

Online Web Portfolio - Write-Up

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Assignment 8

Part 1

Website Description

The purpose behind the design of my website is to educate the user on my personal background, especially in an academic and professional context. I am hoping to convey my educational background, relevant skills, and experience with programming and UX design. Beyond my professional accomplishments, I also wanted to highlight unique personal experiences that I have had through the background images. To show my personality, I included an image of me feeding tigers and one of me with Cisco's CEO. Overall, the website is interesting and engaging, because the vertical navigation bar is different from traditional websites. Further, I included many pieces of animation to keep the users engaged, including fade-in headers and navigation bars, a GPA counter display, a terminal-esque skills description with a buzzing animation, and a "swirling newspaper" animation for my publication. The target audience for my application is my friends and family, especially relatives that are unable to see the work that I do in college, as well as job recruiters, who would be interested in seeing a live application of my coding and UX design abilities.

Part 2

User Interactions

- i. Parallax scrolling
- ii. Scroll through the website to see perception of depth created by the foreground content and background images

- i. Scrollspy
- ii. Scroll through the website to see the navigation bar automatically update based on the section of the website currently in the viewport; the scrollspy can also be used to easily navigate to other sections of the website (eg. click on "Work" in the navigation bar when on the "School" section)

- i. GPA counter display
- ii. Click on the "GPA?" button in the "School" section

- i. Terminal output display and text buzzing

- ii. Go to the “Skills” section (either by scrolling there or using the navigation bar) for the first time since the page has been loaded to see the information appear as though it is being typed in; periodically, the text in the terminal display will buzz
- i. “Swirling newspaper” animation
- ii. Go to the “Publications” section (either by scrolling there or using the navigation bar) for the first time since the page has been loaded to see the PDF of my published paper wobble into view (mimicking a swirling newspaper)

Part 3

External Tool

- i. Skrollr (a parallax scrolling JavaScript library)
- ii. I was really inspired by the clean look of the Digital Volcano website example, so that was my main motivation for deciding to tackle a parallax scrolling website. Additionally, I created my Bun Bun Bake Shop website in a very standard style (ie. with a menu along the top and multiple pages), so I wanted to challenge myself with a new design for this assignment. Further, I was curious if the parallax scrolling style would raise different UX design and programming challenges and figured that the best way to find out would be to try making a website in that style.
- iii. I used the Skrollr library to implement parallax scrolling, which is aimed at giving users an experience of depth through the use of moving background and foreground images. I combined the parallax scrolling with a scrollspy (from MaterializeCSS), which has the purpose of showing what section of the page is currently in the viewport.
- iv. The parallax scrolling makes the website unique from the ones that we typically use everyday (eg. Amazon, Google, etc.), which I hope will set me apart from other job candidates if recruiters visit the website. Additionally, parallax scrolling has given me the ability to use background images that still draw user attention without detracting from the important content; this was pertinent to the mission of this website, which is to show my professional accomplishments while still presenting glimpses of my fun personal experiences.

Part 4

HW7 Iterations

I was able to stick to most of the original design concepts that I described in HW7. One small change that I made was in the placement of the navigation bar, which was originally supposed to be along the right-hand side. After learning about how users initially scan pages in a “F”-shaped pattern in Interaction Design Studio 1, I made the decision to switch the navigation bar location to the left-hand side. Additionally, I implemented all but one of the potential animations/design elements that I had originally set out to do; I didn’t use a chalkboard/whiteboard

animation/background for my leadership section, because I felt that it would have been too overwhelming for the user, especially after the discussion we had in lecture surrounding the overuse of animation and after using the website with all of the other animations in place.

Part 5

Challenges

In implementing the website, I found it challenging to learn how to use some of these libraries, because some had good documentation and diverse examples (with code hosted online), while others used complicated syntax that lacked good reasoning. Additionally, I found debugging to be difficult with these additional libraries. As we discovered earlier in the semester, JavaScript itself is hard to debug, because the error messages are rather vague, but I found that because these libraries lacked explanation, it was even more of a challenge to debug. A final challenge that I encountered was in getting the page to load quickly, especially given the number of resources being loaded at once; I tried to tackle this as well as I could, but I would definitely want to study more in the future about making page loading more efficient.