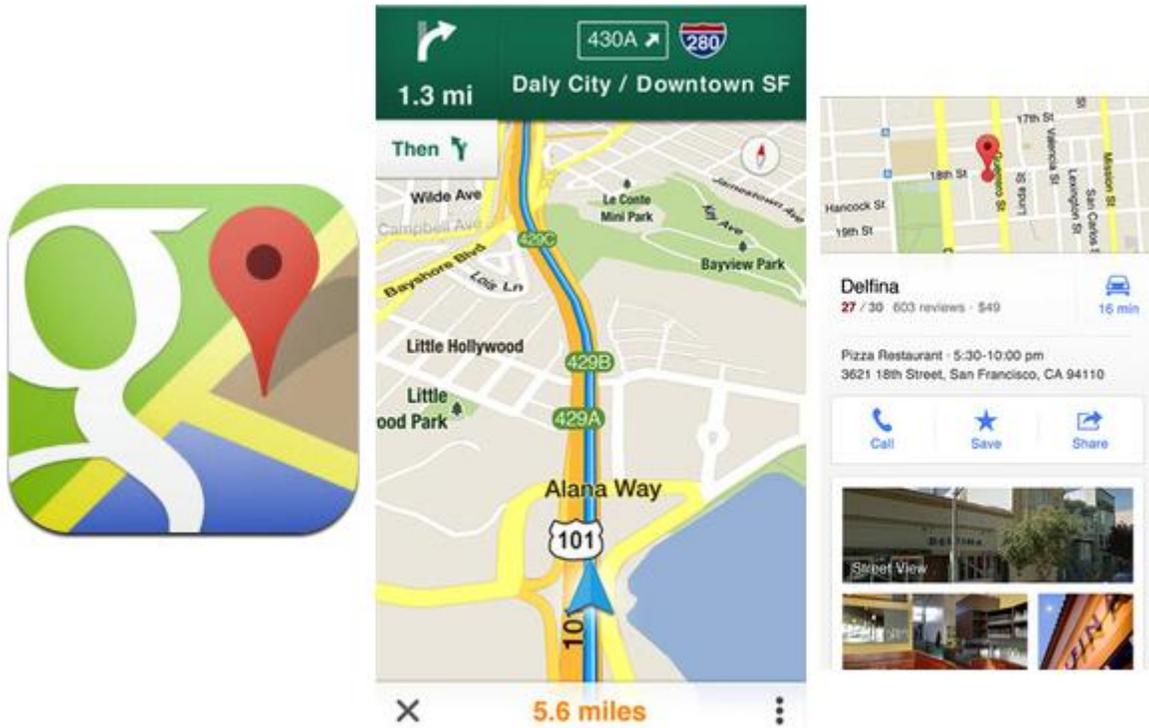


ABSTRACT:

This report provides heuristic evaluation of Google Maps for iPhone device.



Here I have focused on the core functionalities of Google maps: traffic, turn-by-turn navigation, transit directions, walking directions, satellite view, street view and integration with Google profile. The goal of this evaluation is to identify major usability flaws within the Google Maps interface through the application of the 10 heuristic evaluation principles.

HEURISTIC EVALUATION:

The Heuristics rating are based on Likert scale of 1 to 5.

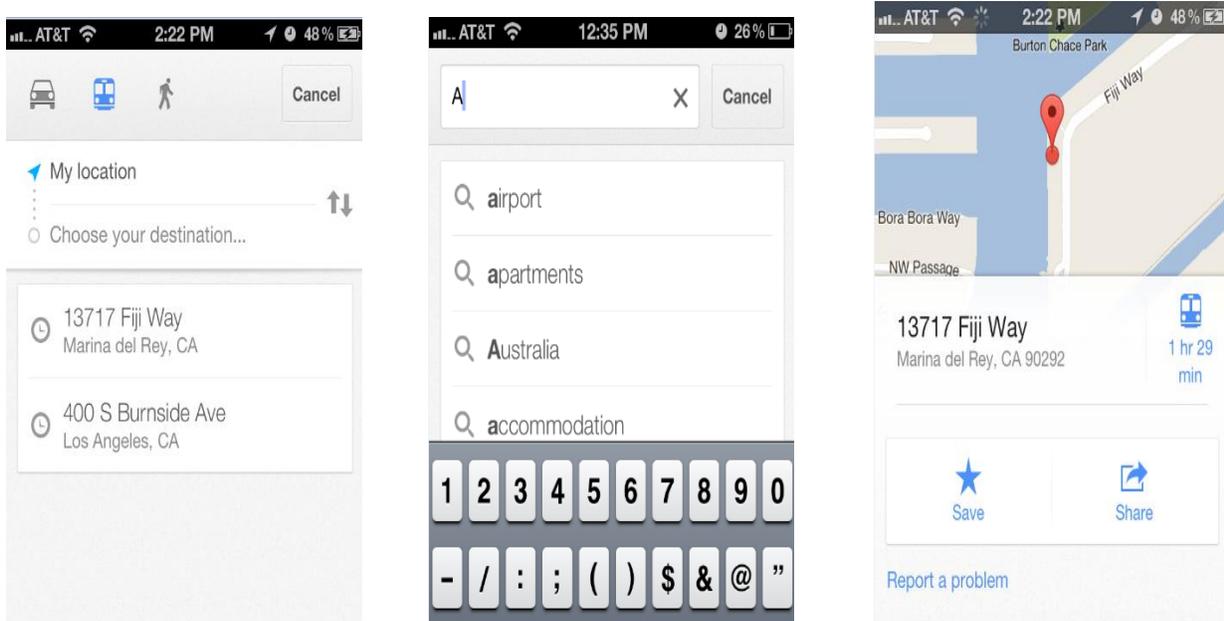
<i>Rating</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	Does not meet expectations
2	Slightly below expectations
3	Meets expectations
4	Slightly above expectations
5	Exceeds expectations

1. Visibility of system status

5/5

The Google Maps does an excellent job by keeping the user informed of what is going on in the system in reasonable timeframe. When the user searches a location, the recent searches are

populated. When a user types in the letters, list of locations corresponding to the letters are auto populated. When the user selects the location, an option to share or save the location as favorite is provided.



There is constant feedback from the system whenever an option is selected, which makes the application easy to use.

2. *Match between system and the real world*

3/5

The app senses the user's environment and adapts the information display accordingly. The Google Maps for iPhone provides turn-by-turn navigation with voice assistance for the first time on iPhone. The audio prompts are excellent with correct pronunciation and detailed complete sentences.

The car navigation does not match up with GPS devices; it lacks features like current speed, road speed limit display, or configurable speed limit alerts. It does not display the trip ETA, the current time, and the distance remaining.

3. *User control and freedom*

4/5

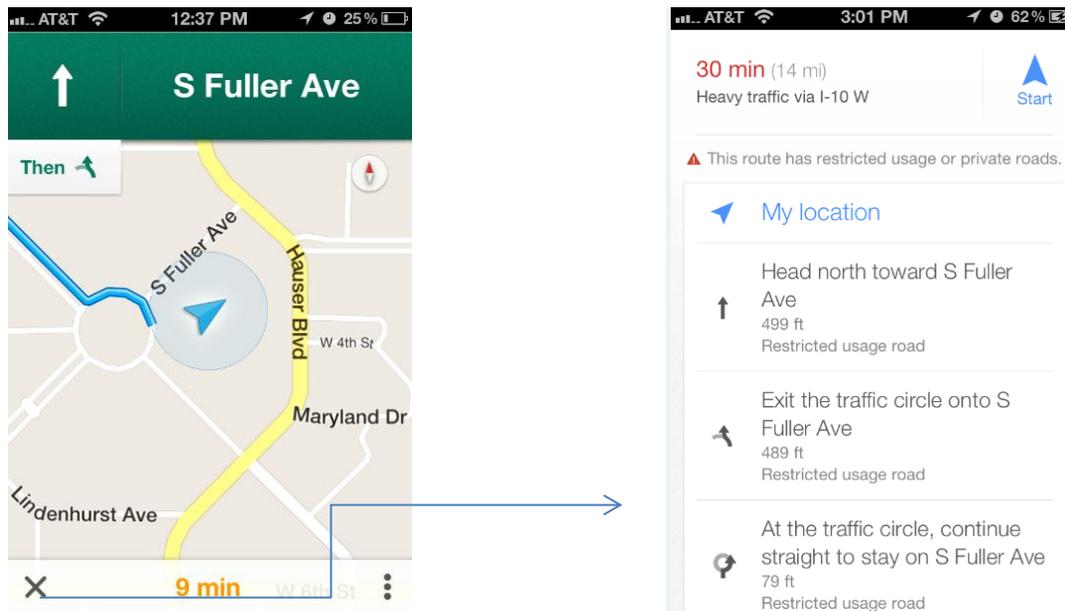
The user can easily manipulate the view with common touch gestures. The system provides an easy way for users to go back from a search results list to the search term. Therefore, if a user wishes to modify their search for any reason after viewing the search results, they can easily modify their search. This provides significant user control and freedom.

4. Consistency and standards

2/5

In certain situations it is unclear whether certain icons are needed or not and what would happen when they are clicked.

For eg: It is hard to figure out what would happen when the X button is clicked in the screen below.



It is non intuitively clear what the  can do, until I spent time using it. The icon image does not match with its functionality.

5. Error prevention

4/5

The Google Maps app lets us easily return back to the main screen when there is any error searching a location.

6. Recognition rather than recall

5/5

The system does an exemplary job recognizing rather than recall when entering search terms. It does this by showing a list of recent searches so that the user can remember past sessions and the searches which yielded successful results. Also, the system provides auto-completion of text from a complete list of past search term and other potential points-of-interest.

7. Flexibility and efficiency of use

2/5

The Google map doesn't have capability to import iPhone contacts. It is surprising that it doesn't let you import google contacts, although you sign in with your google account. There is no point signing in with your account when you cannot import your contacts.

If you sign in to the app with your Google login, you can do things like save your home address, work address, and other locations for easy access from your Google profile.

8. Aesthetic and minimalist design

5/5

The new interface is the first thing to catch your attention when loading up the new app. Google is making all its mobile apps mirror the overall style of its Google Plus app. It has sliding menu from all directions and colors to highlight things. The maps load quickly and searching for addresses is pretty easy. Users can pull a tab out from the right side to expose things like street traffic, public transit lines, satellite view, or Google Earth.

9. Helping users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

3/5

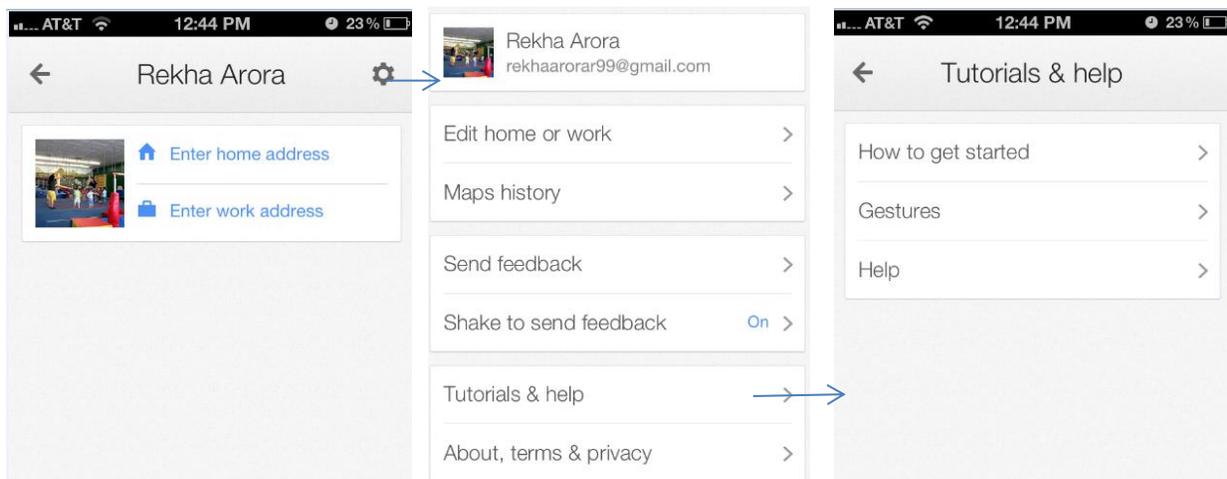
If the map is zoomed in or zoomed out, it is easy to return back to original state with the compass icon on the top.

10. Help and documentation

1/5

On the main screen, there is an  icon which opens up the user profile. In the user profile menu, when you click the gear button it shows all the user settings. The tutorials and help are hidden under the User Profile. It is not easily accessible to the user. Although the tutorials and help are quite detailed and easy to understand, the app lacks positioning the help in appropriate menu/icon.

Tutorial and help is nowhere related to user profile and hence it should not be placed under the user profile menu. What if the user skips linking his Gmail account with Google maps, then the help menu is not accessible to the user.

**CONCLUSION:**

Overall the Google Maps for iPhone has all the core features a mapping application needs to have. The design is simple and easy to follow for novice users. It is a comprehensive GPS and voice navigation solution for walking, driving, biking, and taking public transit.