Hamza Qureshi
05-430 Programming Usable Interfaces
Hong
26 February 2018

Assignment 4: Implementing a Website with HTML and CSS – Reflection

This assignment was succinctly different from any that I am inherently used to following in the development of user interfaces. From the first attempt at developing paper prototypes with just a visage of a brand for the Bun Bun Bake Shop, up until the completion of this assignment, a distinct understanding of the brand needed to be developed to succeed in building the web experience for the company. As a local company looking to make a splash into the world of e-commerce, I envisioned the brand requiring a level of sophistication and simplicity. Achieving these ideals in a design context would then allow the products themselves to jump off of the page. Because of this, I wanted to refrain from using distracting and saturated colors outside of the images, thus maintaining a minimalist aesthetic while allowing the product offerings to speak for themselves.

In developing the high fidelity prototype to be presented on InVision, maintaining a level of sophistication through minimalism while creating interactive experiences were at the forefront of my design thought. I achieved this through creating hover elements that responded to the mouse. For example, on the home page when hovering over the Wacky Walnut option, more information appeared as well as a button to view the product. When translating and iterating this design to develop a prototype using HTML and CSS, I had to make a number of compromises from a design sense. In particular, maintaining the same level of interaction proved to be very difficult. I was able to achieve some of the hover capabilities present in the InVision prototype – namely, the use of italics when a user hovers over a link. However, things like the hover properties over product images appeared to require external libraries or JavaScript to effectively achieve.

There were a number of obstacles and bugs that also arose in the process of creating the HTML/CSS prototype. One particular area of difficulty was with the alignment of text. It appeared that because of specific display options, and sets of text/images not being in blocks, simple solutions like "text-align:" did not work. This became particularly difficult in creating the header for the web pages. Another obstacle to overcome was with the application of images. I noticed early on as I was using images that editing certain properties through the style sheet would cause uniform changes throughout every instance of an image unless I created more "div" elements, which would clutter the code. Instead, I changed things like size of the image in the HTML file directly. Although this method may be possibly problematic, it succeeded in allowing individual images to be changed without changing them all. These bugs taught me a lot about the communication between HTML and CSS. Although it is very beneficial to use CSS to provide consistency throughout a web interface, it is just as important to know the way

around that uniformity to achieve proper customization. Overall, the experience in developing the prototype for this assignment was absolutely necessary in clearing the hurdle of web design that will lead me to more advanced techniques through JavaScript and JQuery.