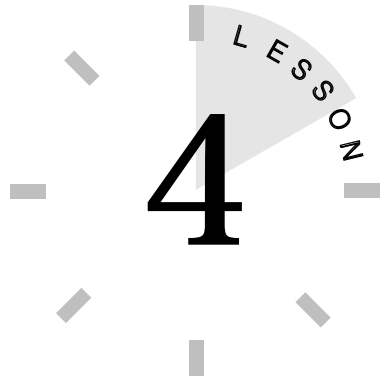# WORKING WITH WEB PAGES AND USING LINKS

4

In this lesson, you learn how to work with Web pages, frames, and forms. You also learn how to work with links by identifying and tracing your links.

NAVIGATING A WEB PAGE

Web pages are document files located on servers (large computers) scattered throughout the Internet. Similar to word processing files, you can scroll through Web documents by using scroll bars, view text and graphics, and select other links you want to visit. Figure 4.1 shows a typical Web page document.

Depending on the size of the document file, you may need to use the scroll bars to view different portions of the page. Click the appropriate scroll bar arrow to move around the document.

WORKING WITH FRAMES

Some Web documents you come across may use *frames* to divide information into smaller sections within the Netscape Navigator window. Figure 4.2 shows an example of a Web page divided into frames. A frames page without a table is useful when there is a lot of information packed into a Web site.

> **Frame**   A section within the Netscape Navigator window that reveals another document or part of a larger document.
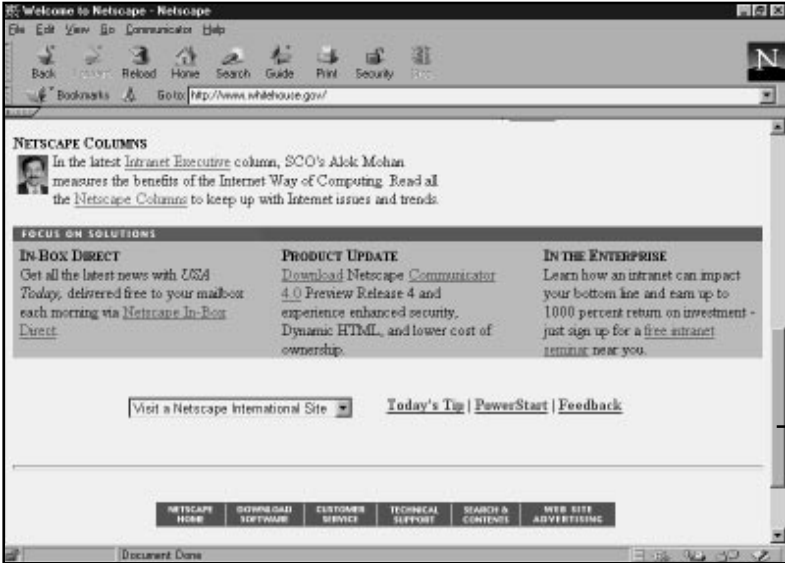
Scroll bar

FIGURE 4.1   You can view more of a Web page by scrolling up or down.

As you can see in Figure 4.2, frames divide the Navigator window, similar to window panes. Use the scroll bars of a frame to view different portions of a document. Web page frames come in different sizes and styles.

Frames are especially useful when viewing long Web pages. For example, a site with two or more frames may display a summary of a document's contents in one frame and a specific portion of a document in a second frame. When you click a link in the content summary frame, the second frame displays the information. In such cases, the frames provide a faster way of moving back and forth through a long document. Clicking links to different parts of the document is much quicker than using a scroll bar.

Some Web page frames may restrict you from viewing two or more Web pages at once. The information you see inside each frame comes from a separate Web page document.
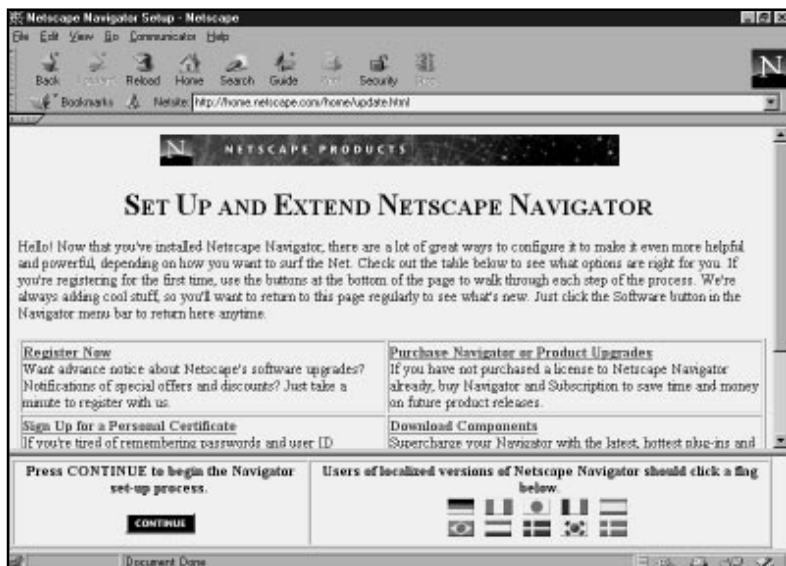
FIGURE 4.2 Some frames are fixed where any link you click within a fixed frame appears in the larger frame.

WORKING WITH FORMS

Another type of Web page is one with a *form*. A form is a built-in dialog box on a Web page. If you've worked with computers and their programs for any time, you are probably familiar with the purpose of dialog boxes—to extract further information from the user before completing a task. A Web page form is used to accomplish the same purpose.

A Web page form can be used to find out more information, conduct an online search, or register your thoughts and opinions. Figure 4.3 shows an example of a Web page containing a form.

Most forms use a standard text box for entering data. Click inside the box and start typing in the information. With some forms, you must click the drop-down arrows to display a select list (drop-down arrows may vary, considering the type of operating system

you're using). Forms also have command buttons that initiate action when pressed, such as conducting a search for online information. For example, when conducting an online search (see Lesson 6, "Searching for Web Sites"), type the text you're looking for; then click the **Search** button to start the search.

FIGURE 4.3   A Web page form often looks like a large dialog box.

Is It Secure?   Some forms you come across on the Web may solicit personal or confidential information. Before filling out such a form, you should first make sure the site is secure. If the site's address uses the prefix HTTPS, it's a secure Web page. You can also check the Security icon on the Netscape Navigator toolbar. A broken lock means an unsecured site. For more information about online security, turn to Lesson 20, "Using Netscape Security."

USING MULTIPLE NETSCAPE WINDOWS

You are not limited to viewing one Web page at a time. You can open two or more Netscape Navigator windows and view several documents. To do so, follow these steps:

1. Pull down the **File** menu and choose **New Browser Window**.

2. Another Navigator window appears on your screen. From here, you can visit other Web sites and view other documents.

3. To switch between open Navigator windows, pull down the **Communicator** menu and click the name of the window you want to view. More than five Navigator browser windows open simultaneously and will create low memory conditions.

> **TIP** **Quick Open**   To quickly start a new Navigator window, right-click a link in the current window and choose **Open Link in New Browser Window** from the Shortcut menu that appears. This opens the link to a separate window on your screen. Mac users can also type **Command+N** to open a new window.

WORKING WITH LINKS

Links, also called *hyperlinks*, provide the easiest way to wander the Web. Most Web pages contain links to other pages. These links appear as blue or underlined text. As you follow a trail of links, the links you click along the way turn a reddish-purple color. This helps you to distinguish which links you have already explored. By default, Netscape Navigator keeps track of these links for nine days. After nine days, the links expire and become blue again.

Links do not always take the form of blue or underlined words. Some Web pages use icons as links or even employ image maps (also called site maps). Image maps, such as the one shown in Figure 4.4, allow you to surf through Web documents by clicking pictures instead of text.
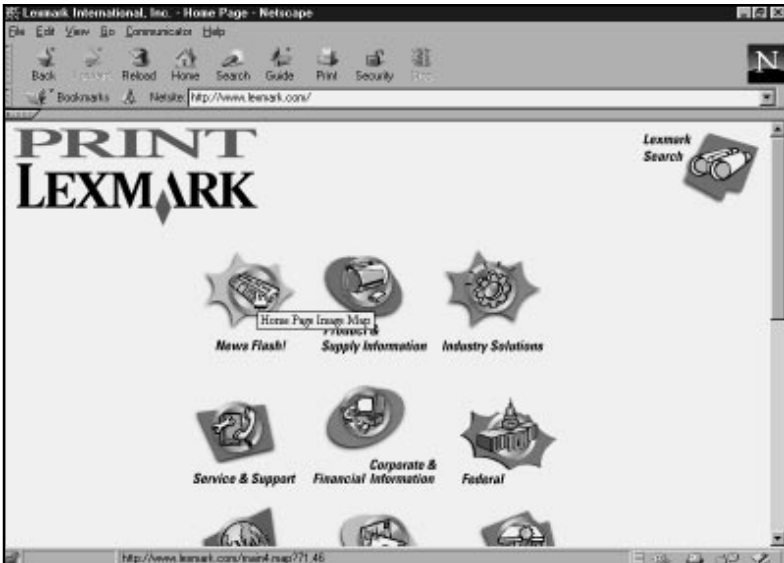

FIGURE 4.4   An example of an image map.

The color and underlining of a text link make it easy to spot. However, images and pictures on a Web page can also be links. It's not always easy to tell when a graphic may be a link to another Web page. Check the graphics by moving your mouse pointer over the image and glance at the status bar to see if the URL changes. If it does, the image is a link.

URL   The Uniform Resource Locator is an Internet site address. (Learn more about using URLs in Lesson 17, "Managing Netscape E-Mail.")

You may have noticed that the mouse pointer takes the shape of a pointing hand when you move it over a graphic. This also signifies that the image is a link. If you click a graphic and nothing happens, it's probably not a link to another Web site.

TRACING YOUR PATH

As you start weaving through the Web and viewing different pages, Netscape Navigator keeps a trail of where you have been, called a *history*. You'll also find a brief record of each page you visit on the Go menu. The bottom portion of the Go menu lists descriptions of each Web page you visit (see Figure 4.5). To revisit any of the pages, click the page description from the Go menu.
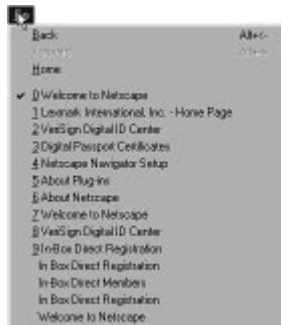

FIGURE 4.5 The Go menu keeps a brief list of Web pages you've visited.

You can also display a list of where you've been by clicking the drop-down arrow in the Location text box, shown in Figure 4.6. The list, which appears with the Location drop-down arrow, shows each page's address or URL. To revisit any of the addresses, click the URL from the list.

When you revisit a Web page, it reloads much faster onto your screen than the first time you accessed the site. Navigator *caches* (stores) each page you visit during an online session, making it easier to revisit the site without waiting as long for the download.

FIGURE 4.6   The Location box has a drop-down list of your session's history.

Cache   A temporary storage area that Netscape Navigator uses to keep track of sites you've visited and the graphics and text displayed. Pronounce it "cash."

TIP

Clear the Cache   As you start using Netscape Navigator, it doesn't take long for Navigator's cache to fill to capacity. For that reason, it's a good idea to empty the cache from time to time (especially if you have increased the cache size above the default 5M value); you can do so from the Navigator window. See Lesson 2, "Customizing and Maintaining Netscape," for more details on clearing Navigator's cache.

In this lesson, you learned tips for navigating Web pages, how to work with links, and how to view your history list. In the next lesson, you learn how to use bookmarks.