

GD260 week 5 class notes

You will create your mockup pages in Photoshop

We are creating mockups of our website layouts in Photoshop. This gives us a opportunity to test text flow and resolve issues of design.

Slice your mockup pages into the main areas of the page

Using the Slice tool in Photoshop, you will create at least four main areas of your page:

- Header
- Navigation
- Content
- Footer

The Slice tool allows you to click and drag boxes over the images that represent slices of that image. These slices will be output as separate files that will be used as background elements for the pages.

Use the “save for web” function to export your sliced .psd files into HTML and CSS

To output these separate files, we must use the “Save for Web & Devices” command from the File menu in Photoshop. In the “Save for Web & Devices” window that opens, you can decide the compression method and file type that will be used for each slice. There are a number of preset compression levels you can choose from, or you can specify more individualized compression for each file. The presets are sufficient for what we will be doing in class. Each slice’s compression level can be set individually. To set more than one slice’s compression at once, hold the shift as you select slices.

Once the compression level and file type is set for your slices, it is time to output. Click the save button and a new window will open where you can decide what to name your HTML file and where it and the images will be created. The first option that can be set is the file name. It’s a good idea to create files without any space or special characters in the name. You should be placing this HTML file within your directory structure for your site, so make sure you are placing your file in the correct place.

Next you will set the option for what exactly you are outputting from Photoshop. Format has three options; “HTML and Images”, “Images only”, and “HTML only”. Choose the option that best serves you. If you haven’t done this export before, you will be creating “HTML and Images”.

Next you will customize the Settings for your output. Here we will set the option to “other” so we can specify a couple of things. Clicking “other” brings up a window called Output Settings. This window has four pages of information that can be accessed through the “Previous” and “Next” buttons. The page you should be most concerned with are the pages titled “Slices” and “Saving Files”. On the “Slices” page you want to make sure that you are generating CSS instead of tables, which is the default option. Tables are an older standard, but harder to edit for layout purposes. On the “Saving Files” page, you want to make sure the images being created are being placed in a folder called “images” to match your directory structure you have already created.

Lastly, there is a menu item for saving “all slices”, “user slices”, or “selected slices”. For our purposes you will save all slices. But as you edit elements for use later you may want to use one of the other options.

Once you click that final “save” button, Photoshop will write the HTML file and save the image files for you wherever you have specified.

Bring the output into Dreamweaver

To bring the output to Dreamweaver, you must establish the site folder structure. Either use the site definition file to restore a previously done setup, or open the Site menu and choose the option “New site...” This will open a window in which you can set the root folder for the site as well as the images folder location. Once this folder location information is set, you should be able to browse the “files” panel in Dreamweaver and double-click on the html file you want to open. This should open the HTML file you created in Photoshop. Looking at the code of this HTML file you should see the statements that describe the contents of the file as well as the styling for the file. We want that styling to happen in an external stylesheet, so we will create an empty CSS file and transfer the rules from the HTML file to the CSS file so that any HTML file linked to the CSS file can take advantage of that styling information.

Edit the output in Dreamweaver

To create the empty CSS file, go to the File menu and choose “New...”. In the window that opens, choose CSS as the file type. This will open a new empty CSS file in Dreamweaver. Save this file in the “CSS” folder of your site. Name it whatever you wish, just make sure not to remove the “.CSS” from the end of the name. “.CSS” should be added to the end of the file name by default. Now that you have the empty CSS file made, you can close it. We will edit the CSS file by linking to it with the HTML file. From there you can edit the contents of the CSS file indirectly without having it open in another window.

Currently the styling that is affecting this HTML file is happening between the <style> tags in the HTML file. This can be seen if we view the “source code” of the HTML file. We want to take the information from the <style> tags and move that directly to the CSS file. We will use the “CSS Styles” panel to change where that information is located. We will link the HTML file to the CSS file, then migrate the styling information from the HTML file into the CSS file.

To link the HTML file to the CSS file, we will use the “Attach Style Sheet” button at the bottom of the “CSS Styles” panel. In the window that opens, we must browse to the location of the CSS file and choose it.

At this point, in the “All” tab of the “CSS Styles” panel, there should be a <style> listing with a number of rules beneath it and a style.css (or whatever you named your file) listing with nothing underneath. In the “CSS Styles” panel, move the rules from beneath the <style> tag and place them under the style.css listing. This will move the styling information from the HTML file into the CSS file. Now any HTML file that is linked to

the CSS file can take advantage of the styling present without having to rebuild it from scratch.

Now currently the images present in the HTML file are just that, images. No content can be placed in those areas over the images without breaking the layout. So what we must do is remove the images from the file as HTML elements, and replace them with CSS declarations that put them in the background. To achieve this select each image from the design view and delete it. This will remove it from the HTML file. To add the images as background elements via the CSS file, choose the rule you want to edit from the “CSS Styles panel. Either double-click the rule or use the “edit rule” button at the bottom of the panel. In the window that opens, go to the “background” category, browse for the necessary image and choose it. Once you click “OK” or “Apply” the display of that image will update in the design view of Dreamweaver.