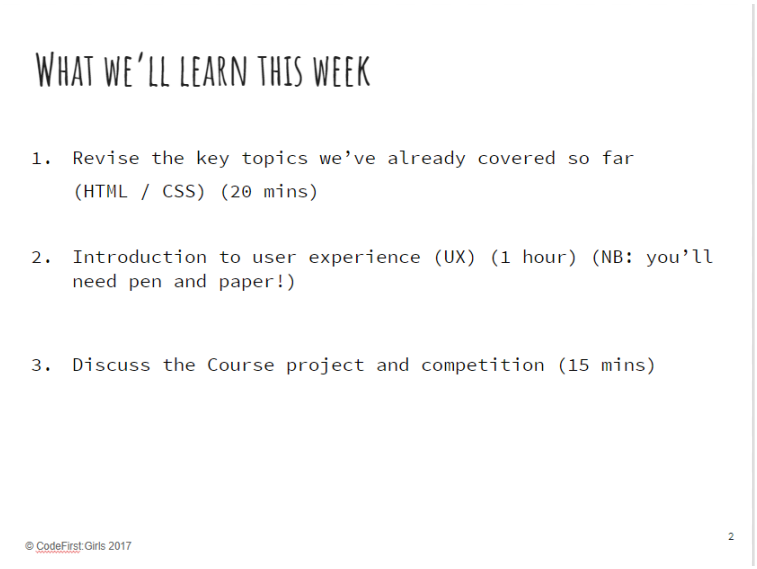
CodeFirst:Girls Beginners Coding course – Front end Web development

Week 3 - Recap, User Experience (UX),

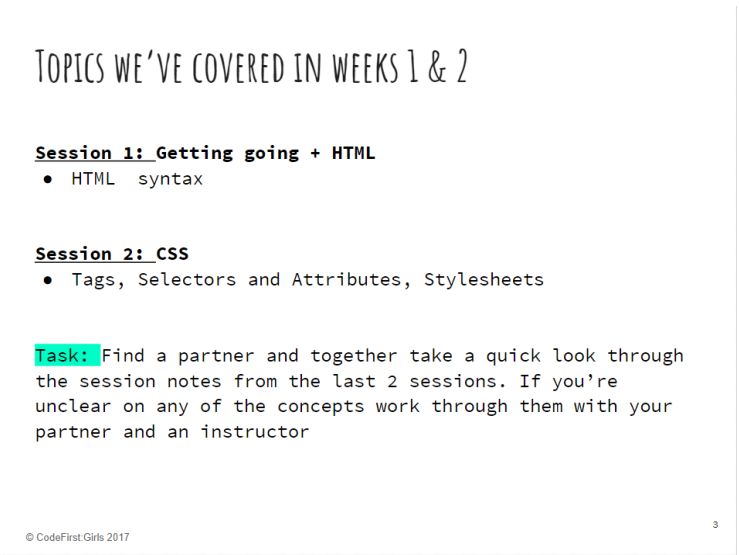
Course competition

16/01/18



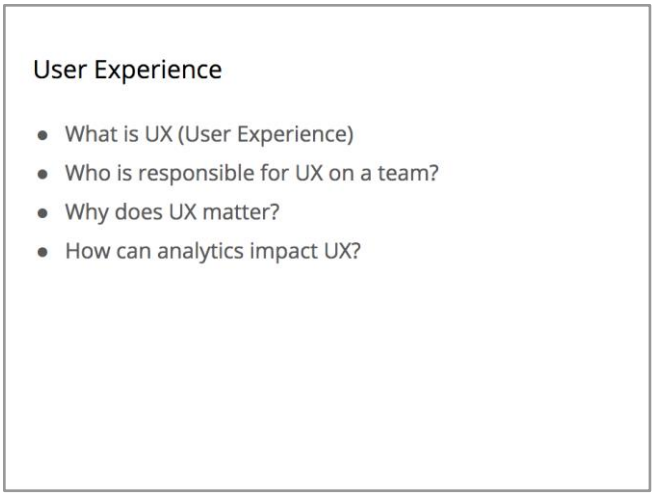
This week we'll begin to think about the website that you will be creating as part of the course competition. We'll have a quick review session of what we have learnt on the course so far, then learn about User Experience (UX), and then talk about what's involved in building your own website.

1. Revise the key topics we've already covered so far (HTML / CSS) (20 mins)
2. Introduction to user experience (UX) (1 hour) (NB: you'll need pen and paper!
3. Discuss the Course project and competition (15 mins)



What we've learnt so far: HTML syntax in week 1, CSS last week. Find a partner and take a look through the session notes from the last 2 weeks. If you are not clear on any of the concepts, work through them with your partner and / or an instructor

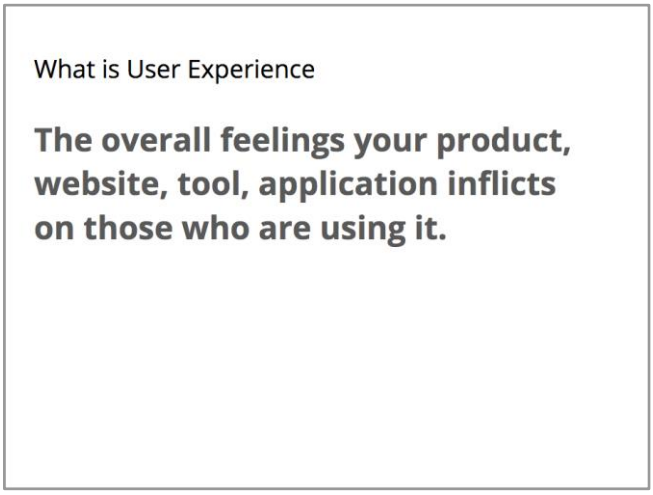
Introduction to User Experience



What will we learn in this section

- What is UX (User Experience)?
- Who is responsible for UX on a team?
- Why does UX matter?
- How can analytics impact UX?

Coding is not the only way in which we can move into the wonderful world of technology. People working in code have a reputation to be people shy and downright geeky, but some roles are people-centric, like user experience researchers or designers for example. After all, when we are building websites and applications it we have to understand who we are building these things for.



What is User Experience?

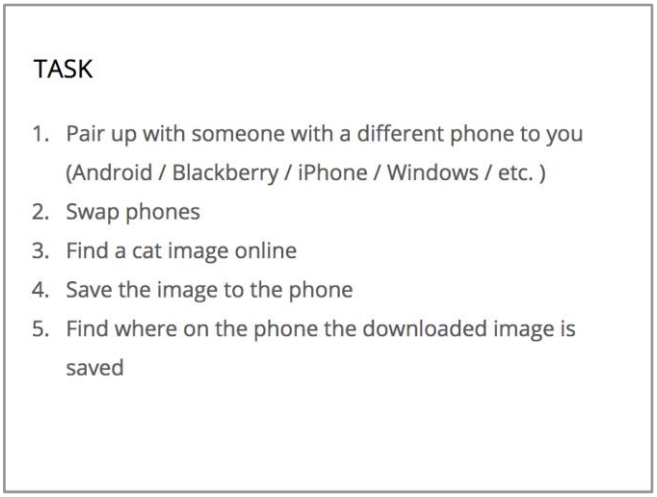
So what is user experience exactly?

User experience is the overall feelings your product, website, tool, application, inflicts on those who are using it.

- It is the look of disgust when something unexpected happens.
- It’s the joy when something has been personalised.
- UX is changing a website's colours to dark tones when someone uses it at night to reduce the glare.

When you browse the web have you managed to achieve every goal you had in mind on every website you have ever used? If not, then why not?

Let’s try something fun.



TASK

(spend 5 minutes on this)

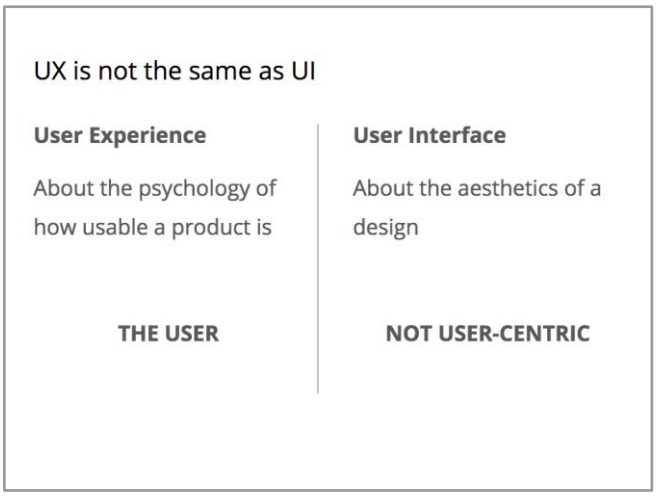
1. Pair up with someone with a different phone to you - Android/iPhone/Windows/Blackberry etc.
2. Swap phones
3. Find a cat image online, save it to the phone, then find where the downloaded file is saved on the phone

If you are not comfortable with swapping phones, then the owner of the phone will take directions on what to do from the other person.

AFTER THE TASK

- Did anyone manage to achieve the task?
- What kind of obstacles did you encounter?

When you are building websites or apps you should take into consideration the problems people can have and why. The journey of your app begins long before someone has touched a phone.



What UX is not

UX is not the same as UI. UI stands for User Interface and usually refers to the aesthetics of a design. UX is more about the psychology of how usable a product is.

Even though UI has an impact on how people feel, it is not user-centric.

For example a website can have a very pretty UI. It can be slick, modern and looking very clean. However if you have to guess how to navigate around the website then it does not have a great user experience.

User experience is also not a new concept. The foundations of UX comes from another discipline called Human Computer Interaction (HCI), which studies how people build relationships with technology and how we interact with computers.

User experience is not easy. It can be subjective, with challenges being solved in multiple different ways. While a solution may work for one demographic, it does not mean it will work for all.

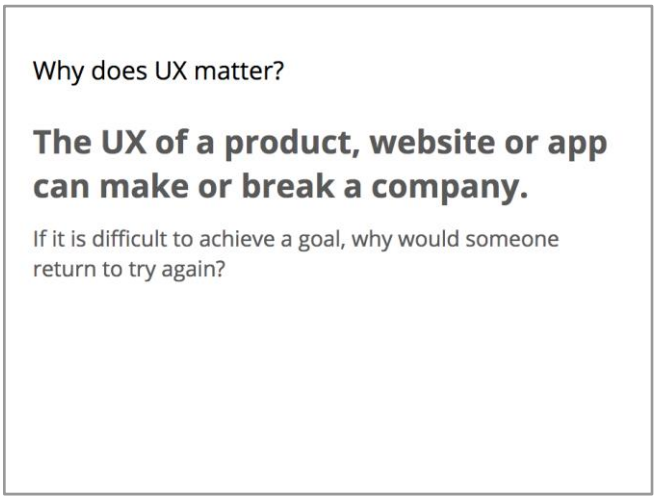
Who is responsible for UX?

In short, everyone on a team is responsible for the overall user experience of a product, website or app. Some people in the team may lead on certain aspects like developing the UX or researching with people. But everyone who touches the product should in some way affect its UX.

Let's have a look at the different departments in a company and their responsibility in relation to UX.

Who is responsible by department

- **Marketing**: they need to understand the problems people have, in order to be able to sell the product that will solve that problem;
- **Visual Designers**: they need to communicate the emotions of the brand using aesthetics;
- **UX-ers**: they need to champion the changes, research with real people and oversee the project;
- **Business analysts**: they need to balance the requirements and how they benefit the user and the business;
- **Developers**: they need to build the product and the behaviour of the product;
- **Quality analysts**: they need to know how to test the UX and spot issues in behaviour.



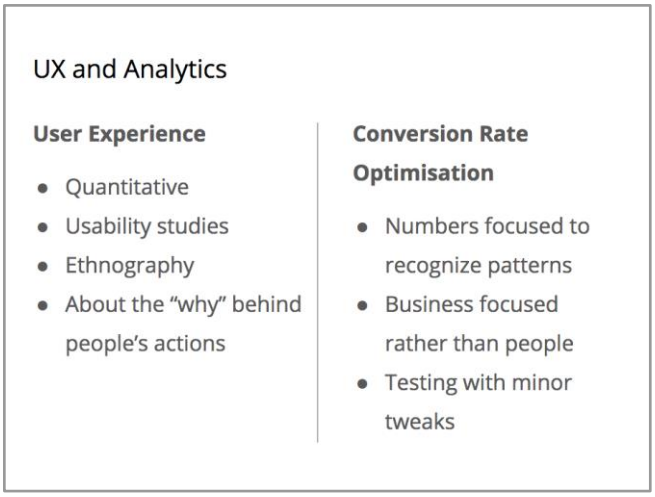
Why does UX matter?

The user experience of a product, website or app can make or break a company. If it is difficult for someone to achieve a goal, then why would someone return to try again. Especially when someone else makes a product that is easier to use.

Let's take a look at the evolution of social media companies.

Friends Reunited was the bee's knees when it first came out. It found a problem - people losing contact with each other, and provided a solution. But they did not think about what people would do after they had connected. There was no information posted by people, meaning the content lacked. (It was also a subscription service which never helps when free services like Facebook and Myspace emerged)

Another good example is Amazon. Amazon customer experience is fairly terrible, as the marketplace is so saturated with goods. Over 90% of purchases are made through the search bar, because it is not somewhere you really browse for a product. Additionally, the buying process was (and still is) complicated. To overcome that, they added the one-click functionality.
The design is awful and cluttered, but because of the good search tool, one click buy policy and prime delivery, they have managed to keep on top of the market.



UX and Analytics

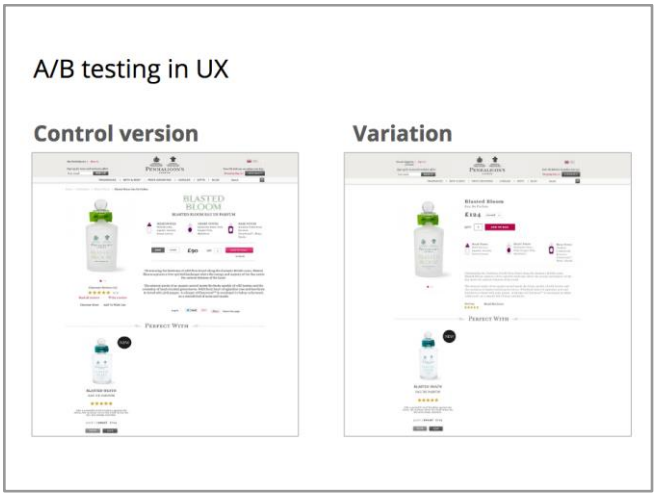
Analytics is the research over a larger audience of people. The area of UX which looks closer at analytics is called **Conversion Rate Optimisation**. This is the discipline of using UX to make minor tweaks to understand if the changes have an impact on your website.

UX is mostly qualitative research:

- Usability studies
- Ethnography
- About the "why" behind people's actions

Conversion Rate Optimisation is mostly quantitative research:

- Focused on numbers to recognize patterns on a large scale
- Focused on business rather than people
- Testing with minor tweaks

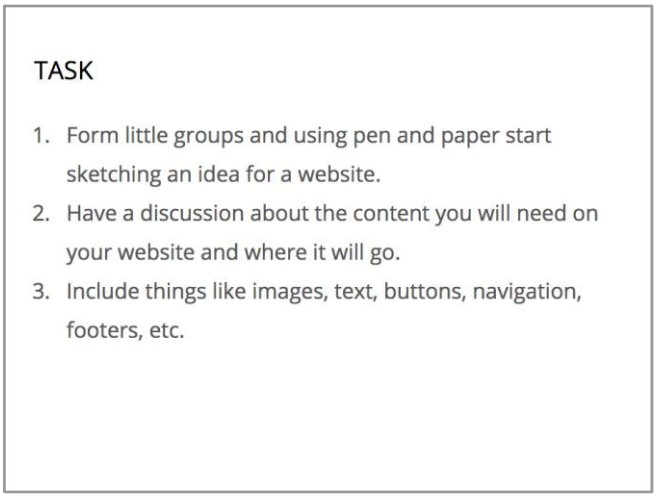


A/B testing in UX

For example A/B testing can be used to test the difference in conversion rates between buttons with different colours, or pages with two completely different layouts.

The control version of this product page is the original design created for the website. In the variation the layout of the Add to Bag section was changed to make it a more prominent on the page. The aim was to increase the engagement with the Add to Bag button. The final results showed an increase in revenue of 15.9%.

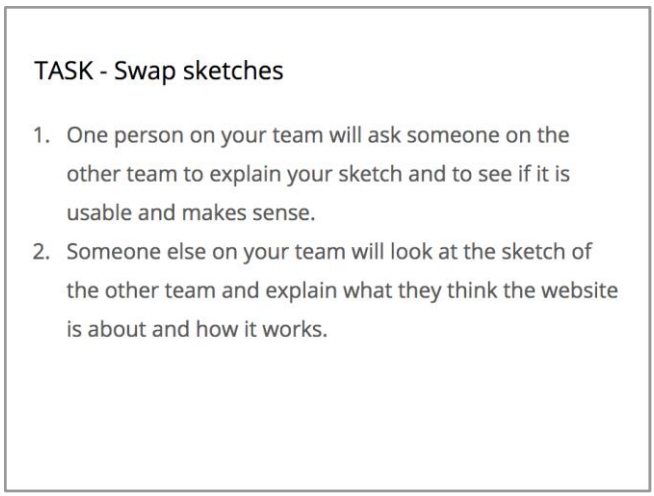
Tools like Google Analytics, HotJar and Optimizely can help target specific demographics with different versions of a website or page.



TASK

Let's have a go at some basic UX

1. Form little groups and using pen and paper start sketching an idea for a website.
2. Have a discussion about the content you will need on your website and where it will go.
3. Include things like images, text, buttons, navigation, footers, etc.



AFTER 10-15 MINUTES

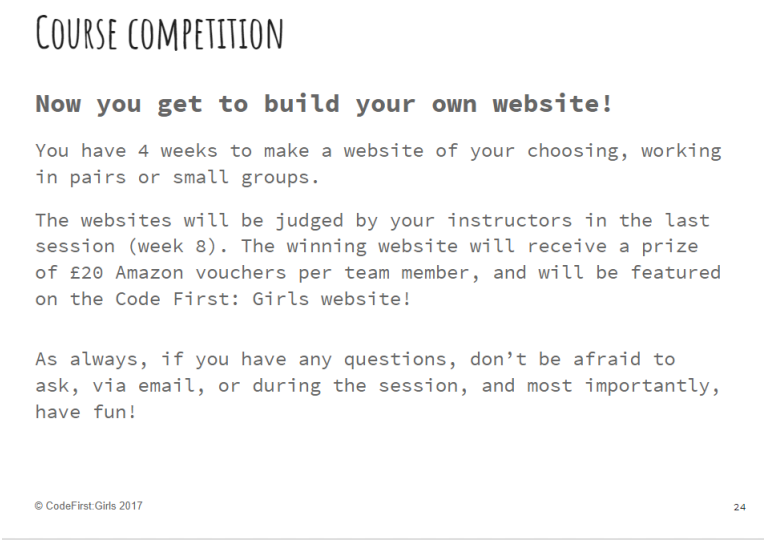
Swap sketches with another team and test out your design:

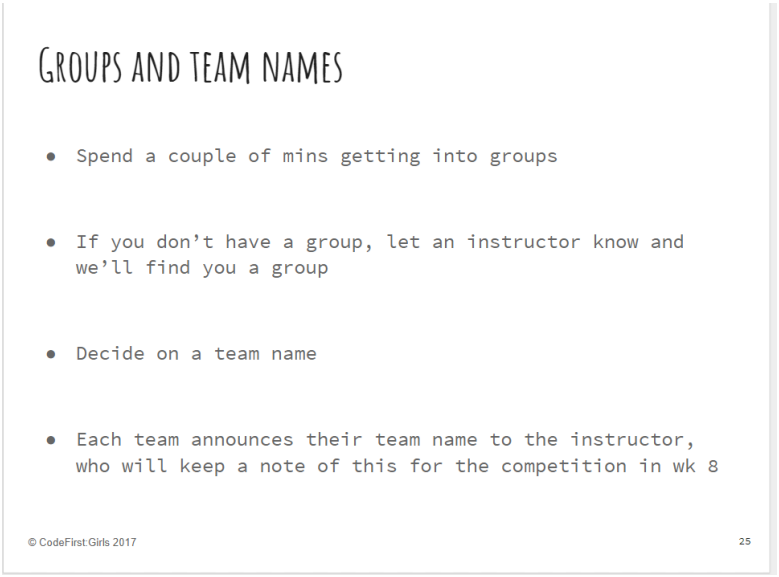
1. One person on your team will ask someone on the other team to explain your sketch and to see if it is usable and makes sense.
2. Someone else on your team will look at the sketch of the other team and explain what they think the website is about and how it works.

AFTER THE TASK

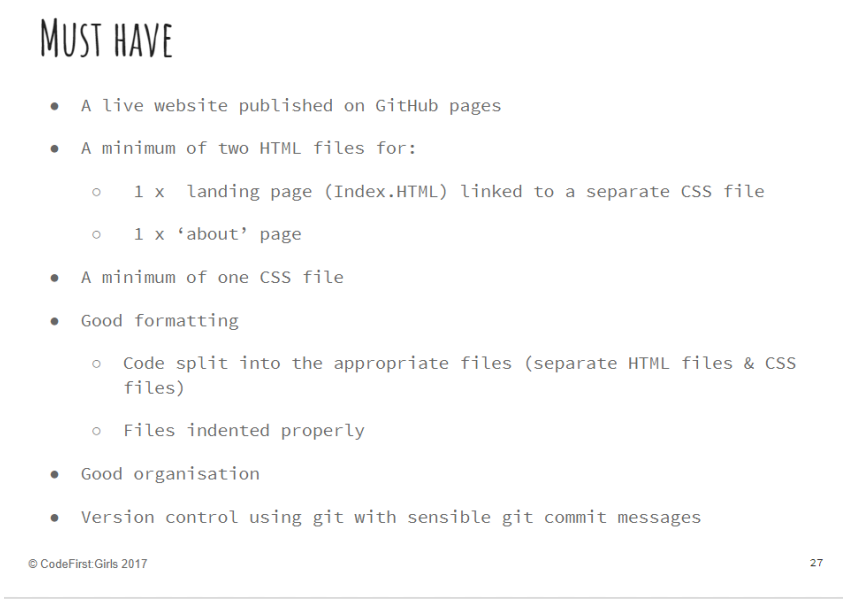
What did you learned from this exercise?

Course competition





NB. Sometimes getting into groups can be quite stressful to participants if they are shy, don't know very many people in the class and find such things intimidating. If you feel that it would be better to assign groups yourself, use the CFG random group generator: https://codefirstgirls.github.io/random-group-creator/



Nice to have

- A visually appealing design - good use of CSS and HTML elements, Twitter Bootstrap, Jquery & Javascript (don't worry you'll learn about these last three topics later in the course!)
- A contact form (for example name and email)
- Social buttons
- As many different HTML elements as you can manage
- Interactive elements (like forms) on your website don't need to be functional, but should be present if they need to be for the visual aspect of the design.
- A responsive site (again you'll learn about this later!)

Homework

- Review what we've learnt this week
- Start working on your websites!