A webpage layout is very important to make more visually interesting website and also simplify navigation clarifying the structure. Reaching effective layout with great look might be attention and time-consuming process. The website must be responsive, so it can be viewed correctly on all devices, and dynamic, that’s why current websites are created using the CSS or JavaScript based framework even though good layout could be created using HTML tables or division tags in combination with other formatting tags. Using tables to created HTML layouts is not recommended now because it slows down the rendering in the browser and complicates redesigning later. Websites layouts could be also created using CSS floats or flex containers. Flex containers give more design options, but CSS floats are easier to use. Header <header>, Navigation bar <nav>, Content <article>, <section> etc., and Footer <footer> are four basic elements found in almost every page layout design.

There are many ways to style a layout since website layouts improve constantly and many frameworks available to help simplify the code. The first website in August 1991 was a simple text page with a few links. First webpage only told people what the World Wide Web was about.

Web pages had text with links to other pages and presented single column designs, which was common for the next couple of years. World Wide Web Consortium was established in 1994 and html became the standard for marking up web pages. Table-based layouts became popular in 1995 and gave more opportunities for web designers such as structure design and make multi-column layouts. First flash sites started to appear in 1996. Flash created more options than html. Flash also used action script. Web designers didn’t have to use complex table structures or spacer images. It made it possible to create complex and interactive sites with animated features. Websites turn out to be interactive with animated features. Close to the end of 90s, web technologies such as JavaScript and server-side scripting such as classic asp and php became popular. Appearance of interactive web pages allowed users to interact with web content. Early 2000s – is the time of CSS design popularity. Advantage of using CSS design is separation of design elements from content, cleaner code in web layouts, and easier web site maintenance. In 2007 there was a rise in using grids and frameworks because all the different layouts for different devices caused content-parity problems. In 2010 happened a movement called responsive web design, which is the usage of same content but different layouts. It leads to similar look of website on all devices. Nowadays there are new CSS measurement units like viewport height and width, which allow better flexibility to position elements, and also Flexbox, which allows to create layouts and change them with a single property instead of writing lots of code.

Website layout and styling changed over the time. It made great impact on how appealing, clear, and interactive the websites became nowadays. CSS that started as something very simple to view a document on a simple small screen. Now we have things like CSS Grid, which based on Google’s Tab Atkins, Editor of the CSS Grid Layout Module is

“most powerful layout tool that have invented yet for CSS. It makes page layouts so ridiculously easy”.

Sources:

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