



# Advanced CSS

Stephanie Sullivan

Ideas in motion.



The 2005 Macromedia® Conference

# Biography

Stephanie Sullivan

Web Developer, Trainer, Consultant

Founder/Principal - W3Conversions & VioletSky Design

Consultant & contractor for XHTML/CSS development

Partner - CommunityMX.com

Author - DW MX 2004 Magic

Contributing Author - MX Developer's Journal, Macromedia's

DevNet Center, and other web publications

Member - DW Task Force for WaSP

# Overview

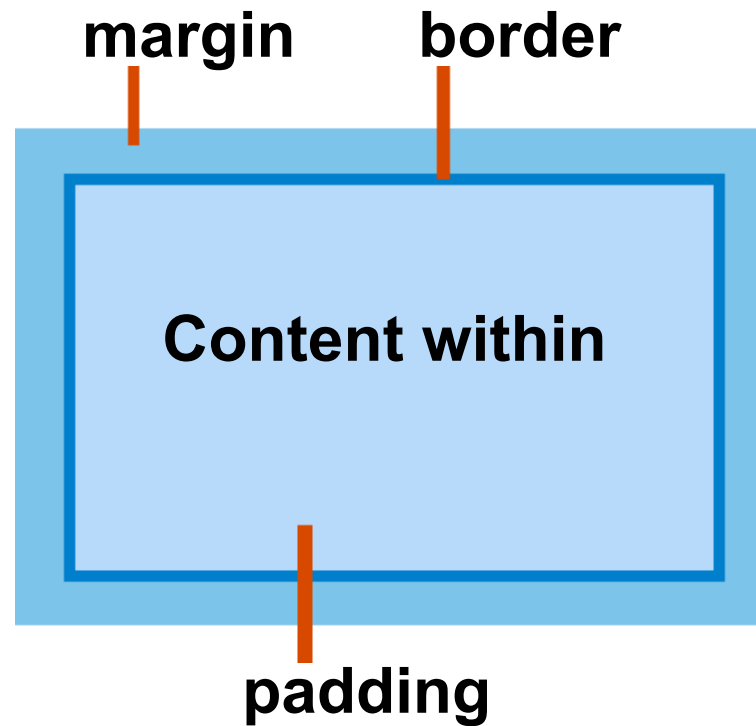
- Absolute Positioning VS Floating
- Clearing Floats
- Faux columns
- Descendant Selector tricks
- Opacity
- Splitting images for reuse

# Overview

- Using images for negative space
- Multiple backgrounds & wrappers
- Using Negative Margins
- Separating CSS into separate sheets & directories
- Common bugs and how to swat them

# Quick Review

- What is the Box Model?



# Quick Review

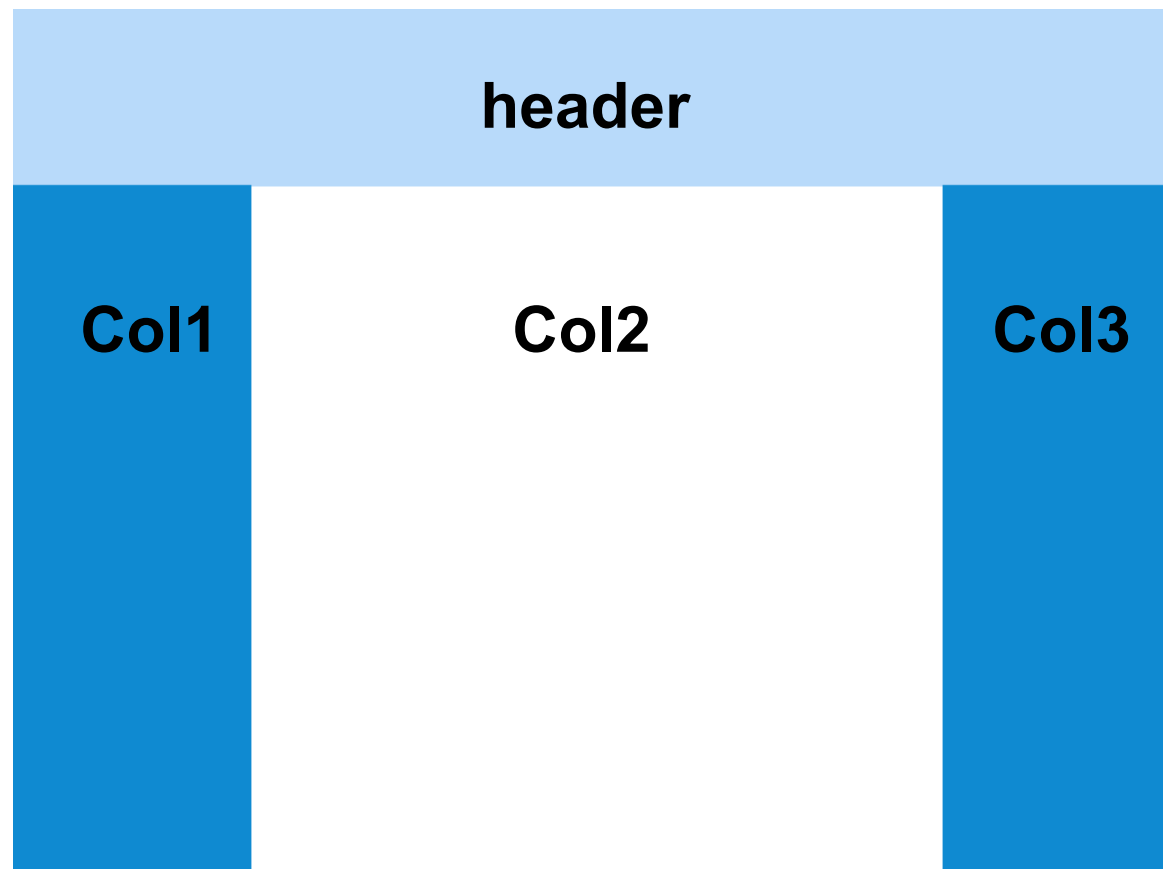
- What is an inline or block element?
- What is meant by the “flow of the document?”
- What is positioning?
  - Static
  - Relative
  - Absolute
  - Fixed

# Quick Review

- What is a descendant selector?
  - `#nav a:link`
  - `#content .pod h1`
  - `ul ul li`
- How do you write efficient CSS?
  - Class vs. ID
  - Avoid classitis using type and descendant selectors
  - Using shorthand

# Three Column Layout

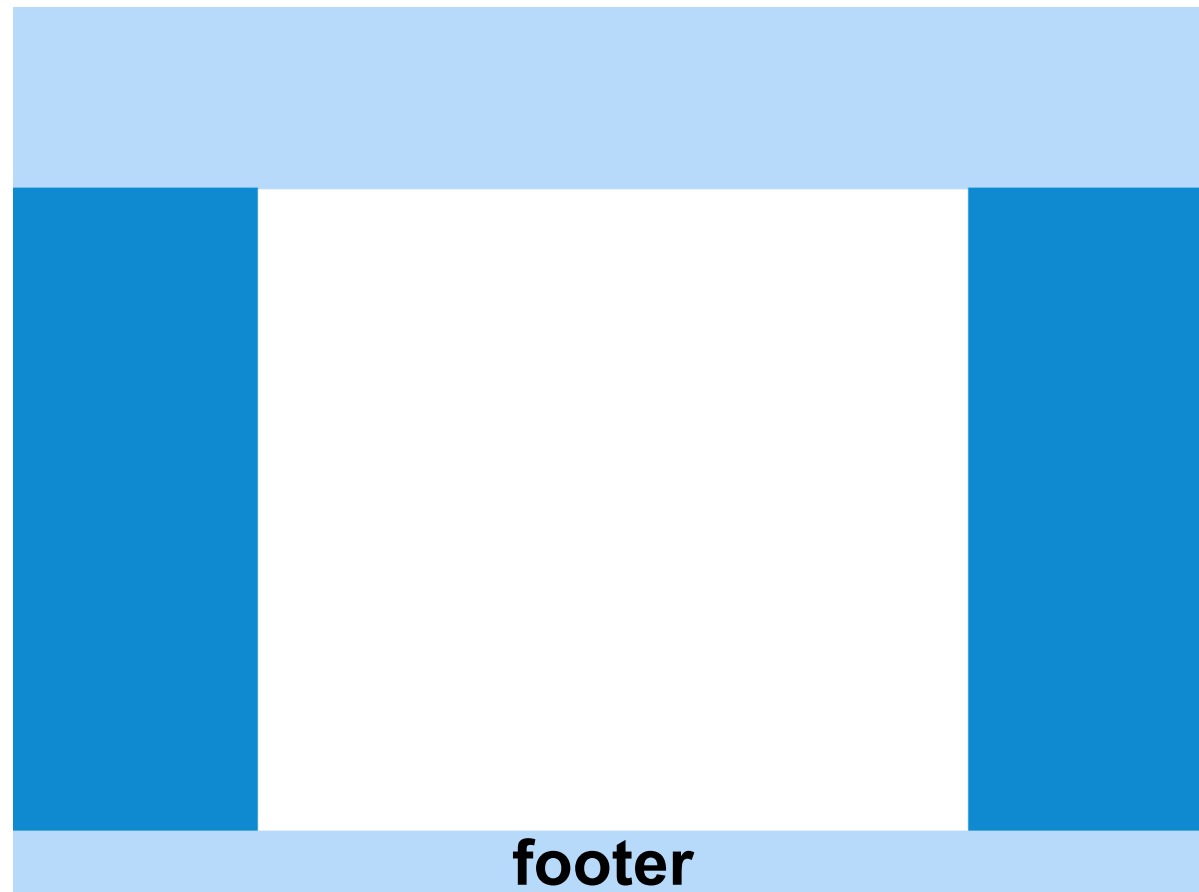
- Basic 3 column layout





# Add the Footer

- How should footer be added?



# Positioning

- Demonstration of Absolute vs Relative Positioning
  - Add content
  - Increase text size

# Making it Flow

- Faux columns
- Float order
- Clearing floats

# Real World Examples - PopStick

- Faux columns, opacity & multiple wrappers

The screenshot displays the PopStick website with a header featuring the logo and navigation links. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column contains a paragraph about PopStick's commitment to Imagination & Development. The middle column features a headline about three dedicated practice areas. The right column contains three sub-sections: POPstick Focus, POPstick Outburst, and SongSync, each with a brief description and a 'Visit Site' link. The layout uses a combination of solid and semi-transparent wrappers to create a complex, layered visual effect.

**POPstick** Imagination & Development

| Home | About | Team | **News** | Contact |

Driven by a commitment to Imagination & Development.

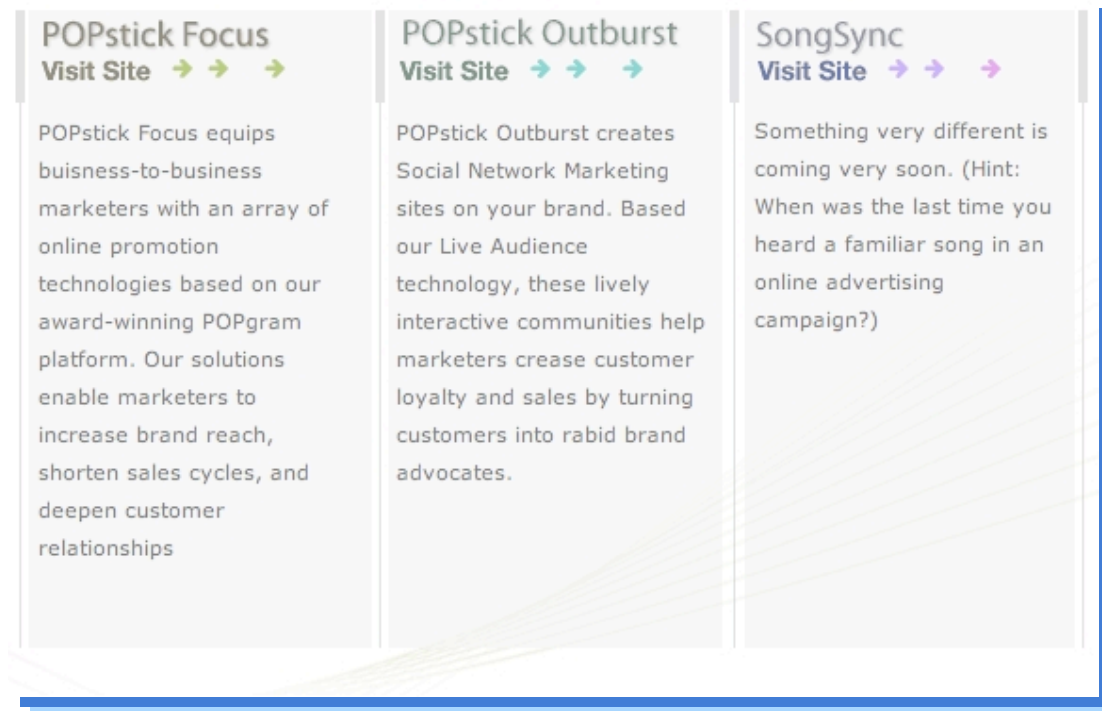
POPstick builds new media solutions for contemporary marketing and communications challenges. In 1998, POPstick pioneered the industry's best-known rich media marketing application, the POPgram. Today we continue to break new ground with a host of revolutionary solutions for marketing driven technology, entertainment and consumer products companies. We bring our technologies and services to market through several dedicated practices, which are located throughout the United States.

**POPstick brings its solutions to market through three dedicated practice areas.**  
Visit these sites to experience each one for yourself.

POPstick Focus Visit Site → → →	POPstick Outburst Visit Site → → →	SongSync Visit Site → → →
POPstick Focus equips business-to-business marketers with an array of online promotion technologies based on our award-winning POPgram platform. Our solutions enable marketers to increase brand reach, shorten sales cycles, and deepen customer relationships	POPstick Outburst creates Social Network Marketing sites on your brand. Based on our Live Audience technology, these lively interactive communities help marketers create customer loyalty and sales by turning customers into rabid brand advocates.	Something very different is coming very soon. (Hint: When was the last time you heard a familiar song in an online advertising campaign?)

# Real World Examples - PopStick

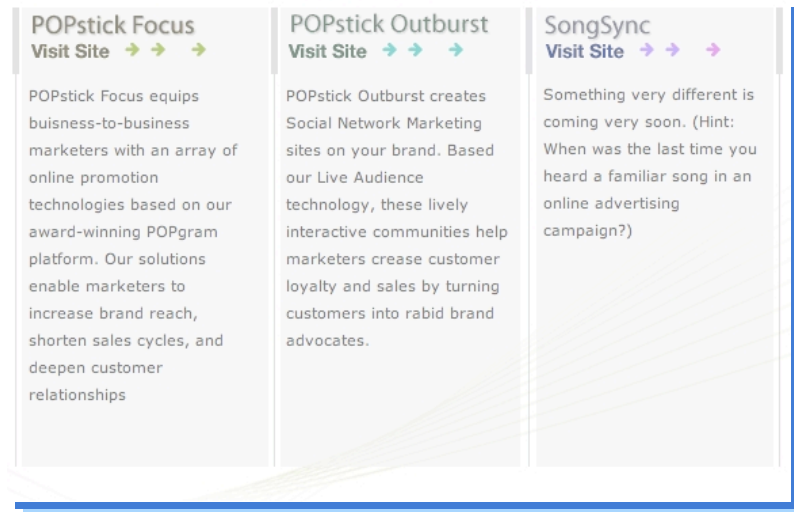
- Faux columns, opacity & multiple wrappers





# Multiple Wrappers - CSS

```
#mostOuter {  
    background: #FFF url(assets/most_outer.gif) repeat-y left top; /* the narrow  
    lines and boxes */  
    margin-top: 25px;  
}  
  
#outerBox {  
    background: url(assets/outer_box.gif) no-repeat left top; /* Shows the thicker  
    grey bars */  
    position: relative;  
}  
  
#boxContainer {  
    width: 620px;  
}  
  
#boxContainer div {  
    float: left;  
    width: 165px;  
    padding: 3px 0 10px 15px;  
    margin: 0 10px 0 0;  
}
```



# Opacity - CSS

```
#mostOuter {  
  
    background: #FFF url(assets/most_outer.gif) repeat-y left top;  
    /* the narrow lines and boxes */  
  
    margin-top: 25px;  
  
    position: relative; /* forces the moz opacity to work */  
  
    filter: alpha(opacity=80); /* IE opacity */  
  
    -moz-opacity: 0.80; /* mozilla opacity */  
  
    opacity: 0.8; /* CSS3 opacity */ }  
  
/* forces the proprietary alpha filter to work in IE */  
  
* html #mostOuter {  
  
    height: 1%  
  
}  
  
/* end hack */
```





# Real World Examples - Anteo

- Multiple wrappers, sIFR & split backgrounds



# Real World Examples - Anteo

- Multiple wrappers

## Rollovers





# Real World Examples - Anteo

- sIFR
  - Use any font - even when only on your machine
  - Uses JavaScript and Flash - falls back to pure text/CSS
  - Create Flash swf of a dynamic alphabet
  - Insert JavaScript, CSS and tune



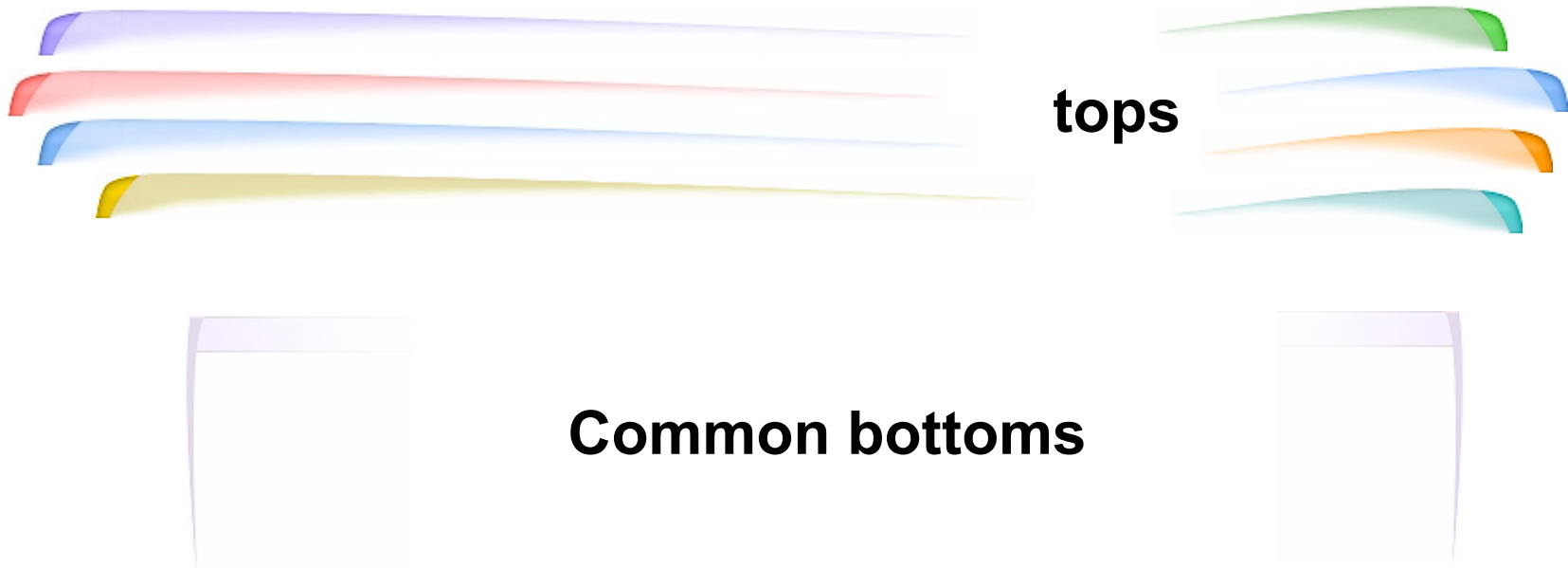
**Sari Medium - sIFR**



**Helvetica - CSS**

# Real World Examples - Anteo

- Split backgrounds



# Split Backgrounds

```
<div id="content">

  <div id="redpod"> <!-- places colored top -->

    <div id="pod"> <!-- used on every pod -->

      <h1>size of header</h1>

      <p>Content of the pod</p>

      <br class="brclear" />

    </div> <!-- closes pod -->

  </div> <!-- closes redpod -->

</div> <!-- closes content -->
```

## SUBLEVEL LINK TITLE

### HEADLINE TITLE

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna link. Eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore.

# Real World Examples - FlexRight

- Local CSS, dependant selectors and AP divs



- Introduction >
- Health Care >
- Dependent Care >
- Commuter Assist >
- I'm Interested >

Sounds great, I'd like to find out the specifics for my business.  
Please contact me >

## FlexRight Offers Three Health Care Options:

### FlexRight MedFlex Account (FSA)

These plans, often called cafeteria plans, flex plans or Section 125, have been available longer than the other flexible benefit options, but still have a strong appeal. With the right plan design, they can be used in combination with some of the newer options like health reimbursement arrangements (HRA) or health savings accounts (HSA). FlexRight offers three Flexible Spending Account options:

1. Pre-Tax Premium Payment
2. MedFlex Account

### Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA)

An HRA account is funded by the employer and is used to pay for qualified healthcare-related expenses. The reimbursements are not taxable to the employee and are tax deductible for the employer. The most common HRA is in combination with a higher deductible health plan. The benefits from lower premium cost, but the higher deductible cost to the employee is cushioned with HRA dollars. [More...](#)



- Introduction >
- Why FlexRight? >
- About Us >
- Contact Us >

## About FlexRight

FlexRight is a service of Workable Solutions, Inc., a third-party administrator based in Orlando, Florida. Workable Solutions has been providing innovative benefit solutions to employers and their employees since 1997.

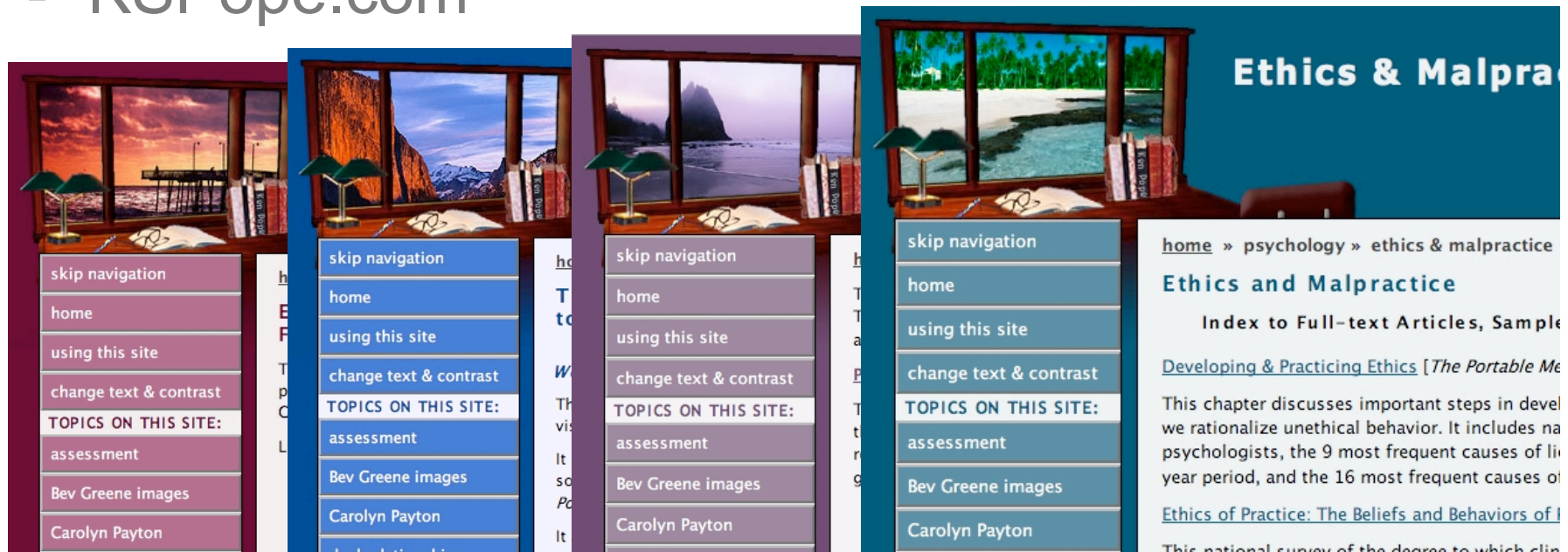
FlexRight is unique. While a lot of administrators offer flexible benefit products, FlexRight actually makes them work. We have the right combination of plan options, automated tools and streamlined processes to make consumer-driven benefits a real, affordable choice, no matter how big or small your company may be.

The right plans, with the right tools, at the right price. Real employee benefits that actually save the employer money too!



# Local CSS

- Site's CSS is broken into two pages
  - flex.css (main structure and all universal selectors)
  - local.css (placed in individual directories - color only)
- KSPope.com





# Dependant Selectors (on Body Element)

- Create two or three columns

```
<body class="two">
```

```
#faux {
```

```
    background: url(images/divider.gif) repeat-y 498px 0px;
```

```
    margin: 25px 0;
```

```
}
```

```
body.two #faux {
```

```
    background: url(none);
```

```
}
```

```
body.two #callout {
```

```
    display:none;
```

```
}
```

# Descendant Selectors (on Body Element)

- Navigation/Site section indicator (you are here)

```
<body id="employer" class="two">
```

```
body#employer #employerlnk a {  
    /*selectors for button */  
}
```

- Pay attention to specificity
  - #about .about a
  - body#aboutpg #nav li#aboutlnk a

- There are many creative, powerful uses for descendant selectors

# Absolutely Positioned (AP) divs

- AP elements
  - should be used sparingly and appropriately
  - should rarely contain resizable content like text
  - should not be routinely styled inline (DW layers)
  - are positioned within the last positioned parent (relative)



[Account Login](#) | [Home](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact Us](#)

RIGHT FOR EMPLOYEES

RIGHT FOR EMPLOYERS

FLEXRIGHT ADVANTAGE

- Navigation bar
  - Dual wrappers for “end caps”
  - grey color between as background color
  - logo placed over the bar as an AP image

# Common Bugs and Coding Issues

- Is it really a bug?
- Use Tag selector & CSS Styles panel
  - Click into element and select it with the tag selector
  - View the properties and rules panes of the CSS panel for a value farther up the cascade that overrides your desired outcome (hover to view specificity)
- Validate your HTML and CSS to verify they are to standards with no errors
  - It's simpler to code to standards and hack as needed for IE

# Ways to Debug

- Use div visualization feature
  - Place background colors on each div
  - Show box model
- Use individual browser extensions to visualize
  - Firefox -- Chris Pederick's Web Developer's Toolbar
  - Internet Explorer -- Developer Toolbar (beta)
  - Safari -
- Create a test case with only the basic divs

# Most Common Bugs

- IE - Float Drop due to 3px bug or doubling margins (star filter)
- List white space, and other *unaccounted for* white space differences (strip white space - tags touching)
- IE - requires a container to have dimensions/layout (Holly hack) -- <http://positioniseverything.net> for IE PC info
- IE Mac - various issues - many relating to dimensions (tan hack) -- <http://www.l-c-n.com> for IE Mac info
- Mozilla-based - issue with margin collapse - protruding from a container causing extra space (remove top and/or bottom margins of element inside)

# Magic Bullets - sometimes

- Add position: relative; to the element
- Use the Holly hack

```
/* Hides from IE5-mac */  
* html .buggybox {height: 1%;}  
/* End hide from IE5-mac */
```

- Create your own bug snippets (or download from CMX)

# Summary

- Take advantage of the flow of the document  
Go with the flow -- not against it
- Use creative methods of display:
  - Multiple divs and backgrounds
  - Negative margins
  - Faux backgrounds
  - Negative space
  - Opacity
  - Break-up CSS and background images
  - Get to know sIFR
- Validate pages and be sure it's a bug with DW's CSS panel and visualization features
- Use snippets to speed up work



# Resources

- Position is Everything  
<http://www.positioniseverything.net/>
- Mac IE 5: oddities  
<http://l-c-n.com/IE5tests/>
- Community MX  
<http://communitymx.com/>
- CSS Zen Garden  
<http://csszengarden.com/>
- W3Conversions  
<http://w3conversions.com/>
- sIFR Information  
<http://mikeindustries.com/sifr/>



Thank you.

Ideas in motion.



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# Real World Examples - Wild Spirit Gallery

- Negative margins



# Real World Examples - Wild Spirit Gallery

- Negative margins
  - Must have positioning
  - Goes in the opposite direction from a normal margin
  - `margin-top: -10px;` pulls the element up 10px





# Negative Margins - CSS

```
#welcome {  
    margin: 1.4em 0 0;  
    border-top: 1px solid #5D3528;  
}  
  
#welcome .pod {  
    background: #5D3528 url(images/pod_gradient.jpg) repeat-y top right;  
    width: 217px;  
    padding: 0 0 20px 10px;  
    margin-top: -1.6em; /* this pulls the pod up so that the lines are aligned */  
    position: relative; /* this allows the negative margin */  
}  
  
#welcome .podtext {  
    float: right;  
    width: 245px;  
}  
  
#welcome h1 {  
    border-bottom: 1px solid #FFF; /* followed by more values ... */
```