

Assignment 2: High-Fidelity Prototype Report

By: Wafiq Ali

1.0 Introduction

One of the main reasons to redesign a website is to resolve all the issues tied to particular sections of the website. This report describes the rationale behind the design choices used to redesign the homepage section for the 'Book Program Discussion (BPD)' website and implement a new registration section. The design choices primarily focus on improving visual design and following the required accessibility guidelines.

The colour that I was given to emphasise significantly in this website is #231A24.

2.0 Discussion

2.1 Visual Design and Design Principles

2.1.1 Homepage

The overall structure is based on a website template from W3Schools [1]. The template provided ideal components that were already implemented and suitable to modify for the requirements of BPD. I will be adapting the overall formatting and composition of the navigation bar, background image, body text, and figure image into my website's design. The arrangement of these components defines an appropriate level of unity that I can work from and leverage. The content in the redesigned homepage of this website will follow what is available on the current 'Book Program Discussion' website [2], and the registration form will be newly implemented as per the guidelines of the assignment specifications.

The redesigned navigation bar at the top of the website is split into two distinct subsections: the registration/login tabs and all other tabs. This is clearly presented due to the use of Gestalt's proximity and similarity principles. The similarity principle helps a user comprehend that the tabs are all a part of the navigation bar. The proximity principle helps the user identify the two subsections of tabs.

Below the navigation bar is the background image and title components. The area principle is used to emphasize that the below image is a background rather than a figure as the size of this image has been formatted to always fit the rest of the page (only if the user is at the top of the page). There are components that sit on top of this background image, such as the title text, company logo, and footer text (relative to the image). Having these elements on top of the background image further emphasizes the area principle. The composition of these elements brings balance across the entire landing screen, which in turn achieves unity.

Underneath the landing screen is the redesigned 'The Idea' section from the official site homepage. This section is positioned in the centre of the page and takes approximately 50% of the screen's width. I chose to keep the formatting roughly equivalent to what was initially given in the template to continue a centre-aligned composition throughout the rest of the page. The composition also stands out well due to the 'surroundedness principle', which defines this section as a whole figure rather than a ground. The 50% width of this section is ideal as it groups the content appropriately, which adds volume to the section and allows the figure image to have an appropriate and relative size to the width of the paragraphs. Having a larger width would affect the visual perception towards the figure image and could confuse users to think of it as a background image due to the area principle.

After 'The Idea' section is the redesigned 'card' section from the current official homepage. The official homepage has three card elements over the background image. So I decided to move this to its own section for a more continuous flow and balance. These three cards are grouped closely together and identify as one section due to the proximity principle. The similarity principle also helps identify subsections within each card, i.e., the similar formatting clearly distinguishes heading from body text.

Lastly, the final section of the homepage consists of a footer section. The official site keeps social media links at the top of the page; however, I have decided to move these links to the bottom of the page within the footer as this is more conventional. The alignment of the social media icons and text is grouped (proximity) and centred, just like the rest of the document. A small example of the closure principle is applied with the footer text – "Powered by w3.css" and "Modified by Wafiq..." are separated by a vertical line.

2.1.2 Registration Form

The registration form can be accessed when the user clicks on the Register tab at the top right of the navigation bar. This form was designed with multiple principles in mind, especially the common fate principle.

There is a title at the top of the form, distinct from the rest of the form due to its unique font size and a horizontal rule beneath it. Underneath the horizontal rule are all the elements that describe the form and allow user input. This section is separated into three subsections due to the subtle differences in spacing. Each subsection has its own subheading, labels, and input components. Each label is above its corresponding input box, and each input box has placeholder text that always ends with triple dots. All elements inside this section are left-aligned, and appropriate font sizes are used to distinguish between headings, labels, and input. This section is completed using a second horizontal rule underneath the last subsection of the form. This is used to separate the final section of the form, where the register button can be located along with some additional information. The register button is the only component that is aligned to the right of the form so that it stands out against the rest of the form. This is done to avoid user error – to click the Register button, the user would have to switch their attention to the right side of the screen to click the button. This is also done as a match between the system and the real world – when a person reads a book, in order to flip to the next page, they would have to move their hand to the right of the page.

The use of the horizontal rule, spacing, relative alignment, and relative font sizes creates a relationship between particular groups of elements that 'move' together visually, creating the appropriate 'common fates.'

2.2 Colour and Accessibility

The overall colour scheme of this website consists of my designated colour and white. My designated colour is a very dark purple and so the only appropriate contrasting colour to pick was white. There are also some elements in the website that follow a monochromatic approach based off my designated colour. The use of colour for this website is for design rather than functionality, so aesthetics, mildness and accessibility are always taken into consideration when designing every element.

I have emphasised my designated colour as a background colour element for multiple sections of the website. These include the navigation bar, 'The Idea' section, card section, registration form, and

footer. The text colour is white when surrounded by dark purple or is dark purple when surrounded by white. This is done to ensure an appropriate contrast ratio between the elements. The text elements on the main background image of the homepage are white but aren't surrounded by any purple background. At first this was problematic as the contrast between the text and the image was poor. Therefore, I came up with a solution to increase the contrast by reducing the opacity of the background image (which made it look even more like a background image) and to add dark but subtle shadows to the white text.

The use of monochromatic colours were used to add depth in some areas and when hovering interactable elements on the website. The company logo consists of three books stacked on top of each other, where the book covers are monochromatic. Hovering over any interactable elements besides the navigation bar illustrate a lighter purple colour. The hover effect on the navigation bar tabs are different to the rest to emphasise that the navigation bar is its own unique section of the page. The cards in the card section and the registration form also consists of a solid monochromatic shadow that adds depth to the form and the cards. I thought that these particular components were suitable to have such shadows that add depth as cards and registration forms are physical objects in the real world.

I have also used colour to separate sections of the homepage. The background colour transitions from dark purple to white when moving from 'The Idea' section to the card section. The same applies once more when moving from the card section to the footer.

Every decision made on the visual design and colour design of the website works towards an overall unity that is expressed across the entire website.

2.2.1 Other Accessibility Rationale

Besides ensuring that an appropriate level of contrast is always present between different colours, there are other accessibility guidelines that were followed during the implementation of this website.

Keyboard Accessibility

There are some users with issues that prevent them from being able to operate a mouse, and so it is essential that keyboard accessibility is taken into consideration to support these users. I made sure that this website is fully-functional with using only a keyboard. This means that all interactable elements on this website are clearly (visually) accessible (by tabbing). When tabbing through the elements on the page, an element that is focused (currently tabbed) is displayed with a bold border. The colour of this border depends on the surrounding colours due to contrast issues. Elements with a dark background show a sandy-yellow border and elements with a light/white background show a bold red border. These borders do not follow any sort of monochromatic design and were chosen mainly due to visibility purposes.

Accessibility of Forms

The registration form strictly follows the set of rules that were detailed in assignment specifications in terms of labelling and instructions. Each input has its own corresponding label as stated before. All form controls are also accessible with a keyboard-only approach.

Web Accessibility – Alt Text

All images that are used in this website besides the main background image contain a HTML alt tag. This tag describes the image in text form and is either displayed when users are unable to see the image or used for screen readers for visually impaired users. There is no current way to set an alt tag for an image that is set as a 'background-image'.

It is also worth noting that all images that were used in this high-fidelity prototype come under the creative-commons license. I chose images under this license for legality reasons that may or may not be necessary for the sake of this assignment.

Page Title

Page titles are essential for orientation and should be used to briefly describe the webpage. I added a page title that simply states the company name. I have also added a 'favicon', which is the company logo as a mini icon that sits on the left of the page title.

References

1. W3Schools Template
https://www.w3schools.com/w3css/tryw3css_templates_cafe.htm
2. Official Book Program Discussion website
<https://www.bds.org.nz/>
3. My Designated Colour #231A24
4. Charlotte's Web Book Cover
https://live.staticflickr.com/8/8803606_ea9ea97c67_c.jpg
5. London Book Cover
https://live.staticflickr.com/3467/3958164578_2778fae410.jpg
6. Figure image under 'The Ideas' section
<https://i0.hippopx.com/photos/183/476/63/books-bookshelves-bookstore-business-preview.jpg>
7. Main Background image
https://live.staticflickr.com/1/187022699_254dff7f3e_b.jpg
8. Company Logo: image part
<https://openclipart.org/download/296597/StackOfBooks.svg>