

Wobo inc. Kepler Redesign

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7/10/14

Background

I'm interviewing for Wobo inc's new Lead UX Designer position, and as part of the process they tasked me with redesigning "Kepler", their in-house demo site that will be used to pitch Wobo's services to potential clients.

Kepler is set up like a basic e-commerce site. It lets a user enter a search term and then displays matching products pulled from a database.

Project Objective

From the challenge description:

"Keep in mind, we are not selling books. We are selling Product Discovery. We are selling the Woboinc Software Development experience."

Kepler should explain to clients how Wobo can build a product that will satisfy the needs of their customers.

I think the existing site is heading towards a feature-rich design that demonstrates the depth of functionality Wobo can offer via an open source stack. While this is one of Wobo's differentiators, I'm not sure it speaks directly to how that helps a client better serve its customers.

Already the site feels like it has some information and functions in it that offer little value to a typical e-commerce customer. I think the crux of the Wobo Software Development experience should be channeling expert development and design into a product that is wholly focused on serving the needs of its users.

I have to point out here that this is a huge assumption. It's very possible that Wobo wants to completely overwhelm clients with the sheer volume of features they offer, and this project shouldn't be concerned with offering real-world use cases.

Normally I wouldn't make such an assumption, but this is a project with a very short timeline and deliberately vague requirements, so I rolled on with it!

My Redesign

I wanted to strip Kepler down to its most basic features and focus on the things that matter to a typical e-commerce customer.

Goals that fell under this objective:

- A fully responsive design to support touch screen phones, 30 inch monitors, and everything in between
- Emphasizing product images more (the most engaging piece of each product)
- Removing extraneous product information wherever possible
- Hiding anything “technical” that’s not relevant to the user
- Reducing UI chrome
- Taking cues from successful e-commerce sites on particular UI patterns

Deliverables

I’ve included detailed mockups for the three main screens of the site (Home, Results, Detail) in the “mockups” folder, in both PNG and PSD formats. I tried to clean up the PSDs sufficiently so they would be easy to work with, but in a production setting I would be happy to provide developers whatever they need in terms of assets, measurements, fonts, etc.

Speaking of which, the fonts I used in my redesign are Ek Mukta and Merriweather, which are both open source fonts available through Google Fonts. I know the main Wobo site uses Lato and Raleway but I wanted to try something different (my redesign could easily have those fonts slotted back in though). I also used a lot of Ek Mukta’s Extra Light face, but this could definitely have legibility issues on some systems, so I would look at using a slightly thicker face in an actual site.

Also included in my deliverables is a fully responsive wireframe prototype in the “web” folder. It has basic navigation and layout, but the main purpose of this prototype is to demonstrate how the site adjusts to different screen sizes. This is far from production quality HTML+CSS - the point is just to give a frontend developer a solid understanding of how the site fits together.

Conclusion

I’m pretty happy with my redesign, though I think there’s still room for improvement. One of the big opportunities is furthering the Wobo visual brand, which is not something I prioritized.

I could say a lot more about the specific decisions I made in redesigning Kepler but I’ll leave that for the next time we talk!