

SEPTEMBER 2024

SOFTWAREAR

XEON 2035

Monday 09 November 2024

SoftWear: The Journey Begins:

Perception:

"The world of how we shop is changing."



Reflections:

The world of how we shop is changing. With the rapid advancement of technology and the growing shift towards online retail, traditional methods of trying on clothes are becoming less relevant. softWEAR times to address this evolving landscape by offering a cutting-edge virtual try-on solution. By allowing users to see how garments fit in real-time through their phones/ iPads or even TV screens, softWEAR aims to enhance the online shopping experience, providing a more interactive and accurate way to assess clothing fit and style. We have seen a shift towards online retail, traditional fitting methods are becoming obsolete, leading to challenges such as expensive returns and uncertainty about fit.

This project, part of an MSc Computer Science dissertation at Birkbeck, University of London, addresses the demand for innovative digital solutions that bridge the gap between virtual shopping and real-world fitting, thereby enhancing accessibility and satisfaction in online fashion. It integrates the developer's skills in full-stack development with an interest in the rapidly evolving fields of Extended Reality (XR) and Augmented Reality (AR), aiming to provide a realistic and interactive fitting experience while meeting the increasing demand for advanced digital fashion solutions.

From this initial gem of an idea will emerge a comprehensive four-month feasibility study

encompassing both primary and secondary research. During this period, a period of concept evaluation will occur, consisting of entity-relationship design, testing, and development of a mock-up for a full-stack, responsive, interactive web application and mobile application will be undertaken. These foundational efforts are intended to support the implementation of XR/AR technologies.

In the coming two months, significant emphasis will be placed on conceptual ER design, testing, and development, with a focus on contemporary technologies and frameworks utilising tech stacks including JavaScript, Node.js and React.js, selected for their versatility and efficiency in constructing dynamic, full-stack applications. Additionally, a mock-up of a responsive, interactive web application and mobile application will be developed. This approach is designed to ensure that the application is both accessible and functional across a range of devices, which is crucial for delivering a seamless user experience. These preliminary tasks will establish a solid groundwork for the project and facilitate the integration of XR/AR technologies.

This will be called the preliminary stage. Overall, the stages are:

Preliminary Stage

The preliminary stage involves idea generation, encompassing nebulous thoughts surrounding cloud technology, and the development of a web application mock-up for the softWEAR test platform with RESTful API. This phase also includes explicit topic selection: Identifying the research area and formulating the research question.

Phase One: Project Commencement

The project commences in earnest with comprehensive primary and secondary research, alongside a thorough literature review. This phase requires the definition of specific aspects of virtual try-on technology and its impact on the fashion industry. A proposal is drafted, outlining the research objectives, methodology, and significance. The literature review consists of an extensive examination of existing research related to the topic, while the methodology design involves the selection of appropriate research methods and tools for data collection and analysis. Primary research is conducted through interviews with users, designers and retailers, or through experiments designed to gather feedback on the virtual try-on experience. Additionally, secondary research involves the analysis of existing data and publications pertinent to virtual fashion and augmented reality, alongside continuous improvements to the mock-up website.

Phase Two: Data Collection and Analysis

In this phase, data collection is undertaken, followed by thorough analysis. Findings are organised and prepared for analysis. Statistical or qualitative methods are applied to interpret user feedback and performance metrics. Primary research is again emphasised through interviews and experiments, while secondary research continues with the analysis of relevant publications. Furthermore, existing technologies are researched to determine feasible implementation strategies.

Phase Three: Project Development and Dissertation Writing

During this phase, the dissertation is drafted, encompassing sections on research background, methodology, findings, and discussions concerning the implications for the fashion industry. Revisions are made based on feedback from advisors or peers. By this stage, the mock-up website should be completed, and actual building and development of the softWEAR tech should be well underway, with ongoing programming and refinements.

Phase Four: Testing and Feedback

We could have a rough mock-up of the softWEAR and be able to demonstrate the virtual try-on concept with our mock-up web application via RESTful API. The website will have Authentication and authorisation verifying user credentials and permissions, error/exception handling endpoint routing, validation and verification and security considerations.

This phase involves rigorous testing, the collection of feedback, and the formation of focus groups, as well as unit testing to ensure functionality. The dissertation drafting continues, incorporating research background, methodology, findings, and discussions relevant to the fashion industry. Revisions are further refined based on continued feedback. The researcher prepares to defend their findings and methodology before a panel.

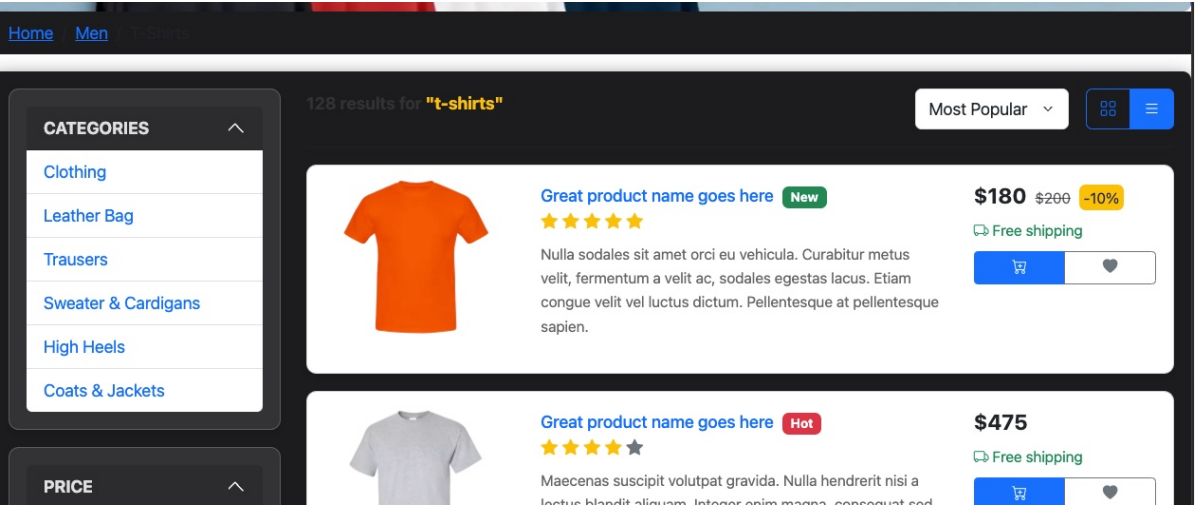
Phase Five - Final Submission

In the final stage, meticulous attention is devoted to formatting, ensuring that the dissertation complies with the specific guidelines established by the programme. The submission will include comprehensive documentation, a complete GitHub history, and an academic journal detailing the progress made throughout the research process. Additionally, all deliverables are compiled, including libraries, dependencies and a fully functional, non-locally hosted website that incorporates the softWEAR technology with a complete SQL database backend and JSON/RESTful API middleware/Express.js to facilitate interaction with softWEAR. This final document is submitted by the designated deadline, signifying the culmination of the research endeavour.

Sunday 15 November 2024

Create The Website Mockup:

Progress has been made on the initial mockup of the website, although a definitive name has yet to be decided.



At this stage, aesthetics are not a primary concern; the focus is on establishing a framework that can effectively accommodate the 3D clothing objects.

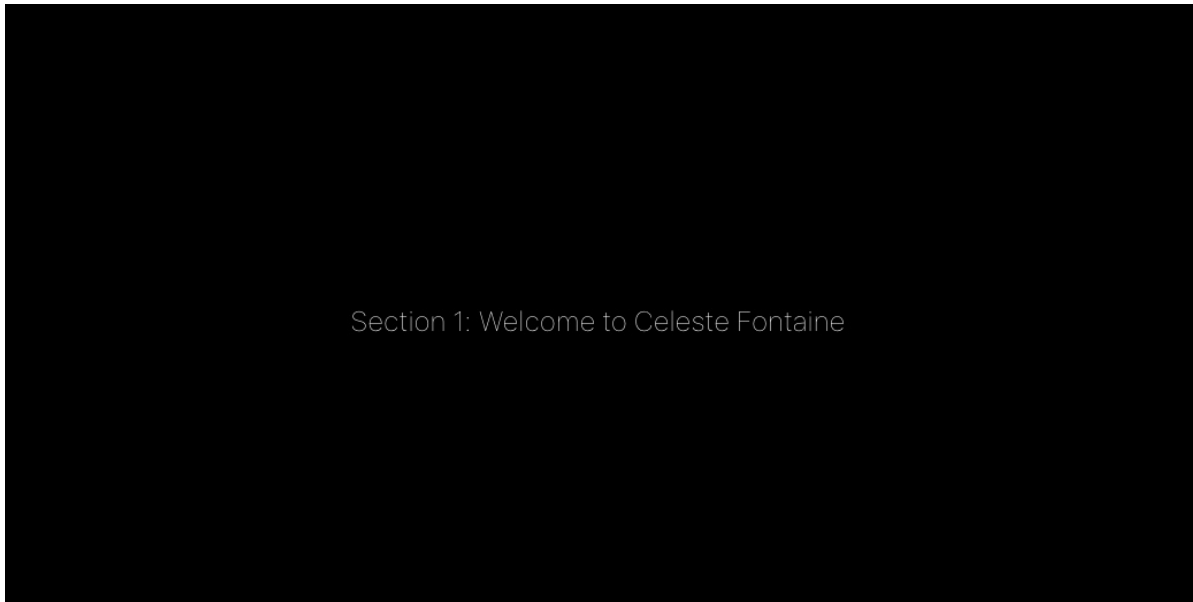
The primary objective is to leverage technologies such as Three.js or Babylon.js to convert the 3D models into a format compatible with the chosen framework, specifically GLTF or GLB for Three.js.

To facilitate this process, waveform .obj files will be created, inclusive of all associated textures and materials. Furthermore, it will be necessary to explore methods for reducing the file size of the .obj files, given that they are intended solely for viewing on the web, where high texture quality is not essential. One potential solution under consideration is the use of MeshLab technology.

Friday 20 November 2024

Progress Update on the Céleste Fontaine Landing Page Development

, efforts were focused on the design and implementation of a sophisticated landing page for the mock-up web page, now to be named: Céleste Fontaine - reflecting the sophisticated chic, upmarket target market who would utilise the sofWEAR app.



The focus was on achieving an Apple-inspired aesthetic with parallax scrolling effects.

Morning:

The day began with outlining the layout and structural components essential for the landing page. The design philosophy centred around creating a minimalistic interface, distinguished by large, impactful headings and a strategic application of whitespace to enhance user experience. The foundational architecture of the project was established, developing critical React components, particularly the `CelesteFontaine.js` file, which serves as the primary landing page interface.

Afternoon:

The afternoon saw development involved centred around exploring the implementation of a linear gradient background that transitions from a rich black to a subtle dark grey. This carefully selected colour scheme was intended to project a sleek and professional appearance while minimising visual distractions. Utilising the JavaScript ScrollMagic¹ interaction library, smooth scrolling effects were integrated across the various sections of the page. This feature was designed to provide a fluid user experience, embodying the elegance associated with Apple's design ethos. Additionally, the SF Pro font family was incorporated, applying varying weights to establish a clear typographic hierarchy

within the textual elements.

Evening:

Thorough refinement of the CSS was conducted to ensure consistency and cohesion throughout the page. Each section was designed to occupy the full viewport height, thereby enhancing the parallax effect as users navigated through the content. Testing was performed to ensure the layout's responsiveness, allowing for optimal appearance across a variety of screen sizes. Finally, the latest changes were committed and pushed to GitHub, documenting progress made throughout the day.

¹ Credit: Scrollmagic 2.0.7 by John Polacek

<https://scrollmagic.io/docs/>