

Coursework Report

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Abstract

This report will talk you through the web application Solar Explorer. This project was set for coursework one of Advanced Web Technologies and here you will find details on the design of the web application, any enhancements made along with the evaluation etc.

Keywords – Solar Explorer, Web App, Advanced Web Technologies, SET09103

1 Title

Solar Explorer

2 Introduction

Solar Explorer is a web application designed for young adults of school age who may be learning about our solar system. This web app was designed to be simple to use and full of quick facts about the Sun, its planets and their moons within our solar system.

By using a simple drop down menu across the top of each page, the users can easily navigate their way around the web app and find the useful information they are looking for. If a user wishes, they can also pull down a list of all planets by typing into the address bar of their browser window the URL or the web app followed by planetlist or moonlist for example: <http://set09103.napier.ac.uk:9135/planetlist>.

The following is a screenshot from the current working model of the Solar Explorer web app -

Screenshot - Index (main) page Image [?].

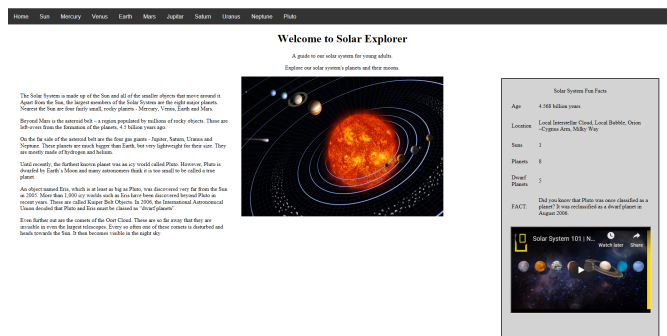


Figure 1: Main page screenshot

3 Design

This web app is structured as it is as it was felt that an easily navigated web app for the targeted user demographic would be most useful. Almost every website uses drop down menus of some sort and by setting it this way, we can easily see all the stars in the solar system followed by the planets and within each planets menu, their corresponding moons.

The URL hierarchy is set out in the same way as the navigation. Within the templates folder we have the index page (Main page) of our web app and we then have three sub folders. One for stars, another for planets and then another for moons. Keeping it organized this way will allow for easier changes or additions to be made to our web app in the future.

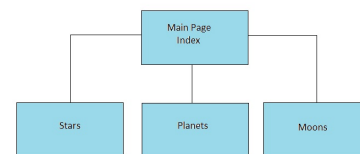


Figure 2: URL hierarchy map

4 Enhancements

In the future it would be an idea to add a search function to this app so that users can also search for a planet or moon instead of having to click through the menus looking for something specific. If a search function was added then the user would simply be able to type in the name of the object they are looking for then submit and they web app would then give page suggestions corresponding to the user search.

Another idea for enhancing the app would be to add in usage of the NASA API to allow users to pull down information from NASA that relates to their searches also. This can vastly improve the web app experience and make it a lot more informative and useful. One particular part about the NASA API that would come in useful would be

the near earth asteroids. Every day this is updated and would allow users to check what asteroids are passing through our solar system close to earth. Users can see they name, size, speed and how close the asteroids are to Earth.

5 Critical Evaluation

Looking at the critical evaluation stage for the web app, the feature that could work better would be the navigation layout. Instead of having the menu bar having the home link immediately followed by the Sun and then planets, it would perhaps make more sense having this redesigned in some way so that users are taken on a tour of some sort starting with the sun then followed by the planets. The interactive part would the come from the user clicking images of planets or moons to bring up information about the objects selected. Though doing it this way would require a lot of graphical animation knowledge.]

However, while saying that, the current navigation does allow users to navigate to any planet or moon that they wish and explore in a fun way at the same time. It is just felt that the app lacks a more interactive approach.

The layout of each page was intended to look the same throughout the app, this allows for easy editing of any page within the app and also makes for easier reading too. Though it is felt that better knowledge of HTML and CSS from the creators side would have allowed for something more interesting to be done.

6 Personal Evaluation

Going into this task the creator of this web app knew very little regarding HTML and CSS and knew nothing about Python Flask. Combining the lot to make a functioning web app seemed like a very daunting task but one that has started to take shape and help improve the knowledge of the creator very well.

Studying the module workbook given out allowed for learning new skills such as routing and redirecting etc. Practicing what was in the book and adapting it to different solutions proved to be successful to allow for a submitted prototype app.

Going back to learning HTML and CSS was something else to overcome this coursework outcome. Using sites like W3 Schools and buying a book from Amazon allowed for this to be done and of course referencing old coursework too.

7 References

- [1] Learning HTML - <https://www.w3schools.com/>
- [2] HTML and CSS design and build websites by Jon Duckett [3] Nasa Images for page - <https://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/imagegallery/index.html>
- [4] Solar System, Sun, Planets and Moons info with help of - <https://www.wikipedia.org/>