

Preparing Your Content for Takeoff with CSS

Stephanie Sullivan



Agenda

- ▶ Content – the Basics
- ▶ Design and Planning
- ▶ Semantic HTML
- ▶ CSS Principles

Stephanie Sullivan

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- ▶ Adobe Community Expert
- ▶ Co-Lead Adobe Task Force for Web Standards Project (WaSP)
- ▶ Partner - CommunityMX.com - web tutorial site
- ▶ Author - DW MX 2004 Magic, Web Developer's & Designer's Journal (formerly MXDJ), Adobe's DevNet Center, and other web publications
- ▶ List Mom for WebWeavers & moderator for SEM 2.0
- ▶ Coming soon - Mastering CSS with Dreamweaver CS3 by New Riders - authored with Adobe's Greg Rewis
- ▶ Contact - stef@w3conversions.com

Content – The Basics



What is a Web Site?

- ▶ Marketing content
- ▶ Product information and sales
- ▶ Informational content
- ▶ The web site **IS** its content

The Importance of Content

- ▶ The single biggest headache in CSS based design is caused by the “wrong” workflow
- ▶ You should **always** begin with the content
- ▶ The actual design should focus on **presenting** the content - not fitting the content into the design

Content and SEO

- ▶ Spiders crawling the web are looking for words
- ▶ Key words and search terms, relating to your client's content, should be planned from the outset and used in:
 - ▶ Title element
 - ▶ Headings
 - ▶ Main text (Don't use pronouns for keywords)
- ▶ Site map should be planned with key search terms in mind

Planning and Mark up



Logical Markup

- ▶ Content should be marked up relating to its inherent meaning
- ▶ A heading should be an h1, h2, h3, h4...
- ▶ Text should be in P elements
- ▶ Lists should be used (ordered, unordered and definition)
- ▶ This is called semantic markup. It's simply the logical meaning of the element itself.

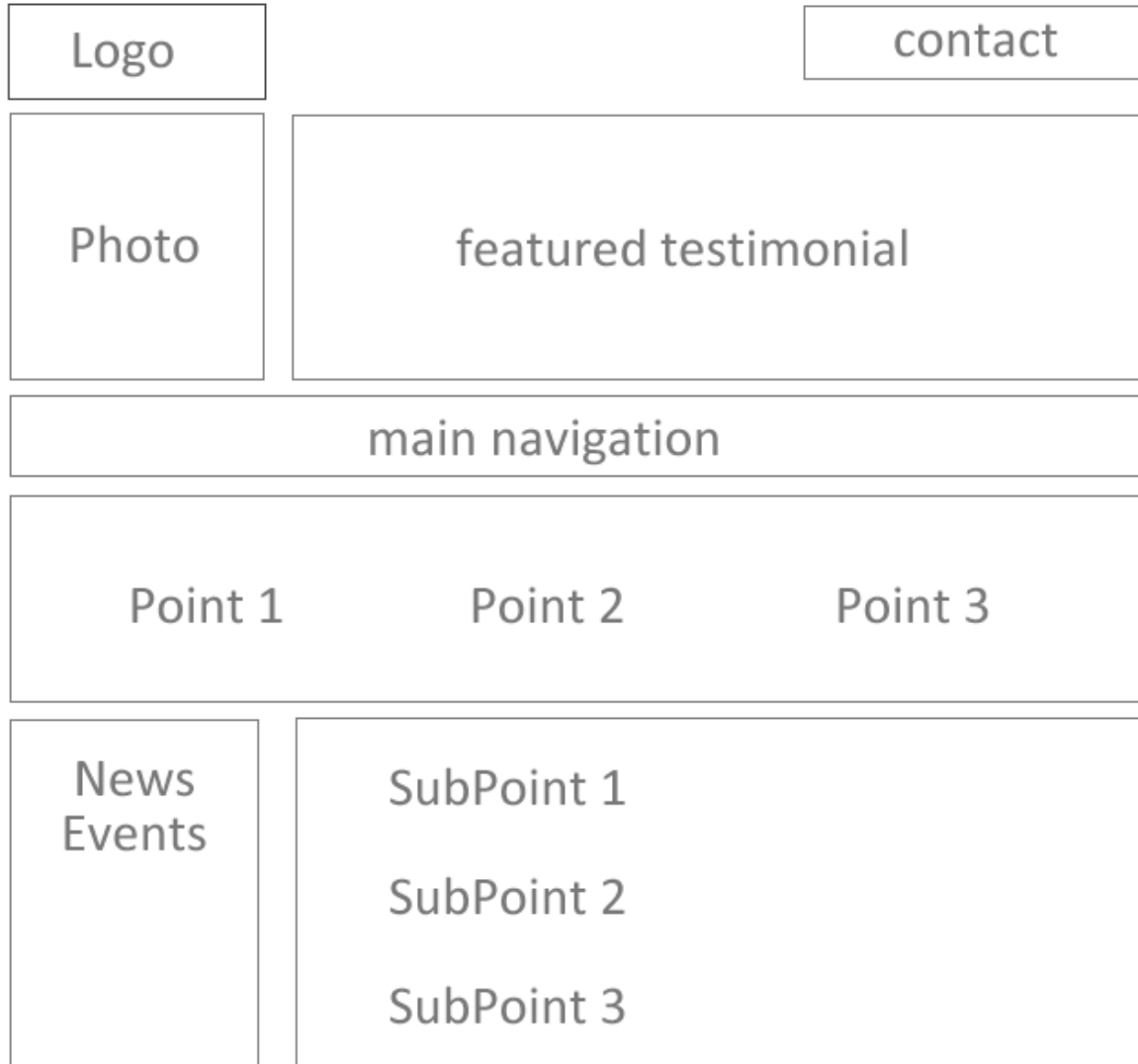
Document Flow

- ▶ The “flow” is the natural order of occurrence of the elements within the HTML
- ▶ When working with CSS for page layout, the document flow impacts the visual position of page elements – depending upon the method of positioning
- ▶ Don't fight the flow, use it!

Create a Wireframe

- ▶ Decide how to emphasize key content
- ▶ Be logical and consider usability and accessibility

WireFrame the Content



Final Design



Stephanie Sullivan educated us on best practices in web design, helped us understand how real users develop websites, and is a valuable resource in our ongoing development.

— Vic Mitnick, Adobe Systems

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6p - 9p: Adobe CS3 and CSS
Birmingham, AL

4/26

Atlanta User Group
7p - 9p: CSS with Dreamweaver CS3

5/23

Adobe Live Germany
CSS with Dreamweaver CS3
Cologne, Germany

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Multi-Mania
CSS with Dreamweaver CS3
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WE'RE HERE TO HELP

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Dreamweaver CS3 is Adobe's brand spanking new version that takes advantage of CSS like never before. Whether you're a beginner or more advanced, this upcoming book from the prestigious publisher New Riders' "Voices That Matter" series is a must-have. It uses hands-on projects and Dreamweaver's unique new CSS layouts to make working with CSS a breeze. Authored by Stephanie Sullivan, recognized by the worldwide web community as a CSS/HTML and

Cascading Style Sheets The Real Power



CSS Primer

- ▶ There are three main types of rules (or selectors)

- ▶ Type

- Defines the appearance of every instance of a given element

```
h1 {  
  font: bold 1.4em Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;  
}
```

- ▶ Class

- Defines the appearance of the element to which it is assigned (can be used repeatedly)

```
.content {  
  font-size: 1em;  
  margin-right: 12px;  
  margin-left: 12px;  
}
```

- ▶ ID

- Defines the appearance of a unique element on the page

```
#navigation {  
  background-color: #999999;  
  width: 750px;  
  border: 1px solid #000000;  
}
```

- ▶ Each rule consists of a selector name, a pair of curly brackets and at least one property:value declaration

Writing Efficient CSS

- ▶ What makes CSS more efficient?
 - ▶ Class vs ID
 - ▶ Avoid “classitis” by using type and descendant selectors
 - ▶ Use shorthand

- ▶ What is a descendant selector?
 - ▶ `#nav a:link`
 - ▶ `#content .pod h1`
 - ▶ `ul ul li`

Divide the Design

- ▶ Break the design into divs (divisions)



The screenshot displays the W3Conversions website with a clear grid structure. The header includes the logo, navigation links (CONTACT, BLOG), and a quote from Vic Mitnick of Adobe Systems. Below the header is a purple navigation bar with links for Home, Services, Clients, Accessibility, Resources, and About Us. The main content area is divided into several sections: three columns of service cards (Corporate Training, Clean Up Your Code, Dazzle Your Audience), a yellow 'NEWS & EVENTS' section with a list of upcoming events, and a light blue 'WE'RE HERE TO HELP' section with a sub-section 'WE WROTE THE BOOK'.

W3Conversions CONTACT BLOG
"DREAMING OF A BETTER WEB?"
STANDARDS, ACCESSIBILITY, TRAINING

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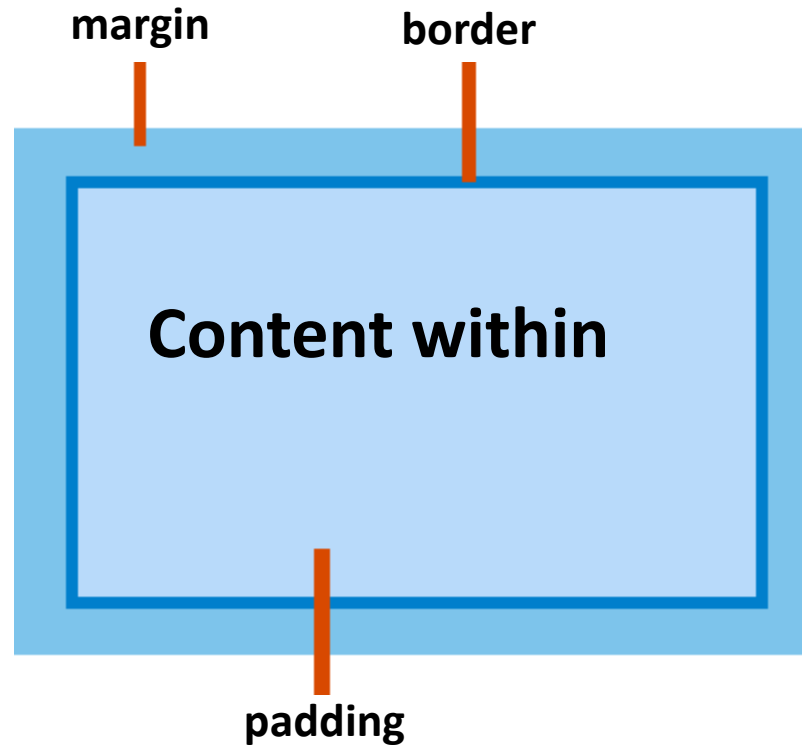
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Understanding the Box Model





A quick demonstration of the Box Model

Types of Positioning

- ▶ The four types of positioning available using CSS:

Static

- The default location of the element in the document flow

Relative

- The element's position is relative to its position in the document flow

Absolute

- A “XY” coordinate based upon its parent container

Fixed

- A “XY” coordinate based on the viewport



A quick demonstration of Positioning

Principles of Floating

- ▶ A float must be given a width
- ▶ A float must be given a directional value of left or right (there is no top or bottom)
- ▶ If you want a float to appear alongside another element, it must precede that element in the source order of the document
- ▶ A float never covers text or inline images
- ▶ Avoid using a width on a block element following a float; use a margin on the same side of the float instead
- ▶ Since a float is taken "out of the flow" of the document, a float inside another container must be cleared in order for the parent container to enclose it properly



A quick demonstration of Floating

Beware of Float Drop

- ▶ Evident when one div starts below the level of the div next to it

Causes:

- ▶ Improper math on your columns
- ▶ An element, like an image, that is wider than can fit in the space provided. The div will move down until it can fit next to the floats.
- ▶ 3px text jog in Internet Explorer (fixed by giving the element `hasLayout`)

Busting Bugs and Coding Problems

- ▶ Is it really a bug?
- ▶ Could it be a cascade issue?
- ▶ Validate your HTML and CSS to verify they are to standards with no errors
- ▶ It's simpler to code to standards (using a browser like Firefox to test along the way) and hack as needed for IE

Q&A



Resources

- ▶ www.w3conversions.com
(my personal site - resources page)
- ▶ www.communitymx.com
(over 2,100 tutorials)
- ▶ www.adobe.com/go/cssadvisor
(community-fed bug wiki)