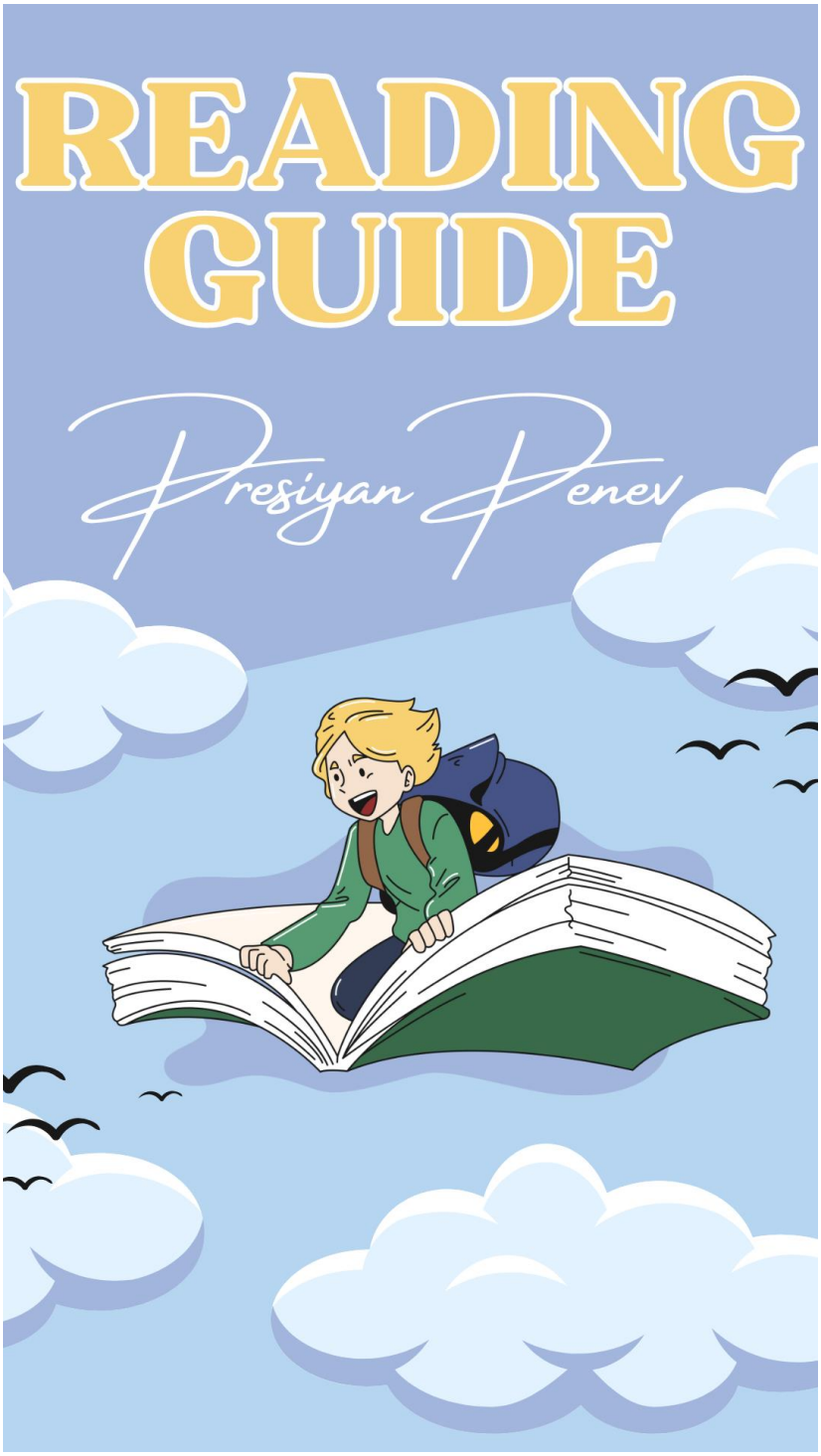

Portfolio Reading Guide

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Semester 6 – Advanced Media 2023

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1. The Assignment

2. Background, Context and Goal of the project.

This semester individual project is to create a portfolio that will serve as a proof of my skills and progress during the semester. My task is to create this portfolio in a way, that my teachers will have an easy read with proper linking between my work. I will use this opportunity to test and hone my skills with coding and

also learn something new during the process. In order to deliver a high-quality portfolio I applied various research activitieas such as literature studies, requirement lists, sketching, prototypying, defining and understanding my target audience to properly shape my portfolio.

I started by creating a project plan, that would serve as a planning and organizing the start of the project.

Project Plan

Design challenge:

Design a portfolio website to showcase Fontys teachers my work during the semester.

Research Questions:

Main Question:

How to create a good-looking and representative portfolio that will serve to showcase my work to the teachers?

Sub questions:

1. Which front-end technology would be best for creating the portfolio? CMD Methods : Literature Study, Requirements List

2. How to indicate if a portfolio is good-looking and representative? CMD Methods : Usability Testing

3. What elements to include in a portfolio? CMD Methods : Best, good and bad practices, Literature Study, Requirements List

4.What expectations do teachers have from my portfolio? CMD Methods : Prototyping, Usability Testing

3. Description of the methodology, process and the results

Reasons for choosing each method.

Sub question 1 -

Literature Study : Literature study provides me with essential information and understanding of which front-end technology is the most suitable for a portfolio project. By researching different sources I gain insight on what has the best value for my project.

Requirements List : Setting requirements and priorities helps me organize my needs and prefferences for every available React framework.

Sub questions 2 -

Usability Testing: Testing always gives esential validation on my choices, and pointing key factors for required improvements.

Sub question 3 -

Literature Study : Finding academic articles and online materials in order to broaden my knowledge and importance of colors, elements, structure is always a good practice if doing something for the first time, or in more advanced level.

Best, good, and bad practices : Exploring already professional-looking portfolio websites that help people showcase their work and make a living with it, it was a good idea to look for inspiration like structure, elements and design style.

Sub question 4 -

Prototyping & Sketching : Sketching is always a nice stepping stone to help and guide me visualize my inital ideas of the portfolio. The prototype itself helped me carry out user testings and gather valuable feedback which contributed to meeting the expectations of my target audience.

Usability testing : Testing and feedback are what makes something better, getting different aspects and following users flow helps you understand if your way of working and design choices were correct.

Requirements list: Setting up a list of requirements for my portfolio was a must have to organize my finding and needs.

3.1 Process & Results

3.1.1 Which frontend technology would be best for creating a portfolio website -

Conclusion:

In conducting this research, my aim was to identify the most suitable framework for my portfolio project, taking into account my previous experience with Next.js. I focused on key aspects like ease of use, performance, flexibility, and available features.

I compared three frameworks: Next.js, Gatsby.js, and Create React App (CRA). Next.js stood out for its server-side rendering, fast loading, and comprehensive plugin ecosystem, making it ideal for projects requiring high performance and static site generation. Gatsby.js specializes in static site generation and offers a wide range of customization options through its plugin system. CRA, known for its simplicity, provides a zero-configuration setup, fitting for smaller projects with rapid development needs.

After reviewing these options, I concluded that Next.js is the most appropriate choice for my portfolio project. Its strengths in performance, flexibility, and server-side rendering, coupled with my existing familiarity with the framework, make it a practical and efficient choice for

my needs. While Gatsby and CRA have their advantages, they don't align as well with the specific requirements and goals of my project.

Read full document pdf: here

Or in my porftolio: Link

3.1.2 What elements to include in a portfolio?

After completing my research on frameworks, I shifted focus to the structure and design of a portfolio. This phase involved understanding what should be included in a portfolio, exploring design options, and drawing inspiration from professional portfolios.

My research methodology encompassed a literature study, compiling a requirements list, and analyzing good, best, and bad practices in portfolio design.

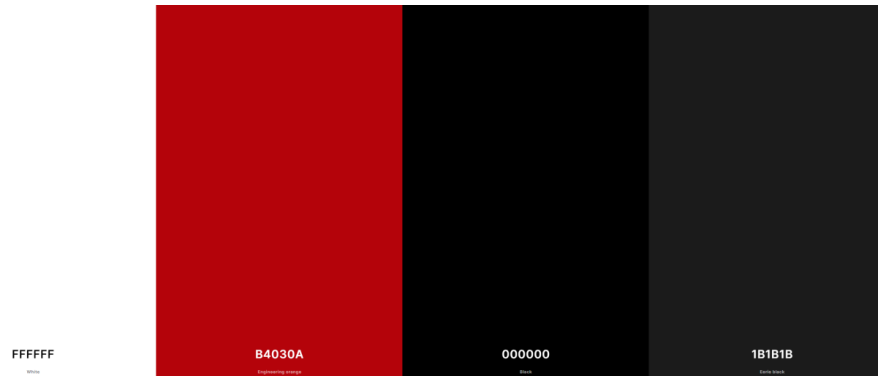
The requirements for my portfolio included ease of viewing, simple navigation, appealing color selection, and a representation of my personality and work. The essential components of the portfolio are:

Homepage: A compelling introduction, visually appealing hero section with my name and a visual element, a high-quality logo, and a call-to-action (CTA) button. The landing page must make a strong first impression, and a personal photo is crucial to connect with potential clients or employers.

About Page: A brief introduction or facts about myself, information on achievements, background, experiences, personal goals, and traits that leave a lasting impression on visitors.

Expertise/My Work Page: Showcases past and ongoing projects and an overview of my skills, presented in a clear and organized manner.

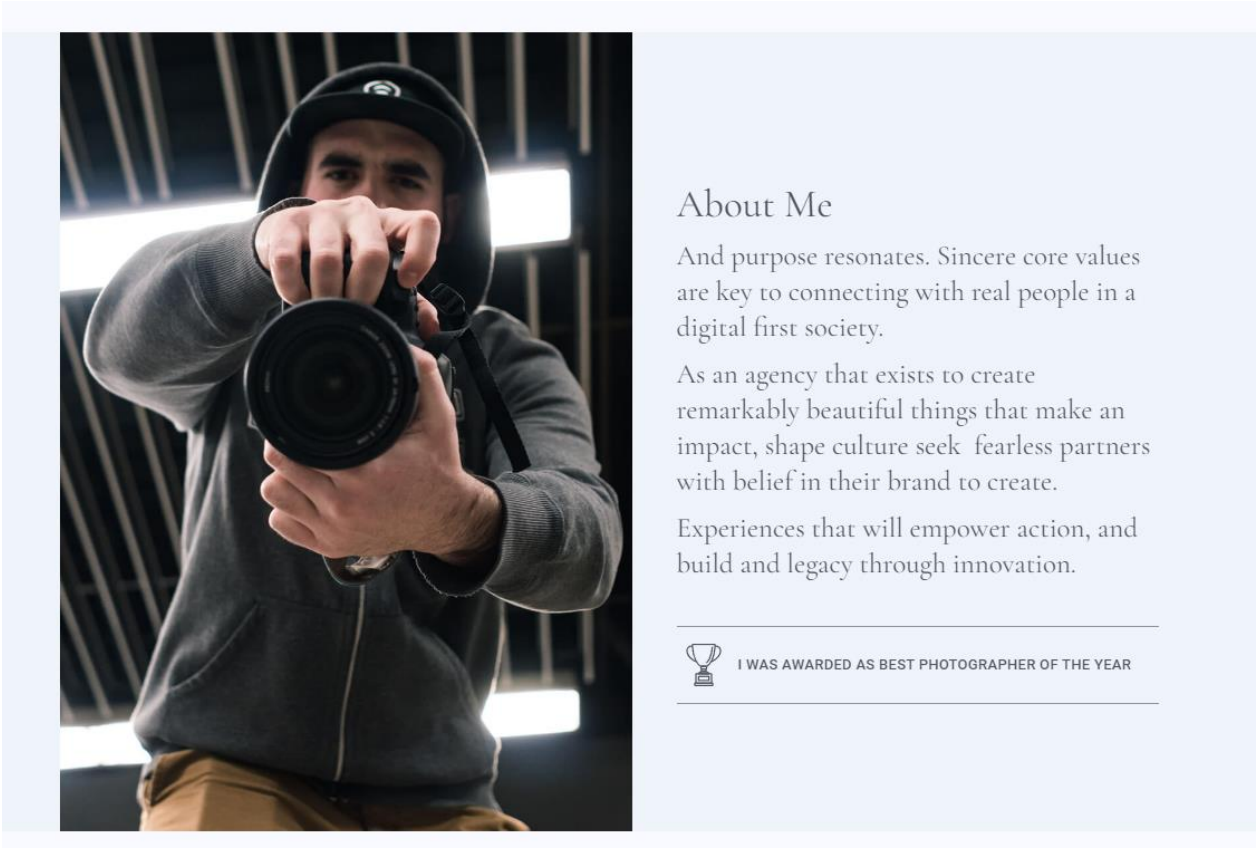
For colors, I revisited a book from my internship at Refactoring UI. I selected a palette of darker red, a subtle shade of black (#1b1b1b), and white, combining warmth, modernity, and readability.

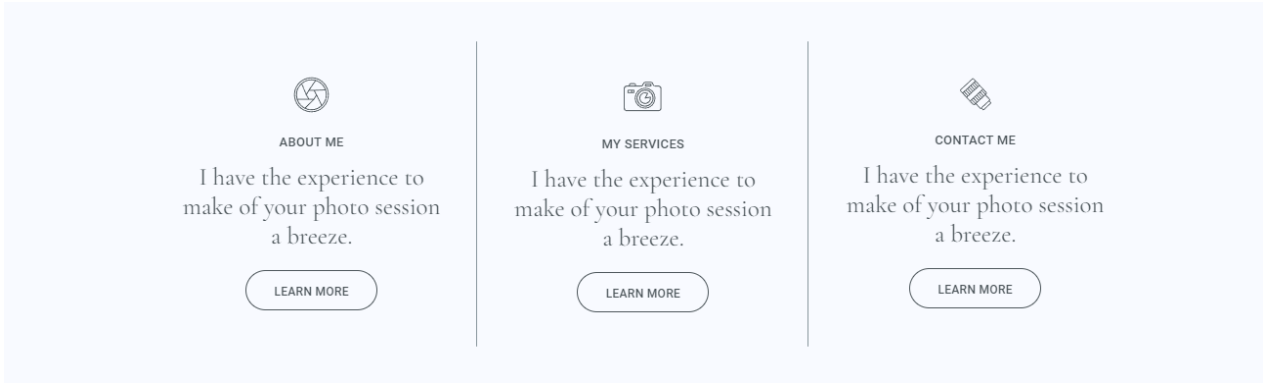


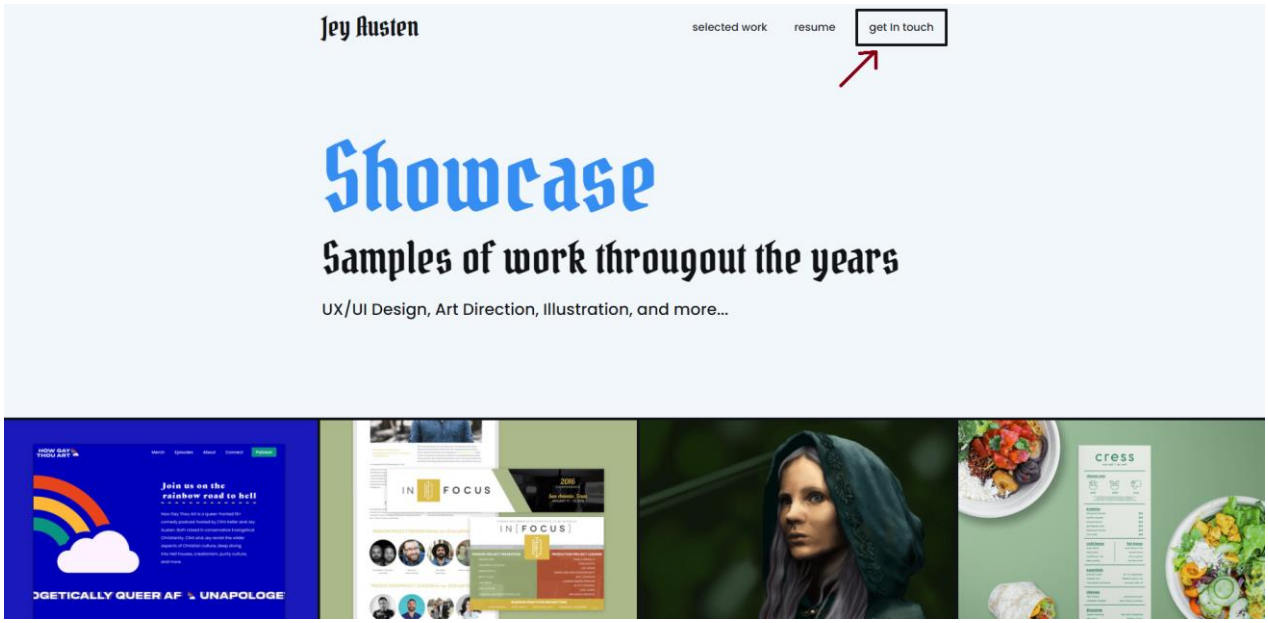
Animations were considered for enhancing visual appeal and user engagement. However, I weighed the pros (visual appeal, improved user experience, storytelling, interactivity, highlighting key information) against the cons (maintenance, accessibility, compatibility, performance issues).

I sought inspiration from various portfolio websites, paying attention to their layout, style, and color

schemes. Key takeaways included the effectiveness of a call-to-action button, the presentation of projects in a showcase format, and the personal touch of including photos.







Read the full document pdf: [here]

Or in my portfolio: link

3.1.3 How to indicate if a portfolio is good-looking and representative?

I conducted prototype testing with a teacher – Maikel Putman

Usability Testing Summary:

I conducted usability testing of my portfolio prototype with Maikel Putman, a teacher from a past semester. During the session, he navigated the website, and I recorded his feedback. His initial impressions were positive, highlighting the clear, cloud-themed design and logical layout. He suggested improvements in presenting project development phases, using red for emphasis instead of bold text, and achieving better visual balance with font sizes. The dual categorization of learning outcomes and specific projects was well-received. This feedback provided valuable insights for refining my portfolio's design and content presentation.

https://youtu.be/lR-M87QpXGs?si=0fG6sweEyb1vpI3D

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Filmora
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Wondershare Filmora free plan

I also conducet user testing with a student from another semester – Dimitar Gunchev

Usability Testing 2 Summary:

In the second round of testing, I worked with Dimitar Gunchev, a student, to assess the final version of my portfolio. Gunchev noted significant improvements and found the navigation intuitive, particularly with the call-to-action button. He suggested better visibility for some sections like "explore my work" and integrating project-specific items like the Figma prototype directly into the project sections. He also recommended improvements to the "go back" button for easier navigation. This feedback was crucial for fine-tuning the portfolio's usability and layout.

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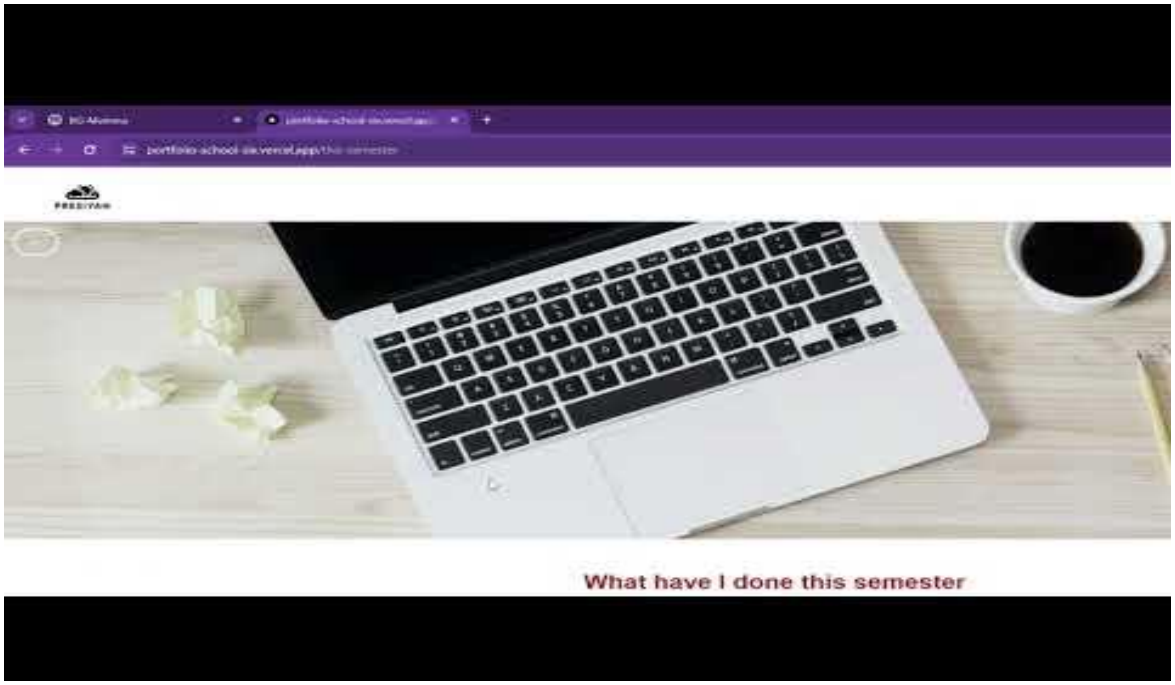


Read the full document pdf: here

Or in my portfolio: link

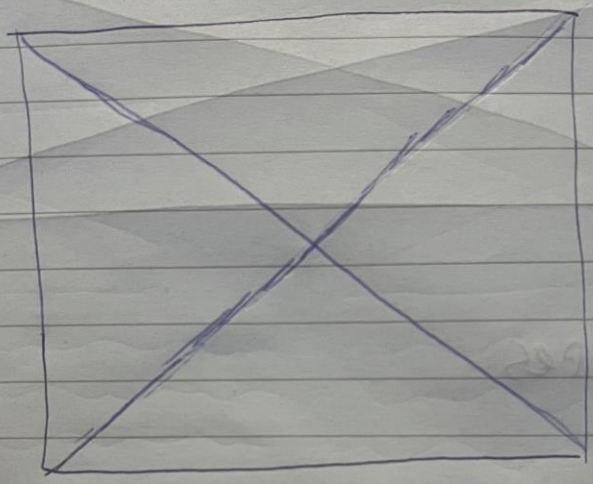
3.1.4 What expectations do teachers have from my portfolio?

I started by creating sketches, which then I turned into a prototype.

Home Page

Logo

About me My work RG

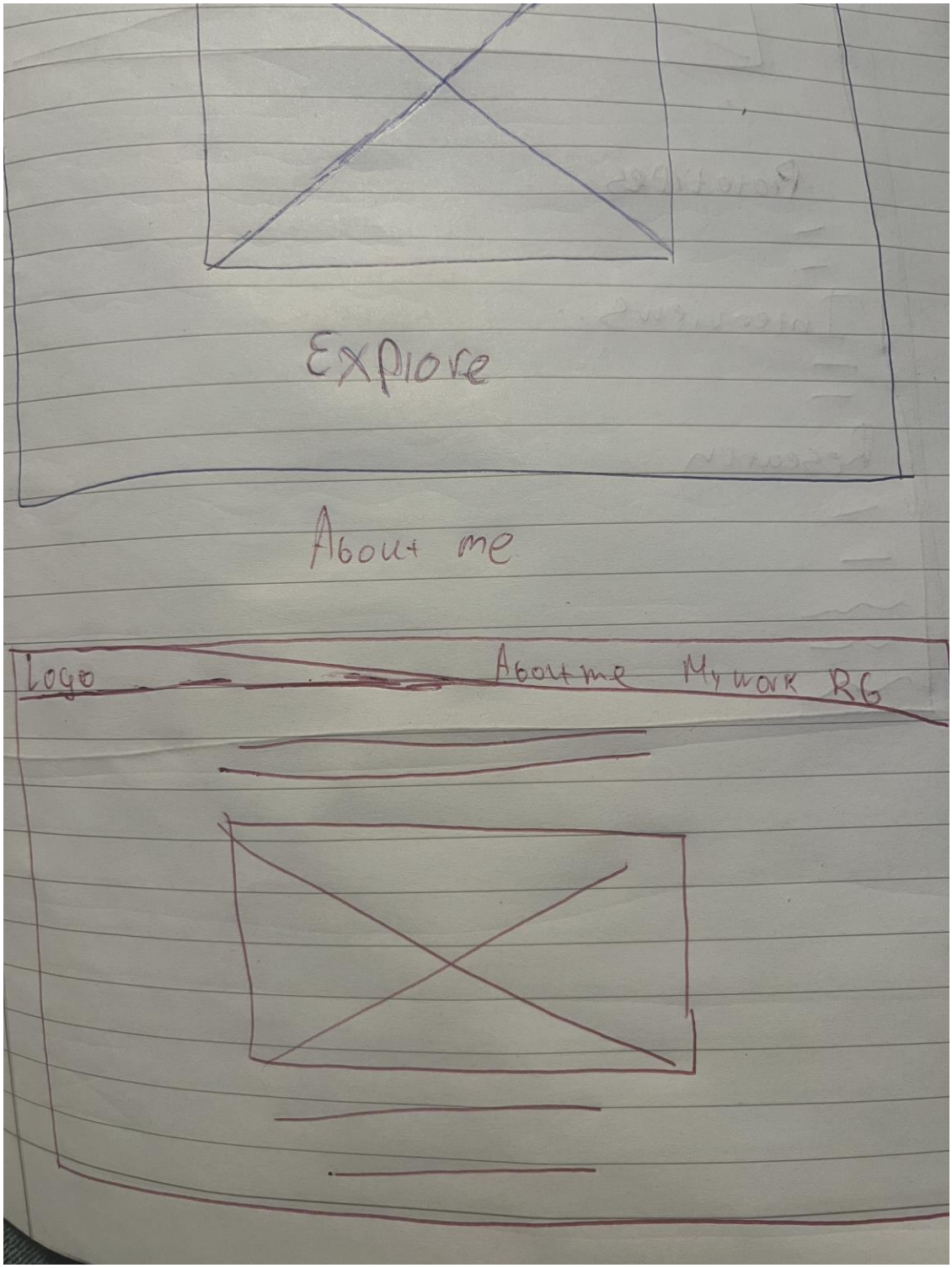


Explore

About me

Logo

About me My work RG


Explore
About me
Logo
About me
My work
RG

My work

Logo About me My work Reading Guide

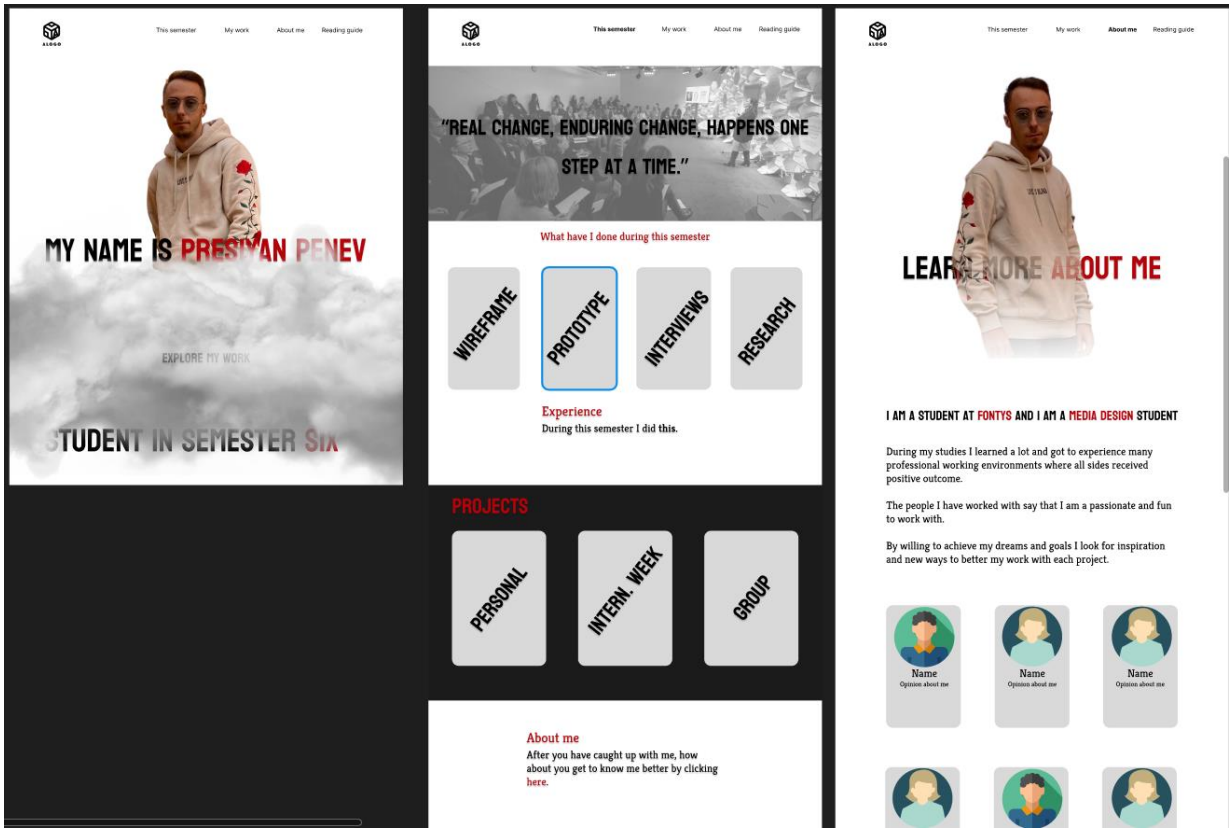
Prototypes

Interviews

Research

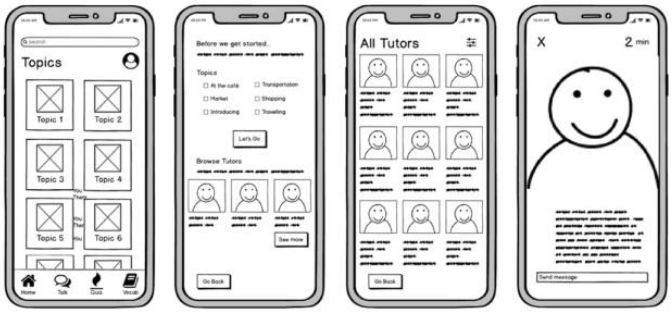
Creating my Semester 6 portfolio was a comprehensive and enriching experience, marked by a series of iterative submissions and the development of a Figma prototype. Each of the three key submission phases to my teachers provided crucial feedback for improvement. The journey began with a positively-received prototype, which I then coded. In the second phase, I refined my research questions and target audience definition, incorporating DOT/CMD Methods for depth. The third submission, though met with somewhat negative feedback, proved to be a pivotal learning moment, underscoring the need for updated content and a more comprehensive reading guide for each project.

The initial research and sketching phases were instrumental in shaping the final design of the portfolio. Feedback from teachers during these phases played a significant role in refining the structure and presentation, ultimately setting the stage for the final development phase. This process, bolstered by insights from colleagues and guided by experienced teachers, significantly enhanced the quality of my portfolio. It highlighted the importance of diverse perspectives and the value of experienced guidance in the creation of such projects.



Wireframes

Short Description -
Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book.
*Links



Interviews

Short Description -
Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book.
*Links

Listing work

ALOGO

This semester | My work | About me | Reading guide

List of carried out research

- Colors research
- Types of journalists research
- Usability testing
- User research
- Target audience (Portfolio)

List of carried out Interviews

- Interview with chief editor Tom
- Interview with journalist Fabian

List of wireframes & Mockups

- Link for group project figma files
- Link for portfolio figma file

WIREFRAME
Structure + Functions + Content

MOCKUP
Style + Colours + Right Content

Coding (GIT REPOSITORIES)

- Link for group project git
- Link for git repository(portfolio)

git

CHECK MY PROJECTS

Read the full pdf teacher feedback: here

Read the full pdf Sketching and prototyping: here

Or follow it on my portfolio: link feedback & link sketches & prototype

4. Conclusion

The whole journey of creating a representative, well-structured, user-friendly and informative was really thrilling. My research has been a crucial part of achieving the end result and answering the main research question, by answering the sub-questions. Sub-question 1 highlighted the importance of the coding framework for the portfolio project. Setting up a requirements list really helped me narrow down the needs for this project. Researching the difference between the react frameworks really provided valuable insights into selecting the most appropriate framework for a project like a portfolio, as every framework has advantages and disadvantages in different project situations. In my case Next.js excels in flexibilty, the SSR(server side rendering) and also being really easy to learn and use really influenced my choice of framework. Sub-question 2 was all about user-friendliness, structure and the ability to showcase my work. Beside researching how a portfolio should be structured, testing my prototype and website, together with frequent teacher feedback proved to be a really efficient way to indicate if I was going in the right direction. Setting up a nice environment for the tests and having a prepared set of questions and tasks made the process really easy and beneficial to understand if

the expectations of the end-result would be fulfilled. For example chaning one of the pages from a list with end-products to an actual learning outcomes page, where relevant documents and proofs would be on the their corresponding place. Another major change that I did was to integrate a reading guide inside my pages following a similar style from previous semesters. Changing the This Semester page to include projects on top and include at the bottom reading guides for each project. Changing the arrow that leads back to sticky, sot that it follows the user when scrolling. All of these feedbacks were really valuable and helpful towards creating a polished portfolio website. Sub-question 3 Study engulfed me with knowledge of the modern industry standarts of a portfolio. It highlighted necessary components to be up-to-date with the UX/UI design trends. Knowing the people I create the portfolio for I went for a minimalistic style and interactive components for a modern portfolio. Moreover, the research underscored the value of color selection and its effect on an appealing portfolio. Sub-question 4 this semester my only target audience were my teaching assessors. Having frequent talks and feedback sessions helped me change a lot. Like following certain frameworks for example the Why,

How, What and how to utilize it for their easy reading and follow my academic portfolio.

5. Reflection

Creating my portfolio website for semester 6 was hard and at the same time fun task to do. I developed further my javascript and design skills, which will help me with the rest of my studies. It allowed me to display the projects and skills I developed throughout the semester. This portfolio will serve to present my work to teachers, as well for personal reflection and growth. Building this portfolio website helped me see my progress, making it an essential tool for both self-assessment and development.

6. Retrospect

This project helped me realize it was more than just an assignment. It was a whole journey of self-development! I faced a lot of troubles along my way, from wondering how to design and structure my website to how to actually creating it. I used to work with this javascript framework during my last semester and I really enjoyed it so I wanted to further develop my skills with it.Maybe for my future projects I would try a different framework and then compare. I took inspiration from various good-looking portfolios of

successful designers and also my fellow coleagues. I gained deeper appreciation for the work I had done over this semester while creating this portfolio. The feedback from my teachers definitely super valuable, providing me with insights and perspectives I had not thought of. I am so happy how my portfolio website turned out to be. However, in the future I plan to do things a little bit differently. Next time, I want to have and try ask a professional designer to give me feedback on my designs to see and understand their way of thinking and working.

7. Evidence table

Learning outcome	Proof
User Interaction (analysis and advice)	Framework research, design & structure research
User Interaction (execution and validation)	Usability testing
Software design and realisation	Sketching and prototyping portfolio, creating react next.js project
Future oriented organisation	Portfolio Project plan
Investigative problem solving	Research questions and methods mentioned in this document and in my website portfolio
Personal leadership	Personal goals, learning objectives mentioned in the document
Goal-oriented interaction	Seeking teachers advice and feedback