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Project 3 Reflection

For my project 3, the social problem I have identified and are planning to work on is a Car Insurance Helper. I personally am at the age where I am an independent (not claimed by my parents due to age) and looking to move out soon-ish, once I get a steady job and enough money saved up in the bank. I need to figure out what car insurance company I will partner with in order to drive a car I will have in the future to get to and from work, as well as various other places. I know choosing a car insurance can be difficult for some people and this program will be aimed towards those individuals in need of a summary of various car insurance companies.

This project consisted of a few various components. The safe goal for this project will be to give the user price comparisons for a few of the top insurances in New Jersey, as well as miscellaneous things (ie. Ratings, reviews, etc.), then bring them to the website of the car insurance company they want to get more information about. The stretch goal will be to ask what insurance and how much they pay for the insurance they wrote, then keep track of that insurance and exclude it from the list of options given as well as price calculations for the same insurance.

In terms of my safe goals vs. stretch goals, my safe goal was met comfortably. I did not have many, if not any, problems achieving that goal. Unfortunately, my stretch goal was not met. It ended up being a lot more in depth than I first expected for a few reasons. The first reason being I had a difficult time taking the input from the user and applying that to the different car insurances that were listed for inspection. I would have had to change the way my program worked and I simply did not have time to implement that correctly. My second roadblock with my stretch goal was bringing them to the website with a button click. Unfortunately, in order to use hyperlinks in a python text file, as far as I’ve read, I would have to learn CGI as well as having access to a database that would essentially take the link and bring you to the website. Again, my safe goal code did not allow for that and I had no prior knowledge of CGI before I started researching it for this project. Overall, however, I feel my progress was pretty solid in terms of accomplishment. I was able to do everything my safe goal was described as and feel, if I had more time, I would be able to achieve my stretch goal, which I might plan on doing anyway outside of this semester, given I have enough free time to work on it.

I have learned a few lessons while attempting to finish this project. The first lesson I’ve learned was that, when given enough time, a lot of things are possible in Python. . The second lesson, and more important lesson, is that Python is a very versatile program that is actually very user friendly. Python has a lot of libraries that help with all kinds of needs. Chances are, if you need a library for something, one already exists, ready to be used.

All in all, if I could do this project again, I would probably stick to topics and coding that I already understand and make the most out of that, instead of not knowing how to do something and not having enough time to figure it out. If I had known about CGI previously, I would have been able to implement web pages into my program instead of just having the website there, making the user type it manually into the browser they use. I would not have done things differently or changed anything, I thought the project was a cool project to do, I just didn’t have all the required knowledge about the topic.