Chrome Extensions Discussion

# Slide 1-4: Introduction

If you’ve heard a version of my developer journey or career, then you’ve heard me talk about my time in school operations. I believe that 2 Chrome extensions might have been my very first real-life apps. Some of you might have been in school in 2020, when the district mandated virtual learning as an option. Long story short, we pieced together an environment for students to do school in on school managed Chromebooks. I think we did an incredible job making it accessible and customized, but it wasn’t seamless. I wanted to use my powers as the domain administrator to do 2 things, keep students from a few things on Zoom. I wanted those pesky Zoom windows to automatically close after a session started, and I wanted to hide a few buttons and redirect away from pages that couldn’t be blocked altogether. I knew just enough JavaScript and HTML/CSS to do that, but I needed to get it on all the devices. My answer… a Chrome extension force loaded on all the devices!

# Slide 5: What is an Extension?

What is an extension? In short, it’s a web app configured to sit within or alongside your browser to enhance the experience in some way. It uses Chrome APIs to do that and their built with web dev technologies. If you can design & code, you’re already ready to start making some.

# Slide 6-7: Overview

Chrome extensions enhance the browsing experience allowing you to:

1. **Customize the user interface.**
2. **Observe/modify the web.**
3. **Extend web service.**

# Slide 8-10: Building an Extension

Let’s talk about building an Extension. If it’s nothing really new, what’s the appeal for the individual? I’d say it’s just like any other reason to build something. For the love of the game, to learn, or to launch a product. Like I said, I was just a guy who finished a Codecademy module, but I had a “published” application out there on the web store. It felt great and spurred even more solutions on. But here are some practical reasons… here is the makeup of a simple extension you can get spun up.

# Slide 11: Code walkthrough

Now I couldn’t do this talk with doing some design and coding right? So, let’s meet nudge, he’s my new study buddy. Now, I designed and coded this for this talk so it’s far from optimal, but it does let me show you each key part of the extension. Let’s walk through these key files….

1. Managing Extensions
2. Manifest
3. Background
4. Sidebar.html, .js

# Slide 13: Close

If you want to make your script available to the world, you’ll need to send it up to the Web Store for review. Granted it isn’t malware and has the proper structure, you can have something published in a few days’ time. There is a one-time $5 fee to register as a publisher.