play it by ear

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play it by ear is a mobile application that enables travelers to explore other cities more spontaneously.

It equips people with an enhanced sense of what's happening in their surrounding, allowing them to "play it by ear."
Responses to heuristic evaluation
Soft key mappings

“The center button should be ‘Select’”

“’Back’ is not consistently mapped to the right soft key.”
The select button

Nokia (old)

Nokia (more recent)

Sony Ericsson
The back button

Nokia

Motorola

Sony Ericsson
Soft key mappings

“The center button should be ‘Select’”

“’Back’ is not consistently mapped to the right soft key.”
Two different map screens

“Why is Map in detail mode different from Map in list mode?”

From Detail view to Directions

From List view to Map
Two different map screens

From Detail view to Directions

From List view to Map

Changed wording
More contextual help

Inform people what they see and what they can do.
24-hour clock confusing

Change to AM/PM format
Changes

v.1 to v.2
List view
Detail view

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Mars Volta</th>
<th>Cowboy Junkies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Berkeley Community Theatre</strong>&lt;br&gt;1800 Allston Way&lt;br&gt;Price: $4&lt;br&gt;Phone: 415-222-6432&lt;br&gt;Web: <a href="http://www.caltheat.ticketsite.com">www.caltheat.ticketsite.com</a></td>
<td><strong>Great American Music Hall</strong>&lt;br&gt;850 O'Farrell Street&lt;br&gt;Price: $5&lt;br&gt;Phone: 415-222-6432&lt;br&gt;Web: <a href="http://www.venuewebsite.com">www.venuewebsite.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:00, 0.5 mi</td>
<td>8:00 PM, 1.02 mi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the platinum success of their seminal 1988 release *The Trinity Session*, an album which helped set the stage for the burgeoning Americana roots music movement, Cowboy Junkies have attracted an uncommonly dedicated international following which has remained loyal to the band. Although recent Cowboy Junkies albums have employed a coterie of support players to flesh out their sound, *One Soul Now* was conceived as a showcase for the core quartet.
play it by ear

Map view
Options

Sort Events By
- Starting Time
- Distance
- Price

Show Events Within
- 0.5 miles
- 1 hour

Global Options
Sort Events By
- Distance

Show Events Within
- 0.5 to 10 miles
- 0.5 to 10 hours
INTERACTIVE PROTOTYPE

Demo
Pilot Usability Study

4 sessions with 4 tasks
Tasks

1. Find a music event nearby (preferrably free)

2. Find events south of Geary Street

3. Find art events between you and downtown

4. Get directions and call venue
List view

What does this list mean?

There are categories?

What’s that face there?
Detail view

What’s this?

And this?

Are these the directions?

What does this do?
Options

What does this screen do?

I’ve selected “Distance” - why doesn’t anything change?

“I’m totally clueless on this one”
Map

What do these numbers mean?

Which events do they represent?

Where am I?

So the phone knows where I am?
Map

Why can’t I pan in zoom mode?

Which option is highlighted?
Softkeys

I push that arrow pointing to ‘directions,’ but nothing happens!
Lessons learned
emulator != actual phone
  e.g. soft key affordances
Last Iteration
Tooltips

e.g. little help bubble in options screen when hovering over radio buttons
Category tabs

Remove visual distance between tab bar and list