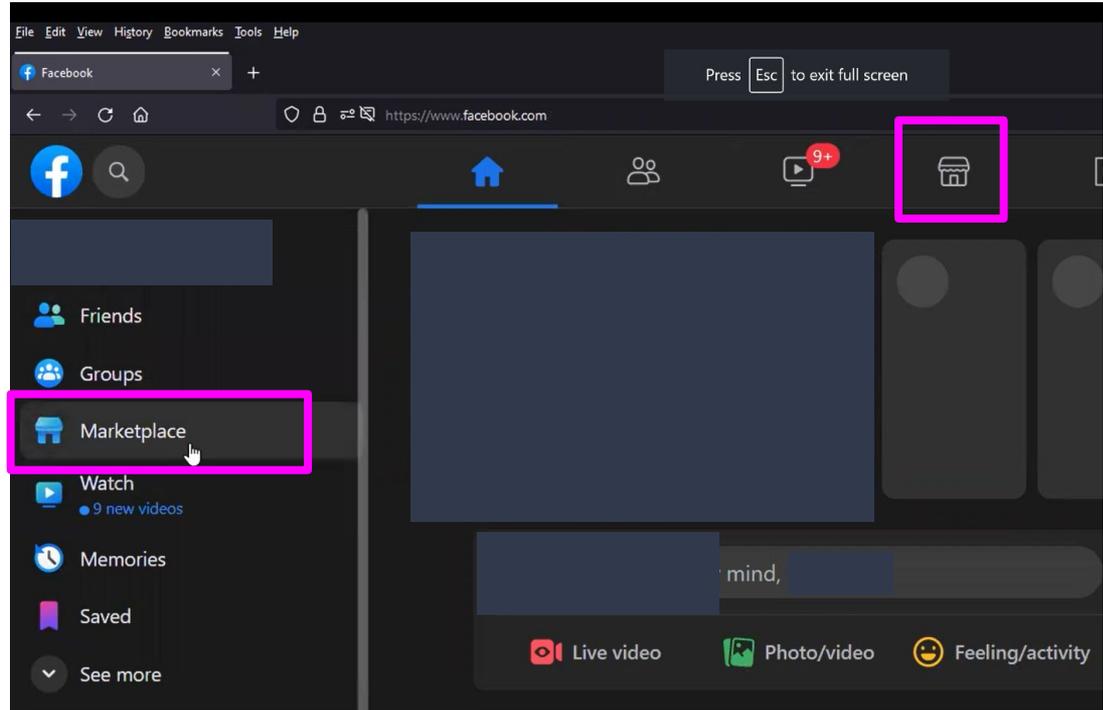
What participants found unpleasant

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(N1) Design conflicts

“I’ve always thought that I’ve had trouble getting to Marketplace ... there’s not a clear button to click. I think I forgot them almost every time.” - P01



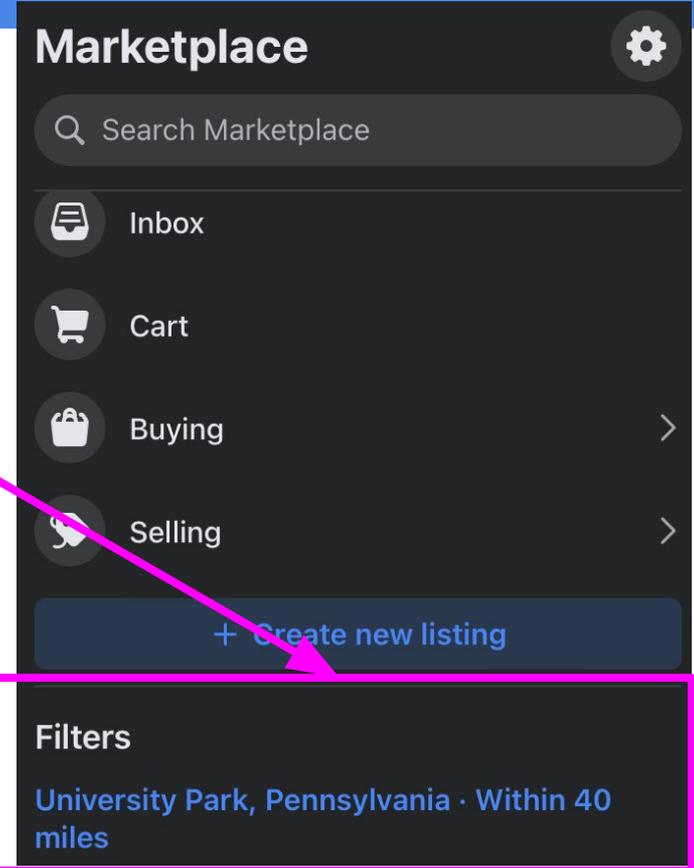
TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(N1) Design conflicts (cont.)

The choice of text color

“... the text color here is kind of weird because everything else is [white] like the price is white and blank is white. ... it's weird that the distance filter is blue because nothing else is blue except for the ‘Notify Me’ button.” - P01



TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(N2) Search Function Problem

Two participants (P01, P04) could not find specific items

1. The limitation in using/searching with keywords

“I'm also not sure there may be an option for keyword searches so I think it would be harder to find a specific set of DVDs or a particular kinds of DVDs... If you're looking for like a specific genre, so if I were just looking for like superhero DVDs, like I think maybe that would come up, but it seems like it's more like by the type of item instead of the genre of item.” - P01

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(N2) Search Function Problem

(cont.)

2. The geolocation-based feature narrowed down the search area, reducing item relevance in search results



“What I'm looking forward to [is] getting marketplace to show me what I'm looking for, but again, that can be a function of ... being in State College [which] means they're not being a ton of options related to what exactly I'm looking for.” - P4

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(N3) System Status Problem

The users are not sure what they are supposed to do to run the price filter, since there is no button like “Apply.”

A screenshot of the Facebook Marketplace search results page. The page is titled "Marketplace Search results" and shows a search for "i5-2520M". The filters section is highlighted with a pink box and a pink arrow pointing to the "Price" filter. The "Price" filter is set to "\$10" to "\$100". Other filters include "Chino Hills, California - Within 40 miles", "Sort by", "Delivery method", "Condition", "Date listed", and "Availability". The "Categories" section shows "Vehicles". The search results display four laptop listings: a Lenovo Thinkpad T420 for \$45, a Dell Latitude E6220 for \$229.99, a Dell Latitude E6420 for \$240, and a Core i5 3570k for \$10. The "Apply" button is missing from the filter interface.

Marketplace
Search results
i5-2520M
Notify Me
+ Create new listing
Filters
Chino Hills, California - Within 40 miles
Sort by
Price
\$10 to \$100
Delivery method
Condition
Date listed
Availability
Categories
Vehicles

\$45
Lenovo Thinkpad T420 - Intel Core i5 2520M 8GB 320GB Windows 1...
Los Angeles, CA

\$229.99
Dell Latitude E6220 12.5 Laptop Intel Core i5 (2520M) 2.50GHz 8...
Ships to you

\$240
Dell Latitude E6420 | i5-2520m | 8GB RAM | 256GB SSD | Windo...
Westminster, CA

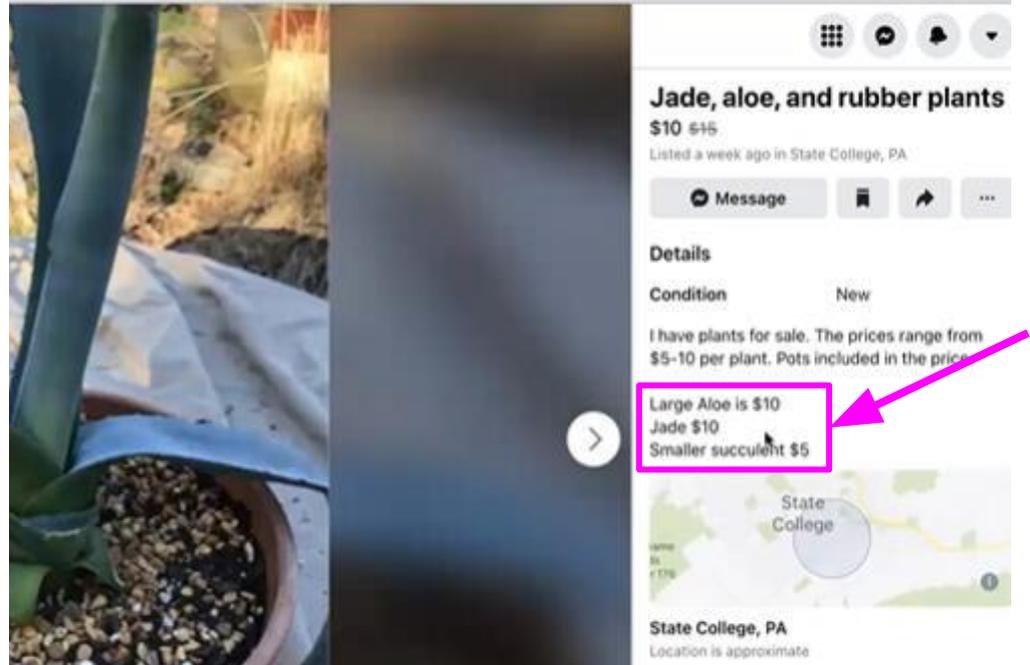
\$10 \$50
Core i5 3570k
Westminster, CA

TASK 1: BROWSING FOR AN ITEM



(N3) System Status Problem (cont.)

Several items are included in one post and are listed with different prices.



TASK 2: CONTACTING A SELLER

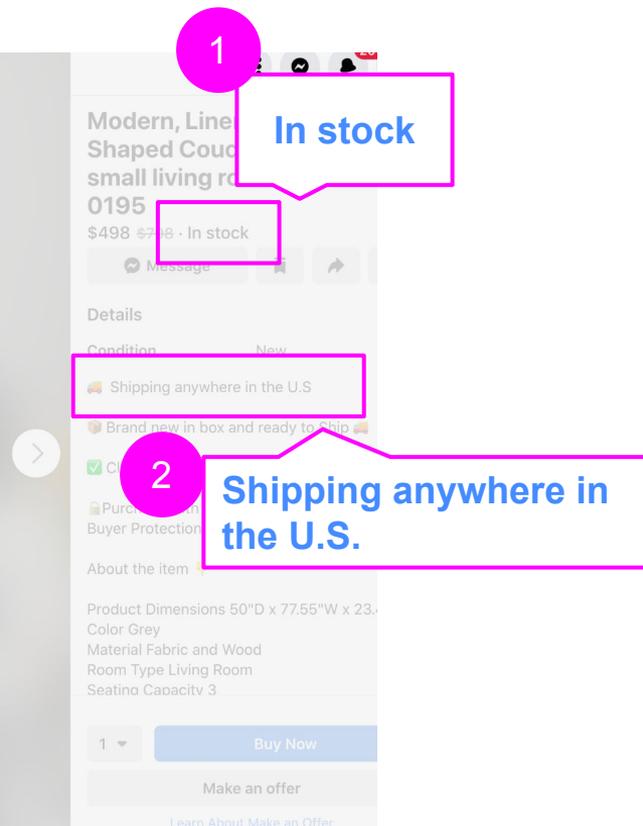
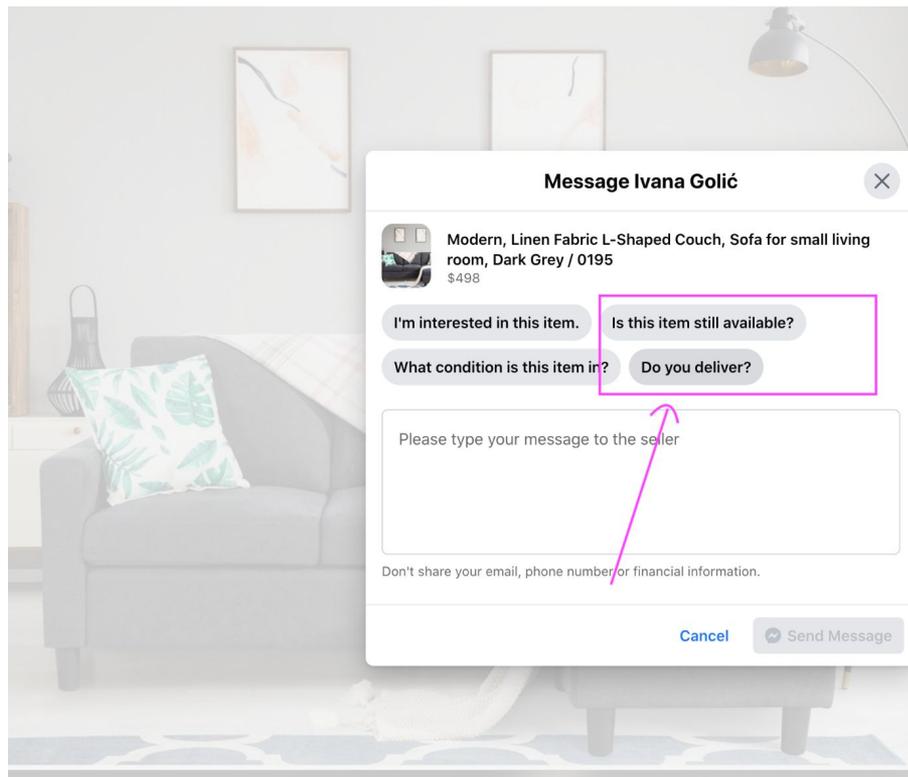


(N4) Problem with pre-populated messages

There is a need for a more context-based pre-populated message. This way, it will reduce redundancy



“‘Is this item still available?’ seems like an odd question because I assume that wouldn't be a marketplace if it weren't available... Two of these [Is this item still available? Do you deliver?] seem slightly redundant because it also says estimated delivery.” - P1



TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



(N5) Preview Page Problems

The preview page confused participants

1. Mismatch between the system and the real world
2. Delivery info
3. Challenge in recover from errors
4. Categories

TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



(N5) Preview Page Problems (cont.)

- Mismatch between the system and the real world

The misalignment between system design and how users' browse information

“The first part is weird because I feel like I want to click over here [right side preview window], but it actually looks like I'm clicking over here [left side window] so that's a little strange... my eye is drawn to the middle of the screen.”

- P01

Marketplace

Item For Sale

Save draft

Public

Photos - 0 / 10 - You can add up to 10 photos.

Add Photos
or drag and drop

New! Upload photos directly from your phone. [Learn more](#) Try it

Title

Price

Next

Preview

Your Listing Preview
As you create your listing, you can preview how it will appear to others on Marketplace.

Title
Price
Listed a few seconds ago in State College

Details
Description will appear here.



State College
Location is approximate

Seller Information [Seller details](#)

Message

TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



(N5) Preview Page Problems (cont.)

- Delivery info

“I don’t see a place to put the [delivery] information so I think I’ll put that in the description.” - P03

“Why is this blocked out? I’m not sure if it’s selected or is it asking me to set up delivery?” - P05

TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



(N5) Preview Page Problems (cont.)

- Challenge to recover from errors

“I didn't like that they listed groups and I also didn't like that once you joined the group, you couldn't leave it.” - P03

Marketplace

List in more places

List Publicly

- Marketplace**
Marketplace items are public and can be seen by anyone on or off Facebook.

When you hide listings from friends, you crosspost to groups.

List in Your Groups

You can list in up to 20 groups.

Suggested Groups You Should Join

- Bellefonte online community yard...**
10.5K members
[Visit group](#)
- State College Online Yard Sale**
34.8K members
[Join group](#)
- State College PA Online Yard Sale - ...**
27.4K members
[Join group](#)
- State College Sell or Swap**
10.8K members
[Join group](#)
- Centre County Sell or Swap - Non-Kid**

You joined Bellefonte online...

Preview



Acer Monitor
\$100
Listed a few seconds ago in Washington

Details

Condition: Used - Like New

This monitor is black. This item is available for pickup only.



Washington
Location is approximate

Seller Information [Seller details](#)



[Message](#)

Visit group

Join group

TASK 3: LISTING AN ITEM FOR SALE



(N5) Preview Page Problems (cont.) - Item Categories

“Okay, this is a little hard to find, like the exact category. Is that computer components?” - P05

A screenshot of a mobile application interface for listing an item for sale. The top bar shows 'Marketplace' and 'Item For Sale' with a 'Save draft' button. Below the title is a list of categories: 'Antiques & Collectibles', 'Arts & Crafts', 'Auto Parts & Accessories', 'Baby Products', 'Books, Movies & Music', 'Cell Phones & Accessories', and 'Clothing, Shoes & Accessories'. A pink arrow points to the category list area. To the right is a 'Your Listing Preview' section with the text: 'As you create your listing, you can preview how it will appear to others on Marketpl...'.

Marketplace

Item For Sale Save draft

- Antiques & Collectibles >
- Arts & Crafts >
- Auto Parts & Accessories >
- Baby Products >
- Books, Movies & Music >
- Cell Phones & Accessories >
- Clothing, Shoes & Accessories >

Category
Time to search

Your Listing Preview

As you create your listing, you can preview how it will appear to others on Marketpl

WHICH PART USERS DO NOT LIKE



From unmoderated testing result, we can see that users described two major things they do not like:

- Hard to find information about item sellers, and hard to trust sellers.
- Hard to find certain feature when searching on phone.

Question 23: Previous Next 23: Overall, in a few words or

Overall, in a few words or more, please describe your thoughts on which part of the Facebook Marketplace you did not like?

	Participants	Answered	Skipped
	2	2	0

Participant 2
21 Apr 2022 10:06 PM UTC
Hard to find any information on the seller. Hard to trust

Participant 3
21 Apr 2022 10:04 PM UTC
I couldn't find the used-like new using the drop down arrow when searching for the phone



RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

TO ADDRESS ...



N1: Design conflicts

- (1) Introduce the Marketplace icon and signs strategically that allow users to pinpoint information intuitively
- (2) Use a consistent format for fillable fields (e.g., dropdown, button)

N2: Search Function Problem

- (1) Depending on the category of items, provide category label suggestions with user friendly terms
→ give users the autonomy to narrow their search results to be more relevant
- (2) Make use of expanded location range for the item

TO ADDRESS ...



N3: Visibility system of status

Implement features that allow sellers to post multiple items with pictures and prices

N4: Pre-populated messages

Improve the recommendation system with machine learning, for example, review the seller's post, then pick out delivery information, so the recommended message is not redundant



N5: Preview page problems

- + Mismatch between the system and the real world
 - × Arrange information that align with the way people browse information
- + Delivery info
 - × Instead of grayed out delivery field, give users an option, such as a checkbox that will determine if users will see the delivery option that is not in-person pick up



N5: Preview page problems (cont.)

+ Challenge to recover from errors

- × Present the suggested groups to listed item for sale after publishing the post → prevent user accidentally joining them, OR
- × Provide the “Leave group” button

+ Item Categories

- × Use machine learning technique to generate the category label for the post based on the title



LIMITATIONS



- × **(L1)** Relied heavily on moderated testing data
- × **(L2)** Participants needed to have a FB account already
- × **(L3)** Diversity of participants is limited



CONCLUSION



- × Facebook Marketplace is in a good position to dominate the online thrift market, but needs to update a few features so that they make sense to customers and don't alienate users
- × Long-term, Facebook Marketplace should focus on customer retention and capitalize on the large Facebook customer base



THANK YOU!

× Any questions? Comments? Concerns?