Dreamweaver: Common Questions Part II
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Question:

How do I create image rollovers, such as the ones used in buttons, with Dreamweaver?

Answer:

First you must prepare the images to be used for both the "normal" and "rollover" states of each button. I would recommend using a single Photoshop file so that the image dimensions for both states will match.

Use Photoshop layers to keep the two states separate in Photoshop. Then only make the "normal" state layers visible & Save for Web for that state. Repeat this again, but this time making the "rollover" state layers visible and hiding all others before Saving for Web. When naming each file, create file names that will appear together in lists for ease of use later. For example "b_about.gif" & "b_about_over.gif".

You will need two images for each button, so if you have 5 buttons on your navbar you will end up with 10 images total. Be sure you save these files to your site folder so Dreamweaver can find them easily later.

Back in Dreamweaver, you will click where you'd like to insert your button and select
Insert>Image Objects>Rollover Image (the Insert Rollover Image dialogue box will appear).
Give the image a short name (only used by code) then browse for the "normal" and "rollover" images you saved earlier. Be sure the "Preload Rollover Image" box is checked, then give your button Alternate text that will be viewable in many browser & search engines. Also add the URL for when the user clicks the button. When you click OK, the button will be built. Dreamweaver will add the necessary Javascript code to your page, but you will need to preview in a browswer to see it in action.

Question:

What is a favicon and how do I create one?

Answer:

Favicons are .ico graphic files used by web browsers in different ways, but generally they are small icons that appear just to the left of the URL above the web page. They are also sometimes seen if you are using tabbed navigation on your browser and can be displayed in each tab along with the title of the page. Favicons are also seen when viewing & organizing bookmarks in your browser.

Though there are several ways to do it, this is only one way to create favicons, as I'm sure you'll see if you search the topic online. This process works well at this time on Mac OSX with Photoshop.

You'll want to start out with a logo or small graphic to represent your website. Remember that this will be extremely small so choose something with good contrast and bold forms. Use Photoshop to work the image into a 64x64 pixel file until you're happy with it at that size. Then use the Image>ImageSize command to downsample the image to 16x16 pixels. Also, you'll have a much clearer result if you use the "Bicubic Sharper" setting located right next to the resample image checkbox.

Now you'll save the image properly with the Save for Web command. Using one of the GIF No Dither presets on the right and begin to prepare the image as if you were saving a GIF file with no transparency. Begin decreasing the number of colors until your tiny image has as few colors as possible but still looks like the original. Once satisfied, press the Save button and then locate the file in the Finder.

Your file's three letter extension, currently .gif must be changed to .ico for this to work. Simply rename it in the Finder and when prompted, say that you'd like to use .ico rather than .gif. Then move the file to the root level of your site folder.

Back in Dreamweaver, add the following code betweent the <head> tags of any pages you would like to carry the favicon:

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<link rel="shortcut icon" href="/favicon.ico" type="image/x-icon" />
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I would recommend placing it your templates, so that all child pages will carry it. Although there is no guarantee that your favicon will show in every browser and having the favicon on your site is not going to affect it's functionality, it is a nice finishing touch.

Question:

How do I insert Flash into my page?

Answer:

Create your flash element in Flash and be sure to export it as a .SWF file for viewing on the web. Save it to your site folder in a location where Dreamweaver will be able to access it later. Now in Dreamweaver select Insert>Media>Flash (then browse for the .SWF file to be inserted)

Click the flash element placeholder in Dreamweaver, and adjust any of it's options using the properties palette. Finally, Preview your page in a browser to see the flash element at work.

Question:

How do I create a basic form so that users can submit information to me?

Answer:

The basic form comes in several parts, the form itself which is a standard html tag that contains all other parts of the form, and form elements that can be things like text fields or checkboxes. Each element must have a coded name and value assigned to it so that the submitted information can be properly processed. In addition to that it's a good idea to have the text fields or checkmarks labeled so that the user will know what he/she is going to fill out. There is typically a "Submit" button as well that will send the information once the form is filled out. Apart from all of these things which live in the html page, the form needs a program or script to process the information and do something with it (such as email you, or add the information to a guestbook, etc.) For this you will need a programmed set of instructions or script that will take care of that for you. Depending on your web host, you may already have access to such scripts (written in languages such as Perl, C, VB JavaScript, PHP & others) but the instructions for how to use them with the form you will create does vary from host to host.

One thing is clear, you must properly create the form with html first and call up the script properly before users will be able to make use of it.

There is an excellent video tutorial on inserting forms at the following link:
http://www.adobe.com/designcenter/video_workshop/?id=vid0160
Don't forget to define the "Action" attribute of the <form> tag. That's where you call up the program that processes the information. For example: ../scripts/guestbook.pl

Apart from this there is more in depth information in Chapter 11 of your textbook, including a very detailed tutorial and a description of almost every form element.