DECEMBER 24, 2020

CODING A PORTFOLIO WEBSITE AS A DESIGNER

HTML/CSS WEBSITE CASE STUDY

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PORTFOLIO WEBSITE CASE STUDY

OVERVIEW

As an up and coming UX/UI designer, I needed a portfolio website for me to showcase my work to potential recruiters, future colleagues, and everyone interested. Through this perfect medium a designer can share a glimpse into their work-ethic, thought-process, and personality.

I learned the enough of HTML and CSS to put together my very own portfolio website from scratch. Creating it myself instead of using a template or website-making service gave me a lot more creative freedom and allowed me to better express myself through my site, making sure each element was something thoughtful and necessary for my goals.

CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE

Background & Description
Understanding the foundations of programming is an important part of any design professional's skillset. This is especially true for designers who regularly collaborate with

developers. I needed to gain valuable insights into how to work with design considerations alongside technical requirements. This project was a way for me to challenge myself as a designer whilst creating something tangible that would help me with my future career prospects. The timeline was 8 weeks in November-December, 2020.

The Problem

I need a way to present my design skills to the world and build up an online presence in order to create a professional network and more easily showcase my capabilities.

Goals

My goals with this project were to learn the basics of HTML, CSS and JavaScript and use that knowledge to create my very own portfolio website. Ultimately, building up my online presence and make myself known in the UX/UI industry to help with jobs and career development. First goal in this process is getting an industry job.

PROCESS AND INSIGHTS

The first step was laying out all the content that was going to be included in the website. I needed to organize and prepare my work section as well as an intro about me, followed by my about section going into more detailed information and sharing my CV, ending with each project page detailing each project.

The second step was setting up a standard website navigation and layout to get a website structure started. The homepage, called Work, would have a short introduction about me but would mainly be highlighting a list of my work which is the main goal of the website. There is a second page, called About, would go into more details about me and have my CV. The final navigational button, called Contact, would lead to the bottom of each page where I would have contact information which is the Call to Action I want people to do from my website. The only other things on my website would be the information about each project that would be linked from the Work page and also have an additional document for more details to keep the website itself short in order to quickly get to the Contact sections on each page.

The third step was getting some early mockups in order to have concepts of what I would code. I followed my newly made style guide for my original mockups and code.

Color Scheme

Burgundy
#912057

Pink
#DA97AE

Light Green
#ACC0B3
Highlights

Icy Grey
#DADEF8

Medium Grey
#898BA3

Typography

Cormorant Garamond - 45 - Heading 1

Cormorant Garamond - 30 - Heading 2

Cormorant Garamond - 25 - Heading 3

Open Sans - 20 - special body text

Open Sans - 16 - body text

Cormorant Garamond

Aa

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Open Sans

Aa

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Rationale

I chose this color scheme to represent relaxing grays with warm red/pink and the light green for highlights. This was to balance the warm with the cold and the serious with the playful and show an overall well rounded designer.

I chose this typography combination for similar reasons as the color scheme. Open sans is more playful and informal whereas Garamond is more serious and together they are balanced.

Original Style Guide for Website

The fourth step was actually getting into coding! I began by laying out the basic HTML for each of the pages, building the bones and foundation of my website. From there, I built the CSS stylesheet to apply styling and flair to the site. Then came some simple JavaScript to add interactive elements and extra functionality to my site. Though it sounds simple I needed to learn how to code each step of the way.

The fifth step was getting back to my UX roots and having some User Testing for the site to begin iterating. Two main lessons from the user testing were:

1. Add more about future job (goals, tasks) and more about my personality, passion, preferences, and some interview answers. Not just pure UX. Show what is special about me that only I bring to a job.

2. Personalize the website look more, including colors, fonts, the logo, and theme.

Both of these points were widely supported and greatly affected the future of my website. I also used this as an opportunity to cross browser test my website and make sure the coding had no error with linters and spell checkers. All the issues were addressed and corrected. Finally, for readability I checked the golden ratio for typography and accessibility for colors. All the results are in, so let the editing begin.

These five steps were all it really took to get to where I am with my website but as any great UX designer knows everything is a work in progress and there is always more testing and iterating that can be done. I will keep working on my website and improving my coding even after completing this case study. As a designer, it's my responsibility to keep up to date with all the latest design trends and make sure I am updating my website accordingly to keep it relevant. The best testament to being a great UX Designer would be to have great UX in my website!

SOLUTION

Based on the above detailed process I recreated my website into its second iteration. I've put together a link to my website as well as some views of my website in desktop, tablet and mobile views, and a link to my GitHub repository:
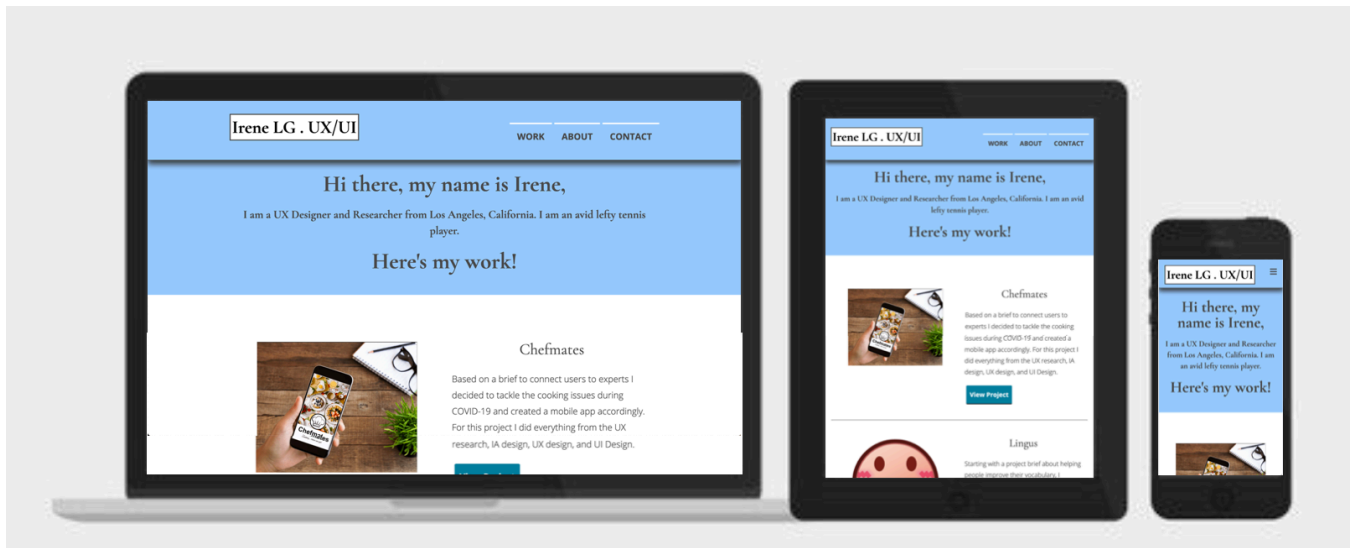
Website: https://irinilg.github.io/PortfolioSite/

GitHub Repository: https://github.com/irinilg/PortfolioSite

Sample look using media queries on different screen sizes:

RESULTS

My main goal was to create an online presence beyond a LinkedIn profile or Behance portfolio page in order to reach more potential employers, other people in the world, and make me stand out as a candidate. I achieved that. I am very happy with my work so far and look forward to greater future improvements.

Laptop, Tablet and Mobile looks