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PUI Assignment 5

GitHub Pages Link

https://victor-grajski.github.io/homework_5/index.html

Repository Link

https://github.com/victor-grajski/homework_5

User Interface Bugs

Disclaimer: I did not address the user interface bugs identified below in my implementation.

The first user interface bug I encountered in my design was a lack of User Control and Freedom as well as Help Recovering from Errors in both my Added to Cart page and my Checkout page. In both pages, there is no "emergency exit" because there is no way to undo the operation. In the Added to Cart page, there is no way to un-add the item from my cart if I added it by mistake. In the Checkout page, there is no clear "emergency exit" to abort the checkout process once it's begun. To solve this, on the Added to Cart page, I would include an "Undo" button so the user who accidentally added the item to their cart could recover from their error without having to go to another page. On the Checkout page, I would add a back button just below the header so users who mistakenly navigated to checkout could navigate away without having to press back on their browser.

The second user interface bug I encountered in my design was a lack of Visibility of System Status on the Products page. If the user interacts with a filter, the filter status will update and the results will change, but the user must work to remember which filters they interacted it if they come back later. To solve this, I would add blocks just below the top of the results to indicate which filters are selected and what their value is. These blocks would also be clickable to undo their filter operation. I believe adding these blocks would convey clearer feedback about the system status at a glance within reasonable time.

The third user interface bug I encountered in my design was a lack of Visibility of System Status on the Detail page regarding which color is currently selected. In my current design, I add a small inner border to the circle corresponding to the currently selected color. This does not appropriately convey system status because it does not offer enough feedback due to how little it stands out from the colors which aren't selected. To solve this, I would first add a hover feature which would describe each color to give users a better idea of which color is which. Next, I would add the name of the color which is selected to the right of the color picker to convey which color is selected. Finally, I would make the circle icon of the currently selected color more prominent by adding more shadow and raising it a few pixels to convey that it is selected.

Challenges

The initial challenge I faced was in wrapping my head around how to translate my design into code at a skeletal level. I used a grid in my design, so I thought using CSS grid would be an appropriate way to construct the scaffolding for my code. This did turn out to be successful, I found myself confused many times as to how to construct my grid so it matched my design. For example, I ended up giving my CSS grid columns relative widths rather than absolute widths like I did in Figma so they worked with small variations in desktop screen size. This was especially important on the Landing page because I needed my background image and a scrolling rectangle to fill the full width of the screen while not interfering with my grid.

The second major challenge I faced was in determining and implementing my architecture for laying out individual items within a block according to my design. For example, it was challenging to figure out how to lay out the individual items of my Detail page once I had my overall grid figured out because many elements are laid out in specific groups with relative spacing. To solve this, I used a mix of CSS grid and flexbox, and as I went further into my implementation, I ended up exclusively using flexbox. I eventually found flexbox to be quite… flexible and intuitive, and as someone who wrote some basic HTML and CSS nearly 10 years ago, it is remarkable how far the technology has come. No longer do I need to give everything an absolute position; now I can use flexbox with virtually every element, specify how I want them to be aligned, and voila, it just works!

Brand Identity

I believe my client's brand identity is modern, urban, and sleek because I believe they are targeting urban millennials who want to outfit their pets with technical gear to show off to their friends while walking in the park. My design is minimal and image-forward because I wanted the products to speak for themselves. To achieve this, I aimed for most of my design to recede into the background to draw attention to the product images. I believe my choices to rely on an off-white background, grey rectangular elements with rounded corners, and dark teal accents where color is needed all help achieve the effect of my design receding into the background to bring the products forward. As Tan France from Queer Eye would say, I used "pops of color" to draw attention where I wanted it: images, star ratings, calls to action, logos, color selection. Virtually all other elements in my design are black or a shade of gray. Minimal designs like mine, however, can be hard to use since they don't signify what the user can interact with. To mitigate this, I made sure to add drop shadows to anything the user can interact with to visually differentiate the element without distracting from my design's simplicity.