Technical Report

Project Exam 2 report

Sven Ingar Frantzen

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1. Summary

Link to repo: https://github.com/svennif/08-Project-Exam-2/tree/main/holidaze

This report will be about how I created and developed this website, with the help of Adobe XD, Reactjs, React-Bootstrap and sass. I will explain the whole process from Gantt to finished product, and I will go through each step of the way with decisions and choices.

I will explain how I changed the main colour from #26403B to #365953 and how I decided to go for two very similar fonts to keep a consistency on the website. Why I decided to use Adobe XD to create the style tile instead of using another program, how my design was from the start till the end of the process, how the search bar and typeahead was planned to be the focal point of the website, and the enquiry function went from being a small button to a part of the detailed website.

A hotel website that I felt didn't fulfil it's potential, and how the admin page was built in a simple way to make sure that the admins could update, create a new hotel or see messages and enquiries from customers, before ending with potential improvements of the website.

2. Body

2.1. Introduction

I will in this report try to explain the choices and decisions I made during the development for this website.

I will try to explain the whole process from creating the Gantt chart and functional specification to low- and high-fidelity prototypes, to the development of the website itself. I will also try to explain improvements and other additions to the website.

2.2. Main section of report

2.2.1 Planning

2.2.1.1 Gantt and functional specification

The creation of the Gantt chart and functional specification went pretty smooth, I didn't have any big issues when creating them, the Gantt was a template created by Microsoft for Microsoft Excel while the functional specification was created in Microsoft Word.

The only mistake I felt I did for the functional specification was that I forgot to add the two different use cases I thought I wanted to add, to have something to work out from. The plan was to give the use cases a personality to create the website as accurate for the target audience as possible.

2.2.1.2 Style tile and prototypes

After creating the Gantt chart, and functional specification, I decided to look for colour that I felt would go well with the website. The reason I landed on a green colour was because I wanted to give the user a feeling of nature with the seven mountains surrounding Bergen in the back of my mind, and not only the sea which Bergen also is famous for. I could have gone for a blue colour, to give it the feeling of the sea and blue skies, but as I mentioned, I wanted to focus on something a little less common for Bergen, even though both Ulriken and Fløyen is two very popular tourist attractions.

All colours I decided to use was based of the darkest main colour, #26403B, which I in the end, ended up not using, because I felt the #365953, which was originally the secondary colour, I felt it suited better as the main colour which I could base everything around. This is also why I decided to base all the other colours of the main colour. The fonts I wanted to use should be simple to read, and at the same time look nice.

As Hagen mention in her book *"White space is not your enemy"*:

*Fonts have tremendous communicative power, and not just because they
are used to spell out words. The right fonts bring character, colour, texture
and pattern to layouts. Which means they must be chosen carefully and
with purpose. (Hagen & Golombisky, 2016, ss. 36 - 37)*

Because of this, I wanted to have them look similar to keep a consistency in the website, to make sure that there weren't too many fonts, and that the fonts were easy to read. This is the main reason why I had one font as header, and one for text.

I created the style tile in Adobe XD, because I found out that it was a lot easier to create it in there, and then use that as a base for the high-fidelity prototype with colours, font sizes, headings and all details that was going into the prototype.

Initially when I created the low-fidelity prototype I found a general layout for the website pretty fast. Through the development process, I decided to stay pretty close to that initial design, with some changes in the later stages of developing, but will come more into that later.

The high-fidelity prototype was created shortly after the the low-fidelity was made. This is because I wanted to have everything clear in mind when it was created. To make sure that I knew how I wanted to have certain elements of the website. As mentioned earlier the high-fidelity prototype was created in Adobe XD, in the same document as the style tile, to shorten the time spent getting colours, fonts etc.

2.2.2 Coding

I will in this section explain the coding process during the last few weeks. I will try to briefly describe each feature, and the reasoning for having them in there.

The framework I decided to use in this assignment was React.js with the help of React Bootstrap and sass. I decided to use React, because I felt that was the JavaScript framework, I was most comfortable with, which made it the most natural framework to work with.

All pages were developed using React Bootstrap which uses a 12-column grid layout to make sure all elements are placed neatly on the website. Bootstrap also have a lot of neat features when it comes to cards, forms, navbars and accordions. I decided to use Bootstrap instead of e.g., Material UI because I'm more familiar with Bootstrap, and I really like the docs, which is a really nice help when stuck. And because of the comfort I have with Bootstrap, I felt it made the development a lot faster.

2.2.2.1 Features

2.2.2.1.1 Search bar and Typeahead

As this was one of the requirements for the website, I spent a lot of time to make this part work, because the components I tested out didn't work the way I wanted, so I decided to create my own triggered by an onClick() function in the input. The benefit of creating my own was that I could more easily. Because the search bar and typeahead were suppose to be alone on the home page, I wanted to give the user a view of how the hotel looked like, therefore I added the photo next to the name to the typeahead.

I wanted to use the search bar and typeahead as the focal point of the website. This was the reason I put the search bar together with the brand name, and slogan to make sure that the focal point was clear for the user.

2.2.2.1.3 Enquiry

The enquiry page was in general thought to be a button just positioned bottom right of the screen, but due to some issues while developing, causing the website to crash whenever

and enquiry was sent, I decided to add it to the detailed page of the specific hotels with the hotel name as the establishment id.

2.2.2.1.4 Hotel page

The hotel results page was created with a bunch of clickable cards with a search bar at the top to make sure that the user could search through all hotels available with a filter function that updated the user with a result for every letter typed. My initial thought was to not have this search feature, but after some thinking, I decided to add it, due to it would have been a lot worse for the user to being able to scroll through all the hotels instead of just searching for different hotels.

This page could have seen a lot of improvements, and added features, but due to poor time management, and issues I was forced to cut some features I had planned to add, but will come back to this in "Decisions and improvements" section.

2.2.2.1.5 Admin

The admin pages were created to be simple and easy for the admins to use. I created a login page with a specified username and password, and if the wrong password or wrong email, the user would be logged in as a guest, and sent back to the home page.

The 4 specific pages in the website have different functions, but are in some ways very similar. Enquiries and messages sent from the contact form have one page each, and they are very similar with accordions with the name of the person who sent the message and when the accordion is clicked, all necessary information is shown with a button that will lead to a separate page where everything is shown, and the admin have the option to delete the specific object from the list with help from the 'delete' method.

Similarly, the admin is able to access all available hotels and can change all values including, price, maximum number of customers, but they are also able to delete the hotel, with the same function as for the messages and enquiries. The admin also has their own page for creating their own hotels, with the ability to add all the required values, just like the update page.

2.2.2.2 Decisions and improvements

I decided to create the site very minimalistic, without any fancy features, because I wanted the user to find what they were searching for easily, what I could have done was to add an input where the user could insert the minimum and maximum price to make it suit their own needs.

A map could also have been implemented, to show the user on a map where it is located, this would have helped any potential customers who would have wanted to stay in a specific place. This map could have been updated as the customer was zooming in or out of the map, and the hotels being shown would also updated to show the customer more easily which hotels were in that specific place.

I also had a though where I wanted to add how many stars each hotel had, but I wasn't able to figure out any good solution for this feature, so I decided to scrap it. This feature is nice to have for the customers who want a specific number of stars on their hotels, and it could have been a feature in the search function, to sort after the number of stars.

I could also have added information cards, to make Bergen more attractive for the user to find out more about the city to engage the user to find out more, and hopefully increase the chance of them using the website to find a suitable hotel for their stay in the city. The information cards could have been placed below the search bar, and could have been linking towards a page of its own where I could have written information about the city, attractions worth visiting, and given tips of trips to walk while being in the city.

I wanted all my pages to bring as much information as possible, but at the same time not being choked by all the information. This is the reason why I like to use some space between all elements on the website, but at the same time try not to trap the negative space which will draw attention away from the content.

2.3. Conclusion

I have in this report tried to explain the choices and decisions I took during the development of this website. I explained my reason to use React, together with Bootstrap and sass. I also tried to explain how I decided to utilize features, like the typeahead, enquiry function, why I decided to change it from being a button, to being a part of the hotel detailed page. How I decided to set up the hotel page, and how I wanted to improve that with other features. Improvements like; a map and star rating for the different hotels, and how I could have added information cards to engage the user more than I did, with information for attractions and things to see in the city.

3. References

Hagen, R., & Golombisky, K. (2016). *White space is not your enemy.* Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.