

Introduction

Over a decade ago—when I used Dreamweaver 1.0 for the first time, I was amazed at how far ahead of its time it was. The capability to incorporate JavaScript Behaviors, styles, and pinpoint accurate designs truly amazed me. I was a skeptic when it came to visual editors and preferred Notepad whenever possible. Dreamweaver changed that for me and made me look at web development in a whole new light.

Dreamweaver has become the industry's leading web development environment, far surpassing any other. Still, many consider Dreamweaver a simple visual editor that accomplishes little but aids in the development of static web pages. The mindset is that visual editors lack the true complexity that it takes to create rich and powerful web applications that encompass client-side technologies such as HTML, CSS, and JavaScript while leveraging server-side technologies like ASP, ASP.NET, PHP, and ColdFusion. Dreamweaver obliterates the stigma by captivating the developer in a vast, intuitive, and feature-rich environment.

If you've picked up this book, chances are you're interested in the world of web design and development and, more specifically, how Dreamweaver can help you succeed in these endeavors. Whether you're a seasoned developer, a print designer looking to expand your base of knowledge to the web, or a home user who wants to create a family website, Dreamweaver offers the features and flexibility to get you on your way quickly and effortlessly. This book introduces you to the many features available through Dreamweaver using a fun, yet concise, approach.

What's Inside, Part by Part

Part I, "Getting Up to Speed with Dreamweaver CS3"—Starting off gently, this part introduces you to Dreamweaver CS3. Moving from Chapter 1, "The Dreamweaver CS3 Interface," to Chapter 4, "Defining Preferences," you'll learn about the many panels, inspectors, and windows that Dreamweaver reveals within its development environment. You'll also learn about defining and managing a site, building a simple web page, and finally, defining Dreamweaver preferences for customizing how you work with Dreamweaver.

Part II, "Static Web Page Development"—Generally considered the heart of the book, this part covers topics related to static web page development. You'll learn about web page structuring using tables, advanced page formatting and structuring using cascading style sheets, frames and framesets, designing forms with form elements, incorporating behaviors into your web pages, and designing pinpoint accurate web pages using absolutely positioned DIVs (AP Divs).

Part III, “Team Collaboration and Task Automation”—Although most consider Dreamweaver a great tool for building web pages, the truth is that Dreamweaver provides many tools for working with web pages within teams. In this part you’ll learn about the many aspects in Dreamweaver that facilitate the collaborative process, such as file check in and check out, Design Notes, and integration with Contribute. You’ll also learn about the many components, such as templates and library items, built in to Dreamweaver for enhancing the workflow process.

Part IV, “Incorporating Multimedia and Animation”—Developers and designers who are building media-rich sites should concentrate on this part. The chapters in this part of the book cover integration with Flash, Fireworks, and Photoshop, as well as video and audio.

Part V, “Dynamic Web Page Development”—The chapters in this part begin to prepare you for working with dynamic web pages. As you’ll see, the chapters in this part cover an introduction to web applications, server-side technologies, databases, and the language used to extract, insert, delete, and update data within databases: SQL.

Part VI, “Building Dynamic Web Pages”—With an introduction to web applications and the many components that make up web applications under your belt, you’re ready to move on to building dynamic web pages. As you’ll see, the chapters outlined within this part walk you through retrieving data from, inserting data into, deleting data from, and updating data within databases. You’ll also learn how to build search functionality, integrate shopping cart technologies, secure your web pages, work with XML web services, and even learn to use Adobe’s Spry framework for Ajax.

Online Appendixes—Appendix A, “Accessibility,” and Appendix B, “Extending Dreamweaver,” are available for download in PDF format. Just register this book at www.sampublishing.com/register for access.

What’s Inside, Chapter by Chapter

Chapter 1, “The Dreamweaver CS3 Interface,” covers the Dreamweaver interface: document views, toolbars, inspectors, panels, and status bars. By the end of the chapter, you should feel fairly comfortable with the Dreamweaver CS3 development environment.

Chapter 2, “Building a Web Page,” covers the essentials of building a web page within Dreamweaver. By the end of this chapter, you’ll understand how to use page properties, various HTML elements, and graphics to create your first web page in Dreamweaver.

Chapter 3, “Dreamweaver Site Management,” covers site management, including defining a site, file check in and check out, working with site maps, and defining local and remote folders.

Chapter 4, “Defining Preferences,” covers every customizable feature for improving how you work with Dreamweaver. Everything from customizing code coloring to setting keyboard shortcuts is outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 5, “Web Page Structuring Using Tables,” covers traditional methods for structuring web pages using tables. In this chapter, you’ll learn about tables, rows, columns, nested tables, and more.

Chapter 6, “Page Formatting Using Cascading Style Sheets,” covers the types of style sheets, how to apply them, and the various properties for text, backgrounds, borders, lists, positioning, and more.

Chapter 7, “Page Structuring Using Cascading Style Sheets,” defines AP Divs, the cornerstones for pinpoint accurate positioning of elements in Dreamweaver. Ever wonder how to make a web page look like a printed brochure? AP Divs are your answer.

Chapter 8, “Working with Frames and Framesets,” covers frames and framesets, including advantages and disadvantages to using them and why.

Chapter 9, “Working with HTML Forms,” covers HTML forms, which are the front-ends to web applications. eBay, E*TRADE, and AutoBytel, among other high visibility sites, use forms in their applications to facilitate data collection from the user. In this chapter, you’ll learn how these types of forms are constructed. We’ll discuss forms and the various types of form elements used within forms.

Chapter 10, “Using Dreamweaver Behaviors,” covers Dreamweaver’s JavaScript Behaviors. In this chapter, you’ll learn the basics of JavaScript, including events, actions, and more.

Chapter 11, “Building Dreamweaver Websites Within Teams,” covers feature within Dreamweaver that facilitate integration and collaboration within teams. Topics such as file check in and check out, file column sharing, and Design Notes are covered in this chapter.

Chapter 12, “Managing Website Content Using Contribute,” covers integration with Adobe’s content management and sharing program, Contribute. In this chapter, you’ll learn about users and roles, applying user settings, and even editing web page content using Contribute.

Chapter 13, “Enhancing Workflow,” covers potentially overlooked features within Dreamweaver that may help you do your job faster and more efficiently. Features such as the Results panel, Find and Replace, various commands, and the Assets panel, are covered here.

Chapter 14, “Working with Templates,” covers Dreamweaver templates in depth. A good understanding of templates and the workflow surrounding them can make you more efficient.

Chapter 15, “Working with Library Items,” covers library elements which, like templates, provide greater efficiency and global content editing from a centralized location. In this chapter, you’ll learn how to convert features (such as navigation menus) of your website to library items, which ultimately makes your navigation menus reusable and global to your website as a whole.

Chapter 16, “Working with the Timeline,” covers AP Elements, including timelines, image slideshows, and creating animated menus.

Chapter 17, “Incorporating Video and Audio,” covers important features for linking and embedding video and audio files in your web pages.

Chapter 18, “Integrating with Fireworks and Photoshop,” covers integration with Adobe’s popular image-editing programs: Fireworks and Photoshop. In this chapter, you’ll learn about round-trip graphics editing, creating web-based photo albums, and optimizing images.

Chapter 19, “Integrating with Flash,” covers Dreamweaver’s integration with Flash—round-trip Flash editing, what parameters Flash movies accept, and how to trigger different Flash movie properties using Behaviors.

Chapter 20, “Introduction to Web Applications,” effectively makes the transition from static web page development to server-side web page development. You’ll learn about web architecture, server-side technologies, and database options.

Chapter 21, “Working with Server-Side Technologies,” begins to dig deeper into the world of server-side web development. In this chapter, you’ll learn about the various server-side technologies, including ASP, ASP.NET, ColdFusion, and PHP.

Chapter 22, “A Database Primer,” covers the basics (tables, rows, columns) and more advanced topics such as stored procedures, triggers, views, keys, and normalization. The chapter concludes with the development of the book’s project database.

Chapter 23, “A SQL Primer,” covers selecting, inserting, updating, and deleting data. It also breaks down SQL into the different clauses and covers joins and sub queries.

Chapters 24 through 29 contain an in-depth tutorial on building a web store application with ASP, ASP.NET, PHP, and ColdFusion. The chapters include real-life detailed code for catalogs, shopping carts, user registration, personalization, search functionality, and security.

Chapter 30, “Introducing the Spry Framework for Ajax,” discusses Adobe’s newest framework for Ajax. You’ll learn how to create Spry Datasets for creating performance-minded web pages that are fed in from XML files. Additionally, you’ll see how to incorporate Spry widgets and effects for creating engaging and eye-catching web pages.

The appendixes cover other important information, such as

- ▶ **Accessibility**—Covers the standards and how to apply those standards. It also touches on the impact of accessibility on design and development efforts.
- ▶ **Extending Dreamweaver**—Covers extending Dreamweaver with objects and behaviors. It also covers sharing those extensions with others.

As you can see—and as you will read—I’ve covered just about every aspect of web development using Dreamweaver CS3. While reading, you can follow along with the step-by-step projects by downloading the support files at this book’s companion website. Thank you for picking up a copy of this book—and enjoy!

—Zak Ruvalcaba