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School of technology
and digital media

Project Exam 1

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Word count

1931



Intro/Preface.

For the duration of these 5 weeks I have been out of commission due to a combination of sickness and mental illness, I was bedridden for 3 weeks and have lost a lot of time.

This is not to garner sympathy, but clarify the timeframe of my progress during this project.

I don't really like making excuses, and often in reports like these, I feel like that's all I do.

With that said, let's dive into this shall we?

Design

What went well on the project?

It took me a while to decide on what to make this blog about and I went back and forth a while before I just started working on the technical aspects thinking I could dress it up as I see fit later.

As you can probably see when looking at the final product, I am a big fan of "dark mode", both in browsers and otherwise. I tend to strain my eyes in too bright light, so when working on something for a longer period of time I prefer - as I assume we all do: comfort.

So with that in mind I started styling the website as I coded the JavaScript and listed my elements in HTML, shifting from project to project within the- well, project.

I started making the hover- "glitch-effect" after re-watching (to be honest it's probably more like re-re-re-.....-re-watching) Spider-Man: Into the Spider Verse (2018) which uses quite a lot of effects like it. Looking at similar CSS animations like (Ken Marolds Jitter Text: <https://codepen.io/kenmarold/pen/dPrOmZ>) take that in with two layers in different hues and colors, and voilà! Shaky text with a glitchy effect I'm satisfied with.

Skull with crown-logo, not too shabby, not the strongest branding but still on theme with the focus of the blog - One Piece a story about pirates.



What was difficult/didn't go well on the project?

I've been going back and forward on choosing a color scheme and I'm not quite happy with what is currently presented. My indecisiveness is my greatest enemy I've come to know, what do I make? Do I make up a customer profile and try to figure out what they would want? Or do I make myself the customer? I went with the latter. If I were to start a blog or something along those lines, It would have to be about something I care about, and hence - I'd like to do it justice. But just as Forgemaster H'naanza I too am my own worst critic. There's a lot I'd like to change and improve, I do feel like I'm at a stage where I'm starting to see the end of the tunnel, but somehow I just cannot reach it yet. This tends to cause frustration in me, which I need to balance with the feeling of- or sense of achievement in order to not give up or just get burnt out.

I don't feel like design is my strongest skill, I feel like I have a good eye and can spot a good piece of work and then proceed to analyze and tell you why it is good. But when I'm sitting down with my own tools I'm not able to create something I myself will consider to be "good". These are some of my most prevalent challenges in this field. That is, as far as I know, and I can't quite know what I don't know.

I am more happy with this product than the last, and that is an improvement that makes me glad.

However I do sorely wish I could utilize the full 5 weeks and not work 12-15 hour days to get things sorted before the deadline.

What would you do differently next time?

I'd like to keep it brief and say "be able to start when the starting shot is fired."

However, I'd like to decide on a design and make a solid prototype, work on that until I'm satisfied. Then before starting to code, make a plan for each component so I can have more control.

I'd like to figure out a less messy naming scheme in the code, the CSS was a mess until I spent a couple of hours cleaning today.



Things I am aware of is missing and sub-par with the design:

Color scheme - the hard black in the header and footer does not play well with the warmer gray in the main section of the website.

Layout and responsiveness on different pages, about.html and contact.html in particular.

I also want to fix the dropdown-reply forms in the comment-section in blog.html, the form gets more and more narrow the further into the nested replies you get - not good.

Technical

What went well on the project?

I have accomplished- things here. I feel like I've learned a lot, but at the same time I'm just as clueless as Jon Snow beyond the wall in Game of Thrones.

It legitimately took me two full days of trial and error with getting the comments in and sorted in order for me to make the replies nested, turns out the easy fix was adding another parameter to the search when fetching. "&orderby=parent&order=asc" turned out to be more powerful and not to forget practical than having 4 nested loops and temporary arrays before writing the comments to html.

I'm not really 100% happy with any of my solutions, as I can feel it in my heart of hearts - there's a way to do this with less fuzz, less code and more efficiency.

I must admit I'm having a lot of fun with JavaScript, and I know one shouldn't pick favorites, but if I "had to" you know... Nudge-nudge wink-wink.

What was difficult/didn't go well on the project?

The hardest part of this project has been maneuvering the different approaches to each part we needed in order to make this project functional. Knowing how to fetch what you need and using the different parameters when CRUD-ing is hard. Thank heavens for google, however! I have learned multiple times during these two weeks that when you don't know what the thing you need to use is called, searching for it is not an easy feat.

I have learned a lot by trial and error, I'm using different methods to access data from the API in different tasks. Some I just use a simple async function() and target the endpoint with the right keywords, others I configure parameters beforehand, to be quite frank, I do not



know the limits nor the possibilities of both, I've played around with them in order to figure out how they work, but I have no idea if I'm close to the limit of what these tools can do.

And I'd like to say that I'm not a fan of all the plugins and external libraries to JavaScript, they seem really neat and easy to use, but getting a straight answer on how to get something done in vanilla JavaScript is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

What would you do differently next time?

Learn syntax, get a wider grip on what tools and methods are out there before starting to "bruteforce" every solution, quite often it felt like I was assembling furniture from Ikea that comes with 13 different sets of screws and all I had was a hammer. I tend to like challenges, but come on.

WCAG guidelines, content management and SEO

Now here I must regretfully admit that this is not something I've had the time to solve on this project, it actually hurt when I realised that I didn't have the time to go through everything. I do have alt text on all the images from WP except the featured images I believe, so I started going through the media library and adding it. It seemed like it only went through to the images in the blog posts.

CMS has not posed any real problems for me, at least none that couldn't be solved within 10 minutes. That said, if there's something I'm not aware of - which there probably are - then I can't really account for that.

Regarding SEO, I've been thinking about it while cleaning my CSS and writing this report and I have a fair idea of what I would do if I had the time to. (This felt like the result of a weird coin toss that I'm not really happy nor dissatisfied about - writing about what I would do instead of doing it.)

I've chosen to deliver my plans in written words as during this project I actually entertained the thought of making use of this blog, just as a little side project to keep me busy in my downtime. And thus, I'd like it to stay out of any potential spotlight as it's not really a finished product yet.



Here's some things I'd focus on:

1. Title tags - make them more fitting and descriptive of the website and the blog-content, maybe longer and make sure they contain some essential keywords.
2. Meta description tags - To not hold back and get in as many keywords and relevant sentences as possible, the more combinations of structured sentences and information, the more hits in the SE. Also make sure to add author name, date and time.
3. Do some research and make sure that the H1 tags are as optimised for the almighty algorithm as can be, I've read in bits and pieces here and there that the H2-H6 tags are not as important in regards to the SEO, however, we go all out when we first start, so we give them the same treatment as the H1 tag. Just need to remember to place the title-content in hierarchical order like an article, from most important details, to least important.
4. Longer and more descriptive IMG alt attributes, this could in my blogs case be a more descriptive text of the scenes, chapters and circumstances in the images I use, including chapter number and more.
5. Make sure to have relevant external links, link to others doing the same thing (game recognizes game) even though one's goal is to get readers/viewers on our own site, if your site can act as a hub people go through in order to find more relevant sources it will look good in the eyes of the algorithm and work in your favor. (However, due to misuse of this it is key to make sure the outbound links are really relevant and make sense on your site. Stick with the theme.
6. I've read mentions and brief explanations of "canonical" link tags, I do not know what they are for except informing about website versions(?) I'd do research on this and utilize it if it makes sense.
7. Social media, the wolf in sheep's clothing, using Open Graph tags, like og:title, og:image etc. These were introduced by facebook, now recognized by LinkedIn, Twitter has twitter cards, which is similar in function but exclusive to twitter.



References

(place references to websites, books, forums etc. that helped you in the project)

- Regarding copyrights and fair use in regards to the images on my website, as the guidelines of fair use states the way I use/intend to use the images on this website falls under the category of exactly that - fair use -
<https://www.japanpowered.com/japan-culture/anime-blogging-and-copyright-considerations>
- Icons used for the left and right paddle-buttons on the slider/carousel is open source, free to use and provided by <https://icons.getbootstrap.com/>

