YAZEDY YAHYA

Personal Branding & Visual Identity
A Case Study of Personal Web Portfolio

ABSTRACT

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The goal of this project was to design a web portfolio for a graduating design student and to report on the process. The project is based on the existing personal visual identity of the student. This paper is created as an instruction for the reader describing the process of personal online portfolio design simply by defining and explaining the main terms and methods used for web design and development.

This thesis work consists of six parts, depending on how the design process proceeded. These parts include research, project management, content development, information gathering, design and an overview of the development process and techniques.

The objective of this work is to create guidelines for newcomers in the design industry. By using these guidelines students and amateur designers can create their own design portfolio which will be well balanced, clean and in trend with the times.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

1. INTRODUCTION

This case study is about the portfolio website that I designed and developed for myself. It is a personal project that I did to showcase my skills and experience as a web developer and a human centred designer. I wanted to create a website that would reflect my personality, my style, and my values, and that would stand out from the crowd. I also wanted to make a website that would be easy to navigate, and that would showcase my best work in a clear and engaging way.

In this case study, I will explain the goal, the process, and the outcome of this project, and how I applied the principles and practices of web development and human centered design. I will also share some of the challenges, the learnings, and the feedback that I encountered along the way. I will describe how I used various tools and methods, such as research, sketching, prototyping, coding, testing, and deploying, to create a website that meets the needs and expectations of my target audience. I will also show some examples of the design and the functionality of the website, and how they relate to the content and the purpose of each page.

I hope you enjoy reading this case study and learning more about me and my work. I also hope that this case study will inspire you to create your own portfolio website, or to improve your existing one. I believe that a portfolio website is a powerful tool to showcase your skills and experience, and to connect with potential clients, employers, or collaborators. I am very proud of the portfolio website that I created, and I hope that you will like it too.

2. GOAL OF THIS PROJECT

The goal of this project was to create a portfolio website that would reflect my personality, my style, and my values. I wanted to make a website that would stand out from the crowd, that would be easy to navigate, and that would showcase my best work in a clear and engaging way. I also wanted to create a website that would demonstrate my skills and experience as a web developer and a human centered designer, and that would appeal to my target audience of potential clients, employers, or collaborators. I wanted to create a website that would tell a story about me and my work, and that would inspire and connect with the people who visit it.

3. FRAME OF REFERENCES

Figure 1: Basic Sections of Personal Web Portfolio

Frame of references describes the keystones of a basic portfolio model, covering vital aspects, such as user interaction. (Figure 1) It is a preliminary guideline for newcomers to the design/development industry what should include a meaningful and future-friendly website-portfolio.

4. ONLINE PORTFOLIO

In simple words, a web portfolio is a 24 hours working showcase of the designer's works, professional skills. It has the potential to attract future employers/clients, while it also provides the essential contact information of the designer. For web professionals, creating a web portfolio is crucial. It is one of the key steps in the self branding process. In order to build a successful portfolio, the designer needs to focus on its simplicity, ease of use, how to reach the main objectives and lastly project management.

The main objective in any design process is to understand the goals which the designer wants to achieve by creating a web portfolio. The web designer and developer should focus on the overall look of the portfolio and to implement many extra features, which graphic or industrial designers might never need, because they don't need to show their coding knowledge and skills. Graphic designers usually focus on illustrations and implementation of personal visual identity to their websites. Industrial designers would need to concentrate on creating professional detailed presentations of each project, which will describe her/his personal approach and the workflow. Good illustrations of every step of the design process, especially photos of prototypes sketches and well written explanations, are also more important for industrial designers. It is very important to first define your brand and target market before you create a portfolio, in order that the portfolio might appeal to them. (Collis Ta'eed, 2012)

In any portfolio design process, would it be a printed version or online portfolio, it is good to remember to present not only your works and professional skills, but also to express your personality. In other words portfolio is not only the way to document the design works, it also needs to show who you are and who you want to be in the future. These values will be illustrated through the style, colors, typography, layout, photography, texts, and so on. To accomplish it the creator needs to analyze personal values and understand her/himself from the client's point of view in order show own strengths and weaknesses, which will help in the future to evaluate how professionally and personally the designer was growing from project to project.

Concluding, the design portfolio is an ongoing process which continues to grow and change just as the designer continues to develop and grow.

5. PORTFOLIO DESIGN PROCESS

In this section I will discuss best practices in modern Web design and go through the entire design and development workflow that I followed to create my website, from the initial planning stage to the final website design, also covering the aspect of future coding methods and techniques. The process of creating online portfolio can be divided to three main stages, such as project planning, designing and development.

6. PROJECT PLANNING AND RESEARCH

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter the most significant part of any design project is defining ultimate project goal and its objectives. Clarifying the purpose of the project as well as describing what problem needs to solve, also have to be included into the brief. On the later stages this data will be used to ensure that the provided solutions are accurate.

In this stage, I did some research on portfolio websites, looking for inspiration and best practices. I also defined my target audience, my value proposition, and my unique selling points. I used tools such as Google, Pinterest, and Behance to find and collect examples of portfolio websites that I liked or disliked. I also used tools such as Google Analytics, Google Trends, and Google Keyword Planner to analyze the market, the competition, and the user behavior. I created a document where I summarized my research findings and insights, and where I wrote the design brief for the project.
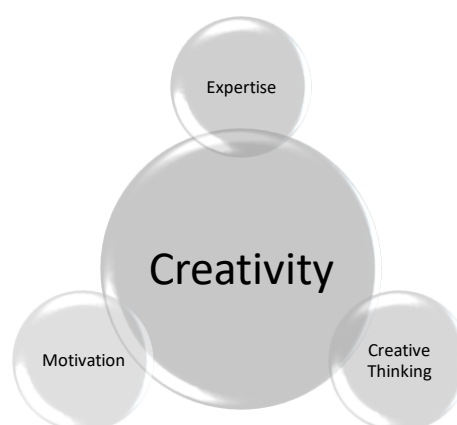
Expertise

Creativity

Motivation

Creative Thinking

Figure 2: Components of Creativity

Expertise: Technical, Procedural & Intellectual Knowledge
Motivation: Intrinsic is more effective than Extrinsic

7. PROJECT DESIGN & DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

The design of my portfolio website is based on a tree-like structure, where each branch represents one of the pages: about, resume, works, contact, and blog. The tree is displayed on the index page, and the user can click on any branch to go to the corresponding page. The tree symbolizes my growth as a web developer and a human centered designer, and how each page is connected to my overall story.
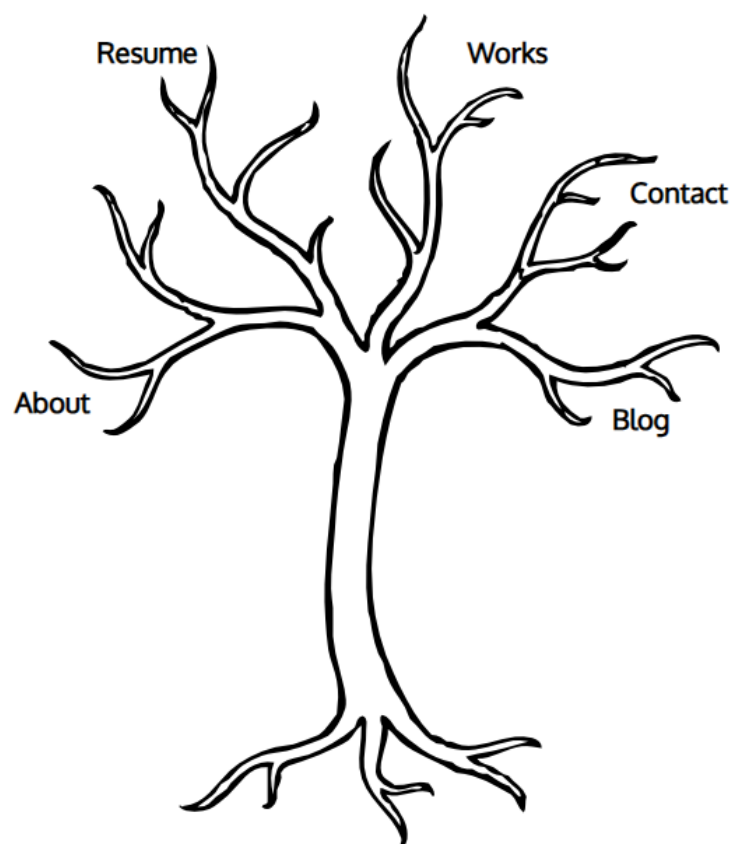

Figure 3: Final Tree-Like Structure on Index Page

The website has a minimalistic and elegant style, using a simple color scheme of black and white. The website also uses a sans-serif font, and some subtle animations and transitions to create a smooth and engaging user experience.

Figure 4: Scrapped Trees

The content of each page is short and precise, highlighting the most important and relevant information about me and my work. The about page introduces myself, my background, my interests, and my values. The resume page summarizes my education, skills, experience, and achievements. The works page showcases some of my projects, with a brief description, and a link to each project. The contact page provides my contact details. The blog page features some of my articles, where I share my thoughts and insights on web development and human centered design.

8. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND CODE

The development of this project involved using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript to code the website and make it functional and interactive. I used tools such as Visual Studio Code, GitHub, and Chrome DevTools to write, debug, and optimize my code. Here is a brief overview of what I did in the development stage.

Index page: In creating an engaging and interactive portfolio website, the technical foundation plays a crucial role. The index page, which serves as the gateway to the various sections of the portfolio, is meticulously crafted using HTML5, CSS3, and modern web standards to ensure a seamless user experience. The underlying code not only supports the visual appeal but is engineered for performance and accessibility.

The index page begins with <!DOCTYPE html>, declaring the document type to be HTML5, ensuring all browsers render the page correctly. The <html lang="en"> tag specifies English as the primary language, which is crucial for accessibility and search engine optimization.

Within the <head> section, metadata like character encoding (UTF-8), browser compatibility (IE=edge,chrome=1), and responsive design settings (viewport) are defined. These elements ensure that the website functions across various devices and browsers.

```
<meta charset="UTF-8" />
```

```
<meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="IE=edge,chrome=1" />
<meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1.0" />
```

A favicon is included providing a unique visual identifier for the website in browser tabs and bookmarks, reinforcing brand presence.

```
<link rel="shortcut icon" href="images/favicon.ico" />
```

The body of the index page is intentionally minimalistic, encapsulating the entire content within a single div with a class of .hotspots. This choice emphasizes a clean and focused user interface, directing attention to the interactive 'tree' metaphor represented by the central image and its branches, each leading to a different portfolio page.

```
<body>
  <div class="hotspots">
   <img src="images/6.png" />
   <a href="about.html" class="hotspot" id="hs-a">About</a>
   <a href="resume.html" class="hotspot" id="hs-b">Resume</a>
   <a href="works.html" class="hotspot" id="hs-c">Works</a>
   <a href="contact.html" class="hotspot" id="hs-d">Contact</a>
   <a href="blog.html" class="hotspot" id="hs-e">Blog</a>
  </div>
</body>
```

CSS Styling for Index Page: The CSS begins with an import of two carefully selected fonts from Google Fonts: 'Oxygen' for headings and 'Source Sans 3' for body text. The choice of these fonts is deliberate, balancing aesthetics with readability to enhance the overall look and feel of the site.

```
@import url('https://fonts.googleapis.com/css2?family=Oxygen&family=Source+Sans+3&display=swap');
```

A global reset is applied to body and html tags, setting padding, margin to zero, and specifying height and width to cover the entire viewport. Overflow is set to hidden to prevent any unwanted scrolling, which could disrupt the visual layout. A subtle perspective property is applied to the body, adding a sense of depth to the page elements.

```
body,
html {
 padding: 0;
 margin: 0;
 overflow: hidden;
```

```css
    height: 100%;
    width: 100%;
    background-color: #fff;
}
body {
    perspective: 100px;
    font-family: 'Source Sans 3', sans-serif;
}
.heading {
    font-family: 'Oxygen', sans-serif;
    text-align: center;
    font-weight: 700;
    margin: 30px 0px 0px 0px; /* top - right - bottom - left */
}
.subheading {
    font-family: 'Oxygen', sans-serif;
    font-style: italic;
    text-align: center;
    margin: 0px 0px 30px 0px; /* top - right - bottom - left */
}
.hotspots {
    position: relative;
    display: flex;
    justify-content: center;
    align-items: center;
}
.hotspots img {
    max-width: 100%;
    height: auto;
    display: block;
    margin-top: 30px;
}
.hotspot {
    position: absolute;
    width: 150px;
    height: 150px;
    padding-top: 6px;
    border-radius: 50%;
    transition: all 0.2s;
    text-align: center;
    text-decoration: none;
    font-weight: bold;
    font-family: 'Oxygen', sans-serif;
    color: #000;
    font-size: 20px;
}

#hs-a {
```

```css
  top: 46%;
  left: 27%;
  color: transparent;
}
#hs-a:hover {
  color: #000;
}
#hs-b {
  top: 6%;
  left: 32%;
  color: transparent;
}
#hs-b:hover {
  color: #000;
}
#hs-c {
  top: 6%;
  left: 51%;
  color: transparent;
}
#hs-c:hover {
  color: #000;
}
#hs-d {
  top: 22%;
  left: 60%;
  color: transparent;
}
#hs-d:hover {
  color: #000;
}
#hs-e {
  top: 48%;
  left: 58%;
  color: transparent;
}
#hs-e:hover {
  color: #000;
}
.about-container {
  display: flex;
}
```

About Page: The About page for Yazedy Yahya's portfolio is crafted to provide a comprehensive and personal introduction to the individual behind the portfolio. Just like the index page, the HTML structure is built with semantic clarity and ease of navigation in mind.

The <head> section follows the same robust structure as the index page, with links to CSS files, charset, browser compatibility meta tags, responsive design settings, and the favicon for brand consistency across the website.

The <body> houses a .wrapper div to encapsulate all content, ensuring a consistent and centered layout. The use of the .logo image provides a visual and navigational anchor point, linking back to the home page.

The .container div encompasses the .header and .about sections, highlighting Yazedy Yahya's name in bold, and bordering it for emphasis. The .about div is divided into two sections: .about-image, which contains a personal icon, and .about-text, which narrates Yazedy's story and his passion for exploring the intersection of technology with human experience. A <button> is provided to navigate back to the index page, reinforcing the user-friendly nature of the website.

```html
<div class="wrapper"> <!-- Added this line to create a wrapper element -->
  <a href="index.html"><img src="images/6.png" width="60px" class="logo" alt="Yazedy Yahya"></a> <!-- This is the logo image -->
  <div class="container">
   <div class="header">YAZEDY YAHYA</div>
   <div class="about">
    <div class="about-image">
     <img src="images/about.png" class="icon" alt="Yazedy Yahya">
    </div>
    <div class="about-text">
     <p>content…………p>
     <a href="index.html"><button class="button">Go back</button></a>
    </div>
   </div>
  </div>
 </div> <!-- Ends the wrapper division -->
```
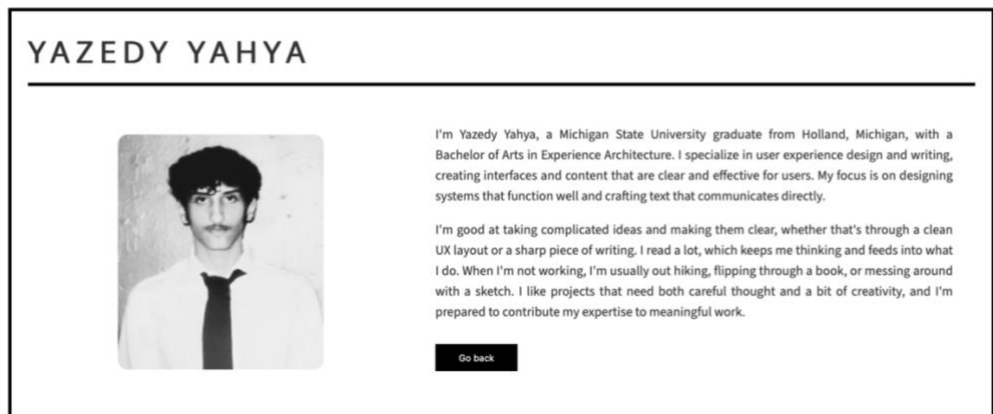
Figure 5: About Page

The About page's code is thoughtfully constructed to prioritize usability, aesthetic, and a narrative flow. The HTML structure is streamlined for easy navigation, while the CSS styling reinforces the personal brand and facilitates a responsive reading experience. Every choice, from the layout to the typefaces, is made with the intent to create a cohesive and engaging introduction to Yazedy Yahya, the person behind the portfolio.

Works Page: The Works page is a showcase of Yazedy Yahya's professional projects and accomplishments. The layout is consistent with the rest of the portfolio, providing a familiar and intuitive navigation experience for users.

As with the About page, the Works page features the same .wrapper and .logo elements, reinforcing the brand and offering easy navigation back to the index page through the clickable logo. The main content of the page is contained within a .container div, with the .header clearly labeling the section as "WORKS." This header maintains the consistent branding and typographic style seen throughout the website. The .about div, similarly styled to the About page, is repurposed here to present project information. The .about-image displays a thematic icon related to Yazedy's work, while the .about-text provides a compelling description of the project. The use of <strong> tags highlights the project name, drawing attention to it.

```
<div class="wrapper"> <!-- Added this line to create a wrapper element -->
  <a href="index.html"><img src="images/6.png" width="60px" class="logo" alt="Yazedy Yahya"></a> <!-- This is
the logo image -->
  <div class="container">
   <div class="header">WORKS</div>
   <div class="about">
    <div class="about-image">
```

```
      <img src="images/works.png" class="icon" alt="Yazedy Yahya">
    </div>
    <div class="about-text">
     <p><strong>Project Heading…………………….</strong>Content………………………
       <a href="pdf/apr-project.pdf" target="_blank">View</a></p>
       <a href="index.html"><button class="button">Go back</button></a>
      </div>
     </div>
    </div>
   </div> <!-- Added this line to close the wrapper element -->
```
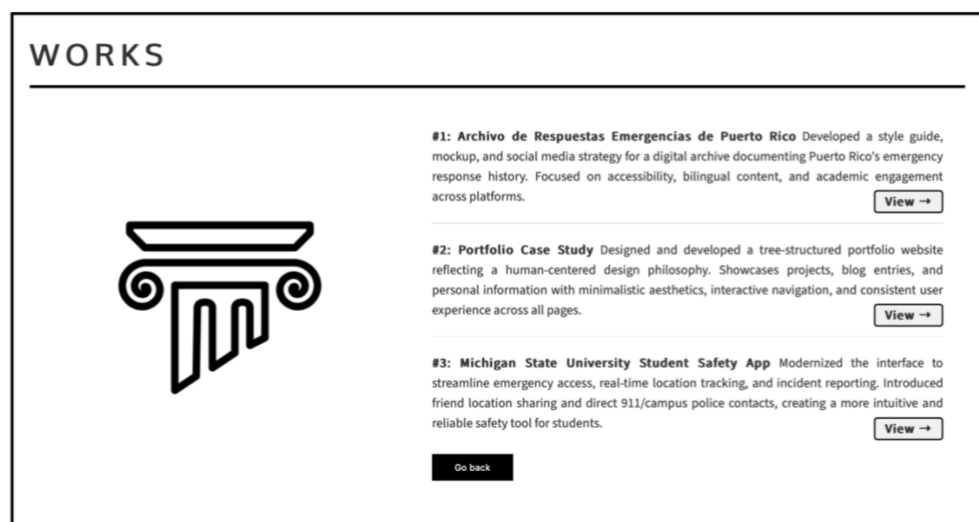

Figure 6: Works Page

Resume Page: The Resume page is designed to present a concise and professional overview of my qualifications. It follows a standard resume format, making it easy for potential employers or collaborators to quickly scan and understand my experience, education, and skills. The page maintains the consistent branding and design elements found throughout the portfolio.

The HTML structure is straightforward, using semantic elements where appropriate. The <body> contains a wrapper div for consistent layout and styling, mirroring the other pages. Contact information (name, email, phone) is placed at the top, followed by clearly delineated sections for "Experience," "Education," and "Skills."

Within the "Experience" section, each job is presented with the job title (using <strong> for emphasis), the company name, and the dates of employment. Bullet points (<ul> and <li>) are used to describe key responsibilities and accomplishments for each role, focusing on action verbs and quantifiable

results where possible. This structure highlights the practical application of my skills and the value I brought to each position.

The "Education" section lists my degree (Bachelor of Arts in Experience Architecture), the institution (Michigan State University), and the expected graduation date. This provides context for my academic background and training.

The "Skills" section utilizes another unordered list to present a summary of my core competencies. These skills are directly relevant to my target audience and highlight my capabilities in both technical and soft skill areas. The inclusion of "HTML/CSS/JavaScript" and "Responsive Design" specifically reinforces my web development expertise.

Yazedy Yahya

yazedyyahya@gmail.com

313-850-3104

Experience

Michigan State University Union Receptionist – June 2023 - May 2024

- Honed interpersonal skills through daily interactions at the university union's front desk.
- Improved multitasking by coordinating events and managing room reservations.
- Mastered administrative duties, including phone and database management.

Ford Library Librarian – June 2022 - August 2022

- The experience cultivated my self-management abilities.
- I undertook the task of transforming a cluttered library into an organized space.
- I developed and refined my proficiency in Excel.

Wayne State Bookstore Librarian – May 2021 - August 2021

- Tasked with the leadership role in systematizing the library's catalog.
- Provided guidance and support to patrons in locating their requested materials
- Managed incoming and outgoing email correspondence with efficiency and diligence.

Education

Bachelor of Arts in Experience Architecture - Michigan State University

December 2024

Skills

- Excellent Communicator
- Website Development
- Interpersonally Skilled
- Prototyping/Wireframing
- Human Centered Design
- HTML/CSS/JavaScript
- Responsive Design

Go Back

Blogs Page: The Blog page of Yazedy Yahya's portfolio is designed to offer a window into his thoughts, experiences, and expertise. The structure of the page is consistent with the rest of the site, providing a uniform user

experience. The <head> section remains unchanged, ensuring consistency in metadata, responsiveness, and branding with the favicon. The .wrapper and .logo elements at the top of the page provide a familiar navigation anchor, allowing users to easily return to the homepage.

The main content area is contained within the .container, which also houses the .header that labels the section as "BLOG." This sets the stage for the blog entries that follow. Each blog entry is wrapped in a .blog-entry div, which contains a .blog-title and a summary paragraph. The .blog-title gives the title of the post, the date, and the author's name, formatted with <h3> tags for semantic clarity and importance.

The summary paragraph provides a teaser of the blog content, using placeholder text 'Lorem ipsum' to demonstrate the layout. At the end of each summary, there is a 'Read More' button aligned to the right, which invites users to click through to the full blog post.

```html
<div class="wrapper"> <!-- Added this line to create a wrapper element -->
  <a href="index.html"><img src="images/6.png" width="60px" class="logo" alt="Yazedy Yahya"></a> <!-- This is the logo image -->
  <div class="container">
   <div class="header">BLOG</div>
   <div class="blog-entry">
    <h3 class="blog-title">#Blog 1 • 25-11-2023 • Author: Yazedy Yahya</h3>
    <p>Content…………………p>
    <a href="blog1.html" style="display:block; text-align: right;"><button class="button">Read More</button></a>
   </div>

   <div class="blog-entry">
    <h3 class="blog-title">#Blog 2 • 27-11-2023 • Author: Yazedy Yahya</h3>
    <p>Content…………………</p>
    <a href="blog2.html" style="display:block; text-align: right;"><button class="button">Read More</button></a>
   </div>

   <a href="index.html"><button class="button">Go back</button></a>
  </div>
 </div>
```
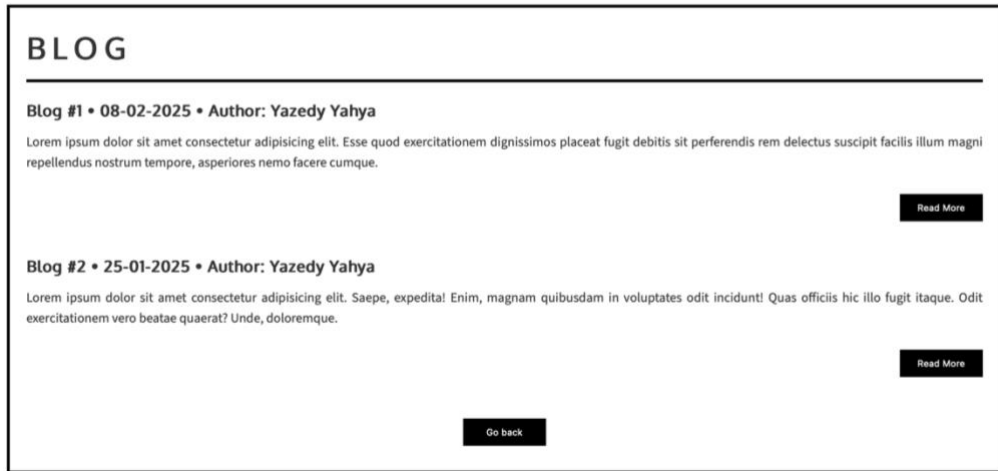
BLOG

Blog #1 • 08-02-2025 • Author: Yazedy Yahya

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipisicing elit. Esse quod exercitationem dignissimos placeat fugit debitis sit perferendis rem delectus suscipit facilis illum magni repellendus nostrum tempore, asperiores nemo facere cumque.

Read More

Blog #2 • 25-01-2025 • Author: Yazedy Yahya

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipisicing elit. Saepe, expedita! Enim, magnam quibusdam in voluptates odit incidunt! Quas officiis hic illo fugit itaque. Odit exercitationem vero beatae quaerat? Unde, doloremque.

Read More

Go back

Figure 7: Blog Page

Contact Page: The Contact page of Yazedy Yahya's portfolio is designed to provide information regarding this contact details. The structure of the page is consistent with the rest of the site, providing a uniform user experience. The <head> section remains unchanged, ensuring consistency in metadata, responsiveness, and branding with the favicon. The .wrapper and .logo elements at the top of the page provide a familiar navigation anchor, allowing users to easily return to the homepage.

The main content area is contained within the .container, which also houses the .header that labels the section as "CONTACT." Then, there is just a Mail and Phone Icon contained in a flexbox which gives the email address and the phone number. In the end, there is a "Go Back" page, like the other pages.

```html
<div class="wrapper"> <!-- Added this line to create a wrapper element -->
  <a href="index.html"><img src="images/6.png" width="60px" class="logo" alt="Yazedy Yahya"></a>
<!-- This is the logo image -->
  <div class="container">
    <div class="header">CONTACT</div>
    <div class="contact">
      <div class="email">
        <img src="images/email.png" class="icon" alt="Email Yazedy Yahya">
        <!-- You need to replace the src attribute with the actual image URL -->
        Email
      </div>
      <div class="phone">
        <img src="images/phone.png" class="icon" alt="Phone Yazedy Yahya">
        <!-- You need to replace the src attribute with the actual image URL -->
        Phone Number
```

```html
        </div>
      </div>
      <a href="index.html"><button class="button">Go back</button></a>
    </div>
  </div> <!-- Added this line to close the wrapper element -->
```


Figure 8: Contact Page

9. CREATE TIMELINE

The timeline of this project shows the four main stages that I completed to create my portfolio website: planning a research, design, development, and deployment. The timeline also shows the duration of each stage, and the total duration of the project. Here is the timeline of my portfolio website:
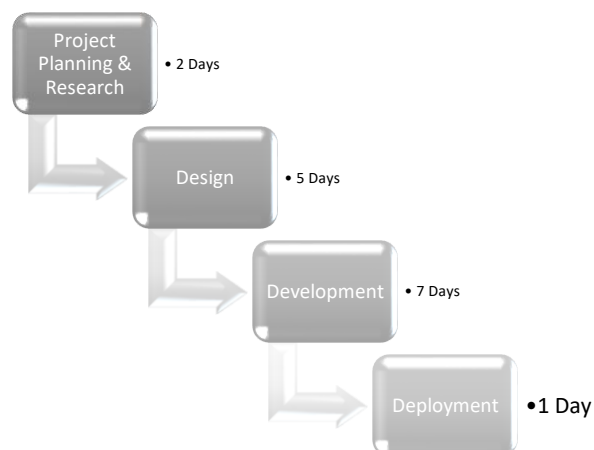

Figure 9: Timeline of the Project

10. CONCLUSION

In this case study, I documented the process of designing and developing a personal web portfolio for myself. I wanted to showcase my skills and

experience as a web developer and a human centered designer. I followed four main stages: planning and research, design, development and deployment. In each stage, I used different tools and methods to create and improve the website. I also faced some challenges and learned some lessons along the way. I created a website that reflects my personality, my style, and my values, and that stands out from the crowd. I also created a website that is easy to navigate, and that showcases my best work in a clear and engaging way. I received some positive feedback from my peers and my users, who complimented me on the design, the functionality, and the usability of the website. I am very proud of the portfolio website that I created, and I hope that you liked it too. Thank you for reading this case study and learning more about me and my work.

****