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Comparative Technology
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Comp Tech Weekly Logs

Week 1:

This week, the main thing that I worked on was conceiving of my project. I'm pretty sure that I want to do something with InDesign because it seems like a skill that would be useful for future employment, plus I enjoyed my time working with Illustrator. Due to my research I want to do something related to circus, which will also work well with the very visual nature of this project. Right now, I'm leaning toward doing something similar to Emily Volkmann's project from last year.

Week 2:

I have settled on doing a digital guidebook to the aerial arts because it accomplishes my goal of learning InDesign, it has to do with my research, it is something I know well, and finding awesome photos of aerialists won't be hard at all.

Week 3:

This week consisted of me doing my groundwork before I can even start designing. I've chosen what I'm going to include in my guidebook: anything that is rigged from a high up point where it is possible and common to do entire routines without touching the ground is aerial. I've starting collecting high-resolution images of the eleven different apparatuses that fall under that definition. I have also begun looking at InDesign tutorials posted on the course site to start getting familiar with what I'll have to do to make my guide interactive (and to start getting more familiar with InDesign).

Week 4:

This was my week to start experimenting with interactive design elements. After following tutorials, I was able to make buttons but I had trouble setting the destinations. The tutorials made it seem like an option would be there (make text boxes into an anchor), but it wasn't. I spent some time setting up the document and pages to plug content and interactive elements into later.

Week 5:

I solved my issue of making text boxes into anchors. I just had to set them as bookmarks, which could be set as the destination in the button menu. After solving that, I set up my table of contents and connected them with buttons to all of the pages, which for the most part have placeholder titles so I can keep them straight. I designed a simple page for Cloud Swing and a more complex one for Chinese Pole with a video. Unfortunately, the video doesn't play when I link it to my blog (though the SWF preview works just fine). I also need to learn how to get rollover effects (like text popping up).

Midterm Report

Where I am at:

Right now I feel pretty comfortable in all of the basic functionalities of InDesign, and I'm starting to get more comfortable with the interactive elements. I no longer have to follow the steps to make buttons and destinations and I'm starting to play around a little bit more with the actions that can happen with buttons.

Looking at my original timeline, I'm actually pretty much on course, even though I didn't think I was. This is one of those projects that starts off slow because I need to learn so many different capabilities of the software, but as I grow more comfortable, it becomes more a matter of design choices. The main barrier in front of me at this point is figuring out how to get videos to play when exported, and how to get rollover effects to happen. After that, I will be able to do everything that I originally imagined for this project, so maybe I'll be able to branch out even further.

Something that is weighing on my mind right now is what information to include in this guide. Right now, I'm thinking of including basic information of what the apparatus is and what sorts of routines typically happen on each. I will include some videos (but not too many to make sure each page is different enough). I also like the idea of having the aesthetics of each of the different pages somehow reflect the apparatus highlighted on that page. In general, though, I think I'm right on schedule. The updated timeline reflects how I'm breaking up the project more into each individual page as opposed to doing static content first and responsive content later; it all will happen at the same time.

Updated Timeline

Week 6: Finalize pages of 2-3 apparatuses

Week 7: Finalize pages of 2-3 apparatuses

Week 8: Finalize remaining pages

Week 9: Peer critique and editing

Week 10: More editing and finalizing whole project