Comp 266 : Unit 5 Learning Diary

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Introduction:
In Unit 5, we finally started to write javascript code on our website. I have never done javascript before and it was a great experience to learn a new language and use it to enhance the features of my website. For my website, I used javascript to build a countdown timer to notify when the inventory would be updated next, a watch list/ to-do list for buyers to keep track of the bikes they found interesting and then make an informative decision of which one to buy and validate the contact form which was built in Unit-1.
Seeing how these features increased the utility and aesthetic of my website multifold was enthralling.
To add on, I did not enjoy the colour scheme and font that I had chosen for my website in Unit 3. Hence, upon advice from a friend with great acumen for colour schemes, I went ahead and changed the colours and fonts of my website to make it more attractive. I realise that this was Unit 3 work only but I feel there is no stop to learning. Through this process, I have learnt that just throwing in colours doesn't make a website look good. A lot of thought and effort goes into these seemingly small things and they go a long way for the aesthetics of a website.
Since I have never written javascript code before, I took help from numerous internet resources like W3Schools, MDN Web Docs, the Digital Reading Room at the myAU website and a few YouTube videos to familiarise myself with Javascript, it's syntax and protocols and for logic building for my design ideas.. I also looked up various other students' work on landing to have an idea and marker as to how much should be done for Unit 4 to be able to successfully move on to Unit 5.

The link to my website is : http://student.athabascau.ca/~harsheenso/Comp266/Unit5/

Work done for Unit 5 and relating it to the personas and scenarios in Unit-1:

After reading more about Javascript and noting down the things I need to make sure I successfully build the three features in my website, I moved on to building the logic for the same.
I had created a contact form in Unit-1 using only HTML where people could email their queries but the form was never validated . So, I wish to add more functionality to an already created design. This form is extremely important for both buyers and sellers on the website. The sellers for example can contact us if they want any of their bikes to be added to our inventory and the buyers could contact us regarding any queries they have or if they need any help. People like Zing Lee Shawn (persona in my Unit 1) who are always on the lookout for particular bikes for their local shops could easily contact us if they have a particular bike they need or if they require a bulk order of a bike type and would greatly benefit through this feature. This feature was relatively easier to incorporate than the other two features. Understanding how to deal with functions and manipulate forms to add this functionality was quite fun to learn.

Next was the countdown timer to notify about the next inventory update. I found this feature to be moderately okay in terms of difficulty. People like Nathan Blundstone (persona in my Unit 1), who browse the website regularly in search of bikes would greatly benefit from this feature and save their time as well. It took me quite some time to understand the algorithm used for the calculations of the days, hours, minutes and seconds left till the set date but seeing the timer work was very satisfying in the end.

Lastly, I added a to-do List/Watch List. This feature would help buyers have track of the bikes they found interesting and they can make an informative decision of which one to buy. People like Bob Turner (persona in my Unit 1), who want to buy a bike that suits their needs and wish to make an informative decision would greatly benefit from this feature.

This was probably the hardest one to build. It took me a lot of time to get the list working. Seemingly small issues like where the items get added or removing the item from the add bar after being added or making the remove button work were a lot of work. That's why when the list worked as I had initially imagined, I almost cried with joy.

I also worked on the slideshow functionality that I did in Unit-4 for part of my bike catalogue and moved it to the whole catalogue and even added the image hover overlay to them. I took this inspiration from W3Schools (link provided in references).

Another thing was to make sure to follow correct coding standards like making sure I made separate javascript sheets for my webpages instead of adding it to the html page.

What went well:
As I did Unit 5, I made sure to follow good coding practises and standards and made proper indentation and spacing. I also successfully added the features in my website as I had originally imagined . All the requirements mentioned in myAU were met as well.

Initially I was very apprehensive of coding in javascript on my own and to add to it, even debug the code and make it work correctly. I honestly thought I would not be able to finish Unit 5 and truth be told, in the early days of unit 5, I felt the same way. It was through hours of staring at the code, screaming and even crying that I finally started to get that 'aha' moment with this Unit. Slowly and slowly everything started to feel more comfortable and easier. I am not saying I have perfected javascript. There are many things I still don't know but now I am not afraid of taking on a challenge in this language.

What didn't go well:
I tried to make the Search the Catalogue part of my website responsive. It is somewhat responsive but I couldn't manage to make it fully responsive. Making the slideshow responsive is probably the biggest challenge I have faced so far. I am hopeful that I would be able to fully figure it out as I continue to work on the upcoming units.

What I would do differently:
If I could, I would've tried to incorporate a different approach for the slideshow in the catalogue as my current approach is making it difficult for me to make it fully responsive.

Mapping Activities to Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcome	Evidence of Meeting the Learning Outcome	Your Own Assessment of the Grade You Believe Would Be Appropriate
Write well-structured, easily maintained JavaScript code following accepted good practice:	1. Followed proper coding standards 2. Proper indentation and spacing in the JavaScript code 3. Appropriate use of functions, loops and arrays. 4. All the pages of my website have no cross-browser compatibility issues. 5. Each of the webpages work perfectly on any device size (fully responsive) 6. Modular code with good naming convention for variables. 7. Made the code as simple and easy to read as possible	A
Write JavaScript code that works in all major browsers (including E, Mozilla-based browsers such as Firefox, Opera, Konqueror, Safari, Chrome):	1. Made sure the code built worked in most popular browsers	A
Effectively debug JavaScript code, making use of good practice and debugging tools:	1. The code works perfectly as intended. This required a lot of hours of debugging and it can be seen through my reflections above as well.	A