

**SELF-REFLECTION**  
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## **Table of Contents**

|                                          |       |
|------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>                      | ..... |
| HERITAGE                                 | ..... |
| <b>DEVELOPMENT PROCESS</b>               | ..... |
| CREATIVE PROCESS                         | ..... |
| DEVELOPMENTS MADE AND PROBLEMS RESOLVED  | ..... |
| THINGS TO DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME       | ..... |
| <b>THIS E-MAGAZINE AND ITS POTENTIAL</b> | ..... |
| <b>CONCLUSION</b>                        | ..... |

## **Introduction**

Throughout these past four months, I have learned many new things in making the project HERITAGE happen. Before I set out on this journey, I had many doubts on whether I would be able to complete this project on time as we had very limited time. HERITAGE being an e-magazine, my assignment was mainly based on travelling to places and experiencing the culture here in Wales. This of course, has been such an amazing experience filled with joy and laughter although it does not seem as easy as it sounds. Throughout the entire process, a lot of time, energy and planning has gone into making sure this project would work. The first stage did however helped us tremendously. As in the beginning we were asked to plan what our project would be about, what it would look like, what would be included, where would we have to travel to, we had to figure out means of transportation, estimate the overall cost needed for the project and so on. Had it not been for the planning, this project would not have succeeded. Being here in Wales is a huge opportunity for me to learn new things and to also grow as a person. Through HERITAGE, I hope to bring my very own personal style of writing and designing, where I get to express myself .

## **Development Process**

HERITAGE being a travel magazine based on food, places, with history and culture, some may find it boring. It is my goal to bring my own personal touch to the magazine in a way to fascinate readers and to also bring my very own vision of the magazine to life with breathtaking pictures and interesting reads of all the beautiful sceneries and architecture here

in Wales. Before the production stage, I had a rough idea of what my project would look like. I decided to have different sections within the magazine divided into sections such as customs and tradition, food, music, art and literature, religion, architecture, sports and scenery. This was the original plan but as the project went on, I realized that I had to eliminate many different topics as it was too much to cover. In the planning it seemed easy to put just about anything you want but the execution itself is a lot harder than planning. Many different aspects had to be considered. Although everything had already been planned out, there were many obstacles that set us back in which we had to improvise.

Right from the beginning I was certain about one thing. That I wanted the design of HERITAGE to be minimal. I was inspired by many different minimal magazines all of which helped me achieve my goal. I have always loved the minimal design and look of magazines. I wanted to write and also express my words through pictures. From the start I had already set out that my magazine will include beautiful captivating photos that will capture readers. I did not want my readers to only focus on my writing, but to also admire the pictures. Throughout the process, many aspects of the planning have changed. The only thing which has remained consistent throughout the process is the very design of the magazine. Simple and minimal is the goal. I wanted HERITAGE to be as neat, compact and as simple as possible yet with very few objects and decorations on the page, I was worried it would look dull, monotonous or worse, incomplete in the eyes of other readers. The challenge was to make this project look as professional yet as simple and elegant as possible. This meant I did not have to focus on patterns, bright colours or other elements which would crowd the page.

As mentioned before, I had to make many changes to my planning. This included crossing out several places that I had initially planned to go, which were places such the Dylan Thomas Boathouse, Laugharne Castle, the Kidwelly Castle, Llandaff Cathedral and a few restaurants such as Wrights and Y Polyn. This was due to time and mainly financial constraints as many of these places were very far away where public transportation would be too costly. However these places were later on replaced with other locations. This also meant that I had to edit my Gantt Chart several times, and had to learn to divide my time accordingly. This gave me a chance to visit other places which were no less interesting than the places planned initially. The greatest part is that it did not affect the quality of my content.

As for the magazine and the actual layout itself, many modifications had been made. This includes the overall layout, typography, colors, fonts, margin sizes and pictures. First of all the font of the masthead has remained consistent. The word Heritage, has been spelt with spacing in between each letter H E R I T A G E ever since it came to life. This is because I love the minimal effect it gives instantly. Fonts for other parts of the magazine however has changed. This is because as the project grew and as pictures were added, the tone slightly changed therefore each time a new picture was added, I would play around with the text and figure out what would be most suitable. Although the font for the masthead is still the same, the font for the headline and body text however has changed. I decided to stick with the typeface that is used in my project now because I find it to be most suitable for the simple, minimal and sophisticated look I want to achieve. I notice a huge difference in the mock design/prototype of the project in the beginning, between the finished product. In the beginning, although I tried to achieve the minimal look, I still had trouble to minimize the

design. Too much was going on in the prototype which I remember being really dissatisfied about, but at that time I still could not quite figure out what was missing. As the project progressed I truly learned what “less is more” meant. I found that the less things there are on the page, the more appealing it is to the eyes, well at least mine. I was also doubtful about including pictures of myself within the magazine but decided to do so after I had talked to my supervisor.

As I flipped through the pages I felt as if something was missing in between. The pages did not have a nice transition from one onto the next. This was when I played around with the design and came up with a simple black page with the title in white, Century Gothic font and a full stop at the end of the title. The full stop was important as I felt it gave more emphasis to the minimal look. It's weird how something so small can make such a difference. I then toggled around with the title placements and found that rather than always placing them symmetrically right in the middle of the page, placing them at odd corners of the page also emphasized the minimal design. Moving on, the font size is kept uniform throughout the magazine, that is, headline, Minion Pro size 18, body text, Perpetua size 10 and transition text Century Gothic size 48. Although I spent a huge amount of time changing the font sizes every now and then trying to figure out which size worked best. From the very beginning I wanted the text to be as small as possible, therefore I had trouble adjusting the text to the right size and had to ask friends for their opinion. Had this magazine been published only for me, I would have been perfectly happy with text size 9 but then again, I did not want my readers squinting their eyes trying to read. With text size 10, I feel both me and my readers would be happy.

In my pre-production report, I had expressed my love for dark colours. I knew I would have to include black pages to really bring out the “me” in this e-magazine. Although I was worried that not many may like what I like, therefore I had to play it safe. This is why I chose the theme colours to be black and white. I also created other colour swatches in Adobe InDesign such as light shade of pink or what my supervisor called it, an ice-cream colour. I chose to include this light-coloured background for the dessert section in Palm Caye, Valentines and the Coracle. I felt that these sections needed their own colour due to the nature of the story and also the pictures included in the section. It’s amusing how the moodboard which was made earlier during the pre-production phase looks nothing like the finished product. The colour schemes are also different. This is to be expected due to the nature of the raw images taken as not all images will have the same temperature, brightness or saturation. Either ways, to avoid my pictures looking too bright or too saturated which I dislike, I created a custom preset in Adobe Lightroom, where I transferred and edited each picture here and later on exported each of them back into the phone and onto Google Drive. This gave all the pictures a faded and slightly darkened, dull and matte effect, which I loved. Besides that, I also faced a problem regarding pictures. Pictures which I had taken using my iPhone would not open or download onto the Mac PC which meant it could not be dragged onto the InDesign project. To solve this I had to upload all my pictures which was in HEIC format through another application to convert them into JPG. I also had to start everything from scratch twice as the computer somehow could not save any of the media files that I managed to upload onto the project. This was a minor setback as I had only a few days left to complete this project when this had happened. InDesign and Google Drive had also crashed many times while I was trying to upload pictures or videos. At first I tried to upload my videos onto Google Drive but the quality was very low and appeared pixelated. Thankfully a

friend helped out and said that I would have to upload the videos on YouTube instead and embed the link once my project is published. Now due to this, the videos which I have included within my e-magazine are available in HD. Having little to no experience using these advanced editing softwares such as Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom and InDesign was a constant struggle. Nevertheless, I persevered and managed to get it done just in time.

Aspiring to be a writer one day, I know this magazine will be a stepping stone in achieving my goal. It has taught me a few things about the industry, that everything is never as easy as it looks - and that persistence is key. This e-magazine will be useful for anyone interested in reading but especially for fellow students of the International University of Malaya-Wales who also plan to study in Wales in the future. This magazine can also act as a guide for students or even tourists on where to go if they ever plan to visit Wales or Carmarthen. It has the potential to be published for universities back in Malaysia or even other online platforms to educate people on the beauty of Wales.

This project has helped me grow tremendously. I've learned to overcome my fears of travelling alone, using public transportation, overcoming self-doubt and my own insecurities. Even though I'm happy and satisfied with how the project turned out, I know there was and there will always be room for improvement. Although we all got the project done on time, we did procrastinate every now and then. Being in a foreign country, the prospect of having a good time and relaxing sounds more appealing than having to work. If I am given the opportunity to do this again, I will definitely manage my time more efficiently and plan ahead better. I will also be able to work my way around the editing software faster and learn more advanced functions therefore I will be able to produce a higher quality work. In conclusion, coming here, I learned many new things. Things as simple as using public transport, reading

bus schedules, rowing a boat, all the way to being able to work my way around advanced editing softwares and also learned how to use Yumpu. I am grateful for such an amazing experience here in the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, and would like to express my sincerest gratitude towards Dr Matthew Jones, for being the kindest, most understanding, most patient and most warm-hearted supervisor I have ever come across all my life. Without his guidance HERITAGE would not have been a success. Thank you again.