Lappeenrannan teknillinen yliopisto
Name of your school goes here (School of Business and Management)

Software Development Skills Front-End, Online course

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LEARNING DIARY

Date: 20.4.2023

Activity: "Environment setup, module 1: Introduction to workflow and sass"

Learning outcome:

Luckily, I was familiar with used environment and technologies from previous courses but tutorial videos on the course pages refreshed my memory about GIT and nodeJS. GIT and Node were outdated, and the latter prompted errors with the node-sass version which required me to update nodejs version to 18.16.0 and put it to use using elevated command prompt. Other than that, the exercise video's steps were clear to follow and gave me a short briefing on node-sass which was my first introduction to it. From what I gathered from the video; the node-sass is CSS compiler module that will help with the overall workflow of front-end development of a website and from the little it was used in the video I can still expect it to be very powerful and do more than just change the background color of a website. I learned that Git Bash is very useful as I feel lacking in knowledge of windows command prompt commands and will definitely make more use of it later.

Date: 21.4.2023

Activity: "Module 2: Homepage and Core Sass/CSS & Module 3: rotating menu button"

Learning outcome:

The module's tutorial video went over the basics of Sass and showed the benefits of using the extension. The ability to use 'mixins', what are essentially the equivalent of functions in JS, and variables to cut off the usual repetitiveness of regular CSS. I have worked with other web development frameworks and Sass gives the same feel when it comes to frontend workflow, this is something that I wasn't previously aware of. Additionally, I learned briefly about external icon library, "Font awesome", and its syntax

I followed the 3rd module step by step which included some JavaScript which wasn't all too unfamiliar and refreshed my memory with some of its most used functionalities. I learned about the versatility of CSS transitions, and it was interesting to see what all could be done with them.

Date: 24.4.2023

Activity: "Module 4: Menu overlay & responsiveness, Module 5: Page with CSS grid"

Learning outcome:

I'm starting to get the hang of the workflow and the syntax with sass. The '.' and '&' for CSS class reference and sass nested class reference symbols were rather self-explanatory but the '@' and '$' symbols for functional code and variables takes some time to get used to, although I understand the concept. Responsive design for the website done by media queries was something I did for the first time, and it was rather straightforward following the module video, but I assume it will take more effort designing the appropriate view for each device type according to screen size on a custom site.

I learned that 'Mixin' in Sass is more like a void function in C# rather than a JS function because it can't return values. I also learned how easy and modular Sass workflow is for expanding into different site views. I learned about CSS grids that were used on the 'about' page, which was a very easy way to segment the content on page with columns and margins.

Date: 15.5.2023

Activity: "Module 6: Work and Contact Pages"

Learning outcomes:

I learned more about CSS grids and how to make them more responsive. Creating two more pages familiarized me more with the Sass workflow.

Date: 19.5.2023

Activity: "Module 7: Website Deployment"

Learning outcomes:

I learned the basics of deploying a website through GitHub pages. As per usual, any tutorial videos in the course as well as any tutorial videos at all, the technical details are environment or machine dependent which required work arounds and research to figure out a solution that would work in my use case. I figured out that the module videos had outdated namespaces to GitHub branches (e.g. master/main) and that Windows has limited number of characters in file names, which is very easy to exceed, before giving a fatal error while deploying to

GitHub pages. With this module I have important notes to keep in mind while working on the course project.

Date: 23.5.2023

Activity: "Project"

Learning outcomes:

I began to work on the project after setting up the environment. For the project I wanted to go for something different than in the tutorial videos but still following some of the coding examples as well as some useful styling decisions. The project will be a mock shoe retail webstore and it will have the following: home view, category view, product view, about view and 'contact us' view. These views will incorporate navigation, responsiveness, flexboxes and CSS grids as features. Color palettes for light and dark mode were picked using "colorhunt.co".

During this session I finished header or App bar as well as the JavaScript behind toggling the menu dropdown with a nested dropdown toggle. For tomorrow, I hope I will finish the home page view with additional features such as product slideshow and a toggle feature for 'dark mode'

Date: 25.5.2023

Activity: "Project: Menu overlay more dark mode"

Learning outcomes:

After finishing the App bar, I started working on the style of menu overlay. I ended up going with a "nested list" design for menu as the project is a mock clothing webstore which should have multiple links for different categories of clothing. The menu links: "men's" and "women's" expand if clicked on to show categories for target audience. Responsiveness in the menu is done with CSS translate3d sliding the menu elemen from the left as well as the buttons are shadowed depending on which link the user is hovering over.

Dark mode or night mode in the project is done by adding a "dark-mode" class to the class list of elements that should be changing to darker color theme at the will of the user. This is

a very heavy or “bloating” way to code this, but to the best of my knowledge, to do this more programmatically the project would have to be full stack.

Next time I’m hoping to get to working on home page and other pages now that menu is done. Also, I’m hoping to add media queries for added responsiveness.

Date: 26.5 - 27.5.2023

Activity: “Finishing the project”

Learning outcomes:

I set out to finish the project in one session since the end of the course was nearing and this would be the last session. I wanted to focus on two main views on the page which were the home page and the product view. I added the parallax site styling to the home page which was a rather easy and stylish way to consume the empty space with so little. This was by far the closest to professional look for any of my web development projects have gotten.

I added flexbox elements to the first section of the home page as ‘dummy’ links to the categories in the mock webstore.

For the product view I went with parallax scrolling banner at the top of the page and the CSS grid elements below that. The fractions of the grid decrease as the screen size decreases for required responsiveness on mobile devices. The grid holds the products as items that have related information as elements.

The media queries affect the image text elements on every site so that the text spacing decreases on smaller screens to avoid unpleasing wrapping of the text. Also, the header’s logo text decreases in font size similarly. Decreasing the size of the header’s icons proved problematic as their size was derived from the source they area fetched from according to their class name. I couldn’t figure out a solution that wouldn’t involve any frameworks.