Project Exam 1

Frontend Development Year 1
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Link to Netlify deployment of web page:
https://zesty-fox-5875f2.netlify.app/

Link to GitHub repository:
https://github.com/Noroff-FEU-Assignments/project-exam-1-JohanLossius

Summary

Partaking in this exam has been an interesting experience, since it's like the first full web page one is supposed to build from scratch. The closest to making something that could well see the light of day.

I'll happily admit that I procrastinated undertaking this exam a bit longer than I should have. However, I did spend about two weeks in Silicon Valley during the first two weeks of 2023, and this gave me a lot of inspiration for the *content* of the web page, although it gave me significantly less time to actually build the web page.

I started this project by reflecting on what kind of blog that I wanted to create, browsed a few blogs within my field of interest, and decided to make one oriented about technology and product development.

Since then I just built stone upon stone. I was initially planning on asking our friend Lorem Ipsum to help me with content, but as I sat there, the thought of launching Mr. Ipsum into the web page "Product Passion", simply completely defeated the purpose of the web page. Furthermore, I felt I had quite some knowledge to share on this topic, since it's something I've been studying avidly for the last few months on Youtube etc. So I spent one day writing all the blog posts instead of spending that day on developing the page itself, and I'm delighted for the choice. It feels pointless to make a blog without any real content or value. So developing the web page when there is an actual purpose and interest behind it seems much more meaningful.

And for that same reason, developing the web page itself was quite efficient. The design decisions were flowing quite smoothly due to me working on something I'm interested in, and due to me doing proper work on content and knowledge before building the web page.

So the only real challenges with this project was performing the various technical tasks that were being asked. Some of which I should have allocated more time for.

Design

What went well on the project

Creating the visual profile. I could have spent significant more effort carefully selecting fonts, logo, etc, but I found something that I thought fit well, and stuck with it, not expending too much time, while at the same time being happy with it in general.

This time I went quicker into developing, rather than spending overly much time on designing prototype. I realized that you still need some kind of a prototype to go by, to have some idea what you are building. But you don't need it down to the very details, as you are better off improving it incrementally throughout.

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

I didn't manage to use the fonts that was initially planned from the logo. I could have spent more time figuring this out, selecting a font that I'd be happier with and making sure the logo fonts and web page fonts were equal, but stuck with it due to time constraints.

What would you do differently next time
Start the design process a bit earlier. I waited too close to the deadline this time. The design needs some experimenting, testing and iterating, as well as some pure work hours simply to make sure it's consistent all over. In order to improve the design from where it is now, I'd simply have to put in a substantial amount of time. Particularly on fonts.

Technical

What went well on the project
I'm happy with the way the HTML, CSS and visual profile play together.
I was able to quite rapidly build out the page in HTML and CSS. There are still some things I need to learn in CSS and HTML, but I find myself sufficiently proficient to be able to build out pages without taking too long now, which is of course pleasant. I'm also happy that I managed to find a proper connection with the backend WordPress API, as well as configuring the entire technical environment quite rapidly. I only spent a few hours setting up the entire setup to be able to begin working on it.

Regarding the JavaScript, I am quite pleased with what I am able to do with it. I have a logical mind and I thrive on problem solving, so I only needs bits and pieces of knowledge and input to solve the issues at hand.

What was difficult/didn't go well on the project
I wish that I had been a bit more fluent in re-using components, and cross styling my elements. However, I find that each page and each paragraph live its own life, and needs some tender, love and care. Adding some unique CSS to each specific page feels natural, although I'm sure I could have re-used more styling.

I struggled quite a bit with the modal image appearing, disappearing, and particularly, building out the blog specific page dynamically, while also creating a modal image.

There were also a few other things I wished I would have had more time for, such as checkbox hack, improving carousel on home page, etc. In order to do this I simply had needed to study and learn from JavaScript, programming, and allocate more time for implementation.

I'm confident I'd be able to do this excellently if allocating more time for it.

What would you do differently next time
I'd plan out fonts, headings, and more re-usable components a bit more, to try and avoid re-styling the same elements, and be able to re-use more across pages.

I'd begin earlier with building the page from a technical viewpoint. There were are few things that I'd never done before, that could have needed a bit more time. I'd invest a few more weeks in the beginning of the project simply *learning* more. I find that some time

spent learning translates rapidly into 3x progress spent actually working, developing, implementing etc. I do need to up my skills in JavaScript and programming particularly.

WCAG guidelines, content management and SEO

What went well on the project
I managed to connect my web page to the WordPress API, and uploading/creating the necessary content in the WordPress Admin Panel, which was quite helpful.
I believe I managed to alt-text-populate most of my images and icons, and title-populate most of my links and pages, and that in general my tags and elements were semantically created.
I also believe that the content that I created will cause the web page in general to be search friendly, due to rich amounts of (hopefully) relevant text.

I did test the web page on Hotjar and with live users. I had some interesting insights and feedback from this that I used to improve the web page. I got good feedback in general, so I hope that it means I've done an OK job with the web page.

What was difficult/didn't go well on the project
Due to time pressure I didn't have enough time to thoroughly review all my WCAG guidelines for optimization, but I believe I did it quite well.
I have been careful to follow what I've learnt so far, and hopefully I didn't miss too much.

What would you do differently next time
I'd simply allocate more time to this part, to ensure that I have optimized WCAG, SEO etc. as much as I can. Possibly it is done quite well, but still I feel that there are things that could be done better, so I'd just allocate a day or two to learn more about this topic and implement my learnings across the web site.

Conclusion
All in all I am very happy with the work that I performed during this exam. The only thing I regret was that I did not get started earlier so that I could have invested more time in learning more JavaScript, technical programming skills, and proficiency with JS, HTML and CSS combined. With that I could have increased my skills slightly to elevate the web page a bit further, and possibly make it stand out from the rest even more also from a technical perspective.

However, taken into consideration the fact that I am still quite inexperienced as a web developer, I am quite pleased that I managed to put up a web page in such a short period of time. I find the web page itself pleasing to use, navigate, and in general engaging both from a content perspective as well as a visual and user-friendly perspective.

Looking forward to building upon my knowledge within product development as well as frontend, design and deeper technical skills.

References

- I used a few guides for reference, such as https://www.w3schools.com/ for building the modal image, and for building out the carousel slider. This was for JS, HTML and CSS concepts that I was until now unfamiliar with. The input helped me figure out how to problem solve on my own web page, as well as helping me over a few hurdles to get across the goal line, instead of spending too long re-inventing the wheel or stumbling along.
  - Looking at succesful code someone else has written is great for providing a structure, insight and understanding for how to get there yourself, but it always needs to be re-written or re-worked to fit your own web page. Smply trying to copy paste something never works, unless you fully understand it. You need to build it yourself from the bottom and up to really understand it, work with it, and adapt it to suit your own web page. Shortcutting with copy pasting makes one more confused, because you lose control of your own web page. You need to do the work yourself, and in the end the web page is so much more valuable, because you have the full control of it yourself, instead of having big black holes yourself that you don't understand.
- I used the Wix Logo Maker to create the logo, and for inspiration for the fonts as well as color palette.