

Unit 9: Design Critique Assignment

Step 1: Reflection

Which existing websites out there most inspired your web site design thus far?

I looked at the very simple sites such as Facebook, SquareSpace, even General Assembly. I think these sites were able to achieve functionality while still remaining very simple and easy to navigate. I adore negative space and think that there is a beauty to simplicity.

Which parts of the design are you most proud of?

I am very proud of the responsiveness of my site. When rendered via mobile, the site includes an apply button and the navigation bar becomes compact and vertical instead of horizontal while the logo remains intact. I am also just impressed that I learned so much within these 10 weeks.

What struggles did you encounter in your design process?

I wanted to make sure the site had a simple interface with a professional educational undertone while still maintaining relevance and a spark of pizzazz. This website will be the crux of Guided Education, and both parents and students will be returning to it time and time again for their work and progress within the curriculum, so it has to be resonate with both generations.

Which struggles did you encounter during page development?

I had some trouble with floating some of my elements. They were not centering even though I set the margins to auto. I also had trouble with overlaying text and images over a background image and making that image a link.

What did you learn from making your project responsive?

I learned that height should never be a fixed amount, in either pixels or percentages. Also, I learned that what looks great on a large monitor may or may not look as good on the small screen. Further, I think working with percentages is best from now on out, so I will not be employing the pixel method if I know I will be creating a mobile site eventually.

Step 2: Reviews

SquareSpace:

- Layout - I chose SquareSpace to review because it was the most appealing to me. I love all of the negative space and the simplicity of the website. Further, I think it is very clear what the functionality and purpose of the site is - for the user to build a website that is beautiful on any of the different screens on the opening homepage.
- Typography - The typography on the homepage enables the slogan to be the focal point. It is very large, fine, and sans serif, which gives the site a modern twist. It screams "technology" and coincides with the overall purpose of the website.
- Navigation - The navigation bars serve their purpose - there is nothing lost on the website. The horizontal bar covers the larger and more overarching content while the hamburger icon opens up to a more detailed vertical nav bar with different options and more nuanced requests. I think this is a great way to keep users engaged. For those who are just trying to understand what SquareSpace is, the horizontal nav is a great place to learn about it. For those who are already comfortable using the website, the vertical nav bar includes many, if not all, their services.
- Overall Flow - I really enjoy the simplicity of the opening page. The flow then allows the user to scroll down, where the user can see examples of the many ways SquareSpace can be put to use. I think there is a bit of chaos right after the "Build a Store, Build a Brand" black div bar, and I would

make a few design changes there (by keeping all of the images closer to the center of the page instead of being so close to the edge). However, the footer brings it all back together by employing the same concept of simplicity on the top portion of the site.

Space Jam

- Layout - I understand where the designer's head was headed. This is essentially a solar system, but it just looks like a mess of bright colors around the Space Jam "sun." There are many problems.
- Typography - The yellow sans-serif font around the "planets" in the solar system is too small for any user. Also, the footer serif font does not at all compliment the other font. It is also terrible garish against the background of stars.
- Navigation - The navigation is the planet formation. While I think that is a fun concept, it is too busy for my taste. Also, I do not know what most of the nav items are, so as a user, I would not be engaged enough to click on any of them.
- Overall Flow - The focal point is the sun, and then the eyes, if they can stand it, are drawn to the planets. And then, there's the footer. I am not impressed.