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SOFTWARE+TUTORIALS  
INSIDE BACK COVER

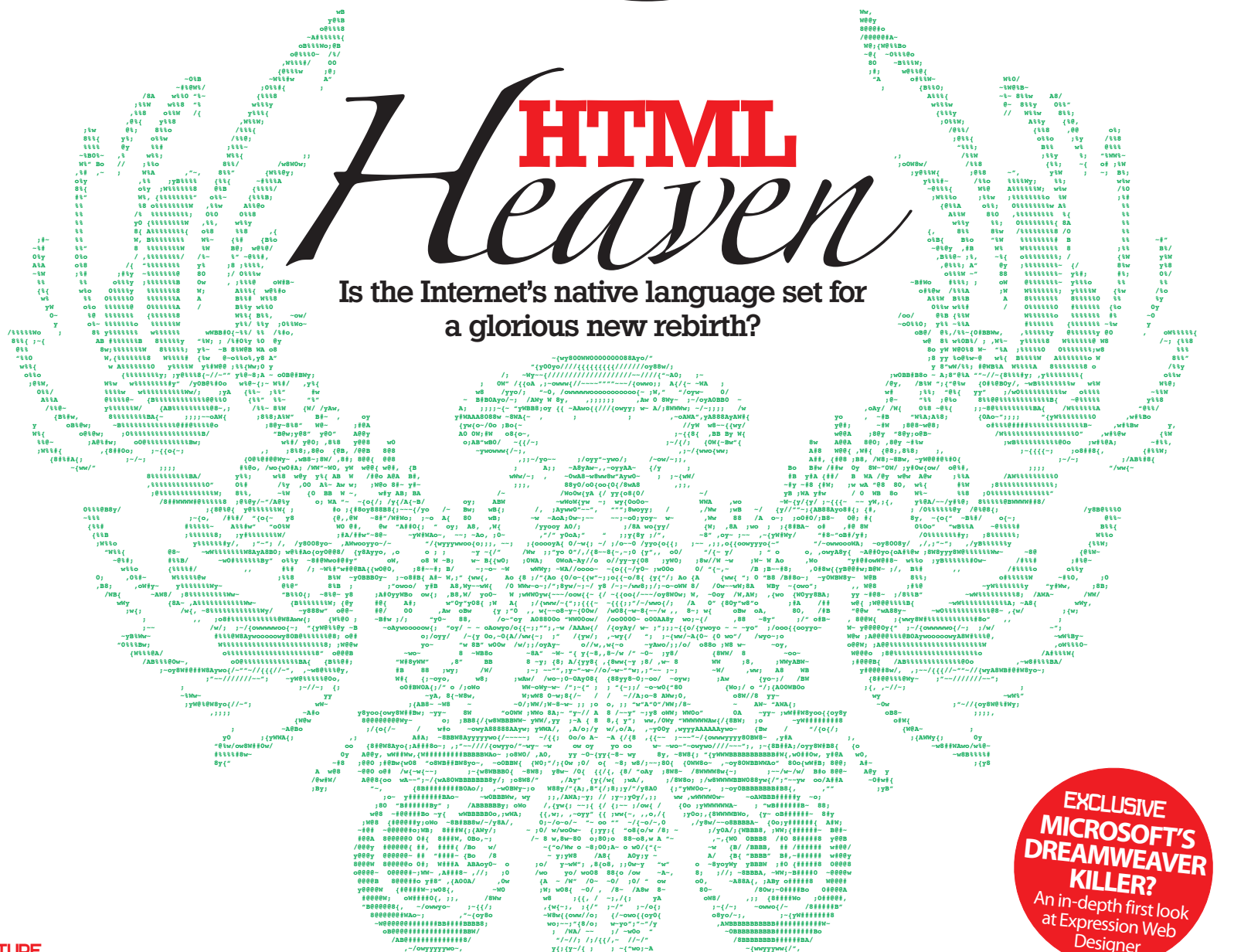
ISSUE 121

# designer

DREAMWEAVER FLASH PHOTOSHOP

www.webdesignermag.co.uk

"IF YOU DON'T ASCII, YOU DON'T GET"



Is the Internet's native language set for  
a glorious new rebirth?

## FEATURE

# SUPERCHARGE DREAMWEAVER

10 of the best extensions for  
powering up Version 8

## IN THIS ISSUE

ADD BROADBAND-RICH CONTENT [Flash] PRODUCE EXPERIMENTAL INTERFACES [Flash]  
DRAW ILLUSTRATIVE GUIs [Photoshop] PUNK UP YOUR WEB TEMPLATES [Photoshop]  
DISCOVER AJAX CODING [Dreamweaver] CHECKING OUT ACTINIC'S NEW SHOP BUILDER [Actinic 8]

EXCLUSIVE  
MICROSOFT'S  
DREAMWEAVER  
KILLER?  
An in-depth first look  
at Expression Web  
Designer

## TUTORIAL

# INTRODUCING AJAX

Taking your first steps to developing  
revolutionary Web 2.0 applications



# Welcome

## OUR experts

LINING UP THE FINEST MINDS IN WEB DESIGN FOR YOUR ONLINE EDUCATION



### James Davies

ALL 'SHOPPED OUT? TIME TO THINK PUNK

As art editor of *Digital Photographer* and co-founder of [www.dirtyvelvet.co.uk](http://www.dirtyvelvet.co.uk), James is the man to get you creating a swanky portal. This issue he pimps out his Photoshop skills on page 68, where he looks at mixing up your 'Shopped site.



### Mark Shufflebottom

THE BOY DONE GOOD...

After winning some serious credibility with Vegas awards (see page 22), Mark's come back to *Web Designer* to introduce you to the delights of Flash Video 8, working up action footage with ActionScript for a rich media extravaganza.



### Simon Bisson

CAN MICROSOFT'S NEW CREATION TAKE OVER?

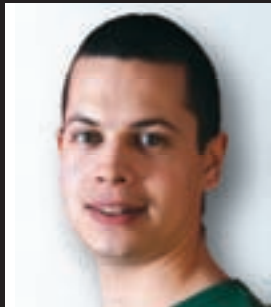
This issue Simon takes us through Web Designer, Microsoft's new web toy. Simon has been a web consultant and journalist for years, and has worked with web tools since the early Nineties. Turn to page 82 to see if Web Designer wins him over...



### Darren Richardson

INTERFACE ACTION WITH A BIT OF FLASH MAGIC

As tech lead for Magic Lantern Production, Darren's immersed in the interactive world every day. With a boundless (and quite scary) Flash passion, he also runs [www.actionscripts.co.uk](http://www.actionscripts.co.uk) and [www.flashgroup.net](http://www.flashgroup.net) alongside his own [www.playfool.com](http://www.playfool.com).



When rushing headlong into an exciting future, it's amazing how easy it can be to completely forget where you've come from

Sometimes we all need to stop, take a breath and assess whether what we're doing is necessarily the right thing. We're giving the majority world of web development the chance to do that this issue by examining whether the Internet's roots are being buried or if, in fact, its foundations are due an uprising. Yes, we're heralding a renaissance for HTML and all the derivative markup languages that to a large degree have found themselves buried under a barrage of Flash-based content. Just from my time crawling the web for cutting-edge gallery sites it has become apparent that more traditionally built content is increasingly rare, while many of us are guilty of ignoring standards and accessibility in favour of the .swf movie. Do newbie designers head straight for Flash over Dreamweaver? What future does the common <body> tag have in tomorrow's Internet? Will Ajax and Web 2.0 deliver a leaner, meaner alternative to ActionScripting? Such questions and more are addressed on page 28, our lead cover feature.

We then take a look at a selection of the finest extensions available for Dreamweaver and show you how they're used, before our latest haul of exciting tutorials kicks in with a couple of extra twists. In addition to exercises in multimedia building and experimental GUIs in Flash, Photoshop templating, and a special

look at Ajax, we have two surprises. Brand new applications in the shape of Microsoft's Expression Web Designer and Actinic 8 are put through their paces for the very first time from pages 82 and 94 respectively. Both are stacked with exciting new features, so hopefully you'll learn some helpful new tricks that will fast-track you to master status in no time.

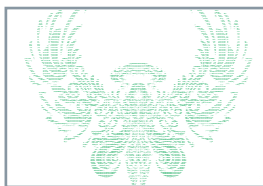
Elsewhere you can be sure of the usual mix of industry news, top profiles, ecommerce announcements, and the prettiest portfolios from the best up-and-coming design talent.

Forgotten where we've come from?... No chance!

**Mark Billen**  
DEPUTY EDITOR

## Editor's picks

Just a few of the main reasons why *Web Designer* 121 shouldn't be missed...



28-34

We look at why HTML could be due a revival in our superb six-page cover feature.



52-56

Time to get experimental with lessons in creating an exciting Flash interface.



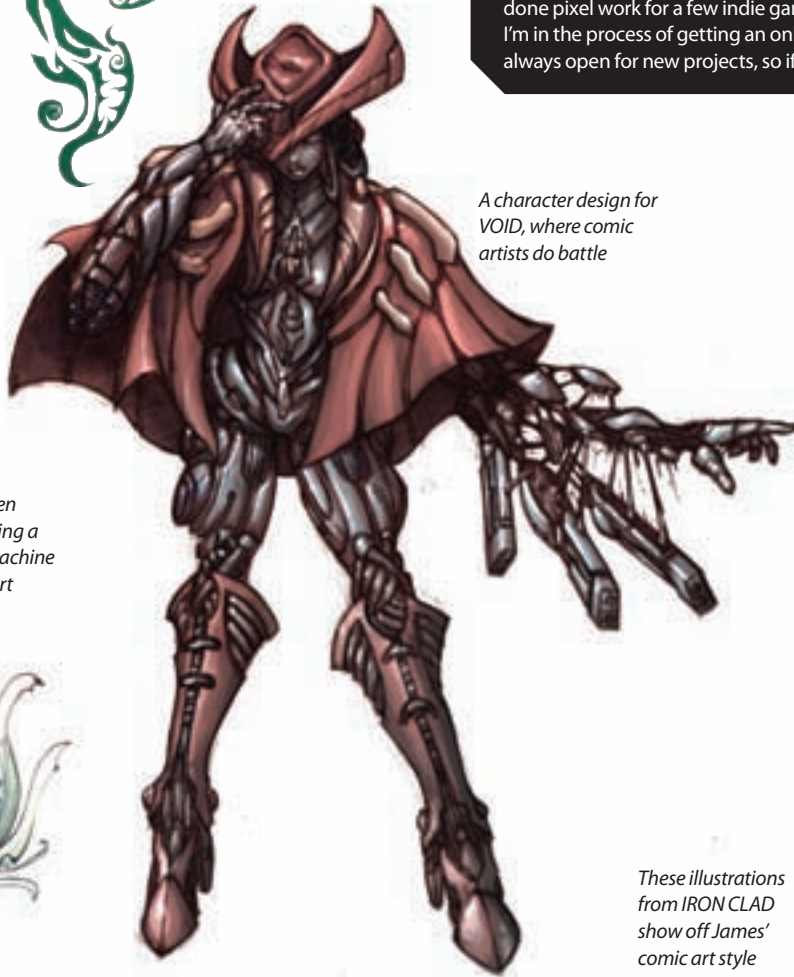
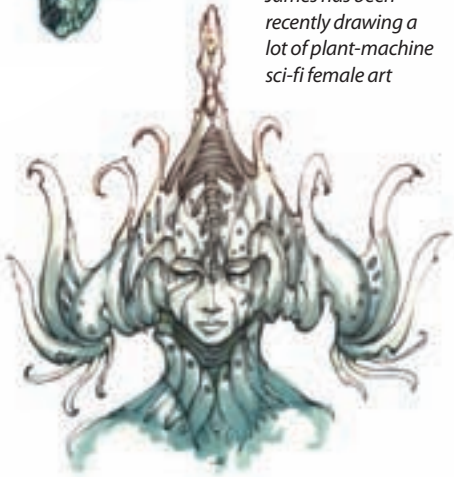
82-88

Express yourself like never before with a look at Microsoft's new web editor.

"I can't stop doodling abstract tribal designs in my free time!"



James has been recently drawing a lot of plant-machine sci-fi female art



A character design for VOID, where comic artists do battle

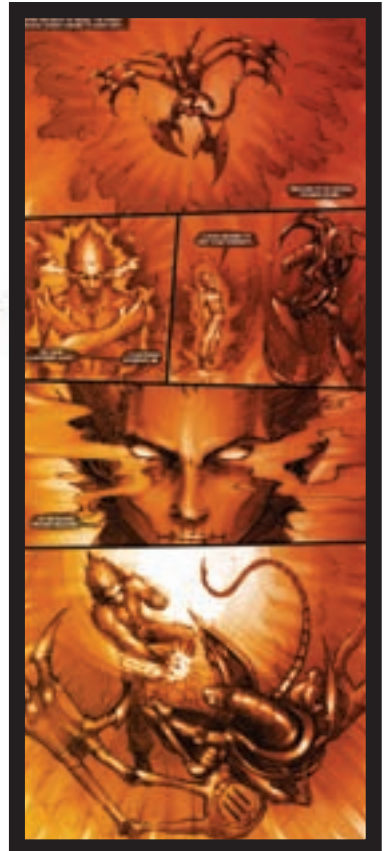
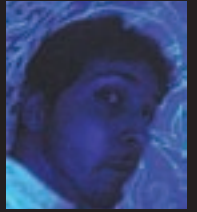
## COVER ARTIST

James Dies

WEB: <http://silverlimit.deviantart.com>

EMAIL: [SilverLimit@sbcglobal.net](mailto:SilverLimit@sbcglobal.net)

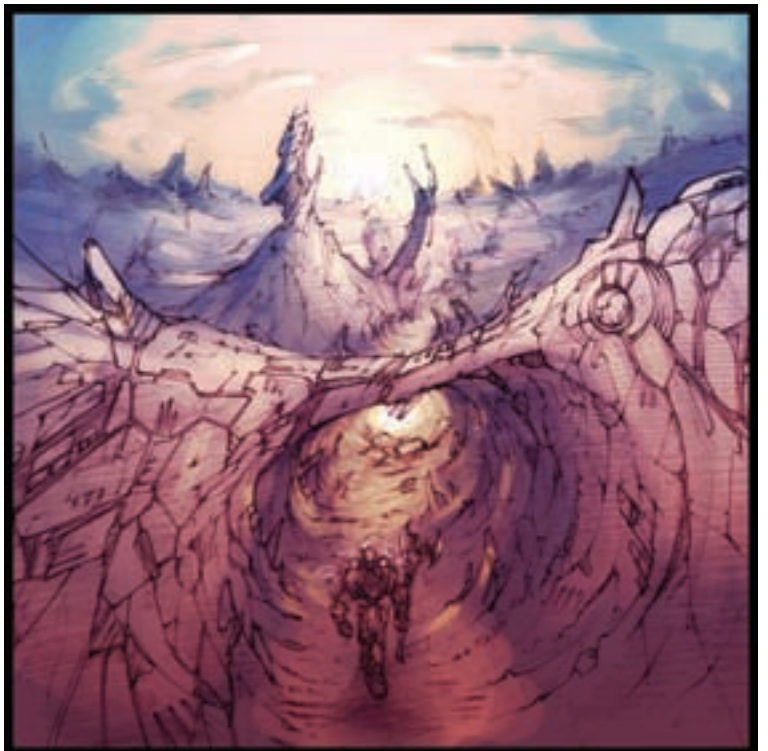
This issue's heavenly cover image is the product of the fevered imagination of James Dies, a 22-year-old screen-print artist, although his talent extends to a dazzling array of media. "I'm a bit of a jack-of-all trades when it comes to art. Although I've focused on pencil work most of my life, I've also dabbled in sculpture, been a finalist in a few film festivals for stop-motion animation, done some comic work for and been by published by VOIDstudios ([www.entervoid.com](http://www.entervoid.com)) plus designed characters and done pixel work for a few indie game projects that never made it off the ground. I'm in the process of getting an online store set up for tribal commissions. I'm always open for new projects, so if anybody's interested, give me a ring!"



These illustrations from IRON CLAD show off James' comic art style



"I'm obsessed with points, curls, and excessive detail"



# gallery

## THE CREAM OF THE WEB CROP



**GET INTERACTIVE**  
This tells you about what to click and do



**CLOSER LOOK**  
Highlights the way certain elements appear



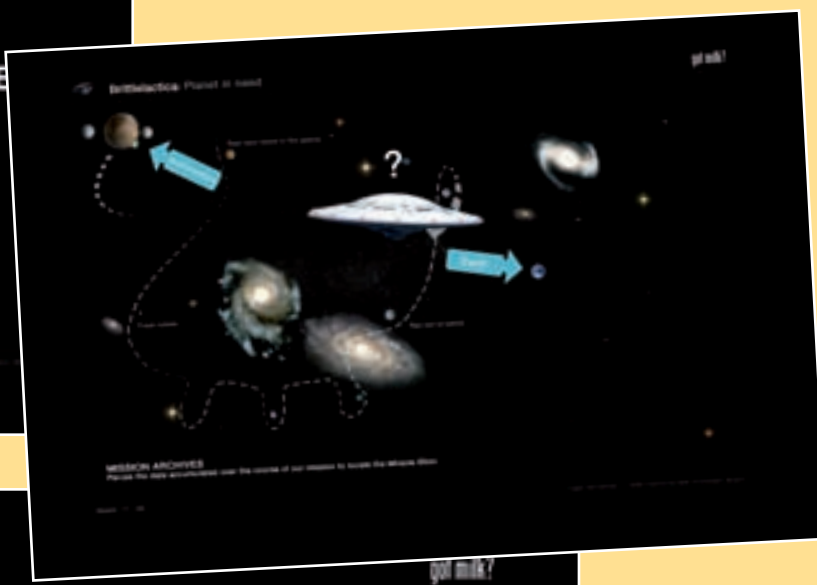
**MOVIE SEQUENCE**  
Animation, video and cool stuff to watch



**HEAR THIS**  
Gives you a clue to any audio elements



**Supreme beings**  
The attention to detail is something you have to see for yourself, but every page features video and interactive elements, even down to a complete translation system



**Milk shake**  
In a feat of Flash coding, this cow rotates 360 degrees to show what Britilactican scientists have learned. However dull your content seems, try to think outside the box...





## Drop 'em

**cleavage**  
effect

**BOOST YOUR CLEAVAGE**  
**EMBRACE YOUR**  
**AL**

## MEASURING YOUR EFFECT

DISCOVER THE COLLECTION

## LEGAL STATEMENTS



**plunging**  
effect

FOR A DRAMATIC PLUNGE  
BE DEEPLY DARING

Long maximum coverage term to give dramatic effect, under your deepest plunging neckline.

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

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EMBRACE YOUR  
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## LEGAL STATEMENTS

A group of young people are shown on a moving staircase, possibly in a subway or transit station. The image is split into two parts by a vertical line. On the left, the word "split" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. On the right, the word "rounded" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. The people are dressed in casual clothing, and the overall atmosphere is one of movement and transition.

Leo Burnett



#### Burst into action

The moment you roll over the pencil, this site bursts into life, with the letters bounding around the screen. Unusual and great fun, it's both quirky and high-tech



#### The small screen

Click on a client or floating apple and you swoop in for more detail and an individual animation. Instead of a Back button, you simply click the pencil on the outer edge



#### A ten for effort

Each element is treated individually, with either funky Flash animation or nicely integrated video. Because the main layout is stark and minimal, these balance well

## Leo Burnett

[www.leoburnett.ca](http://www.leoburnett.ca)

**Designed by:** Leo Burnett

This portfolio site for the Leo Burnett agency in Canada shows that experimentation with navigation can be a very good thing. Eschewing traditional buttons and menus for an intuitive zooming interface, browsers navigate using the pencil to click through the various site elements, trailing a line at every turn. Each campaign is given an individual treatment, while the little apples open up to reveal charming Flash animations that provide an insight into the agency's philosophy.



## Go fish

You'll find info if you click a creature, but it's not an obvious thing to do. This method is too subtle for most sites, but Amautalab gets away with it here because it's so entertaining



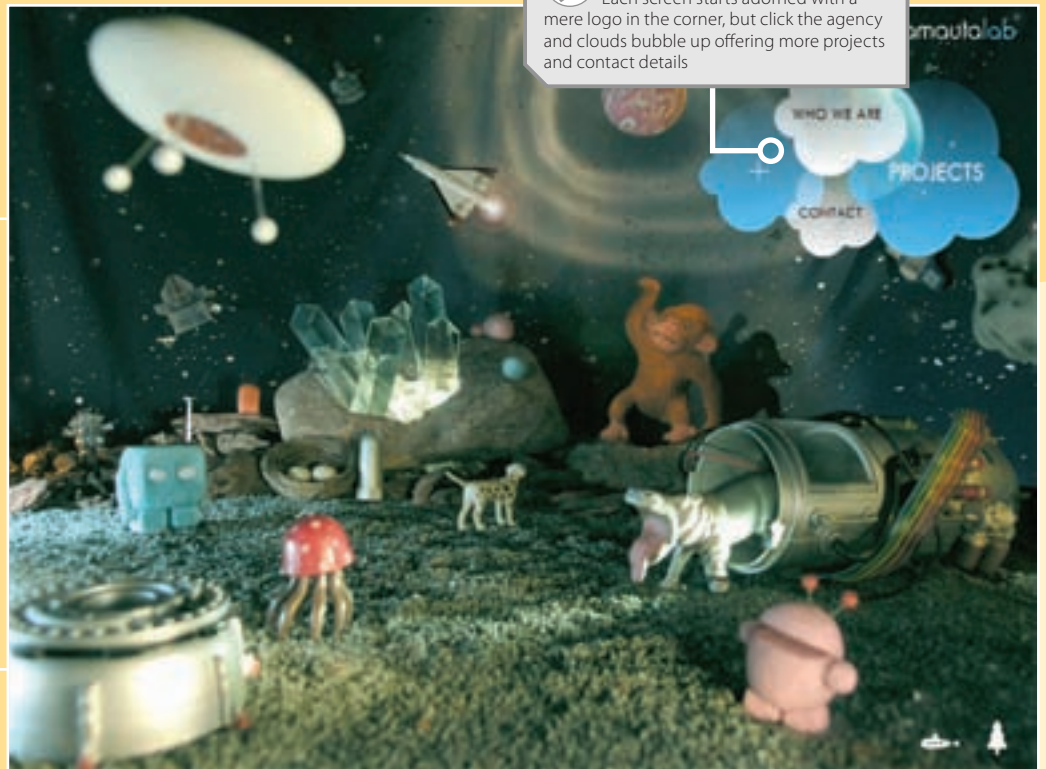
## Toy story

Each of the characters enacts a little scenario when rolled over along with an individual sound effect. Sometimes creepy, sometimes funny, always very weird



## Clouding over

Each screen starts adorned with a mere logo in the corner, but click the agency and clouds bubble up offering more projects and contact details



## Amautalab

[www.amautalab.com](http://www.amautalab.com)

**Designed by:** Amautalab

Welcome to the very surreal and darkly humorous world of Amautalab. Perhaps the most obscure agency portfolio site we've come across, it reveals three set-pieces laid out in an unusual wonderland of forest, sea and outer space. Populated by plastic models, stuffed bears and submarines that spring to life on rollover, it's certainly a very original way to create a corporate identity. Accessing any actual information involves a bit of trial and error and a lot of random clicking, but this just adds to the bizarreness of it all.



### Elemental, my deer

Repetition of key visual elements such as the red leaf, animal hide and Polaroid-style images mean that the interface looks cool rather than cluttered



### Keep it consistent

The same elements appear through the pages, creating a cohesive look. In this section even the border makes another appearance, wrapped around the central O'Neill shot



### It's a rollover

Rolling over these side elements prompts them to burst into life, encouraging a click to find out more. It's a great way to include info without swamping your site



## Moose Syrup

[www.moosesyrup.com](http://www.moosesyrup.com)

**Designed by:** Mike Hansen

Proving that even a layout crammed with a massive amount of information can work is this portfolio site from Mike Hansen. What should be a jarring selection of shapes and overwhelming information works well due to a simple colour palette, recurring elements, and consistent typographical theme. There's a lot to take in, but each element is kept small and the backdrop is plain, with the focus clearly on the intricate animated logo.



## Day dreamers

Rolling over the angular thought bubbles brings up the dream subjects. Notice how text is used sparingly and is consistent in typeface throughout (below & right)



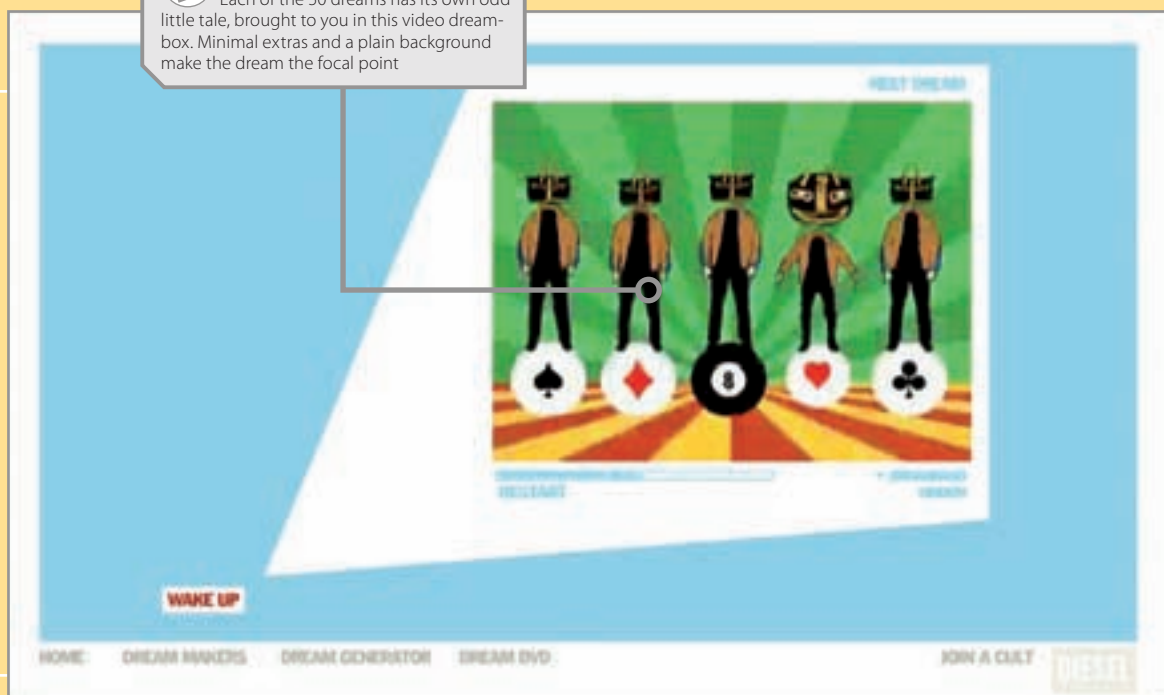
## Cut it out

The rough cutout photo style and the stylised background create a surreal overall image, but this is the perfect way in which to complement the Diesel clothing worn



## Video drone

Each of the 50 dreams has its own odd little tale, brought to you in this video dream-box. Minimal extras and a plain background make the dream the focal point



## Diesel Dreams

[www.dieseldreams.com](http://www.dieseldreams.com)

**Designed by:** Diesel

An offshoot of the funky Italian label's website, Diesel Dreams is a cool minisite that explores the dreams of the immaculately clothed models. There's a nice line in choppy photographic effects, while the simplicity of the text is a lesson in typographic treatment. As with many contemporary sites the product takes a second place to the overall style, but this is a very effective way to sell the lifestyle as well as the jeans. Get this rough cutout look yourself by following our guide to punk web style on page 68.



# bulletin

## HOT NEWS FROM THE WEB DESIGN WORLD



Will you be known as a  
Linus, Bill or an Alien?



## Going wireless

WI-FI SET TO BOOM AFTER SPANISH FIRM DELIVERS SOME DIRT-CHEAP GOODS

**THE DELIVERANCE** of an affordable wi-fi access could finally be here as Spanish firm FON gets ready to sell subsidised routers for the astoundingly reasonable price of £2.75. On a limited offer – well, until all the products are sold – you can save 80 per cent on the original price of a FON Social Router (excluding VAT and shipment costs). Addressing FON Social Router users as ‘Foneros’, the hardware will allow you to connect for free to any access point within the FON community worldwide.

“Wi-fi is universal in cities, but access isn’t,” explains FON’S Juergen Urbanski. The new social router will not only allow you to have wi-fi access from home, but will also allow you to

communicate with other members of the largest wi-fi community in the world.

To work the Social Router you must register your router and keep it powered up at all times in order to keep the FON community alive and kicking. FON’s aim is to have 50,000 working hotspots worldwide by September this year and 150,000 by the end of 2007, creating a huge community of connected surfers. Registered

Foneros are users who share their wi-fi connection in exchange for something of value and are either ‘Linuses’ or ‘Bills’. Those who wish to access the FON community but not register will be labelled as an ‘Alien’. It’s all pretty nifty stuff, the kind of thing a web-obsessive dream is made of, but we’re betting that the odd bad boy ISP or two have some clever tricks up their sleeves. [www.fon.com](http://www.fon.com)

**“FON gets ready to sell subsidised routers for the astoundingly reasonable price of £2.75”**

# NEWS in brief



## Camera magic

*PENTAX isn't just the master of hardware, and proves it is serious about its online aesthetics*

DIGITAL IMAGING COMPANY PENTAX UNVEILS ITS NEW FRESH WEB STYLES

**CAMERA MASTER** Pentax has done wonders for its image by unveiling two sports optics websites just in time to coincide with its release of a new adventure gear selection.

The new PENTAX Sport Optics website at [www.pentaxsportoptics.com](http://www.pentaxsportoptics.com) is targeted towards consumers looking to purchase binoculars and scope products for a number of different outdoor activities and hobbies. As the products are split into four different interest areas including Travel & Events, Birding, Hunting and Astronomy, the website is split into four different sections too. "Each section identifies ideal optics for individual hobbies and activities in addition to a list of additional resources (non-profit organisations and helpful links) that focus on conservation efforts," says

PENTAX. The choice between city and countryside activities has been approached with a welcoming scrolling Flash panoramic that shifts between a woodland scene and an urban metropolis.

The second of PENTAX's microsites, [www.h20camera.com](http://www.h20camera.com), originally launched one year ago, but has been given a complete make over to advertise the new line of Optio waterproof cameras. Matching the same summer earth colours of the cameras, the pages design makes the most of the aesthetics of the camera with a blooming great home page in which the various models take the form of flowers.

The company's original approach certainly made us want to look into the products further, proving that PENTAX is taking its style very seriously.



### ITV PACT

ITV has signed a new media rights deal with producers' trade body Pact. Viewers will now be able to watch ITV programmes on the Internet and mobile phones for up to a month after they have been shown on TV. 'Five' is now the only terrestrial channel not to have reached an agreement with Pact.

[www.pact.co.uk](http://www.pact.co.uk) & [www.itv.com](http://www.itv.com)



### MYSPACE AGE RESTRICTIONS

Popular networking website MySpace.com plans to introduce age restrictions in an attempt to stop adults from befriending young users. The new restrictions will mean that users over 18 years of age will no longer be able to request 'friendship' from a 14- or 15-year-old, unless they already know their email address or full name.

[www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)



### SHAKE IT ALL OUT

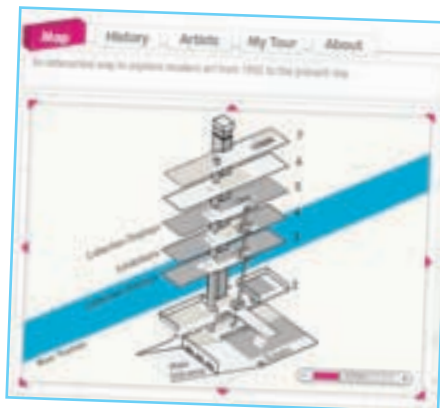
Apple has released a new version of the industry leading compositing software, Shake 4.1. The program, which created sophisticated 3D compositing, keying, image tracking and stabilization has been drastically cut in price from £1,649 to £274. "It's now priced as low as a plug-in for Final Cut Studio," commented the vice president of Applications Product Marketing.

We're not complaining.  
[www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)

## Interactive art

TATE MODERN LAUNCHES A NEW INTERACTIVE WEBSITE TO ALLOW USERS TO NAVIGATE THROUGH THE GALLERY

**TATE MODERN** has spruced up its website to include an interactive section, whereby users can navigate through each floor of the gallery. 'Explore Tate Modern' is a new feature on [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk) and allows viewers to peruse the layout of the gallery and check out details of exhibitions in more detail than ever before, searching for the locations of particular artists and more.

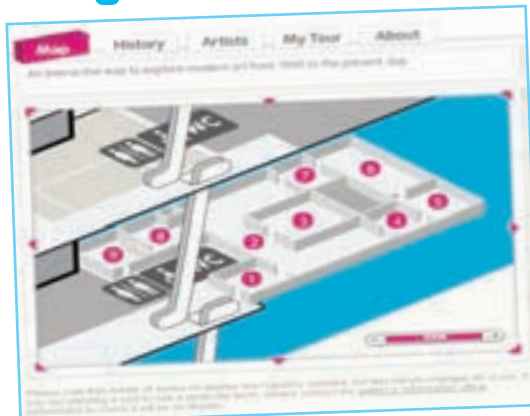


**"A superb example of how a simple design can be effective in pulling in the crowds"**

The navigation layout takes the form of a three-dimensional floorplan, including details of access, floor level and even where the nearest loos are. Once you've zoomed into a particular collection you're interested in you can take a closer look at the separate rooms and even check out individual artworks on display. All carried out with an impressively fluid and simple polish.

There are no hefty download waits here, and the whole project is a superb example of how a simple design can be effective in pulling in the crowds. The only major drawback of this new concept is that because of copyright restrictions, some of the images cannot be displayed on the website.

Head to [www.tate.org.uk/modern/explore](http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/explore) and indulge in a little culture as you explore this detailed and accomplished site.



*The simple but effective new feature on the Tate site shows that you don't have to get complex to perfect web interactivity*

## We Dare you

WANTED: HOT, YOUNG,  
AND VERY BRAVE TALENT

**DARE SCHOOL**, a graduate recruitment programme for creatives, is on the lookout for ten hot young things who would like to start a career in interactive advertising. There are no demands that you've had training at college or specific skills, but talent and drive are a must. The new recruits will be rewarded with a year's on-the-job training at Dare, whose clients include Sony Ericsson, BBC, Barclays and Wanadoo, along with a starting salary of £17,000.

Sound good to you? Well now you have to pluck up the nerve to call Dare's secretary Marjorie on +44 (0) 203 008 5555 and explain to her why you're worthy of a place over the phone. If your telephone manner leaves you in a quiver, then you can also give your pitch via email at [us@daredigital.com](mailto:us@daredigital.com).

To fulfil the creative brief you need to come up with an interactive idea to promote watching TV on your mobile phone. Your idea can take any form including web, phone, electronic poster or your own invention. The only constraint is that you must explain your idea to Marjorie in 25 words or fewer: "You can use 26, even 27 if you like, but we've found that the simpler ideas are always the best ones." So what are you waiting for? Pick up that phone and start pitching! [www.dareschool.com](http://www.dareschool.com)



*A call to Marjorie could seriously alter your life*

**"Pluck up the nerve to call Dare's secretary Marjorie and explain why you're worthy of a place"**



## A big deal

COMPUTING GIANTS ADOBE AND GOOGLE SIGN A DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

**LINKING ARMS** and running at Microsoft at full pelt, Adobe and Google have joined forces and signed a multi-year agreement that will see Google's Toolbar distributed with various Adobe products. As part of the agreement, a new Google Toolbar has already been added to Adobe's Macromedia Shockwave Player. The Toolbar will be offered as part of the Shockwave Player installation process for Internet Explorer on Windows.

The signed deal will also see the new addition on a number of other Adobe products. Available as a free download, the Shockwave Player allows users to

view interactive web content akin to Flash Player. "As leaders in our respective market categories, it's fitting for Adobe and Google to work together to improve the ways customers engage with ideas and information," said Shantanu Narayen, president and chief operating officer at Adobe. "Our customers will benefit from the power and convenience of the Google Toolbar, and the popularity and reach of Adobe technology gives Google even broader exposure to a growing base of consumers. We expect the agreement to represent significant revenue to Adobe over a period of years."



## TOP Downloads



### CRESTOCK

[www.crestock.com](http://www.crestock.com)

Here, you can download images for a fixed fee of \$10. Great for a couple of reasons; there will be no nasty surprises when the bill comes in and you know you can afford every image. If you want to try your hand at a bit of photography you can also supply your shots and add \$2 into your pocket every time a shot is used.



### TYPODERMIC

[www.typodermic.com](http://www.typodermic.com)

Add some pizzazz to your websites and get serious with your typography with this site. You can browse through the vast selection of artwork that has used Typodermic fonts to get an idea of how you can incorporate new fonts into your sites. If you can't see what you want then you can get in touch with the team, let them know how you'd like your font to look and let them deliver the goods!



### BLUEVINYL

[www.bvfonts.com](http://www.bvfonts.com)

A stunning download site featuring the work of designer, Jess Latham, Bluevinyl features both freeware and pay fonts of the highest standard. The only clause is that you must pay for your fonts if you are serious about publishing them on the web, but they're of such a high standard that we have no gripes!



### DREAMSUITE GEL

[www.autofx.com](http://www.autofx.com)

For those who use Photoshop in their work, you may be interested to add some fun and useful plug-ins to your software. DreamSuite Gel gives you the opportunity to create vibrant, translucent images. Perfect for adding extra elements to a boring homepage or creating a snazzy brand logo.



Talk the talk and walk the walk by jazzing up your studio with these ultra funky gadgets



## APPLE MACBOOK

Price: £1029/\$1499

Web: [www.apple.com/uk](http://www.apple.com/uk)

Do you like to stand out from the crowd? If so your next purchase should be the MacBook black. We're all used to seeing the white Macs (yawn) and this sleek black beauty will match your U2 iPod. The new MacBook from Apple features Intel technology, a screen over 13 inches wide as well as all of a Mac's usual fare, and comes in either traditional white or the bold black. Which will you choose?



## MIMOCO MIMOBOTS

Price: Various prices. Average prices are: 256MB

\$49.95/£27.40, 512MB \$69.95/£38.37, 1GB

\$99.95/£54.83, 2GB \$144.95/£79.50

Web: [www.mimoco.com](http://www.mimoco.com)

These cute little USB hubs measuring two inches come in a variety of styles and memory sizes. From the geek chic 'Ramona', to the more edgy 'Hate', there's a character to suit everyone. Featuring gorgeous creations from designers TADO and Jon Burgerman, the Mimobots are available in 256MB, 512MB, 1GB and 2GB capacities, use high-speed USB 2.0 and are compatible with both Mac and Windows. You can also keep your little Mimobots snug in a plush furry hood suit, available in white, silver and black for \$9.95/£5.45 separately or \$5/£2.74 when ordered with your device.



## AMERICAN EXPRESS BUTTERFLY

Price: Free to Gold Card account holders

Web: [www.americanexpress.com](http://www.americanexpress.com)

Impress important clients and show them you're an all-round style-conscious dude with the new Butterfly card from American Express. Free to all Gold Card holders, the Butterfly card can be folded into a sleek and stylish silver case, which you can safely hang around your neck. You can use the Butterfly just like a normal card, so wherever the American Express symbol's displayed. The number will appear separately on your statement to remind you that you used the special card for a certain transaction. That really will put some bling into the credit card sting.



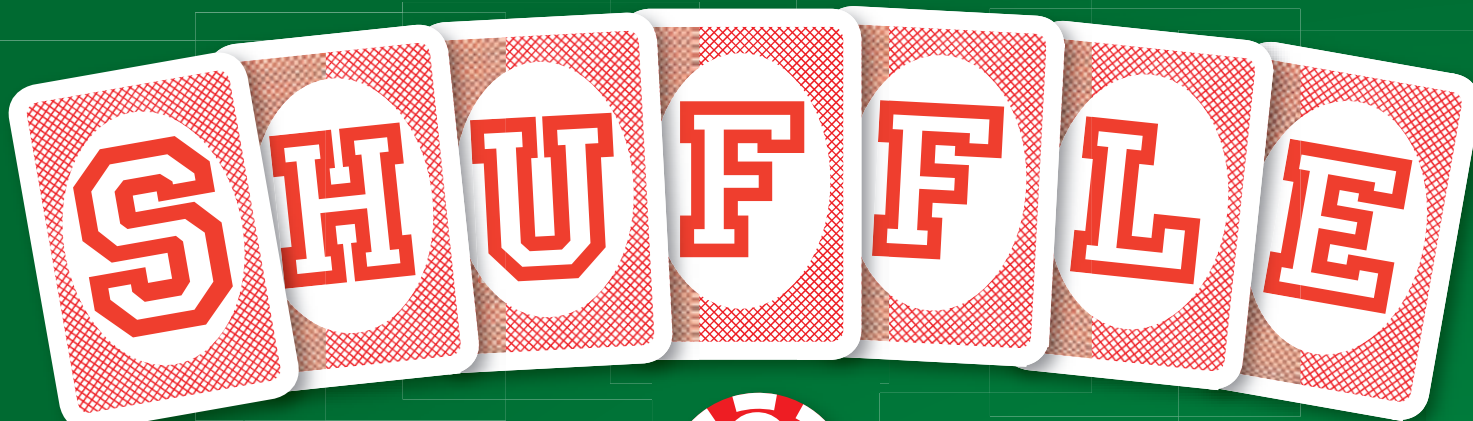
## PS LAB CHAIRBAG

Price: €169/£116.60

Web: [www.pslab.nl](http://www.pslab.nl)

Every web designer loves a good place to slouch and relax after hours toiling with templates. A piece of furniture crossed between a bean bag and a chair, with the aesthetics of a buoy. This novel chair is rugged enough to stand the test of time and as many spilled beers as you like. Available in a variety of different colours and easily tucked away into a handy bag. The Chairbag is perfect for dragging into the garden if you fancy doing some laptop work al fresco.





## FLASH MAN WINS AWARD!

April saw regular *Web Designer* expert Mark Shufflebottom fly to Las Vegas and accept a prestigious award from the Broadcast Education Association (BEA). His 'A Dark Matter' project, designed during his time as a multimedia tutor at Bournemouth University, was judged Best of Festival 2006.

*With a single handshake, Mark became a made man in the online industry*

**W**inning an award is not something that happens to you every day, so how exactly would you react when an email arrives informing you that the BEA requires photos, audio files and written documentation about your project?

My first reaction was that this is just a wind-up. Another junk email cluttering my inbox. But hang on a minute, how would anyone know I'd entered this competition, after all, when I was asked to enter my work on behalf of Bournemouth University, I just burned the CDs and sent them off without telling anyone – well, I'd never win, would I? Maybe I'd better keep this email.

So that's how I found out I had won. No moment of glory with fanfares blowing and

Working at Bournemouth University teaching Interactive Media certainly has its perks. For a start, I'd always fancied having a masters degree, so when a course started in Interactive Media, which I was teaching at undergraduate level, it was the perfect opportunity to get one. This is how I came to produce a piece of work to be submitted for a competition.

When it came to my final project, it had to be something a little bit special. I decided

**"I actually heard several gasps as people watched me moving first-person through a 3D environment"**

a crowd going wild, but by actually reading very carefully an email that I thought was junk. The exciting part of why the BEA wanted information from me was so that they could make a little five-minute documentary about the work to show at the awards ceremony in Las Vegas. Hang on a minute, does that mean actually going to Las Vegas? This was getting better by the minute.

to produce an interactive narrative. This is a story which I wanted people to discover while roaming through a virtual world. The piece took about four months to put together from concept to completion.

So with such a prestigious award being given to a *Web Designer* writer, the editor insisted on me boasting... I mean sharing an in-depth analysis of the award ceremony.



## A DARK MATTER

### MARK REVEALS HOW HE CREATED HIS PROJECT, WHAT IT IS AND WHAT SOFTWARE HE USED

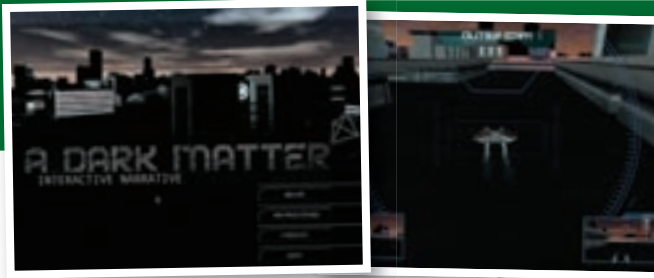
An **interactive narrative** can be anything from a text-based page with hyperlinks to allow the reader to experience the story in any order, through to a videogame. Videogames tend to have a high amount of interactivity but a very linear story. *A Dark Matter* is a project that has the 3D environment of a computer game but allows the player to discover the story in a non-linear way and then try to piece the story together.

The 3D environment was built in 3D Studio Max as separate scenes for each level of the project. This was exported and taken into Director so that the real-time Shockwave 3D engine could be used to explore the scene. The code and interactivity was added here so that the player could navigate the scenes in first-person mode. The story segments were filmed in the university's TV studio against a blue screen and composited with After Effects

onto backgrounds created in 3D and Photoshop. These were saved as Flash Video files and streamed into the Shockwave 3D scene as textures on interactive elements.

Once the player has discovered some of the story they can open the inventory and watch it again. There is also a timeline upon which the user can place clips in order to build up an overall story. This part of the project was built in Flash, playing back Flash's FLV video files. Once the player is happy with the timeline, they can submit it to an online database, where they then have the option of viewing other people's timelines and comments. It was this community/video-editing aspect of the project that most impressed the judges.

Mark is hoping to make the *A Dark Matter* project available for download – including source code – from his site [www.webspaceinvader.com](http://www.webspaceinvader.com).



Mark's *A Dark Matter* project, a 3D experience that wowed the judges



### WEDNESDAY 26TH APRIL:

So this is the registration day to the BEA Festival of Media Arts. It's being held in the Las Vegas Convention Centre, a small building – only the size of 68 football fields! You'd think a building of that size might stick out, but the first thing you learn about Vegas is that everything is huge. The second thing you learn is that everything is fake. You realise that as you come in to land on the flight. Looking out of the window there is desert as far as the eye can see, then out of nowhere a lush, green city springs up. Even our driver from the airport told us that the only green things in Vegas are either painted or have hoses running underneath!

The Broadcast Education Association (BEA) runs during the North American Broadcasters (NAB) conference week. This is a giant show encompassing everything from news broadcasting to animation, and of course multimedia or 'networked media', into which it seems to be evolving. After registering I decided to check out Adobe at this conference week and see all the latest developments for Flash, Dreamweaver and the rest of the Studio suite. Got a great demo of all the latest developments in Flash Communication Server which is now renamed Flash Media Server and took a look at the fledgling authoring for mobile devices stand.

On getting back to the hotel I discovered that all the day's events from the conference were being broadcast just to the Vegas region especially for all the attendees... mental!

### THURSDAY 27TH APRIL:

The most bizarre experience of starting any day is that all the casinos are just as full as

when you went to bed! This was my first official award presentation, the jury for the awards was split into two jurying divisions. I received first place on the Eastern Jurying and then won the overall Best of Festival award. This was due to take place after lunch at 1.30pm so that gave me just enough time to catch some rays around the hotel pool.

In total, Bournemouth University managed to scoop five awards in the different regions, winning two third places and two honorable mentions for Interactive Media. I was presented with plaques on behalf of the winners and myself, so my luggage allowance was already being eaten away. The ceremony was in a much smaller informal room and I was asked to demonstrate my project. I actually heard several gasps as people watched me moving first-person through a 3D environment they would expect to see in PlayStation games. Afterwards, several requests were made for the source code of the project.

That left plenty of time in the evening to hit Las Vegas Strip and check out some of the entertainment, sights and sounds of the city.

### FRIDAY 28TH APRIL: STRIP SHOW

Well this is the big day! The awards ceremony was kicking off at 6pm with dinner, I even had to attend a rehearsal at 4.30pm. This gave me plenty of time to check out the shops. I needed some new headphones for the return journey, but the Apple store had sold out. Fortunately for me, I found an iPod vending machine in the Hilton Hotel so I managed to get some.

The day flew by and I was soon at the rehearsal. Everyone was told to keep

acceptance speeches down to just 30 seconds (hmm... I think that's possible). The event eventually got underway with a red carpet reception and a real buzz around the place. Because I had a badge on, people kept coming over to say how much they liked my work. This is about as near to a celebrity lifestyle as I'll ever get.

Once the ceremony began it was very professional with a huge cinema screen to show the work. The evening was hosted by David Bianculli, a media critic for the New York Times. With dramatic music ringing through the auditorium, my name was announced and my project was up on the main display screen. I'd cut a trailer to 'Stem' by DJ Shadow, which was now blasting through the auditorium – it felt amazing. I was called to the stage to thunderous applause. The thanks were soon over and I was back in my seat, leaving me to enjoy the rest of the show.

When you spend time working on a project, you are never really sure quite how it will be received. This was such a fantastic experience as not only was the project being enjoyed, it was given the highest accolade of the show, The Best of Festival. The \$1,000 prize money and Avid video-editing software was the finishing touch to a fantastic visit.

Legitimately on the red carpet, Mark looks every inch the celebrated pro





## Resham Sidhu **Skive**

SKIVE IS ONE OF THE UK'S HOTTEST INTERACTIVE AGENCIES. WE CORNERED ART DIRECTOR RESHAM SIDHU TO FIND OUT WHAT MAKES IT SO SPECIAL

### Where do you find your ideas and inspiration?

My ideas and inspiration come for many things, from my surroundings to my experiences in life and even my childhood. I like to surround myself with toys and gadgets that keep my creative mind ticking! The studio space is very inspirational – we have work all over the walls of graphics and designs that inspire great things. As a child I grew up playing the classic console games, from Sinclair Spectrum to the Commodore 64, those games captivated my attention and encouraged a desire to be creative and have fun.

### What's the atmosphere like at Skive?

Most people get the misconception that we are a bunch of Skivers but that couldn't be further from the truth. Although there is a great spirit and vibe in the studio we balance the fun and games with solid hard work. Working at Skive is like being adopted by a huge family – we all look after each other and when there are late nights they often turn into pizza-eating events!

### What has been your favourite project so far?

I have been exceptionally lucky at Skive as I have had the chance to work and pitch for some awesome projects, all of which push me to extreme creative levels.

However a recent pitch for a major Sports Brand really pushed my creative thinking forward, the entire design team was obsessed with the project and we began thinking of some fantastic online concepts that really broke the mould from conventional websites. What was so fantastic about this project is the hard work, passion and energy that went into presenting to the client and demonstrating that we understood the brand and could really take it to another level. Being a

*Created for Castrol, Rate My Ride is an interactive game that encourages you to pimp up high-end motors*



designer is not only about creating great ideas, it's about expressing them with a passion that makes the client believe in the concept.

### What kind of trends do you see emerging?

I certainly think Flash video will be more widely used in the next few months, with software

me that some designers don't put much effort into presenting with flair and some energy. The best way to get your portfolio to stand out is to make yours different, you're creative so think of a different way to present it; it doesn't have to be a CV with some links on it.

**“Nothing about Skive is like a normal job. We seek individuals who can bring something great to the table”**

becoming so advanced that designers are finding it easier to achieve the creative effects and styles without taking years to develop and costing a fortune. Most clients don't demand specific technologies, however they do look to you to know what's happening on the web.

### You've got a job ad for designers on the site: what are you looking for in new blood?

We are constantly searching for new people. We're looking for people who are excellent at what they do, but who have a great passion and energy for their work. Nothing about Skive is like a normal job, so we seek quirky individuals who can bring something great to the table.

### How could someone really stand out?

A designer's portfolio is the most important piece of work they will put together and it surprises

### Is there a campaign you'd really love to get involved with?

I've always enjoyed the classic *Star Wars* films and have been a huge fan of directors like George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. It

would be fantastic to work on their next film. Can you imagine bringing their film styles alive on a website? That would be surreal!

Skive off at [www.skive.co.uk](http://www.skive.co.uk)



*The Starburst game site shows how a controlled palette and sharp layout can still be easily surfed, even when there's loads going on!*



The Gary Rhodes site at [www.garyrhodes.com](http://www.garyrhodes.com) features brilliant kitchen-related pre-loaders and controls

# Message board

POST: Web Designer, Richmond House,  
33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, BH2 6EZ

FORUM: [www.webdesignermag.co.uk/forum](http://www.webdesignermag.co.uk/forum)

EMAIL: [webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk](mailto:webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk)

Air your opinions on the web industry or our magazine in general in our regular roundup of readers' opinions

## Honesty policy

Hi *Web Designer*, just a note on the 'Will Work For Food' feature in issue 119. Thanks for the guidance – I'd put together what I thought was a sensible and professional portfolio, but after reading the article I realised that it was really just a safe, rather dull representation of what I was capable of. I added some off-the-wall stuff as a talking point, and reworded my CV to reflect me and my interests, rather than a faceless third-person personality-free codehead. I don't know if it'll work, but I feel more comfortable about going into an interview now, so thanks.

*Jason C, Brighton*

Well it's brave, but it's the right thing to do, Jason. It's the only way to get into a company that is in line with your own personal goals, and success is all the sweeter when you've been up-front about what you want from the start. Stay professional, but make sure your portfolio is true to what you can do.

## 'Shop on the box

Most of you may have already heard of this one but I'm really enjoying the PhotoshopTV podcasts and highly recommend them to anyone interest in the industry from beginners to very experienced users. Visit [www.photoshoptv.com](http://www.photoshoptv.com).

*Perfecthill, via the forum*

Thanks for the tip, Perfecthill. We've seen these guys in action and they really are great. Not only will you learn loads of useful Photoshop tricks, but there are competitions and links on the site too. An educational use for that Video iPod you've splashed out on (not that watching Britney strut her stuff isn't educational).

## Absolute beginner

As a student graduating this summer (all going well), I was hoping, until I find a decent job, to try my hand at freelancing as a web designer. I have managed to get my name down to do a couple of sites which I'm working on at the moment for a couple of companies and I'm doing them for free to try and build up my

## MAIL OF THE MONTH

### Teaching tactics

Hi everyone. I'm currently looking to improve my web design creative skills and I was wondering if anyone knows of a good part time/short course that covers the creative aspects of web design? All the web design courses I have seen advertised seem to teach you how to code HTML and use Dreamweaver rather than the creative design area.

I want to learn about colours, fonts, layouts, etc, rather than the technical stuff, which I already know. I live in the London area and would appreciate any ideas advice and ideas you have.

*Cdewsnip, via the forum*

We'll certainly be looking at including more course details in the mag in the future, as we've had loads of you contact us about design training – Flash 8 seems to be making a particular impact now that it's heading into the mainstream. But for a creative take on web design you really need to start with the basics of form, typography and colour. For serious creative cred, try Central St Martins' evening course in Beginners' Graphic Design, which encourages the development of ideas as well as an understanding of layout and typography (<http://courses.csm.arts.ac.uk>). For something that works around your schedule, try the Open University's Design and Designing, which aims to develop your design awareness skills ([www3.open.ac.uk](http://www3.open.ac.uk)). Floodlight ([www.floodlight.co.uk](http://www.floodlight.co.uk)) is a site specifically set up for Londoners looking for courses, with over 40,000 listed.

portfolio, which I gather is kinda important. I saw an article, *Becoming a Web Designer*, by Matt Dwyer at <http://tinyurl.com/kt2of>, but it's American/Canadian. I have a suggestion for an article for this

**"I reworded my CV to reflect me and my interests, rather than a third-person personality-free codehead"**



*Swot up on your imaging app with the addictive Photoshop TV episodes. And there's always a happy ending*

great magazine: *Becoming a Web Designer* – A How To Guide, which could show the best way to getting started: which skills are most beneficial, the importance of a portfolio, advertising and getting known out there, rates to charge, meeting potential clients and selling yourself to them, how to get involved with other designers and the best resources available on the net.

*John, via the forum*

Thanks for the suggestion – we'll certainly give it some thought. Although we've covered areas important to designers before, readers are clearly hungry for more. Look out for coverage in future issues!



# HTML Heaven

With today's web becoming increasingly Flash-heavy, **Ian Main** looks to our development past to consider a more angelic future

**IT'S AN EXCITING TIME** right now for web design. But wait, haven't we all heard that before in several guises? I certainly have on numerous occasions throughout my involvement with web design.

For example, there was the time my creative arts teacher told me the very same thing after discovering that Photoshop had a slice-and-export function for creating web pages on the fly.

I think every aspiring web designer who used Dreamweaver for the first time while learning HTML said to themselves how exciting

the "what you see is what you get" feature was. We've also heard it said about Flash, CSS, SVG. We're constantly hearing about Ajax and Ruby on Rails and seeing how web design is changing to reflect Web 2.0 and blog trends. It is an exciting time right now, but what makes it stand apart from earlier developments is that this time we have acknowledged the importance of content.

We are continuing to work hard to ensure our designs focus on accessibility and forward compatibility, because, as we all know, content is king.

**"We are continuing to work hard to ensure our designs focus on accessibility and forward compatibility"**

# HTML Heaven



The ability to integrate its services into your sites is a real boon for Flickr

## Evolution revolution

So what have been the key milestones in the evolution of HTML, and how have these impacted web designers?

Going on roughly 15 years now, HTML has transformed from a language that provided only basic formatting like headings, paragraphs and hyperlinks to what you now see in your web browser or handheld device.

In 1993 Mosaic, the first Microsoft Windows graphical browser, was released. This browser allowed a wider audience to use the web at its full potential. Graphics in web pages became the norm, and with it came the need to offer a richer array of information and data. So the HTML specification was extended to incorporate visual tags like font, bold, italic, strikethrough, and bgcolor. Of course this may have been more than enough for your average site developers, but designers demanded more.

Although greater functionality was included, it soon became clear that the

tools available weren't going to fulfil a designer's expectation. Tools were used in an innovative way to give a closer result to expectation, and so the HTML table design was born.

To this day designing websites by using HTML tables is still common – even more than ten years since the first takeup of the table trend began.

Although this layout system did revolutionise web design, the complexity of the markup structure meant that a straightforward update was not a simple task, and resultant errors could readily make the website inoperable.

While all of this was happening, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) was quietly developing a specification that would one day resolve the issue of how to separate presentation from site content. That day has now arrived.

## Next generation

The second generation of web applications is well and truly here, and has helped shape

## WORKING TOGETHER



### Wufoo

[www.wufoo.com](http://www.wufoo.com)  
Building forms for HTML can be an interesting task. There is no set standard in place for correct format use and browsers render inputs differently, so no form looks entirely the same. This is where Wufoo comes in. Wufoo helps build online forms instantly and the whole process is simple; it's completely interactive and the end results are beautiful, usable forms.

**“The second generation of web apps is here, and has helped shape the web into an online operating system”**

the web into a complete online operating system. Web 2.0 gives us the opportunity to access personal services anywhere in the world, at any time we want through an Internet connection.

We're spoiled for choice, from sharing, storing and organising your photos in a social system with Flickr (<http://flickr.com>) to collaborating in real-time with online word processors ([www.writely.com](http://www.writely.com)). All of this is made possible with HTML as the underlining framework, only this time we have a language that focuses on providing the accessible and forward-compatible future that HTML couldn't offer. Welcome, XHTML 1.0 (Extensible HyperText Markup Language). XHTML is essentially HTML but with a much more strict, clean syntax that results in a document that is not only backwards compatible but ensures future cross-browser, cross-platform, and cross-media compatibility.

The W3C is currently working on the XHTML 2.0 draft specification which, when released, will include XForms, a replacement for HTML forms to allow user input forms to be completely compatible between different media types.

## ALTERNATIVE ARSENAL



### Ruby on Rails

[www.rubyonrails.org](http://www.rubyonrails.org)  
Ruby on Rails is an open-source web app framework written in Ruby, which makes building web applications a whole lot simpler. It's designed with optimisation in mind and Ruby on Rails' philosophy is “Convention over configuration”. Apps such as Basecamp ([www.basecamphq.com](http://www.basecamphq.com)) and Campfire ([www.campfirenow.com](http://www.campfirenow.com)) are built with Ruby on Rails.

*Moving the desktop to the Internet domain is pivotal to the theory behind Web 2.0 content*





## WORKING TOGETHER



### Google Finance

<http://finance.google.com>  
Google Finance is a perfect example of how Flash and HTML can work seamlessly side by side. By using Flash the user can interact with financial charts, click and drag back and forward through financial history or zoom in on key timeframes. The chart is synchronised with corresponding news articles to help return relevant information.

*Browser support has always been a bone of contention for designers*



*Firefox is among a group of new browsers that acknowledge key web standards*



It's also developing XFrames, which is a replacement to solve many of the usability issues that HTML frames currently have, and another notable feature: a new list element that will increase the semantics of navigational menus.

Valid XHTML aims us in the right direction towards a more accessible, usable web experience. However, only in the last few years have designers seemingly taken notice that it's their responsibility to work to a standard. A web standard created to provide an equal experience for all users, regardless of disabilities like blindness or lack of mobility or simply just supporting browsers, operating systems and media types.

By using web standards your websites will be much easier to update, load much faster, return better search engine results and provide a device-ready, future-ready website or web application.

Now that web browsers are acting more responsibly, technologies like web standards, CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) and

XHTML are flourishing after having endured a wait of many years while browsers caught up. The problems for these technologies arise when leading web browsers don't

[com/globalstats](http://com/globalstats)) have Internet Explorer's popularity ranging from between 53 and 88 per cent. It is worth considering that these statistics will often reflect the

**"Valid XHTML aims us in the right direction towards a more accessible, usable web experience"**

conform to standards but rather create their own closed set of standards and rules. Although accurate statistics for web browser usage are hard to find, we do know that Microsoft's Internet Explorer 6 remains the leading browser in this market. It is likely this is a result of it being pre-installed with every copy of Windows since the 1995 version, obviously giving it a vast user base. In fact, seven sources ([www.upsdell.com/BrowserNews/stat.htm](http://www.upsdell.com/BrowserNews/stat.htm)) as well as W3Counter ([www.w3counter.com](http://www.w3counter.com))

nature of the website. For example, a lower figure might be from a website whose visitors are aware of better web browsers than Internet Explorer – such websites are often technology-based – while a higher percentage could be sourced from websites such as local government services, or possibly news websites, where the target audience covers an older age group who often adapt to technological changes at a slower rate. Mozilla Firefox, Mozilla Camino, Opera, Safari, OmniWeb and Konqueror are

## TAKING A STAND

### Ryan Nichols

Web Designer

<http://applestoorang.es>

"Both XHTML and Flash have advantages and limitations, and should be used where they are most appropriate. Flash has the rich media capabilities we crave, but is a proprietary technology and limited by being stuck as a plug-in within the browser. HTML is everywhere, flexible and cheap to produce, yet it lacks rich media capabilities and is slow in terms of executing JavaScript. I believe what we have now with Flash and XHTML will really prove to be a temporary solution to our needs in the future. We need to evolve an open and standards-based technology that has the advantages of both. SVG and Safari's canvas solution are a step in that direction, but it will be a few years before it gains the tools necessary to satisfy the Flash designer or developer."





## “Opera has done a decent job of providing technology for small screen devices for some time”

all classified as modern browsers as they are regularly updated, some even have a nightly release system in place. They do a fantastic job of supporting CSS and all closely follow the W3C specifications.

When designing for the web this means that pages will look similar when viewed across these browsers, which of course is what we all expect.

### Setting standards

It's not just computer-based web browsers that need to conform to web standards. Now that the Internet can be accessed from practically anywhere, mobile device technology is moving at a pace to satisfy the demands of a more mobile user base. Opera has done a decent job of providing technology for small-screen devices for some time, although this seems to have only recently received greater recognition. Companies such as Nintendo ship both its new console, Nintendo Wii, and its handheld, Nintendo DS, with the Opera web browser. Opera is also found in devices made by Nokia and has even been integrated into in-flight entertainment systems aboard passenger aircraft.

The advantages to be gained by building on interoperable standards are clear rather than having a situation of multiple completely independent closed sets of methodologies. The ability to separate presentational aspects from content is one of the

### ALTERNATIVE ARSENAL



#### Ajax

[www.ajaxinfo.com](http://www.ajaxinfo.com)  
Ajax (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML) gives web developers the power to create interactive and more responsive web applications. Instead of web pages having to reload to return exchanged data, Ajax can fetch data and place it instantly within web pages. This results in a more interactive experience for the user and has somewhat bridged the gap between Flash and HTML.

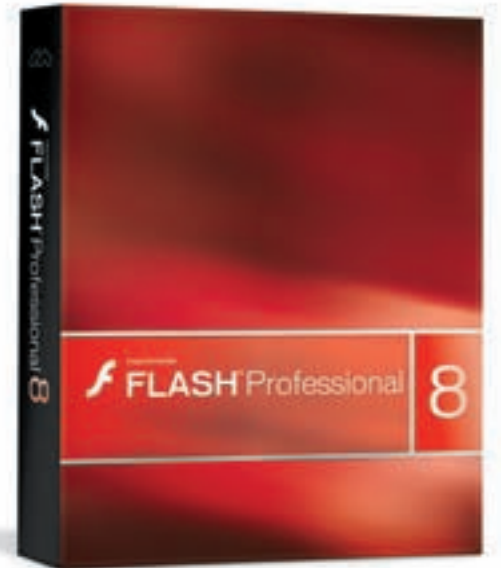
### WORKING TOGETHER



#### Script.aculo.us

<http://script.aculo.us>  
Script.aculo.us provides users with complete easy-to-use JavaScript libraries that harness that Ajax essence we all love. There is a demo page that shows the power of Ajax, like a drag and drop shopping cart, transitional animations, and auto completion, which started the whole Ajax trend.

*Saint or sinner? It's really how you use Flash that plays the biggest part in its effectiveness*



main reasons why we can render websites on a Nintendo system, on a projector, or even on Braille feedback device. This wasn't possible when web designers embedded presentational code into their layouts because no matter what media type your website was rendered in, it would always render the same way for a computer screen. CSS gives web designers the power to completely separate every presentational element needed for that web page into an external style sheet file.

That external style sheet has rules that determine how that web page should be rendered on a computer screen; conversely, a different style sheet could have rules for displaying when a handheld device is detected. Upon recognising a screen reader for visually impaired users another style sheet can provide a richer experience by using rules that control voice characteristics like pitch, speed,

volume, gender or even to simply spell out acronyms or abbreviations. Additionally, let's not forget the importance of rendering appropriately for print media.

### Accessible to all

By utilizing a semantically structured website it doesn't matter what style sheet you are using, in fact, it means the website doesn't even require a style sheet. Of course, you'll lose all your presentational elements but the underlying hierarchy of information will remain intact. It is essential that search engines are able to index an HTML page without having to wade through any superfluous markup. A clean, semantic structure will essentially result in a page that is indexed correctly thus maximizing the opportunity to return a higher search result rank.

So how do other media types rate at providing an accessible experience for all



*Nintendo's next console will arrive with an Opera browser for better web surfing*



Sites like Dave Shea's famous CSS Zen Garden provide a real lesson for styling great pages



users? Macromedia Flash is one of the most widely available technologies for the web and, according to Adobe, is installed on 97.7 per cent of all machines that access the Internet ([www.adobe.com/products/player\\_census/flashplayer](http://www.adobe.com/products/player_census/flashplayer)).

Flash content is rendered independently from a web browser so it looks identical

impaired users, and screen reader access for visually impaired users.

Another issue that Flash presents is the breaking of browser-controlled actions, as it is a separate technology not controlled by the web browser. The forward and back toolbar buttons have no effect within Flash content and it is common for users

windows – users should have the option to open a link in the same window, a new window or a new tab.

### The right way

Just as there is a correct and incorrect way to use HTML, there is a correct and incorrect way to use Flash. Large bodies of content shouldn't be rendered in Flash for the simple reason that search engines cannot index the content. Nor should website navigations be rendered in Flash. Some search engines have the ability to index each individual navigational item and display it in the search results, but this only works when the navigation is marked up with valid HTML. Flash navigations also mean that users lose the ability to decide how they want to interact with links, such as whether they should open in a new page or new tab. Flash certainly has its place on the web, and just like HTML, it's here to stay for quite some time. But there

## "Flash provides a rich multimedia environment dedicated to animation and interactivity..."

on any graphical browser that has the relevant Flash player plug-in installed. Flash provides a rich multimedia environment dedicated to animation and interactivity by using text, graphics, video and audio in a compressed format, but what impact does this technology have on web accessibility and users with disabilities?

Due to the relative ease of creating a Flash presentation, embedding it into a HTML document and uploading it, a lot of Flash developers are unaware of what implication that has on the web and its variations of viewers.

It is more difficult to support users with disabilities, for example: providing keyboard control for mobility impaired users, providing captions for hearing

to accidentally restart the Flash animation by clicking the back button on the web browser. Users also lose control over how they want their browser windows to function while viewing a Flash website. Now a lot of web browsers are using a tab system to control multiple browser

*Microbot pushes design boundaries, but does it embody good, honest design?*



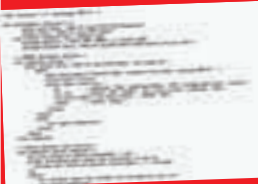
### WORKING TOGETHER



#### Lightbox JS

[www.huddletogether.com/projects/lightbox2](http://www.huddletogether.com/projects/lightbox2)  
Lightbox JS is a slideshow picture viewer, equivalent to many Flash examples. Lightbox JS is built with JavaScript and CSS, uses transitional effects, and has keyboard support. It's extremely simple to set up and modify and is supported across a wide range of web browsers.

### ALTERNATIVE ARSENAL



#### XSLT

[www.w3.org/TR/xslt](http://www.w3.org/TR/xslt)  
XSLT (Extensible Stylesheet Language Transformations) is a powerful templating language that transforms XML documents into web content. Because of the versatility XSLT offers, importing or exporting data between websites or web applications has never been easier and it may even change the way web applications interact with each other.



## WORKING TOGETHER



### Cascading Style Sheets, level 3

[www.w3.org/TR/css3-roadmap](http://www.w3.org/TR/css3-roadmap)

When released, and when fully supported by browsers, CSS3 will once again revolutionise the web. Although some browsers support a few aspects of CSS3, major features like multi-column layout, text effects, the ability to be able to resize browser windows, and opacity sadly won't be around to the complete market for quite some time. Internet Explorer 6 doesn't support any CSS3 features, and as there will only be limited support in Internet Explorer 7 it's possible we won't see CSS3 fully supported for up to six years.

You need validated markup, so ensure your code is up to scratch



*A bastion of HTML development in the software market, Dreamweaver has a huge influence*



is no reason these technologies have to work independently. CSS, Flash and XHTML can all work together in a harmonic environment to offer a rich, interactive experience and still remain completely accessible and usable to everybody.

### Markup matters

Flash covers the multimedia side of the web, but what about the markup side?

**“Whether you are a designer or a developer, I think we can all agree the web is moving in the right way”**

Adobe Dreamweaver is the industry-leading markup editor and it requires a minimal amount of knowledge to use, which can be a good or a bad thing. It has a design and code view built in, providing the two important viewpoints as far as layout and structure goes.

With the rise of CSS-based designs, Dreamweaver didn't do a very good job at rendering the code accuracy in the live design view. With the release of Dreamweaver 8 the accuracy has certainly been improved, although we'd advise that

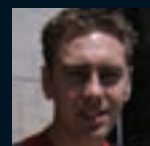
the design view should only be used as a preview feature, as the code view provides far more power and precision for the needs of web creators.

Dreamweaver can be a powerful application when used correctly. Although it may require more attention and execution than Adobe Flash to make websites validate or look visually the same across browsers, knowing that you are offering access to

your site to a magnitude of users you never thought you'd be able to support makes the whole effort worthwhile.

Whether you are web designer or a Flash developer, I think we can all agree the web is moving in the right way. Over the next few years we will see Web 2.0 technology close much of the gap between Flash and XHTML, and web applications will provide much of the responsive, interactive enjoyment we love from Flash. So I can say with confidence that it truly is an exciting time right now for web design.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### Just who on earth is Ian Main?

One of a burgeoning network of purist web slingers currently active, Australian designer Ian Main has grown hugely passionate about standards and CSS. His site and blog at [www.e-lusion.com](http://www.e-lusion.com) forms a creative hub for like-minded visitors, showcasing personal and professional projects alongside his proud exhibits for CSS Zen Garden. Self-taught in this particular area, Ian understandably cites guys like Jeffrey Zeldman and Dan Cederholm as considerable influences over his work. Keen to extend his career into journalism, this is the first article he's written for *Web Designer*.



*Interactive Flash sites like [www.coca-colablak.fr](http://www.coca-colablak.fr) look incredible, but is it time that we set aside visuals for accessibility?*





# Extending Dreamweaver

## Extending Dreamweaver

### Ten extensions you cannot live without

**E**ach new version of Dreamweaver brings with it a new dawn, enticing more and more designers and developers to sample its wares. Version 8 brought with it a new unified CSS panel, the style rendering toolbar and improved accessibility, to name a few. However, even the greats are not perfect and there is always room for improvement. A simple but effective option for supercharging Dreamweaver lies in the realm of the extension. As the name may suggest, extensions can broaden the already impressive power of Dreamweaver and take it to another level. Furthermore, the installation of carefully selected extensions will give developers vital time-saving techniques and personalise a toolkit for any task ahead.

Now that we have established the credentials of the extension, exactly what are they? In a nutshell, 'extensions' are small programs (often written using HTML and JavaScript) that can be downloaded and installed into the Dreamweaver infrastructure. They appear in many guises, from simple text effects right through to full-blown ecommerce solutions. However, the one common thread that courses through every extension is its ability to provide more power in an instant. No longer is there the need to hand-code reams of HTML with the distinct possibility that you missed a semi-colon somewhere. The extension gives instant accessibility to ideal elements fit to grace any page.

It is worth noting that with such power, someone somewhere usually needs to be rewarded. Commercially available extensions generally provide the greater power and functionality, but the freebies are pretty impressive as well. Gratis has to be the more tempting option, and the web provides great locations to reveal what's on the market. A trip to Dreamweaver Exchange is a must-visit, providing hundreds of freebies alongside thousands of commercial downloads. Again, when on the lookout for free extensions, Rabi's Dreamweaver Extensions is another excellent resource that should not be missed.

With the obvious power and functionality that extensions can bring to the development and design lifecycle, the thought of developing your own can prove very tempting. So, how do you about building and distributing your own extras? Creating extensions is generally a three-step process. First, the code to perform the task needs to be written. This can be created using a range of languages including JavaScript, HTML and PHP. Second, any user interaction needed will have to be created, ie, an interface. Third, the file needs to be converted and placed in the right location. This is only a general overview, but a delve into the Dreamweaver Support Centre will reveal an in-depth look at the process. Beyond the web there is plenty of literature available, including our choice from Laura Gutman, which we look at on page 41.

The final piece of the jigsaw is getting the extensions into the fray ready to show their true worth. Using the .mxd file extension, extensions are a doodle to get running; just double-click a download and they automatically install. Dreamweaver allocates the Extension Manager (found on the Command menu) to control extensions. This gives users the option to keep an extension in all its glory or disable it with a single click. Add to this the extremely useful directions that reveal the exact location of the extension and you will wonder how you ever coped without them.

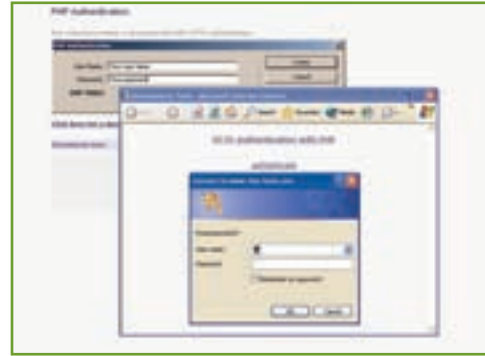
## PHP Authentication

**Author:** DVP Tools

**URL:** [www.dvp-tools.com](http://www.dvp-tools.com)

**Price:** Free

PHP Authentication from DVP Tools is a very simple extension that adds HTTP authentication to a selected page. As the name suggests, the extension will not work within a HTML page or any other dynamic page. The PHP Authentication extension (which resides on the Command menu) only becomes active when a page with the .php extension is opened. All that's needed is a username, a password and a quick click of the Create button to stop users gaining access to a page. The extension simply adds the appropriate PHP code to the source code of the page.



## MacStyle Menu

**Author:** F-Source

**URL:** [www.f-source.com](http://www.f-source.com)

**Price:** £26.95

The MacStyle Menu extension from F-source is an aptly named fellow. It recreates the almost legendary menu system found on all Apple websites. The extension creates a Flash movie file without the hassle of having to learn Flash itself. The free version gives users a great insight into the available features. The extension presents a carbon copy of the standard Apple menu with the option to change background colours and rollover colour text. The extension also is available in a number of other menu styles (Adobe, Macromedia) all tested and approved by Adobe.



## RSS DreamFeeder

**Author:** Ronald Northrip

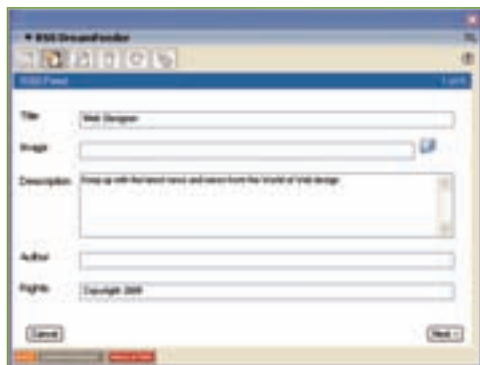
**URL:** [www.rnsoft.com](http://www.rnsoft.com)

**Price:** Free

RSS DreamFeeder is a Dreamweaver-integrated search engine that looks through your website for new and updated content to include in your own personal RSS feed. When you process the feed, any new or updated content will be extracted from the HTML or XHTML pages in the method specified by you and listed as entries within your RSS file. The beauty of RSS DreamFeeder is that it is easy to use (no knowledge of any new RSS/XML codes needed here) and it will get your news content published to new audiences, maybe even Yahoo! and Google News.

## How it works: RSS DreamFeeder

GET YOUR LATEST NEWS SEEN BY THE WEB AT LARGE WITH THIS RSS EXTRA



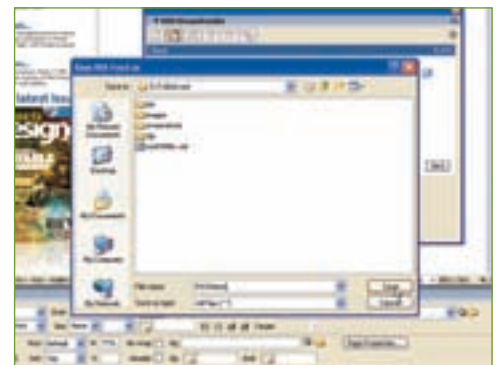
### 01 Feeding time

Head to the Window menu and select RSS DreamFeeder to open the related dialog window. On first use there are no RSS feeds available. To add a new feed click the New RSS Feed button (second from left) to open step one of the process. In the respective areas, add a Title, Image, Description, Author, etc, and press Next.



### 02 Summing up

The first option allows you to select the whole site or, more conveniently, a directory or page (a news page would be ideal). Now select the Capture type – we've chosen File Modifications, which looks for changes – then the URL of the site containing the file. Decide how many stories should be shown and press Next to continue.



### 03 Extract and save

Finally, select the Extract Headline options and press Next. Now select the Extract Author option before pressing Next and continuing to Extract Story, selecting the relevant options and again pressing Next. Now select the location to save the file, name it and press Save. (Note that all the default options are perfectly adequate).



## Rabi's Extensions

**Author:** Rabi Sunder Raj

**URL:** [www.dreamweaver-extensions.com](http://www.dreamweaver-extensions.com)

**Price:** Free

All of these extensions are really simple to integrate into a page but prove extremely useful, especially within the set available at Rabi's Extensions for Dreamweaver. Included is the old chestnut Home Page, which provides the option to create a link (text or image) that allows users to set your site as their home page. Add To Favourites works on a similar level, but places the page in the Favorites folder. Print is extremely useful when combined with a page that has been designed to print on A4, as the extension automatically opens the Print dialog window, allowing users to choose properties and options.

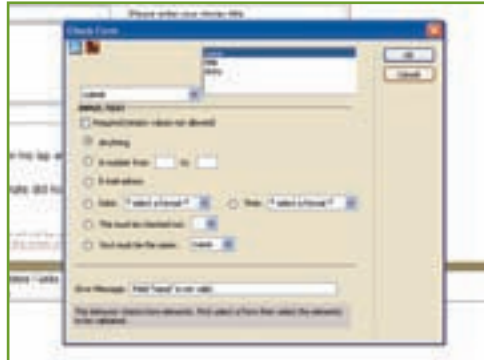
## Check Form MX

**Author:** Jaro Von Flocken

**URL:** [www.yaromat.com](http://www.yaromat.com)

**Price:** Free

Check Form MX is a behaviour that helps extend the validation qualities already present in Dreamweaver. Menus, lists, text fields, radio buttons and checkboxes can all be validated. Radios and checkboxes can be validated for selection, state and even cause dependencies on other form objects, eg, 'If checked, then text field can't be empty'. Finally, users can define their own custom error messages. To fully appreciate the Check Form MX extension, why not try the free Form Builder found at [www.dreamweaver-extensions.com](http://www.dreamweaver-extensions.com)? This provides a host of ready-made List/Menu objects for quick form creation.



## Zoom Search

**Author:** Wrensoft

**URL:** [www.wrensoft.com](http://www.wrensoft.com)

**Price:** Free

The Zoom Search extension provides the ideal option to add a powerful custom search engine to your website. The cross platform application works by scanning the pages in your site (this can be offline in a local folder or online, simply add the URL) and creating an index. Accessed via the Commands menu the process is a quick and simple step-by-step process that will give you search capabilities in minutes. The Free Edition is ideal for small personal sites that do not exceed 50 pages (no advertising, nag screens or time restrictions). Further additions (Standard, Professional) are available for larger sites for a one-off fee.



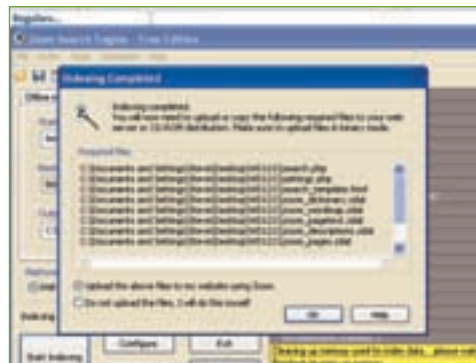
## How it works: Zoom Search

ADD A SEARCH FUNCTION TO YOUR SITE IN THREE EASY STEPS WITH THE POWER OF ZOOM



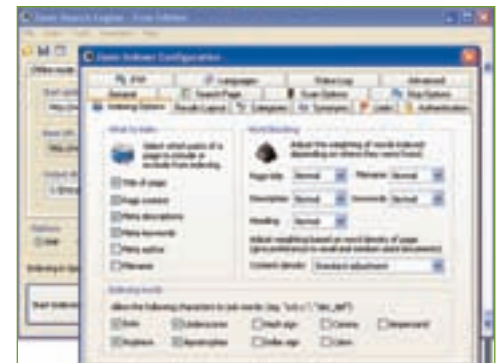
### 01 Work with the wizard

Selecting Index Site with the Zoom Search Engine from the Commands menu will start the search the Zoom Search Engine wizard. First select the search option you wish to use, eg, 'Create a search engine for an online website' and press Next. Now enter the URL of the site you want to use and again press Next.



### 02 Indexing steps

Select your file types (only HTML and dynamic page are available in the Free edition) before pressing Next to select a scripting platform and pressing Next again. The last step of the wizard requires the location of the folder in which to save the index file. Now hit the Finish button to start indexing the chosen URL.



### 03 Configure options

A Wizard suggestions window appears which gives you the chance to modify the search template. When you've finished, press Done to close. Now hit Configure to fine-tune the finer points of the search engine. Check out the Indexing Options tab to select which elements of a page should be included when indexing pages.



## TSPlayer

**Author:** Trio Solutions

**URL:** <http://components.developers4web.com>

**Price:** \$10/£7

TSPlayer is a website-based Flash music player that introduces the features of powerful music playing software to any web page. The player allows users to play music, stop, skip to the next track or the track before, pause a selected track, select a random track in the playlist and jump to it, set the playlist to random playing order or to repeat itself, increase/decrease the volume or set it to mute, balance the sound between both stereo speakers or even drag along a selected track to play it. The extension simply adds the appropriate code with one click.



## WebAssist PayPal Ecommerce toolkit

**Author:** WebAssist

**URL:** [www.webassist.com](http://www.webassist.com)

**Price:** Free

The WebAssist PayPal Ecommerce Toolkit for Dreamweaver is a quick and easy way to add ecommerce facilities to any website. The toolkit provides a collection of wizards that will add the input of payment buttons and basic shopping cart functionality extremely easily. The extension provides five options including a Buy Now Button, Add to Cart Button and a View Cart Button. Users of the ecommerce kit will need to set up or have in existence a PayPal account to use the extension successfully. As a final note, be prepared to be patient, this is not the simplest download ever encountered.

## How it works: WebAssist PayPal Ecommerce toolkit

GIVE YOUR SITE A BIT OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY WITH THE ADDITION OF A PAYPAL EXTENSION



### 01 Buy, Buy, Buy!

Open the appropriate page before heading to Insert>PayPal and selecting the first option, the Buy Now Button. This will open the related wizard at step one, so add your PayPal email address and press Next. Now select a button, enter details of the item for sale, select a currency plus a few further details and press Finish.



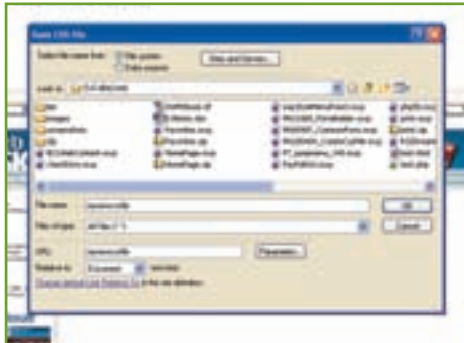
### 02 Add to Cart controls

The next step is to head to Insert>PayPal menu again and select the Add to Cart option. This follows in the footsteps of the Buy Now button with a five-step wizard. Start by adding your PayPal email address and continuing through the wizard, adding the appropriate details. The details should match those entered in the previous step.



### 03 Check it out

To complete the set again head to the Insert>PayPal menu, but select View Cart, add your PayPal email address and progress to step two. Now select a button of choice and press Next to review the button selection. Select Finish to complete the page. Now when users buy online they will be taken to PayPal to pay for your product.



## Create CSS Files from Style Tags

**Author:** Public Domain Ltd

**URL:** [www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange](http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange)

**Price:** Free

This is a very simple extension, but one that could prove to be worth its weight in gold. Create CSS Files from Style Tags does exactly what it says on the tin. Any page with a set of style tags can be converted into a CSS file with one click on the appropriate command. Simply name the CSS file and save to the preferred location. Not only will this will reduce the page weight, but it will also provide the option to attach the newly created CSS file to all new pages (or even a template).



## BCL Technologies

**Author:** BCL Technologies

**URL:** [www.bcltechnologies.com](http://www.bcltechnologies.com)

**Price:** \$59/£32

BCL WebContent is an extension that imports documents, converts them to HTML and extracts the content for publishing on a website quickly and easily. The process allows you to import PDF documents created by a PDF authoring tool. These can generate basic free-flowing HTML or exactly positioned CSS layered HTML. Text, tables and graphics are always preserved in the conversion process. The content from each page is inserted into the current workspace by simply selecting a thumbnail and clicking Insert!

It is worth noting that this valuation extension from BCL originally comes from a download that first provides an executable file. This will need to be run to obtain the actual .mxd file.

## Unearth Dreamweaver extensions

WE POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TO GET YOUR HANDS ON A HOST OF BRILLIANT EXTENSIONS AND PLUG-INS FOR MACROMEDIA'S GREEN GIANT



### Rabi's Dreamweaver extensions

**URL:** [www.dreamweaver-extensions.com](http://www.dreamweaver-extensions.com)

With a URL that incorporates both Dreamweaver and extensions this site is difficult to miss. We've included it in our essential ten already, but the rest of the site is a cross-section of extensions from the simple to the stunning. You will not find thousands here, but there's a very useful selection. These include Form Builder, Home Page and MetaTag Generator. There's also an extensive look at a Dreamweaver-friendly shopping cart.



### DMX Zone

**URL:** [www.dmxzone.com](http://www.dmxzone.com)

DMX Zone is more than just a Dreamweaver extensions site; it provides a tutorials, downloads, news, an e-magazine plus a host of other stuff. An active forum provides a fountain of knowledge for Dreamweaver designers and developers. It incorporates a thread exclusively to Extension developing. The Extensions page provides plenty of categories boasting a varied (if not huge) array of content, so be sure to check it out.



### Dreamweaver Exchange

**URL:** [www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange](http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange)

If you are on the lookout for extensions, the official Dreamweaver Exchange is a good place to start. The neatly categorised site boasts thousands of extensions from hundreds of developers, both professional and amateur. There are plenty of pay-for options, but there's a vast range of free and trial extensions too.



### Project Seven

**URL:** [www.projectseven.com/extensions/listing.htm](http://www.projectseven.com/extensions/listing.htm)

Project Seven provides a list of cross-platform products dedicated to the Macromedia giant. With its impressive commercial set of products (mainly menu-related) the site provides a set of free extensions. On offer is CSS-related material, DHTML, Layer, Forms, Images, Colours, Productivity, Utility, Windows and Frames.



## Dreamweaver MX Extensions

**Author:** Laura Gutman

**URL:** [www.newriders.com](http://www.newriders.com)

**ISBN:** 0735711828

Laura Gutman provides practical tutorials on how to write your own extensions. This book explores the configuration of Dreamweaver and its API (Application Programming Interface) so that users can understand how to create Dreamweaver extensions. Each section of the book includes tutorials of the following types: simple practice tutorials designed to explore the underlying architecture of the extension type; workshop tutorials that create simple (but useful) extensions; project tutorials that solve workflow issues.



### THE BRIEF

#### ON THE CD

**Tutorial files:**  
Start folder,  
Finished folder

#### TUTORIAL OBJECTIVE

Create a rich media and video website using the power of Flash 8

#### TIME REQUIRED


Up to two hours

#### SKILL LEVEL



# Create a rich-media site using Flash 8 video

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BROADBAND! WE SHOW YOU HOW TO USE FLASH'S TRANSPARENT VIDEO AND RICH MEDIA SETTINGS

 **WEB PUNTERS ARE LOOKING** more and more at the experience that websites give them, and this can be clearly seen with sites such as Bacardi ([www.bacardi.com](http://www.bacardi.com)). This site uses broadcast production values, rich media content, a thumping soundtrack, and as many bells and whistles as your Internet connection can take.

This throws us web designers headfirst into multimedia production. Thankfully if you have even the smallest

appreciation of Flash then producing a rich media site is not all that hard to contemplate. The FLV (Flash Video) file format is really coming into its own. Now that it supports transparent video, a seamless integration between video and web is possible. To that end we will produce a site with a logo like you might find on a TV programme, produced with shiny light-emitting graphics. We'll add some traditional Flash animation and a photo viewer that will read its images from an XML file.



## YOUR EXPERT

**Mark Shufflebottom** teaches on the BA and MA Interactive Media courses at Bournemouth University, where he teaches 3D applications, interface design, online gaming, small-screen device production and, of course, all things Flash and ActionScript.

# Create a rich-media site using Flash 8 video



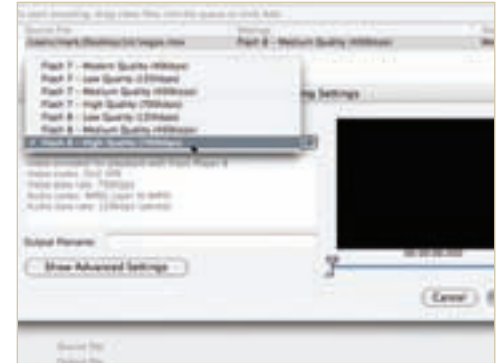
## 01 Video conversion

Before starting, we need to get the video into the right files for Flash. Open the Flash 8 Video Encoder app and from the CD drag into the queue the 'lv-logo.mov'. Click the Settings button and a dialog will appear. Change the Quality menu to Flash 8 – High Quality.



## 02 Alpha encoding

Click Show Advanced Settings and tick Encode Alpha Channel. This video has transparency, which will be encoded with the file. Click OK, then click Start Queue to convert the video to the Flash format. When finished, remove the file from the queue via the remove button.



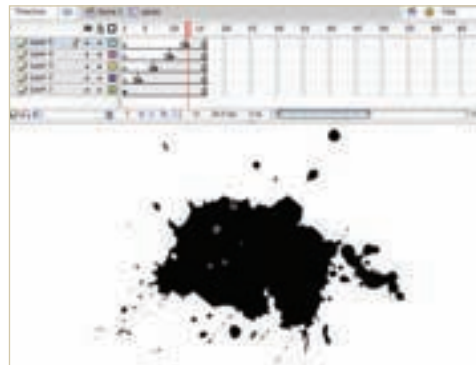
## 03 Another movie

Drag into the queue the file 'vegas.mov' from the CD. Click on Settings as before and change the Quality drop menu to Flash 8 – High Quality then click OK. Click Start Queue and when the video is encoded, quit the application. Make a note of where the Flash video FLV files were saved.



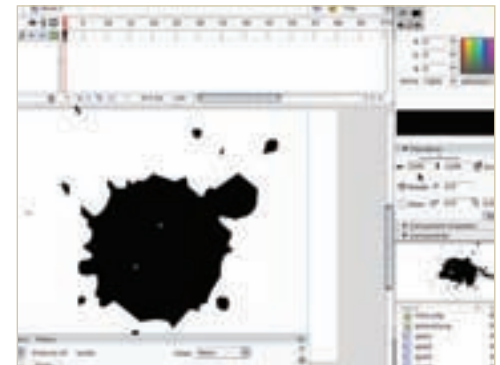
## 04 Leap into Flash

From the CD, copy the contents of the start folder into the same place as the saved FLV files and open 'start.fla' in Flash. Open the library and you'll see some imported graphics. Hit Ctrl+F8 to create a symbol, name it 'splats' and make it a movie clip. Click OK and an empty stage appears.



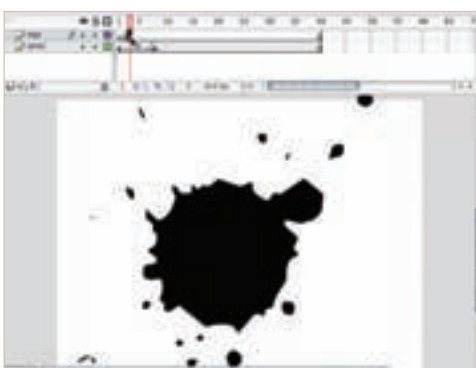
## 05 Add the splats

Drag the symbol splat1 from the library onto the stage and select frame 16. Press F5 to extend the timeline. Now add a new layer and add a keyframe at frame 4, then add splat2 to the stage. Repeat the process on new layers until all five splat symbols are added four frames apart.



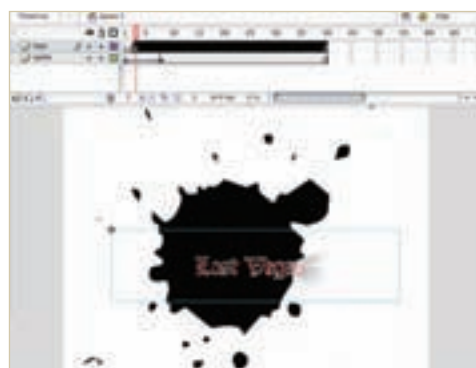
## 06 Stop repeating

Add a new layer and place a keyframe on the last frame. Press Alt+F9 to open the ActionScript panel and add a stop(); command to stop the movie clip repeating. Click the Scene 1 icon just above the timeline to return to the main stage. Add the splats symbol and scale up to 150%.



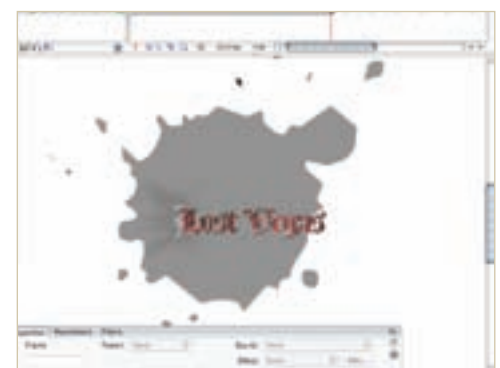
## 07 Extend the timeline

Add a keyframe at frame 8 and reduce the splat to 100%. Add a motion tween between these keyframes, now select frame 40 and press F5 to extend the timeline. Rename this layer 'splats' and add a new layer, naming this 'logo'. Add a keyframe at frame 3 and go to File>Import>Import Video.



## 08 Import video

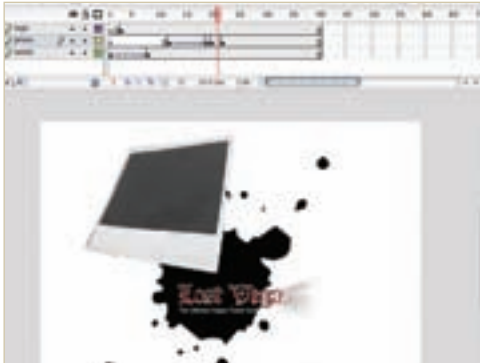
Choose the 'LV-logo.flv' file and hit Continue. On the next screen choose 'Embed video in SWF and play in timeline' and click Continue. Change the symbol type to Movie Clip and click Continue. Click Finish and the file will import. The video will appear in the centre of the screen as shown.



## 09 Edit symbol

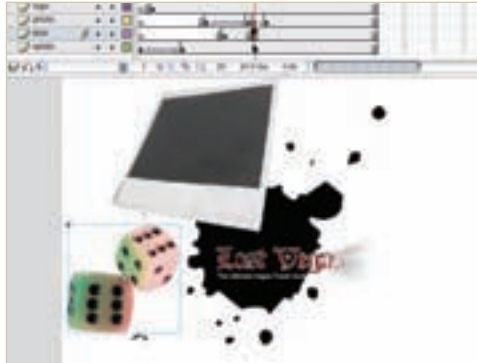
Double-click the logo on the stage to edit the symbol. Add a new layer and add a keyframe on the last frame. Drag the logo.png from the library onto this keyframe and align with the logo underneath. Now extend the timeline of this layer to frame 270. Click Scene 1 to return to the stage.

# Tutorial



## 10 Text effects

Add the text as shown to the logo layer. Create a new layer, name it 'photo', and drag it below the logo layer. Add a keyframe at frame 12 then add the 'polaroid.png' image from the library and place at the top of the stage. Animate this moving onto the stage as shown.



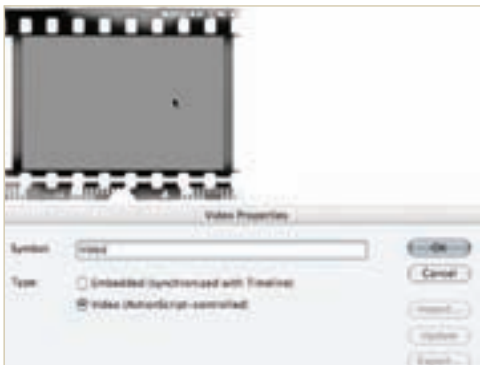
## 11 Dice layer

The last two frames of the photo frame are the frame bouncing into place. Add a new layer below the photo layer named 'dice'. Add a keyframe at frame 15 and add the 'dice.png' as shown. Go to Modify>Convert To Symbol and name the symbol 'dice'. Add a keyframe at frame 20.



## 12 Fade in

Select frame 15 and click on the dice. In the properties palette change the colour drop menu to alpha with a value of 0%. Now add a motion tween to these frames so the dice fade in. Press Ctrl+F8 to create a new symbol, name it 'movie player' and make it a movie clip, then click OK.



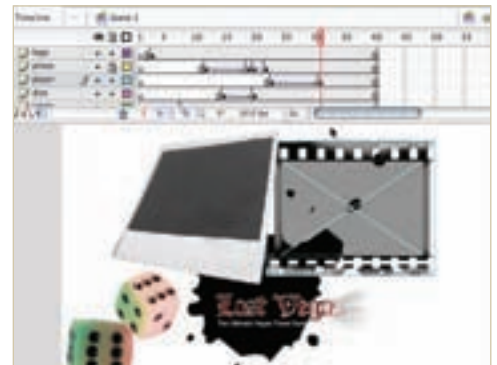
## 13 Movie Player symbol

Drag the 'frame-filmstrip.png' onto the stage. Add a layer below this and draw a rectangle to fill in the frame. Make the fill colour black with 50% opacity in the mixer palette. In the library click the options in the top right, choose New Video and fill in the details as above.



## 14 Add the video symbol

Create a new layer and drag your video symbol to the stage. Ensure this layer is below the frame (you may need to lock the frame layer). Resize the video symbol to 254x170 pixels. Name the instance 'my\_video'. Return to Scene 1 and create a layer above the dice named 'player'.



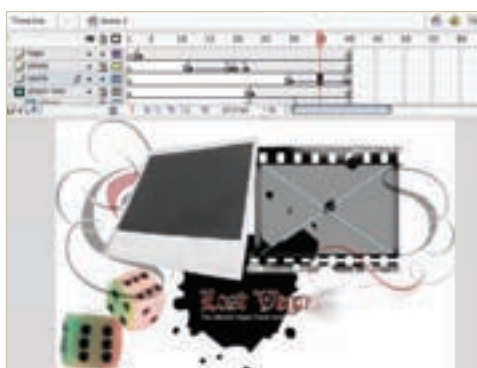
## 15 Tween the movement

Place a keyframe at frame 23 and add the 'player' movie clip to the stage. Name the instance of this 'player\_mc' and position underneath the picture frame. Add a keyframe 31 and move the 'player\_mc' instance to the right of the picture frame and add a tween between these frames.



## 16 Add a mask

Add a new layer above the 'mask' layer and name it 'player mask'. Add a keyframe at frame 23 and draw a rectangle on the stage as shown above. Now right-click this layer and choose Mask from the drop menu. Add a new layer above player mask and name it 'swirls'.



## 17 Add the swirls

Add a keyframe to frame 30 and drag 'swirls' onto the stage and position in the top left corner (0x,0y). Add a keyframe at frame 40 then select frame 30 and click on the swirls on the stage. Change the colour drop menu to alpha, 0%. Add a motion tween so that the swirls fade in.



## 18 Add the background

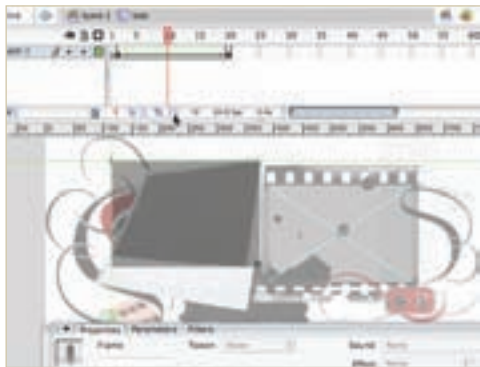
Create a new layer and position it below all the other layers, naming it 'bg'. Add a keyframe at frame 38. From the library add the 'bg' symbol (lines and gradients to bring the composition together). Position this as above. Now add a new layer and position below the logo menu.

# Create a rich-media site using Flash 8 video



## 19 Menu and controls

Name this new layer 'menu'. Add a keyframe at frame 35 and add the 'menu.png' symbol. Motion-tween this sliding onto the stage from the right. Create a new layer and animate the 'controls.png' sliding onto the stage from frame 33. Name the second layer 'controls'.



## 21 Photo fade

Create a new layer and add a keyframe at frame 40. Draw a grey photo rectangle as above. Convert this to a symbol, naming it 'photo-fade'. Double-click this to edit it and move the keyframe to frame 2. Add a keyframe at frame 20 and change the colour to have 100% alpha. Add a shape tween.



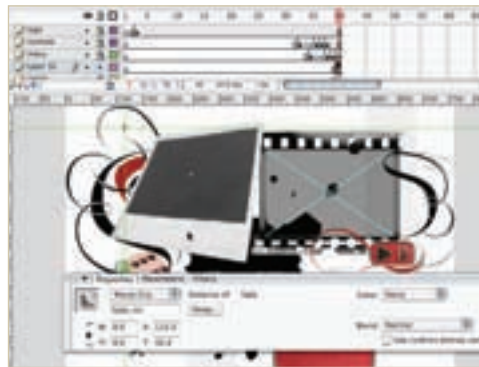
## 23 Create a mask

Add a new layer, naming it 'photo mask'. Add a keyframe at frame 40 and use whichever tool you feel comfortable with to draw the shape of the photo on the stage. Right-click this layer and convert it to a mask layer. The 'empty' layer will not be part of the mask so drag it up slightly to correct that.



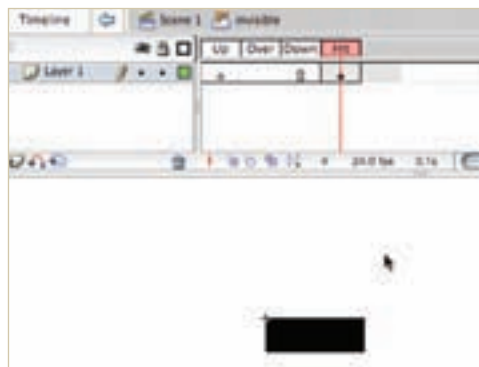
## 20 Photo loader

Now to create a symbol for the photos to load into. Create a movie clip (Ctrl+F8) named 'empty'. Return to Scene 1 and add a layer above the photo layer. Add a keyframe at frame 40 and drag guides to the stage to line up with the photo. Add the empty symbol and name the instance 'empty\_mc'.



## 22 Stop Right There

Select frame 1 and press Alt+F9 to open the ActionScript panel. Add a stop(); command, then close the panel and return to Scene 1. Give this instance the name of 'fade\_mc'. This will play when we load a photo to give it a chance to load in the background. Name this layer 'photo fade'.



## 24 Create buttons

Create a new symbol in the library now and this time make it a button, naming it 'invisible'. Select the hit frame and press F6 to add a keyframe. Draw a rectangle on the stage and then return to Scene 1. Create a new layer above all the other layers and name this 'buttons'.

## TECHNIQUE

### The mask of Flash

Our tutorial makes full use of masks for making content visible and hidden on the stage. Here's exactly how this works.



## 01 Add your content

The first step is to add the content that is required to be masked to the stage. Content can quite literally be anything that Flash can display such as images, videos, graphics, buttons or dynamic content. Once on the stage it is time to create the mask.



## 02 Create the mask

To create the mask, create a new layer and draw a shape on the stage using preferred drawing tools. This is usually an irregular shape, which is why you are using a mask. Remember the area that you draw will be the visible area, not the other way around.



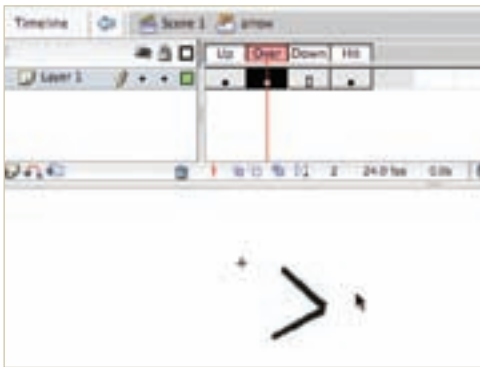
## 03 Create the mask

Right-click on the top layer, which will be the mask layer, and from the menu choose Mask. Both layers are automatically locked and the top layer forms the mask for any layers below. To add more layers to the mask create layers and drag them below the mask.



## 25 Add buttons

Add a keyframe at frame 40 and drag two copies of the 'invisible' symbol onto the stage and place them over the play and pause icons of the controller. Name the instances of these 'play\_btn' and 'pause\_btn' accordingly. Add the text for the menu or substitute your own headings here.



## 26 Photo buttons

Create another new symbol in the library and this time name it 'arrow', again make this a button. Use the line tool or paintbrush to create an arrow. At the over state add a keyframe and change the colour to black. Add a keyframe for the hit state and draw an oval shape around the arrow.



## 27 Add to the design

Drag two copies of the 'arrow' symbol from the library onto the 'buttons' layer and position as shown above. Rotate one of the symbols 180° so that it points to the left. Name the instances 'back\_btn' for the left-pointing button and 'forward\_btn' for the right-pointing button.

## IN DETAIL

### Get the blues

Getting your own transparent video might seem like quite a daunting task, but here we give you tips on filming and preparing your video content

WE'VE LOOKED in the main tutorial at creating video with an alpha channel from a source that contains the alpha channel. You may well be wondering just how to go about how you go about creating alpha video with footage from your DV camera?

Well, the first step is to film your subject over an evenly lit blue cloth or screen (see our example on the right). You may well have seen this on the special features section of a Hollywood DVD, when the actor stands in front of either a blue or green screen so that CGI effects can be added in post-processing. These colours are used because blue or green is not in the skin pigmentation. If the person you're filming is wearing blue, then use a green screen.

Take your footage from your DV camera into a program such as Adobe After Effects that can knock out blue screens, which is known as keying. Set up a new composition to a size that suits your video, remember you can keep the composition as small as your subject and reduce the file size by not have loads of unused pixels around the edge. Drag your video from the project window to the timeline.

To key out the video go to the Effect menu and apply Keying and Color Key effect. You can sample a blue or green colour from the background and take up the tolerance till it disappears. Add a two-pixel edge to this and a little feathering to get a smooth edge around your subject.

To Export this, go to the File menu, choose Export and select FLV as the file format. After naming your file you will be presented with the exact same encoding screen in the Flash Video Encoder application. Make sure you click on the option to Encode the Alpha Channel and your video will be transparent. Although this may seem like a lot of work for a rich media website, the final result will be a cutting-edge fusion of ActionScript and action, and as you hone your Flash 8 Video skills your online projects can get even more adventurous and ambitious.



Filming your subject against a blue or green screen will enable you to remove the coloured background for transparency



The same output options for FLV video are available from third-party applications such as Adobe After Effects



## 28 Dynamic text

Add a text field to the left side of the photo frame on the buttons layer. In properties make the text dynamic text and name the variable 'entrytxt'. Skew the text to 20.3° and 8.3° in the transform palette. In the properties, click embed and fill in the numbers, a space, letter 'o' and 'f'.

## 29 A code layer

Create a new layer and add a keyframe at frame 40. Open the ActionScript editor and add the code as shown above. This code sets up the variables needed for the streaming video and it then streams the video into the player we created earlier on.

```
var playVid:Boolean=false;
var netConn:NetConnection = new
NetConnection();
netConn.connect(null);
var netStream:NetStream = new
NetStream(netConn);
player_mc.my_video.attachVideo(netStream);
netStream.setBufferTime(5);
netStream.onStatus = function(infoObject) {
    if (infoObject.code == "NetStream.
Buffer.Empty") {
        playVid=false;
    }
};
```

# Create a rich-media site using Flash 8 video



```
play_btn.onPress = function() {  
    if (playVid==false){  
        netStream.play("vegas.flv");  
        playVid=true;  
    }else{  
        netStream.pause(false);  
    }  
};  
pause_btn.onPress = function() {  
    netStream.pause(true);  
};  
stop();
```

## 30 Play and pause

Add the next part of the code shown above, which contains the button code for the play and pause buttons. The play button checks a variable to see if the video is already playing, if not then the video is streamed in from the NetStream object.

```
var imageBank = new XML();  
imageBank.ignoreWhite = true;  
var record = 0;  
var total = 0;  
var current = 0;  
imageBank.load("imageList.xml");  
imageBank.onLoad = function(success) {  
    if (success) {  
        empty_mc.loadMovie("images/  
"+this.firstChild.childNodes[_root.record].  
childNodes[0].firstChild.nodeValue);  
        total = this.firstChild.  
childNodes.length;  
        current = record+1;  
        entrytxt = current+ " of  
"+total;  
    }  
};
```

## 31 Load XML data

This loads the list of images to display in the image viewer. This is brought in from an XML file called 'imageList.xml', which you can take a look at in a plain text editor. This is then passed to the onLoad function which displays the image and the number of image it is in the list.

```
back_btn.onPress = function() {  
    if (record == 0) {  
        record = total-1;  
    } else {  
        record -= 1;  
    }  
    fade_mc.play();  
    imageBank.load("imageList.xml");  
};  
forward_btn.onPress = function() {  
    if (record+1 == total) {  
        record = 0;  
    } else {  
        record += 1;  
    }  
    fade_mc.play();  
    imageBank.load("imageList.xml");  
};
```

## 32 Back and forth

This final code is for the forward and back buttons that cycle through the list of images from the XML file. Note how they check the record number and appropriately move the record back to 0 if the total is reached when going forward and vice versa for going back.

# Tech support Flash

This month **Mark Shufflebottom** takes an in-depth look at loading dynamic content, fixing glitches in web pages and optimising Flash file sizes

## Q Bring it on

I've been experimenting with bringing content in from external sources. I know I can load external images into movie clips and was wondering if I could create a link in my text that will open the image, so that it cuts down on unnecessary image loading if the visitor does not want to see that image? I would rather this be a text link and not a button because I want the link to scroll with the content.

Brad Jenner

**A** Yes, this is possible and shouldn't be too difficult for you to integrate into your existing script. As you don't mention exactly what dynamic source you are using, the code will be fairly generic and should only require some minor tweaking in order to work with your data source.

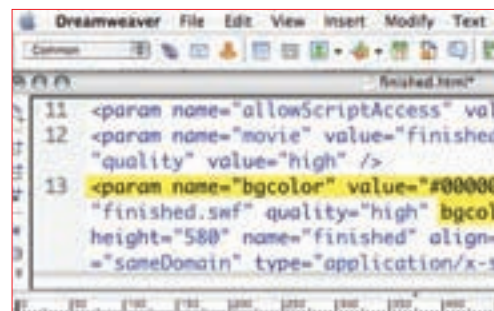
First up, you'll need an empty movie clip on the stage and then name the instance 'picHolder\_mc'. This will be the target that will display the image. Now create a new layer and rename it 'code', adding the following code

into the ActionScript panel:

```
function showJPG(pic){  
    picHolder_mc.loadMovie("images/"+pic);  
};
```

So that function will be used to call in the image from a folder called 'images'. We'll call this function from a link in the text on the stage. Now you need to create the text, so Text Tool and make the text type 'dynamic text' in the properties palette. Give the text the instance name of 'content' and just click the format as HTML button as well. Add the following code to the ActionScript panel after that shown above:

```
var picture:String="picName.jpg";  
function showContent(){  
    content.htmlText+="};  
showContent();  
stop();
```



Ensuring the background colour is in the HTML file means that a slight flash of white is not seen as the browser launches the Flash plug-in

Here a variable called picture is declared which will hold the name of the image, you can set this to your dynamic image source. Then a function displays the text in the content text field as HTML text, hence why we had to press the Render as HTML button on the properties palette. The text is given a link status and told to link to the asfunction: showJPG which is of course the ActionScript function we entered in the first part of the code. The image name is passed across and it loads. There you have a fully working image linking system from a text field.

## Q White lightning

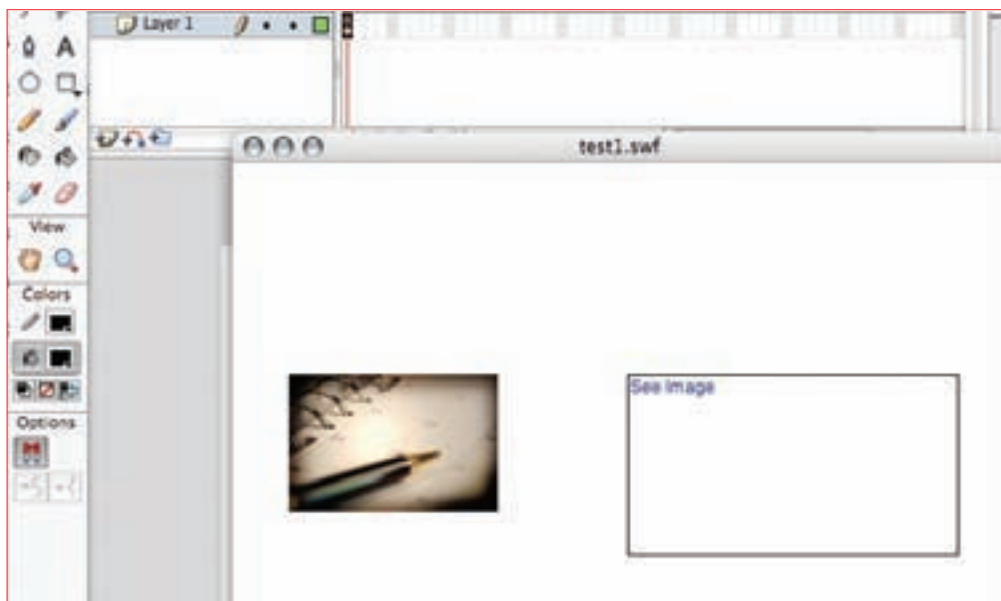
I have a Flash movie with a black background. The XHTML page it is embedded in is also black, but when the SWF first loads a flash of white appears before the movie begins. Is there any way to prevent this from happening?

Kevin Marshall

**A** I have heard of this problem occurring from others, yet I have never actually experienced this problem myself. The problem could actually be caused by a combination of software/hardware issues such as browser, plug-in version, graphics card or any combination of the two between.

The way around your problem is to just ensure that everything is set to black. So while at the moment your SWF is set to a black background and your HTML is set to a black background, the slight flash you see is actually the Flash player kicking in and running the file, as it does so the screen momentarily goes white until the information is loaded that tells the Flash player to turn black.

Export your movie from Flash and add it to the HTML file through Dreamweaver. Now look at the HTML code and just add the following code to the parameters:



Creating a link from a text field which opens an image in Flash is possible and you don't have to rely on creating buttons to get the job done

If you have a problem, and no one else can help, send it in to the *Web Designer* team! We'll do our best to print your problems on our pages, but we cannot reply personally to every email.

**SEND YOUR QUERIES TO:**  
webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk



## Your expert

**Mark Shufflebottom** has been teaching on the BA and MA Interactive Media courses at Bournemouth University for the past five years, where he teaches 3D applications, interface design, online gaming, small screen device production and of course all things Flash and ActionScript. Mark has recently won an international award at the BEA Festival in Las Vegas for the production of an interactive, real-time, 3D narrative.

```
<param name="bgcolor" value="#000000" />
```

Now in the embed tag add the following code:  
`bgcolor="#000000"`

What this actually does is tell Flash, before it has had to read any of the SWF file, exactly what colour the background should be. If you publish the file with HTML through Flash then it actually fills these details in within the HTML code. Hopefully now when you access your HTML page in the browser you will see that there is now no white flash as the Flash Player plug-in starts up.

## Small wonders

I am reasonably new to Flash and I was wondering about how to keep my file size small. Should I always convert my content to a vector format as Flash is a vector-based application? I am quite confused so any help will be useful.

Graham Morgan

**A** It all depends on the type of content that you are using. If you are saving an image as a GIF from an image-editing application, you are choosing that file type because it has a low number of flat colours such as a cartoon or a simple web button. This type of image is very easy to recreate in Flash. Vectors look very flat and therefore it is better to recreate this

image in Flash. However, if you are saving an image as a JPEG then you are using a lot of photographic tones. If you took this type of image into Flash and used the Trace Bitmap command on this, you could very easily turn a 16KB image into 160KB as a vector. You may well wonder why this is when vector graphics are supposed to be small in file size. The reason is that Flash is having to add so many shapes to cover each of the colours that the vector data ends up being far too complicated to be small. A general word of caution is that anything that can be created in Flash should be. Any tracing of other images is going to create larger file sizes than if you make them from scratch in vectors.

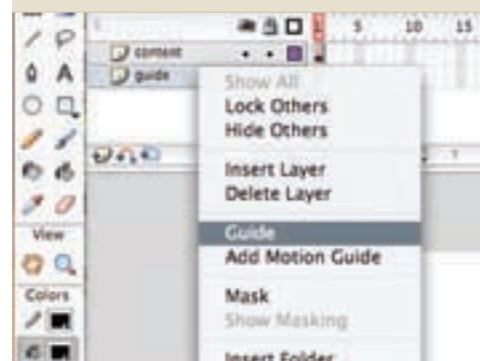


Not all content traced into vector format will be small in file size – this image went from 29KB to 155KB in vector

## Expert advice

### A good guide

Many Flash users design their sites in other applications, such as Photoshop, Illustrator or even sketch out on paper the way their Flash design will look. If you design like this, you can bring most graphical files into Flash and use them as positional aids to help you design in Flash. Obviously because these files are flat images, they might not be suitable for using in Flash as animation and movement might need to be added. Place the image on a separate layer and right-click the layer, then from the pop-up menu choose 'guide' layer. This stops that layer from actually publishing and helps you to get your design in place in Flash.



## Technique: Realistic chrome effects

**Q** I have been working on a website for a client and they have requested that the site should have chrome effects added – I'm sure you know the type of thing, bevelled edges and shiny. I'm trying to find the best way of doing this. Should I learn a 3D application or can Flash do this for me?

**A** Learning a 3D application will produce superb results, however the file size may be completely unsuitable for what you need. In this mini-tutorial we'll look at how to quickly fake something up in Flash, which, given a little more work, could easily satisfy the needs of your client.



### 01 Add some text

First up we'll use the Text Tool to add some content to the stage. Use black as the background colour to make your chrome look even more shiny. Now press Ctrl+B to break the text apart to individual letters. Repeat this and the letters will be graphics.



### 02 Gradient effects

Create a simple black, white, black linear gradient in the mixer palette and add to each letter individually. Use the Gradient Transform Tool to rotate the gradient. You can rotate each letter slightly differently to show that it is reacting to the light.



### 03 Gradient stroke

Choose the Ink Bottle Tool and make the stroke two pixels in the property palette. Choose the linear gradient as the colour but make it dark grey, white, dark grey. Now add this stroke to each letter and you will see the bevelled edge finishes this off.



### THE BRIEF

#### ON THE CD

**Tutorial files:**  
Bugs.as, BugsMenu fla  
tile.jpg, Sound fla,  
FinishedMenu fla

#### TUTORIAL OBJECTIVE

Learn how to create an experimental navigation system using Flash 8

#### TIME REQUIRED

Three hours

#### SKILL LEVEL



## Explore interactive menus with Flash 8

STAND OUT FROM ALL THE OTHER SITES AND OFFER YOUR VISITORS AN INTERACTIVE NAVIGATIONAL EXPERIENCE USING FLASH 8

**AFTER SPENDING A FEW** hours surfing the Internet it is surprising to find that most of the websites you'll come across have pretty standard site navigation – which begs the question of how to make this part of your website more interesting and prompt user interaction with the content. Let's face it, the menu is one of the main items used on any web page. So in the following tutorial we want you to open up your mind and get you thinking a bit about user experience using

experimental Flash techniques in your menu interface. This tutorial should give you the basic building blocks from which you can create your own visual and interactive menu, applying these skills to any manner of interactive site.

In this example you will be using the theme of nature. The menu items used are pre-made insects, and when the user rolls over each one each creature will display the location they will take the user to if clicked.



## YOUR EXPERT

**Darren Richardson** works as a tech lead for Magic Lantern Production and has been in the business for over ten years. In his spare time he runs Flash resources [www.actionscripts.co.uk](http://www.actionscripts.co.uk) and [www.flashgroup.net](http://www.flashgroup.net). Get more from Darren at [www.playfool.com](http://www.playfool.com).

# Explore interactive menus with Flash 8



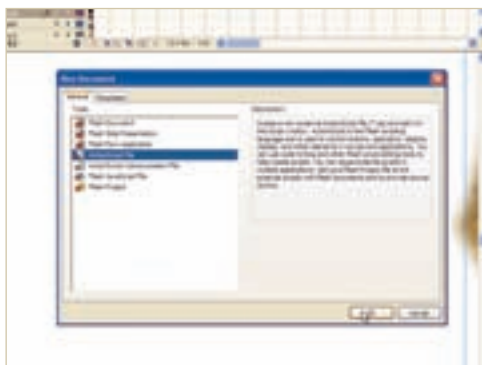
## 01 Set the stage

Open up 'bugsMenu.fla' in Flash 8 and make the stage height 200px and the width 700px. Use the Size button in the Properties panel to bring up the Document Properties dialog. Here you need to make the frame rate 31 fps, add a title and description and press OK.

## 04 Data testing

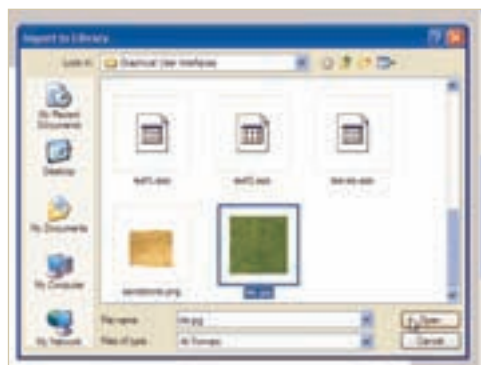
Open Actions and copy in this code. You're creating a new BitmapData object and assigning the imported 'tile.jpg' to that object, then you are telling the root to beginBitmapFill with the bitmapData object you have created over the whole of the stage. Run the movie and test.

```
import flash.display.BitmapData;
var pattern:BitmapData = BitmapData;
loadBitmap("tile.jpg");
function createTiles():Void {
    with (this) {
        beginBitmapFill(pattern);
        moveTo(0, 0);
        lineTo(Stage.width, 0);
        lineTo(Stage.width, Stage.height);
        lineTo(0, Stage.height);
        lineTo(0, 0);
        endFill();
    }
}
createTiles();
```



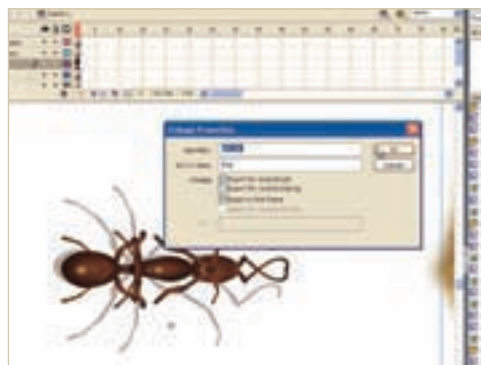
## 07 First class

Now for a different way of approaching Flash. The old way of placing code on the timeline has gone, as has the method of repeating code for MovieClips on the stage. We'll create a class that will control all the bugs so there's no duplication in code. Go to File>New>ActionScript file.



## 02 Grass background

To make the movie look like a little garden you are going to first import a grass tile, which can be found on the CD. Head to File>Import>Import to Library and choose 'tile.jpg'. You will notice the 'tile.jpg' in the library with a few other presets I have added.



## 05 Bugs away!

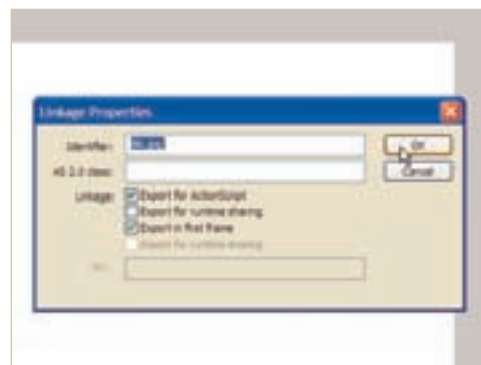
Drag the 'ant\_mc' onto the stage and name it 'opt1' in the Properties panel. Go to the library, right-click the 'ant\_mc' and select Linkage. Press Export for ActionScript and also add 'Bug' to the AS 2 Class input box. This assigns the MovieClip 'ant\_mc' to a class you will create in a minute.



## 08 Importing packages

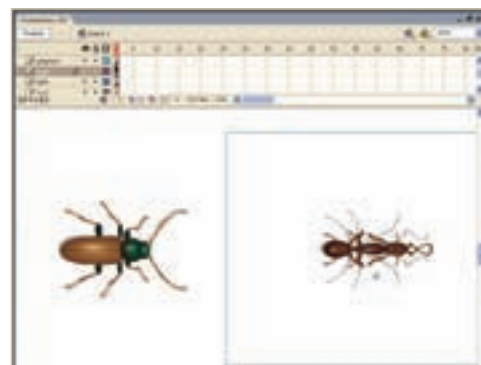
At the top of your class import two packages. These are both from the Flash Class Transitions package and are used for movement. In this example, these imported classes will tween the bugs around the screen in random directions using code. Next, add the class name and extend MovieClip so you can use some of the built in functions of MovieClip like onRelease.

```
import mx.transitions.Tween;
import mx.transitions.easing.*;
class Bug extends MovieClip {
```



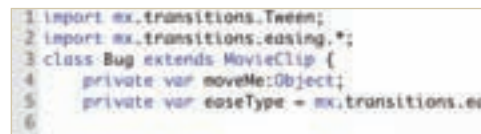
## 03 Tile files

In the library, right-click the JPEG and select Linkage. Tick Export for ActionScript and keep the name as 'tile.jpg'. Press OK, now add a keyframe on the first layer in the first frame via Insert>Timeline>Keyframe. Call the layer 'code', as this is where you will place all your code from now on.



## 06 Creepy crawlies

The bugs are your menu options, and have been pre-made to save time on this tutorial. Repeat the last step but put the 'beetle\_mc', 'spider\_mc' and 'ladybird\_mc' on the stage, naming them 'opt2', 'opt3' and 'opt4'. Also, remember to make the linkage and assign the AS 2 Class.



## 09 Private parts

In between the class brackets add the bulk of the code. First add two private variables – these will only be used with in the class because you have declared them that way. The first is for the tween object (this object creates the movement), while the second is the ease type, and there are a number you can use. Search Google for 'mx.transitions' for more information.

```
import mx.transitions.Tween;
import mx.transitions.easing.*;
class Bug extends MovieClip {
    private var moveMe:Object;
    private var easeType =
mx.transitions.easing.Regular.easeIn;
}
```

## TECHNIQUE

### Experimental by example

Darren's site, [www.playfool.com](http://www.playfool.com), is where you can find more examples of wonderful and challenging web work



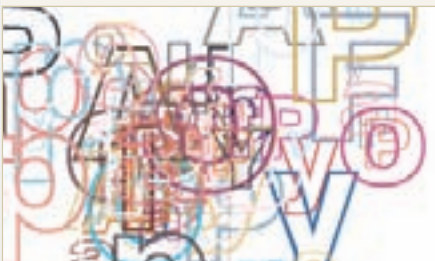
#### 01 Pond life

Darren links to his scripting experimental projects, including the work-in-progress [www.experiment.org.uk](http://www.experiment.org.uk), which plays host to a virtual pond complete with free-moving fish and a dragonfly.



#### 02 Play on words

With this tiled interface Darren plays with the mx.transitions and onMotionFinished to trigger a response on rollover. This sort of interface would be ideal to work into a site navigation.



#### 03 Just our type

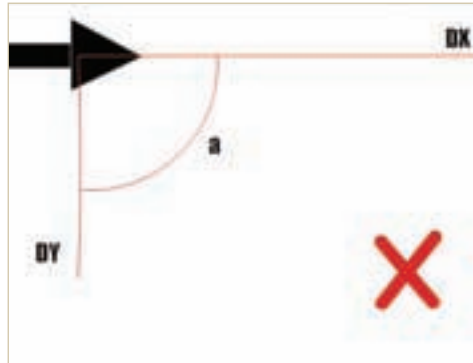
This work in colour, typography and tweening sees a jumble of text move for a constantly changing hierarchy. It's pure experiment in style, and shows that you can open your web designs to new ideas.

```
7 public function Bug() {
8     // constructor
9     BugInit();
10 }
11 private function BugInit() {
12     mover();
13 }
14 }
```

#### 10 Public or private?

So what is the difference? Well, it's pretty simple really; a public function is a function that can be seen outside the class and a private function can only be accessed inside that class, so for good practice you are meant to have your constructor call a private function, as below.

```
public function Bug() {
    BugInit();
}
private function BugInit() {
    mover();
}
```



#### 12 Radian rules

The next three, 'dx', 'dy' and 'a', make the insect face in the right direction. Using the simple example above, 'dx' is the '\_x' distance that the arrow above has to move to get to the red X (the same goes for 'dy'). The variable 'a' works out the angle needed to turn in radians using Math.atan2.

```
var dx = newCordX-this._x;
var dy = newCordY-this._y;
var a = Math.atan2(dy, dx);
this._rotation = a*(180/Math.PI);
```

#### 14 Move me

Assign moveMe a new tween. You need a few parameters: the object to move, which property to tween, the type of ease, current position/new position, the speed you want the tween to execute (you need two one for the \_x and the other for \_y). Now add a listener to the tween object.

```
var dx = newCordX-this._x;
var dy = newCordY-this._y;
var a = Math.atan2(dy, dx);
this._rotation = a*(180/Math.PI);
moveMeX = new mx.transitions.Tween(this, "x", easeType, this._x, newCordX, rnd);
moveMeY = new mx.transitions.Tween(this, "y", easeType, this._y, newCordY, rnd);
moveMeY.addListener(this);
```

#### 11 The movers

This is the bit that does the business. You have three variables: the first two are random numbers that define the boundary of where the insects can go (we have limited them to the stage size); the next is a random number, the speed of the tween that moves them at different speeds.

```
private function mover() {
    //var easeType = mx.transitions.easing.Regular;
    easeOut:
    var newCordX:Number = Math.round(Math.random()*600);
    var newCordY:Number = Math.round(Math.random()*200);
    var rnd:Number = 100;
    var dx = newCordX-this._x;
    var dy = newCordY-this._y;
    var a = Math.atan2(dy, dx);
    this._rotation = a*(180/Math.PI);
    moveMeX = new mx.transitions.Tween(this, "x", easeType, this._x, newCordX, rnd);
    moveMeY = new mx.transitions.Tween(this, "y", easeType, this._y, newCordY, rnd);
    moveMeY.addListener(this);
}
```

```
var rnd:Number = 100;
var dx = newCordX-this._x;
var dy = newCordY-this._y;
var a = Math.atan2(dy, dx);
this._rotation = a*(180/Math.PI);
```

#### 13 Converting degrees

Flash works in radians when working out angles, so to get the true angle you need convert it into degrees which you do with the following bit of code:  $a * (180 / \text{Math.PI})$ . Job done. Assign the result to the rotation property and your MovieClip will turn in that direction, note that you have to have your MovieClip facing east like the insects are in this example.

```
var rnd:Number = 100;
var dx = newCordX-this._x;
var dy = newCordY-this._y;
var a = Math.atan2(dy, dx);
this._rotation = a*(180/Math.PI);
```

```
var dx = newCordX-this._x;
var dy = newCordY-this._y;
var a = Math.atan2(dy, dx);
this._rotation = a*(180/Math.PI);
```

#### 15 Return objects

You added the listener so you can catch any returning functions. The tween object has a return object of onMotionFinished – once the tween has finished this function is fired. Here you call the mover function to move the insect again, giving it continuous movement.

```
moveMeX = new mx.transitions.Tween(this, "x", easeType, this._x, newCordX, rnd);
moveMeY = new mx.transitions.Tween(this, "y", easeType, this._y, newCordY, rnd);
moveMeY.addListener(this);
function onMotionFinished() {
    mover();
}
```

## 16 It's a rollover

As you have extending MovieClip above, you can now use some of its native function calls such as `onRollOver`. Here you are checking to see which insect you have rolled over and then setting the text for the menu captioning, which you will add shortly.

```
function onRollOver():Void {
    switch (this._name) {
        case "opt1" :
            _parent.menu_txt.text = "About
Natures Garden Center";
            break;
        case "opt2" :
            _parent.menu_txt.text = "Plants ";
            break;
        case "opt3" :
            _parent.menu_txt.text = "Tools";
            break;
        case "opt4" :
            _parent.menu_txt.text = "Contact";
            break;
    }
}
```



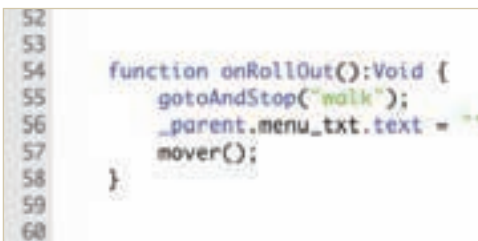
## 17 Stop tweening

To make the caption text a bit funky it's a good idea to make it appear where the mouse is, so the first two lines here do just that. You may want to add ten pixels to make it so you're not rolling over the textfield. To stop the insect moving around, when you rollover you add the following three lines. The last line stops the insect's legs moving.

```

        _parent.menu_txt._x = _parent.
xmouse + 10;
        _parent.menu_txt._y = _parent.
ymouse + 10;
        moveMeY.removeListener(mover);
        moveMeX.stop();
        moveMeY.stop();
        gotoAndStop("stop");
    }
}

```



## 18 Over and over

This again is a function extended from the MovieClip object, and here you just want to start the animation again. First start the insect's legs moving, followed by resetting the caption text and finally starting the mover function (which starts the tween over again).

```
function onRollOut():Void {
    gotoAndStop("walk");
    _parent.menu_txt.text = " ";
    mover();
}
```

## IN DETAIL

## More accessible menus

How can you make your Flash menu accessible to more users, such as those who are blind or have impaired vision? It's important that the maximum amount of people can explore your site

**AS MANY PEOPLE** know, Flash is not the best at being totally accessible. Here we will go through a couple of tricks on how to overcome some of the restrictions that Flash coding places on our website.

Let's look at what we need to implement to aid a blind or vision-impaired user who wishes to access and understand the site menu. Now it's hard to make any site totally accessible for a user with sight difficulties – especially with Flash as it is a visual experience that relies heavily on its appearance. Nevertheless, you can still make steps towards making the site as usable as you can. To do this for a vision-impaired or completely blind user you will need to add sound to the buttons, which in this case are the insects.

So, when a user rolls over an insect you need some audio to play to inform them that if they press that button a certain action will happen (in this case take them to another page). Going back to the class Bug.as, add the sound code shown and place four sound MP3 files named 'song1.mp3' through to 'song4.mp3' in the same directory.

Now, because they are moving this causes another problem. Viewers can't follow them round the screen so you need to stop the animation, and this is taken care of in the rollover code. Visually impaired users may not be able to see your fancy fonts or the style effects added to a font such as drop shadow and inverse, so if you want to keep your site as accessible as possible look at using larger fonts that are clear and easily legible, such as Arial.

Finally, it's fair to say that Flash has some built-in measures to help with accessibility, and these can all be found on the Accessibility panel located via Menu>Window>Other Panels>Accessibility. Select the panel and press F1 for more help and information on making your site accessible, including an auto-labelling option. It certainly makes good commercial sense to open your site up for the world to explore.



Add the top bit of code to the constructor, and then add the play code to the rollover and press functions



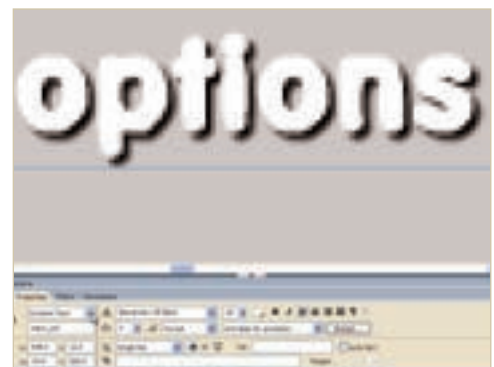
Using the Accessibility Panel will help screen readers such as JAWS, which is the most popular reader worldwide



## 19 Release me

Here the insect has been pressed and you are catching the mouse release action, then assigning a page to open.

```
function onRelease():Void {
    switch (this.name) {
        case "opt1" :
            getURL("opt1.html");
            break;
        case "opt2" :
            getURL("opt2.html");
            break;
        case 'opt3' :
            getURL("opt3.html");
            break;
        case "opt4" :
            getURL("opt4.html");
            break;    } }
```



## 20 Caption action

Yay, no more code. You are now going to add a textfield so that the user can see what the insects represent when rolled over and pressed, so add a new textfield to the stage, in the Properties panel make the type 'Dynamic Text' and call it 'menu\_txt', also make sure its single line.

# Tutorial



## 21 Explore filter features

With the added filters in Flash 8 there is no need to import a fancy title, you can just play around with the filters, add a new layer and place a static textfield on the stage containing any text. Open the Properties panel, go to the Filters tab and have a play to see the effect it creates.



## 22 A bit of greenery

To add a little more graphic interest to the menu, try adding a layer and drawing a top-down plant and perhaps then another layer and some textured brick work. These additions will make the insects stand out and give the menu a greater visual impact and a bit of vibrancy.



## 23 Layers

Play your movie, and chances are that it may not look totally right because of insects going under the title and climbing on top of a plant. Move the layers around as above to get an effect that is like looking down on the insects as they go over the title and under the plant.



*e***Mag**



### THE BRIEF

#### ON THE CD

**Tutorial files:**  
Menu items.psd,  
Pattern.psd,  
Tree\_Texture.psd

#### TUTORIAL OBJECTIVE

Create an abstract interface in Photoshop to go on to build in Flash

#### TIME REQUIRED

Up to two hours

#### SKILL LEVEL



# Design an exciting website interface

THIS ISSUE WE'LL TACKLE THE PHOTOSHOP, AND NEXT ISSUE WE'LL REV UP FLASH TO FINISH OFF THE PROJECT. PALETTE AT THE READY? THEN LET'S BEGIN

**THE BACKGROUND** you come from, be it web design, print design or good old-fashioned painting with a brush, usually determines how you mock up visuals for a website. Perhaps the easiest way of doing this is using Photoshop or Illustrator to design your interface and then export the individual components. Using these packages opens up the possibilities of what can be achieved with your graphics – you can add smooth shades layer effects and textures to really make the artwork jump off the screen.

Flash is a terrific package for animating in, but it's Director that holds the power of combining graphics. Yet even though

Director was invented as an animation package it is now Flash that everyone uses. The future is bright for our Flashie little friend now that Adobe has taken over Macromedia, and with the increasing bandwidth and faster computers that are now standard fare for high-end users it's time to push the possibilities of what can be achieved.

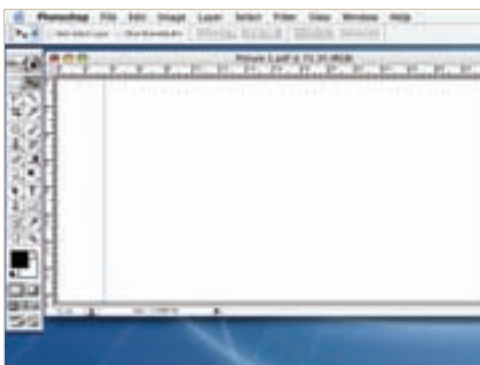
For this tutorial we will be using Photoshop to create an interface and then next issue we will be putting it together in Flash and adding some fantastic functionality and scripts, which you can then go on and use on your other projects. But we're ahead of ourselves; first, it's time for the Photoshop.



## YOUR EXPERT

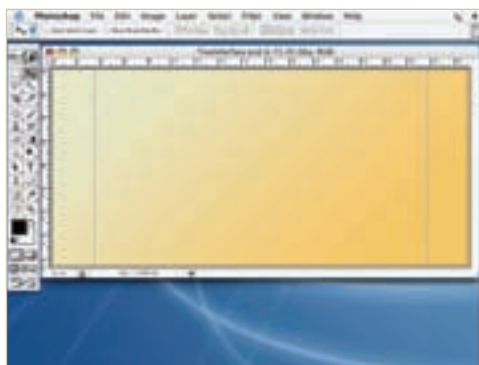
**Rodger Page** is a new-media designer and multimedia editor who has been using Photoshop and Flash for years. His plans are to teach digital arts at a college or university, but for the moment enjoys authoring CD and DVDs here at Imagine Publishing.

# Design an exciting website interface



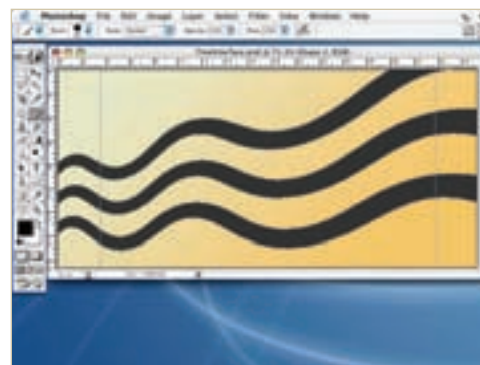
## 01 A fresh start

Create a new document and set the dimensions to 800x470px. Stick two guidelines on the left and right edge and increase the width of the canvas to 1000px. Your main image will be designed within the middle area, and once animated in Flash the whole of the area will be used.



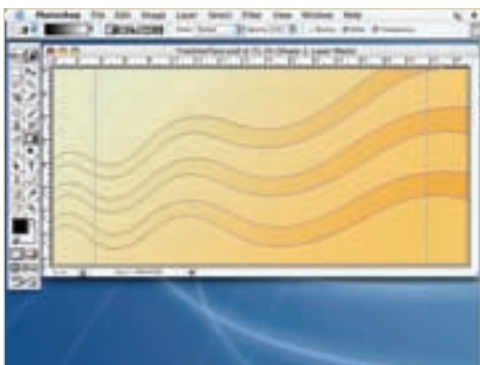
## 02 Filling in

If you're using CS2, create folder groups of each of the five parts of the image. Create a folder and name it 'Background'. Now create a new shape layer covering the whole of the document and add a Linear Gradient fill layer from #FFCC66 to #E9E9C8 at an angle of 135 degrees.



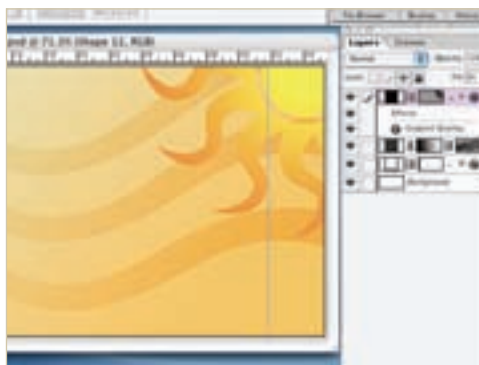
## 03 Heat wave

Select the Custom Shape Tool and choose 'Waves' (you may need to reveal all of the available shapes to find it). Draw the shape, holding down Shift from left to right. Transform the perspective so that the right side of the wave disappears off the top right of the screen as above.



## 04 Fade the wave

Set the colour of the vector shape to #333333 and add a layer mask to the wave via Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Select the Gradient Tool, ensuring the default colour is set to black-to-white and draw the gradient out from left to right. Set the layer blend mode to Soft Light.



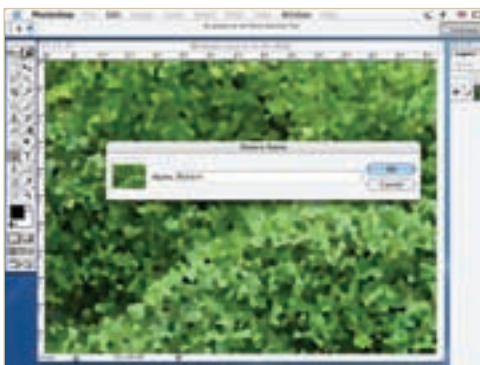
## 05 My only sunshine

Again using the Custom Shape Tool, select from the menu 'Sun 1' and draw out the sun holding down the Shift key so that a quarter of the sun is visible in the top right-hand corner. Add a Radial Gradient fill from #FFFF33 to #FF9900 to the sun and turn down the Opacity to 80%.



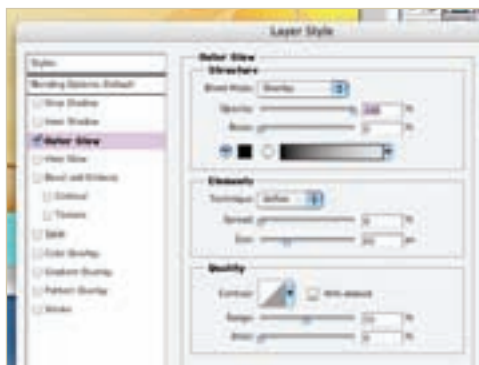
## 06 The hills are alive...

Select the Pen Tool and with vector shape layers selected draw out some hills. Add a vertical Gradient Overlay of #CC9966 to #FFFFCC. Add a stroke of 6px positioned outside and coloured to #996600. Set a Pattern overlay using the wood pattern and set the blend to Multiply.



## 07 Define a pattern

Open the 'Pattern.psd' file and select Edit>Define Pattern. This will set the pattern so it can be used as a layer effect. If you wanted to create your own Brushes to customise Photoshop further then select Define>Brush from the same menu. It's a great way to create unique graphics.



## 08 Just add water

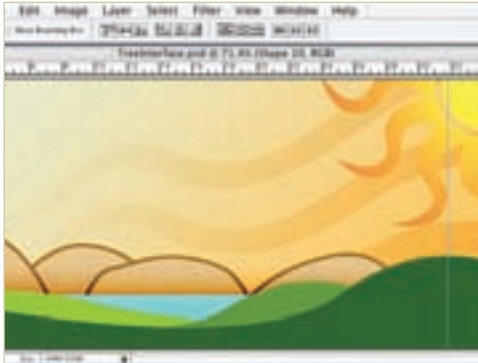
Draw a rectangle vector shape at the bottom of the document and fill it with #00FFFF. Now add the first of three layer effects starting with an Outer Glow set to black and with: blend mode: Overlay, Opacity: 60%, Spread: 0%, Size: 60px, Range: 50% and a Jitter: 0%.



## 09 Extra effects

Add a gradient layer effect of black to white, with a blend mode of Soft Light and an angle of 90 degrees. Apply the pattern layer effect that you have just created then select it from the thumbnail menu, set the blend mode to Multiply, Opacity to 16% and Scale to 2%.

# Tutorial



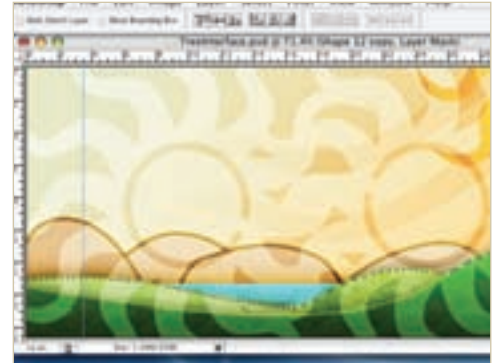
## 10 The grassy knolls

CS2 users, create a new folder group and name it 'Mid ground'. Select the Pen Tool, and again with vector shapes selected draw out three grassy hills to span the width of the document. Choose three different shades of green for each of the hills: #006600, #669900 and #99CC33.



## 11 Layer styles

Right-click the Sea layer and copy the layer styles. Paste it to one of the hills and change the Outer Glow effect to 40% Opacity, Blend Mode to Normal and Size to 30px. Go into the Pattern overlay and increase the Opacity to 40%. Copy this layer style and paste to the rest of the grassy hills.



## 12 Sunny side up

Create two suns where the rays cover the grassy hills. Holding down Shift and Alt, click the hills in turn to create a selection of all three. Select Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All and fill the selection with white via Ctrl/Apple+Backspace. Set the layer to Soft Light with an Opacity of 40%.



## 13 One tree fill

Create a new group folder and call it 'Tree'. Select the Pen Tool and draw out the main body of the tree, choosing a fill of #88452B. We are now going to add five layer effects to this layer so that when you create the branches for the tree the effects will be applied automatically.



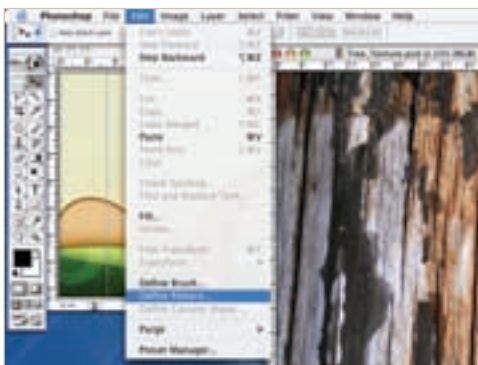
## 14 Tree's company

Apply this: Outer Glow; Opacity: 50%, Spread: 0%, Size: 20px, Range: 50%. Add an inner Bevel/Emboss; Depth: 100%, Size: 30, Soften: 10, Angle: 30, Altitude: 30, Contour Cove: Shallow, Blend: Linear Dodge, Colour #ED974A Opacity: 36%, Blend: Multiply #000000, Opacity: 21%.



## 15 Final effects

Continue to add the layer effects to the same layer by selecting Gradient Overlay set to Soft Light 100%, Opacity from black to white at an angle of 90 degrees. Now set a Stroke size of 3px, Position Outside and a colour of #38150A. Click OK and we are almost there.



## 16 Bark textures

Open up 'Tree\_Texture.psd' and once again define the texture by selecting Edit>Define>Pattern. Now add the final layer effect to the tree by selecting the Pattern Overlay, set the Blend Mode to Multiply with an Opacity of 57% and a Scale of 3% and the effect is now complete.



## 17 Building branches

Select the Pen Tool again and continue to draw each of the four remaining branches (draw more if you wish). Some of the branches will require you to edit the Bevel and Emboss effect to maintain the shadow, and this can be done by simply clicking up or down in the layer effect menu.



## 18 A new leaf

Select the Pen Tool and draw out one half of a palm tree leaf, choosing a dark green colour #438838. Select the grassy layer and copy its layer effects. Draw the second half of the leaf, fill it with the same colour and paste the effects to this layer too.



## 19 Spread the leaves out

Duplicate the leaf layer and using the Free Transform Tool scale down the leaf, rotate it and tweak the perspective. Because you merged the two vector leaves together the shape had been rasterized – scaling up the leaf will distort it, so always copy and transform from the original.



## 20 Flower show

Create a new folder within the Tree folder and call it 'Menu items'. Create a new document 200px by 200px and click OK. Select the Custom Shape Tool and in turn select the three shapes – 'Floral ornament 4', 'Flower 5' and 'Flower 7' – and draw them out, holding down the Shift key.




## 21 Bright and breezy

Open up the layer effects dialog by selecting Gradient Fill. Enter the following values; Blend Mode: Normal, Gradient Fill: #FFFF00 to #FF6600, Style: Radial and 90 degrees. Now select the stroke and set the Size to 2px, Position Outside and a colour of #FFFF00 (or 'yellow' to everyone else).

## IN DETAIL

### Brushing up

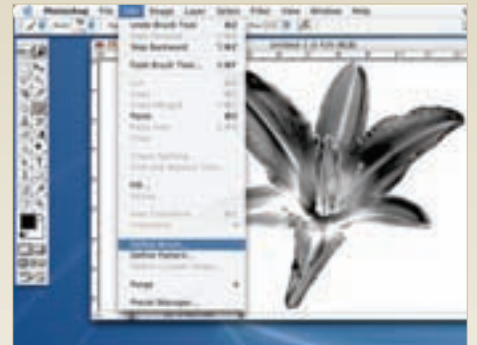
Creating an individual look is all in the detail, and there's nothing more unique than putting together your own textures and brushes. Here's how it's done...

 **THE BRUSH TOOL** is a fantastic, easy and fun way of creating artwork with a simple movement of your hand. It is a very powerful utility that can be customised in various ways, and with the additional resources that can be found on the Internet you can build up a vast and varied library to use at your disposal. But if you have some interesting images then using these as a brush tip and playing around with the brush options will create some amazing results and add that extra touch that you were looking for.

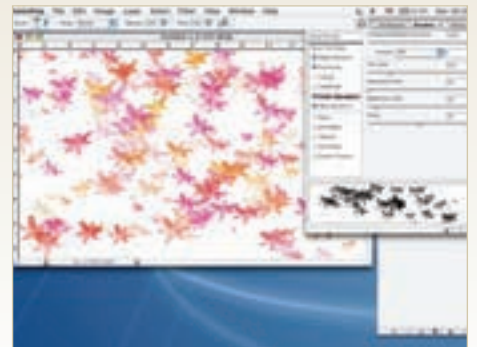
The main thing to remember when creating your own brushes is to keep the image as large as possible. As with any bitmap image, reducing the size will not affect the quality but blowing it up will pixelate and distort it and, more often than not, make the image look terrible.

To get the most out of the Brush Tool it is a good idea to turn up the contrast so there are clear areas of dark and light shades. The Brush Tool works on a greyscale basis, so having colours in your image will not affect the end result. Converting your desired image to greyscale and playing around with the levels to define definite areas of black and white and even burning out the white in some cases to create a heavy contrast can achieve better results and give a clearer idea of how the end result will turn out. This may not always be the effect you are trying to achieve, though, as areas of black will be heavy in your desired colour and areas of grey will be lighter, with white containing no colour at all. Have a play around with your image first, creating the brush, testing it, deleting it and going back to tweak it further until you get the look you're after.

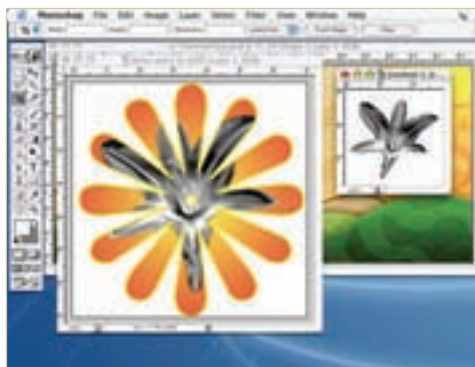
The Brush options makes it easier to change the colour, size and rotation for each brush you use, so all you need to do is click and draw. Working with the options will create some spectacular effects, but the best thing about the Brush Tool is that you will only get a feel for how it works by playing around with it, and it is lots of fun to play with!



From the main menu select Edit>Define Brush. A dialog will appear with the file name suggested as a title for your brush



From the main menu select Window>Brushes. This is the place to have some fun with your brushes and create some amazing effects



## 22 Add some texture

Open up 'Flower.psd' and using the Move Tool drop it into the newly created document. Transform the shape to fit in the vector shape. Holding down Ctrl/Apple, click on the vector shape layer to make a selection and from the main menu choose Layer>Layer Masks>Reveal Selection.



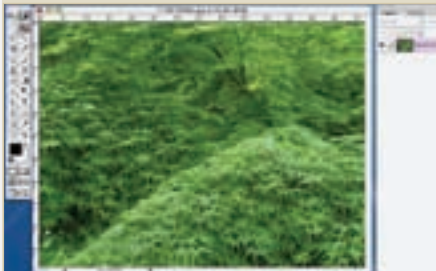
## 23 Merging together

Set the blend mode to Linear Light, turn the Opacity down to 50% and merge both of the layers together. Follow this through for all of your flowers and drag the three different designs into your main document, ensuring that they are kept in the Menu Items folder in your layer palette.

## TECHNIQUE

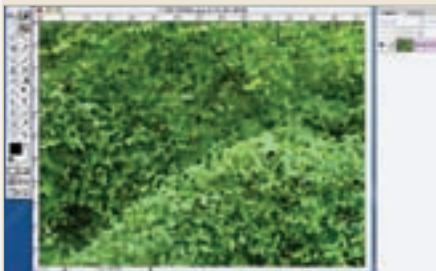
### Creating your own textures

There are plenty of sites that cater for shapes, brush tips and textures, but sometimes it's more fun to do it yourself!



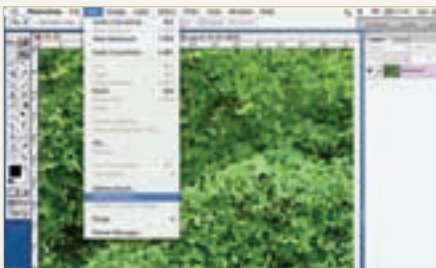
#### 01 Image selection

Open up an image that you wish to use as a texture. The rule here is that the bigger the texture is then the better the quality of the end result, as we can always reduce but never blow up (big images may be slower to work with, but the results are better).



#### 02 Pixel tweaking

This step is not compulsory but does produce some good results, and if you define a pattern you might as well double your library. Select Filter>Pixelate>Crystallise, enter a value around 30% and click OK. You'll see a rather nice pattern emerge.



#### 03 Define Pattern

In a similar way as when creating a brush tip, select Edit>Define Pattern and choose a relevant name. When you now go into the Pattern Overlay layer effect you will see your newly created pattern, ready to use on any artwork you want.



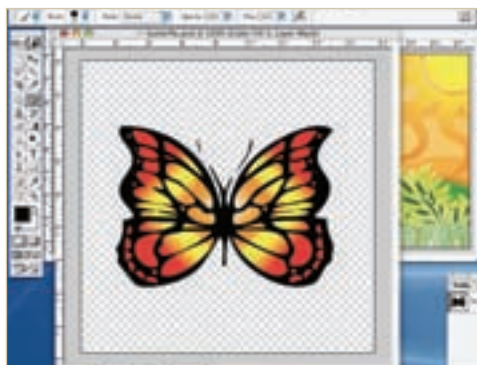
#### 24 Branching out

Position the three flowers on the document so that they sit on the ends of the branches, then copy and paste two of the flowers and position these on the remaining branches. Holding down the Shift key, reduce the scale of the flowers to fit in with the size of the tree.



#### 26 Grassy textures

Create a new layer and name it 'Grass', select the Brush Tool and open up the brush tip menu. Select the 'grass' tip and a mid-green colour of #ACBC74. Now paint the grass onto this layer. Set a gradient fill to flatten out the colour. And you are about done!



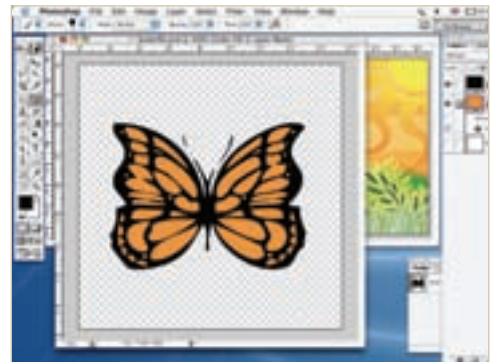
#### 28 Winging it

Select the colour panels and apply a Gradient Fill. Set the style to Diamond and the angle to 90, and whack up the scale to 150%. Open the Fill menu and add two colour sliders, starting from the left add in the colours #FF0000, #FFFF00, #FF9900 to #FFFFFF. Save the butterfly as a .psd.



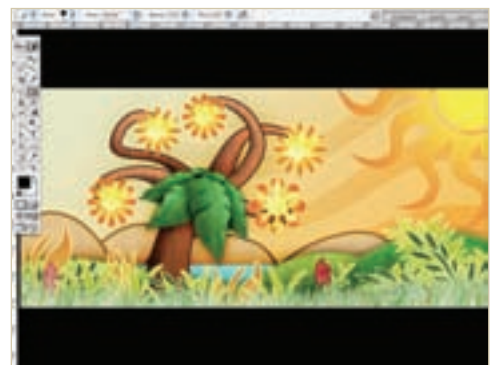
#### 25 Bring in the plants

Create a new layer folder and call it Foreground. Select the Custom Shape Tool, scroll through the shapes menu and in turn select the 'Fern', 'Grass 2', 'Grass 3', 'Flower 2' and any more you would care to use. Draw out the shapes and throw on some Gradient Fills and some Strokes.



#### 27 Flash fly-by

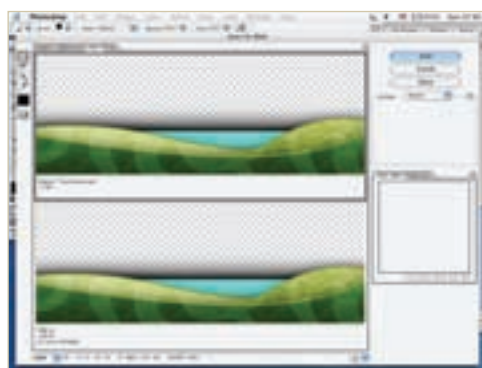
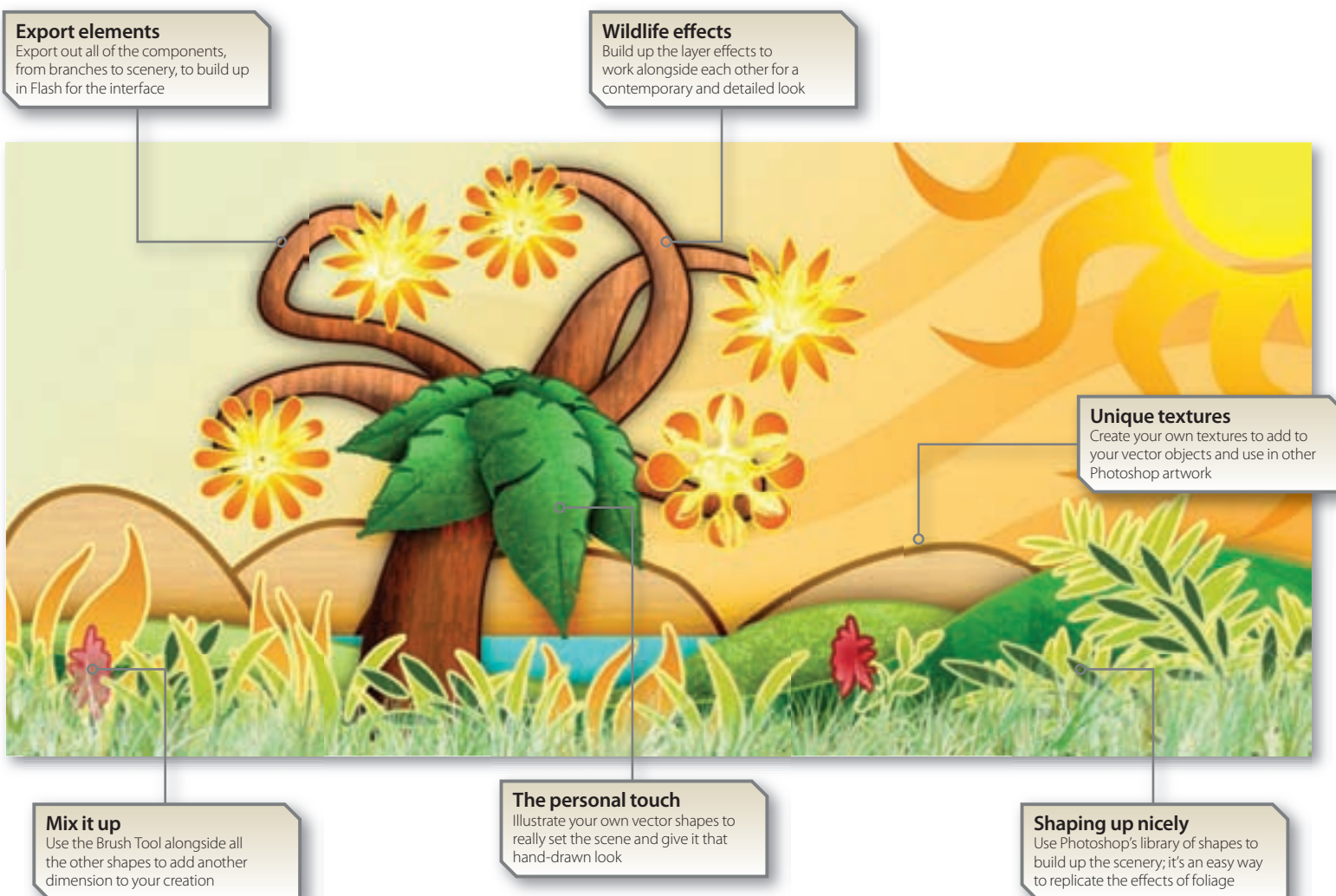
As part of the Flash animation, there will be a butterfly flying around the screen to click on to get to personal details. Create a new document with the dimensions of 400px by 500px. Using the Pen Tool, roughly illustrate a butterfly outline and the colour panels.



#### 29 Stop and tidy up

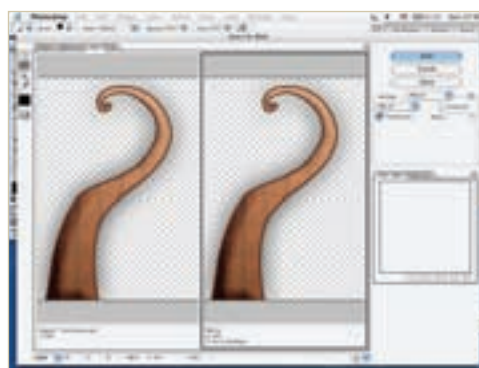
We're about done now. As everything is in layer folders (for CS2 users), when it comes to exporting the components it is a case of making folders visible and invisible and exporting. We are using the .png format to handle a continuous tonal range of colour and an Alpha channel.

# Design an exciting website interface



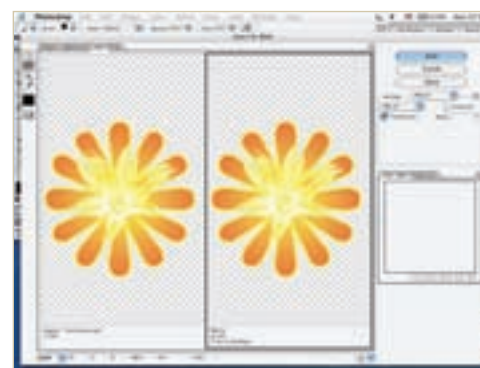
## 30 Backing up

Starting with the background, hide all the other layers (including the background layer) and select File>Save for Web then choose 'PNG-24'. Save it with a relevant name and hit OK. Do this for the rest of the layers (leave out the Tree Folder as we have to do this separately).



## 31 Saving the forest

Isolate the tree branches in turn and then select the Crop Tool. Crop the image, leaving some space around the edges, and export the branch. Flip back to the step before the crop and repeat this for each branch, saving each one as a .png each time.



## 32 Flora finish

A last step and we are done. As before, isolate the flowers, crop them down, and export as a PNG. Now with all of these individual components stored in a folder you can now prepare to build it all up again in Flash. Tune in next issue as we look at scripting and animation techniques.

# Tech support Photoshop

Send in your queries and our Photoshop guru will sort out your image-editing woes

## Q Colour codes

Hi *Web Designer*. I was wondering if there is a quick and easy way to get my images opened corrected and out of the door as quick as possible, because I mainly like to concentrate on the building of sites and I want to spend as little time as possible in Photoshop. My biggest issue is colour correction, I'm just not very good at it. What is the fastest way of doing it?

Paul Nelson

A Hi Paul. From the sounds of it, I bet you're a programmer aren't you? There is no shame in being a programmer and struggling with image software – it's common enough!

As for most of us, we don't always get to design in Photoshop as often as we wish but moreover find ourselves utilising CS2 as a production conveyer belt: opening, cropping, correcting, saving image as .tif. Let's face it, it's boring – but what job doesn't have its bad bits...? Good colour correction is a fine art, and your end media, be it paper or plastic (or a Mac!), will determine how much you need to

do in the way of correction. Because monitors aren't the same around the world it is difficult to judge what is the best, therefore just a quick brighten in the midtones and maybe removing colour casts.

The fastest way of doing this is to use the Variations function found in Image>Adjustments>Variations... This handy little tool displays 12 windows with 12 variations of Lightness and Darkness covering the RGB and the CMY spectrums, enabling you to quickly flick through all the different options to discover what combination is best.

After you have mastered this tool you should have learned how to see what colour needs removing from an image, so try progressing on to the Levels or the Curves Tool as this will produce better results.

## Q Fill me in

Hi, *Web Designer*. I'm loving the new-look front covers that you seem to be producing of late, I used to buy your mag once every few months but I found myself shelling out for the last three



Using the threshold function on contrasted images will give you a good indication of where to start

issues all because they were calling to me! I loved the tutorials on desktop patterns, it was good to have a Photoshop project to get stuck into but is there an easier way to define the outlines and highlights of objects so you know where to add the colour fills?

James Berkely

A Hi James, you certainly know what to say to get on our good side. How could we not publish your question and put your name in the mag? As mentioned in the last question getting a chance to design something in Photoshop for yourself is very liberating – we sometimes forget why we wanted to learn the package in the first place!

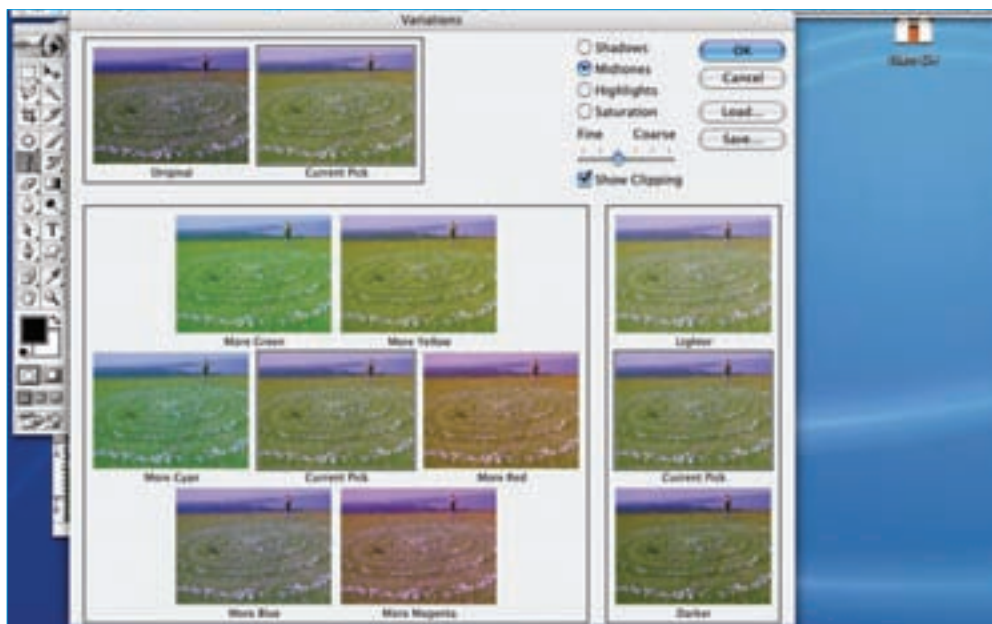
But to get the most out of CS2, learning the essential techniques to make the mundane everyday jobs easier, such as cutting out images for your fantastic ideas, will smooth your workflow. Using the Threshold function will define two definite areas of colour Black and White, and also enable you to adjust the percentage of colour to convert to black. Shifting this percentage should show the outline of objects, but this will only work on images of contrast so using this for, say, a city scene at night, will only pick out the lights but still produces a nice effect.

Select Image>Adjustments>Threshold and shift the slider up and down until you can still make out the subject matter. Sometimes inverting the image will help so simply select Image>Adjustments>Invert and the white and black areas will swap over.

## Q Tone it down

I was wondering if there was a way of applying a filter to an image then reducing the effect of the filter. At the moment I am applying a filter an image on a separate layer and turning down the opacity of the layer, but as I am blending this

**“It is possible to ‘fade’ filters and blend them to the applied image. This can produce spectacular results”**



Get a quick start into the fine art of colour correction by using the Variations function

If you have a problem, and no one else can help, send it in to the *Web Designer* team! We'll do our best to print your problems on our pages, but we cannot reply personally to every email.

**SEND YOUR QUERIES TO:**  
webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk



## Your expert

**Rodger Page** is a new-media designer and multimedia editor who has been using Photoshop and Flash for years, and he is also a regular contributor to *Web Designer's* Photoshop tutorials. His future plans are to teach digital arts at a college or university, but for the moment enjoys authoring CD and DVDs for a range of magazines with the rest of the digital crew here at Imagine Publishing.

layer it is difficult to add the filter and maintain the effect. Is there a solution to my problem, or shall I just give up?

Toby Brown

**A** Hi Toby. This is an interesting question, it is totally possible to 'fade' filters and also blend them to the applied image. This can produce some spectacular, and effective results, as the blending options are the same as the layer blending options found in the layer palette, taking away the need to duplicate the image and reducing the opacity down to achieve the desired results. Blending filters in this manner adds another dimension to what can be achieved with filters because when blending a filter you are only blending the effect that is produced, whereas blending a layer will blend the image and the filter combined.

To blend a filter go to Edit>Fade... (and the name of the applied filter) and play with the options to see what can be achieved. The fade function can also be applied to other bitmap-created objects such as the Brush Tool or even the Gradient Fill Tool (not the vector shape tool) but you must use the fade function as soon as you apply a filter or finish a brush stroke because as soon as you do something else the option will not be available. Bear this in mind before you get carried away!



## Can't draw, won't draw

I want great images for my site, but I just can't draw (and clip art looks rubbish). What can I do?

Jen Highcliffe



**A** Where do we start, Jen? The whole point of Photoshop and other image-editing programs is that you don't have to be an artist to create something brilliant, as long as you can work the program properly. You could use a scanner to scan in and work with found textures such as pressed flowers or leaves, or just scan in old photos and roughly cut them out for a cutting-edge urban look. This issue we've included a tutorial just for people who can't draw for toffee – check out page 68 for the easy guide to designing a thoroughly modern site.



Expand the range of filters by utilizing the fade function and applying blending modes



## Expert advice

### Keep your colleagues in the loop

We all know the virtues of being organised when it comes to giving images, layers and paths relevant names, but why not go one step further by using the Notes Tool? The advantages of this handy little tool is that if you have special instructions to give to someone say over the email you would have to be very descriptive on what needs to be done but using the Notes Tool would make it instantly obvious on what needs to be done, and as the notes are only contained in a PSDs when the image is exported or printed the notes will no longer appear. Very clever, very useful.



## Technique: Exploring layer masks

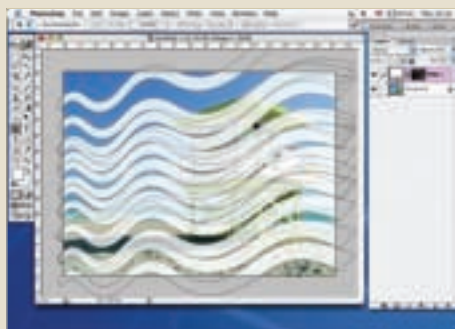


Is there a way of creating layer masks without adding a masking layer and drawing in the masking areas in black and white? I want to apply an image to a layer and mask out one image with another. I can't help but think that there has to be an easy way of doing this without using lots of layers?

Dan Shepperton

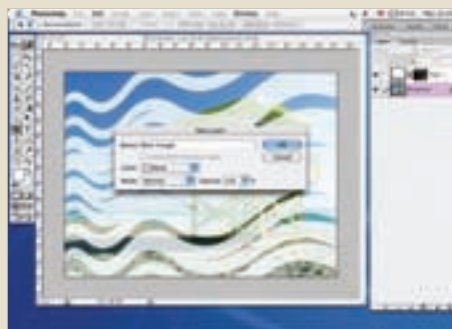


**A** There is, but it means that you still need an object for a mask, be it a vector shape, brush strokes or a pattern. Here I will create some vector shapes on a fill layer then apply this layer to an image using a single mouse click. The beauty of being able to mask layers in this fashion is that you can apply multiple masking layers to one or more layers.



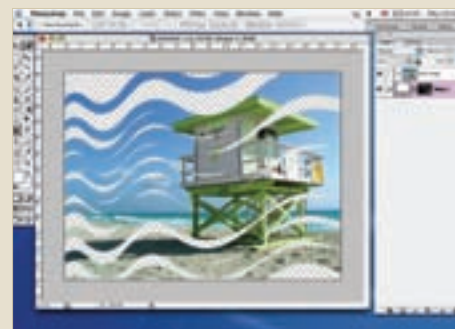
### 01 Create the shape layer

Select the Shape Tool and choose a shape: here it's the wave custom shape. Draw out the shape on the page, also add a perspective transform to follow the line of perspective. You could use a brush with patterned brush tip and paint on certain areas.



### 02 Layer palette

Open the layer palette and release the background layer to a new layer by double-clicking on the background layer thumbnail. A dialog will appear for you to rename the layer, click OK. Swap the layers so that your masking layer is below your image.



### 03 Mask the layer

Hold down the Alt key and position the mouse between the two layers. Your mouse should turn into two circles and a small arrow, now click with your mouse and like magic the layer is masked. Reposition the layer with ease using the Move Tool.



### THE BRIEF

#### ON THE CD

**Tutorial files:**  
paper.tif, wood.tif, zen.tif, teeth.csh, teeth.tif

#### TUTORIAL OBJECTIVE

To create eye-catching visuals for your web templates

#### TIME REQUIRED

Up to four hours

#### SKILL LEVEL



## Create sharp visuals and stimulating sites

IF YOU WANT SOMEONE TO STOP AND BROWSE YOUR SITE YOU NEED TO ENSURE IT CAPTURES THE IMAGINATION. HERE'S HOW...

**NO MATTER WHAT** you're promoting through your site you need to ensure it is presented at its best. Whether you're selling t-shirts or your own artwork, a head-turning splash page will cause the biggest waves.

This tutorial is designed to show you how to create a colourful, multi-faceted intro, without the need of a design doctorate or app other than Photoshop. Although anything goes here – custom shapes, photographs or scanned-in

images – there are a few rules to abide by. Ensuring your splash stays within the bounds of web-safe colour is a basic but fundamental rule. Also bear in mind the busier the image the fewer options you'll have for applying buttons for clear links.

The best way to find your style is to practice – you're sure to go through a few intro screens but at least you'll end up with one you really like! And remember – these skills will see you through the rest of your design career.



## YOUR EXPERT

**James Davies** is art editor on our sister mag *Digital Photographer*. Since graduating Thames Valley University with a 2:1 in Digital Arts he's had commissions for *Digital Creative Arts*, *Advanced Photoshop*, and renegade t-shirt label *Dirty Velvet*, [www.dirtyvelvet.co.uk](http://www.dirtyvelvet.co.uk).

# Create sharp visuals and stimulating sites



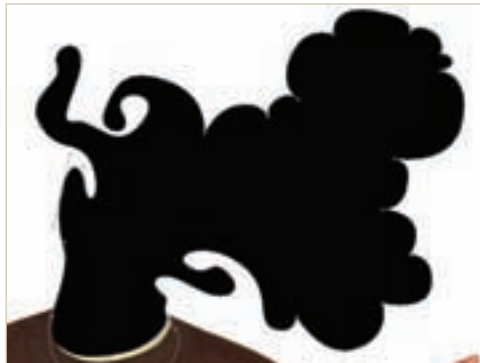
## 01 Cut it out

Open up 'zen.jpg' and select the Pen Tool (P). Ensure that the tool is set to Path as opposed to Shape Layers then draw a series of points and curves to give it a feeling of being cut out by hand. You can be loose with this, try imagining how you'd cut it out using scissors.



## 02 Off with his head

Select the path from the path palette, hold down Ctrl and click on the path icon to turn the path into a selection. Next, turn your attention to the head and, using the same loose style and Pen Tool, cut the head from the figure to leave us with the torso.



## 03 Smoking!

Using the Path Tool set to Shape Layers, draw a coloured shape coming out of the neck as if were smoke billowing where the head should be. Using the Direct Selection Tool, click the path and manipulation the point curves until you are happy with your shape.



## 04 Technocoloured

Using the Pen Tool again, continue to build up other shapes in different hues until a multi-coloured smoke has replaced the spot our head used to occupy. It might take a few goes to get a look you're happy with, especially if you're not too hot with the Pen, but persevere.



## 05 Face off

To add the face detail select the Custom Shape Tool and load the teeth shape from the CD ('teeth.csh'). Select an appropriate colour and draw by clicking and dragging on the canvas, remember to hold down Shift to constrain the proportions. Use the Ellipse Tool to draw in the eye.



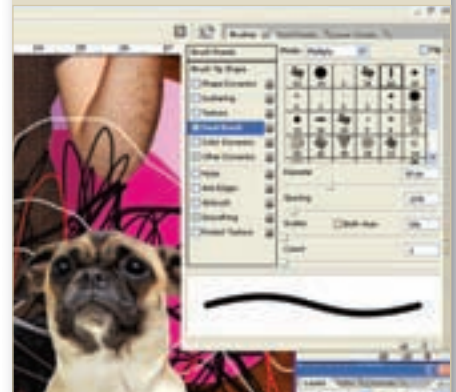
## 06 Back to nature

Open up 'wood.tif' from the CD and place it into the document. To create the path use the Pen Tool (Paths selected) draw the cloud shape over the wood before turning the path into a selection. With the wood layer selected, click Add Vector Mask (in Layers palette).

## TECHNIQUE

# Building custom brushes

This image needed a brush that responded the same way as a highlighter pen, so we'll create one! Here's how...



## 01 New brush

Go to the Brush palette and create a new brush. Create a brush and select Shape Dynamics. Make it 15% round, at a 90-degree angle and with a pixel diameter of 45. You should have a vertical ellipse. Hardness should be between 95-100% with spacing clicked on at 1%.



## 02 Dual Brush Action

Next, create a round brush with the same diameter. Make the second brush 100% round. Then select Dual brush from the Brush Preset menu and select the two new brushes from the Custom menu. Set it up as shown in the screenshot. Click on Smoothing from the brush preset menu. Select Multiply from the mode drop-down menu at the top of the palette and your new brush is ready.

## TECHNIQUE

### Create custom shapes

Custom shapes are handy if you want to repeatedly use a motif or shape in your work, so here's how I created the teeth



#### 01 Draw your shape

We'll create the teeth shape by importing a photo of some teeth, but by all means use your own to make it extra-personal. Selecting the Pen Tool, set it to shape layers and turn the layer fill to 0%. Trace the outline of the teeth.



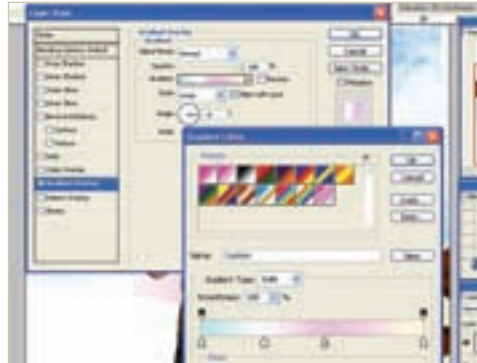
#### 02 Define your shape

Using the Path Selection Tool (A) select the path and Edit>Define Custom Shape. This will convert your path to a custom shape, putting in the custom shape list. These shapes are saved in your Photoshop>Presets>Custom Shapes folder.



#### 03 Use your shape

Click the Custom Shape Tool and select your teeth. Hold down Shift to constrain the proportions and drag the shape onto your canvas, where you can change the colour, etc. These shapes remain fully editable paths until you rasterize the layer.



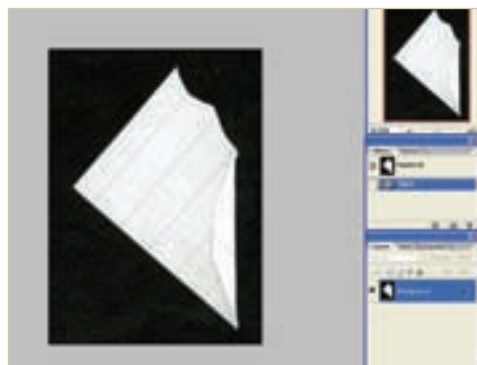
#### 07 Overlaying colour

Using the Pen Tool (Shape Layers selected) draw a second cloud shape below the first. Rasterize the layer (Layer>Rasterize>Layer). Hit Layer>Layer Styles>Gradient Overlay, click on the Gradient colour bar to open the editor and change the colour by clicking the bottom swatches.



#### 09 Animal magic

Bring in some other elements to the composition – I've used a dog and a bird. Roughly cut out the elements from their backgrounds as if done by hand and place them in front and behind the figure to give depth and perspective.



#### 11 Paper trail

Grab some lined paper and cut out an irregular shape around one of the corners (you may need an adult to supervise you). Fold part of the paper and scan it in. Or, open 'paper.tif' from the CD, place in the image and cut the folded part of the paper out with Polygonal Lasso Tool.



#### 08 Clouding over

By clicking the bottom swatches or sliders then on Colour Box you can select a colour. Change the angle of the gradient to suit. Add another cloud, and to change the colour go to Layers palette and double-click the layer icon to bring up the colour picker.



#### 10 Printed effects

Select the dog layer and Layer>Duplicate Layer. With the new layer selected go to Filter>Pixelate>Colour halftone and set the Max. Radius to 4. Set Blending Mode to hard light, Opacity to 60%. This will give the dog a printed quality. Repeat for all the photographic elements.



#### 12 Body parts

Line the paper up with the elbow (rotate/resize to fit). Cut out the bits that protrude from the fold using the Polygonal Lasso. Duplicate the paper fold layer and make it a selection by Ctrl+clicking the thumbnail. Select a near-black and Shift+F5 to fill. Filter>Gaussian Blur with a radius of 4.



## 13 Ear, ear!

Using the Move Tool, shunt the new layer as if it were a shadow from the paper fold on the elbow. Repeat the process on the dog's ear. Using the Polygonal Lasso Tool, select the tip of the ear, Edit>Transform>Rotate and rotate it ten degrees clockwise so it looks like it's been ripped.



## 14 Shaping up nicely

Select the Pen and draw in shapes behind the ones you made earlier (shape layers selected). Create shadows using the technique in step 12. To delete unnecessary shadows on the white canvas, make selections of the layers that the shadows fall on, Shift+Ctrl+I to inverse, and delete.



## 15 Create the canvas

Select a neutral colour for the canvas and Shift+F5 to fill. Go to Filter>Render>Lighting Effects and select a Spotlight light. Set the intensity to 35, the focus to 68, Gloss to 100, Material to -100, Exposure to 0, and the Ambience to 32. Now manipulate the light source so it's a long ellipse.

## IN DETAIL

### Distress to impress

Gaining that trendy bruised and battered look isn't all that hard to achieve once you get the hang of using filters and a spot of some good old-fashioned creative imagination

**DISTRESS EFFECTS** can really hammer home that natural finish to even the most digital looking images. All too often digital images are made to look too clean, too sharp and too new, there is another way. Using distressing techniques can help give your creations a urban feel that will make it stand out from the digital crowd.

There are several ways to achieve this kind of look. From painting dirt onto an image using custom brushes (for a good array of brushes visit <http://share.studio.adobe.com> – the site also features displacement maps for texturing and all sorts of other free downloadable goodies) to a more complex layered approach using blending modes and texture files, there are a wealth of options. Complete Photoshop novices will find comfort in Mister Retro's Vintage Wash filters ([www.misterretro.com](http://www.misterretro.com)), which currently has around 60 wash effects. This takes all the leg work out of applying a distressed-wash effects to your images. It works by making a layer mask out of a textured picture and applying it the image. You can import your own texture maps, but due to the nature of layer masks the texture image needs to be monochrome greyscale.

Another approach is to source some aged or stained paper and scan it in. Once in Photoshop, lay it under your artwork on the layer hierarchy and set your image (this is the artwork not the scanned paper layer) layer blending mode to Multiply. This multiplies the colour of the multiply layer by the colour underneath, making a darker colour. Multiplying any colour with black produces black while multiplying any colour with white makes no change.

This technique works well with a rough paper texture as long as the paper is not too dark. It can be worth playing around with a number of different techniques to find the one which suits each image best. No one technique will suit every image you ever create, so be sure not to get stuck in a creative rut!



*It's amazing what some cracked parchment texture can add to your images when trying to achieve that distressed look*



*Soon you'll be creating larger and more complex images by using many of the same techniques exhibited here*



## 16 Blurring effects

Duplicate the dog and fill it with the shadow colour. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and set to 4. Set the layer opacity to 50%. To blend the layer so it gets fainter, select the shadow layer and click Add Layer Mask. Draw a black to white gradient on the layer mask.



## 17 Falling shadow

Duplicate the dog again to create a shadow layer with a Gaussian Blur of 13. We want this shadow to fall on the colour layers behind the dog so move the shadow to correspond with the light source. Select the area outside of the colour shapes affected by the shadow and delete.

# Tutorial



## 18 Shady dealings

Using the Blur Tool from the tool palette, set the strength to 100% and blur the parts of the dog's shadow that fade out. Unlink the layer mask from the shadow layer by clicking the link between the thumbnails, now select the shadow layer thumbnail and begin painting in the blur.



## 19 Light fantastic

Repeat the process for all the elements (the birds, the figure and so on) so that they all cast their own shadow which works with the lighting source. See how the bottom lighting source would create different shadows than the top lighting source.



## 20 Paint drips

Using the Pen Tool (again set to shape layers) draw on a long drip from the pink shape layer. Just imagine some paint dripping down a wall – that's the effect we want to replicate here. It gives it a bit of a random edge, like you just threw the whole thing together.



## 21 Dog's body

Using the Ellipse Tool, draw a series of circles to resemble a cartoon puddle from a bird's eye view. You'll need to do this on separate layers so that the layer shapes to intersect on the same layer. Select all the layers on the layers palette and go to Layer>Rasterize>Layer.



## 22 Puddle perspective

Give the puddle a sense of perspective by heading across to Edit>Transform>Distort. Squash the puddle to about half the height. Then go to Edit>Transform>Perspective and tweak the perspective so the puddle gets smaller in the distance, making it sit more naturally.



## 23 Hyper-real effects

Using the techniques already employed, create a shadow that the drip casts onto the colour shapes behind and the puddle which it creates. Think about how the shadows would be cast if it were real and try to mimic this. You can judge it by eye to see the overall effect.



## 24 Big drip

Repeat the process for a yellow drip on the layer behind the pink shape and drip. The desired effect is to create something obviously digital, but that exists in a real world with lighting and physics. So make the shadow as realistic as you like, as there'll always be that sharp digital edge.



## 25 Rough and ready

Create a circle using the Ellipse Tool. Set the layer colour to black. Using the Pen Tool with shape layers selected, crudely draw your text to look like it was cut out of paper using scissors, as above. This fits in perfectly with the style of the image we've already created.



## 26 Go play

See the brushes technique to create a brush like a colour marker. Then, using this brush, draw on a new layer with varying thickness of brushes (from 5 up to 12 pixels) and colours (I've stuck to red, white and black), doodling on the image with the Paintbrush Tool.

## Create sharp visuals and stimulating sites



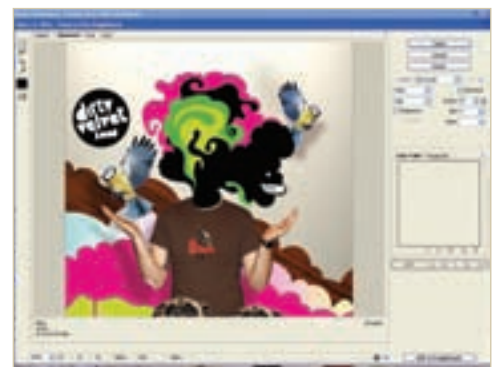
### 27 Navigation station

Although this shape of image isn't really traditional site navigation it is the style that's important here. The image itself can be created as your needs dictate. This kind of site could be used to break the mould – I've created text to depict where I'd place the navigation buttons.



### 28 Doodle do

Using the Paintbrush Tool, and with your custom marker brush selected, roughly paint on some scribbles which link the text buttons into the image and to make them more visible. It also adds to that rough hand-drawn look we've been cultivating through the whole image.



### 29 Ready for the web

Before adding your buttons in your web program you'll need to save the image for web. There are many ways to do this but I've chosen the simplest. Go to File>Save For Web and set it up as a 60% quality .jpg file. (Or, you could slice the image or save it as a progressive scan file.)



### THE BRIEF

#### ON THE CD

**Tutorial files:**  
All the files for this tutorial are included on your free CD

#### TUTORIAL OBJECTIVE

Learn the basics of Ajax using the Prototype library by creating a username validation script

#### TIME REQUIRED

One hour

#### SKILL LEVEL



# Enhancing your web applications with Ajax

WE'LL FIND OUT HOW TO USE AJAX TO INCREASE THE USABILITY OF WEB APPS WHILE ENSURING THAT THEY STILL REMAIN ACCESSIBLE

**ONE OF THE ISSUES** with creating web applications is that in order for the user's input to interact with the database or other scripts they need to submit a form or click a link that contains QueryString parameters. This means that web applications can't behave in the way that desktop applications do, reacting immediately to user input. However, things are changing in the world of web application development and Ajax can allow you to get this desktop application style interactivity in a web application. AJAX stands for

Asynchronous JavaScript and XML, and using JavaScript enables developers to interact with their backend scripts and database without needing to reload the page each time.

To develop Ajax functionality completely from scratch is time-consuming and involves in-depth knowledge of JavaScript, however we are fortunate to have existing libraries that we can use which make development simple and quick. In this article we will use the Prototype Library to add AJAX functionality to a registration form.



## YOUR EXPERT

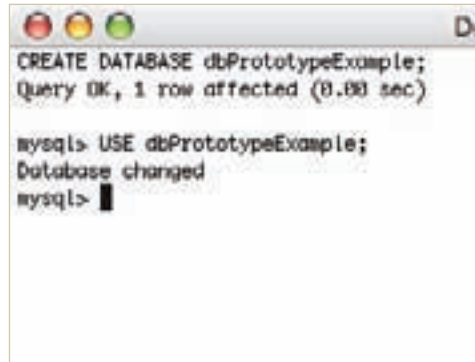
**Rachel Andrew** is a web developer and Managing Director of web consultancy [www.edgeofmyseat.com](http://www.edgeofmyseat.com). She is author of a number of books, including *Build Your Own Standards Compliant Website Using Dreamweaver 8* published by Sitepoint.

# Enhancing your web applications with Ajax



## 01 Start your site

Start by setting up a site in Dreamweaver that uses the PHP and MySQL Server Model (you could also add this functionality to an existing site built with PHP and MySQL). We are using PHP, but these techniques and the Prototype Library itself could be used with any Server Model.



## 02 Begin a database

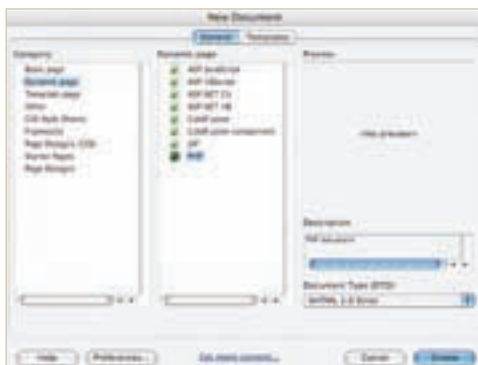
Either create a new database for the purpose of this tutorial and name it dbPrototypeExample – the name of the database for which an SQL script is available on the CD. Alternatively, you can add the table to an existing database – if you are going to do that just skip this step.



## 03 Create tblUsers

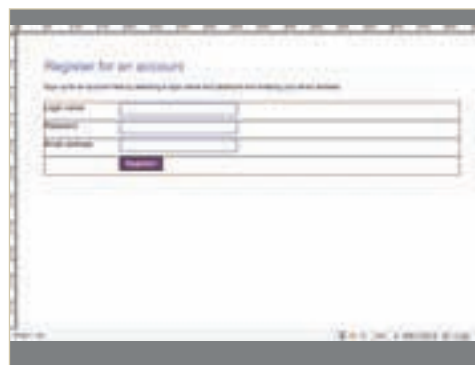
Now create a table named tblUsers inside your new database. This table will contain a userID which is an INT, set to auto\_increment and the Primary Key, we also add varchar fields for userLogin, userPassword and userEmail. Create this using a database admin tool or by entering the SQL below at the command line.

```
CREATE TABLE tblUsers (  
  userID INT NOT NULL AUTO_INCREMENT  
  PRIMARY KEY,  
  userLogin VARCHAR(100),  
  userPassword VARCHAR(100),  
  userEmail VARCHAR(255));
```



## 04 The signup form page

In Dreamweaver, select File>New and in the new page dialog create a new Dynamic Page. Select PHP from the list and then set the Document Type (DTD) to XHTML 1.0 Strict, then save the new page as 'register.php' into the site you created earlier or your existing site.



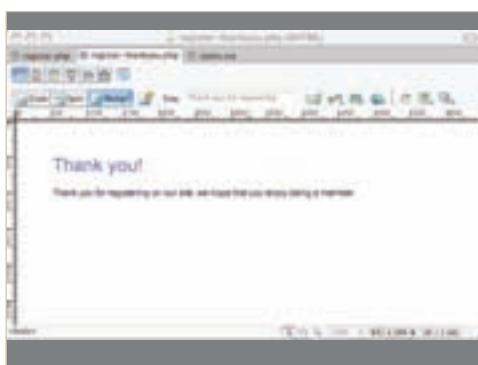
## 05 Add a form

On your new page use the Forms Pane of the Insert Toolbar to insert a new form. This form will enable users to sign up by selecting a username and password. Add three form fields: 'userLogin', 'userPassword', 'userEmail' into your form, and a submit button with a value of 'Register'.



## 06 Connect to the database

Open the Databases Panel (in the Application Panel Group) and make a connection to your database. The only choice you have using PHP is to use a MySQL database. In the dialog that opens enter your database connection info. Click OK, and the connection should appear in the Panel.



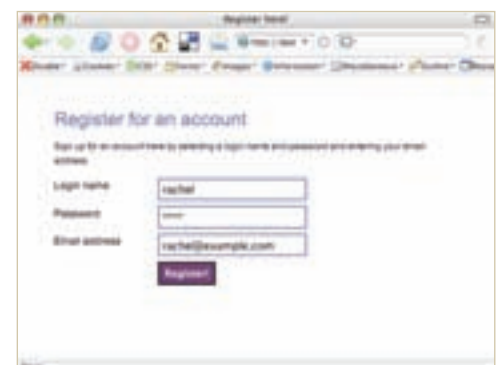
## 07 The thank you page

Before setting up the form to add the data to the database create a new page in Dreamweaver named 'register-thankyou.php' and add a message that lets the user know that their registration has been successful and we will redirect to this form after a successful input of data.



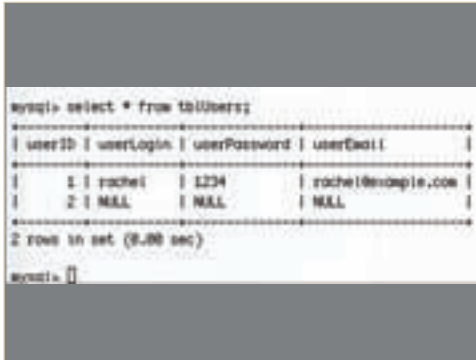
## 08 Submitting the form

To submit the form and insert the data select the form and in the Server Behaviors Panel select 'Insert Record'. Select your database connection and the table tblUsers. Check the fields are inserting into the right place and choose the 'register-thankyou.php' page as the redirect page.



## 09 Test the form so far

Before going any further check that this form works, display the page in a web browser and enter some data then submit the form. You should be redirected to the thank you page. Check in your database that the data you just entered displays as a row in the table tblUsers.



## 10 Server-side validation

Our form has no validation; you can enter a completely blank form and it will show up in the database with nulls. You can also enter a duplicate userLogin. You must validate forms on the server-side, not just with JavaScript; to do this in Dreamweaver we need to edit the code.



## 13 Display the message

We can now add the error message so that it will display on the page in the event of a user trying to submit and incomplete form. I have added my message just below the heading on the page in order that it is obvious to the user that there has been a problem.

```
<?php
if(isset($errmsg)) {
    echo '<p class="err">'. $errmsg . '</p>';
}
?>
```

## 16 Check for an existing user

We have basic validation working, but should make sure each username is only used once. First we'll write a function that can be used to check a username, adding it in a functions.php file. Create this file and add this function.

```
<?php
function isNewUsername($userLogin,$database
$conn, $conn) {
    $userLogin = (!get_magic_quotes
    gpc()) ? addslashes($userLogin) : $userLogin;
    $sql = "SELECT userID FROM tblUsers WHERE
    userLogin = '$userLogin' LIMIT 1";
    $result = mysql_query($sql, $conn);
    if(mysql_error()) {
        return false;
    } else {
        $row = mysql_fetch_row($result);
        if(is_array($row)) {
            return true;
        } else {
            return false;
        }
    }
}
```

## 11 Checking for blank fields

In register.php switch into Code View. Find the line (around line 33) that is:

```
if ((isset($_POST["MM_insert"])) && ($
$_POST["MM_insert"] == "form2")) {
```

After this we need to insert the code below. This checks to see if we have blank fields being submitted in the form.

```
if ((isset($_POST["MM_insert"])) && ($
$_POST["MM_insert"] == "form2")) {
    if($_POST['userLogin'] != '' and
    $_POST['userPassword'] != '' and $
    $_POST['userEmail'] != '') {
        $insertSQL = sprintf("INSERT INTO tblUsers
        (userLogin, userPassword, userEmail) VALUES
        (%s, %s, %s)",
        GetSQLValueString($
        $_POST['userLogin'], "text"),
        GetSQLValueString($
        $_POST['userPassword'], "text"),
        GetSQLValueString($
        $_POST['userEmail'], "text"));
```



## 12 Fully complete?

Now scroll to the bottom of the PHP block where we need to add the else for our new if statement. This will create an error message which we can then display on the page if the user has not completed the form fields fully. All of this code is on the CD for reference.

```
header(sprintf("Location: %s",
$insertGoTo));
} else {
    $errmsg = 'Please complete all of the form
    fields to submit the form!';
}
?>
```



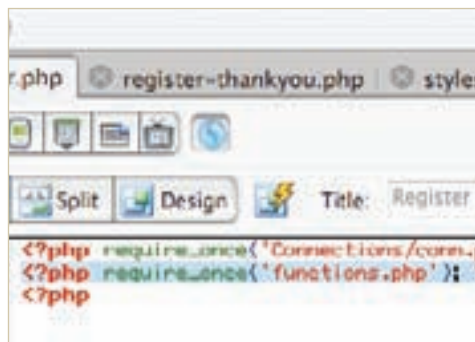
## 15 Improving user experience

Currently an error clears all of the form variables meaning that the user has to complete the form all over again if they miss one field. We can write out the entered values to make this more friendly for the user. On a small form disappearing data isn't too bad, but it is annoying on a large complex form.

```
<div><label for="userLogin">Login name</
label>
<input type="text" name="userLogin"
id="userLogin" class="text"><?php if(isset($
$_POST['userLogin'])) { ?> value="<?php echo
$_POST['userLogin']; ?>"><?php } ?></div>
```

## 14 Check the validation

Save your page and view it again in the browser, this time if you try and submit a blank form or a form where some of the fields have not been completed the form will not process and the error message will be displayed to you instead, completed forms should still submit as before.



## 17 Include functions.php

Include the new functions.php file below the connection include in register.php. By including the file we can then use the functions contained in it just as though they were added to the page. You can even copy out the functions that Dreamweaver itself adds if you want to tidy up the register.php page.

## 18 Call the function

Next we'll add a second if...else statement inside the one that checked for blank fields to call this function. If the function returns true we have a new userLogin and can proceed, if false the name already exists and shows the message. Add the code just after the first line of validation:

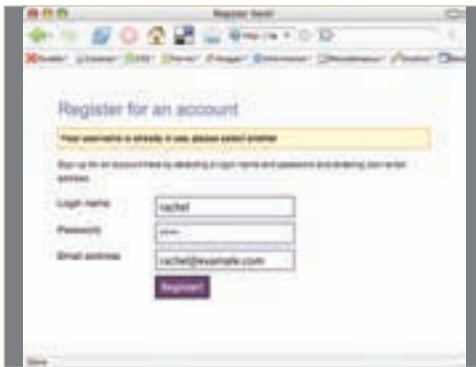
```
if($_POST['userLogin'] != '' and
$_POST['userPassword'] != '' and $
$_POST['userEmail'] != '') {
    if(isNewUsername($_POST['userLogin'],
    $database_conn, $conn) == true) {
        $insertSQL = sprintf("INSERT INTO tblUsers
        (userLogin, userPassword, userEmail) VALUES
        (%s, %s, %s)",
        GetSQLValueString($
        $_POST['userLogin'], "text"),
        GetSQLValueString($
        $_POST['userPassword'], "text"),
        GetSQLValueString($
        $_POST['userEmail'], "text"));
```



## 19 Add the else

As with the last line of validation we need to add an else and in that set a message that will be displayed to the user. We don't need to write this out to the page again as we are called the variable \$errmsg once again so it will display in place of the other message.

```
header(sprintf("Location: %s", $insertGoTo));
} else {
    $errmsg = 'Your username is already in use,
    please select another';
}
} else {
    $errmsg = 'Please complete all of the form
    fields to submit the form!';
}
}
```



## 20 Test the new functionality

Open your page in the browser and check out the new functionality – check that if you enter a username that is the same as once in the database that you get the message, and also check that empty fields still create the correct message and that a correct form will insert.



## 21 Adding some Ajax!

We have a functioning signup, but as unique usernames are important let's add some Ajax to check the username before the user submits the form. We'll use Prototype (download it from <http://prototype.conio.net>). All you need is the prototype.js file, save it into your site directory.

## IN DETAIL

## How AJAX works – a simple explanation

We have seen in this tutorial what AJAX can do but the use of the Prototype library effectively shields us from the real workings of AJAX and how this works

**AJAX ISN'T A** technology in itself – it's a combination of technologies some of which you will already be using. These technologies include: (X)HTML and CSS, the Document Object Model, XML and XSLT, the XMLHttpRequest Object and JavaScript. We have seen a bit of how these technologies work together in our simple application. We added a div with an ID to the page that could be addressed via the Document Object Model, we included a JavaScript Library and wrote a small amount of JavaScript to make use of it however we didn't encounter the element which makes Ajax possible – the XMLHttpRequest Object itself.

This object was first added as an ActiveX object by Microsoft into Internet Explorer, it has since been implemented in other browsers such as Mozilla (which includes Firefox and other Mozilla based browsers) and Safari. It enables us to make HTTP requests (such as we make when posting a form or requesting a page by clicking on a link) in the background. So, when a user of our form clicks away from the userLogin text field what is actually happening is that we are making a background POST to our ajax.php script with the data that has been added into the text field, the script then passes back some text which we can display to the user by manipulating the Document Object Model.

It is very important to remember that when you use Ajax you are reliant on the user having JavaScript and in being able to understand the change of state on the page brought about by your script.

In this tutorial we built our form first, so that it was robust and validated the data – we then introduced the Ajax – and this is really how you need to work, even if you plan to use Ajax from the outset, the application needs to work without it, even if it is in a more simple form or requires the user to post pages in the more usual way.



Our code checks that the user has filled in the forms properly, and displays an error message if they have not



It's important to make sure that your form is stable and works without the Ajax extra, as the user may not have JavaScript



## 22 Include the JavaScript files

You now need to include the prototype.js JavaScript file along with another new file into your register.php page. Create a new JavaScript file in Dreamweaver and save it as ajax.js. Now, in the head of register.php include these two JavaScript files. The ajax.js file will add the specific JavaScript functions for your page.



## 23 Add some for the message

Our Ajax will check to see if the username is in use and, if it is, display a message when the user clicks away from the input field. We need to add something to our document into which this message will go, in this case a div with an id of val-msg.

```
<div><label for="userLogin">Login name</label>
<input type="text" name="userLogin"
id="userLogin" class="text">?php if(isset($
POST['userLogin'])) { ?> value="<?php echo
$ _POST['userLogin']; ?>"<?php } ?> /><div
id="val-msg" class="ajaxmsg"></div></div>
```

## TECHNIQUE

# CSS style for the form

In the tutorial I have laid out the form fields without using a table, here's how I achieved this layout

## 01 The mark-up

The form is marked up with each label and text input pair being wrapped in a div. The label is important for accessibility but also gives us a hook to hang our CSS hat upon when creating a table-free form.

```
<form id="form1" method="post"
action="">
  <div><label
for="userLogin">Login name</label>
  <input type="text"
name="userLogin" id="userLogin"
class="text" /></div>
  <div><label for="userPassword">
Password</label>
  <input type="password"
name="userPassword"
id="userPassword" class="text"
/></div>
  <div><label
for="userEmail">Email address</
label>
  <input type="text"
name="userEmail" id="userEmail"
class="text" /></div>
  <div><input type="submit"
name="btnSubmit" id="btnSubmit"
value="Register!" class="btn" /></
div>
</form>
```

## 02 Position form fields

To line up the form fields we float the labels left and give them a width. To make sure that the div doesn't pop up alongside the first we clear it left and give it some padding. Add the class register-form to the form element.

```
.register-form div {
clear:left;
padding-bottom: 0.6em;
}
.register-form label {
float:left;
width: 10em;
}
```

## 03 Adding some style

You can now style the form fields and labels as you wish – adding borders, background colours and so on, to create an attractive looking form that doesn't use a table and so is more easily accessible to all of your users.



## 24 The PHP page

You have now done everything that you need to do to your register.php page to add Ajax. The Ajax needs to call a PHP page that will call the same function that we use to check the username during posting the form. Create a new PHP page in Dreamweaver to use for this.



## 26 The Ajax Script

We now need a simple PHP script that calls the isNewUsername function. If the function returns false then the username already exists in the database. Just as in the register.php page we are passing to the function the variable userLogin from the POST. If false echo a message – this message will appear on the register.php page.

```
<?php
if(isNewUsername($_POST['userLogin'],$database
$conn, $conn) == false) {
echo 'This username is already in use
- please choose another!';
}
?>
```



## 28 The init() function

The above function calls the function init() which will set up a listener to watch for someone entering text in the userLogin box, we now need to write this function which again uses Event.observe – this time waiting for someone to click away from (blur) the userLogin field after adding their username.

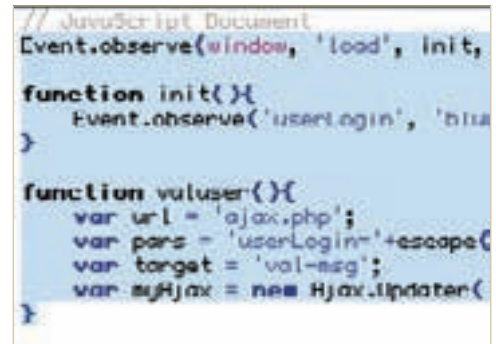
```
function init(){
Event.observe('userLogin', 'blur', valuser,
false);
}
```



## 25 Add the includes

Save the new PHP page as ajax.php, the first thing we need to do is include the database connection include and functions.php right at the top of the page. You do not need any DOCTYPE or other XHTML on this page, so delete anything that Dreamweaver has added for you.

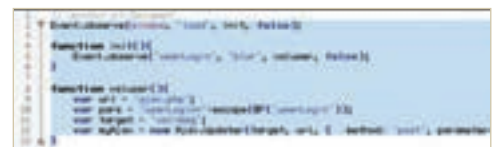
```
<?php require_once('Connections/conn.php'); ?>
<?php require_once('functions.php'); ?>
```



## 27 Write ajax.js

Open the JavaScript document that you created earlier and that is included in your page saved as ajax.js. The first thing that we need to do is create a listener which sets everything up when the window is loaded by using Event.observe, which is part of the Prototype library.

```
Event.observe(window, 'load', init, false);
```



## 29 The valuser() function

Our final function actually does the work of calling our PHP script and validating the username. The URL is the ajax.php page we have created, the parameter is the posted userLogin, the target is the ID of the div on register.php and we call the Prototype Ajax.Updater to do the dirty work.

```
function valuser(){
var url = 'ajax.php';
var pars = 'userLogin='+escape($F('userLogin'));
var target = 'val-msg';
var myAjax = new Ajax.Updater(target, url, {
method: 'post', parameters: pars});
}
```

## Enhancing your web applications with Ajax

```
// Javascript Document
Event.observe(window, 'load', init, false);

function init(){
    Event.observe('userLogin', 'blur',
}

function valuser(){
    var url = 'ajax.php';
    var pars = 'userLogin='+escape($f);
    var target = 'val-msg';
    var myAjax = new Ajax.Updater(target,
```

## 30 The completed ajax.js

That's it! Save `ajax.js` as that is all we need to do to implement our Ajax username look up functionality on our `register.php` page. With the help of the Prototype library we don't need to write a whole bunch of scripts to be able to add this type of feature to our pages.

Register for an account

Sign up for an account here by selecting a login name and password and entering your email address.

Login name:  This username is already in use - please use another

Password:

Email address:

[Register!](#)

## 31 Test the script

Open `register.php` in your browser. Type in a username that you know is already in the database. As soon as you click away from the `userLogin` field you should see that the message you added to the `ajax.php` file is displayed. I added a class to the div and some CSS (on the CD).

Register for an account

Your username is already in use, please select another

Sign up for an account here by providing a login name and password and entering your email address.

Login name:

Password:

Email address:

[Register!](#)

## 32 An accessible script

Remember that the Ajax only runs if the user has JavaScript. However, we have already accounted for this as our page works fine without the Ajax. If the user doesn't get the message or submits the form anyway, our original username validation will catch the duplicate.

```

function GetSQLStatementFromLog($tableName, $tableName, $tableIndexName = "", $tableStartIndexName = "")
{
    $tableName = (get-LogIndexTableName) |> select -first ($tableName) : $tableName

    switch ($tableName) {
        case "tblLog" {
            $tableName = ($tableName -eq "" ? "" : $tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog")
            break
        }
        case "tblLog" {
            $tableName = ($tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog" : $tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog")
            break
        }
        case "tblLog" {
            $tableName = ($tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog" : $tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog")
            break
        }
        case "tblLog" {
            $tableName = ($tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog" : $tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog")
            break
        }
        case "tblLog" {
            $tableName = ($tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog" : $tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog")
            break
        }
        case "tblLog" {
            $tableName = ($tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog" : $tableName -eq "" ? "tblLog")
            break
        }
    }

    return $tableName
}

Set-LogIndexName -f "tblLog" -tblLogIndexName "tblLogIndexName"
Set-LogIndexName -f "tblLog" -tblLogIndexName "tblLogIndexName"

```

## PHP functions

These functions are added by Dreamweaver when we add the Insert Record PHP Server Behavior

[illegible]

## Editing the code

We have added two additional if... else statements to the Insert Record behavior for our validation

```

7  def login(self, username, password):
8      cursor = self.cursor()
9      cursor.execute("SELECT * FROM users WHERE username = '%s' and password = '%s'" % (username, password))
10     results = cursor.fetchall()
11     if len(results) > 0:
12         return True
13     else:
14         return False

```

### Re-usable function

We call this included function from register.php and also from ajax.php to validate our username

```

1  @type response_model: ConnectionResponse | ?
2  @type response_model: FunctionType | ?
3  @type
4      response_model: Union[ConnectionResponse, FunctionType] | ?
5      attr: This attribute is already in use - please check grammar!
6  }
7  }

```

### The script called by Ajax

This script takes the posted userLogin checking it is not a duplicate by calling `isNewUsername`

```

1 function test() {
2   function test1() {
3     console.log('test1', this, false);
4   }
5   function test2() {
6     var self = this;
7     var para = 'test1';
8     var target = 'test2';
9     var obj = new Object({target: target, self: self, method: 'test', parameters: para});
10  }
11 }

```

## ajax.js

This custom JavaScript calls the Ajax functionality when someone clicks away from the text input

```

70 # Signs up for an account using the selected login name and password and entering your email address
71 #
72 # @param login_name: login name
73 # @param password: password
74 # @param email: email address
75 # @return: True if successful, False otherwise
76
77 def sign_up(login_name, password, email):
78     # Create a new user
79     user = User(login_name, password, email)
80     # Add the user to the database
81     db.add(user)
82     # Commit the transaction
83     db.commit()
84     # Return True if successful, False otherwise
85     return True

```

## Displaying the message

All we have to now add to register.php is an empty div with an ID as you can see in the code here

# Tech support

# Dreamweaver

If you are having problems with Dreamweaver, don't despair. Site supremo **Steve Jenkins** is here to resolve your design dilemmas

## Q Smart shadows

Browsing the web the other day looking for inspiration I found a site with just the layout I was looking for. All the text and images were placed in a central column on a white background with a contrasting colour either side.

The bit that I liked was the shadows that appear on the central column. How do I go about creating such a look?

Sean Bridges

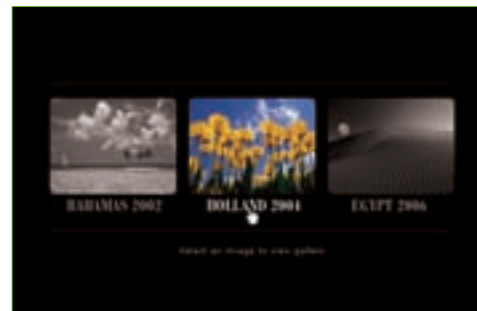
A This style is often used for blogs and proves to be an effective layout, ideal for reading long reams of text on a single page. There is more than one option for creating such a layout but we are going to demonstrate a couple of relatively simple choices.

The first option is to create an image and apply it to the page as a background image. First create your image in your favourite image editor (ours is Photoshop). Ideally this will be 600-700 pixels wide with a width of around ten. Add the background colour you want to use, create a new layer with a white

background and add an outer glow and save. Now head over to Dreamweaver and create a new page and bring up the Page Properties dialog via the Modify menu. Hit Browse and select the background image just created, then select the Background color: that matches the image.

Finally, select repeat-y from the Repeat: drop down list and click Apply. Head to Code view and add the following line background-position: center; to the code already created between the style tags. Now go back to Design view and add a table to the page. Centre it and select a suitable size, ie, 550 pixels, as not to go over the edges of the central column.

Alternatively, you can create a table with one row and three columns and apply images (the shadows) to the left and right columns leaving you with a centre column to work in. This approach does not offer quite as much flexibility as the first technique, but works just as well for pages with preset dimensions so it's worth considering.



With a little imagination and creativity – along with a few great photos – the Image Objects menu can produce great results

## Q Opening style

I would like to create an opening page for my site that provides both style and functionality. Essentially it should be an introduction to the site ahead, reflecting some of the content and encouraging people to explore.

I thought that it might present images in black and white that then change to colour (maybe with additional text) when a mouse cursor is placed over the image. Is this easy to do in Dreamweaver?

Jan Petersen

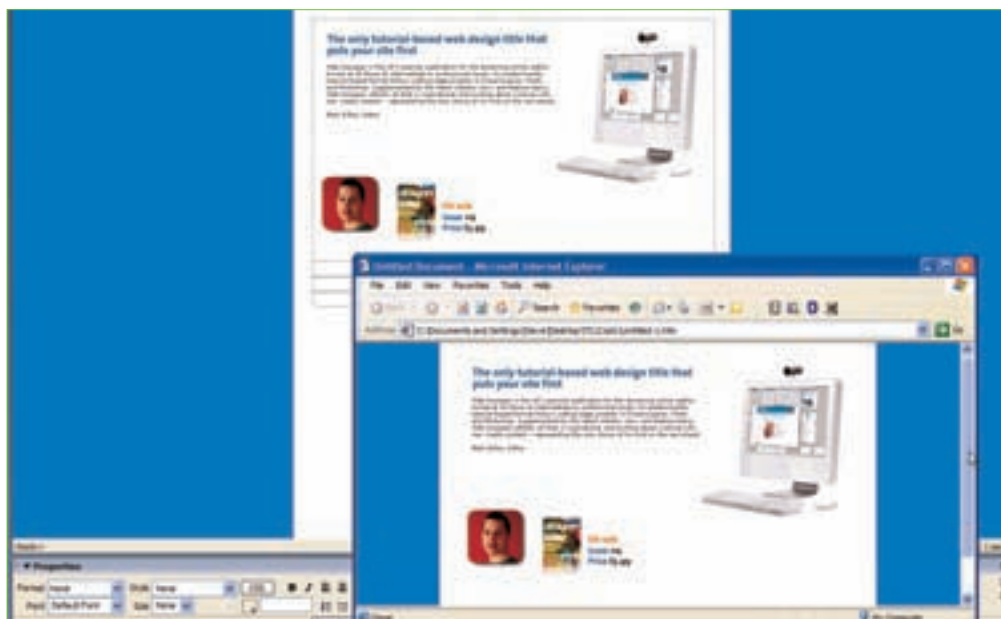
A In principle this is a pretty simple affair thanks to a number of Dreamweaver's inbuilt tools. A visit to the Insert menu provides the solution to your question via Image Objects. Here you will find Rollover Image and Navigation Bar, which operate on a similar level on the surface. Rollover Images are created individually and offer a simple image swap when the mouse cursor is placed on the image.

These only use two images whereas Navigation Bar offers the option to add more than a single instant of image, plus it offers four different states.

Additionally it also creates less code than using several rollover images. However, the hard work for either option will need to be done before Dreamweaver is even opened. Images are the basis for both approaches and planning the look and feel is critical to the success of the page.

As a quick guideline, all images really need to have the same dimensions. Dreamweaver automatically resizes the secondary images to the original. Hence if they are not the same size they lose their perspective. To create a rollover image select the appropriate position on the page and head to Insert>Image Objects>Rollover Image, name and select the

“Knowing keyboard shortcuts is an essential part of handling any software, and Dreamweaver is no exception”



With the help of CSS and a simple image you can create the ideal single column background for all resolutions

If you have a problem, and no one else can help, send it in to the *Web Designer* team! We'll do our best to print your problems on our pages, but we cannot reply personally to every email.

**SEND YOUR QUERIES TO:**  
webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk



## Your expert

**Steve Jenkins** is a keen designer and developer who started creating websites while attending Bournemouth University, and loves tackling the most teasing of Dreamweaver problems. He has been a keen Dreamweaver advocate since the heady days of version three, creating a wide range of site for clients and for personal use. To see a sample of Steve's work take a visit to [www.thesouthend.co.uk](http://www.thesouthend.co.uk)

initial and secondary images and press OK. If the image is to link to another page remember to add the URL and Alternate text. To create a Navigation bar head to Insert>Image Objects>Navigation Bar, add an Element Name: and select images for each state (Up, Down, Over, Over while down).

To add another set of images press + and repeat the process until you have all the buttons you want.



### Quick steps

Like all good software Dreamweaver uses menus and keyboard shortcuts to reach the desired destination in double-quick time.

The problem is that I don't want to have to find out what every shortcut is I just want to use them. So, can I create my own if I want? It would be better for the way I work.

Ian K



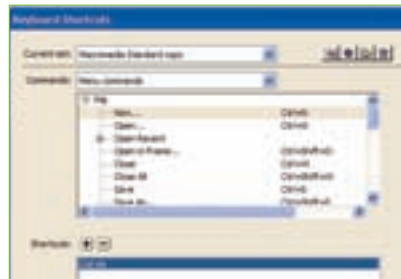
Knowing keyboard shortcuts is an essential part of handling any decent software, and Dreamweaver is no exception. It incorporates many of the standard keyboard shortcuts that can be found across a host of applications from a number of manufacturers.

A popular shortcut for pretty much any application is Ctrl+S, which saves the open document. Another example is the ubiquitous

Cut, Copy and Paste commands, (Ctrl+X, Ctrl+C, and Ctrl+V) all very useful. Beyond this Dreamweaver incorporates a vast range of its own, some more popular than others. A personal favourite of mine is the F12 key, which previews the page in the primary browser. To reveal and edit Dreamweaver shortcuts head to Edit>Keyboard Shortcuts to open the related dialog window.

To remove a shortcut select a category from Commands; ie, File, select a shortcut and click the Remove (-) button.

To add a shortcut find an empty command, add combination in Press Key and click Change. Finally, to edit a shortcut select, add combination in Press Key and click Change and press OK.

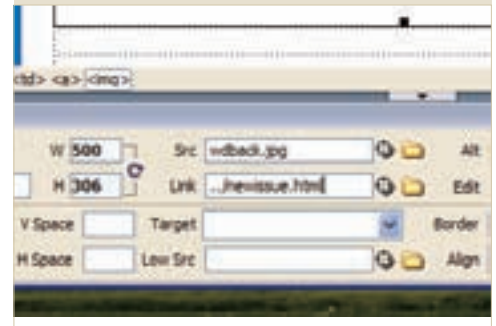


*You may need to try a number of combinations before you hit a successful sequence*

## Expert advice

### Absolute and Relative links

Hyperlinks comes in two guises: Absolute and Relative. Absolute URLs give the full address, including protocol, host, path, and filename, eg, <http://www.imagine-publishing.co.uk/>. Adding a forward slash at the end of an absolute URL tells the browser to show the default page. Relative URLs are relative to the directory or folder in which the active page exists, so there's no need to add the protocol or host, just the directory and file name. To link to a file that resides in a different directory or folder './' can precede a file name, eg, [./index.html](#). This will ensure the appropriate file is found.



## Technique: Image-editing in Dreamweaver



Images are an essential part of my website, but I get really annoyed when I place a perfectly good image in a page and then have to modify it later on. This is generally my own fault, as I have not done enough forward planning. Do you have any suggestions that will help?

Stephen Briars



A problem we have all encountered at some point in our web design career and one that really needs to be dealt with. Thankfully, it seems that the boffins at Dreamweaver have come up with a partial solution. Dreamweaver provides a number of simple Edit tools in the Properties window, which we are going to demonstrate here.



### 01 Cropping

Start by selecting the image to be edited and head to the Property Inspector to select the Crop tool. Now select a crop handle and adjust the visible crop area to suit your requirements. Head back to the Crop button and press to crop the image.



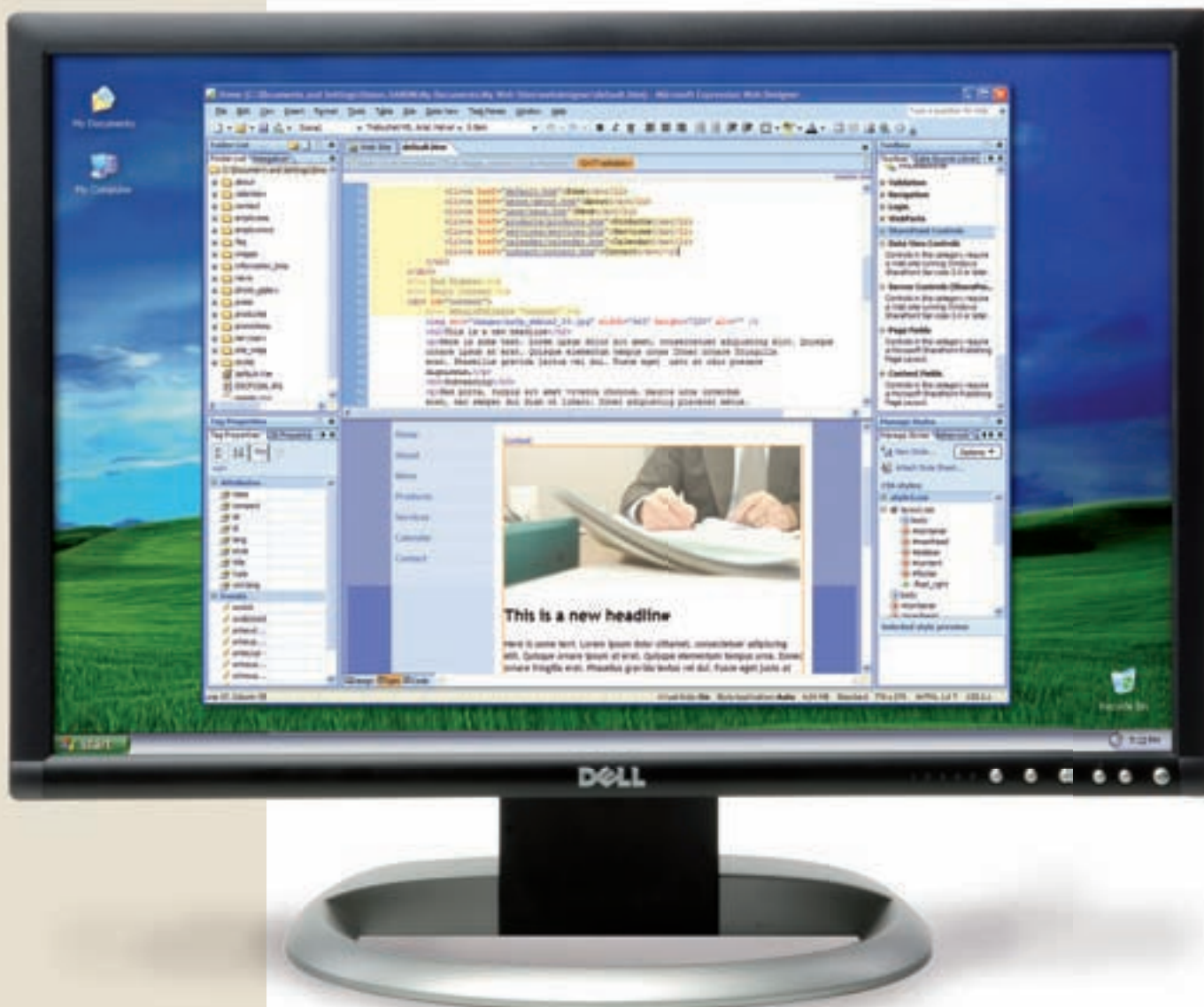
### 02 Resize and resample

To resize an image, select it, grab the resize handle and drag. To maintain the image proportions hold down Shift while dragging. Resizing an image activates the Reset button, used to reset to original size. Or, press Resample to reduce the file size.



### 03 Slide away

The Property Inspector offers another couple of Edit options in the shape of Brightness/Contrast and Sharpen. Select the image, click Brightness/Contrast and adjust the sliders accordingly. Now select the Sharpen tool, again adjust the slider and press OK.



### THE BRIEF

#### ON THE CD

Tutorial files:  
N/A

### TUTORIAL OBJECTIVE

An introduction to the key features of Expression Web Designer

### TIME REQUIRED

30 minutes

### SKILL LEVEL



# A first look at Expression Web Designer

MICROSOFT'S PROFESSIONAL WEB DESIGN REPLACEMENT FOR FRONTPAGE FINALLY ARRIVES, AND WE TAKE IT FOR A TEST DRIVE

WITH WINDOWS VISTA around the corner, Microsoft is taking another shot at a market that's so far eluded it: the design professional. First unveiled at last year's Professional Developer's Conference in Los Angeles, the three Expression products took their time to reach the outside world. While Expression Graphic Designer (codenamed Acrylic) has been around a while, Expression Interactive Designer (the product formerly known as Sparkle) arrived early in 2006. The third, and

final, member of the family, Expression Web Designer, shook off its Quartz codename at March's Max06 design conference, but a preview version didn't reach download sites until May.

One of the Expression threesome, Web Designer is targeted at professional web designers and web application developers. With an interface that's familiar to both Dreamweaver and Visual Studio users, Microsoft is attempting to bridge the divide between designers and developers.



## YOUR EXPERT

Web application consultant and technology journalist **Simon Bisson** has been working with web development tools since the early 1990s. Since then he's used everything from Compuserve's first web page wizard to FrontPage on every operating system going.

# A first look at Expression Web Designer



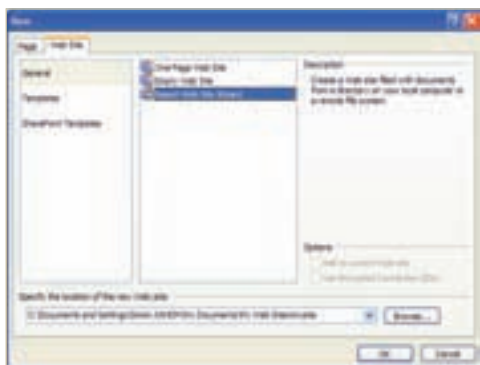
## 01 Download the code

You can download CTP1 of Expression Web Designer from the Microsoft website at [www.microsoft.com/products/express/en/web\\_designer/default.msp](http://www.microsoft.com/products/express/en/web_designer/default.msp). If you're going to be using its ASP.NET tools, you'll also need to download the .NET 2.0 framework.



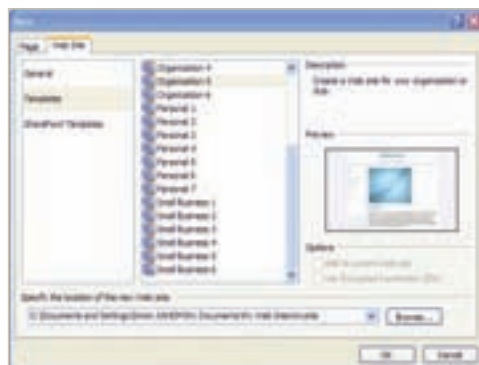
## 02 Getting started

Now launch the application. It'll open up in its code view with the basic HTML framework for creating a new page already in place. It's set up to deliver XHTML 1.0 – ready for the latest web browsers. This isn't a tool for building sites that work in Netscape 1.0 or Internet Explorer 3.0.



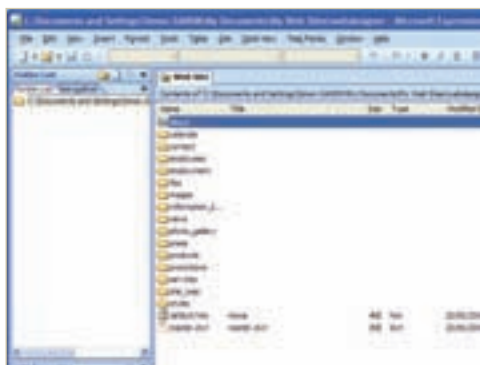
## 03 General advice

Head to File>New>Select Website. The General tab is where you'll be able to create a one-page site if you're just quickly editing a new page, an empty website if you're developing a site from scratch, or import an existing site that's either in a local directory or on a remote server.



## 04 Exploring templates

Web Designer comes with a selection of templates to simplify site design – either for quickly putting together a demo site, or to help beginners learn what goes into a well-designed site. Choose from a selection of 25 event, organisation, personal, or small business layouts.



## 05 Structure setup

We've started by creating a small business site using a template. Once the site's created you'll find yourself in the website structure view, looking at the list of directories that have been automatically created by the template. Click on a folder to see the files that you'll be able to edit.



## 06 Converting templates

Web Designer uses the same DWT template format as FrontPage 2003 (also used by Dreamweaver). You can use any existing templates with both apps, allowing teams to work with both tools, and to convert sites from one to the other quickly. Here's the DWT format template for our site.

## TECHNIQUE

# Microsoft's creative trio

Web Designer is part of the Expression family, squarely aimed at the design pro. Could it challenge Adobe's dominance?



## 01 Web Designer

Dreamweaver is criticised for trying to support too many legacy standards, so is it the right time for Microsoft's competitor to take a foothold? With its strong spin towards standards compatibility, Web Designer could offer developers the edge.



## 02 Graphic Designer

With its use of layers, filters and image effects, Expression Graphic Designer is targeting the Photoshoppers out there. But will these die-hard Adobeophiles switch to a Microsoft creation?



## 03 Interactive Designer

Following through Microsoft's vision for interactive design and completing the lineup is Interactive Designer, which enables you to create user interface designs and apps. Work with interactive video, 3D, vectors, HD video and much more.

# Tutorial



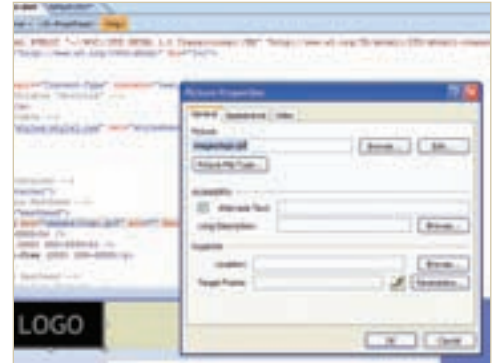
## 07 Design view

We can quickly switch between design and code views, just as in Dreamweaver. Design view gives a WYSIWYG look at your site. If you're working with a template-driven site you can see which sections of a page can be edited, as these are surrounded with an orange line and labelled.



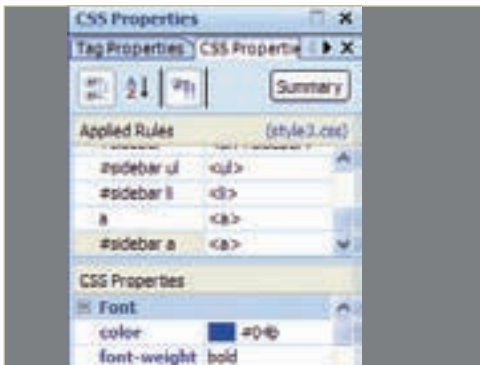
## 08 Split view

Split view shows you both code and layout at the same time. Click in the layout and you'll be taken straight to the relevant code. Make changes in the layout view and they'll update in the code view. You need to click between panes to see changes made in the code view in your layout.



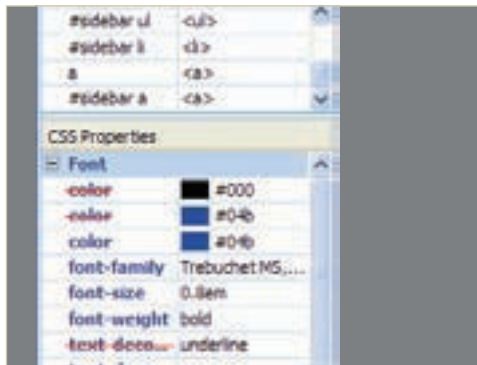
## 09 Editing templates

DWT templates contain common page information as well as layout information. You'll need to edit the site's master.dwt to add info – and extra pages – to your site. Here we're using the Picture Properties dialog to change the site logo. If we change it here, it'll change for every page in our site.



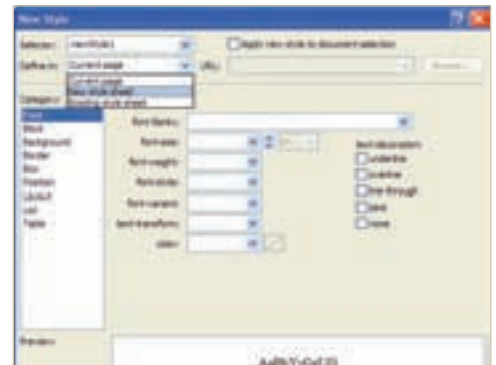
## 10 CSS styling

Microsoft is pushing Web Designer as a CSS-based design tool. There are a lot of CSS design tools here, and foremost is the CSS Properties tool. With this you can work with your site's CSS style sheets and see just how the page uses its CSS (important if you're using more than one stylesheet).



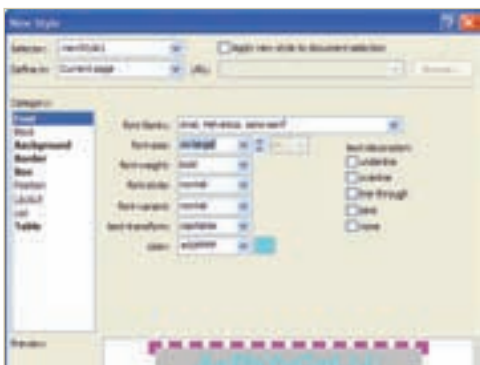
## 11 Rules summary

If you click on Summary in the CSS Properties tool, you can quickly see just which CSS rules apply to a page element and which have been overruled by other CSS definitions. A red line through a rule shows it's been overridden, and if you roll over the rule, you'll see what's caused the override.



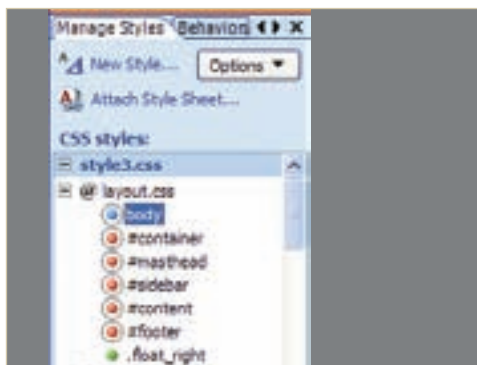
## 12 Start a new style

In the Manage Styles dialog, click New Style to launch the style creator tool. Use this to add styles to the current page, to an existing style sheet – or to start creating a new stylesheet from scratch. You can use this tool to add any of a range of style categories, from fonts to tables.



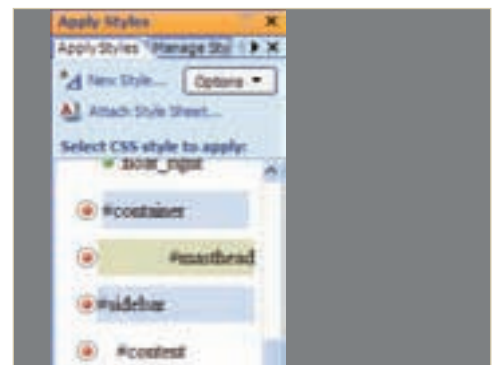
## 13 Toolbar tricks

If you've used Visual Web Developer 2005 Express, then you'll find Expression Web Designer's style creation tools very familiar. You can easily mix categories to build your styles, using the tool's preview and description panes to see just what you've created.



## 14 Managing styles

The Manage Styles pane lets you see all the styles used in internal and external style sheets (it won't show you inline styles). Use this to move styles from internal to external and vice versa. The Options button lets you change which are displayed, from all to just those used on a page.



## 15 Setting up styles

So how do you go about applying a style to your site? The Apply Styles task pane lists all the available styles. Simply select a section of your page, choose the style you want, and click. You can also modify existing styles, and clear all styles from a page, ready to let you start from scratch.

## Building forms for your site

The screenshot shows the Visual Studio .NET Toolbox with the 'Data Sources Library' tab selected. Under the 'Form Controls' category, the 'Input (Textbox)' control is highlighted with a green checkmark.

Stop Server for Replication

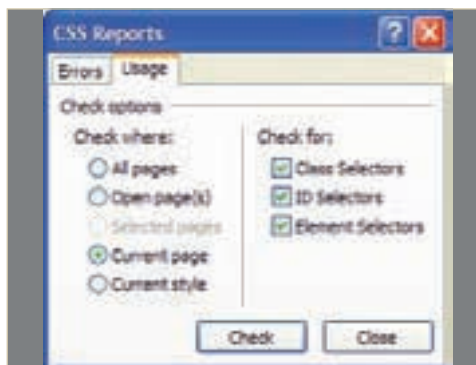
Name	Status	Stop
File		
Page		
Page		
Page		
Page		
Page		
Page		

☐ Stop
 ☐ Stop All
 ☐ Yes
 ☐ No

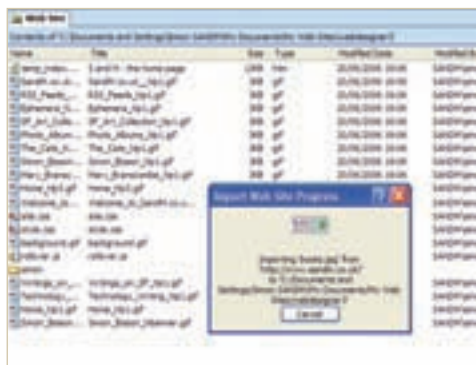
The Tag Properties control panel lets you modify how a tag looks on a page, before CSS stylesheets are applied. You can also use it to define script events, so that buttons trigger multiple actions as well as form submissions.



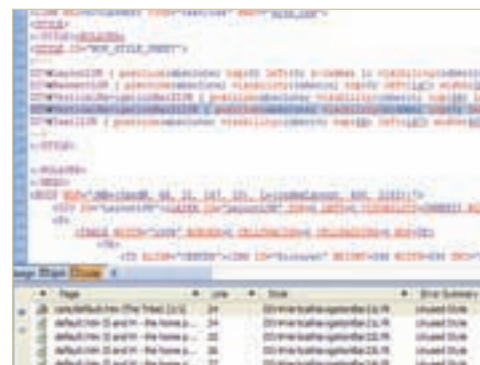
If you prefer to edit CSS by hand, you can create a new CSS page and start editing the styles in Web Designer's code editor. You can take advantage of Microsoft's IntelliSense code completion tools, as well as the CSS Properties tools built into Expression Web Designer.



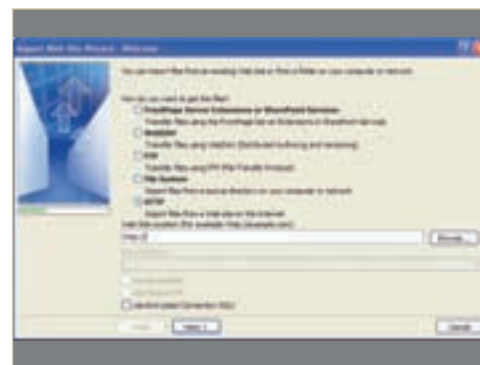
Select Tools>CSS Reports. You can choose whether to create an errors or a usage report. Error reports show unused styles, undefined classes and mismatched case. Usage reports help show class, ID and element selectors, where they're used, and where the style's defined.



You can watch the site download, and create a local website on your PC. We're using an HTTP session to download a site from a remote web host. The site was developed using an obsolete design tool, so will take some work updating to the latest web standards.



Web Designer is able to report on a wide range of site issues to help you tune existing sites, and get them ready for today's web standards. The CSS reporting tools show unused styles, as well as looking for errors. A report pane shows the results, and takes you directly to the problem.



To use Web Designer to update an old website, you can use its import tools to make a local copy of the site. From the New Website dialog, click Import Website Wizard. This will give you a choice of tools for importing the site, from using FrontPage Server Extensions to working with HTTP.



Web Designer will give you a lot of information about your site, showing you how many pages and images it contains (as well as how many broken links need fixing). The range of basic reports is large, and as well as detailed views, give you a quick overview of the site you're working with.

## IN DETAIL

### Into the future with Web Designer

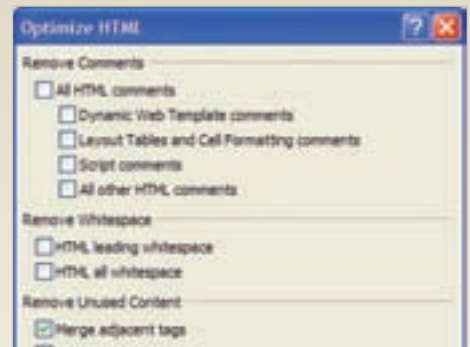
We explore how Microsoft plans to position its new editor in the market and why its fresh features could be a welcome breath of air now that Adobe has gobbled up Macromedia

**THERE'S A LOT TO** Expression Web Designer. It's a big step on from tools like FrontPage (now renamed SharePoint Designer, and focused on building and working with Microsoft portal sites), and a lot more akin to Dreamweaver. With Adobe ending GoLive development after its Macromedia takeover, there's a distinct hole in the market ready for another high-end web design tool. Certainly, Expression Web Designer has the mix of features that are needed to play well in this space.

Standards-compliant HTML and XHTML are important features, and Microsoft has worked hard to make sure that its generated code is both compact and valid. The built-in test and reporting tools are inherited from FrontPage, but have been given a hefty update – especially with regards to accessibility. It's extremely important for a modern website to be accessible to all, and the tools in Expression Web Designer will go some way to helping designers deliver accessible sites.

Perhaps the most important feature of Expression Web Designer is its CSS support. All its layout design tools use CSS – from formatting to element positioning. Even the site templates are built using standard template formats and CSS. The design view uses its own CSS-rendering engine so that you can see what your design will look like without having to switch to and from a browser. You can even view pages in quirks mode, so you can see how they'll look in different browsers.

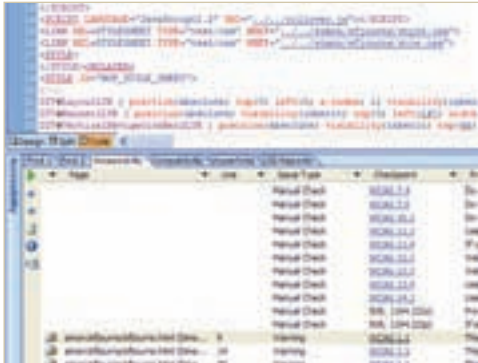
So when will we see a final product? Microsoft is understandably cagey about release dates for the Expression tools. However, we'd expect to see a final release some time in the first few months of 2007. As we go to press there's a free trial of Web Designer CTP1, Graphic Designer CTP and Interactive Designer CTP at the Microsoft site at [www.microsoft.com/products/expression](http://www.microsoft.com/products/expression), so keep an eye out for future updates.



Optimise your HTML for smaller sites and faster downloads – and to neaten up all that lousy HTML from Word!

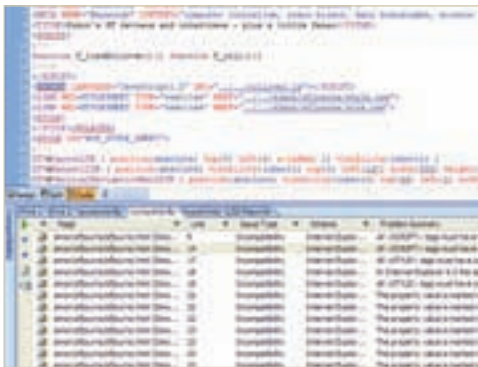


Keep an eye on the Microsoft Expression website for future Web Designer CTP releases



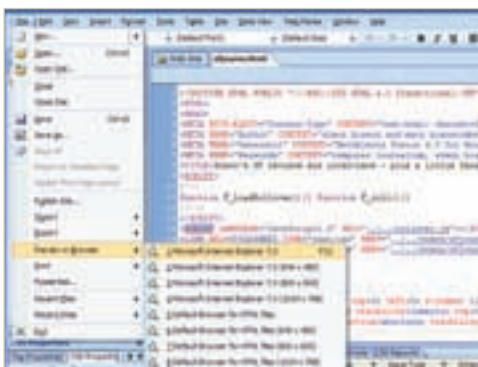
## 22 Accessibility reports

A well-designed site needs to be accessible, and Web Designer will examine your site to see how it meets many of the more common accessibility directives. Choose Tools>Accessibility Reports to launch the Accessibility Checker. This will analyse a single page or the entire site.



## 23 Compatibility reports

To be sure your site will work in as many browsers as possible, take advantage of the Compatibility Report tools. Choose Tools>Compatibility Reports, then pick a browser and a CSS type to run a test. Currently only W3C specs and Internet Explorer versions are supported.



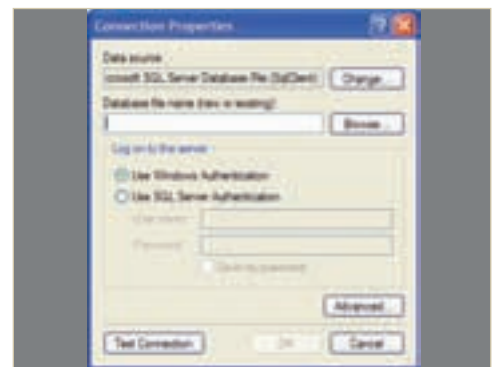
## 24 Preview in browser

Web Designer is able to work with multiple browsers to help you test your HTML. You can quickly add new browsers to the list of testing tools, and you can choose to view your site at different resolutions, including 640x480 and 1024x768. Choose this via File>Preview in Browser.



## 25 Working with ASP.NET 2.0

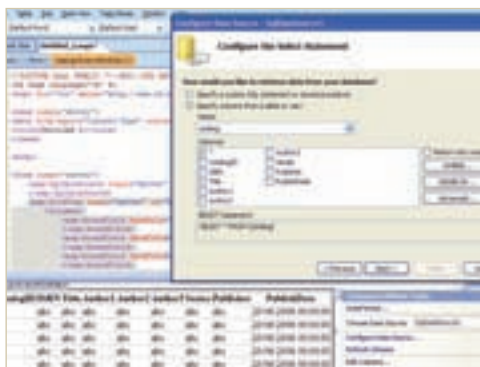
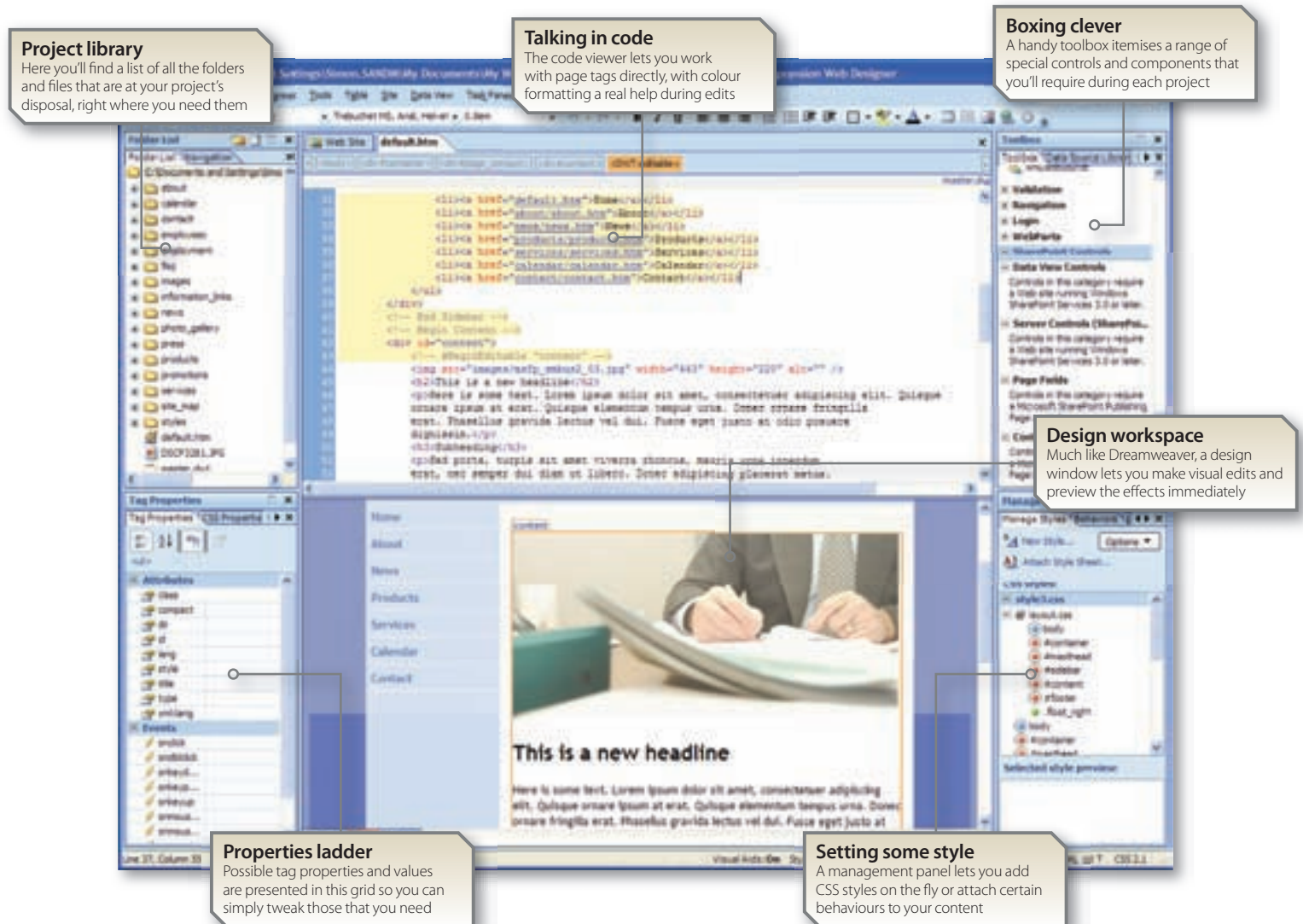
This is more than a web design app. It can also work with ASP.NET applications. The Toolbox gives you access to the key ASP.NET controls you'll find in Visual Studio or Visual Web Developer 2005 Express. Using these you can build data-driven web apps without leaving your design tool.



## 26 Adding a data connection

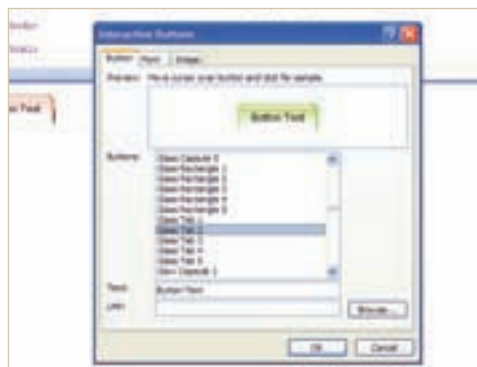
From the Data Source Library task pane you can add XML and ASP.NET data connections. Use New ASP.NET Connection to set up a connection to a SQL database. Out of the box there's access to Access, ODBC data sources, SQL Server (including SQL Express) and Oracle.

# Tutorial



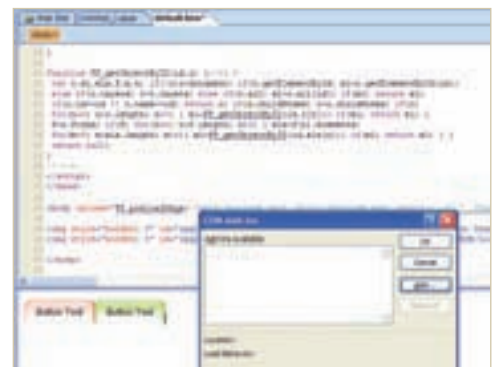
## 27 Creating a GridView

Data is often best shown in tables, and Web Designer uses the ASP.NET GridView control to add data tables to pages. Drag a grid view from the Toolbox onto a page in Design View. Use the Common Tasks pane to add a data source, then a connection to a previously defined SQL database.



## 28 Interactive buttons

If you don't want to write the scripts needed to add your own JavaScript-driven buttons, you can use the Interactive Buttons. Hit Insert>Interactive Buttons. Pick a button design and a font, and the package will handle rollover and click effects, adding JavaScript automatically.



## 29 Expanding Expression

You're not limited to the tools that come out of the box; Web Designer can be expanded using Add-ins. There aren't any available just yet – so keep an eye out. Add-ins could come from sites like Amazon or PayPal, making it easier to add ecommerce or other functions to sites.

SET UP YOUR SITE TO SELL WITH OUR GUIDE TO  
MAKING MONEY IN THE NEW DOT COM WAVE

## THIS Month

**ACTINIC DESIGNER 8**  
Exclusive first look tutorial

94

**ECOMMERCE GALLERY**  
Vodafone takes us on a Journey

98

**WEB HOSTINGS**  
Choose your perfect deal

100



*Too little too late: EU dish out fresh punishment to a dallying Microsoft*

## Fine time for Gates

**MICROSOFT HAS ITS WRISTS SLAPPED AGAIN FOR IGNORING EUROPEAN ANTI-COMPETITION RULINGS**

**IT MAY BE** gearing itself up for a much-anticipated launch of Windows Vista, but it seems Microsoft can't quite shrug off a multitude of legal battles surrounding its past conduct.

With the EU already raising concerns over Microsoft's strategies for the forthcoming operating system, it has since issued further punishment for the company's non-compliance with a ruling made in 2004. At that time Microsoft was ordered to 'open up' its Windows XP platform to rival software vendors and therefore reduce its unfair hold on the market. The firm would also be required to loosen its grip on the multimedia playback sector by unbundling Windows Media Player

or packaging alternatives from the likes of RealPlayer etc. However, subsequent action has been somewhat half-hearted, as Microsoft appealed against the judgement and has now incurred a fresh 280.5m Euro (£194m) penalty. EU Competitive Commissioner Neelie Kroes lamented that "Microsoft has still not put an end to its illegal conduct" but hoped that the latest fine proved "no company is above the law".

Meanwhile, support for Windows 98 has been officially halted. Microsoft has urged an estimated 70 million users still running the outdated OS to upgrade immediately now that technical support and security updates are to be discontinued.

## Not so happy shoppers

**LATEST STUDY SUGGESTS ONLINE RAGE COULD SERIOUSLY ENDANGER THE UK'S WEB ECONOMY**

**WE MIGHT LOVE** nothing more than a spot of online retail therapy here in the UK, with around three-quarters of us now enjoying web shopping, but we're also seemingly prone to losing our cool.

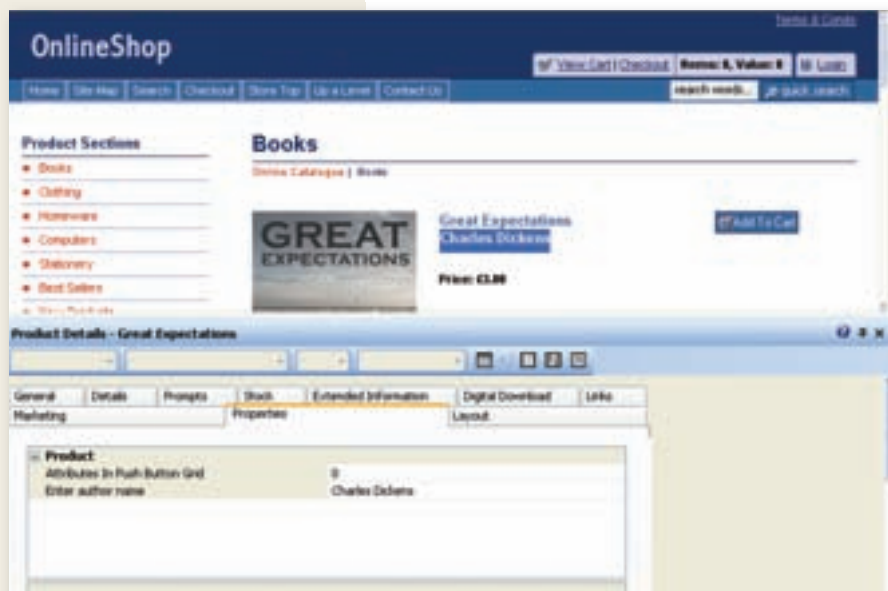
Brand new research from site-testing specialist SciVisum has alarmingly revealed that as much as 78 per cent of dot com spenders have complained that frustration with web shopping services has led them to not only switch off their computers in disgust, but a third have also shown a reluctance to give their favourite sites a second or third chance. Interestingly, the survey also suggested a regional bias so much so that Northerners demonstrated a less forgiving attitude than those located in the South, despite their apparent willingness to splash out on more expensive items.

One in five North-Westeners admitted that they would happily splash out £5,000 or more on a single purchase, closely followed by the Scots, whereas their more Southerly counterparts vehemently dismissed such a lavish outlay. However, in general the results did more broadly suggest that the love affair with the speed of Internet purchasing could suffer a backlash

if vendors ignore service satisfaction levels. "Web rage is a burgeoning online phenomenon" explained SciVisum's CEO Derri Jones. "With less than half of online shoppers prepared to give their favourite website more than two chances to get it right, the message to retailers is very clear. Online shoppers are showing zero tolerance to poor performance – and e-tailers must follow this lead if they're to avoid losing their customers to competitors or the high street."

The full report for anyone interested to know more can be found by visiting SciVisum's website home page at [www.scivisum.co.uk](http://www.scivisum.co.uk).





### THE BRIEF

#### ON THE CD

Tutorial files:  
N/A

### TUTORIAL OBJECTIVE

Design your own online store with Actinic 8 using your exclusive trial

### TIME REQUIRED

Two hours

### SKILL LEVEL



# Get into ecommerce with Actinic Designer 8

THOUSANDS OF SMALL BUSINESSES USE ACTINIC'S PRODUCTS, SO HAS THIS BRAND NEW VERSION MADE ECOMMERCE EVEN EASIER?

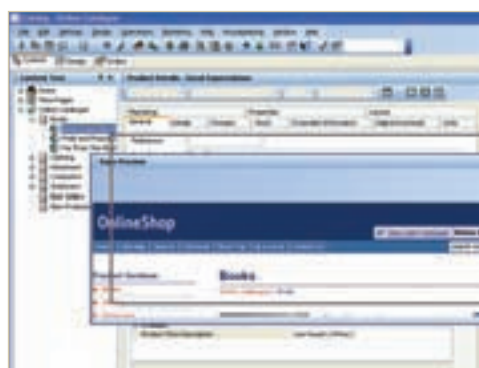
 **WHEN ACTINIC** released its first version of Catalog, thousands of small businesses suddenly had a toolset that gave them access to a global market via their websites. Since then, Actinic's Catalog has been favoured by thousands of small businesses for its ease of use and ability to manage a web business all from the desktop of any PC. Competitively priced, the current version 7 offered fast setup and integrated promotions. But with the release of version 8, the core

features of the package have been overhauled, with major new marketing features. Now available in multiple versions, each aimed at a specific user, and with closer integration with industry-standard design tools like Dreamweaver, the latest version looks set to further enhance Actinic's reputation as the ecommerce application of choice for all online businesses. Head to [www.actinic.co.uk/webdesigner](http://www.actinic.co.uk/webdesigner) to download your exclusive trial of Actinic Designer 8.



## 01 Choose your version

Actinic has created a choice of versions of its software to appeal to specific types of users. Catalog is still at the heart of the application, but is now joined by Business and Designer versions, which have features to appeal to those users. Choose the version you want from the drop menu.



## 02 Screen layout

When you start version 8 the layout of the screen looks familiar to anyone who has used previous versions of Actinic's apps. The split screen between the Content Tree, Page View and Product Details can all be modified. Notice the new Marketing drop-down menu and the Design tab.



## 03 Take a tutorial

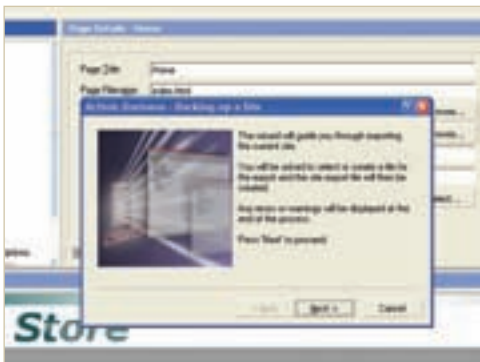
If you're new to Actinic the quick start tutorials are your first port of call. Click the icon in the toolbar or choose the tutorials from the Help menu. There's also a PDF guide if you fancy a bit of light reading! Standard help topics are also available also under the Help menu.



## YOUR EXPERT

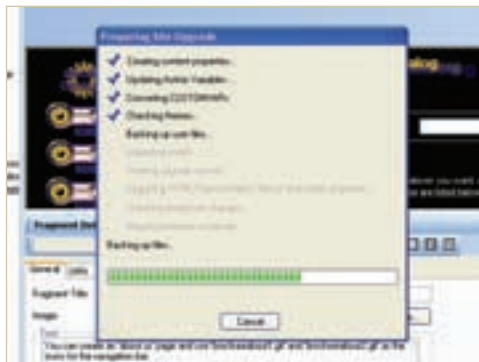
**Dave Howell** is a journalist and writer with over 15 years' experience of writing about technology for consumer and business publications. As a past editor of a leading online retailer he knows how to build profitable websites. [www.nexus-publishing.co.uk](http://www.nexus-publishing.co.uk)

# Get into ecommerce with Actinic Designer 8



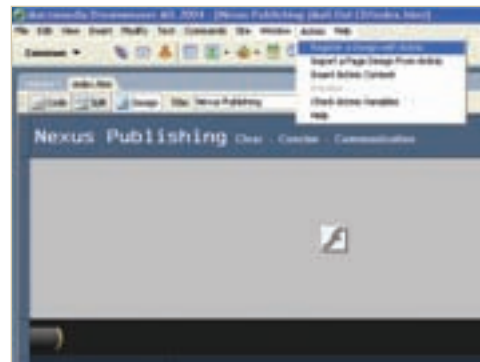
## 04 Create a site snapshot

When you upgrade to 8 you are offered the chance to convert your existing website pages to version 8's format. You can also manually perform the conversion – start version 7 and take a snapshot of your existing site. Click File>Snapshot>Export Site and follow the instructions.



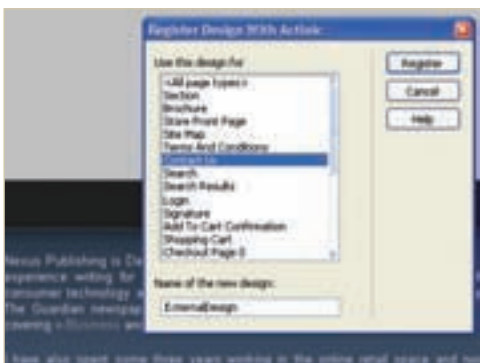
## 05 Import into version 8

Start version 8 and choose File>Snapshot>Import Site. A wizard will step you through the process. Ensure that you have a backup of your sites files just in case the import fails. You now need to check each page of your site, as you may need to make some manual adjustments.



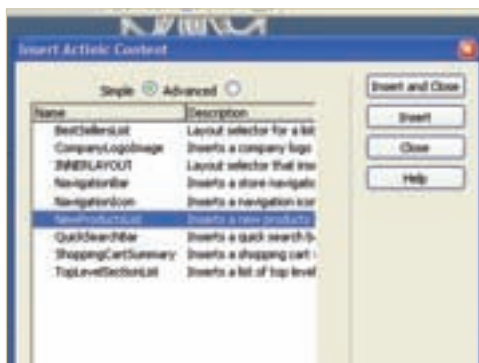
## 06 Web converts

One new feature is the ability to take a web page created in Dreamweaver and convert it for use as an Actinic Catalog page complete with all the placeholders for text, images and prices. You can install the Dreamweaver plug-in when you install version 8 for the first time.



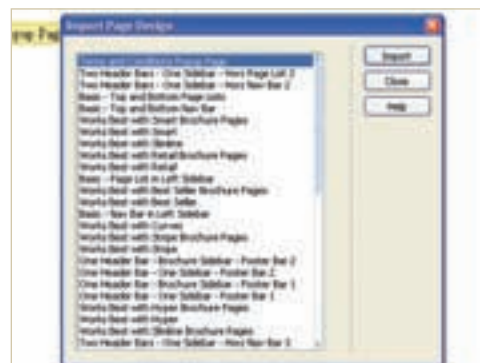
## 07 Dreamweaver pages

Once you have completed your page in Dreamweaver you need to change its parameters so Actinic 8 can read it. Open the page, and hit Actinic>Register Design With Actinic. Now choose what kind of page your Dreamweaver page will become and click Register.



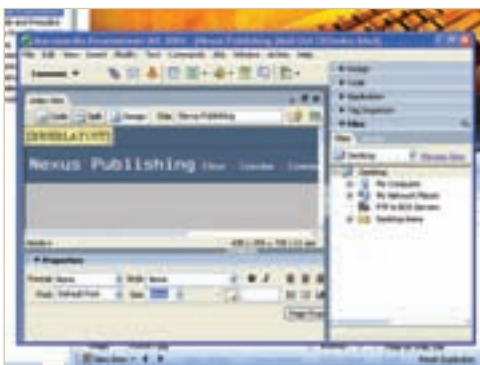
## 08 Insert Actinic content

You don't have to wait until you move to Actinic to include specific content on your Dreamweaver pages. The plug-in enables you to insert this content while you're in Dreamweaver. Put your cursor at the insertion point and click Actinic>Insert Actinic Content.



## 09 Actinic imports

The last thing you can do while you're designing your store pages in Dreamweaver is to include Actinic page elements. Click Actinic>Import Page Design. From the dialog box that appears you can choose from a wide-range of objects to insert. Make your choice and click the Import button.



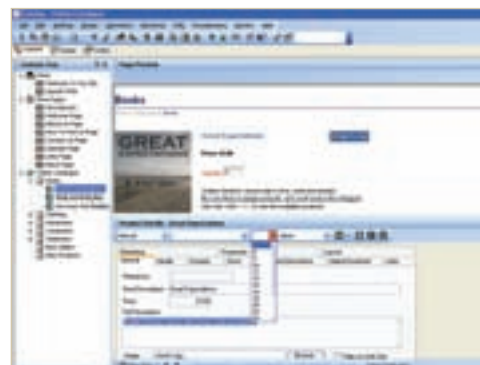
## 10 Move to Actinic

Once you have completed your design in Dreamweaver it will be available in Actinic as you have registered the pages as new templates. Flip back to the Actinic window and your design will appear in the page preview window just as if you had created it from scratch within Actinic.



## 11 Design view

Clicking on the new Design tab will change to a new view type that will look familiar to Dreamweaver users. The elements on the page you are working on can be selected and their HTML code edited. Page elements can also be moved precisely to allow pixel-perfect accuracy in layouts.



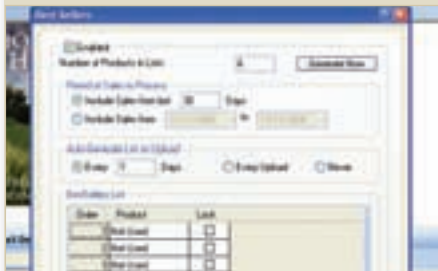
## 12 Change attributes

In the new version, changing text attributes doesn't mean you have to mess about with the HTML. A new Word-like toolbar runs across the top of the Product Details window. Select the text you want to change and then use the drop-down menus and buttons to change its attributes.

## TECHNIQUE

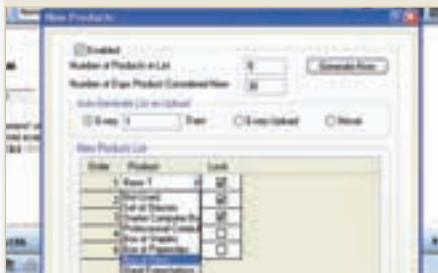
## Enhance your marketing

You can now set up Best Sellers, New Product and Also Bought for any of the items in your store



### 01 Best Sellers

Click Marketing>Best Sellers. Click the 'Enabled' button to activate the feature. Enter the number of products. You can set the timeframe that the list will be calculated over and also how often the list will be updated. Click Apply to start the feature.



### 02 New Products

You can now show your customers what's new easily with Actinic 8. Click the new Marketing menu and choose New Products. The dialog box is similar to Best Sellers. Enable the feature and then select the items you want to include on your list.



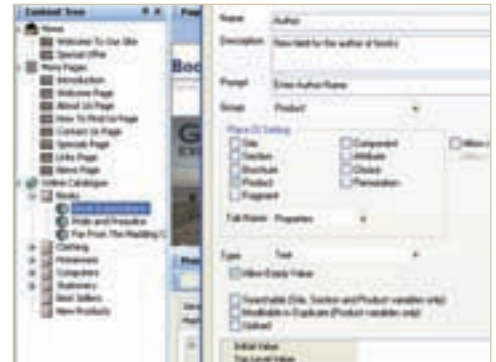
### 03 Also Bought

This feature is only available in the Business version of Actinic 8, under the Marketing tab. It enables you to show shoppers similar products bought by other visitors. This can be effective at increasing trolley value, as customers often purchase related items.



### 13 Add a new variable

User-defined variables have now replaced the old Custom Properties. You can now control where on your pages these appear and what kind of content they contain. For instance, you could add an author variable to your book store. Click the Layout tab then Design>Library>Variables.



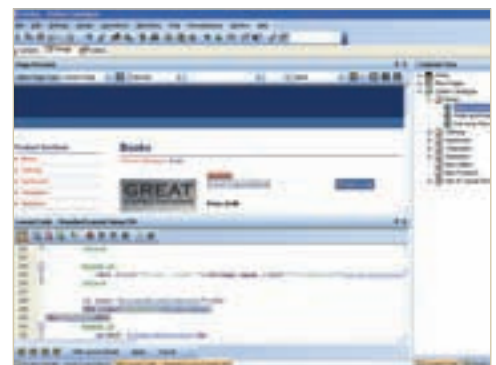
### 14 Create a new variable

Right-click Product and choose New Variable. Complete the first three fields of the dialog box that opens. Select Product from the Place of Setting area and deselect the 'Allow <Use Parent> as an Option'. Click OK. You'll see a new variable appear in the Design Library.



### 15 Complete the attribute

Click on the Properties tab in the Properties Details screen – the new author product attribute has appeared. You can now complete the field with the author's name. Click the Apply Changes button to activate the attribute. You now have to create a placeholder for the new variable.



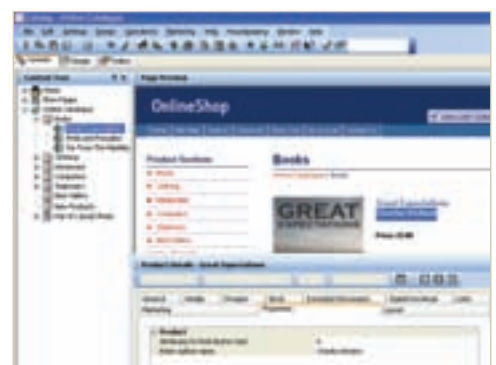
### 16 Variable placeholder

Switch to Design view and highlight the products name. In the Layout Code pane locate the ProductName. It should be highlighted. You need to enter a new variable holder so click the insert variable icon on the toolbar – this is the blue circle with the '+'. This will open a new window.



### 17 Choose the variable

Locate the author variable you're looking for. You can do this by filtering the available variables using 'auth'. Highlight this and then click Insert. This will enter the new placeholder's code into the HTML of the page you're working on. If you make a mistake, go to Edit>Undo.



### 18 Update your pages

The new placeholder it will now appear in the Page Preview pane. Some variables are linked to specific products, so using the author variable on a book will only appear when books are looked at on your site. You can add similar placeholders for a wide range of elements.

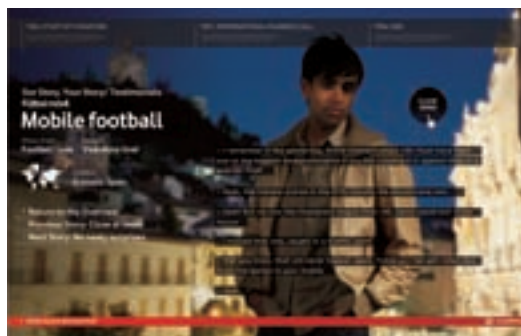
# eCommerce gallery

Mobile giant calls in the design cavalry to unleash a new promotional site full of the kind of cool multimedia content it hopes to get customers calling home about

## Vodafone's online kingdom

**www.vodafonejourney.com**

A HUGE PART of any large company is public relations, and they don't come much larger than Vodafone. The worldwide mobile network giant has been at the forefront of the cell phone explosion and has a huge audience of fervent customers, most of whom wish to access services online. Vodafone Journey appears to be a corporate gateway that utilises exciting dynamic content to literally tour visitors through the story of what the company is, where it has been, and where it is going to. Less concerned with marketing or selling specific products and more designed to spread their business vision, this example ably demonstrates how potentially stale content matter can be lifted considerably via more innovative presentation ideas.



Here we find some nice testimonials from Vodafone customers regarding various memorable events, with on-screen text being supplemented by actual voiceovers



A selection of sub-sections are listed for you to work through, discovering some nicely presented nuggets of information company as you go

The site uses a breakaway menu system that lets you dip out of the main narrative and explore additional areas of interest

Chapters can be skipped here where necessary, which can be a huge bonus for returning visitors who want to jump to relevant sections

# ECOMMERCE GALLERY

A rather nice hostess greets you at the beginning of the tour to walk and talk you through a presentation of Vodafone's philosophy

**"Vodafone has demonstrated an innovative approach to corporate relations"**

The journey begins with a slickly produced movie 'tour' sequence that takes the viewer through the main areas of navigation for the site

Various controls allow you to halt playback or skip to certain chapters of the tour with minimal loading time disruptions

As the tour progresses, our hostess passes through a selection of locations and scenarios to illustrate the company's global services

Areas of additional content like this dynamic rollover map manage to provide dry and unexciting information in imaginative ways

Pop-up preview windows provide a stylish visual indicator to important chapters within the main tour sequence, allowing easy navigation

A timeline control resides at the bottom of the tour area. Here you can see the movie's progression and skip to key chapters

## VERDICT

### Mobile marvel:

Vodafone has demonstrated an innovative approach to corporate relations with site, dispensing with the stereotype that business URLs have to static, stuffy, and grey affairs. Weighty, but beautifully executed.

# Choosing a home for your website

KEEP AN EYE ON THE LATEST WEB PACKAGES AND DEALS WITH OUR COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF ISPS TO SUIT EVERY WEB DESIGNER'S NEED

IT MAY WELL be the last thing on a designer's mind as they put those final touches of inspiration into a hot new online project, but hosting is pretty important. Just remember that if you actually want people to enjoy and appreciate your hard work then it will need a spot on the web to call home, and that many clients will expect you to find it.

To be fair, the choice can be slightly bewildering thanks to the amount of choice on offer and the technical jargon used to describe the many deals

available. That's why our new-look ecommerce hosting pages not only list the attributes of the best packages money can buy but now come complete with a quick-draw guide to what it all means.

Each month we'll also be picking out a couple of the featured companies and going into more detail about why we'd recommend them, while encouraging the industry itself to keep us informed of the very latest offers. If you love your ISP, let us know at [webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk](mailto:webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk).



## WE WANT THE LATEST DEALS!

We don't always have the chance to keep track of package or price changes as they happen, and packages often change after we go to print – so we're relying on you! If you're a hosting company and want to update us on the very latest listings, or would like to investigate ways of promoting your services via these pages, email [webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk](mailto:webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk).

NAME AND URL	PACKAGE	PHONE NUMBER	COST PER YEAR	WEB SPACE	MONTHLY BANDWIDTH	POP3 ACCOUNTS	FRONTPAGE EXTENSIONS	DATABASE SUPPORT	SHOPPING CART	VIRUS FILTER	FIREWALL	PHONE SUPPORT	EMAIL SUPPORT	WEB CONTROL PANEL	SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT
1&1 ( <a href="http://www.oneandone.co.uk">www.oneandone.co.uk</a> )	Home (Linux)	08708 503 305	£59.88	800MB	10GB	300	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
1&1 ( <a href="http://www.oneandone.co.uk">www.oneandone.co.uk</a> )	Home (MS)	08708 503 305	£71.88	800MB	10GB	300	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
1&1 ( <a href="http://www.oneandone.co.uk">www.oneandone.co.uk</a> )	Business (Linux)	08708 503 305	£107.88	2.5GB	20GB	700	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
1&1 ( <a href="http://www.oneandone.co.uk">www.oneandone.co.uk</a> )	Business (MS)	08708 503 305	£119.88	2.5GB	20GB	700	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
1&1 ( <a href="http://www.oneandone.co.uk">www.oneandone.co.uk</a> )	Professional (Linux)	08708 503 305	£179.88	6GB	50GB	1500	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
1&1 ( <a href="http://www.oneandone.co.uk">www.oneandone.co.uk</a> )	Professional (MS)	08708 503 305	£203.88	6GB	50GB	1500	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
123 reg ( <a href="http://www.123-reg.co.uk">www.123-reg.co.uk</a> )	Starter	0900 11 22 123	£19.08	100MB	1.5GB	15	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
123 reg ( <a href="http://www.123-reg.co.uk">www.123-reg.co.uk</a> )	Starter Plus	0900 11 22 123	£35.88	250MB	3GB	25	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
123-reg ( <a href="http://www.123-reg.co.uk">www.123-reg.co.uk</a> )	Starter Pro	0900 21 11 23	£47.88	500MB	5GB	35	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
2020Media ( <a href="http://www.2020media.com">www.2020media.com</a> )	Everyday	0845 166 7456	£100	100MB	2GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2020Media ( <a href="http://www.2020media.com">www.2020media.com</a> )	PHP	0845 166 7456	£150	100MB	2GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2020Media ( <a href="http://www.2020media.com">www.2020media.com</a> )	JAVA Tomcat	0845 166 7456	£175	100MB	2GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2020Media ( <a href="http://www.2020media.com">www.2020media.com</a> )	Coldfusion	0845 166 7456	£250	100MB	2GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4D hosting ( <a href="http://www.4dhosting.com">www.4dhosting.com</a> )	Bronze Package	0845 166 8386	£40.00	10MB	500MB	2	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
4D hosting ( <a href="http://www.4dhosting.com">www.4dhosting.com</a> )	Silver Package	0845 166 8386	£64.99	20MB	2GB	10	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
4D hosting ( <a href="http://www.4dhosting.com">www.4dhosting.com</a> )	Gold Package	0845 166 8386	£79.99	50MB	2GB	50	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
4D hosting ( <a href="http://www.4dhosting.com">www.4dhosting.com</a> )	Titanium Package	0845 166 8386	£149.99	500MB	5GB	500	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4D hosting ( <a href="http://www.4dhosting.com">www.4dhosting.com</a> )	Reseller Package	0845 166 8386	£299.99	1GB	10GB	1000	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9Net Avenue ( <a href="http://www.9netave.co.uk">www.9netave.co.uk</a> )	Starter	0870 8726560	£99	50MB	1.5GB	10	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9Net Avenue ( <a href="http://www.9netave.co.uk">www.9netave.co.uk</a> )	Professional	0870 8726560	£199	100MB	2.5GB	25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9Net Avenue ( <a href="http://www.9netave.co.uk">www.9netave.co.uk</a> )	Corporate	0870 8726560	£399	500MB	5GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BeamHost ( <a href="http://www.beamhost.co.uk">www.beamhost.co.uk</a> )	Home	0871 277 9827	£59.88	800MB	5GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X
BeamHost ( <a href="http://www.beamhost.co.uk">www.beamhost.co.uk</a> )	Business	0871 277 9827	£119.88	2GB	2GB	300	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X
BeamHost ( <a href="http://www.beamhost.co.uk">www.beamhost.co.uk</a> )	Economy	0871 277 9827	£239.88	5GB	80GB	1000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X
Christian Technology Ltd ( <a href="http://www.christiantechnology.co.uk">www.christiantechnology.co.uk</a> )	Host Package	0870 742 0530	£55 inc VAT	50MB	1GB	25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Christian Technology Ltd ( <a href="http://www.christiantechnology.co.uk">www.christiantechnology.co.uk</a> )	Pro Package	0870 742 0530	£125 inc VAT	100MB	2GB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Christian Technology Ltd ( <a href="http://www.christiantechnology.co.uk">www.christiantechnology.co.uk</a> )	Base Package	0870 742 0530	£250 inc VAT	250MB	5GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Clara.net ( <a href="http://www.clara.net">www.clara.net</a> )	Clarahost Lite	0845 355 1000	£29.99 inc VAT	10MB	1GB	10	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clara.net ( <a href="http://www.clara.net">www.clara.net</a> )	Clarahost Advanced	0845 355 1000	£699	500MB	30GB	200	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CWCS Managed Hosting ( <a href="http://www.cwcs.co.uk">www.cwcs.co.uk</a> )	CWCS Entry Package	0870 703 1000	£120	750MB	5GB	10	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DataGate ( <a href="http://www.datagate.co.uk">www.datagate.co.uk</a> )	Exchange Hosting	08000 19 98 19	£120+	200MB	Unlimited	19	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DataGate ( <a href="http://www.datagate.co.uk">www.datagate.co.uk</a> )	Unix Shared Business Hosting	08000 19 98 19	£179.40+	150MB	2GB	50	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Datex ( <a href="http://www.datex.net">www.datex.net</a> )	Level1	08000 652 2110	£185	300MB	1.5GB	5	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Datex ( <a href="http://www.datex.net">www.datex.net</a> )	Level2	0800 652 2110	£259	400MB	2GB	10	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Datex ( <a href="http://www.datex.net">www.datex.net</a> )	Level3	0800 652 2110	£330	500MB	3GB	50	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

# WEB HOSTINGS

NAME AND URL	PACKAGE	PHONE NUMBER	COST PER YEAR	WEB SPACE	MONTHLY BANDWIDTH	POP3 ACCOUNTS	FRONTPAGE EXTENSIONS	DATABASE SUPPORT	SHOPPING CART	VIRUS FILTER	FIREWALL	PHONE SUPPORT	EMAIL SUPPORT	WEB CONTROL PANEL	SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT
Datex (www.datex.net)	Level4	0800 652 2110	£369	750MB	4GB	80	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Datex (www.datex.net)	Level5	0800 652 2110	£409	1024MB	5GB	120	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Datex (www.datex.net)	Level6	0800 652 2110	£549	1500MB	6GB	200	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dedicated Servers (www.dedicated-servers.co.uk)	Linux entry	0870 333 0365	£99/month	40GB	30GB	Variable	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dedicated Servers (www.dedicated-servers.co.uk)	Windows entry	0870 333 0365	£199/month	40GB	30GB	Variable	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Donhost (www.donhost.co.uk)	Reseller Unix	0870 7414151	£470	Unlimited	20GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Donhost (www.donhost.co.uk)	Reseller Windows	0870 7414151	£587.50	Unlimited	20GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Donhost (www.donhost.co.uk)	Enterprise Plan	0870 7414151	£105.75	100MB	2GB	20	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Donhost (www.donhost.co.uk)	Commerce Plan	0870 7414151	£211.50	250MB	5GB	50	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Donhost (www.donhost.co.uk)	Designer Plan	0870 7414151	£141	100MB	2GB	20	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Donhost (www.donhost.co.uk)	Developer Plan	0870 7414151	£305.50	250MB	5GB	50	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Dziner Solutions (www.dzinersolutions.co.uk)	Windows Shared	n/a	£44.50	100MB	2GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Dziner Solutions (www.dzinersolutions.co.uk)	Domain Forwarding	n/a	£14.50	5MB	100MB	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Dziner Solutions (www.dzinersolutions.co.uk)	Unix Shared Starter	n/a	£19.50	50MB	1GB	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Dziner Solutions (www.dzinersolutions.co.uk)	Unix Shared Standard	n/a	£44.50	100MB	2GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Dziner Solutions (www.dzinersolutions.co.uk)	Unix Shared Premier	n/a	£79.50	200MB	3GB	200	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
eHosting (www.ehosting.co.uk)	Home & Business 200 Account	0161 236 2241	£49.99	200MB	10GB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EliteUKServe (eliteukservice.net)	Business Kick Start Linux	0871 717 0390	£49	50	3GB	20	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
EliteUKServe (eliteukservice.net)	Business Kick Start Windows	0871 717 0390	£75	50	3GB	20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
EliteUKServe (eliteukservice.net)	Business Standard Linux	0871 717 0390	£99	100	3GB	100	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
EliteUKServe (eliteukservice.net)	Windows	0871 717 0390	£125	100	3GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
EliteUKServe (eliteukservice.net)	Business Enterprise Linux	0871 717 0390	£199	250	5GB	250	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
EliteUKServe (eliteukservice.net)	Business Enterprise Windows	0871 717 0390	£225	250	5GB	250	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
EliteUKServe (eliteukservice.net)	Business Pro Linux	0871 717 0390	£399	500	10GB	500	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
Eurofasthost.com (www.eurofasthost.com)	Soho	0800 3161 067	£99.00	100MB	3000MB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FastHosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk)	Business	0870 888 3600	£149.99	2GB	N/A	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FastHosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk)	Business Pro	0870 888 3600	£249.99	5GB	N/A	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FastHosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk)	Net Pro	0870 888 3600	£299.99	3GB	N/A	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FastHosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk)	Net Standard	0870 888 3600	£199.99	2GB	N/A	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FastHosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk)	Starter	0870 888 3600	£19.99	100	N/A	15	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FastHosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk)	Home	0870 888 3600	£49.99	500	N/A	100	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FastHosts (www.fasthosts.co.uk)	Home Pro	0870 888 3600	£69.99	1GB	N/A	300	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Internet Services (www.futureinternetservices.com)	Beginner3	0845 641 0776	£ 9.99	40 mb	300 mb	3	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Internet Services (www.futureinternetservices.com)	Basic3	0845 641 0776	£ 14.99	100 mb	1,500 mb	5	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Internet Services (www.futureinternetservices.com)	Standard3	0845 641 0776	£ 22.99	200 mb	2,500 mb	10	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Internet Services (www.futureinternetservices.com)	Business3	0845 641 0776	£ 39.99	500 mb	5,000 mb	50	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Internet Services (www.futureinternetservices.com)	Advanced3	0845 641 0776	£ 79.99	1,200 mb	10,000 mb	100	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Internet Services (www.futureinternetservices.com)	Professional3	0845 641 0776	£ 119.99	2,000 mb	15,000 mb	unlimited	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Giacom (www.giacom.net)	Business Pro	0800 542 7500	£199	100	2GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hostextra (www.hostextra.co.uk)	Pro-Host	08702 501 500	£99.45	100	10GB	200	X	✓	X		X	✓	✓	✓	X
Global Gold (www.globalgold.co.uk)	Unix launcher	0870 004 4444--	£78	50	5GB	5	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Global Gold (www.globalgold.co.uk)	NT launcher	0870 004 4444--	£80	50	5GB	5	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HaiSoft (www.haisoft.co.uk)	HaiSoft Perso	0870 080 4247	£14.90	100MB	1GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HaiSoft (www.haisoft.co.uk)	HaiSoft Pro	0870 080 4247	£49.90	500MB	10GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HaiSoft (www.haisoft.co.uk)	HaiSoft eCommerce	0870 080 4247	£99.90	750MB	20GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Heart Internet (www.heartinternet.co.uk)	Free Starter Professional	0845 644 7750	Free	2.5GB	100MB	1000	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓
Heart Internet (www.heartinternet.co.uk)	Starter Professional	0845 644 7750	£29.80	2.5GB	10GB	1000	X	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Heart Internet (www.heartinternet.co.uk)	Home Professional	0845 644 7750	£89.99	10GB	50GB	10,000	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Heart Internet (www.heartinternet.co.uk)	Business Professional	0845 644 7750	£129.99	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓



**Skymarket**  
www.skymarket.co.uk  
This may just be the Internet arm of a larger business group, but Skymarket still manages to offer a great selection of targeted hosting deals. You'll find grouped lists of packages for domestic users that start at £49 per year and go up to £75, while more sophisticated monthly services are provided for businesses.

**Namesco**  
www.namesco.co.uk  
Formed out of a merger between two Internet start-ups in 2000, Namesco has grown into one of the big players for UK hosting. Currently offering free .co.uk domain names with all packages, it has four products spanning Starter, Starter+, Business, and Business+, with prices ranging from £4.99 to £18.99 per month.



# WEB HOSTINGS

NAME AND URL	PACKAGE	PHONE NUMBER	COST PER YEAR	WEB SPACE	MONTHLY BANDWIDTH	POP3 ACCOUNTS	FRONTPAGE EXTENSIONS	DATABASE SUPPORT	SHOPPING CART	VIRUS FILTER	FIREWALL	PHONE SUPPORT	EMAIL SUPPORT	WEB CONTROL PANEL	SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT
Heart Internet (www.heartinternet.co.uk)	Reseller Professional	0845 644 7750	£299.99	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
HostSupreme (www.hostsupreme.co.uk)	Windows 2000 Unlimited Plan	0208 777 8881	£29.50-£499	100-5000MB	2-80GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
HostSupreme (www.hostsupreme.co.uk)	Resellers Plan	0208 777 8881	£200-800	2GB	30-50GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hostway (www.hostway.co.uk)	Silver	0808 180 1880	£79.50	150MB	3GB	5	✓	X	Option	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X
Hostway (www.hostway.co.uk)	Gold	0808 180 1880	£139.50	300MB	5GB	10	✓	✓	Option	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Hostway (www.hostway.co.uk)	Gold Plus	0808 180 1880	£189.50	450MB	10GB	30	✓	✓	Option	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Hostway (www.hostway.co.uk)	Platinum	0808 180 1880	£359.50	600MB	20GB	50	✓	✓	Option	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Hostway (www.hostway.co.uk)	Platinum Plus	0808 180 1880	£599.50	1.2GB	40GB	10	✓	✓	Option	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Hostway (www.hostway.co.uk)	Email Plus	0808 180 1880	£49.95	50MB	N/A	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓	X	✓	✓	X
Ideal Hosting (idealhosting.co.uk)	Lite	08712 773494	£14.99	25	1GB	5	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ideal Hosting (idealhosting.co.uk)	Starter	08712 773494	£23.49	50	1GB	20	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ideal Hosting (idealhosting.co.uk)	Standard	08712 773494	£52.49	100	1GB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ideal Hosting (idealhosting.co.uk)	Professional	08712 773494	£68.99	250	1GB	unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ideal Hosting (idealhosting.co.uk)	Business	08712 773494	£119.99	500	1GB	unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ideal Hosting (idealhosting.co.uk)	Corporate	08712 773494	£199.99	1000	1GB	unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internetters (www.internettters.co.uk)	Unix Basic 50	0870 160 5555	£70	50	1GB	5	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internetters (www.internettters.co.uk)	Unix Frontpage 50	0870 160 5555	£100	50	1GB	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internetters (www.internettters.co.uk)	Unix Standard 200	0870 160 5555	£160	200	2GB	20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internetters (www.internettters.co.uk)	Unix Superior 500	0870 160 5555	£220	500	3GB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internetters (www.internettters.co.uk)	Windows 50	0870 160 5555	£100	50	1GB	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internetters (www.internettters.co.uk)	Windows 200	0870 160 5555	£190	200	2GB	20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internetters (www.internettters.co.uk)	Windows 500	0870 160 5555	£260	500	3GB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Magic Moments (www.magic-moments.com)	Magic Entry	0115 917 0000	£79.50	600MB	7GB	300	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Magic Moments (www.magic-moments.com)	Magic Business Professional	0115 917 0000	£199	5GB	20GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Magic Moments (www.magic-moments.com)	Magic Business e-commerce	0115 917 0000	£499	5GB	20GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Magic Moments (www.magic-moments.com)	Magic Reseller	0115 917 0000	£500	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Merxweb (www.merxweb.com)	Starter	0845 838 2631	£59.88	150MB	3GB	25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Merxweb (www.merxweb.com)	Store	0845 838 2631	£95.88	300MB	5GB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Merxweb (www.merxweb.com)	Advanced	0845 838 2631	£119.88	450MB	7GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NameHog (www.namehog.net)	Email Only	0845 6120330	£11.75	25MB	1GB	5	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NameHog (www.namehog.net)	Standard Package	0845 6120330	£35.25	100MB	4.5GB	10	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NameHog (www.namehog.net)	Professional Package	0845 6120330	£58.75	250MB	8GB	25	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NameHog (www.namehog.net)	Expert Package	0845 6120330	£105.75	500MB	15GB	75	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namesco (www.names.co.uk)	StartUp	0870 120 8888	£49.99	100MB	2GB	5	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namesco (www.names.co.uk)	StartUp Plus	0870 120 8888	£89.99	200MB	5GB	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namesco (www.names.co.uk)	Business	0870 120 8888	£149.99	500MB	10GB	25	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namesco (www.names.co.uk)	Business Plus	0870 120 8888	£89.99	700MB	15GB	50	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namesco (www.names.co.uk)	Designer	0870 120 8888	£239.88	1GB	20GB	200	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Namesco (www.names.co.uk)	Designer Plus	0870 120 8888	£479.88	Unlimited	30GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NetBenefit (www.netbenefit.com)	Unix	0870 264 2298	£180	100MB	2GB	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NetBenefit (www.netbenefit.com)	Windows 2000	0870 264 2298	£229	100MB	2GB	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netcetera (www.netcetera.co.uk)	Starter Package	0800 2987 214	£30	500MB	1GB	100	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netcetera (www.netcetera.co.uk)	Home Package	0800 2987 214	£60	1GB	5GB	100	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netcetera (www.netcetera.co.uk)	Developer Package	0800 2987 214	£100	4GB	10GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Netcetera (www.netcetera.co.uk)	Commerce Package	0800 2987 214	£180	6GB	20GB	1500	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netcetera (www.netcetera.co.uk)	Reseller Package	0800 2987 214	£450	10GB	30GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netscalibur (www.netscalibur.com)	Netscalibur Web Unix	0800 072 0000	£324	100MB	5GB	1	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓

## WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

New to hosting slang? We explain what all the categories in our hostings table are talking about...

### WEB SPACE

This describes the amount of physical data storage space you'll have available to you on the hosting server and will have a bearing on how weighty your site or its content is or will become over time.

### MONTHLY BANDWIDTH

This relates to the amount of expected traffic and the data transfer demands that your site will place on the host each month. A very busy, data-intensive site will obviously demand larger and faster bandwidths.

### POP3 ACCOUNTS

Does your site require email support? If so, you'll want the ability to set up personalised mailboxes to which you can direct feedback.

### FRONTPAGE EXTENSIONS

These are a group of programs that must operate behind the scenes on your host server if you're a Microsoft Frontpage developer. Most Windows Server-based packages will therefore have them as standard, although you might like to ask your chosen

vendor to make doubly sure if you think that this applies to your website.

### DATABASE SUPPORT

With sites becoming more reliant on often vast quantities of information and utilising technologies like MySQL and SQLServer, you'll probably require database capabilities from your host.

### SHOPPING CART

Selling products online is a big part of ecommerce,

# WEB HOSTINGS

NAME AND URL	PACKAGE	PHONE NUMBER	COST PER YEAR	WEB SPACE	MONTHLY BANDWIDTH	POP3 ACCOUNTS	FRONTPAGE EXTENSIONS	DATABASE SUPPORT	SHOPPING CART	VIRUS FILTER	FIREWALL	PHONE SUPPORT	EMAIL SUPPORT	WEB CONTROL PANEL	SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT
Netscalibur (www.netscalibur.com)	Netscalibur Web Windows	0800 072 0000	£324	100MB	5GB	1	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
NewNet (www.newnet.co.uk)	Lite	08700 599 599	£29.90	200MB	1GB	1	£1.50	X	X	£1.50/mailbox	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
NewNet (www.newnet.co.uk)	Plus	08700 599 599	£49.90	400MB	2GB	5	£1.50	£1	X	£1.50/mailbox	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
NewNet (www.newnet.co.uk)	Advance	08700 599 599	£99.90	1GB	5GB	10	✓	✓	X	£1.50/mailbox	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
NewNet (www.newnet.co.uk)	Pro	08700 599 599	£199.90	3GB	15GB	50	✓	✓	X	£1.50/mailbox	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
NewNet (www.newnet.co.uk)	Enterprise	08700 599 599	£499.90	10GB	25GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nildram (www.nildram.net)	Unix	08701 608602	£120	10MB	5GB	1	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Nildram (www.nildram.net)	Windows	08701 608602	£120	10MB	5GB	1	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Nildram (www.nildram.net)	Shared SQL Business 50	08701 608602	£300	50MB	25GB	1	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Nildram (www.nildram.net)	Shared SQL Business 100	08701 608602	£600	100MB	50GB	1	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Pay As You Host (www.pay-as-you-host.com)	Standard	0870 284 0287	£47.88	50MB	512MB	Unlimited	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pabb Web Design (www.pabbwebhosting.co.uk)	Unlimited hosting	07756 441059	£114	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Positive Internet Company (www.positive-internet.com)	Z account	0800 316 1006	£293.75	120MB	10GB	Unlimited	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X
The Positive Internet Company (www.positive-internet.com)	Dolphin	0800 316 1006	£2,172.58	2x20GB	40-60GB	Unlimited	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X
The Positive Internet Company (www.positive-internet.com)	Fully managed servers	0800 316 1006	£5,287.50	2x70GB SCSI	80-250GB	Unlimited	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skymarket (www.skymarket.co.uk)	Standard 1	0800 321 7788	£49	10MB	2GB	1	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skymarket (www.skymarket.co.uk)	Standard 2	0800 321 7788	£69	20MB	2GB	1	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skymarket (www.skymarket.co.uk)	Premium 1	0800 321 7788	£99	25MB	2GB	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skymarket (www.skymarket.co.uk)	Premium 2	0800 321 7788	£149	50MB	2GB	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Switch Media (www.switchmedia.co.uk)	Home	0151 236 9111	£53.88	500MB	4GB	100	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X
Switch Media (www.switchmedia.co.uk)	Business	0151 236 9111	£95.88	1.5GB	10GB	500	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Switch Media (www.switchmedia.co.uk)	Professional	0151 236 9111	£186	3GB	25GB	1200	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
theName.co.uk (www.thename.co.uk)	Parking	08707 65 63 64	£52.88	25MB	500MB	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
theName.co.uk (www.thename.co.uk)	Forwarding	08707 65 63 64	From £15	N/A	500MB	N/A	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
theName.co.uk (www.thename.co.uk)	Hosting	08707 65 63 64	From £7.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Titan Internet (www.titanhosts.net)	Win50	0845 125 9500	£58.75	50MB	500MB	5	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Titan Internet (www.titanhosts.net)	Win100	0845 125 9500	£117.50	100MB	1GB	20	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Titan Internet (www.titanhosts.net)	Win200	0845 125 9500	£235	200MB	2GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WebFusion (www.webfusion.co.uk)	Entry	0800 031 7800	£79.50	600MB	7GB	300	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
WebFusion (www.webfusion.co.uk)	Home	0800 031 7800	£99.95	1.5GB	10GB	500	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
WebFusion (www.webfusion.co.uk)	Soho	0800 031 7800	£149.99	3GB	15GB	1000	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
WebFusion (www.webfusion.co.uk)	Professional	0800 031 7800	£199.95	5GB	20GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
WebFusion (www.webfusion.co.uk)	eCommerce	0800 031 7800	£499	5GB	20GB	Unlimited	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Hosting Standard	0870 050 0080	£39.95	50MB	1GB	5	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Hosting Standard Plus	0870 050 0080	£99.95	50MB	2GB	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Hosting Business	0870 050 0080	£79.95	100MB	3GB	15	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Hosting Business Plus	0870 050 0080	£159.95	150MB	4GB	30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Hosting Professional	0870 050 0080	£179.95	250MB	7GB	50	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Hosting Professional Plus	0870 050 0080	£299	500MB	10GB	100	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Standard Multiweb	0870 050 0080	£64.95	75MB	1.5GB	10	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Standard Multiweb Plus	0870 050 0080	£149.95	100MB	2.5GB	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Business Multiweb	0870 050 0080	£149.95	200MB	4GB	25	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Business Multiweb Plus	0870 050 0080	£299	250MB	5GB	40	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Professional Multiweb	0870 050 0080	£249	500MB	7.5GB	100	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Xcalibre (www.xcalibre.co.uk)	Professional Multiweb Plus	0870 050 0080	£499	500MB	10GB	150	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zen Internet (www.zen.co.uk)	ActiveSpace	0845 058 9000	£100	50MB	2GB	0	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Zen Internet (www.zen.co.uk)	.NETspace	0845 058 9000	£250	100MB	4GB	0	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X

and no self-respecting storefront can operate without shopping cart functionality. Host support can either mean that this is provided in some form or that your own bespoke cart systems can be facilitated, so do check in advance.

## VIRUS FILTER

No one wants to have their site attacked, data ravaged, or be responsible for spreading infections across the ether. A built-in virus filter is therefore essential to sites that can't afford any sick leave.

## FIREWALL

Again linked to site security, firewalls represent a digital barrier that sits between your site's server and the hordes of malicious attackers that threaten to pull it down. Only trusted data is allowed to pass through it, thankfully.

## WEB CONTROL PANEL

A vital part of great hosting is control, so this is where you'll want to pay attention. Web-based panels let you log in remotely and intuitively tweak your

account whenever you like, without the need to relay complicated instructions down the phone.

## SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

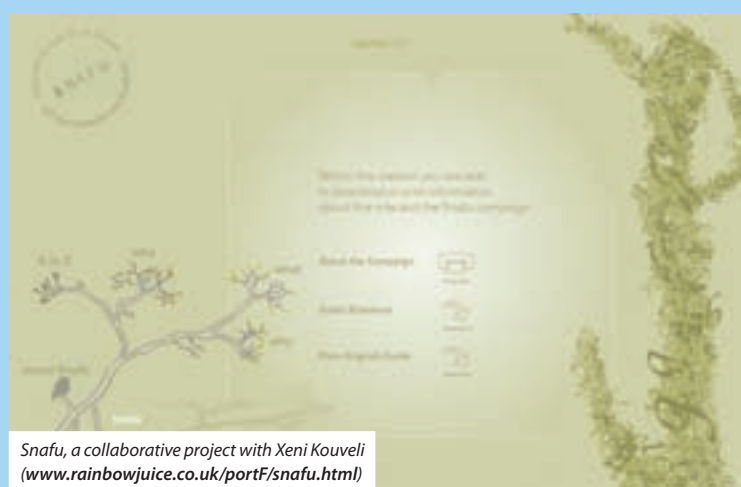
This is all about getting guarantees that your host will do the best job possible for you. Some might have clauses about what you can and can't do, but ultimately it's a handy declaration of what to expect should you sign up. Make sure you check this for all the requirements and backup that your site may need before making the big decision!

# portfolio

THE PLACE WHERE YOUR WORK DOES THE TALKING



Darren's personal portfolio site, [www.rainbowjuice.co.uk](http://www.rainbowjuice.co.uk), which uses flying birds and unusual controls for an illustrative look (centre & right)



Snafu, a collaborative project with Xeni Kouveli ([www.rainbowjuice.co.uk/portF/snafu.html](http://www.rainbowjuice.co.uk/portF/snafu.html))

## Darren O'Donoghue

[www.rainbowjuice.co.uk](http://www.rainbowjuice.co.uk)

**Skills:** Flash, Illustrator, Dreamweaver

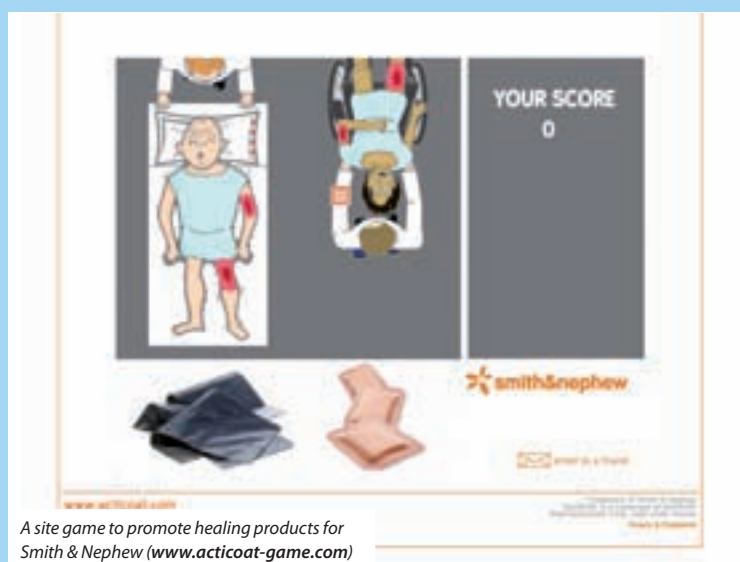
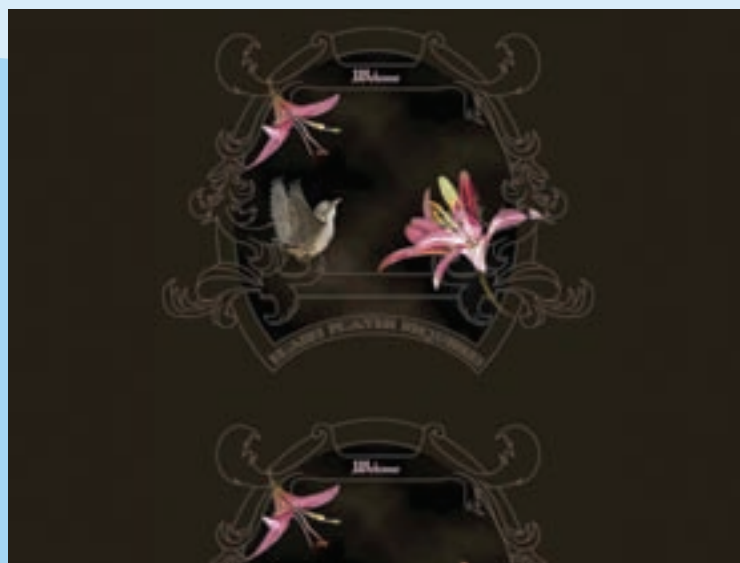
**Employment status:** Junior designer at MEME, London

"I graduated with a BA honours in web design from the University of Lincoln (based in Hull) in 2005, where I was fortunate to have been published in the 2005 D&AD student design annual.

After graduation, I worked freelance on a multitude of different projects, including a game for Smith & Nephew. In May of this year I was approached by the recruitment agency Aquent, who found me a position with a advertising media agency called MEME (part of the Engine group), where I have been working at for the past nine weeks as a junior designer. Design-wise my true passion comes from being able to design really creative illustrative work, either for web and interactive or just print-based.

In the future I would like to experiment with 3D and video work as I feel this will be a growing area of the industry. My inspiration comes from, like most creative people, everything I see and interact with, also designers such as Autumn Whitehurst and Brendan Dawes.

I originally lived in North Yorkshire, but I'm now living and working in London. I'm 23 and have been interested in design since school, but I never really thought I could make a career from it."



A site game to promote healing products for Smith & Nephew ([www.acticoat-game.com](http://www.acticoat-game.com))



Web design for Life Switch, a project that encourages users to make small changes towards a healthier lifestyle ([www.rainbowjuice.co.uk/portF/life.html#](http://www.rainbowjuice.co.uk/portF/life.html#))

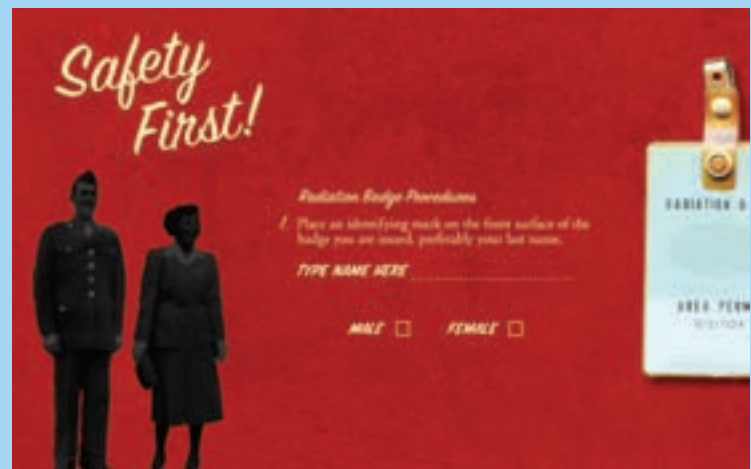
**GET YOUR CREATIVE JUICES** flowing with a flip through the pages of this month's portfolio, where we showcase the designs and interactive creations of some of today's hottest talents and give you the lowdown on courses that could lift your web design into the realm of the sublime

**MAKE IT HAPPEN!**

To keep this section going we rely on student or freelance designers to put themselves forward. It is great exposure for your talents and every single one of you will be considered so drop us a line now at [webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk](mailto:webdesigner@imagine-publishing.co.uk)

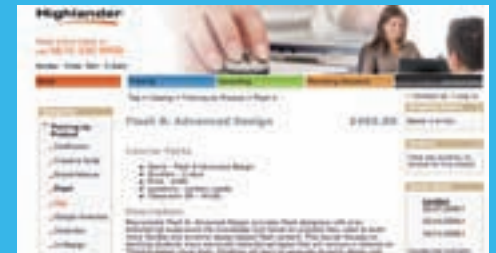


*A coin design for a Royal Mint competition in 2005, which incorporates the thistle, shamrock, daffodil and rose in an image of the Lion representing the United Kingdom*



# DO YOUR HOMEWORK

This issue we take a look at three countryside courses that will help you tackle today's top technologies



## HIGHLANDER

[www.highlander.co.uk](http://www.highlander.co.uk)

**Course:** Flash 8 **Price:** £495-795

**Course length:** Two days

**Location:** London, Leeds

If you've been drooling over Flash effects, it's time to pull your socks up and get your head around implementing this powerful app. Alongside Flex, Dreamweaver and Google Analytics courses, Highlander offers four Flash 8 courses covering ActionScript, Rich Content Design, Video Development and Advanced Design.



## UBIQ

[www.ubiq.co.uk](http://www.ubiq.co.uk)

**Course:** Building Accessible Websites

**Price:** £450 **Course length:** Two days

**Location:** London

If you're planning to dip into ecommerce, making pages that everyone can explore is a legal necessity, not to mention good business sense! This course, run in East Dulwich in London, walks you through the concepts and techniques involved in designing accessible websites and covers compliancy and CSS (essential for that AAA certification).



## ADOBE

[www.adobe.com/uk](http://www.adobe.com/uk)

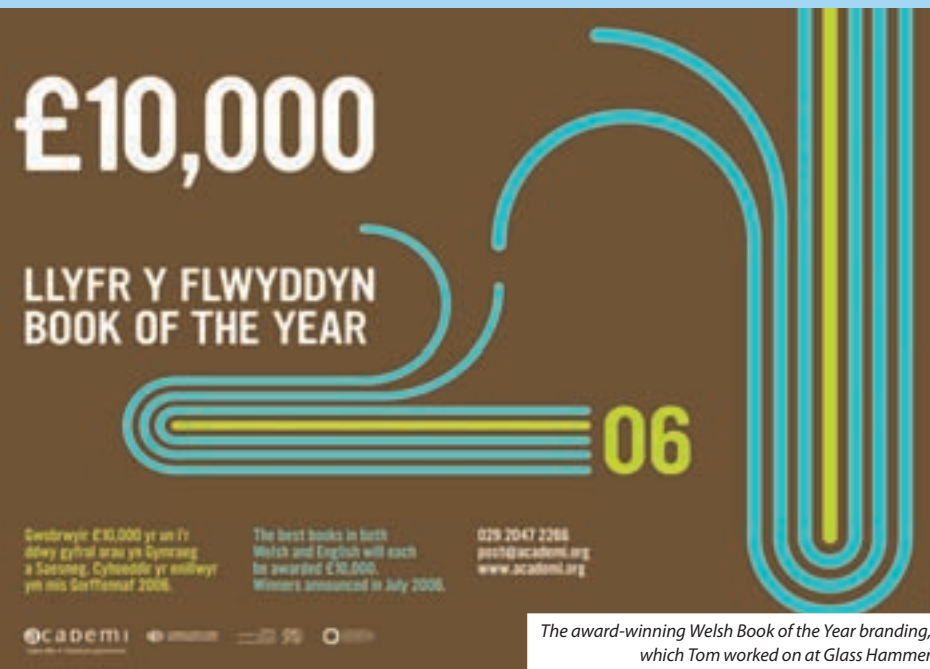
**Course:** Creative Suite 2 Training

**Price:** US\$129 (£71) **Course length:** At your pace

**Location:** Online, so anywhere!

If you're looking to unleash the creative power of CS2, there's no better teacher than Adobe itself. This library covers over 30 courses on Photoshop, Illustrator, Acrobat Professional, GoLive, InDesign and Version Cue at various levels of difficulty. Try one of the free courses before you invest.

Alongside his strong interactive media skills, Tom enjoys working across printed creations



*The award-winning Welsh Book of the Year branding, which Tom worked on at Glass Hammer*

## Tom Tribe

[www.tomtribe.co.uk](http://www.tomtribe.co.uk)

[thomas\\_tribe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:thomas_tribe@yahoo.co.uk)

**Skills:** Flash MX & ActionScript, Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop, AfterEffects, Dreamweaver MX, QuarkXPress, Premiere, and more

**Employment status:** Designer at Glass Hammer, Cardiff

Tom Tribe has won several accolades for his media work, including 2006 Welsh Designer of the Year at the Bilingual Design Awards, a D&AD award in 2004, and coverage in Creative Review. He honed his ActionScript, Photoshop and AfterEffects skills at various agencies around Wales after graduating the Cardiff School of Art & Design with a degree in Graphic Communication, producing creative corporate work for clients including the BBC and The Welsh Tourist Board. During that time he also involved himself with new media projects, Flash websites, print campaigns and more.

He is currently working on a variety of branding and web-based projects at Glass Hammer in Cardiff ([www.glasshammer.co.uk](http://www.glasshammer.co.uk)), including the award-winning Welsh Book of the Year branding and The Welsh Cider and Perry Company Gwynt y Ddraig which, Tom enthuses, "has its obvious perks!"

"In five years' time I'd like to have helped Glass Hammer evolve and improve, and worked with increasingly high-profile clients. I would also love the opportunity to work on album or single artwork for a popular band. Like most designers, at some point in the future I would also like to run my own successful agency."