

msnexperience

MSN My Apps User Research Study

Final Report

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This document was prepared by:

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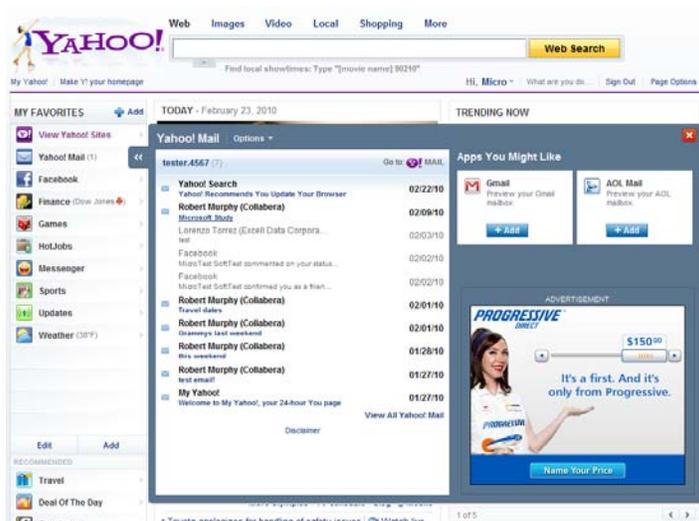
Executive Summary

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to learn about user’s current behaviors, needs, and pain points that relate to app bars, and to assess the usability, discoverability and desirability of the current implementation of the MSN My Apps and Yahoo! Quick View. Observations and feedback were collected as participants interacted with the feature on both sites, and an in-depth discussion took place, exploring participants’ impression and interest with the feature. A total of 8 participants were recruited from the Puget Sound area, between the ages of 19 and 53. One half of the participants were active MSN users, and the other half were active Yahoo users. Participants were categorized as Information Seekers (3), Functional Organizers (2), Connected Socializers (3).



MSN My Apps Feature



Yahoo Quick View Feature

General My Apps Findings

Overall, the **MSN My Apps** feature received mostly positive responses from the participants. Some common terms used to describe this feature were “quick”, “easy” and “convenient”, with one participant summing their experience up as “Everything I use on a computer is right there on one page. This makes it a simple and fast way to get to your things.”

Many participants (6 out of 8) **discovered** the MSN My Apps feature on their own, hovering their mouse over the feature or mentioning some of the applications available in the feature.

The **look and feel** of MSN My Apps received positive feedback from 5 out of 8 participants, with some describing it as “professional”, “attractive” and “nicely organized”. However other participants thought the feature appeared “boring” or “bland”, and could stand out more.

The **fly-out** in the MSN My Apps received positive feedback also, with some describing it as “sleek”, “nicely organized” and “easy on the eyes”. Most participants preferred the size of the MSN version, over the Yahoo version, although, some participants desired a larger view for email, Facebook and maps.

Most participants liked the **hover behavior** of MSN My Apps, and preferred the highlighting or slight movement of the icons in MSN over the Quick View pop-up in Yahoo. That said, many participants liked and desired Yahoo’s ability to link directly to the application.

All but one participant wanted to **customize** MSN My Apps by adding, removing and reordering applications, and including other email services.

All participants indicated they would **likely use** MSN My Apps either as a main or quick source to access information. One participant pointed out that they would probably use it, but not likely return to the Homepage any more frequently because of it.

An Emotional Outcome Questionnaire yielded an **average user score of 5.98 (out of 7)** for the MSN My Apps feature, achieving the 5.5 metric.

General Yahoo Quick View Findings

Yahoo provides access to various applications and sites, such as email, weather and Facebook, through their “My Favorites” navigation bar. For each application listed, there is an optional link to access the application through their Quick View feature.

During this session, none of the Yahoo participants used this Quick View feature until directed to do so; only one participant indicated they had used it in the past to access their email account.

To access applications, such as email or weather, participants simply clicked the direct link available in the “My Favorites” navigation bar, or another link on the Homepage.

None of the participants had used the Yahoo links to access Facebook; all participants indicated they go directly to the site through the URL or a bookmark.

After interacting with the Yahoo Quick View feature, feedback was mixed, but still leaned towards a positive experience. Some of the comments used to describe this feature were “really easy” and “one-stop webpage” but others used “impractical” and “a little obtrusive”.

Key Findings on Apps in MSN My Apps

The **email** application received mostly positive responses from participants. It was found to have more functionality than the Yahoo version, and for one task, seemed faster than going to Hotmail. Despite this, it still had limited functionality which some participants indicated would result in limited use.

- **What worked well**
 - All participants were able to sign into an email account.
 - All participants were able to read their email messages.
 - All participants were able to send an email message.
- **What can be improved**
 - One participant wanted the ability to sign-in from the fly-out display.
 - One participant wanted to be able to see the account ID displayed on the down-state.
 - The display of the time that a message was received can be improved: instead of showing how much time has passed, it could show the actual time it was received.
 - Participants provided an assortment of additional functionality they would like to see within this application.

Facebook was probably the most desirable application, but due to the limited functionality, tended to be the least engaging. Most Facebook users preferred the Yahoo version, with its additional information and abilities.

- **What worked well**
 - All participants were able to read the updates
 - All participants were able to post updates
- **What can be improved**
 - All participants had difficulty or hesitations connecting to their Facebook account. Some participants didn't realize there were multiple steps to connecting, and additionally, there was concern with the step “Allow MSN to update my profile”.

- Participants provided an assortment of additional functionality they would like to see within this application.

The **Weather** seemed to be the most engaging application within the feature, and tended to receive the most positive feedback. Participants commented on the amount of information available and preferred this version over the Yahoo version.

- **What worked well**

- All participants were able to view and read details about the local weather.
- All participants were able to use the drop-down to display weather conditions for other cities that were added to their drop-down list.
- Participants were also able to remove a city from the drop-down list.

- **What can be improved**

- When trying to add a new city to view the weather conditions, most participants looked for that function in the drop-down list. All but one participant eventually found the function under “Customize”. The remaining one participant needed assistance with this task.
- Participants found it frustrating to have to create a new city/location entry when trying to change temperatures from F to C.
- Linking off from the 10-day forecast listings to the main MSN weather page caused some confusion.
- One participant wanted a time reference with the weather, particularly when viewing conditions in other parts of the world.
- One participant thought the orange color used in the weather display was difficult to read.

The **Maps** application also received positive feedback, with participants exploring some functionality on their own.

- **What worked well:**

- All participants were able to view traffic conditions.
- All participants were able to access driving directions.

- **What can be improved**

- The maps display currently overlaps text and images on the Homepage. Providing a border around the map will allow for easier focus on the map itself.

Research Questions

- Concept
 - Do users understand the concept of the AppBar?
 - Does the terminology used make sense (“My Apps”)?
- Discoverability
 - Do users discover the feature on the Home Page?
 - Is the functionality apparent to the users?
- Home Page
 - Did the addition of this feature have a negative impact on normal Home Page functionality?
 - What would be the optimal position for this feature on the Home Page?
 - Do users notice duplicated content on the Home Page?
- Content
 - Is there an appropriate amount of content displayed in the Passive state?
 - Is there an appropriate amount of content displayed in the fly-out display?
 - Is there additional content users expect or would like to see?
- Customization
 - What type of customization might a user want with this type of feature?
 - Are there additional applications users may want?
 - Might users have a preferred application?
- Desirability
 - Do particular user segments find this feature more appealing over others?
 - Do Yahoo users find this feature desirable?
 - Would this feature convert Yahoo users?
 - Does this feature encourage more MSN Home Page usage?
- Functionality
 - How do users react to and interact with the functionality within the fly-out (i.e. tabs within the modules)
 - Is the overall functionality intuitive?
 - Is there different functionality the users would expect in this type of a feature?
- Look and Feel
 - What are users’ reactions to the visual look and feel of the feature?
 - What are users’ reactions to the size of the feature?
 - What are users’ reactions to the fly-out behavior?
- Performance
 - Is there any reaction to the page load time?

- Is there any reaction to the speed the applications perform at?
- Interaction
 - Do users tend to scan the feature for information, or do they interact with it?
 - How do users interact with the feature?
- Comparison w/Yahoo
 - How does the MSN AppBar compare to Yahoo AppBar?
 - Is there functionality provided by Yahoo that users desire on MSN?
 - Is there content provided by Yahoo that users desire on MSN?
 - Does the MSN AppBar appeal to Yahoo users?

Impact of results

The results from this study will influence the overall design and direction of the MSN My Apps, helping determine whether or not the feature adds value to the MSN site.

Participants

A total of 8 participants were employed for this study.

Standard Criteria

- No participants worked for Microsoft or a competitor company
- No participants had participated any other research in the last 6 months
- Participants had not taken part in any other market research activities for, at least, the last 6 months

Demographics

- 4 active MSN users, 4 active Yahoo users
- 4 males and 4 females
- Segmentation
 - Information Seekers (3)
 - Functional Organizers (2)
 - Connected Socializers (3)
- Ages ranged between 19 and 53
- All participants are US citizens

Please see the [recruitment screener](#) for full details of the recruitment criteria.

Methodology

Date and Location

This study took place in Bellevue, WA at the Bravern 2 Usability Labs, from Feb 4th - 9th 2010.

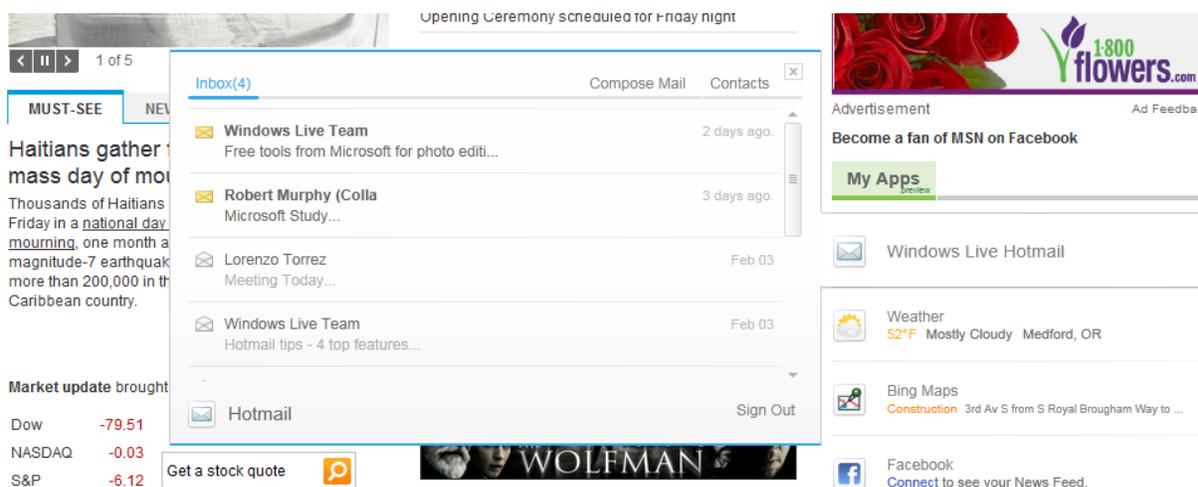
Testing Session

This was a 2-part study including:

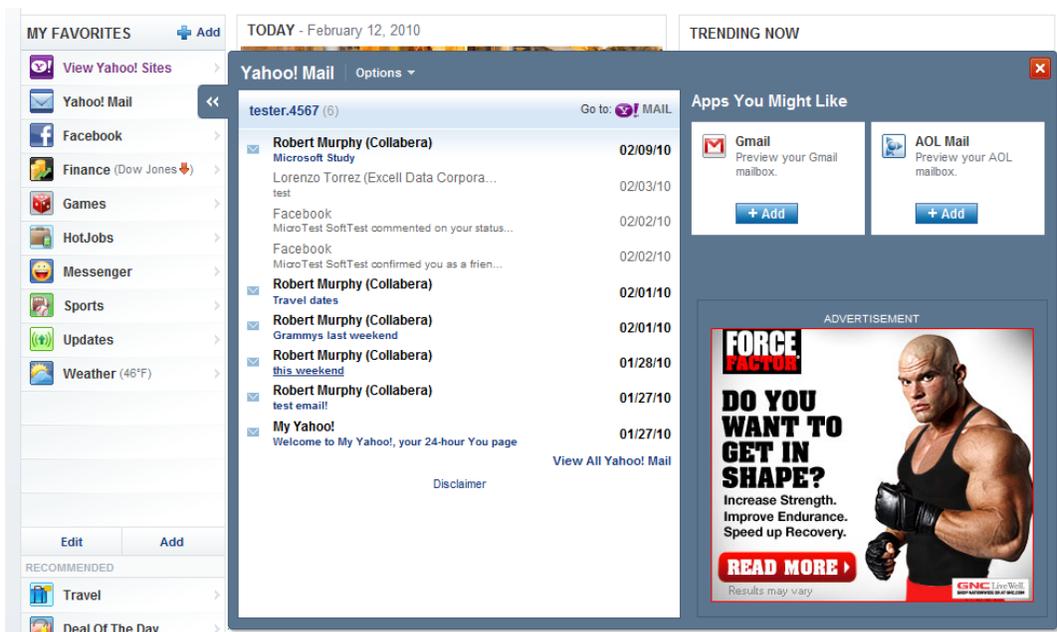
- Task-based usability session with think-aloud protocol, conducted on each the MSN My Apps feature and the Yahoo Quick View feature.
- Discussion session, inquiring into participants' impressions and interests with the features studied.

Study Materials

The materials used for this study were the current "Preview" version of the MSN home page, with the My Apps feature, and the current Yahoo site, with the current implementation of their Quick View feature.



MSN My Apps feature



Yahoo Quick View feature

Study Outline

1. Introduction (5 min)

- Moderator introduces her/himself
- Moderator explains the research process
 - Explains that a recording is being made
 - Explains that there are other people observing the study
 - Explains that what you say is important to us and that it helps improve our products
 - Explains that everything being said is completely confidential
- The NDA will be signed
- Moderator explains evaluation process
 - Think-aloud process
 - Feel free to ask questions
 - Simulate a real-life experience
 - Will be provide tasks to step through and complete

2. Internet Usage Interview (10 min)

- Moderator will discuss participant background as it relates to the following topics (refer to Questionnaire):
 - Participants' Home Page
 - Use of Yahoo or MSN
 - Email account(s)

- Social Networking account(s)
- Search Engine

3. Primary Home Page Usage (MSN or Yahoo) (5 min)

- Participants will use their respective primary portal (MSN or Yahoo)
- Moderator will instruct participants to perform some of their typical homepage activities
- (Yahoo users proceed to #5)

4. Exploratory Opportunity (MSN and Yahoo) (5 min x2)

MSN HP

- Both MSN and Yahoo Participants will be shown the MSN HP containing the AppBar
- Participants will be given the opportunity to discover and explore the AppBar
 - App Bar will be pointed out to participant, if they fail to discover it.

Yahoo HP

- MSN users will be shown the Yahoo HP, allowed the opportunity to explore

5. Task Specific Home Page Usage (MSN and Yahoo) (20 min x2)

- Moderator will direct participants through a series of tasks, having them interact with the respective feature on the site
- Participants will be asked for their feedback on their interaction with the feature, discussing their likes, dislikes and any comments about the experience
- Emotional Outcome Questionnaire
- (Repeat steps 4 & 5 for alternative HP)

6. Discussion and Comparison of Features (20 min)

- Moderator will discuss various aspects of the AppBar and the concept in general, probing participants' interests in the feature.
- Participants will also be asked to compare and discuss specific elements of the evaluated feature on each site.

7. Overall Comparison (5 min)

- Participants will be asked to provide and discuss any additional feedback they may have
- Participants will be asked their overall preference

8. Wrap Up (5 min)

- Thank participant
- Provide gratuity
- Answer any final questions

Task List

Part 5: Task Specific Home Page Usage

Email

- Sign In
- Read email notifications
- Send an email message

Facebook

- Sign In
- Read Facebook notifications
- Send a Facebook message

Weather

- Find details about the local weather
- Find the weather for a different city
- Find the weather forecast for a non-default city
- Remove a city from your list in weather (MSN only)

Maps (MSN Only)

- View traffic conditions
- Get driving directions

Metrics Collected

- Task Success
- User Comments
- Research Observations
- Responses to Discussion Questions
- Emotional Outcome Questionnaire

Test Configuration

Lab Testing - In lab testing configuration is as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Test machine | PC |
| Operating system: | Windows Vista |
| Screen resolution: | Higher then 1028x768 |
| Screen size | 17" |
| Browser: | IE 7.0 |
| Browser toolbars on display: | None |
| Internet Connection: | High-speed business connection |
| Remote software: | None |

Session Recordings

Recordings of the research sessions were taken by using Ovo running off the participant's computer. These can be viewed here:

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Detailed Findings and Recommendations

This section contains all the findings from the sessions, including participants’ current Homepage behavior, as collected from an interview and a demonstration by the participants; feedback and observations from participants’ interaction with the My Apps feature, including initial reactions and emotional outcomes; results of the task-based portion of the session, including issues that arose while completing the tasks using both MSN’s My Apps and Yahoo’s Quick View; and finally results of discussions that focused on key aspects of the feature on both the MSN and Yahoo sites.

Current Homepage Usage and Feature Access

To begin the study, all participants were asked various questions about their typical internet usage, focusing on Homepage activities, email and social networking accounts. Following that, participants were directed to their respective Homepage, where they were asked to spend a few minutes performing some of their common tasks on that page.

The following is a summary of those findings:

| | MSN (current blue version) | Yahoo |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Common Activities | Email, News, Videos, Sports, Searches, Movies | Email, News, Weather, Searches, Movies |
| Page Scroll | 4 participants (all) | 1 participant |
| Email Access | Top left Hotmail link | Top of page link My Favorites link |
| Facebook Access | Direct URL or Bookmark | Direct URL or Bookmark |

Current behavior on MSN homepage (V11)

Participant behavior was consistent with previous MSN homepage studies, with participants scanning the page for the latest news, videos, sports, and entertainment information. Participants primarily accessed Hotmail through the Hotmail link in the navigation.

Current behavior on Yahoo homepage

The current Yahoo homepage offered an app bar combined with the navigation, with a feature to preview content by clicking on “Quick View” (this was recently changed from a mouse over

display of preview content). Interestingly, even though Facebook was available through Yahoo's My Favorite links, none of the Yahoo participants actively used that method to access Facebook.

Other key findings related to Yahoo's Quick View include:

- Only one Yahoo user scrolled the page when asked to perform some common activities.
- Some Yahoo participants used the left-side My Favorites navigation links, but none of the participants used Yahoo's Quick View feature during this session to get a preview of the content, until they were prompted to do so.

When asked to direct their attention to and use the Yahoo Quick View feature, one participant indicated he had used it previously, but for email only. Other participants seemed unfamiliar with the feature, even surprised that it was available.

- None of these participants mentioned the previous My Favorites / Quick View behavior of triggering the fly-out with a mouse hover.
- One participant expressed frustration when accidentally triggering the Quick View, while trying to open a different link.

MSN My Apps General Experience

This section focuses on participants' awareness of, reactions to and feedback on the My Apps feature and the concept in general.

Discoverability of MSN My Apps

Prior to conducting tasks on the MSN My Apps feature, participants were given the opportunity to view the V14 MSN Homepage with My Apps loaded. Only one participant (MSN) had seen this version of the Homepage before. All participants scrolled up and down while looking at the page.

- 6 out of 8 participants discovered the My Apps feature. This was indicated by:
 - Moving their mouse over it and viewing the hover interaction
 - Identifying it as a method to access Hotmail or Facebook.
- No participant actually clicked on the feature, until asked to perform the tasks.

Initial Reactions to MSN My Apps

Participants were allowed a few minutes to explore the My Apps feature on their own, with a directive to click into some of the applications. After an initial exploration of My Apps, participants had mixed reactions to the feature.

- 5 participants had positive comments about the feature, describing it as “simple and quick”, “efficient” and “cool”.

“All the things I normally use” – P8

“Pretty similar to yahoo, but seems more catered to me” – P5

*“It gives you all your email and social networking right at your fingertips”
– P3*

- 3 other participants had neutral reactions, describing the feature as “interesting”, “It’s alright” and “More for social networking”.

“I don’t know if I would use it, I’m so used to my bookmarks” – P1

“It’s not very engaging, it doesn’t stand out.” – P4

Post Interaction Feedback

After spending some time performing tasks and further interacting with the My Apps feature, participants continued providing positive feedback, with 2 of the neutral participants providing more positive feedback than previously. Overall feedback included:

“I actually like it and would use it”

“Sometimes there’s too much – this simplified things”

Likes and Dislikes

When asked what they liked and disliked the most about the MSN My Apps feature, participants supplied almost twice as many “likes” as “dislikes” (25 likes, 13 dislikes).

Some of the likes included:

- Really like that weather/maps are straight to point
- The ability to switch back & forth between apps
- Nice easy access
- Everything’s right there

Some of the dislikes included:

- Size of (fly-out) display is too small
- Inability to customize
- Difficult to notice and focus on
- Facebook: would prefer additional content and functionality

When asked to use three words or characteristics to describe the My Apps feature, all the responses were positive words. Some of these included:

- Easy (3)
- Quick (3)
- Convenient (2)
- Cool (2)
- Modern
- Efficient
- Uncluttered
- To the point

A complete list of the Likes, Dislikes and descriptor words is available in [Appendix A](#).

Name of Feature

After interacting with the My Apps feature, participants were asked what they would call this type of a feature. The following are feature names proposed by the participants:

- *Side Bar (2 times)*
- *MSN Side Bar*
- *Apps*
- *Tool Bar (3 times)*
- *Quick Links*
- *Mini Apps*
- *Mini Nav*
- *Application Tool Bar*
- *Shortcuts*
- *MSN Links*
- *Menu*
- *Quick Access to Favorites*
- *Heads-Up Display*
- *Quick Menu*

Term “My Apps”

Participants were then asked what comes to mind when they hear the term “My Apps”. The following are their responses, with a common theme appearing of “personalization”:

- Personalized, ownership
- Widgets on a Mac computer
- All your applications in one spot
- Applications I can use to quickly navigate to things
- Different interactive websites where you can get specific information
- Personalized to what I want
- Personalize apps you use day to day
- Associate with games and other stuff on cell

Participants were finally asked what they think of the name “My Apps” for the feature they were interacting with. This received mostly positive feedback:

- I like it, it fits, it’s everything that I need to work with and keep things organized
- I wouldn't consider these “applications”
- A good name for it
- I like it, seems like it would fit
- I think so, you have everything people use daily
- I would get use to it
- I like it

Potential Usage of the My Apps feature

Towards the end of the session participants were asked to describe their potential use of the My Apps feature.

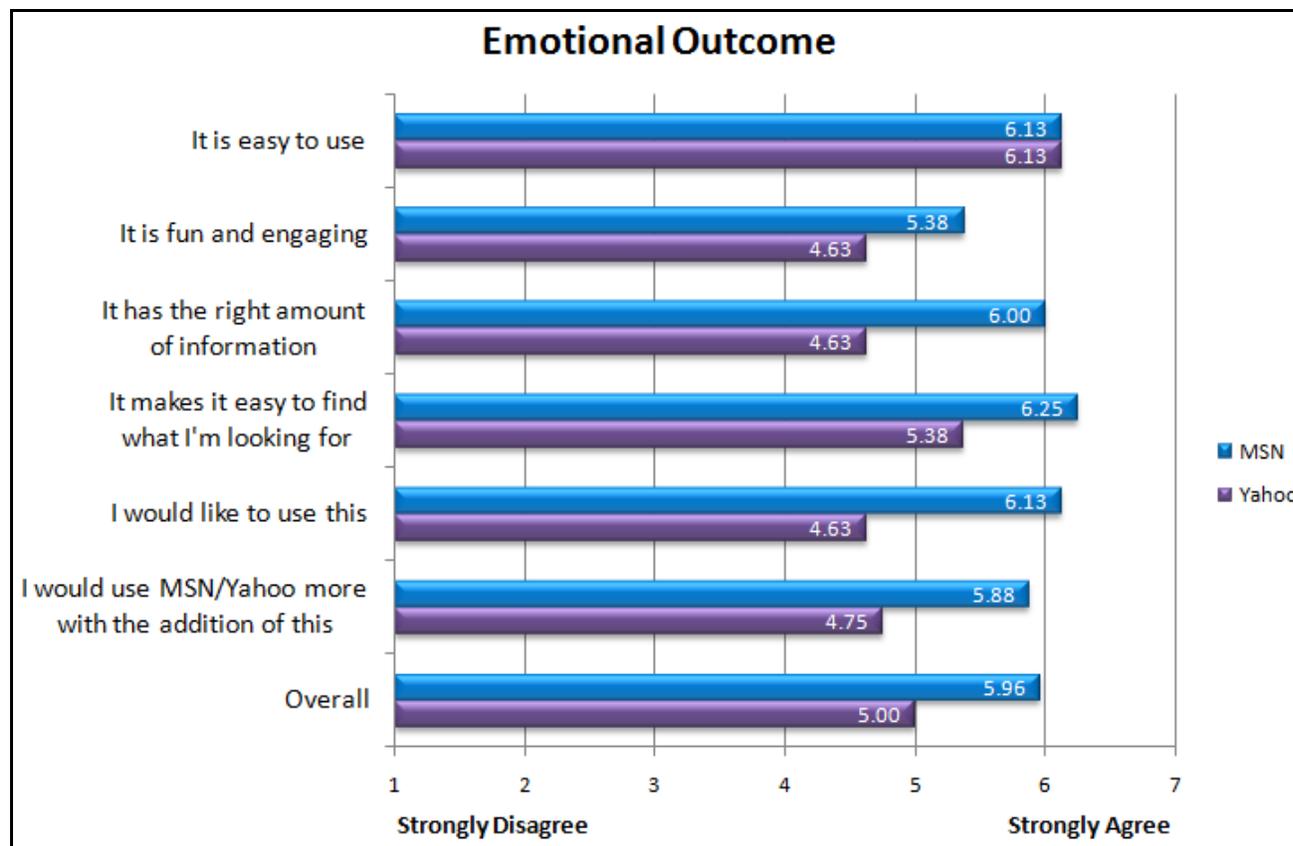
- 3 participants indicated they would likely use this feature daily
- 1 participant mentioned they may visit the main application sites less, if this feature were available
- 1 participant mentioned they may use MSN for a longer period of time, with the addition of this feature, but not likely to use MSN more frequently
- 1 participant indicated they would likely use this feature if Yahoo email were available

When asked specifically if they would use this feature as: 1) a main source of information, 2) a quick source of information, 3) to sign-in only, or 4) not use it at all:

- All 8 participants indicated they would at least use it as a “quick” source of information
- 5 participants indicated they would additionally use it as a “main” source of information

Emotional Outcome

After interacting with and completing the series of tasks on each site, MSN’s My Apps and Yahoo’s Quick View, participants were asked to complete an emotional outcome questionnaire.



Emotional outcome scores for the questionnaires.

A scale of 1 to 7 was used, with 1 being strongly disagree and 7 being strongly agree.

Results

- The responses to the questions are generally positive, with most scores being near or above 6. (Scores of 5.5+ are considered positive scores.) The one response that fell below this ranking was “It is fun and engaging.”
- As indicated in the display, MSN outperformed Yahoo in all but one response, “It is easy to use”, where the responses were equal.
- All but one response to the Yahoo questionnaire actually fell below the 5.5 ranking. The only response that passed the 5.5 ranking was “It is easy to use”, where the response were equal to MSN.
- There was no significant difference in questionnaire responses between participant segmentation. However, Yahoo participants tended to give higher ratings to both the MSN site and the Yahoo site, than MSN participants did. More details of ratings are available in [Appendix E](#).

Participant Feedback

The following is a summary of participant comments accompanying the questionnaire ratings for the MSN My Apps feature.

1) It is easy to use.

- Participants indicated the feature was “simple” “easy to use” and “self explanatory”.

2) It is fun and engaging.

- Participants enjoyed seeing “new” and “cool” and “fun” features, with references to the weather application also.
- However, two participants noted here, they felt the feature was not visually attractive, and could stand out more.

3) It has the right amount of information.

- Participants indicated the feature had “all the right stuff, but not overbearing”, and “has everything I need”.
- But some point out the lack of functionality within Facebook, and the lack of customization.

4) It makes it easy to find what I’m looking for.

- Some common comments were that it “has all the right links” and is “easy to find”.
- However two participants pointed out the difficulty in discovering the feature, “the location on the page was not easy to find”, and “once I found it, the apps were easy to use”.

5) I would like to use this.

- One participant indicated they would “use this daily,” another said it would “make life simpler and easier”. Once again, weather was mentioned in this context.
- Another mixed response was “it gets the job done, but not inspiring”.

6) I would use MSN more with the addition of this.

- A couple participants indicated they would likely spend more time on the page with the addition of this feature.
- A couple of Yahoo participants expressed interest in this feature, but pointed out their unlikely use due to their Yahoo email account.

Details of these responses are available in [Appendix F](#).

MSN My Apps Key Feature Experience

This section documents detailed usability analysis and recommendations. Usability issues included in this report are rated in terms of severity as follows:

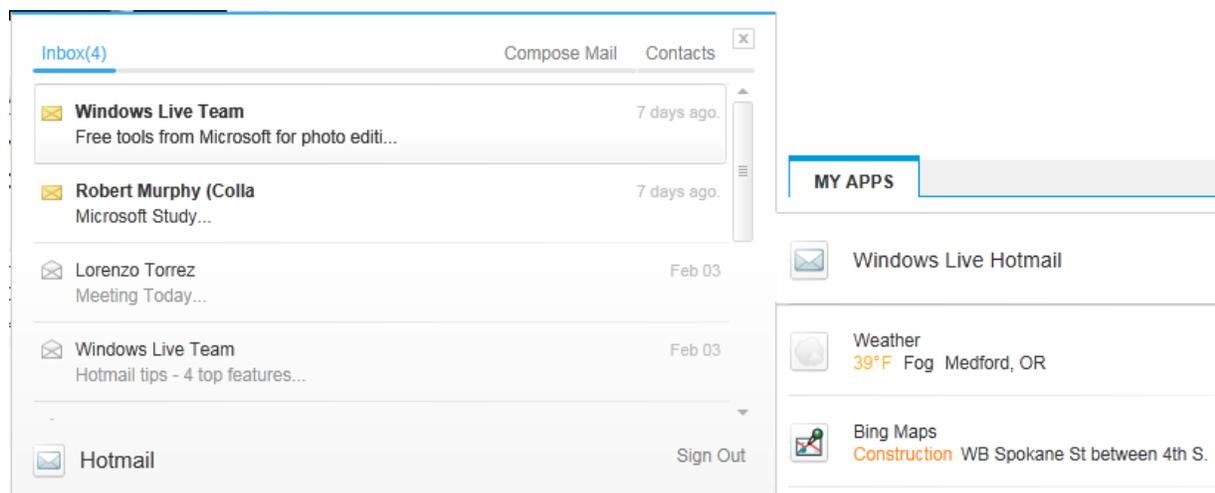
- High** A catastrophic usability issue that will prevent the user completing their task or make it extremely difficult to do so.
- Medium** A major usability issue that will cause the user considerable problems in completing their task or it may take them longer than they need to.
- Low** A cosmetic or very minor issue that will not prevent the user completing their task but it may make them momentarily stray or doubt what they need to do.
- Success** No usability issues. The user could complete their task.

The frequency in which site visitors may encounter the usability problem has also been taken into consideration when assigning severity to issues.

A summary of Tasks Completion rates is available in [Appendix C](#).

A summary of Issues and Recommendations is available in [Appendix D](#).

Email



General Feedback

Even though there were no issues with using the email feature, a couple participants pointed out their likely limited use of this feature, due to the low level of functionality available.

Notes

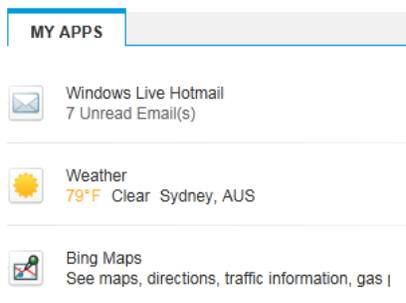
- All participants were able to easily sign in to an email account.
- All participants were able to read email messages; no one seemed to mind the transition from the fly-out to the Hotmail page.

- All participants were able to use the “Compose” feature to create an email message.
 - One participant seemed to think this method was quicker than going directly through Hotmail
 - A couple participants pointed out that that feature is not available in the Yahoo Quick View

Issues

The account holder name is not visible Low

One participant pointed out that they share a computer with other family members, and noted the importance of knowing who may be signed in on the computer.

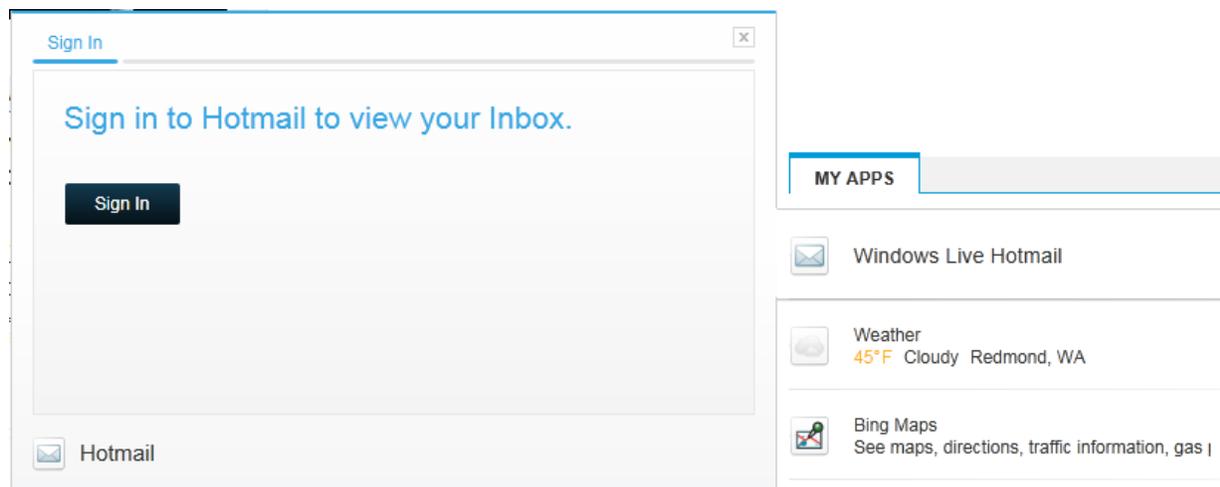


→ Recommendation

- Display the Hotmail account holder’s name in the signed-in display of the Hotmail Application.

Sign in requires transition from the Homepage to Hotmail and back Low

After clicking the sign-in button in the fly-out, users are taken to the Hotmail sign-in page. After submitting your credentials on that page, they are taken back to the Homepage.

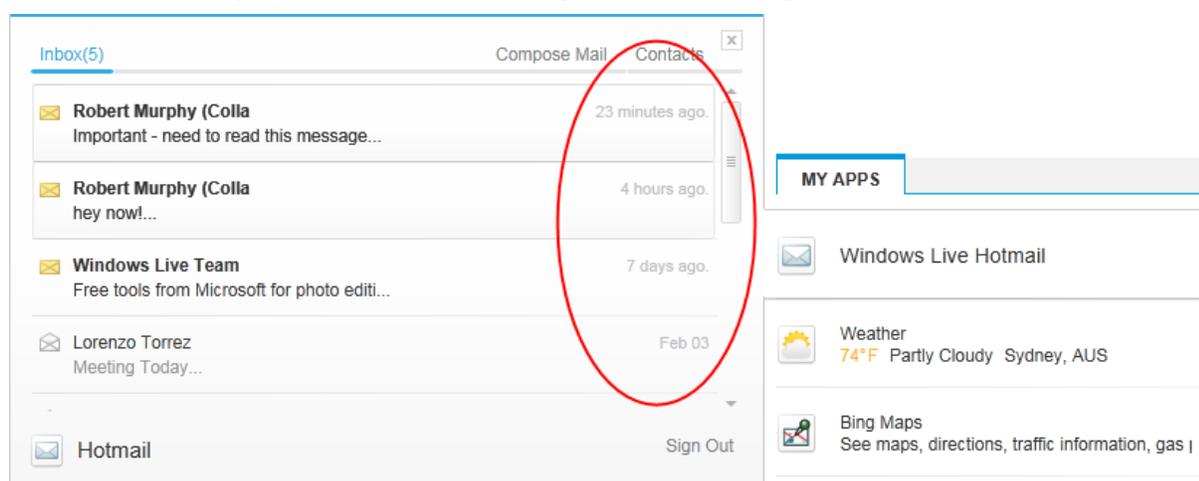


➔ Recommendation

- Enable users to sign in directly from the My Apps fly-out without having to leave the homepage; this would make it easier and faster access to email.

The time that messages were received can be confusing **Low**

The time that messages were received was confusing to some participants. Currently the display indicates how much time has **passed**, since the message was received; whereas the Hotmail Inbox display indicates the **actually time** the message was received.

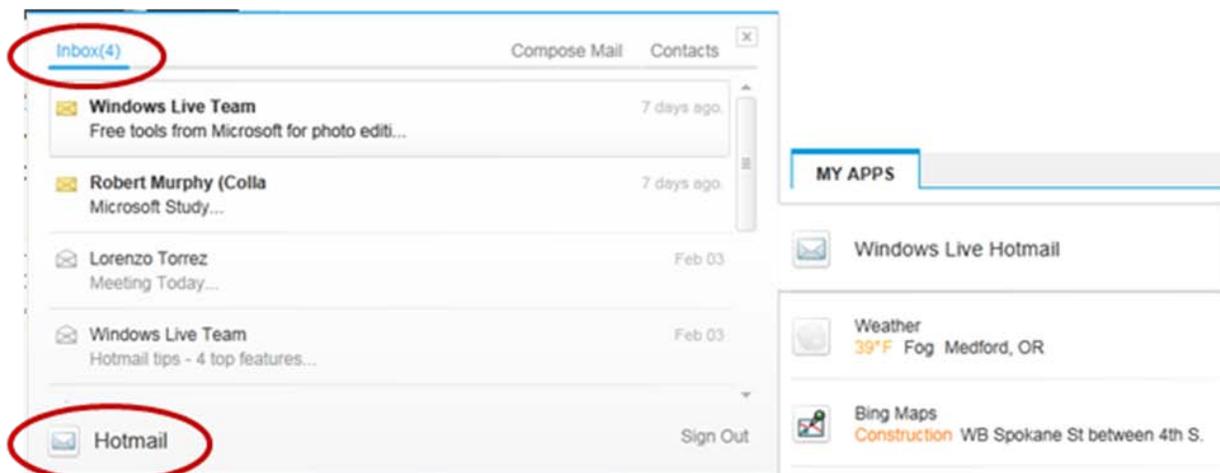


➔ Recommendation

- Use the same time display from the Hotmail inbox. This will provide a consistent experience between displays and will be easier for users to understand.

Participants could not find a direct link to Hotmail **Low**

Some participants were looking for a direct link to the Hotmail application, and couldn't find one. The "Inbox()" does link there, but it was not perceived as a link by all participants. Some participants tried clicking on the "Hotmail" text and icon at the bottom left of the display, but that doesn't work.



→ **Recommendation**

- Provide a more obvious link directly to the Hotmail application; Make “Hotmail” link there, or have a “go to Hotmail” link

Participants can't delete messages

Low

Many participants indicated they receive a large amount of junk mail, with one participant indicating they'd like to easily delete those messages from this view.

→ **Recommendation**

- Provide the ability to delete messages from the My Apps email.

Current in-box provides limited view

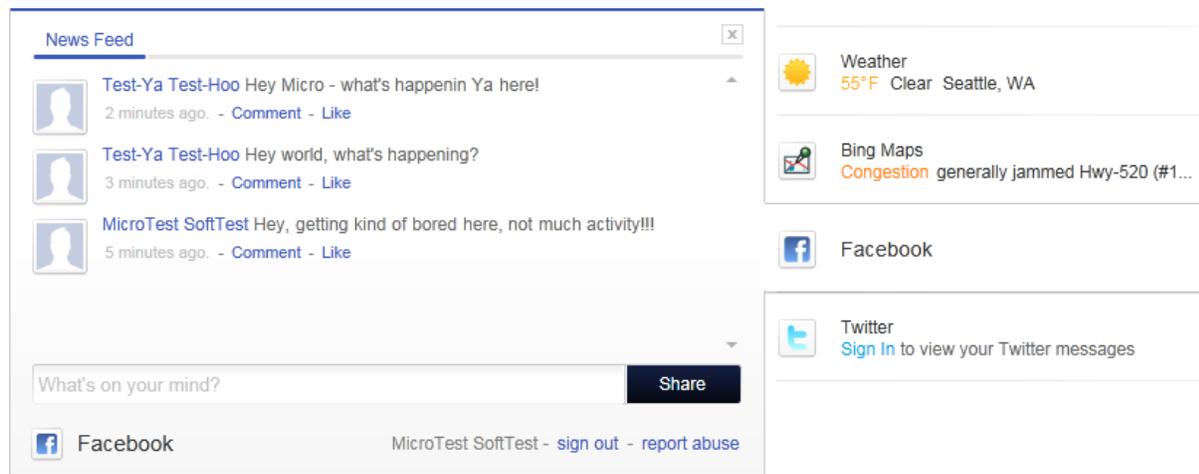
Low

A couple participants demonstrated that they have a lot of messages in their in-box. They indicated a larger vertical display would more easily accommodate their high-volume in-box.

→ **Recommendation**

- Explore options to display more messages in the in-box, maybe an expandable view to show more messages at a time.

Facebook



General Feedback

Facebook was probably the most desirable application out of all; unfortunately it seemed to have the least amount of functionality available. Participants who interacted with Yahoo before MSN, right away pointed out the lack of Facebook functionality on MSN My Apps and their preference for the Yahoo version. Due to connectivity problems, only five participants interacted with the Facebook feature.

The participants who noticed the “Sign-out” feature expressed their appreciation for that; with some pointing out that the option wasn’t available in Yahoo.

Notes

- Signing into Facebook was one of the more difficult tasks in the study. 4 of the 5 participants had difficulties or reservations about the connection process. The other participant was able to connect without going through the same connection steps.
- All participants were able to read the updates available, and able to post an update.

Issues

The buttons or steps to continue the connection process were overlooked Medium

There are three windows one must step through in order to complete the Facebook “connection” on MSN.

Some participants seemed to overlook the steps of clicking the “Allow” buttons. Some thought they completed the connection process, while others simply didn’t know what to do.

“Kind of confusing what this thing is, I don’t really know where to go”



→ Recommendations

- Increase the visibility of the buttons by positioning them closer to the main content.
- Use some indication of steps or progression of the connection process, which should help users complete the process.

Participants were hesitant to allow MSN to “update status” Medium

All participants hesitated on this page before proceeding. The text is confusing and raised some security or privacy concerns.

- Two participants “declined” access on this 3rd window
 - Part of the confusion comes from the messaging on the 3rd window: “Allow MSN to update my status”. As one participant stated:

“I don’t know if I want to do that, it feels like it will do something weird to my facebook wall.”



→ Recommendation

- Provide clearer definition of the connection process and what users are allowing MSN to do during the process.

Link on the page appeared to have same functionality as the button

Low

One participant continued to click the “MSN” link in the top left of this display, thinking it served the same purpose of the button.



→ Recommendation

- Make the distinction between links and buttons clear, avoiding similar worded phrases for different purposes.

View a [video clip](#) highlighting these issues.

There's no direct link to user's profile **Low**

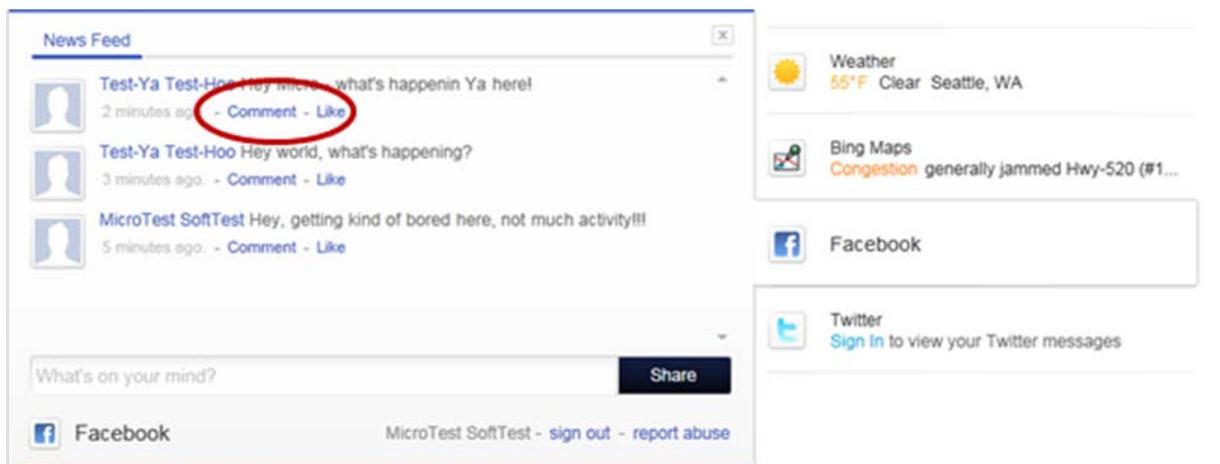
Three participants were looking for and expected to have a direct link to their profile on Facebook

➔ **Recommendation**

- Provide a direct link to user's profile on Facebook

User's cannot see comments to the postings **Low**

Comments to postings are not displayed. It was pointed out by a couple participants that this is provided in the Yahoo display.



➔ **Recommendation**

- Display to comments made to postings.

Embedded photos are not displayed.

Low

The images are not displayed within the messages of user's News Feed, only the tag links. This was pointed out right away, as a limitation of My Apps, compared to Yahoo's Quick View.



→ **Recommendation**

- Display the embedded images within messages.

Current display has a limited view

Low

Similar to the issue mentioned about email, some participants desired a larger viewing area for the Facebook application.

→ **Recommendation**

- Explore options to display more messages at a time. One idea would be an expanding and contracting display for user's who desire that extra view.

There's limited functionality available

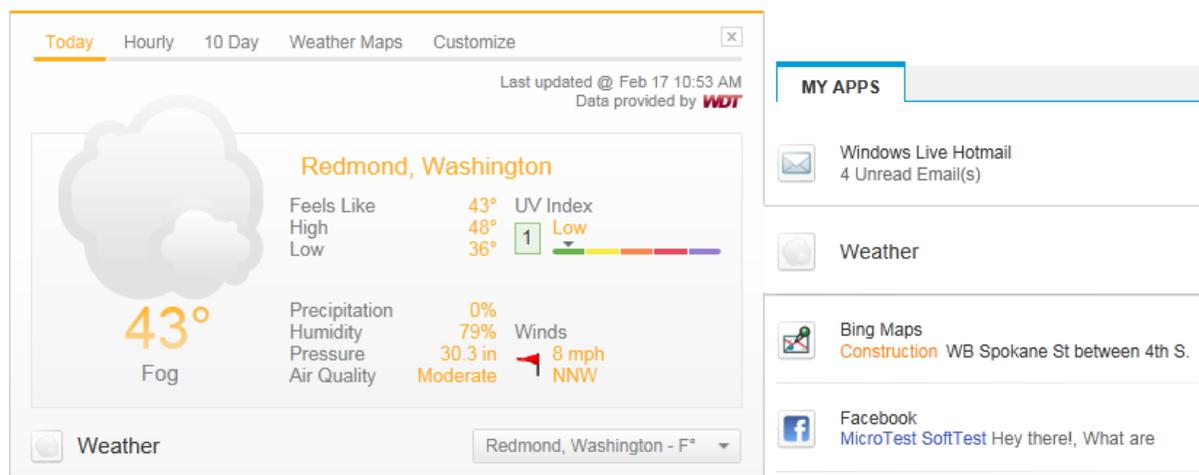
Low

In addition to above mentioned issues, several users suggested additional functionality they would like to see within the My Apps Facebook application.

→ **Recommendations**

- Provide access to Inbox
- Provide access to Friends
- Provide access to chat

Weather



The weather was the most engaging feature in MSN My Apps, with participants spending the longest amount of time exploring and interacting with this application. Without prompting, a few participants pointed out they preferred this version over both Yahoo’s and Google’s Sidebar versions.

- 3 participants discovered and liked the scrolling feature in the down state.
- Some participants right away looked up weather in a different city, viewed the forecast and explored the weather maps.

“I like the look of this, I like how easy it works together.” – P1

“Everything I could want... kind-of fun, easy and convenient.” – P5

Local Weather Module

Four participants noticed and briefly explored the weather display in the “Local” module on the Homepage. One participant thought it was “a little weird” to have two versions of the weather on the Homepage, while the other participants didn’t seem to be bothered by it.

- All participants who saw the Local module preferred the My Apps version of the weather display.

After interacting with the weather in the Local module, two participants inadvertently moved their mouse over the other tabs adjacent to “Local” tab and loaded different content in that position.

When trying to return to the “Local” version of the weather, both participants were confused and did not know what happened to the weather content they previously saw. Both participants were eventually able to access the weather display, but confused with what happened.

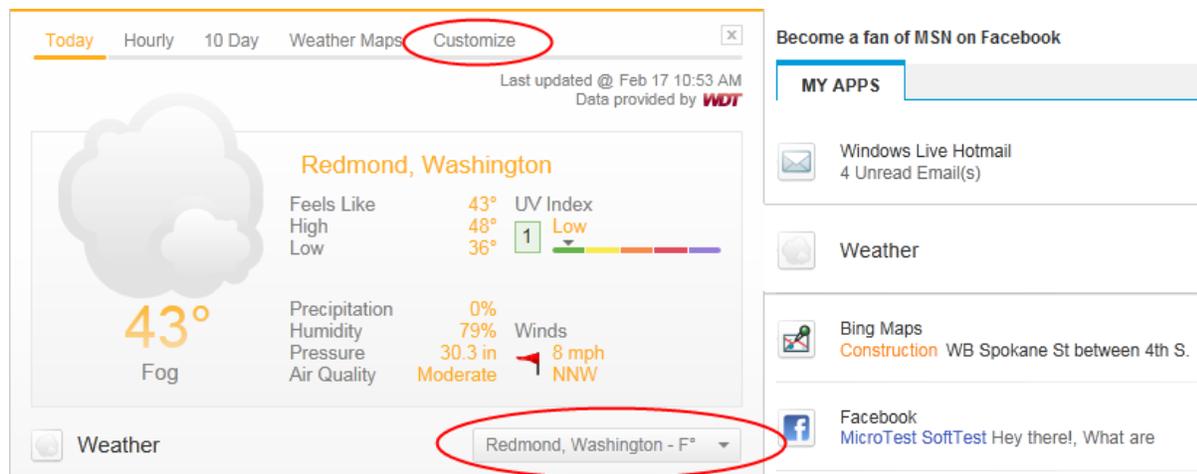
Issues

Participants were unclear how to add a city to the weather display

Low

When entering a different city for the weather display, most participants first used the city drop-down, instead of the “Customize” feature. One participant failed at this task.

- 3 participants were able to enter a city right away, going directly to the “Customize” tab.
- 4 participants first went to the city drop-down to look for an “add city” function, then eventually discovered it under “Customize”.
- 1 participant could not find the functionality, and had to be shown how to complete the task.
 - This was the only task failure



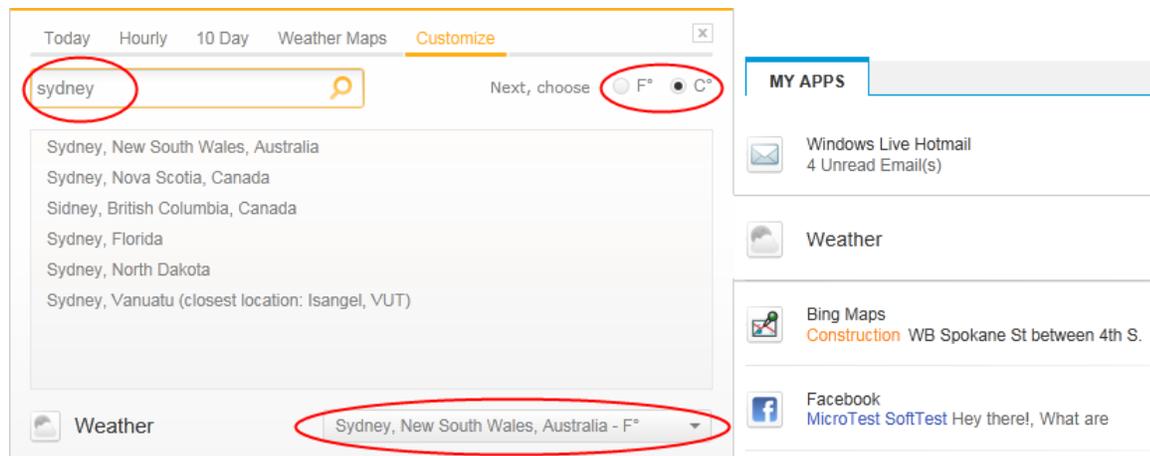
→ Recommendations

- Change the “Customize” tab to “Add a Location”
- Add an entry to the location drop-down, “Add a Location” which loads the respective tab

Changing from Fahrenheit to Celsius requires a new location entry

Low

To change a location's temperature from Fahrenheit to Celsius, a new entry is required for that location.



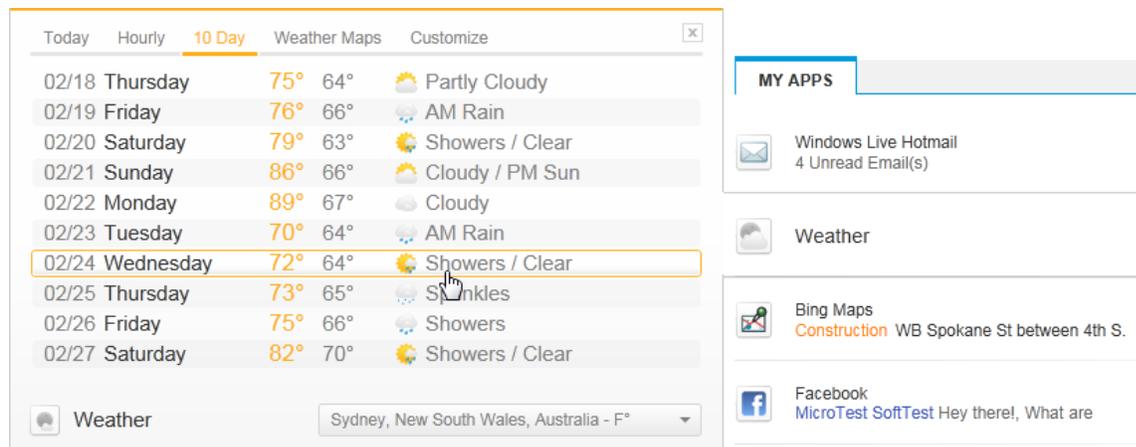
→ Recommendation

- Allow users the ability to change from Fahrenheit to Celsius on the fly, as implemented in the "Local" weather display.

Linking off from the 10-day forecast page caused confusion

Low

The date listings in the 10-day forecast link off to the MSN weather page. The page loads with the location's weather, but is not related to the actual date listed. This caused confusion to all participants who clicked on it.



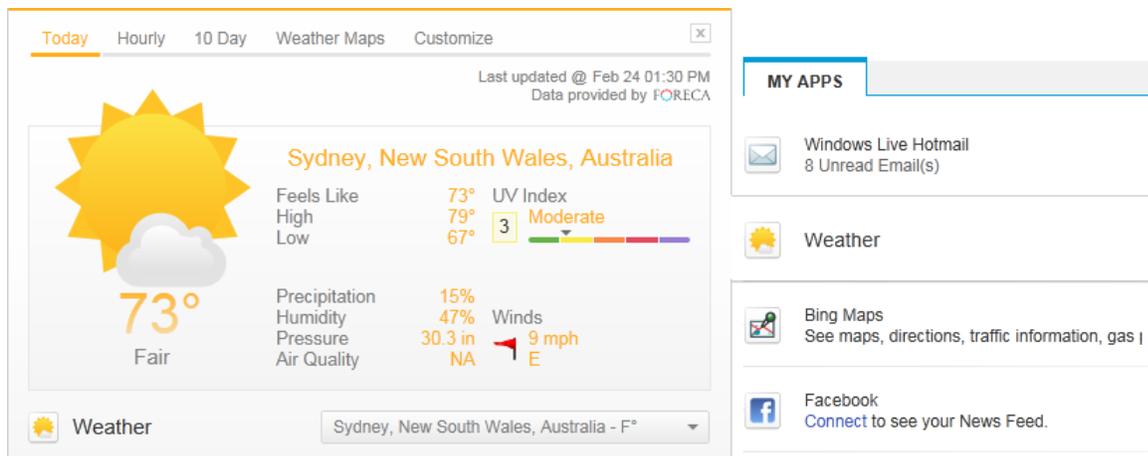
→ Recommendation

- Unless it is possible to link to an equivalent forecast for the given location, the recommendation would be not to link off from this page.

Missing the time display for a location

Low

The time of the day is not displayed for any location. This can be useful when viewing conditions in other parts of the country or world.



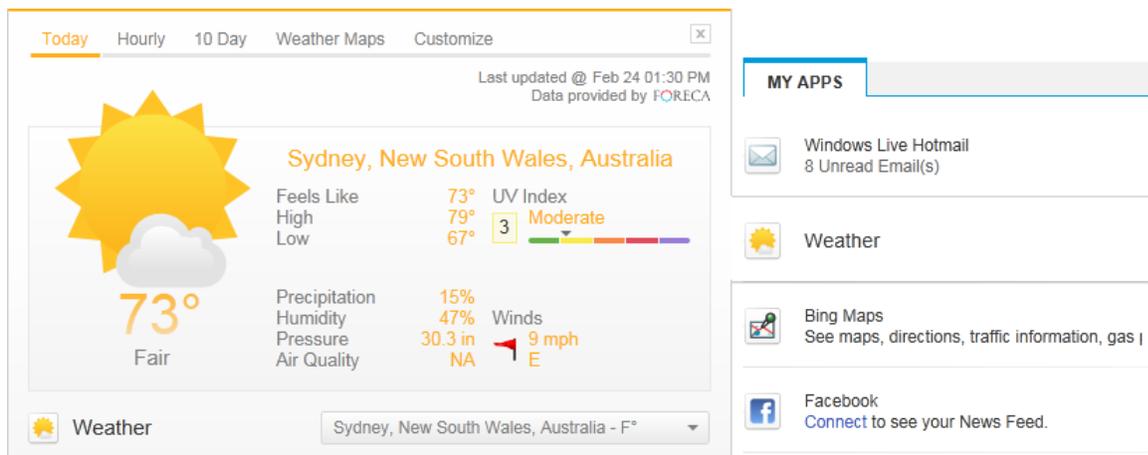
→ Recommendation

- Provide some indication of time or time of day for the location displayed.

Orange color text provides low contrast for reading

Low

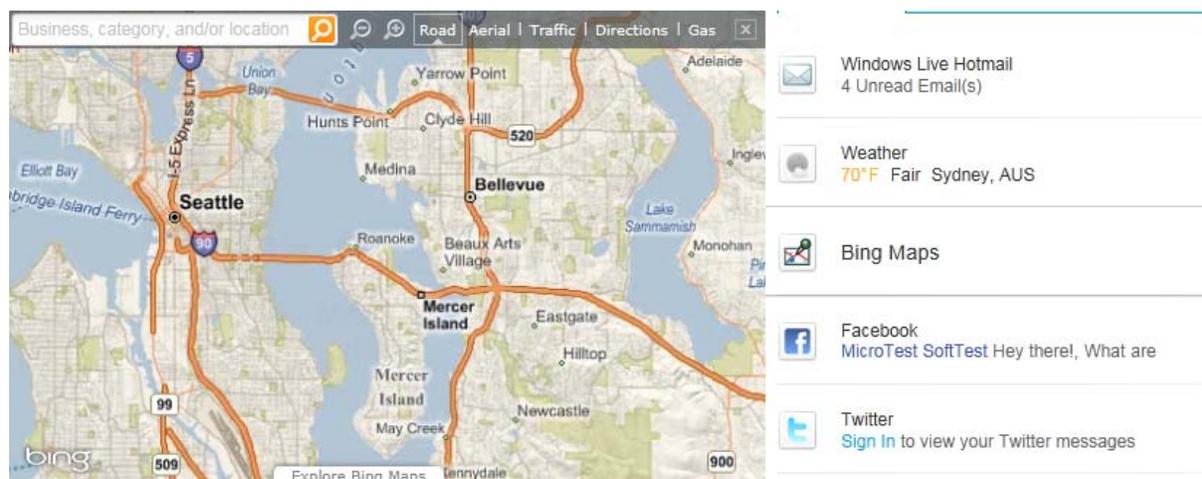
One participant mentioned that the orange colored font was some-what difficult to read.



→ Recommendation

- Consider using a darker color font which will provide higher contrast for increased legibility.

Maps



The maps application in MSN My Apps also received positive feedback from all participants. Without prompting some participants explored the traffic and aerial views. One participant indicated this application was better than MapQuest.

“It’s cool it’s all right here.” – P8

“It’s really fast and it’s clear, I really, really like this feature.” – P5

Notes

- All participants were able to find and view details about the local traffic.
 - 1 participant left the “traffic” feature “on”, and was confused with all the construction indicators, until they turned it off
 - 1 participant was confused with the color display, until they found the legend
- All participants were able to get driving directions using the My Apps maps application.
 - 1 participant expected to stay within the fly-out, when accessing directions
 - 1 participant started to use the “search” feature, before locating the “directions” feature

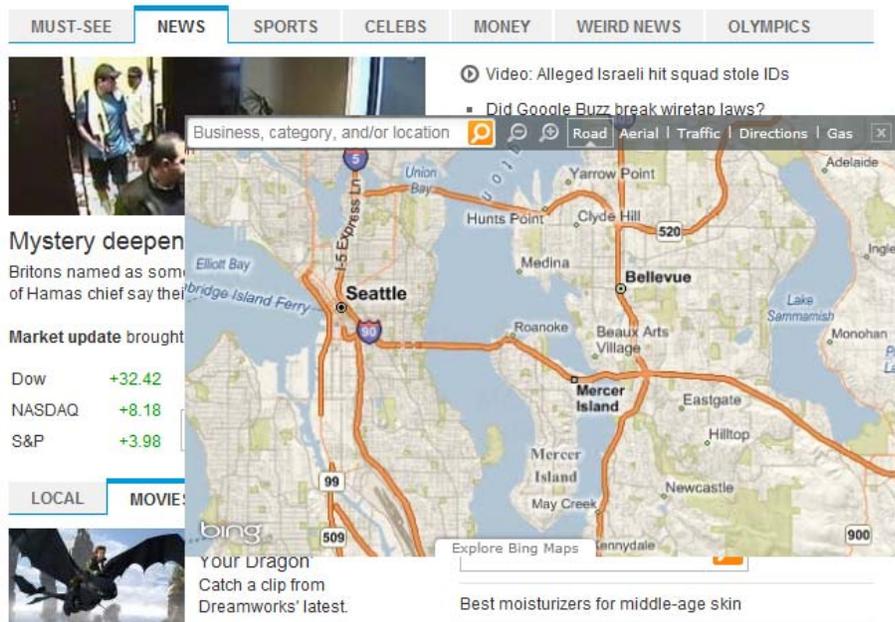
Issues

Map fly-out overlaps with photos and images on the Homepage

Low

Within the maps fly-out, the content (map) fills in to the edge of the display, causing direct overlap with the background. Providing a separation between the background and the map will make it easier to focus on the map itself.

Other fly-out displays avoid this issue through both a slight border and a white background between the edge of the display and the content.



→ Recommendation

- Having a border around the map fly-out will make it easier for users to distinguish between the map and the background, making it easier to focus on the map itself.

Yahoo Quick-View General Experience

During this study, all participants were given the opportunity to interact with the Yahoo Quick View feature. Even though it is integrated with Yahoo's My Favorites navigation, the Quick View feature has similar functionality as the MSN My Apps. The general feedback provided here was collected following participants' interaction with the Quick View feature.

Overall Feedback

When asked for overall impressions about the Quick View feature:

- 4 participants (1 MSN, 3 Yahoo) provided positive feedback about the feature
- These comments focused on the concept in general
 - Comments included:

“Easier than having to click through a lot of pages” – P5

“It's very helpful, it's quick access when you're in a rush.” – P2

- 4 participants (3 MSN, 1 Yahoo) provided negative feedback
 - The MSN participants had viewed the MSN My Apps feature first
- A common complaint about the Quick View feature was its size
 - Comments included:

“I would never use it, it's a hassle” – P1

“This seems to be a little intrusive” – P3

Likes and Dislikes

When asked what they liked and disliked the most about the Yahoo Quick View feature, participants supplied only slightly more “likes” as “dislikes” (14 likes, 11 dislikes).

Some of the likes included:

- The position of the feature
- Convenient
- Ability to customize
- Quick and easy access

Some of the dislikes included:

- Size of the fly-out
- Unnecessary mouse clicks
- Lack of a Facebook Log-out
- A Yahoo account is required in order to access Facebook on Yahoo

When asked to use three words or characteristics to describe the Quick View feature, there was a mix of positive and negative descriptors (13 pos, 9 neg). Some of these included:

- Convenient (2)
- Easy (2)
- One-stop webpage
- Accessible
- Impractical
- Not very user friendly
- Confusing
- Inconvenient

A complete list of the Likes, Dislikes and descriptor words is available in [Appendix B](#).

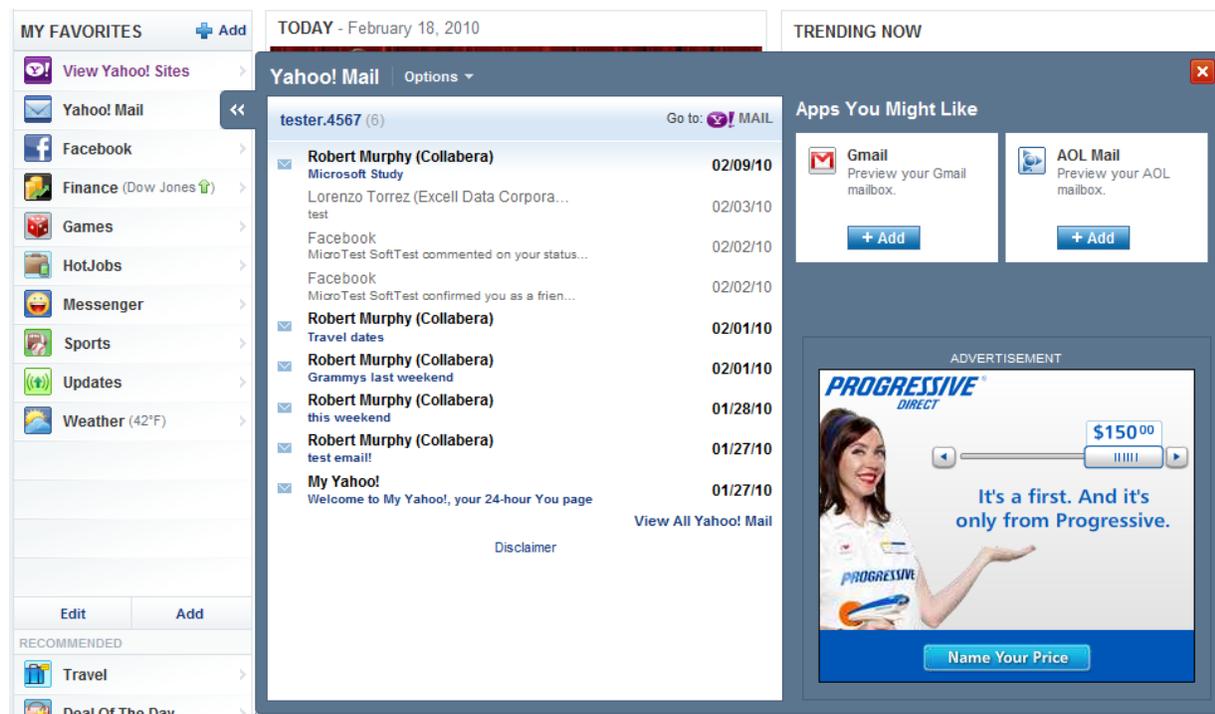
A common complaint with the Yahoo Quick View feature was the size of the fly-out, although many participants took advantage of content in the extra space:

- Some participants noticed and appreciated access to additional email clients as displayed in the email fly-out.
- Some participants began interacting with the “Related Links” as displayed in weather fly-out.

Yahoo Quick-View Key Feature Experience

A summary of tasks completion rates is available in [Appendix C](#).

Email



Access

When asked to log into a Yahoo account (either their own or a supplied account):

- 6 participants accessed Yahoo email through the My Favorites link
- 2 participants accessed Yahoo email through a top-of-page link
- No participant previewed their mail by clicking on the Quick View link.

General Feedback

Participant's first impressions of Quick View email were positive, but some right away indicated they wouldn't use it, due to its lack of functionality.

- Several participants noticed to access to other email clients, and were impressed with that.

Issues

- A common frustration while using the Yahoo email was the fact that a new browser window would open when participants tried to return to the Homepage.
 - Two Yahoo participants avoided this by signing out of their account, which would load the Homepage in the current window.

- The ability to compose a message is missing from the Yahoo email Quick View. Participants had to click a message, to access the main email application, from there they were able to compose and send an email.
- No participants seemed to use the “Go to Y! mail” link

Facebook



General Feedback

Facebook was probably the most appreciated application in the Yahoo Quick View feature. Participants were impressed with the functionality available and the content displayed. Some examples are:

- Feedback or comments related to postings
- Yahoo’s Facebook would display the embedded photo in a message
- Yahoo provides access to one’s “Friends” list
- Access to Events
- Access to both News Feed
- Access to own Profile

This display was referred to as a “mini-version of Facebook.”

Issues

Two important issues did arise while participants were interacting with Facebook on the Yahoo Quick View feature.

- There is no obvious way to “sign-out” to one’s Facebook account.
 - Under “Options / Settings” one has the option to “unlink” the Facebook account from the Yahoo account
 - This was a major concern for at least one participant
- One Yahoo participant frequently used Yahoo as a source of information, but didn’t have an actual Yahoo account. This person expressed frustration at not being able to access Facebook, due to lack of a Yahoo account.

Weather

The screenshot shows the Yahoo Weather widget integrated into the MSN app bar. On the left, a sidebar contains navigation links: Games, HotJobs, Messenger, Sports, Updates, and Weather (41°F). The main weather panel for Redmond, WA, displays a sun icon, a current temperature of 41°F, and a 'Fair' condition. Below this, a three-day forecast is shown: Today (58°/37°), Tomorrow (58°/36°), and Saturday (56°/35°). To the right of the weather panel is a 'RELATED LINKS' section with links such as 'U.S. Satellite Weather', 'Hurricanes and Storms', and 'Weather Alerts'. Below the links is an advertisement for Progressive Direct insurance, featuring a woman holding a gun and a 'Name Your Price' offer of \$99.00. At the bottom of the weather panel, there is an 'Add Location' link and a 'Disclaimer' link. The bottom of the sidebar includes a 'QuickView on Rollover' checkbox and a help icon.

General Feedback

The weather on Yahoo’s Quick View feature received moderate interest from all participants. No one was overwhelmed, nor was anyone disappointed in the display.

- All participants were able to display the weather for a different city.
 - Almost all participants right away saw and used the link “Add Location” to add a different city

- Several participants liked the ability to see their additional cities on the main page:

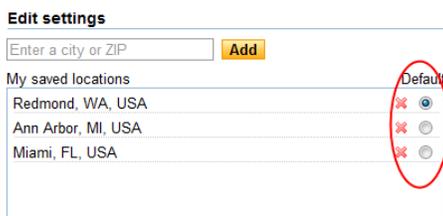


Issues

- One participant initially missed the city drop-down arrow, but eventually located it

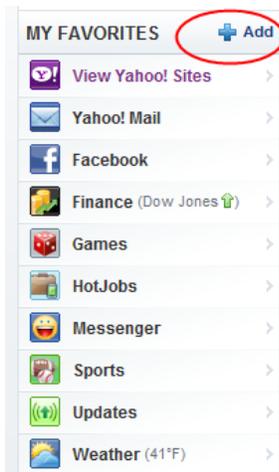


- Two participants experienced some confusion interacting with the “default” option, when removing a city from the drop-down list



Maps / Customization

Yahoo's Quick View feature does not display the Maps application in its default state. It does though, have the ability to customize the display, by adding or removing applications. So, the task of viewing maps on Yahoo's Quick View, was also a "customization" task.



Issues

All participants had difficulty in this task.

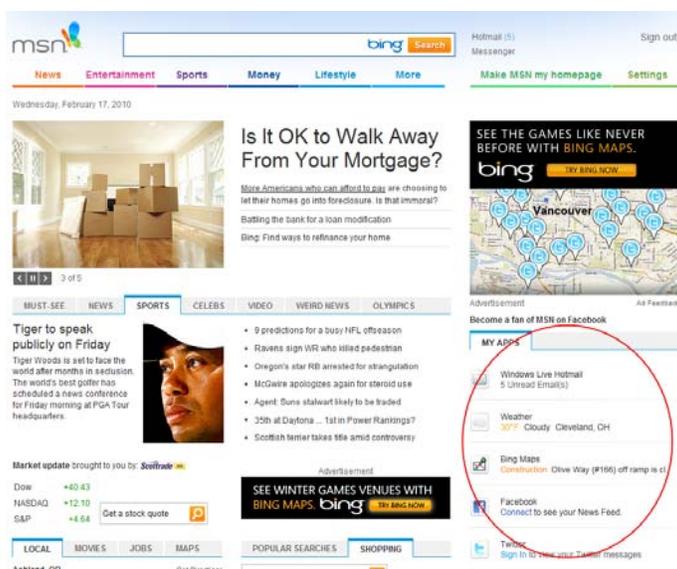
- 6 participants were not able to locate Yahoo Maps.
 - 1 participant remembers seeing it in the "My Favorites" during prior visits
 - Some participants began to use Yahoo Search to locate maps
 - None of these participants noticed or thought to use the "Add" option under "My Favorites"
- 2 Participants eventually found and interacted with the "Add" option under "My Favorites"
 - 1 participant simply linked to the application
 - 1 participant actually added it to the display

Analysis of My Apps Interactions and Visual Experiences

This section covers the discussion portion of the sessions, conducted after participants completed tasks using both MSN's My Apps and Yahoo's Quick View. Various aspects of the My Apps feature were discussed including interactions and the visual displays, sometimes using Yahoo's Quick View as a comparison.

Position on the Homepage

During the session of interacting with the MSN My Apps, no one made a comment about the position of the feature on the MSN Homepage, however, one participant mentioned the position of the Yahoo Quick View on the left hand side of the screen seemed more "standard".



MSN My Apps position



Yahoo Quick View position

- When asked what position they expected to see for this type of a feature:
 - 4 participants felt it was OK in its current position
 - Other participants suggested that they expected to see this higher on the page
- When asked if they preferred the position of MSN's My Apps or the position of Yahoo's Quick View:
 - 6 participants preferred the Yahoo Quick View position on the left

→ Recommendations

- Explore opportunities for alternative positions on the page, such as higher up on the page, either on the right or left.
- Get user feedback on alternative placements in future studies.

Look & Feel

Home Page Display

The look and feel of the MSN My Apps feature received positive feedback from many participants:

- 5 participants generally liked the Look & Feel of the feature, and preferred it over Yahoo
 - 3 participants mentioned "uncluttered" or "lack of junk"
 - 3 participants mentioned how professional it looks
 - 1 participant thought Yahoo's solid color looked "less friendly"

"I like the way it looks, not too much stuff" – P5

- 3 participant who didn't care for the look and feel, had some common comments:
 - All 3 either used the term "bland" or "boring"
 - 1 participant expected a more colorful display with larger icons
 - 2 participants indicated there's not enough to make them click on it, but pointed out the value after they did click on it.

"It's sleek when you open it, but right now it's boring" – P1

→ Recommendation

- Explore opportunities for drawing more attention to the My Apps feature, or distinguishing it from other content on the page. It does have different functionality than the rest of the content, so it could look slightly different.
 - One suggestion may be use a subtle background color, which carries over to the fly-outs.

Icons

Two participants mentioned the icons in the down-state, with mixed feedback.

- 1 participant preferred the MSN icons, stating the Yahoo icons looked too “childish”
- 1 participant preferred the Yahoo icons, stating they were more colorful and more distinct

→ Recommendation

- Consider more vibrant icons, or darker border around the icons, which may make them more distinct.

Fly-out

The look and feel of the fly-outs received positive feedback from all participants.

“Colorful, nicely organized – you know what to click on” – P2

- No one complained about the size of the MSN My Apps fly-out, or the fact that it covered Homepage content.
- Most participants preferred the size of the MSN My Apps over Yahoo’s Quick View, indicating the Quick View takes up too much of the screen.
- However, 2 participants preferred the taller size of Yahoo’s Quick View, for scrolling through email and Facebook messages.
- 2 participants wanted the ability to move the fly-out around the screen.

→ Recommendations

- Consider an expandable option to the fly-out, which would accommodate users who wish to have a more vertical view more of their email in-box or Facebook messages.
- Explore the ability to move the fly-out around the screen. This would probably apply to a persistent version of the feature, allowing users to keep it docked against an edge, or moved to a different position.

Hover and Navigation Behavior

Most participants liked and enjoyed interacting with the hover behavior of the MSN My Apps.

- 6 out of 8 participants prefer the MSN My Apps hover behavior over the click behavior of the Yahoo Quick View.
- Participants liked the highlight behavior when they hovered over it.
 - 1 participant referred to it as “the bounce”
- Yahoo’s pop-out behavior was perceived as too much, or “in your face.”

Within the “My Favorites” navigation links, Yahoo provides both direct links to the applications and the Quick View access. All participants liked the availability of both options, as provided by Yahoo.

- 2 participants indicated they would likely go directly to the site, and not use the My Apps.
- Even though they liked the option, 2 participants thought it was poorly implemented in Yahoo.

→ **Recommendation**

- Consider allowing users to link directly to the application from MSN’s My Apps. This may result in lower usage, but the MSN Homepage could potentially become a source to access various applications.

Customization

Three participants brought up the concept of customization on their own, wondering if they could change the order of or add an application.

- When asked, all participants indicated a desire for that ability. The main functions requested were:
 - Reordering
 - Adding applications
 - Removing applications
- Some additional applications or functionality participants mentioned were:
 - Clock, Calendar
 - You tube, My Space
 - Sports, news, games
 - Additional email accounts
- The most common “favorite” applications participants mentioned were:
 - Email
 - Facebook
 - Weather

→ **Recommendation**

- Provide the opportunity for users to change the position, add and remove applications.

Advertisements

- Even though all participants were exposed to ads in the Yahoo Quick View, 3 participants did not recall seeing them.
- The size of the Yahoo Quick View fly-out, containing the ad, was considered a poor use of space.
- Some participants pointed out there were already ads on the Homepage, so why would they show them in the Quick View.

→ Recommendation

- Avoid adding advertisements to the My Apps display.

Overall Preference

Overall preference between MSN's My Apps and Yahoo's Quick View received mixed responses, some participants preferring certain elements in one over the other:

- 4 participants (2-Y, 2-MSN) preferred MSN overall
- 1 participant (MSN) preferred MSN; but Yahoo's Facebook
- 1 participant (Y) preferred MSN Fly-outs; but Yahoo's downstate
- 1 participant (MSN) preferred Yahoo
- 1 participant (Y) had no preference

Yahoo Conversion to MSN

- 3 Yahoo participants indicated they wouldn't use the site, due to their Yahoo email
- 1 Yahoo participant indicated they wouldn't use the site due to their familiarity with Yahoo

Appendix A

MSN My Apps: Likes, Dislikes, Descriptors

| Participant Profile | Likes | Dislikes | Descriptors |
|---------------------|--|--|--|
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather • Maps • Hotmail makes things easier | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clutter of other apps • Not likely to use if didn't know it was there • Difficult to notice and focus on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks cool • User friendly • Modern |
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stuff right there • Don't have to search for something • Simple format | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to customize | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient • Uncluttered • Effective |
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to switch back & forth between apps • Maps email • Nice easy access • Time saving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of display is too small | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick • Overview • Convenient |
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything's right there • Small pop-ups • Everything I need not overbearing... • Very quick | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to customization • Inability to move windows | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blew my mind • Cool • new |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One spot • Very quick • Information I need | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook: would prefer additional content and functionality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple • Easy access • Quick |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Really like fact that weather/maps straight to point • Easily accessible • Hot mail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook: log in • Not very sexy – blends in too much | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick • Easy • To the point |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps • Easy links to see (maps) • Weather | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook: limited information • Missing direct link to Facebook | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient • Easy • Self explanatory |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bing maps • Weather | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It doesn't stand out like everything else on this page | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative |

Appendix B

Yahoo Quick View: Likes, Dislikes, Descriptors

| Participant Profile | Likes | Dislikes | Descriptors |
|---------------------|--|--|--|
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look of FB • Customization – add/remove | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything else • Click offs • Unnecessary mouse clicks • Advertising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impractical • Unusable • Kind of a hassle |
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left side links seem more standard • Options of links - to site or QV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of fly-out – right side of pop out | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible • Little obtrusive • One-stop webpage |
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location on HP • Clarity of titles of categories – icon and text | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hover behavior: Doesn't make sense to have words listed, then move over to "QV" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient • Fly-out – kind of dull/drab • Listing under "My Favorites" very clear |
| MSN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give right amount of information • Not full page | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icons kind of corny | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More confusing • Extra step – doesn't like the QV hover ... |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick pop-up, remain on current page • Easy access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couldn't access FB w/out Yahoo account • Missing some FB functionality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheat sheet • Easily accessible • Fast |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Really easy to use • Convenient | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast • Convenient • Summarize important info |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too Brief (not enough info) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not very user Friendly • Inconvenient |
| Yahoo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FB – makes it simple everything right there in once central spot | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FB – potential to hack – easy access for anyone on his computer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Really easy • Simple • Quick |

Appendix C

Task Summary

| Email | Success Rates | |
|---|---------------|-------|
| | MSN | Yahoo |
| 1. Sign In | 8/8 | 8/8 |
| 2. Read email messages | 8/8 | 8/8 |
| 3. Send email message | 8/8 | 8/8 |
| Facebook | | |
| 4. Sign In | 5/5 | 8/8 |
| 5. Read Facebook notifications | 5/5 | 8/8 |
| 6. Send a Facebook message | 5/5 | 8/8 |
| Weather | | |
| 7. Find details about the local weather | 8/8 | 8/8 |
| 8. Find the weather for a different city | 7/8 | 8/8 |
| 9. Find the weather forecast for a non-default city | 8/8 | 8/8 |
| 10. Remove a city from your list in weather | 8/8 | 8/8 |
| Maps | | |
| 11. View Traffic Conditions | 8/8 | -- |
| 12. Get driving directions | 8/8 | -- |
| 13. (Customize – Yahoo) | -- | 2/8 |

Appendix D

Summary of Issues and Recommendations

Email

| | | |
|------------|---|--|
| Low | The account holder name is not visible | |
| | Issue: One participant pointed out that they share a computer with other family members, and noted the importance of knowing who may be signed in on the computer. | Recommendation: Display the Hotmail account holder’s name in the signed-in down-state of the Hotmail Application. |
| Low | Sign- in requires transition from the Homepage to Hotmail and back | |
| | Issue: After clicking the sign-in button in the fly-out, one is taken to the Hotmail sign-in page. After submitting your credentials on that page, one is taken back to the Homepage. | Recommendation: Provide an easier and faster access to email by allow one to sign in directly from the My Apps fly-out. |
| Low | The time messages were received can be confusing | |
| | Issue: The time display indicates how much time has passed , since the message was received; where the Hotmail Inbox display indicates the actually time the message was received. | Recommendation: Use the time display from the Hotmail inbox. This will provide a consistent experience between displays and will be easier for users to understand. |

Additional Recommendations from Participants

- Provide a direct link to Hotmail (some participants missed “Inbox” link)
- View a sent list
- Larger (vertical) inbox - to more easily accommodate high volume in-boxes
- Provide the ability to delete messages
- Better indication of what's been read and not

Facebook

| | | |
|---------------|--|---|
| Medium | The buttons or steps to continue the connection process were overlooked | |
| | <p>Issue: There are three windows one must step through in order to complete the Facebook “connection” on MSN.</p> <p>Some participants seemed to overlook the steps of clicking the “Allow” buttons. Some thought they completed the connection process, while others simply didn’t know what to do.</p> | <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Increase the visibility of the buttons by positioning them closer to the main content.</p> <p>Use some indication of steps or progression of the connection process should help users complete the process.</p> |
| Medium | Participants were hesitant to allow MSN access to “update status” | |
| | <p>Issue: All participants hesitated on the “allow MSN to update my status” page before proceeding. The text is confusing and raised some security or privacy concerns.</p> | <p>Recommendation: Provide clearer definition of the connection process and what users are allowing during the process.</p> |
| Low | Link on the page appeared to have same functionality as the button | |
| | <p>Issue: One participant continued to click the “MSN” link in the top left of the “allow MSN to update my status” page, thinking it served the same purpose of the button.</p> | <p>Recommendation: Make the distinction between links and buttons clear, avoiding similar worded phrases for different purposes.</p> |

Additional Recommendations from Participants

- Provide a direct link to one’s own profile
- Ability to view replies or comments to updates
- Display of user’s picture
- Access to Inbox
- Access to Friends
- Display inline photos instead of links
- Addition of chat

Weather

| | | |
|------------|---|---|
| Low | Participants were unclear how to add a city to the weather display | |
| | Issue: When entering a different city for the weather display, most participants first used the city drop-down, instead of “Customize” feature. | Recommendation: Add an entry to the drop-down, which loads the “Customize” display. |
| Low | Changing from F to C requires a new location entry | |
| | Issue: To change a location’s temperature from F to C, a new entry is required for that location. | Recommendation: Allow users the ability to change from F to C on the fly, as implemented in the “Local” weather display. |
| Low | Linking off from the 10-day forecast page cause confusion | |
| | Issue: The date listings in the 10-day forecast link off to the MSN weather page. The page loads with the location’s weather, but is not related to the actual date listed. This caused confusion to all participants who clicked on it. | Recommendation: Do not link off from the 10-day forecast listings. |

Additional Recommendations from Participants

- Time reference for weather displays
 - One participant was looking at weather for other parts of the country and world, and wondered how accurate they were. The display showed sunny and warm, but it would have been the middle of the night for that location
- One participant thought the orange color used in the weather display was difficult to read

Maps

| | | |
|------------|--|--|
| Low | Map fly-out overlaps with photos and images on the Homepage | |
| | Issue: The maps fly-out often overlaps text and images on the Homepage. | Recommendation: Using a border around the map fly-out will make it easier for users to distinguish between the map and the background, making it easier to focus on the map itself. |

Appendix E

Emotional Outcome Results by Site and Participant Profile

| MSN Site | Participant | | Overall** |
|---|-------------|--------|-----------|
| | MSN* | Yahoo* | |
| 1) It is easy to use | 6.00 | 6.25 | |
| 2) It is fun and engaging | 5.50 | 5.25 | |
| 3) It has the right amount of information | 5.50 | 6.50 | |
| 4) It makes it easy to find what I'm looking for | 6.00 | 6.50 | |
| 5) I would like to use this | 6.00 | 6.25 | |
| 6) I would use MSN more with the addition of this | 6.25 | 5.50 | 5.96 |
| Yahoo Site | | | |
| 1) It is easy to use | 5.50 | 6.50 | |
| 2) It is fun and engaging | 4.25 | 5.00 | |
| 3) It has the right amount of information | 4.50 | 4.75 | |
| 4) It makes it easy to find what I'm looking for | 5.25 | 5.50 | |
| 5) I would like to use this | 4.00 | 5.25 | |
| 6) I would use Yahoo more with the addition of this | 4.50 | 5.00 | 5.00 |

*Participant Profile scores are based on n=4;

**Overall scores are based on n=8

Appendix F

Questionnaire Responses

| | | | 1) It is easy to use | | 2) It is fun and engaging. | | 3) It has the right amount of info. | | 4) It makes it easy to find what I'm looking for. | | 5) I would like to use this. | | 6) I would use MSN more with the addition of this. | |
|-------------|---------|------|----------------------|---|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Participant | Profile | Seg. | Score | Comment | Score | Comment | Score | Comment | Score | Comment | Score | Comment | Score | Comment |
| 1 | MSN | FO | 5 | Ran into some problems, but overall it worked | 6 | weather was fun, wanted me to see more | 5 | wants more in FB and Maps | 5 | | 5 | | 5 | Would use longer but the same number of times |
| 8 | MSN | FO | 7 | Familiar, but new experience | 7 | Really cool features | 7 | All the right stuff, but not overbearing | 7 | all the right links, and easy to find | 7 | similar to cell phone apps | 7 | Less likely to wander off to other pages |
| 3 | MSN | IS | 6 | Once familiar, everything is at your fingertips | 6 | simple design makes it fun and interesting to use | 5 | current is great, would like customization | 7 | everything you interact with is easy to find | 7 | would use this daily | 7 | great tool |
| 7 | MSN | IS | 6 | straightforward and easy to use | 3 | Has the information, but not visually attractive | 5 | Slide-outs are great for info, but too small. Names on HP have too much info on them | 5 | Assuming I can add additional apps. Location on page was not easy to find | 5 | Gets the job done, but not inspiring | 6 | Yes, I would use it more, multiple tabs would be a must for me. |
| 2 | Yahoo | CS | 7 | Everything was simple | 5 | seeing new features and the easy access was good | 7 | has everything I need | 7 | everything is labeled and has titles | 7 | Like using it | 6 | |
| 4 | Yahoo | CS | 6 | Yes, everything was self explanatory and simple | 4 | initial layout not too impressive, would like to see it stand out more | 6 | Once I click, it has all the info I'd like to see | 6 | Once I found it, the apps themselves were easy to use | 6 | it would make life easier and simpler | 4 | Use Yahoo |
| 5 | Yahoo | CS | 7 | easy to find, easy to log in | 7 | everything was attractive and easy to read | 6 | missing functionality on FB | 7 | everything was easy to find, not too much clutter | 7 | liked weather and maps - informative and easy to use | 7 | maps/traffic section is fantastic |
| 6 | Yahoo | IS | 5 | Only 5 links that are self-explanatory | 5 | Quickly changing cities on the weather page | 7 | Not too much, just basic - which is good | 6 | Good to not have to filter through too many links | 5 | Less "junk" | 5 | Yes, if I had MSN for my email |