

# Slack Notification System

*Your notifications, your preferences*

## User Manual

ECSE 424 - Human Computer Interaction

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## 1. Introduction

### a. Motivation for the project

One of the most commonly used communications tools in the professional world is Slack. Slack fosters an environment where employees, friends and classmates can communicate with each other. While Slack has a powerful messenger system, it fails to “ease the communication burden” because of Slack’s non-customizable notification system. When the Slack window is minimized, if the user receives a notification, a red dot appears in the corner of the app icon and a generic, stock Operating System notification appears in the right corner. The notification outputs are coupled with limited customization which does not take into account the specifics of the messenger authors- e.g. their group, and channel.

We believe we have implemented an improvement on Slack’s notification system. Users should be able to customize notifications to their liking to improve their overall experience. Not only does this involve changing the location of the notification, but also changing the style of the notification based on a multitude of parameters. We have implemented a system where a user can choose the color, content included, duration and position of the notification. After experimenting with several notification looks, the user can then save up to 8 notifications and for each the user specifies the filter for which the notification applies. **With all of this functionality the user will be better able to decide if they need to check their messages, leading to less distractions, a better interface, and higher productivity.**

### b. Suggested Hardware

A computer that has Java 8 Runtime Environment (JRE). If you don’t have JRE, please install it here:

<http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/java/javase/downloads/jre8-downloads-2133155.html>

### **c. Prototype Limitations**

Given the technical challenge of connecting our app to Slack API's we have decided to focus on the HCI aspects of our project. This means that the process of setting the notifications and how they appear have been developed, however this won't actually connect to Slack and you won't be able to receive Slack notifications through our app. We ask that you imagine what it would look like were it connected to Slack, and hopefully in next iterations we figure out how adapt our project to Slack's outgoing message API.

## **2. Installation Procedure**

Installation should be very easy and straightforward. Once you have downloaded the .jar file that can be found on our project page, simply click to open the file and run the program. If you have difficulty running the .jar file we have included OS specific instructions below that will always work.

### **a. OSX**

- i. Open terminal, navigate to directory containing the .jar file, use command `"java -jar BetaFinalPresentation.jar"` to run.

### **b. Windows**

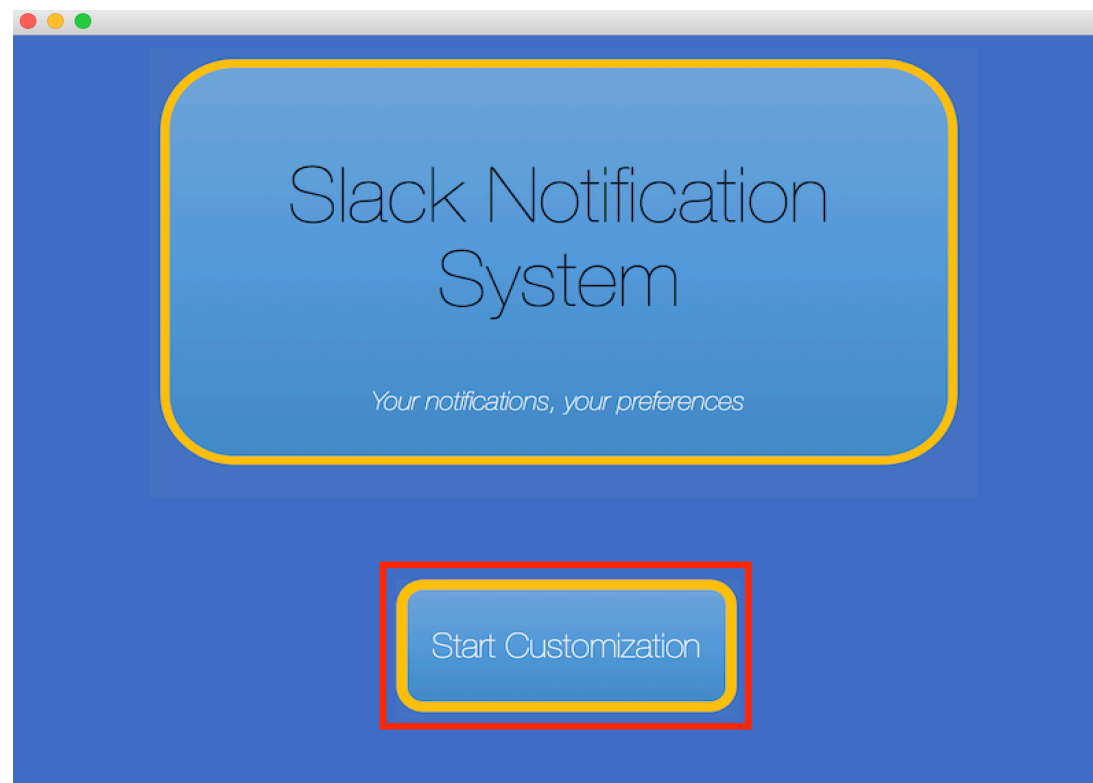
- i. Open command prompt, navigate to directory containing the .jar file, use command `"java -jar BetaFinalPresentation.jar "` to run.

### **c. Linux**

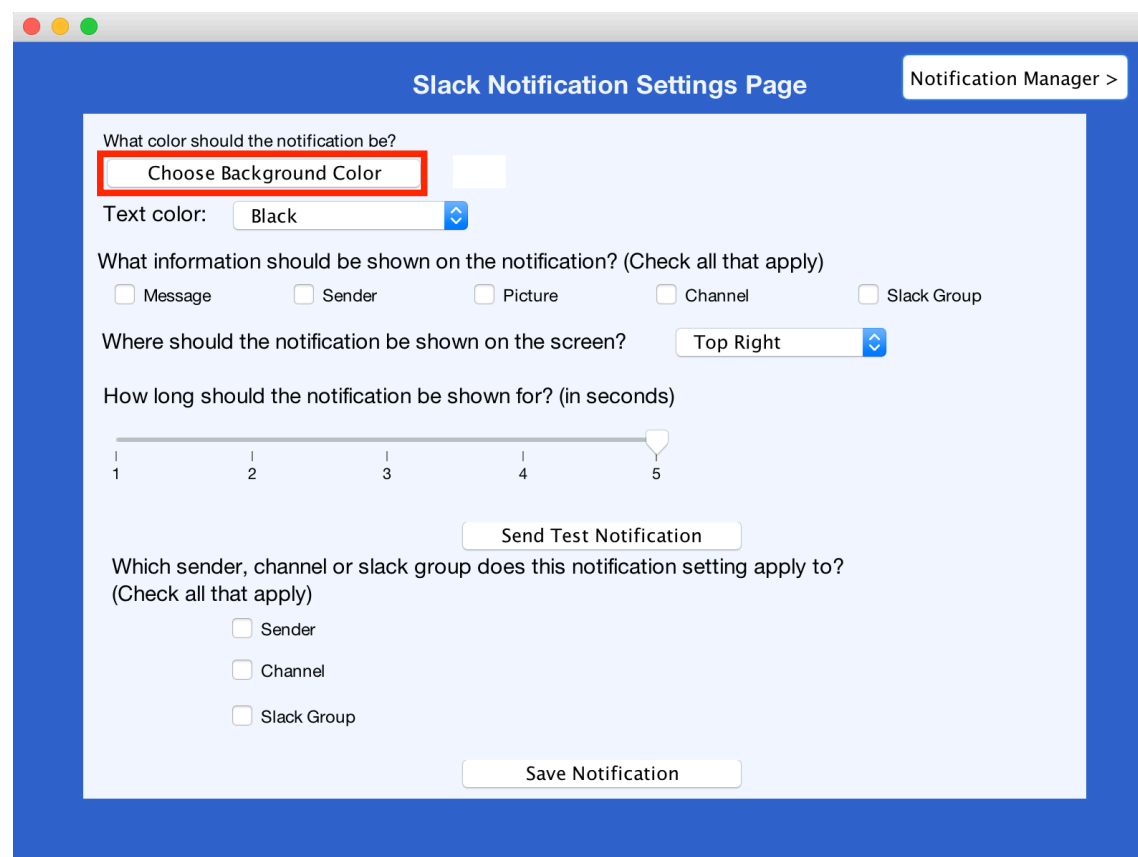
- i. Open terminal, navigate to directory containing the .jar file, use command `"java -jar BetaFinalPresentation.jar "` to run.

### 3. User Guide

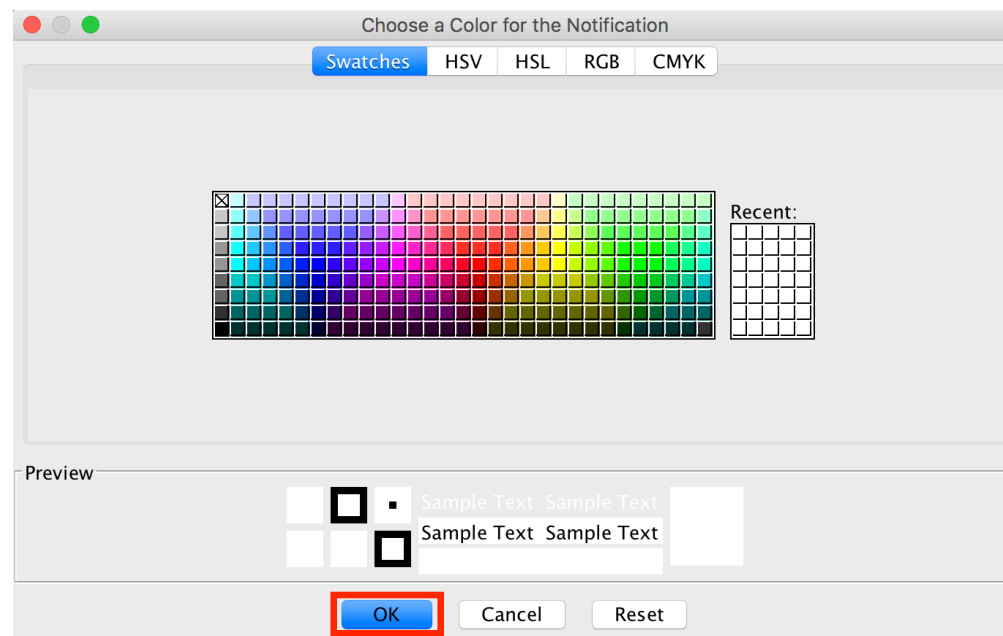
Once the application starts, you should be greeted with this page:



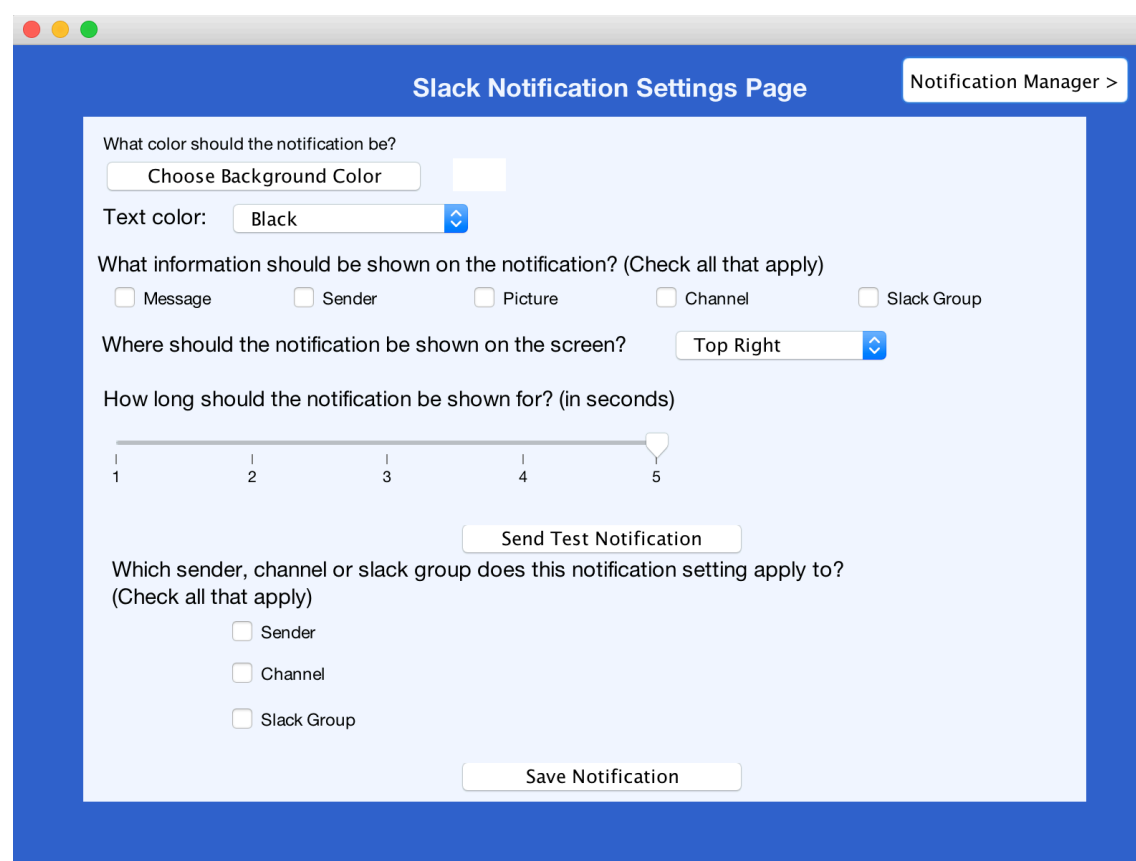
Proceed by clicking on “Start Customization” and you should be greeted with this page:

A screenshot of the "Slack Notification Settings Page" in a web application. The page has a blue header with the title "Slack Notification Settings Page" and a link "Notification Manager >". The main content area is light blue and contains several settings sections. The first section, "What color should the notification be?", has a "Choose Background Color" button highlighted with a red border. Below it is a "Text color:" dropdown menu set to "Black". The second section, "What information should be shown on the notification? (Check all that apply)", includes checkboxes for "Message", "Sender", "Picture", "Channel", and "Slack Group". The third section, "Where should the notification be shown on the screen?", has a dropdown menu set to "Top Right". The fourth section, "How long should the notification be shown for? (in seconds)", features a slider ranging from 1 to 5, with the value currently set at 5. Below the slider is a "Send Test Notification" button. The final section, "Which sender, channel or slack group does this notification setting apply to? (Check all that apply)", includes checkboxes for "Sender", "Channel", and "Slack Group". At the bottom of the form is a "Save Notification" button.

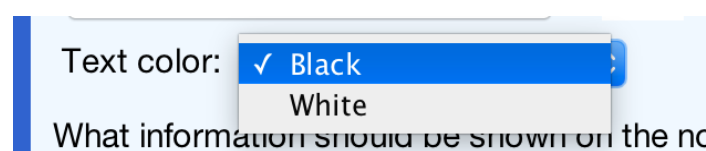
You are now on the Notifications Settings Page where you can begin to customize notifications to your liking. You can begin by selecting “Choose Background Color” to pick the color of the notification, you should see this page:



Going through each tab you should see a multitude of different methods to select colors, once you are satisfied, click “OK” and you should be brought back to this page:



You can then select the color of the text using a dropdown menu:

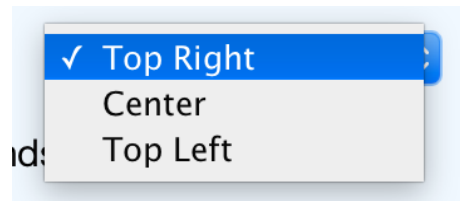


Next you can check off what information you want to appear on the notifications here:

What information should be shown on the notification? (Check all that apply)

☐ Message    ☐ Sender    ☐ Picture    ☐ Channel    ☐ Slack Group

After that the location of the notification with respect to your desktop screen in another dropdown:

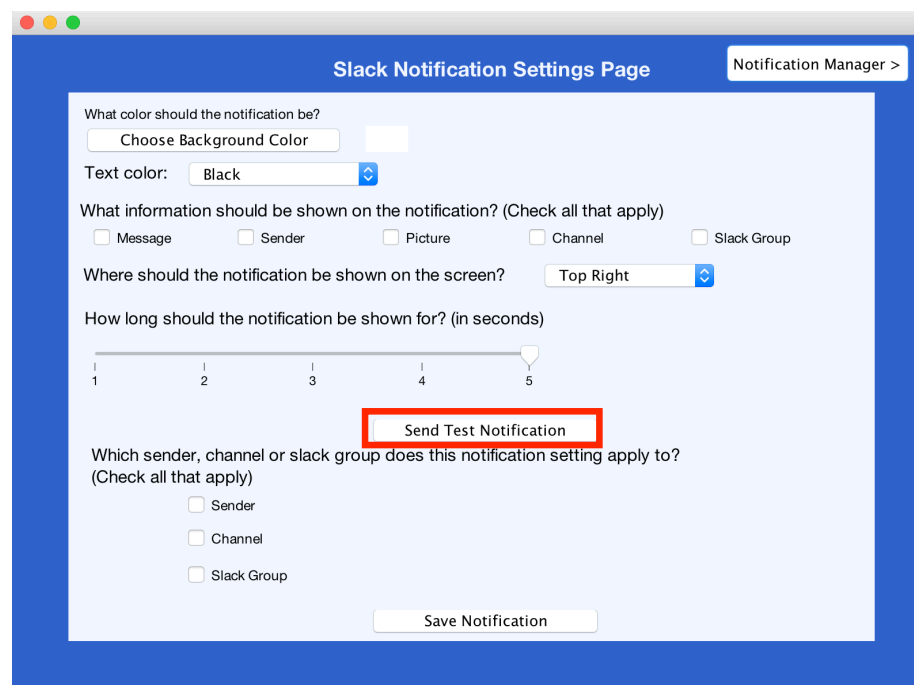


Finally you may select how long you would like the notification to appear:

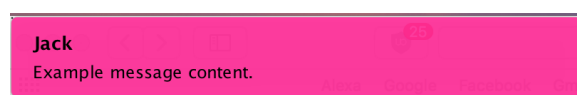
How long should the notification be shown for? (in seconds)

1 2 3 4 5

Once all your settings are chosen you may click on “Send Test Notification” highlighted below:

A screenshot of the 'Slack Notification Settings Page'. The page has a blue header with the title 'Slack Notification Settings Page' and a link 'Notification Manager >'. The main content area is white and contains several settings sections. The first section is 'What color should the notification be?' with a 'Choose Background Color' button and a 'Text color' dropdown set to 'Black'. The second section is 'What information should be shown on the notification? (Check all that apply)' with checkboxes for 'Message', 'Sender', 'Picture', 'Channel', and 'Slack Group'. The third section is 'Where should the notification be shown on the screen?' with a dropdown set to 'Top Right'. The fourth section is 'How long should the notification be shown for? (in seconds)' with a slider from 1 to 5. The fifth section is 'Which sender, channel or slack group does this notification setting apply to? (Check all that apply)' with checkboxes for 'Sender', 'Channel', and 'Slack Group'. At the bottom of the settings area are two buttons: 'Send Test Notification' (highlighted with a red rectangle) and 'Save Notification'.

This will make a test notification appear on your screen, showing you what your notification would look like given the settings chosen. You have the possibility to hover over and close out the notification if you would like. An example is shown below:



Once you are satisfied with your notifications you can then decide to filter that notification for a specific Sender, Channel, and Group by clicking the check boxes:

Which sender, channel or slack group does this notification setting apply to?  
(Check all that apply)

☒ Sender

☒ Channel

☒ Slack Group

Sender Name:

Channel:

Slack Group:

Save Notification

You are then presented with Field boxes to specify the specific sender, channel, or group you wish to filter out, an example is shown below:

Which sender, channel or slack group does this notification setting apply to?  
(Check all that apply)

☒ Sender

☒ Channel

☒ Slack Group

Sender Name:

Channel:

Slack Group:

Save Notification

If at any point in the process of making a notification you would not like to save the notification the you can immediately go back to the Notification Manager page:

Slack Notification Settings Page

Notification Manager >

What color should the notification be?

Choose Background Color

Text color:

What information should be shown on the notification? (Check all that apply)

☐ Message

☐ Sender

☐ Picture

☐ Channel

☐ Slack Group

Where should the notification be shown on the screen?

How long should the notification be shown for? (in seconds)

1 2 3 4 5

Send Test Notification

Which sender, channel or slack group does this notification setting apply to?  
(Check all that apply)

☐ Sender

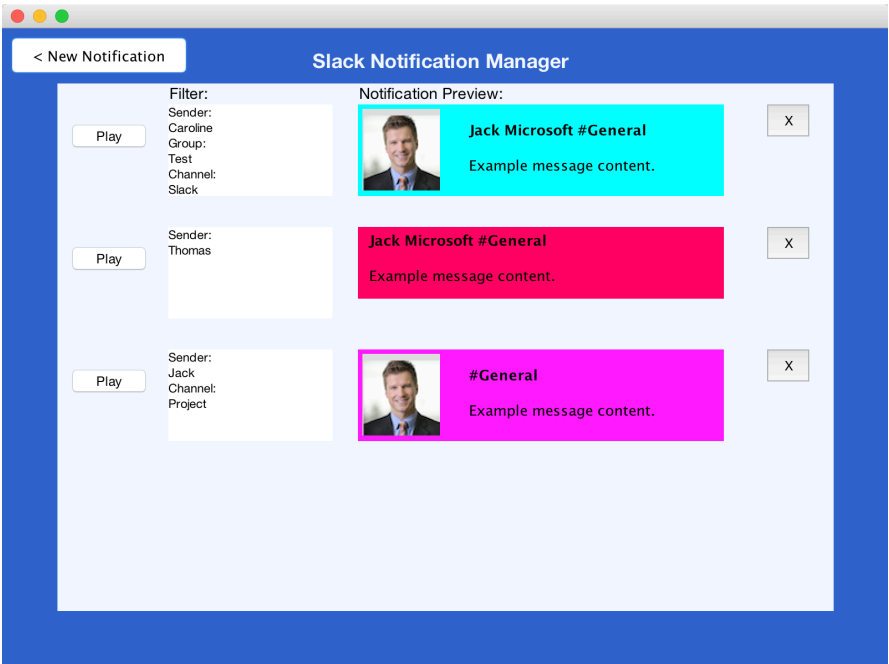
☐ Channel

☐ Slack Group

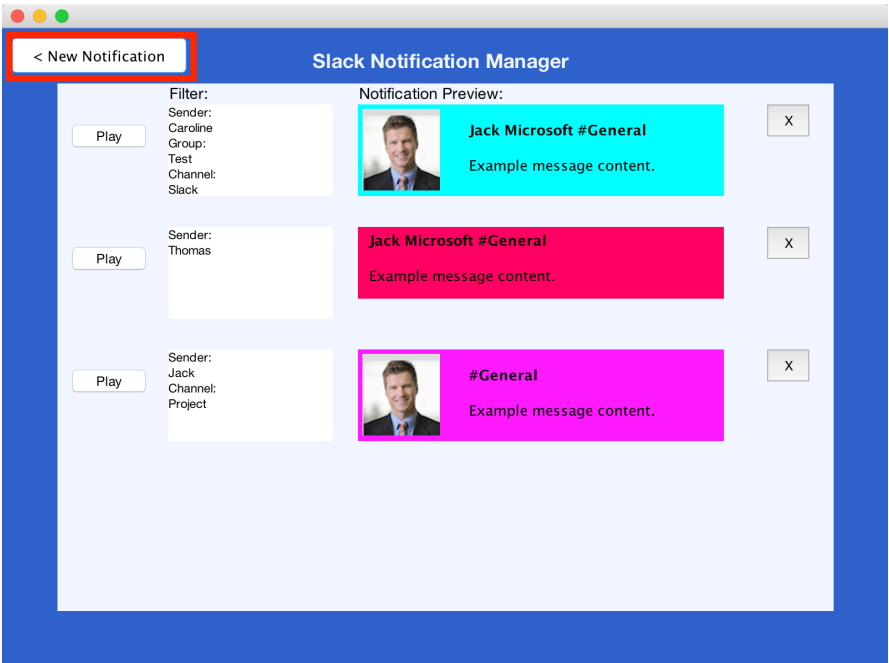
Save Notification



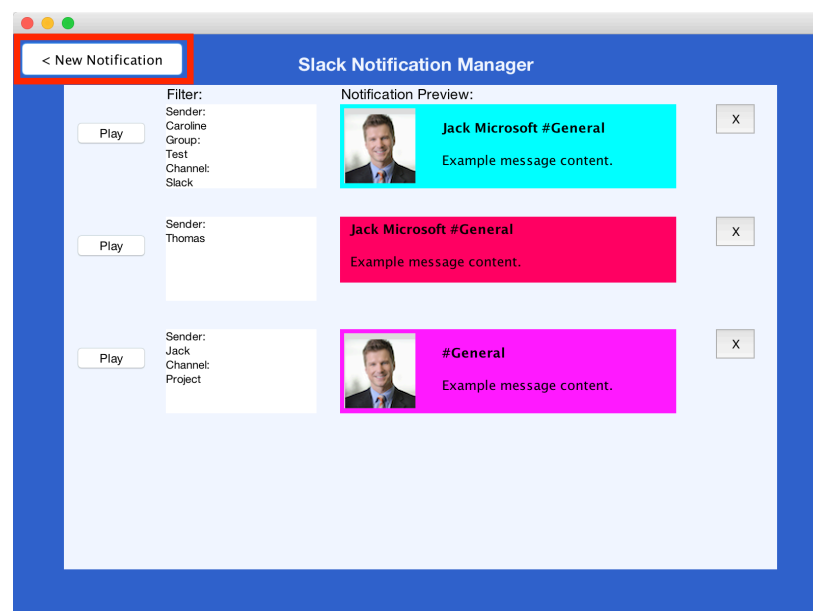
Otherwise you may click on “Save Notification” once you have everything set up to your liking and you will be presented with the Notifications Manager Page with your new notification:



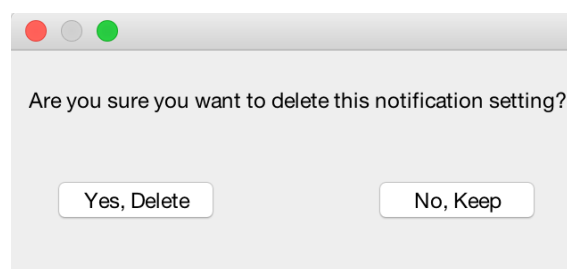
To add a new notification hit the New Notification Button and you will be brought back to the Notifications Settings Page.



To Test your notifications you may hit the Play button and you will be sent a test notification.

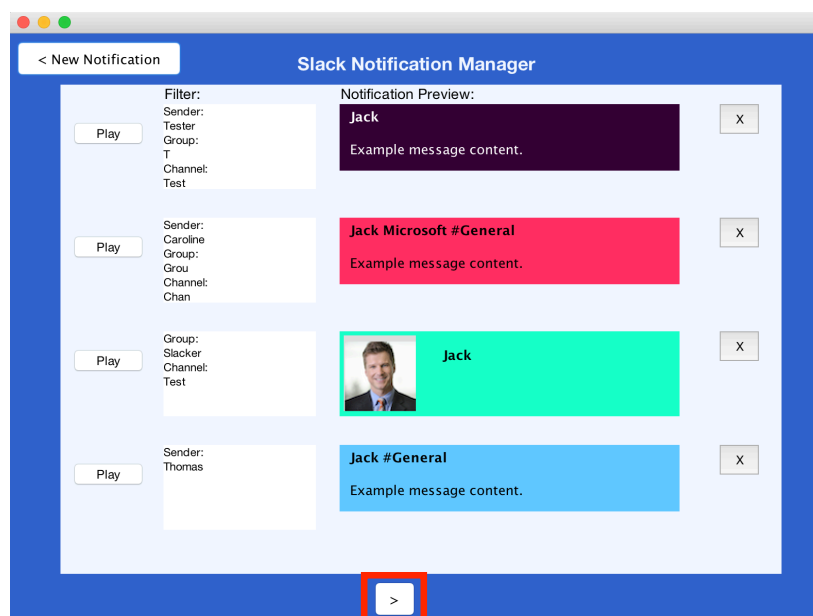


You may also click on the 'X' to delete a notification and you will be presented with this popup



You can now pick whether to delete or keep the notification.

When you have created 4 notifications on the manager page you will get the possibility of moving to a new page to create more notifications by clicking on the carrot here:



Congrats! You have finished the user manual. You may continue to create, delete, and save notifications to satisfy all your needs. We hope you like our product!