



Website Design 5

Introduction

In the first few parts of this web design series there has been no mention of file structures or folders; a single file has been used as an example (one.html). However a website will contain many files, normally one for each web page plus other files and folders to contain the other web site assets, (assets is the term used by Dreamweaver for items such as text, images, movie clip, links etc).

Keeping track of the web sites assets is important and needs a structured approach to prevent time being wasted searching for images etc.

Local PC Directory

All of the web sites development files will be stored on a local PC and need to be managed. This is best achieved by creating a separate specific folder for websites. Within this main folder create a folder for each organisation or company. For each organisation or company there will be additional sub-folders to represent each website version. This structure is optional but saves time.



Website folders

Having established a main directory structure there needs to be a file and folder structure for each website. These will be broadly the same for every website but may differ slightly. if for example the site contains a large number of images and corresponding thumbnail images, it would be preferable to store the main images in one folder and the thumbnail images in a separate folder.

It is possible to store all of the website assets in the 'Website Version' folder but even with small websites it is good practice to create separate folders.

The copy folder is used to store all of the basic text information. This can be in Microsoft Word document formats, but equally it can be in Notepad. All of the text formatting will be controlled by the web page tags, not by the control features or codes entered in Word. In fact it is better to store text in Notepad (txt format) as the additional formatting control characters that are added by Word need to be removed before the text is incorporated in to a web page.







The document folder is used to store documents (Word, rtf etc) that will be made available to view on the website.



Images are stored in the images folder, pdfs are stored in the pdf folder and templates are kept in the templates folder. However if only one template is being used for the site then the template can be stored in the main directory.

The web page or html files are stored in the main directory together with any style sheet such as Cascading Style Sheets.

Basic website file structure

 D:\... \Adrelia10	Website Version
 D:\... \copy	Folder for copy
 D:\... \docs	Folder for documents
 D:\... \images	Folder for images
 D:\... \pdf	Folder for pdfs
 D:\... \templates	Folder for templates
accessibility.html	html file
adrelia10.css	CSS file
index.html	html file
page2.html	html file
page3.html	html file

This basic format can be used for many websites and makes site maintenance (and updating) easier. Eg all images for Adrelia10 are in the folder *images*. By using a consistent name for the folders it will be easier to re-use previously created html and Dreamweaver created code in other web sites.

For example if you have used an images and set up borders, links, etc it is possible to copy the details and use them in another website without any changes being necessary. This is made easier if all image folders have the same name, as it is not even a requirement to change the folder name. If the folders have different names eg *img*, *image*, *images* then the cross reference to the image folder will need to be checked, verified and if necessary changed which takes time and allows the introduction of errors that will need to be corrected.

Summary

When creating a website it is advisable to have a well-defined and reusable file and folder structure that is consistent across all of your websites. This file structure will be mirrored in Dreamweaver and is helpful when updating the website on the file server and for re-using the same code on different websites.

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