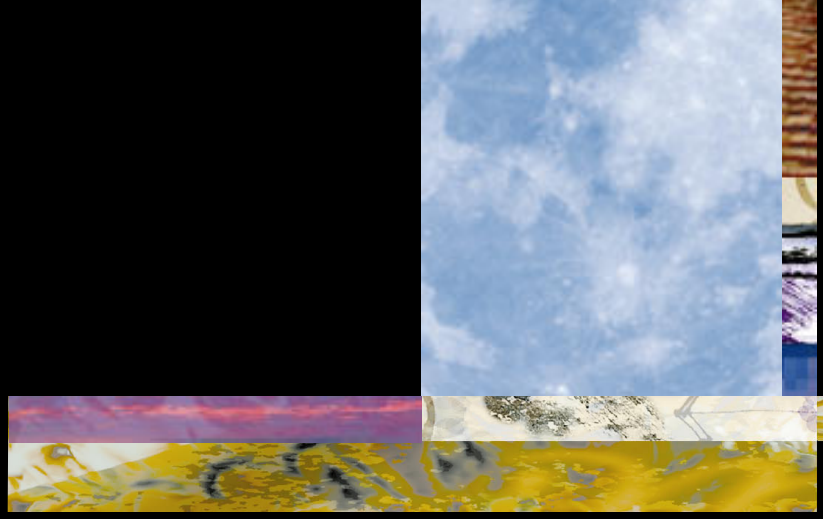
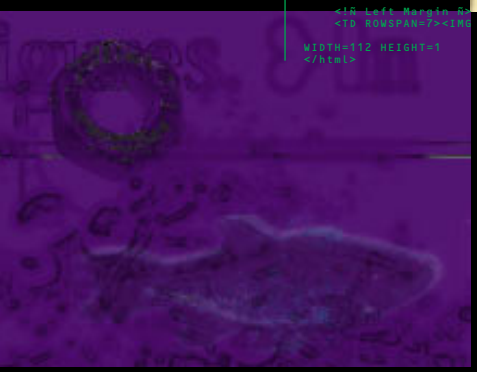
www.killersites.com



CREATING KILLER WEB SITES

The Art of Third Generation Site Design

David Siegel



As someone who is used to QuarkXPress (and therefore getting things to look just as I want them to), I have been frustrated by the design limitations imposed by HTML. Your tips are going to make a big difference in my personal site and in sites I am working on for others. ***Mason R***

Aaaaaaaaaah. I've spent more than three hours poking through nearly every link in your web pages. I thank you for your extraordinarily interesting, inspiring, rich, generous and multifaceted creation here on the Web. ***Larry A***

Boy am I glad I just found your web site! After schlepping around to other resources for Web Page Developers, yours is the first I've found with the wealth of useful information I've been looking for. ***Judy F***

Dave, I am in awe. Your web pages are definitely in the top the class, if not *the* top of the class. I could stay all day reading your material and looking at your page design. To review different web sites as part of my job, then to encounter your pages...life is almost too good. ***Mora C***

Most of the Web books in existence are for severe technoweenies, *not* people who actually design stuff. Thank you. ***Steve B***

I'm setting up a web publishing company myself, and I've been checking out everything the net has to offer. You probably have the best resources available for web development. ***Mike M***

Your pages have provided *the best* and *most direct* explanation of HTML vagaries I've yet encountered, and believe me, I've been looking obsessively. ***David R***

I've just finished looking at your site, and I can honestly say, after having looked at about 20,000 sites out there, that from a Web design point of view yours is *by far* the most innovative and best-designed site on the Web! ***Eric G***

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This book is dedicated to the surfers from around the world who visit my web sites regularly. Keep the cards and letters coming!

Introduction

The Book Site: http://www.killersites.com

New software emerges on the Web daily. Any CD-ROM included with this book would be hopelessly out of date before pressing.

My company, Studio Verso, maintains a site, http://www.killersites.com, which serves as an up-to-date companion reference to this book. There you will find all the files you need to follow these chapters from your own desktop, as well as pointers to books and software useful for making third-generation web sites.

It is generally referred to as the "Book Site" throughout the text.
We hope it will serve you well!

About this book and its contents

This is not a first book on HTML. In addition to a good book on basic HTML, I recommended the following books on design principles:

The Form of the Book by Jan Tschichold, edited by Robert Bringhurst (Hartley & Marks, Vancouver, BC, 1991.)

The Visual Display of Quantitative Information by Edward R. Tufte (Graphics Press, Cheshire, CT, 1983.)

Envisioning Information by Edward R. Tufte (Graphics Press, Cheshire, CT, 1990.)

WE DON'T MAKE WEB SITES the way our parents did. The typical "Welcome to my home page," menu-driven, icon-encrusted model is fast being replaced by a model I call *third-generation site architecture*. Though third-generation sites rely heavily on today's browser technology, the difference is not technology *per se*. The difference is design. This is the first book about the conception, design, and construction of third-generation sites.

I have written this book in three parts. Part I covers the nuts and bolts of making third-generation sites, from theory and structure to implementation and tools. Part II contains case studies that take you through the design and construction of five third-generation sites, ranging from introductory to advanced. This section ends with a chapter that showcases several real-life design solutions from around the Web. Part III introduces Adobe Systems' Portable Document Format (PDF) with a primer and a case study. Finally, I discuss issues beyond HTML as we know it today, presenting a vision for the future of on-line design.

Although this book is more than a survey, it is far from complete. I have tried to cover graphic design as applied to the Web, and that necessarily involves a great deal of technical detail. There is much to know and learn about information design, form design, internationalization, and user interfaces. I touch on these subjects briefly. These are substantial subjects, too big for any one person to put into a single book.

We must start somewhere. The days of paper used frivolously are over. The Web is here to stay. I hope this book helps designers to make the transition. In her essay entitled *Electronic Typography,* Jessica Helfand, a brilliant designer who has turned her modem into a design tool, wrote:

Here is the biggest contribution to communication technology to come out of the last decade, a global network linking some 50 million people worldwide, and designers – communication designers, no less – are nowhere to be seen.

With the freedom of the Web comes new responsibility; it will take new thinking to make the Web more visually rewarding as it continues to grow more interesting.