Creating Flat Design Websites

Design and develop your own flat design websites in HTML

António Pratas

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About the Author

António Pratas is a Portuguese designer living in London. He has an MSc in Multimedia Design and has been working as a designer since 2005. He has worked with advertising agencies and in design ateliers, including Euro RSCG (now Havas), Bürocratik, and Universidade de Coimbra. He has also co-founded a small design atelier and a web startup. He previously wrote articles for designmodo.com, webdesignerdepot.com, and awwwards.com.

Acknowledgment

I always looked up to good and famous designers/authors as if they had the answers to all design problems. However, eventually I found out that design is not about the answers, it's about asking the right questions, and even these great designers are, in the end, only humans. There's no correct way or formula on how to do things or solve problems, it's about choosing a path and trusting you're doing what is best for each problem you're faced with.

This book would not have been possible without the support of my lovely girlfriend Márcia Gaudêncio. Thank you for all your help and patience, and for all the meals you cooked and chores you've done that should've been my responsibility, while I was busy with my laptop for hours on end.

I'd also like to thank Rebecca Youé for offering me the chance of writing my first book, as well as the Packt Publishing team and reviewers for their great work in reviewing and helping out over and over again.

Last but (definitely) not least, I'd like to thank my father, António Redondo Pratas, and my mother, Leopoldina Correia for giving me all they could ever give me, making me everything that I am today, and teaching me all that I know and do. You can't find these things in any book. Obrigado!

About the Reviewers

Eddy Borja has witnessed the evolution of websites from their static Web 1.0 beginnings to the modern designs that we have now, throughout his life. His first exposure to web design and development began during his teenage years, and he has been involved in the creation of web and mobile apps ever since. He has been a consultant for many startups and a co-founder of a software development shop that builds mobile apps for its clients.

> As always, I'd like to thank my parents and my family for their never-ending support, and my love, Karla Salazar, for her support and encouragement.

Pedro Piñera Buendia is an Electronics and Telecommunication engineer from Spain. He started working as a mobile developer in 2010, and since then, he has been involved in developing applications that are related to health and entertainment. He is currently working as an iOS developer for Redbooth, a platform to help companies manage their projects (through tasks, notes, conversations, and so on).

> I would like to thank my girlfriend and Merengue (my dog) for waiting for me while I was helping the author review this book.

Emrullah Lüleci is an entrepreneur, a software engineer, and a UX designer. He has been developing cloud-based Android and web applications. He believes in the power of open source. Thus, he owns several open source projects and contributes to many others. Even though his background is based on programming, he is passionate about designing and creating unique interfaces, which are mainly flat. He is also a member of several communities and delivers speeches about mobile app designs and their development. Emrullah is the founder of CengaLabs, which focuses on developing mobile applications and sharing all the new tools that are created for the projects in open source.

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Preface

Flat design is a digital style of design that has been one of the biggest trends in recent years in web and user interface design. It is famous for its extremely minimalistic style. It has appeared at a time when skeuomorphic, a style of creating realistic interfaces, was considered to be the biggest and most famous trend, making this a really rough and extreme transition for both users and designers.

Creating Flat Design Websites will explain the story of flat design since its early roots to the present day, while also showing you some of the most famous examples and explaining how to design and implement your own flat design website in a practical and easy way.

What this book covers

Chapter 1, What is Flat Design?, explains what flat design is, its history since the introduction of the international typographic style, and how it has evolved over the years. We will also understand what brands helped bring the flat design to light and how this style became more evident as a trend for more brands and interfaces, such as the recently released iOS 7 from Apple.

Chapter 2, Designing in Flat, covers how to design in flat and what are the most important things that the designer should have in mind while designing. It will focus on the importance of typography, alignment, and creating a layout by always using a clear, invisible grid and creating more predictable layouts.

Chapter 3, Creating a Flat and Usable Interface, shows why you should focus on web usability and how important it is for the good functioning of flat design websites. The main focus is to avoid any kind of damage to the interface, its navigation and readability to exemplify this, we will create some tests and visual exercises.

Chapter 4, Designing Your Own Flat Website, will show you, step-by-step, how to design your single page flat website. We will cover the entire journey from planning visual sections to deciding on layout and navigation, up to the final pixels.

Chapter 5, Developing Your Site, will explain how to develop the page designed in the previous chapter using Designmodo flat UI Bootstrap components. We will cover how to code the basic static page, as well as jQuery transitions and CSS3 effects.

Chapter 6, Creating Your Own Flat UI Kit, will go over the creation of your own kit while reviewing all the work that you have done. We will see how to organize our images, styles, and effects, and save them for future usage as a personal Flat UI kit.

What you need for this book

Throughout this book, we will be creating a design of a web page and develop some code, specifically HTML, CSS, and JavaScript (with the help of jQuery). For the design, we will be using Photoshop, and any version from CS4 onwards will suffice. For the code, we will require a code editor such as Sublime Text, which may be downloaded and evaluated for free from `http://sublimetext.com`; it's a great piece of software. You can also use any other code editor of your preference, such as Notepad++ for Windows (`http://notepad-plus-plus.org/`), Coda (`http://panic.com/coda/`)for Linux, or Espresso (`http://macrabbit.com/espresso/`) for Mac.

Who this book is for

This book is for designers and developers who are interested in creating websites. Ideally, you should have some prior knowledge of design notions, but it is essential to know how to use Photoshop at a beginner/medium level. This is also written for designers who already have some knowledge on frontend development, as we will develop a website using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript (with the help of jQuery).
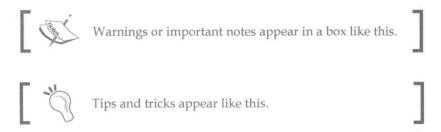
Conventions

In this book, you will find a number of styles of text that distinguish between different kinds of information. Here are some examples of these styles, and an explanation of their meaning.

Code words in text, database table names, folder names, filenames, file extensions, pathnames, dummy URLs, user input, and Twitter handles are shown as follows: "We will now create the styles for our `<body>` element."

A block of code is set as follows:

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html lang="en">
<head>
</head>
<body>
<button class="btn">Click Here</button>
</body>
</html>
```

New terms and **important words** are shown in bold. Words that you see on the screen, in menus or dialog boxes for example, appear in the text like this: "Clicking the **Next** button moves you to the next screen."

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