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Chrome Dev Tools

There are many useful features Google Chromes DevTools has to offer both developers and designers. ­Using this toolkit, developers and designers can view live changes to documents when they manipulate/change DOM and CSS elements rather than having to switch back and forth between browser and files, saving time and frustration. It allows developers to test and debug JavaScript and even see how optimized and accessible a website is (Google, n.d.).

A tool that is frequently used by designers is the Device Mode feature. This tool allows you to view different viewport sizes, view and edit media queries (Key CDN, 2019), and see how websites and apps will look when viewed on multiple popular devices. You can also simulate landscape views on mobile devices with Device Mode. These features have helped ensure countless web applications are cohesive and look and function properly across devices, an essential standard. Another tool that Device Mode offers is the “throttle list.” This allows you to see how a device is rendered and behaves under 3G conditions or with a slow CPU for example (Google, n.d).

Another awesome feature of Chromes Dev Tools is the ability to debug and test JavaScript right in the browser. There is a built-in console that shows errors and can be used for logging information while testing programs. This can be much easier than switching back and forth from the browser and .js file, allowing you to view and test live changes. This can also be beneficial when debugging programs that are using the jQuery library since it is run in the browser. Another important debugging tool it offers is the ability to step your code and create breakpoints to test smaller parts of a program.

When debugging JavaScript, Dev Tools also has a feature that allows you to find unused JavaScript, which can aid in both performance and code refactoring. This feature is also offered for finding unused CSS. Personally speaking, when I design website, I often change styles so frequently that is can be easy to lose track of what is being used and what is not. This helps ensure my CSS file is cleaner and more maintainable.

One especially important set of features Chromes DevTools offers are their accessibility and performance tools. You can go into the “Audits” panel and check performance, best practices, SEO, and accessibility for both mobile and web. These tools give you detailed reports that suggest where exactly in your code you can make improvements (Google, n.d).

Google Chromes DevTools or Firefox Developer Tools are an essential part of any web developers’ toolkit. Aside from the obvious benefits of being able to change and manipulate DOM, CSS, and JavaScript live, the added benefits Chromes DevTools offers with Device Mode, accessibility, and performance auditing make it a truly awesome development tool.

Reference:

Chrome DevTools  |  Tools for Web Developers  |  Google Developers. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://developers.google.com/web/tools/chrome-devtools

Williams, M. (2019, November 5). Chrome DevTools - 20 Tips and Tricks. Retrieved from https://www.keycdn.com/blog/chrome-devtools