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Project Proposal for E-Portfolio (15%)

Due Date for Draft: uploaded to Moodle before next class (Oct. 2/4, depending on your course section)

Due Date for Final Draft: Oct. 9 for Section B/Oct. 11 for Section C

Goals

This assignment is an extension of the introduction to e-portfolios that I presented in class. The proposal will be the first part of your project to compile and prepare an e-portfolio which records your academic and professional achievements and which you can use as you begin your job search upon graduation.

For this proposal assignment, you will also learn, practice and apply the following:

- Analytical thinking and reading
- Your research and writing skills
- Write clear descriptions and explanations
- Thinking about how to design and present your material so that it is clear and easy for readers to understand
- Self-assessing your writing and using your assessment to guide improvements in your work.

Purpose

The purpose of the proposal is to familiarize yourself with E-portfolios and to research and plan for the final E-portfolio assignment which is due at the end of term.

Tasks

1. Research and propose your platform choice.

Step 1: Research and evaluate the available platforms which are most often used to house an e-portfolio. Provide a References list with the sources you have used to review the possible platforms. Your list should have a minimum of 3 citations in APA format.

Answer:

There are hundreds of different platforms and engines to host a website, and each one comes with its unique advantages and disadvantages. However, since I am Marketing myself as an IT professional, it is best to use the suggestions of developer communities to select the most suitable solution. After researching for hours, I narrowed down the list to these solutions: GitHub Pages, Heroku, and Netlify.

GitHub is one of the most popular version control tools used in the software development world both for personal projects and enterprise solutions. GitHub Pages uses the same principles and infrastructure to host a website for free. So if a person has used GitHub before, developing their portfolio is very intuitive and familiar when using GitHub Pages (Sexton, 2019). It also supports custom domain names (Hathibelagal, 2018). However, there are some downsides: The code of the website will be public (unless one pays for a private repository which defeats the free advantage we mentioned earlier). There is no support for HTTPS for custom domains (Hathibelagal, 2018) and even though Jekyll (a static middleware site generation framework) is supported, plug-in support is not sufficient (DiSilvestro, Somkane, & Somkane, 2018).

Heroku is an “Easy implementation, deployment and good to use” platform to host a website (Perez et al., 2018). It is also easy to scale and has excellent plugin support for third-party apps. However, it requires you to enter your credit card information, and if the portfolio gets large enough, it gets pricier than alternative solutions. It is also not very easy to migrate your website to another platform. (Flores, 2018)

Netlify makes creating websites very easy, has both a web-based and a command-line interface, supports custom domain names, Supports HTTPS certificate which is very important in the modern era considering browsers flag websites that only use HTTP, and can pull updates from GitHub, So it is almost as intuitive for a GitHub developer as GitHub Pages (Hathibelagal, 2018). It also allows for Asset Optimization, Form handling and Continuous Deployment that GitHub Pages and Heroku lack

References

DiSilvestro, A., Somkane, M. A., & Somkane, M. A. (2018, April 10). Blogging on GitHub Pages:

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Sexton, J. (2019, July 16). Establish your online presence with these simple ways to deploy your portfolio. Retrieved October 1, 2019, from <https://www.freecodecamp.org/news/establish-your-online-presence-with-these-simple-ways-to-deploy-your-portfolio-37101569909/>.

Step 2: Present your research findings in a comparative table. Present a comparison between at least TWO different platforms, highlighting the strengths and gaps.

Answer:

	Github Pages	Netlify
Price	Free	Free
Privacy	None(code of the website is public)	Private
Build Limits	10 Builds per hour	3 Builds per minute
Custom domains with HTTPS	No	Yes
Asset Optimization	No	Yes
Continuous Deployment	No	Yes
Time to Deploy	Very fast(roughly 10 minutes)	Fast

Step 3: Write a short paragraph outlining which of the platforms you have chosen to use for the final e-portfolio. Be sure to explain why you have chosen this platform.

Answer:

It is important to note that all of these three platforms are amongst the best and using either of them is entirely professional and recommended. However, even though these platforms have

a lot in common, upon further investigation, it is evident that Github is somewhat limited in developing sites with modern tooling. When comparing Heroku and Netlify, we have to remember that Netlify is more accessible to set up and has less of a steep in price increase when the site gets too big.

Hence, I choose Netlify to use to develop and host my e-portfolio.

2. Gathering requirements.

Step 1: Review and evaluate other e-portfolios using this link:

<https://www.jelizabetchclark.com/eportfolio-examples>

Step 2: Choose TWO e-portfolios that you consider to be strong examples that you would like to use as models for your final project.

Step 3: Provide the links to these two choices and write a 150-250 word evaluation, highlighting why you consider these two examples to be strong.

Answer:

1. <https://kalynnakano.com/>
2. <https://anthonybarranco.com/>

I am impressed to see these great portfolios from Computer Science graduates. Since IT and Computer Science have a lot in common, analyzing these portfolios can help in determining the characteristics of a great IT student portfolio. Upon visiting the first portfolio (Kalyn Nakano), the viewer is immediately exposed to Kalyn's excellent design skills. Kalyn shows his strong background in colour theory by choosing contrasting colours to create clean and simple sections and using appropriate font in each of those sections. He included a hamburger menu at the top right corner containing links to different parts of his portfolio to prevent the viewers from having to scroll down the entire portfolio (this menu bar is shown by 3 lines on top of each other creating a shape similar to a hamburger). In the next sections, he showed both his creativity and terminal development skills by writing his short bio in a lookalike terminal using the terminal commands. This also gives a great first impression to the viewers. Adding links to his personal blogs and website adds a touch of personality to his portfolio and further strengthens it.

After including his resume while using typography principles, he provides different links to his design and coding projects, further proving his competency. The only minor problem with this portfolio is that the personal and the professional projects are not separated from each other.

The second portfolio (Anthony Barranco) has all of the same great features that Kalyn's portfolio has except that it uses different tabs to different parts of the portfolio which might be a better alternative than the hamburger menu Kalyn used. It might have been better if both of these portfolios (but especially Anthony's since it includes a lot of coding projects) also included links to their GitHub repositories so that the potential employers can verify their knowledge of good coding principles like MVC.

3. Conclusions: Your written plan and rationale.

Step 1: Write a 1-2 page proposal and rationale (300-400 words) to explain how you will apply what you have learned about e-portfolios in class as well as in your research conducted in Parts 1 and 2 of this assignment. Your plan and rationale should address how you envision the final e-portfolio project

and should demonstrate how you are incorporating the research that you have done in Parts 1 and 2 here. Be sure to provide a cogent, focused and concise response to this part of the assignment.

Be sure to answer the following questions:

- How will your decisions to apply these concepts make your final e-portfolio more compelling?
- What artifacts will you be including in your final e-portfolio and why?
- What are you proposing to exclude from your final e-portfolio and why?
- How will you ensure that your final e-portfolio appeals to your audience?
- What can you start doing now to make the final e-portfolio assignment easier?
- Is there any training that you need to do to use the platform that you have chosen?

Answer:

After reviewing dozens of portfolios, it is evident that just like a great story, the most important factor in designing a portfolio is conveying a good narrative in which the candidate's work and personality leave no ambiguity behind. The best portfolios also support this narrative by providing up to date and relevant artifacts of sample projects, education, work history, etc. As we saw in the 2 great portfolio examples, should be implemented with great attention to design principles such as colour theory, user experience, user interaction and typography.

Since I will be mainly applying for software development positions and in particular web development, it is essential to keep in mind to use artifacts relevant to these industries in the portfolio. Having said that, it is best practice to include artifacts like blogs and volunteer work to showcase my personality as well. In this regard, I will include links to my social media accounts on Instagram (for design work samples), LinkedIn (for showing my professional network and history) and GitHub (if the viewer wants to further investigate my coding abilities). Moreover, I will include my education history and relevant course works, IT certifications, some of my volunteer work history, my best samples of design and coding projects, best projects that I was a part of and my responsibilities and accomplishments in detail my best writing and project management work samples.

I propose to exclude my older and lower quality projects and include only the best and most complex projects I have done or have been a part of. This is because the first impression is critical and most viewers will only spend seconds on my portfolio website. So, if I include some of my mediocre works and the viewer only clicks on one of those works and decides to leave the website afterwards, they will judge my abilities based on that average project, and this will hurt my brand.

The actual design and implementation of the portfolio website are of much higher importance to software developers and designers since it is a sample of their coding and design abilities. Thus, I will make sure to make my website visually appealing by using colour theory principles and typography and easy to use and navigate by using user experience principles (for example, by using maybe a similar to the hamburger menu designed by Kalyn and including hyperlinks to different sections of the portfolio just like Anthony).

The best way to make designing the portfolio easier is to create a list of all the different artifacts that I want to include in my portfolio in detail. I have to go through my social media and professional accounts to gather all of these artifacts together and make sure I do not miss anything. In the meantime, I have to work on more projects to present in my portfolio.

To use Netlify, I have to refresh my knowledge of JavaScript and Jekyll. Also, I have to familiarize myself with the Netlify environment. This is not very hard though, since there are dozens of tutorials available that show all the steps of designing a website using Netlify. I will also have to learn more about Progressive Web Apps (PWA) to make my portfolio responsive (i.e. rendering correctly in different devices such as smartphones and tablets.)