

Design pattern research

For the development of my portfolio and to answer the research question 'How do I make my portfolio easy to navigate?', I wanted to see what kind of standardized practices already exist for websites. As such, I researched design patterns and noted down all of the patterns that are or can be relevant for my portfolio.

Implemented patterns

These are the patterns that I have implemented in my portfolio website.

Categorization

To make my portfolio easy to navigate for future users, I'll categorize my content based on the different projects I will do during the semester. The projects will each get a separate page with all the deliverables of that specific project.

(Toxboe, n.d.)

Breadcrumbs

To make navigating the portfolio faster, I will use breadcrumbs. This makes it possible for the user to quickly go from an assignment page to the page of the project the assignment is a part of, or even further up in the hierarchy of the site.

(Toxboe, 2014)

Home link

I will add a way to directly go to the home page from any other page of the portfolio. This way the user can go back to the start of the portfolio to easily navigate to a different part.

(Toxboe, 2011)

Thumbnails

I will use thumbnails to give a quick overview of the different assignments I've done. These thumbnails will be combined with the title of the assignment and a short description explaining what the assignment is about. This way the user can quickly see what a deliverable is about.

(Toxboe, 2008)

Patterns I want to implement later

Because of time constraints created by the group project, I had to make choices on which patterns I can implement now and which patterns I'll have to add in a later iteration of the portfolio. These are the patterns that I intend to implement in later iterations.

Shortcut Dropdown

I can use a shortcut dropdown to help people that are searching for an assignment on the site categorize on the different project.

(Toxboe, 2009)

Vertical Dropdown menu

With the vertical dropdown menu I can give the user easy access to all of my deliverables in any page. The user can hover over a project name in the menu and see all of the relevant deliverables.

I wanted to implement this pattern, but I found the pattern unintuitive because of the amount of deliverables I have per project. Because of this I didn't implement the idea, but in a next iteration I'd like to do some extra testing on how this pattern could work as I do think it's a great feature to add.

(Toxboe, 2012)

Scrapped patterns

One pattern that I originally was thinking of implementing was later scrapped after I asked feedback from two teachers. I was already questioning if this pattern would work as it would make the information on the site more hidden and after my discussion with the teachers it became clear to me that this pattern is not a beneficial addition to my portfolio.

Progressive disclosure

With progressive disclosure, a user can see a summary of a deliverable and click on a button to see the deliverable in more detail. However, after talking about it with a few of my teachers we came to the conclusion that the user of this pattern would make the navigation of the site slower, as well as less intuitive to use (because a user has to click on more buttons to see the information they wanted to see anyways, as a teacher wants to be able to see the whole documentation). Because of these reasons, I made the choice to not implement this pattern.

(Toxboe, n.d.)

Conclusion

I found a lot of relevant design patterns that I can use for my website to make the navigation more comprehensive. I do hope that I still have enough time to implement them though, as the group project is taking up a lot of time. If time gets sparse, I will make a selection of the most important patterns to implement, while also looking at how efficiently I can add the specific patterns. This way I can still implement as much as possible.

Bibliography

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