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GIT 480 – Draft Design Process Documentation

**Brainstorm**

Before I even got the assignment, I knew I wanted to create something front end related but not too time-consuming because in past experiences I have dealt with scope creep and didn’t finish my projects. I wanted a project that would challenge me but also display all my skills. I just recently became a manager at my Code Ninjas job and when I was presented with our landing page, I saw a fantastic opportunity to fix it. This would be a fantastic opportunity for me to go through the web design process and put it into practice. This website redesign would solve the functionality and aesthetic look of the website and organize all the content to which the users could find all the information in one go. I chose to do this because I think this will help me especially when I am trying to make a sale and have kids sign up to my center and for personal reasons, this is something I can say I did.

My second idea was a basketball analytics application that I have been thinking about doing for a long time. The idea was to pull information from a free basketball API and display it in a way where the user can filter categories to find the specific stats they want. For example, say the user wants to see how Player X’s statistic from the month of August – September and compare that with other players for that year. Unfortunately, the more I thought about it and listened to feedback from Professor Cynthia, she was right in that it would take too long to do and learn something new so ultimately, it is best to scrap it.

Naturally, the biggest concern I had was scope creep as my goal is to produce a functional website redesign. The biggest challenge would be which day and how many hours I could dedicate to finishing this up. Between my internship, my 2 classes and my 2 jobs and being promoted at one of my jobs, preparation was going to be key.

What I learned from this phase is how much research and planning was required. I see the effect of good planning as it alleviates a lot of potential problems back tracking or trying to implement innovative ideas while working on the old ones.

**Identify**

Between the two ideas, the website design seemed the most practical as it would impact me at my code tutoring job, and it is the front-end related project I can do. The main problem with the website was that the content was extremely hard to read and very ugly to the eye. It also lacked some features that I think could be useful like a gallery to see what the kids are doing and how they are coming along. Resisting the urge to add more ideas is an obstacle for me especially if the idea is a good one. With my timeline, I cannot afford to add to my plate.

**Define**

Our objective is to redesign the website in a way where it is both appealing aesthetically and functional at the same time. The website will hold all the information about our programs and camps that we offer and will be the place where parents can go to for their questions. The website will include many sign-up forms and I will add an about us page to give more information. The website will also include our social media links.

The project will start September 12th, 2022. We will begin with a research phase and analysis phase and then move on to our brainstorming phase. We will analyze the website and see which content we need to create and which to keep and will use a mood board to reimagine a website.

The final product should be launched and deployable by October 7th (still depends on manager’s approval). This includes the landing page and about us page. The about us page deadline is September 25th, and the landing page deadline is September 30th.

A respectable number of points of inspiration were STEM inspired as well as a lot of website designs concepts I found on Pinterest as well. This website is geared more for parents and the goal was to make the website as easy to navigate as possible. I wanted the website to be fun with colors, bright and family friendly. After assignment 2, I watched some Korean pop videos and what I loved most was their use of color. The use of color was like visual candy and made it so attractive to the eyes and I will try to model my website after that. In terms of web elements and UI/UX elements, I found different web elements on Pinterest and wanted to take parts from each design and see what I can produce that. Lastly, for the font, I did want to stick to the Code Ninjas brand, but I wanted to add another type face to make it more fun.

As I reflect on this phase, I did follow the project brief, however I did not follow the project timeline. I wanted the about us page at least done today according to my plan, but it has not even been started. I underestimated just how tired I would be during the week, and it was foolish of me to think I could work on the project after my jobs knowing that I was tired and did not want to do anything. Even on Sundays and Mondays, I still have more internship and school assignments done and have neglected to do that, but I still have time to do this and asking my boss for an extra day off will certainly help. The adjustment will be setting aside at least 1 hour a day on days that I work and dedicating 5 hours a day to my off days.

**Ideate**

The first thing I wanted to do was create some low fidelity wireframes. I learned a trick from a youtube video which was to fold a paper into 8ths and draw a wireframe into each one. In the 1st – 3rd frame, I made different variations of having the logo in the center of the header and then having the navigation in the middle. The little abstract shapes with X’s on them are images of different aspects of our program. These sections would be clearly seperated with a horizontal line. In the next section, I experimented with how I wanted the cards to look like. This particulaar section would display the different programs we offer and the user could click on the card to display a modal that has more information.

In the 4th – 6th wireframes, I experimented with having the logo on the left side and having a more a traditional approach. In the 4th wireframe, for the hero area, the ideas was to have an image on the right side and have it be a carousel that rotates througfh all the pictures with a call to action on the left. I do like the card set up in the 4th wireframe but I think that would take up to much space and would cause too much scrolling for the users. In the 5th wireframes, it is a more refined idea of the 4th and I think that might be a better apporach. In the 6th, I attempted to being the abstract shapes back but then I ran into a conflict of which content to display. My main problem is where do I want to display the programs we offer, in the hero section or as cards in one of the sections below. Ultimately for this wireframe, I think it would be better to display them in the hero section as it woiuld definetly save on space. For the 7th wireframe (2nd from the bottom right), I just made another variation of how the abstract shapes would look. I think having the main call to action in the middle and having the supplmental programs in the hero section on the side is a good idea I should keep exploring.

Lastly, for the last wireframe, I saw concept where the hero section was not full width and the rest of the website was and I kind of liked it. This is another idea I need to explore more and would like to add on.

As I went throug this process, taking into account the websites functionality was the biggest challenge. In my UI/UX intership, I’ve learned that aevery decision I make has to be have purpose behind it. I can’t just put pictures because I want to or make the text bigger cause it looks cool. I need to take into account various design elements and then back them up with the research I did and assess if this is helping me achieve the goal of my website. I definitely should have labeled everything and even came up with a key to identify all the elements also. Professor Cynthia is correct as this is confusing at first glance and I did not even consider that. My goal is to redo these wireframes with more detail and more it more presentable to a client.

**Prototype**

To define the stages of development for this project I went in this order: research, preperation, mockup, coding, then deploying. I did a lot of research on Figma (“Figma: The Collaborative Interface Design Tool.”) as I would use that as the tool to make my mockups. Im using it for my UI/UX internship and I love how easy it is to learn and work in. I looked into prototyping (Prototyping) as I wanted to something very interactive to share. Next I looked into what tools I would use to code everything and I thought Visual Studio Code (Documentation for Visual Studio Code) and Bootstrap (Otto) were the only tools I needed. I also downloaded the plugin “live server” (Live Server - Visual Studio Marketplace) as it would refresh my project everytime I made changes which was fantastic. I then research what project management system I would use to approach this and I actually referred to one of my earleir classes on project mamangement systems. I would use the Agile (Peek) method as I would be making frequent modifications and adjustmensts to my website. Lastly, I decided I was going to use Github (“GitHub: Where the World Builds Software”) to deploy my site as it is the easiet and most familiar to me. The cool aspect of Github is that you can upload your code and you can see all the changes that were made by day. I unfortunately forgot to upload everything the first couple days I was working on the website so I didn’t upload anything til about the 5th day working on it.

After I was done researching, I went ahead and prepared everything I need. I know myself by now and I know I get overwhelmed just trying to start a project so what I did was gather all the assets, set up my figma account, made all the folders and files for the project. I also went ahead and made a design system in Figma to make my mock up work flow easier.

In the all the projects Ive done before, taking the time prepare was definetly helpful this time around. Usually I would rush in and just tackle problems on the way and then backtrack and would get messy but defining everything from the jump saved me a lot of time.

A small bstacle I ran into was importing the png assets to figma. Even though the PNG’s had transparent backgrounds, figma was adding a white background to it. I don’t know if it was a setting I had but in some cases I had to go to Photoshop to manually remove it. Another problem I ran into was scope creep. There was so many things I wanted to add and so many other pages I wanted to add but I knew I had to get the foundation done first and then I could add all my features if possible.

I think the Agile process worked wonders for me, I think Id rather work in this workflow because Im constantly refining my ideas and making sure the website looks good.

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**Test**

Unfortunately I didn’t have a draft available for my peers at the time but when I presented this to my co workers, they were estatic. They were happy that I was using actual photos from our dojo and not just stock photos from corporate. They were also happy that I was the one to code everything as it adds more value to our program and makes as a great selling point when we do tours (our sales pitch). Some of my co workers (the high schoolers) were also interested in learning Figma and HTML & CSS as they are coders but don’t know what program to get into . Overall it was a posititve reception. In terms of critique, my co workers were telling me to add more about me sections or “get to know the staff” sections and while that is good, like I mentioned before, I can’t afford to get lost in scope creep.

One obstacle I ran into was finding the correct font. As much I could I wanted to stick to the brand guidelines for Code Ninjas and their font called for Azo Sans and from the research I did, only the Adobe Suite had it. Another obstacle I encountered was using Flexbox. Im not sure if Flexbox is outdated on chrome but when I tested the files on my server, Flexbox wasn’t even working. Unfortuantely I had to scrap this idea and took a good portion of my time.

Another weird obstacle I ran into was having to inline style the background image in the jumbotron section. I was always taught never to inline style anything but after researching and testing all sorts of commands, the only way it worked is if I inline styled everything. I cant explain why it works but I lost a lot of time trying to do ir the right way. That is the dliema of a project. Do I proceed with a product not coded correctly but works or try to keep everything clean and within best practice but not functional?

Lastly, the pages are suppose to show up in Github pages however, whenever I got the link, it kept going to one of my older expired projects. The docuementation on Github was so vast and unfortunately I was not able to display my pages. I do have all the code on a github repo though.

**Refine**

There was lots of refinement but mostly minor chanegs mainly with the CSS and looking at different browsers. It has also been a while since I last used Bootstrap so It did take me a while to figure how it works but after a little bit of documentation reading, I was able to pick it up again.

After putting in the content for the hero section, I worked on the footer next as it was the easiest thing to do after running into the snag with the Flexbox

**Implement**

There was lots of refinement but mostly minor chanegs mainly with the CSS and looking at different browsers. It has also been a while since I last used Bootstrap so It did take me a while to figure how it works but after a little bit of documentation reading, I was able to pick it up again. A lot of the refinements was just making sure that the space looked cohesive and everthying adjusted to mobile.

A picture containing graphical user interface

Description automatically generated

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