Ashdeals

**Problem Statement:**

Most food and beverage locations do not have their weekly specials posted anywhere online, and if they do there is no system to search multiple locations simultaneously.

**Abstract:**

Develop a website to effortlessly allow users to search for deals for many, if not all, weekly food and beverage specials in Asheville, NC.

Too many times I have visited a local place to enjoy a meal or drink, only to find out that if I would have come on a different day I could have saved money. After this occurred several times I began to plan ahead by researching earlier in the week, only to find out most places don’t advertise their deals online.

The website I develop will allow users to search a database full of Asheville’s weekly deals by many different categories. In order to get my data I will have to go out and research the places myself, gathering data of all the deals they have, as well as when they apply. Organizing my data by the day will allow users to search for deals based on a specific day, not only at one location, but many simultaneously. This could help the user determine not just what day they want to go to a certain location, but where the user wants to go as well.

The importance of this boils down to money. Imagine a user looking up the best deal of the week for their favorite Asheville pizza place. This could influence them to go on the day that saves them the most money. However, maybe they add all Asheville pizza places to the search and realize there is an even better deal that day at another location, so they decide to go there. Once this is factored in, the Ash-deals site gets looked at from a business perspective. Businesses can now easily see the weekly deals of the competition and decide to change their deals accordingly to be more competitive.

Due to it being geared for web-based projects, I will develop the structure and GUI of the site in Brackets. The database of local deals will be built in MySQL.

One of the most important factors of my project will be the user interface. While functionality is highest priority, I don’t just want it to work; I want it to be effortless. Anyone with basic computer competency to be able to navigate and know what they are doing without much complication. As well as simplicity, I will develop several CSS style sheets in order to create a responsive design that suits tablets, as well as smartphones.

**Test Plan:**

I will test thirty people, only identifying them by their age. A large portion of my testing group will be from the UNC-Asheville baseball team, given they will fall into my sites demographic and its a group I have a good relationship with. To find older testers, I will test some family members as well as non-computer science professors, seeing as how computer science professors will have an obvious advantage of navigating the site.

Half of my testers will only be told they will be using a site that lets them look up local deals for Asheville, that is all. They will have two minutes to roam the site. After the two minutes I will ask this group:

1. Where you looking for anything specific? Did you find it?

2. What suggestions do you have to improve the navigation?

3. What suggestions do you have to improve the graphic interface?

4. Any other suggestions you have?

The second half of my testing group will be given a specific assignment, such as “Show me the deals for Pizza places on Thursday’s”. These questions will vary for users in order to get better results. After two minutes of browsing I will ask:

1. What were you looking for?

2. What would you suggest to improve the interface?

3. What was the most confusing?

4. I will also note if they completed the task.

**Software & Hardware Used:**

I will develop the site in Brackets using HTML, CSS, JavaScript as well as jQuery to create a seamless user interface. Brackets ‘live view’ feature will make front end development go much quicker. The database will be in MySQL, using JavaScript to link the two together. When going public with the site, I plan to use GoDaddy.com for the domain and hosting due to their prices as well as reliability and support.

**Methodology:**

1. Research and compile data of the deals from local Asheville food and beverage locations.
2. Create a thorough database in MySQL of all the deals for each location. Each entry should include location, applicable deal or special, day(s) the deal applies.
3. Develop SQL queries that allow users to search by various factors.
4. Develop the base HTML and link the database to the site in order to have functioning searches at this point.
5. Plan desktop website design and being to create the front-end ascetics of the site. Develop basic CSS design and location of fields, buttons, etc. for user testing.
6. Begin user testing, only identifying them by age.
7. Continue to develop front end based on user testing, making adjustments as needed. Begin developing mobile stylesheets for tablets and cell phones. Continue to user test with varying ages and computing skill until an effortless user interface is achieved.
8. Use jQuery and other library’s as need to add a sleek and elegant design to the site, making it look professional.

I. Obtain domain publish site to the World Wide Web.

**Indication of Competency**:

The development of my project relies heavily on database skills, as I will need to use my knowledge of database structure as well as creating, updating and deleting data. To create the site itself, I will utilize my web technology skills to create a functional back end site with a clean and user friendly front end design as well as tie it all together and make the database work with the site.