Assignment 5 Reflection

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The first "Bun Bun Bake Shop" website wireframe and prototype was designed using Sketch and InVision. After running through a heuristic evaluation of this design, I found several UI bugs to correct before proceeding onto an HTML and CSS coded website:

1. Secondary Menu Button on Landing Page

This feature violates heuristic principle #8, "Aesthetic and Minimalist Design". Having two sources for accessing the menu (browse) page is redundant and may cause confusion if users think the direct to different locations. Additionally, this feature violates heuristic principle #4, "Consistency and Standards", by using different terms to refer to the browse page: "Menu" and "Shop Our Buns". Users should not have to wonder whether these two links direct to different pages. In the end, this button was removed entirely. The navigation bar is prominent and sufficient for accessing the menu page.

2. Lack of Delivery Area

Since Bun Bun Bake Shop only delivers within the city of Pittsburgh, it would be very unfortunate if users selected products and began the checkout process, only to enter their address and be notified that they are outside of the delivery address range. The lack of such reminders earlier in the user experience violates heuristic principle #9, "Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors". In the coded design, a central message was added to the home page to inform users of the delivery range: "We deliver anywhere within Pittsburgh!".

3. Fixed Header and Footer

In this website, the header contains the website navigation bar and the footer contains contact and social media links. In the prototype, these areas were not fixed to the top and bottom of the page; scrolling might cause either to disappear out of sight. This violates heuristic principle #6, "Recognition Rather than Recall", when some of the most important available actions disappear from sight.

In the coded design, the header and footer are fixed to the top and bottom of the pages. The header is given a thin white border to separate it from other content, even while scrolling. The footer was also given a white background in order to show up more against the image background of the home page.

4. Checkout Stages (not part of Assignment 5)

The checkout process in the prototype include three numbered circles to help the user know how many steps there are in checkout, as well as where they are in the process. However, these circles were not linked back to the previous steps (although there were other hyperlinked text areas that were, "< Back to My Cart"). This violates heuristic principle #3, "User Control and Freedom", if the user proceeds to a checkout stage by mistake and needs to "undo". Hyperlinking the non-active process circles would give the user another way to go back a step.

Furthermore, lack of labelling on these circles gives no feedforward on what the next steps will be or what the previous steps were. This violates heuristic principle #6, "Recognition Rather than Recall", and could be solved by placing the numbered circles along a line with enough space for each stage's title ("My Cart", "Delivery Options", and "Billing Info").

Challenges in Implementation

One common challenge I had in implementing this design was that many pages have multiple elements are laid out in rows, columns, or grids across the page. Which method of formatting and organization would work for each? For example, the product browsing page required even rows and columns of six different cinnamon roll flavors with pictures and descriptions. I chose to use a grid display of blocks, since these elements needed to be organized so evenly.

On the other hand, the details page had many elements that were essentially organized into two sides. Should I use grid again, or perhaps flexbox? I decided that the simplest way to have complete control over spacing and content was to simply have two <div>s, one floated left and one floated right, within an overarching <div> that specifies the external margins on either side of the content.

One specific challenge or "bug" that I encountered was related to the <select> dropdown menus used for selecting quantities of cinnamon rolls on the product details page. The default style of these elements were rectangles with rounded corners, which my original design did not have. Even when border-radius was set to 0 in style.css, the rounded corners persisted. A quick Google search showed that Chrome does not recognize this edit yet!

Fortunately, however, I decided that the rounded corners were not that aesthetically displeasing and that the different shape helped highlight these option fields for users to better notice them. Initially, I had wanted to make the text in or around these dropdowns in all uppercase letters to be consistent with the styling of other buttons, but decided I did not like the look of it. Having a different background color (which I kept on purpose) and rounded corners (which would

have required a work-around) actually served the same attention-grabbing purpose as capitalization.

Client Brand Identity

"Bun Bun Bake Shop" is a Pittsburgh-area delivery cinnamon roll company. Its products are a unique category of baked goods that are soft, sweet, and satisfying, traditionally designed with a beautiful swirl design and dripping white icing. This website design reflects this soft and sweet style, with minimalist straight lines to emphasize the swirls and curves in each of the many cinnamon roll images across the website.

The color scheme was designed to look light and airy, yet sweet and homey to remind people of their wholesome, local roots. White borders and spacing was used to keep the cinnamon rolls from looking heavy or cloying. Different levels of gray text was used to keep the design soft and modern, rather than a sharp black or alternative saturated color.

A more neutral pink was used as the primary "pop of color" to keep the design from being perceived as overly feminine. This more natural shade of pink was used to give a more adult, artisanal, and modern-rustic feel to the website. The faded header image also gives users the impression of high-quality, organic ingredients and hand-made baked goods (regardless of whether these are true of the company-- but let's assume it is!).

As unique cinnamon rolls are the only product that Bun Bun Bake Shop sells, it is important to avoid an immature, unprofessional, or generic style that would not imply a level of artisanal, high-quality baking that is worth specially ordering for delivery. Every style choice has to be made to create a pleasing, modern, and effortless experience for ordering especially delicious, local cinnamon rolls.