IDM 232 Case Study

Overview

For this final project, I had develop a dynamic, self hosted recipe page using PHP to integrate a database of 37 recipes and all their information. With the use of HTML, CSS, PHP, MySQL, and a little bit of Javascript, I was able to create my final project and accomplish the goals I had set for myself. From in-class critiques, I was able to gain feedback that helped me to improve this project as the course progressed to make it more functional and user-friendly.

Context & Challenge

Background

At the begininng of the 11 week course, we were assigned to create a responsive and dynamic recipe site using HTML,

CSS, JavaScript, PHP, and MySQL. Throughout the course, we were introduced to modern server-side technologies for internet-based delivery of dynamic content that could be used by us to connect and manipulate database content. For the first three assignments, we had to create the basic responsive static pages for the projects which included the main recipes page and the recipe details page. After that we had to begin incorporating PHP and MySQL to dynamically pull data from our database of 37 recipes that we were given.

The Problem

For the course, I had to create a responsive recipe site that would display all 37 recipes from the given database. The main recipes page wouuld have to display all the recipes as well as have working filters and search feature. The recipe details page would need to display all the info for whatever recipe was clicked on as well as list out all the steps with images.

Goals & Objectives

The main goal of this project is to build a dynamic recipe website that pulls information from our database. With the use and integration of PHP into my recipe website, users need to be able to filter and search through the recipes on the main page. Other goals I have for this project include making the web pages responsive so users on smaller screens can still have a functional experience and making sure the pages are well designed as well as easy for users to

read. It should layout information in a visually appealing and concise way for the users.

Process & Insight

During the first static page assignment, I focused on creating the branding for the site I wanted to create. I first chose the hero image at the top of my site and then built out the branding and layout from there, taking some inspiration from the banner I had chosen. I went with the color scheme of beige and different shades of green like dark green and dark olive green to lean more into colors that people associate with food since this would be a recipe site. The colors also fit well with the hero image I chose and didn't clash or look weird with it. The title, "Sizzle and Savor", was part of a list of potential titles I had brainstormed and that stuck with me the most out of all of them. I coded the main recipes page using Visual Studio Code, sticking to the branding I had developed for the site. The first assignemnt had us create a static version of our main recipes page that consisted of only 9 recipes to start, a search bar, and at the very least a protein filter based on the information in the database.

After recieving the critique for the first assignment, the second assignment was to implement the feedback we recieved and update our static page as well as create a subtitle. I chose my subtitle to be "Savor the Flavors of Home Cooking" which I had come up with based on teh title of the site I had picked out previously. We also had to

option to create microinteraction on the main recipes page for extra credite which I did. I created a hover state for all the recipe images and titles. When you hover over one of the recipe tiles that consisted of the image, recipe title, and subtitle, the recipe tile would become bigger to show the user which one they are looking at.

Assignment 3 was to create the static recipe deatil page which a user would see after clicking on a recipe from the main page. I designed and coded this page with Visual Studio Code using the same branding from the main page. This page had to consist of the recipe image, title, subtitle, recipe description, basic information like the amount of time it would take to make and the amount of calories in it, a list of ingredients, the ingredients image as well as all the steps and the corresponding images.

After the first three assignments of static page layouts, we moved into learning PHP and MySQL with the next assignment which was the "Alpha" build. For this assignment, we had to begin to use PHP and MySQL to dynamically pull all the recipe information that was displayed on the main recipes page which included the recipe images, titles, and subtitles, from the database to now display all 37 recipes. Since I had never worked with PHP and MySQL before, it was a huge leaning curve to begin with and took a lot of trail and error before I could get the page to actually work. Once I figured out how to incorporate the PHP into my website and how to manipulate it to fit into my site, I was able to tunr in the assigment.

After the "Alpha" assignment, we moved onto the "Beta" assigment which was to incorporate PHP and MySQL into the recipe detail page we had previously created. We picked a recipe number and then had to dynamically pull that recipe's information from the database which included all the ingredients, steps, and the images that went with them. After going through integrating PHP with the "Alpha" assignment, there wasn't as big as a learning curve though it was still a bit of a struggle to get it to work especially the steps and step images. At first, they wouldn't layout correctly even though I had the CSS in place to do so. Eventually, after looking at the sample code we were given and doing some research, I was able to fix it and turn in the assignment.

Now we moved on to the final assigment which was to link the pages we had created as well as use PHP to get the search and filter functions working. Using PHP we had to push the recipe id number to the recipe details page so it would displlay the correct selected recipe information. We also had to use PHP to get the search bar and the filter sections of our main recipes page working.

The Solution

Live Final Website

Here is the link to my final website. Overall I am happy with the brand I created and the work I put into integrating the PHP into my pages. The site has a strong brand identity

by utilizing the color scheme I created and rounded shapes. I was also able to include microcinteraction into it to make the users experience with my site better. I had created a hover microinteraction for teh recipe tile on my sites main page. This interaction enlarges the recipe tile when a user hovers over it. It also includes an error message for when a user types in a keyword in the search that can't be found. If they do type in a keyword that can't be found, an message wppears displaying "No results found for" whatever the keyword the user had typed in was. Each feature that I incorporated or included in my final site, were to serve as a foundation to create a easy to use and consise user expereince.

The Results

Throughout this project, I learned a lot more about PHP and database integration. Before going into this class, I didn't know anything about PHP or mySQL but was able to learn it and incorporate it into my final website. I think this was a success and that I was able to achieve the goals that I had set for myself. I was able to take the feedback I recieved from multiple in-class critiques to improve the site and make it more user-friendly as well as functional. I gained valuble skills and knowledge from this course that I will apply for the rest of my career.