Design Review

Student Name: _____   Date: _____

Design Team Name: _____

Client Name: _____

Client URL: _____

Summary

- After understanding the client's goals and audience, conduct a design review of the client's website:
- One team member summarizes the client's audience, purpose, and goals to confirm the group's understanding.
- The team evaluates the strengths of the site's design. Consider the following design elements:
  - Consistency
  - Ease of use
  - Use of color
  - Universal navigation
  - Layout
  - Links
  - Usability
  - Accessibility
- The team discusses improvements they would suggest to the site design.
- One team member summarizes the strengths of the site.

Consistency

What elements are repeated on content pages to help identify the entire site?

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How does the repetition help or hinder the overall purpose of the website?

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When coming to the site, how do visitors know where they are, where they can go next, and whether they remain in the same site as they go from page to page?

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How well do the pages comply with web standards (for example, are links blue and underlined)?

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Universal Navigation

Where is the main navigation for the site located, and how consistent is it from page to page?

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How do visitors return to the home page from every other page in the site?

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How do visitors control their movement in the site (for example, is there always a way to return to the previous page they visited)?

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Layout

Is the page layout logical or does the design look randomly placed?

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How does the relative size and placement of text and images imply relative importance?

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How often do you need to scroll down the page to find important elements?

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If there are images, how clear are they?

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How do images add value to the content or are they only for decoration and appeal?

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How does the color scheme contribute to the purpose or tone of the site?

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Usability

How clearly are links labeled?

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Is the time it takes for a page to load worth the wait?

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How easily are visitors able to find information?

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How easily are visitors able to return to essential sections of the site (if at all)?

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Accessibility

Are all images labeled with alternative text (Alt tags)?

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To what extent are the text and titles clear and easy to read for all visitors (color, size, and so on)?

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Do image links and hotspots (image maps) have alternative text?

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Technical Features and Their Design Solutions

Technical Feature	Design Solution
Pop-up menu	Display multiple links in a small amount of space. Provide navigation flexibility without long download times.
Rollover image	Add highlighting or design effects with an image swap to draw visitor attention. *Example:* Buttons that change appearance when the pointer rolls over them
Image map	Help set up navigation on a website. *Example:* Geographic map with hotspots or invisible buttons that link to sites about each country
Photo presentation	Add design elements to pictures to enhance the overall design of the site. Make changes to photograph presentation elements such as tone, color, and blending.
Spreadsheet table	Quickly set up a table of information such as a directory, large catalog, or schedule.
Calendar	Quickly create an editable calendar. *Examples:* Company calendars, list of community events
Form	Interact and gather information from site visitors. *Examples:* Feedback form, guest book, survey, or product order form
Cascading Style Sheets	Create a consistent design for all pages that easily updates multiple pages on a site. Use with templates for managing large sites.
Transitions, filmmaking effects, or timeline effects	Enhance or reinforce the mood of the site. Add to overall message of the site. *Examples:* Banner ads and cartoons
Sound	Add narration to further clarify or enhance visual elements.
Video	Use video on websites to personalize and enhance the user's experience. *Example:* Customer testimonials

How to Make Websites Accessible

Alternate Text (Alt tags)

Alternate text for images is critical for many devices that assist disabled people to access the web. The Property inspector in Dreamweaver has a text box for entering alternative text (Alt tag) for an image, link, or button. The text can be descriptive and as long as necessary, but it should be as succinct as possible.

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

Developers use CSS to separate content from presentation of their websites, allowing assisting devices easier access to the information provided in the content. Developers also use CSS to create a consistent structure for text content, aiding interpretive devices (such as text-to-speech browsers).

Image Maps

Provide alternate text for hot spots in images to make them readable by interpretive devices.

Tables

Provide alternate text descriptions for tables, such as identifiers of row and column headings for data tables or longer descriptions for tables with textural information.

Templates and Library Objects

Designers can create a single, accessible template or a small set of templates as the basis of the entire site. Templates limit mistakes when multiple designers are working on a site. In addition, templates foster a consistent, easy-to-use site that keeps visitors oriented and has consistent common elements such as navigation bars.

Frames

Add descriptions of frames in the Property inspector. This alternative text provides additional information to web browsers and readers as visitors navigate each frame.

Device Independence

Use the Behaviors panel in Dreamweaver to create rollovers and other scripts that are triggered by logical events, such as onFocus and onBlur. Create scripts that combine mouse events with logical events to support a variety of visitors.

Sample Design Document

Coast Middle School Website

Project overview

Site Challenges:

Navigation: The page is too long, so it requires visitors to scroll. There is too much information contained under too few topics. For example, the *About Us* section could be broken into *Athletics*, *Activities*, and *Volunteer Opportunities*.

Page Layout: Uses tables and anchor links that could be separated into multiple pages for visitors to get to all the information.

Colors: The colors do not work well together and the images do not draw the interest of the audience.

Accessibility: The main image does not have an Alt tag so a screen reader would not describe the image.

Possible Solutions:

Navigation: Split the page into multiple pages organized by topics, with a navigation structure on the home page.

Page Layout: Create a new logo to replace the small picture of a schoolhouse that repeats the name of the site.

Colors: Select two or three unifying colors to create a consistent site.

Use technology structures such as templates and Cascading Style Sheets that will make the pages consistent and easy to update.

Goals, objectives, and messages

The Coast Middle School needs a redesign of its website to make it easier for visitors to navigate and find information. The present site gives information about the school location, a map, a list of teachers, and a short description of the school and its activities. The school uses the site to inform parents and community members about the school. The school's mission is to build parental and community involvement with the school by informing them about volunteer activities and happenings around the school.

Audience

The intended audience of the site is parents, community members, school administrators, teachers, and students. They will go to the site for information about the school, its faculty, and its events, as well as to find more ways to be involved with the school.

Goals for redesign

The redesign should include the following:

- Make the site easy to update, to provide information about new school activities as well as changes in the faculty and staff.

- Incorporate the new logo.

- Give more detailed information about activities, athletics, organizations, and departments because these groups will be creating their own websites.

- Use a calendar to inform the community about events at the school.

- Give easy access to categories of information.

- Attract the audience to increase community and parental participation in the school.

Technical specifications (delivery requirements)

Audience members will typically access this site by using a dial-up modem at 56Kbps or a cable modem. They might use Netscape Navigator, Internet Explorer, or America Online. The site should optimize all images to load quickly while still being appealing.

Site content

Home page:

- Logo for the Coast Middle School

- Title for the Coast Middle School

- Links to the following areas:

  o Academics: departments, schedules, class pages, library

  o Student Activities: athletics, clubs and organizations

  o School Information: news, calendar, handbook, volunteering

  o Faculty and Staff: teachers, administrators, staff

  o About Us: mission, directory, civics, contact info, maps, links

Sample content page:

- Text navigation bar

- Universal navigation to each of the following:

  o Academics

  o Student Activities

  o About Us

  o School Information

  o Faculty and Staff

- New Coast Middle School logo

Site Structure

```
                                    Home Page
        ┌───────────┬───────────┬──────────┬──────────────────┬─────────────────┐
   Academics   Student Activities   About Us   School Information   Faculty and Staff

   Library      Athletics       Mission        News              Teachers

   Class Pages  Clubs           Directory      Calendar          Administrators

   Departments                  Civics         Handbook          Staff

   Schedules                    Contact Info   Volunteers

                                Maps

                                Links
```
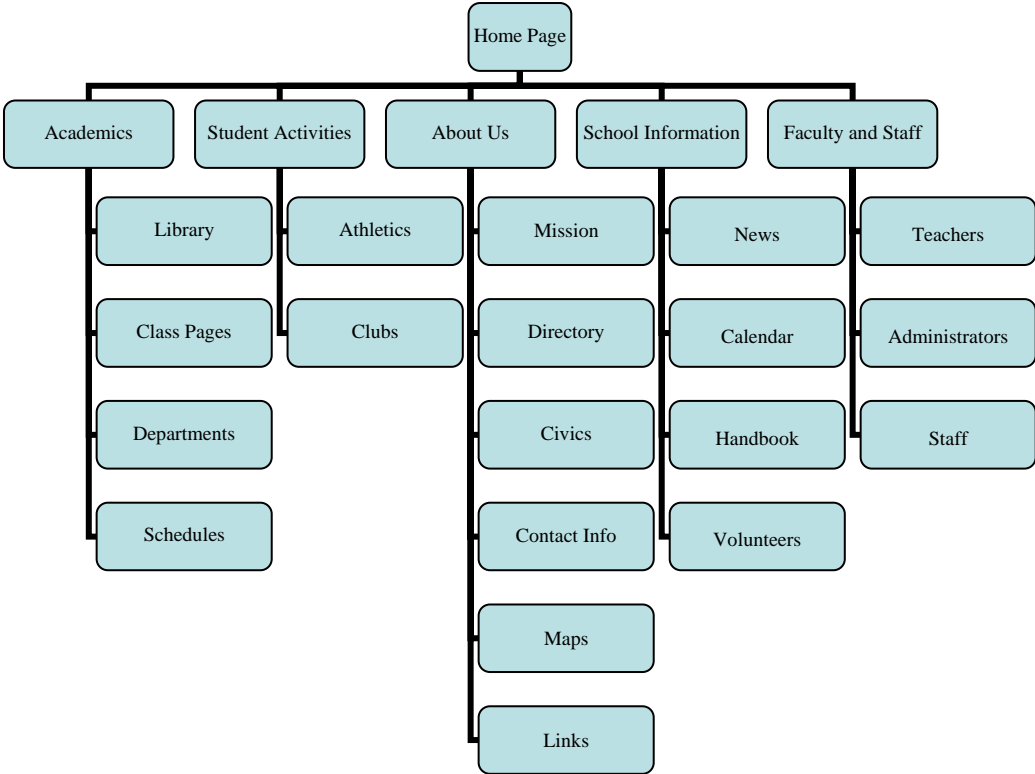
Visual Design

This is the original site for the Coast Middle School. It has only one page and it scrolls to include all the information for the school. The site is difficult to update and the text is very dense.
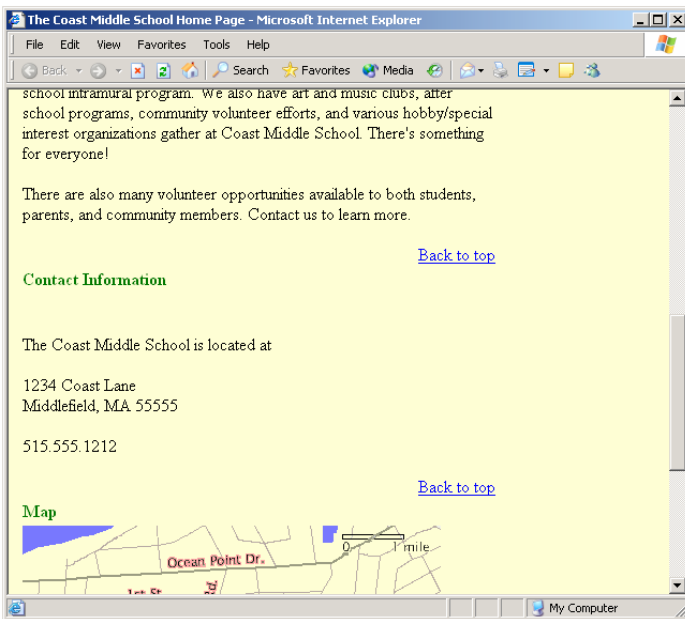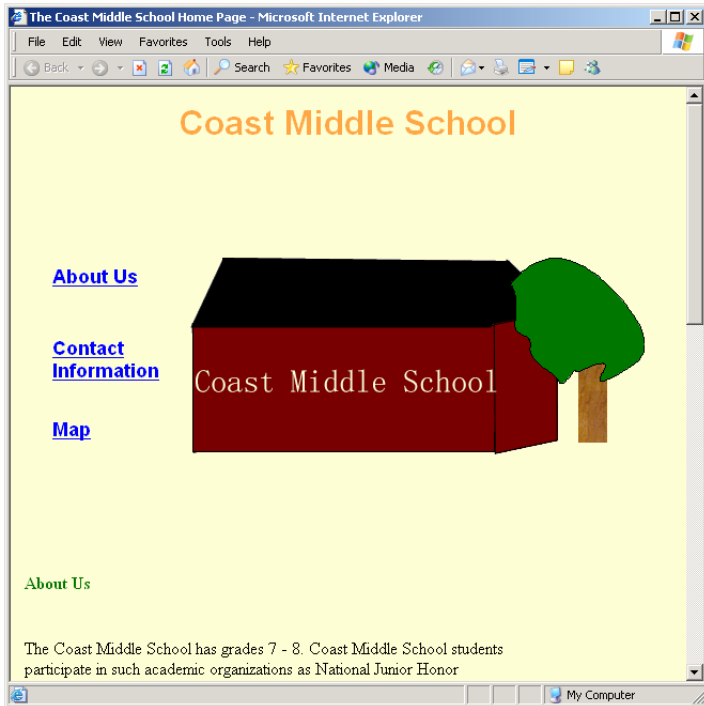
Color and Font Samples

Design A:

- The main blue color will be used for the navigation structure and as part of the logo.
- The pink color will be used for regular text on the page.
- The black and white will be used in the logo.
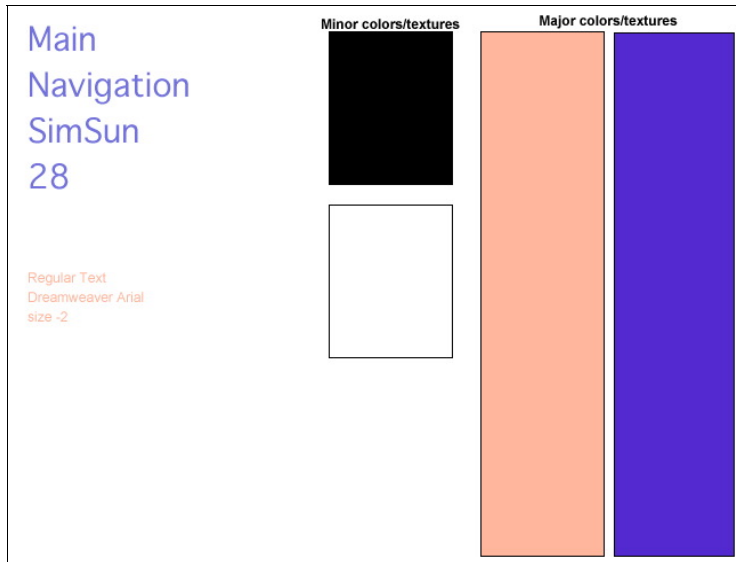
Design B:

- The main orange color will be used for the logo and to highlight any text.
- The gradient blue-black will be used as a background for the navigation structure on all pages.
- The black and white will be any text on the page: white text on the blue-black background and black text on the white background.
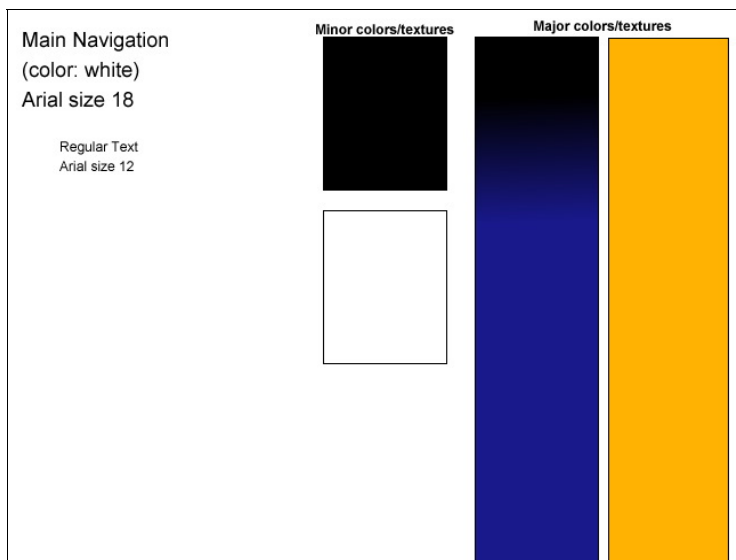
Sample Design Comps

Design A

This home page design uses pop-up menus to manage all the content and links for the main navigation. It uses the blue color for the navigation and a mix of blue and pink for the logo. The main text on the page is similar to the pink in the logo to draw the attention of the visitor. A content page would look exactly like the home page, with the same navigation bar across the top. For this design, the team would need to create one template for use throughout the site. This design unifies the site; however, it does make it difficult for visitors to know when they are on the home page versus a content page.

- *Consistency:* The site is consistent because it uses only three colors and uses the logo and footer on every page.

- *Ease of use:* Pop-up menus make the site easy to use because visitors can jump to specific information easily and quickly.

- *Universal navigation:* A universal navigation scheme is repeated on every page.

- *Layout:* The layout uses white space between the logo and the footer to focus visitor attention on the content in the middle of the page.

This design uses the logo and color choice to create a simple site that might appeal to multiple audiences.
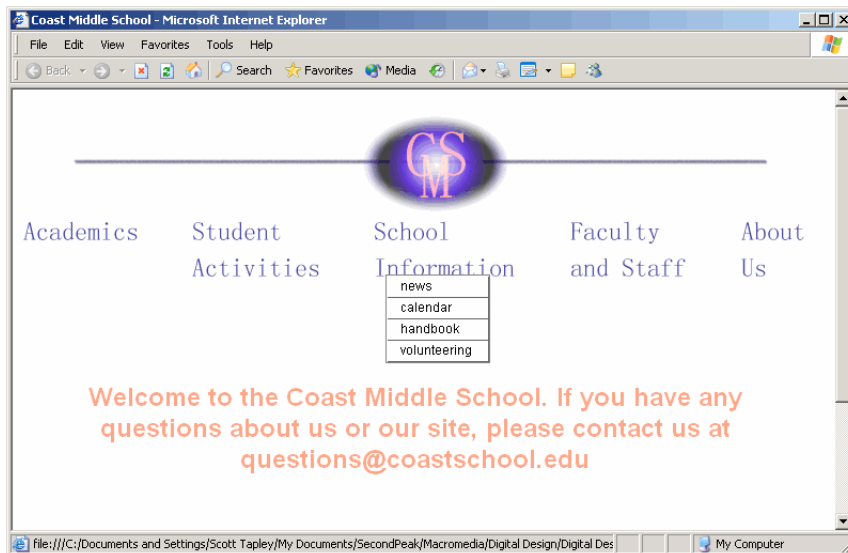
Design B

This design uses a large navigation menu for the home page instead of pop-up menus. Also, a school quiz is included to entice visitors to learn about the Coast Middle School. The main colors and logo are used as directed.
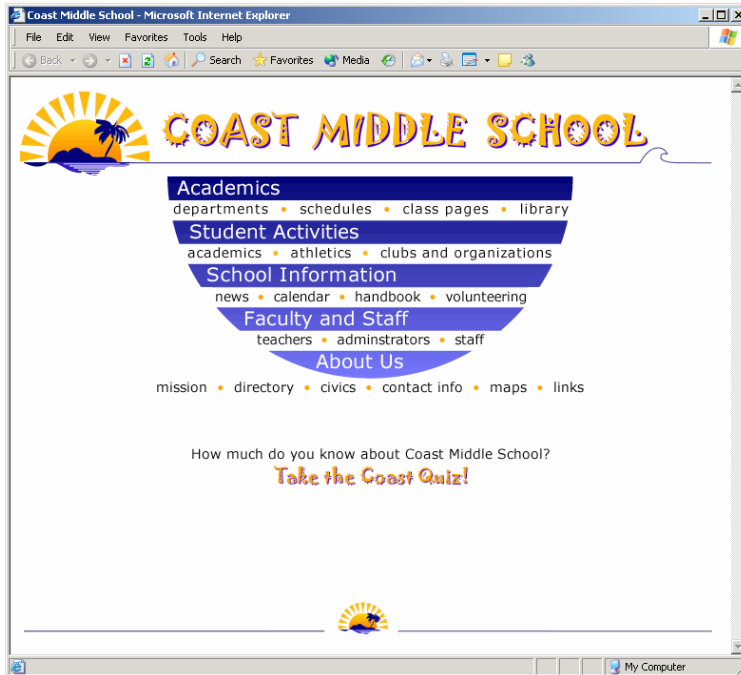
This sample content page is similar to the home page with the logo, but it contains a collapsed main navigation bar. Also, text links at the bottom of the page make the page more accessible. The site is unified by the logo and footer logo.
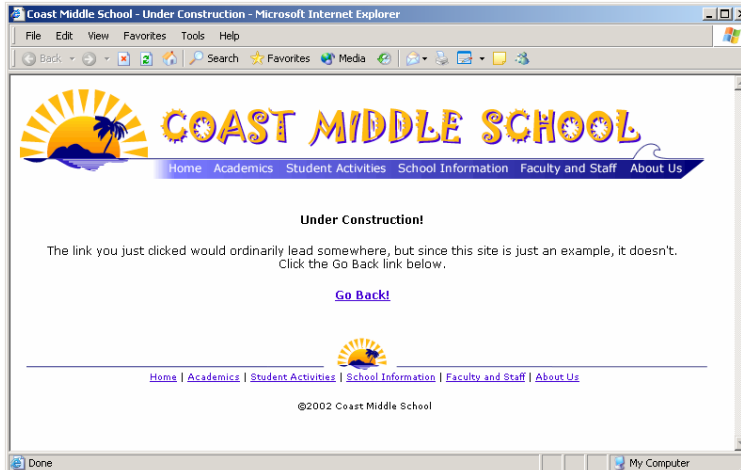
- *Consistency:* This site uses color consistently, and the logo appears on every page.

- *Universal navigation:* The navigation scheme is a large menu on the home page and repeats in a simpler form on all content pages.

- *Ease of use:* The site has a main navigation scheme throughout the site and also contains text navigation at the bottom for visitors who have turned off viewing of graphics.

- *Layout:* Layout focuses visitors on the white space between logo and footer.

This design uses fonts and color to make the site more fun and more representative of students in a middle school.

Design Document

Use this worksheet to take notes for your design document.

Project Overview

List site challenges.

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List possible solutions to these challenges. If you have examples from other sites that address these challenges, include screenshots and bibliography information.

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Goals, Objectives, and Messages

List goals of the site.

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Audience

Write a brief description of the target audience for this site.

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Goals for Redesign

List the goals for redesign.

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Delivery Requirements

List the delivery requirements (browsers, connection speed) for this site.

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Site Content

Home page: List any images, logos, text, and links that will appear on this page. Describe any standard colors or fonts that must be used on this page.

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Sample content page: List any images, logos, text, and links that will appear on this page. Describe any standard colors or fonts that must be used on this page.

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Site Structure

Draw a flowchart of the site.

Visual Design

Insert screenshots of the site's original home page and a sample content page.

Color and Font Samples

Create two different color and font samples with Macromedia Fireworks 8 and insert screenshots of the samples. Describe and justify your page layout and design decisions.

Sample Design Comps

Create and insert screenshots of two different page designs for the home page and a content page. Use the color and font samples as part of these designs. Describe and justify the page layout and navigation design.

Design Principles for Macromedia Flash Content

When designing Macromedia Flash Content, you need to consider the following principles:

User-Centered Design

What you are presenting with Flash is dictated by the user, otherwise known as the audience. You must know your audience: how large it is, who they are, where they come from, what their goals are, and what obstacles they may face when accessing your Flash content. Some variables to consider include:

- Language
- Impairments
- Interests
- Experience with technology

Purpose

What is the main purpose of your Flash presentation? Is this for a corporate website, a software application, an entertainment site, a game, or for personal use? For each type of presentation, you should consider different technological, graphic, and usability factors.

Consistency

As you design the content of your presentation, create a consistent frame layout, color scheme, and navigation system. For example, use the same button style and menu system for all the pages on your Flash website.

Technology

Be aware of the technical requirements it will take to implement, deliver, and access your presentation. Elements to consider are:

- Hosting and ISPs
- Web servers
- Browser and e-mail security
- External application needs, such as Java
- Media playback components, such as sound cards and speakers

Content

The content of your site takes into consideration all other design principles. The content should be appropriate for your audience, align with the purpose, and be well organized, consistent in presentation, and technologically suited for your users. Make sure the media you include enhances your message rather than distracting from it. Increase the readability of text elements by applying appropriate font types, sizes, and colors. Use graphics and photographs that are meaningful and complement other content.

Control

Provide simple navigational objects for the users. Use standard designs for all buttons, scroll bars, menus, and language, and do not hide navigational elements. Consider accessibility guidelines when designing the navigational system for your presentation.

Creating and Modifying Text in Macromedia Flash

To create text, you can use the Text tool or you can copy and paste text from other sources. After you create the text, you use the Property inspector to modify attributes of the text. There are three types of text you can specify in the Property inspector: Static, Dynamic, and Input. The default type of text is Static. Static text is used when the text will not change, such as button and form labels. Dynamic text is used for text that will change, such as text pulled from an external database in response to user's request. Input text is used for requesting input from the user, such as a user name and password.

Create Text

1. Start Macromedia Flash 8.

2. Open a new Flash document.

3. On the Timeline, double-click a Layer , name it, and press **Enter** (Windows) or **Return** (Macintosh).

   Naming layers helps keep the Timeline organized.

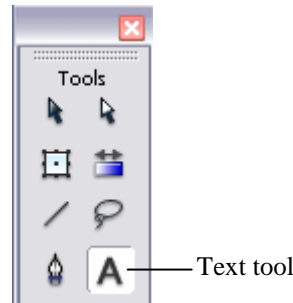4. In the Tools panel, select the **Text** tool (**Figure 1**).

5. Move the pointer to the Stage.

   The pointer changes to a cross hair with the letter "A" attached to it.

6. To create an expanding-width text field, click on the Stage.

   The text field contains a flashing insertion point. This is where text will appear as you type. The round handle indicates that the text field is an expanding-width one-line static text field (**Figure 2**).
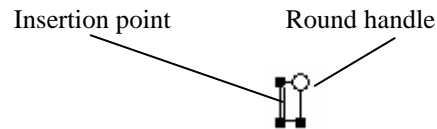
7. Type the text.

   The text field expands as you type.

8. Click away from the text to deselect it.

9. To create a fixed-width text field, drag approximately a half inch on the Stage.

   A text field is created. This text field has a square handle in the upper-right corner (**Figure 3**). The square handle indicates that the text field is a fixed-width static text field.
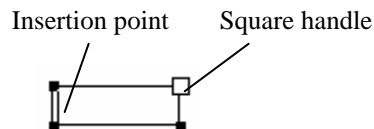
10. Type the text.

    The text you type wraps to a new line when it reaches the right edge of the text field.

11. Drag the square handle to the right until the text is on a single line.

    Note: Double-clicking a square handle changes it to a round handle and changes the text field to an expanding-width one-line static text box.

12. Click away from the text to deselect it.

Text tool

Figure 1 Text tool

Insertion point   Round handle

Figure 2 Expanding-width one-line static text field

Insertion point   Square handle

Figure 3 Fixed-width static text field

Edit Text

To edit text after you create it, use the Property inspector. You can modify text attributes such as the font, font size, fill color, alignment, and spacing.

13. Use the Text tool to select the text.

The text is surrounded by the text field (**Figure 4**).

14. Use the Property inspector to apply text attributes (**Figure 5**).

- *Text type*
    - o *Static:* Text that does not change, such as on buttons, form labels, and navigation cues. This is the default text type.
    - o *Dynamic:* Information that can be updated, such as current news generated from an external file or database.
    - o *Input:* Text entered by a site visitor, such as personal information in completing a form.
- *Instance Name* (dynamic and input text only): Assign a specific instance name to a text field. This is very useful if you want to control your text fields with ActionScript.
- *X and Y:* Control the X and Y position of the text field relative to the Stage, where 0,0 is the top left of the Stage.
- *Width and Height:* Control the width and height of the text field.
- *Font:* Select the font to apply to the text. You can apply multiple font types to a single text field.
- *Font Size:* Adjust the height of the text.
- *Font (fill) color:* Set the color that fills each letter of text.
- *Alignment:* Align text left, centered, right, or full.
- *Change orientation of text* (static text only): Control vertical or horizontal positioning of text.
- *Letter spacing:* Control the space between the letters in a text field.
- *Character positioning*
    - o *Normal:* Set text characters at the baseline. This is the default setting.
    - o *Superscript:* Set text characters above the baseline, as for exponents.
    - o *Subscript:* Set text characters below the baseline.

Figure 4 Selected text

Figure 5 Property inspector

- *URL link* (static and dynamic text only): Associate a website address with text.

- *Target:* Control whether a URL opens in a new window or with a specific frame set on a page.

- *Font rendering method:* Add or remove anti-alias on the text. Anti-alias is the smoothing of the edges of text to make it more readable. You have several options:

  o *Use Device fonts:* Allow the published Flash document to select a font from the site visitor's system that closely matches the font you originally selected when designing the document.

  o *Bitmap font:* Useful for displaying small font sizes. Bitmap fonts do not contain outlines, which helps keep the file size of a published Flash document to a minimum. Bitmap fonts are never anti-aliased.

  o *Anti-Alias for Animation:* Special anti-aliasing for animated text.

  o *Anti-Alias for Readability:* Special anti-aliasing for text that will only be read.

  o *Custom Anti-Alias:* Modify thickness and sharpness to control the effect anti-alias has on your text.

- *Embed* (dynamic and input text only): Control the character sets included in your published Flash document. Embedded fonts increase the file size of the published document.

- *Line Type* (dynamic and input text only): Controls text wrapping in a text field. The default is single line spacing with no wrapping.

- *Selectable* (static and dynamic text only): Allow site visitors to select and copy the text in text fields.

- *Render Text as HTML:* Retain rich-text formatting for text, including the HTML tags associated with the formatting.

- *Show Border Around Text:* Turn the text field border on or off.

- *Variable:* Assign a variable to a text field for use when scripting.

- *Auto Kern:* Control the space between pairs of characters. Turning this option on uses built-in kerning information in the font.

Copy and Paste Text

1. Start Flash and open a new Flash document.

2. Open a file external to Flash that contains the text you want to copy.

3. Select the text and copy it to the Clipboard.

4. In Flash, create a text field on the Stage.

5. Select **Edit > Paste Special**.

   The Paste Special dialog box opens (**Figure 1**).

6. Select **Text (ASCII)**.

7. Click **OK**.

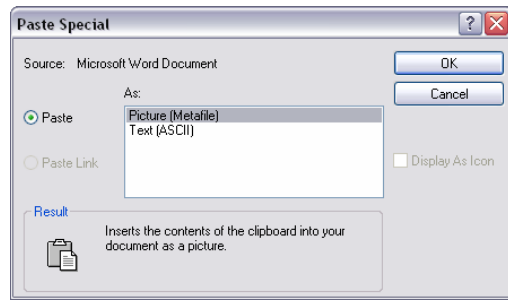   The text is pasted in the text field you created. You can now format the text by using the Property inspector.

Figure 1 Paste Special dialog box

How to Create Timeline Effects

In Macromedia Flash 8, you can change text, shapes, and symbols in many ways. This is commonly known as *adding effects*. This guide illustrates how to apply a specific Timeline effect to text, as well as how to edit and remove the effect. You can apply any number of effects using this technique.

Create a Timeline Effect

1. Start Flash and open a new Flash document.

2. Use the Text tool to type some text**.**

3. Change some of the properties of the text, such as:

   - Font

   - Font size

   - Text Fill

   - Alignment

   - Letter Spacing

   - Character Position

   - Anti-Alias

   - Auto Kern

4. Select the text with the Selection tool.

5. Select **Insert > Timeline Effects > Effects > Drop Shadow**.

   The Drop Shadow dialog box opens (**Figure 1**). You can adjust the color, transparency, and offset of the drop shadow. When you make changes to the settings, click **Update Preview** to preview your changes. Click **OK** to accept your settings.

   Instead of adding a drop shadow, you have the option of blurring the text, expanding the text, or exploding it. Each effect has attributes you can set to control the speed, direction, color, transparency, and size of the effect.

Figure 1 Drop Shadow dialog box

Edit a Timeline Effect

You can change an effect after you have applied it.

6. Select the text with the effect.

7. Select **Modify > Timeline Effects > Edit Effect**.

   The dialog box opens.

8. Change any of the settings in the dialog box and click **OK**.

Remove a Timeline Effect

You can remove an effect after you have applied it.

9. Select the text with the effect.

10. Select **Modify > Timeline Effects > Remove Effect**.

    The effect is removed. (You can restore it by selecting
    Edit > Undo.)

How to Use Transparent or Invisible Buttons

Recall that the Hit state of a button is not visible. If you create a button with no graphics in the Up, Over, or Down states, the button will be transparent. However, you can control how a transparent button will operate when a visitor clicks within the hit area. You can use transparent buttons in Macromedia Flash 8 in the same way you use hot spots in an image map in Macromedia Dreamweaver 8.

Create a Button

1. Start Flash and open a new Flash document

2. Rename Layer 1 *Graphic*.

3. Insert a new layer and name it *Button*.

4. On the Graphic layer, add a photo or a graphic to the stage.

   The document illustrated in **Figure 1** contains a photo of San Francisco that needs three transparent buttons to overlay it. Viewers can use the buttons to navigate to information about the subjects in the photograph.

5. Select the **Button** layer.

6. Select the **Rectangle** tool.

   Choose any color for the fill.

7. Set the Stroke Color to **No color**.

8. Draw a rectangle over an area in the photograph or graphic to which you want to add a button (**Figure 2**).

9. Select the **Selection** tool.

10. Click the rectangle to select it.

11. Select **Modify > Convert to Symbol**.

12. In the Convert to Symbol dialog box, type a name for the button in the **Name** text box.

13. Select **Button** as the Behavior.

14. Click **OK**.

    The button is added to the library and an instance is added over the photograph on the Stage.
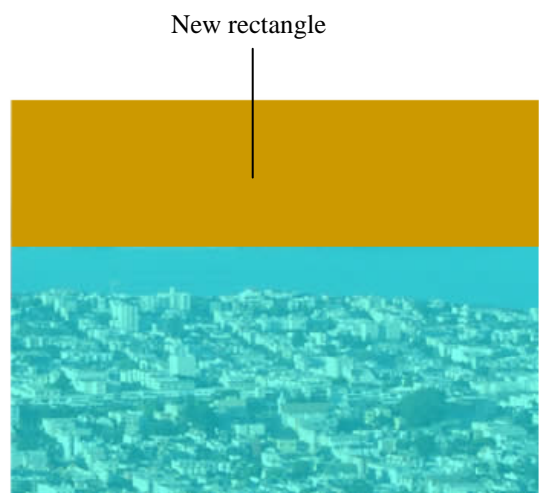

Figure 1 Transparent buttons on a photograph

New rectangle

Figure 2 Rectangle drawn over hill

Make a Button Transparent

15. On the Stage, double-click the button instance.

The button opens in symbol-editing mode. On the Timeline, the Up frame is selected.

16. Add a keyframe to the Up, Down, and Hit frames.

17. Select the **Up** frame.

18. Press **Delete**.

The colored rectangle representing the button on the Stage of the Up frame is deleted.

19. Delete the colored rectangle from the Stage of the Over and Down frames.

The Hit frame should be the only frame containing a colored rectangle on the Stage.

20. On the edit bar, click **Scene 1**.

The button is now transparent.

21. Save the **file**.

Add ActionScript

22. Make sure the button instance is selected on the Stage.

23. Select **Window > Actions**.

The Actions panel opens (**Figure 3**).

24. At the top of the Script pane, click **Script Assist**.

The parameters area opens above the Script pane (**Figure 4**).

25. In the Actions toolbox, click **Global Functions** to expand that category.

26. Expand a category from which you will add the action, such as the **Browser/Network** category to have the button send site visitors to an external web page.
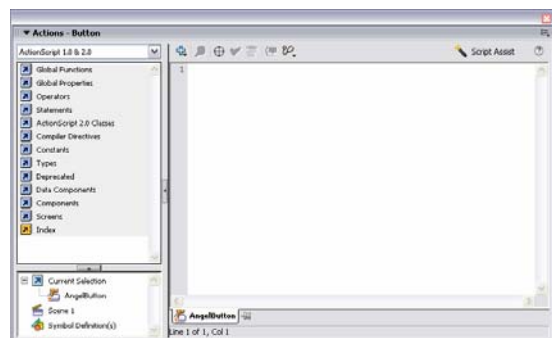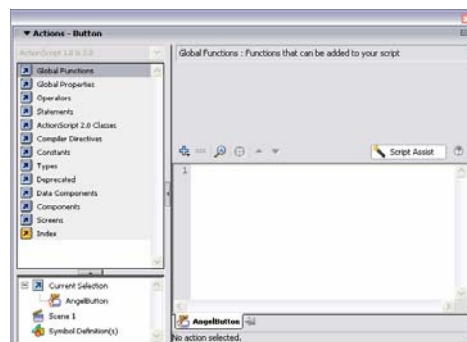

Figure 3 Actions panel

Figure 4 Script Assist turned on

27. Double-click **getURL**.

The *getURL* action is added to the Script pane. The parameters for *getURL* are displayed in the parameters area (**Figure 5**).

28. Click in the **URL** text box and type a URL for your button to navigate to when clicked.

The URL is added to the *getURL* action in the Script pane.

29. From the Window pop-up menu, select **_blank** (**Figure 6**).

30. Collapse the Actions panel.

31. Save the document.

32. Select **Control > Test Movie** to test the button.

33. Click the area of the graphic on which you created the invisible button.

A browser window opens and navigates to the website you defined for the button.
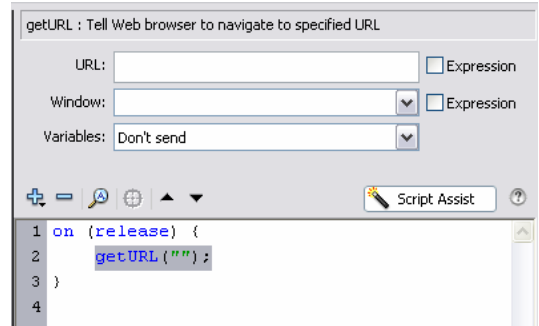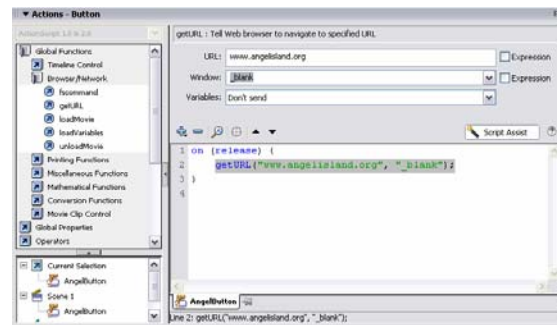

Figure 5 Parameters for *getURL*

Figure 6 URL and window type defined for the *getURL* action