STANDARDS AND TRENDS + UI LESSONS RECAP
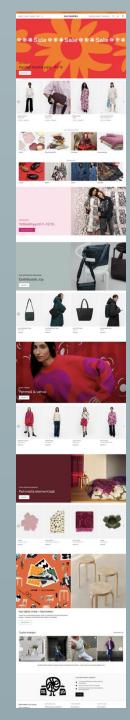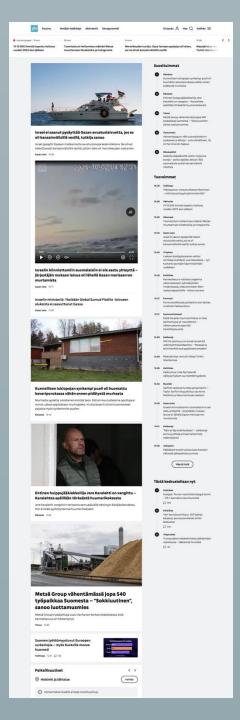
Anna Shitikova

ECOMMERCE

- Marimekko is a stylish Finnish clothing and design brand.

- https://www.marimekko.com/

- Platforms focused on product sales emphasize highly visible products, clear product cards, large images, clear pricing, category navigation, and filters. For example, Marimekko emphasizes unique design, aesthetic value, a strong visual style, and brand identity.

NEWS / MEDIA

- Yle — a Finnish national media company, news, TV, and radio broadcasts

- https://yle.fi/

- Focus on content: articles, multimedia (video, audio), quick access to the latest materials. Navigation should be clear so users can quickly navigate to the topic of interest. High readability, mobile-friendly, and prioritizing text and images as illustrative elements.
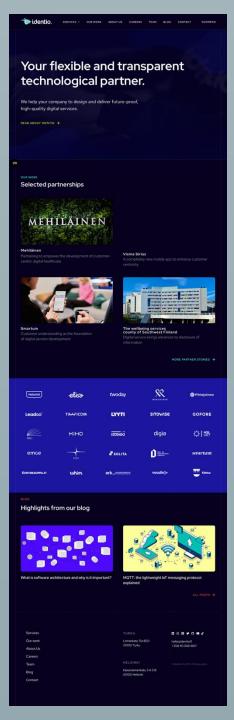
PERSONAL PORTFOLIO

- Emre Devseren — a portfolio of personal design/visual projects

- https://emredevseren.webflow.io/

- The main thing is to showcase your work: projects, case studies. Minimalistic design, often extensive visuals, clean layout, an emphasis on quality content, and work samples. The mobile version should be simple and quick to navigate, often a single long page ("one-pager") or sections, scrolling.

MISCELLANEOUS (COMPANY / PRODUCT / PROJECT)

- Identio — a technology company, digital service projects

- https://identio.fi/

- Identio includes well-structured sections such as Services, Our Work, About Us, Team, Careers, Blog, and Contact. The site also highlights case studies and client projects, which serve as trust elements alongside partner information. Its design is clean and professional, with a clear corporate style. Strong brand colors and consistent visual elements give the site a recognizable identity. The overall layout emphasizes clarity, trustworthiness, and expertise

TRENDS:

- Clean minimalism — lots of white space, uncluttered interface.
- Mobile-friendly — a "mobile-first" approach, or at least flexible adaptation (burger menus, hidden/simplified elements).
- Large images / large banners / hero sections.
- Emphasizing the brand through typography, colors, and a consistent style.
- Use of high-quality fonts and legibility.
- Blog / latest news or case studies / partner stories — shows that the site is alive.
- Security and trust: SSL, privacy policies, "about the company" information.
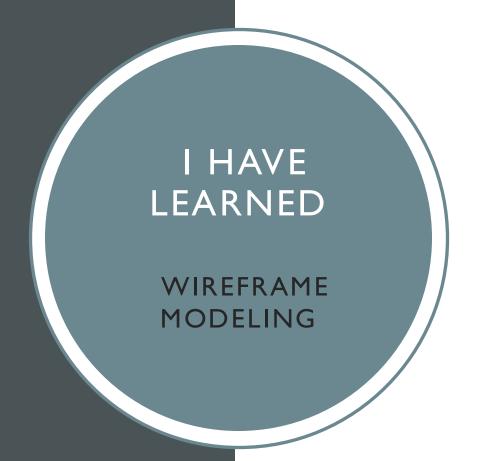
WHAT ALL EXAMPLES HAVE IN COMMON:

- Navigation (header + menu) — easy access to the main sections.

- Adaptive / mobile-friendly (or at least visible when elements are resized / hidden / the menu is simplified).

- Good visual hierarchy: headings, subheadings, highlighting key sections.

- Clear logo and brand identity.

- Contact or corporate information (about the company / FAQ / policies / careers) is often present.
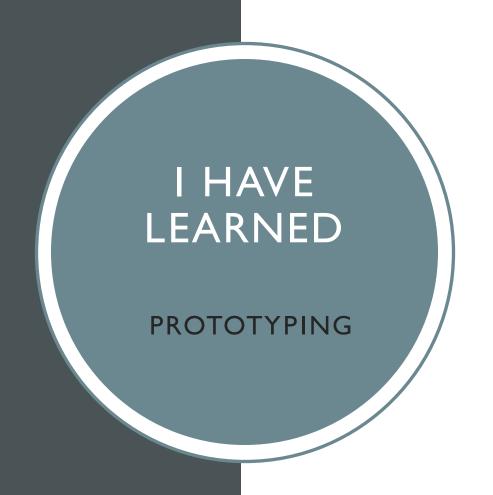
KEY UI DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CATEGORIES:

- eCommerce is more visually rich, product-focused: cards, filters, calls to action ("Buy," "Add to cart"), often dynamic (on hover, on scroll).

- News/Media — focus on text and headlines, fewer visual embellishments where they interfere with reading. Quick access to content.

- Portfolio — more visual work, sliders, galleries, effects, often complex backgrounds, markers, animations.

- Corporate / Miscellaneous - more formal, less embellishment, emphasis on trust, transparency, case studies, evidence, fewer eCommerce-style "conversions" (less aggressive calls to action), more information about the company.

I HAVE LEARNED

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

I've learned that good design is about clarity and cohesion: every element should make sense. The core principles I now apply are visual hierarchy (guiding the user's eye to the most important information). Contrast helps highlight important elements and makes the interface readable. Emphasis directs the user's attention to key actions and information. Alignment and proportions create a neat and balanced look, making the interface easier to read. Repetition and consistency of elements create a unified style and make the app understandable. Proximity of elements helps logically group related information. White space improves readability and makes the interface less cluttered. It's also important to design with constraints in mind—responsiveness, performance, and accessibility—so that the interface works for both real users and devices.

I HAVE LEARNED

WIREFRAME MODELING

Wireframe modeling taught me to separate structure from visual polish. I start with simple sketches or black-and-white wireframes to plan the information architecture, layout, and user flow without getting distracted by colors and fonts. Wireframes help validate assumptions early on (where buttons are located, what fields are needed, how pages are connected) and make changes quickly without wasting time on visualization or coding. They are a great tool for team coordination and documenting user flows.

I HAVE LEARNED

PROTOTYPING

Prototyping showed me how to transform static ideas into interactive experiences. Clickable prototypes (even the simplest ones) allow me to test interactions, synchronization, and user flow before implementation. I learned to create prototypes in stages: low-level ones for validating logic and layouts, and high-level ones for testing visual elements and microinteractions. Prototypes make usability testing visual—users can click and interact, identifying errors that aren't visible on paper.

I HAVE LEARNED

ACCESSIBILITY

- Accessibility became an integral part of design, not an optional extra. I learned practical rules: using semantic HTML, meaningful alt attributes, keyboard navigation, sufficient color contrast, visible focus states, and using ARIA only when necessary to ensure interfaces are accessible to people with disabilities. I also learned how to test with tools (contrast controls, screen readers) and real users, and I realized that accessibility benefits everyone (improved SEO, readability, and interface reliability).

LOOKING FORWARD, I WANT TO IMPLEMENT THESE LEARNINGS INTO A REAL APPLICATION

- Build UI according to the design principles I have learned here.

- In my future job, use wireframes at the start of projects to align structure before styling.

- Better understand how designers create interactive prototypes and use them as a guide for building real applications and validating flows with users.

- Ensure accessibility is integrated into the process from the very first design step.

My goal is to create an app in the future where design principles, prototyping, and accessibility are not separate tasks but part of a single, integrated workflow. This way, my apps will not only look good but also feel intuitive and inclusive for all users.

THANK YOU!