Jeremy Wang
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Reflection

UI Bugs

The first user interface bug that I found during my heuristic evaluation was that the cart did not initially display how many items were in it. Only after an item was added did the text change to show (1) one item in the cart. This violates both the usability heuristic of visibility of system status (the user does not know how many items are in the cart initially) as well as the heuristic recognition rather than recall (it is easier for the user to see how many items are in the cart rather than remember). To fix this bug, I added a (0) next to the cart tab when there were no items in the cart.

In my heuristic evaluation, I found yet another bug in regards to visibility of system status. At first, my navbar did not have any indication of what page the user was currently on. In my HTML/CSS implementation, I fixed this bug by highlighting the page that the user was currently on in the navbar in a different color.

The third bug that I found relates to flexibility and efficiency of use. On the product detail page, when the user presses the "Add to Cart" button, they only add one item to their cart. If they wanted to buy the same item multiple times, they would have to manually press the "Add to Cart" button that many times. By adding a dropdown menu in which the user can select the quantity (and setting the default value to 1), I fix this bug and give users the ability to buy multiple items more efficiently.

Challenges

For me, the most challenging part of implementing the HTML and CSS was trying to use the grid layout. The grid layout is used liberally in my implementation, and while I appreciate its utility and versatility, I did not fully understand how it worked at first.

Alignment and spacing were also a challenge. HTML likes to pre-format certain text elements in its own way, and this includes adding unwanted spacing. I often found that compared to my InVision prototype, my actual website had much more whitespace. There was enough space that it breaks the flow of the webpage, so I had to find ways to get around this spacing. One way of doing this was manually specifying the margin and padding of each element. After playing around with numerous settings, I would eventually find one that was satisfactory.

To solve any implementation challenges, I mostly took the same approach as each bug came up. I made a Google search. Much of the time, someone else had already had the question and asked on StackOverflow. By trying all of the suggested answers from multiple queries one by one, I eventually found the answer that I was looking for. Some aspects of the UI, such as the exact spacing between certain elements, were very difficult to match from prototype to implementation. For these, I ended up settling for a design that looked similar, though not exactly the same. Without the exact same design, the website still functioned fine, and it didn't look egregiously bad.

Brand Identity

With Muddy Paws Adventure Gear, I designed for a simple and friendly look. The website is targeted at animal and outdoors enthusiasts. People who can afford these types of luxury products for their pets are probably at least middle class, but it does not mean that they are necessarily well-acquainted with tech. Thus, I made the website as easy to navigate as possible, with everything visible without many clicks. The website uses analogous colors to present a cohesive look. I chose tan as the main site color to reflect the brown of the earth as well as the warmth of one's pets. Muddy Paws Adventure Gear may not look super cutting-edge in terms of site aesthetics, but it provides a homely feel and reassures customers that the company cares about its customers in a simple and honest way.