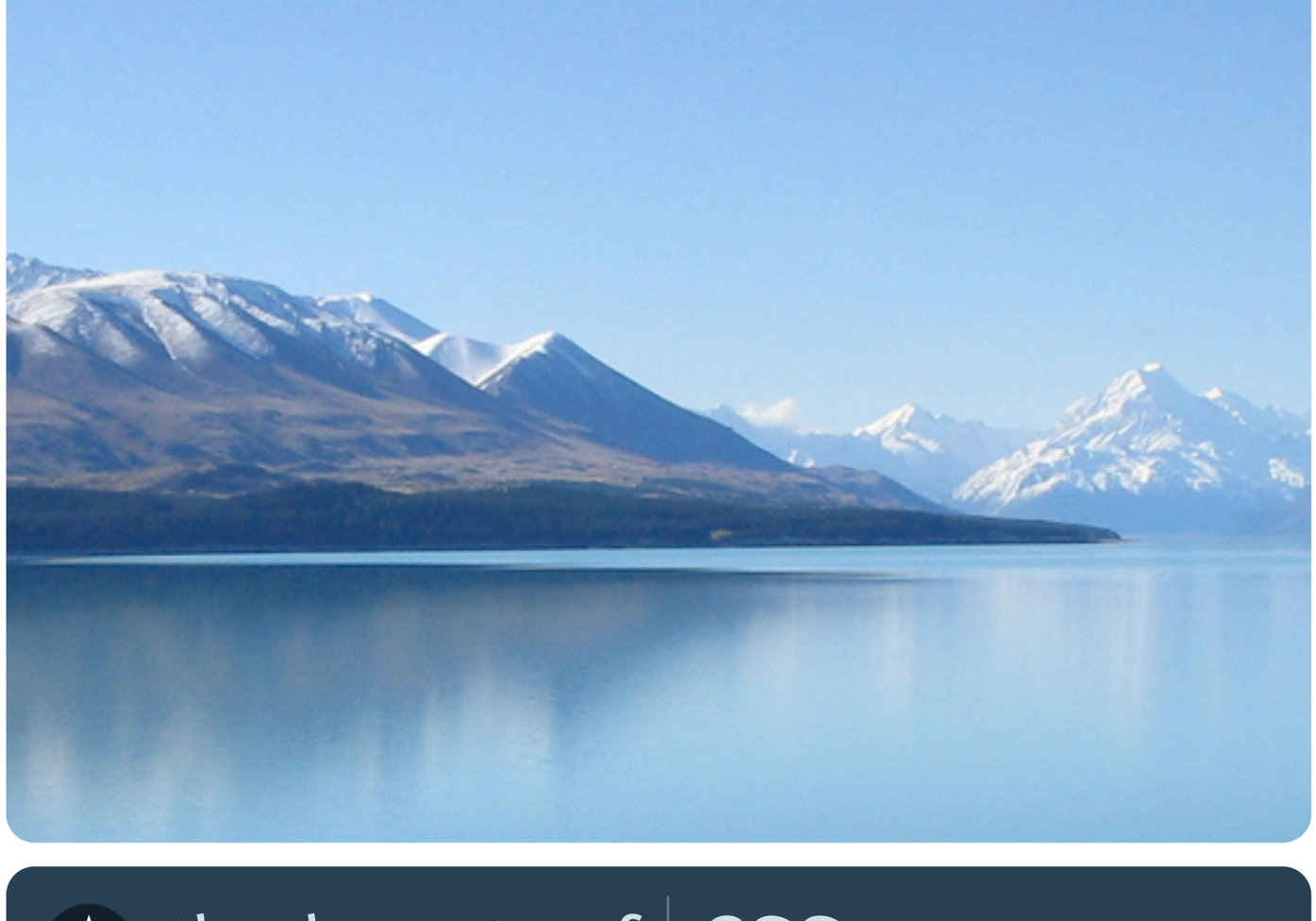

the beauty of | CSS

9 june 2005

douglas bowman

@media | london

Beauty by design

As a standard

stan·dard

n. something, such as a practice or a product, that is widely recognized or employed, especially because of its excellence

adj. regularly used, widely available or supplied

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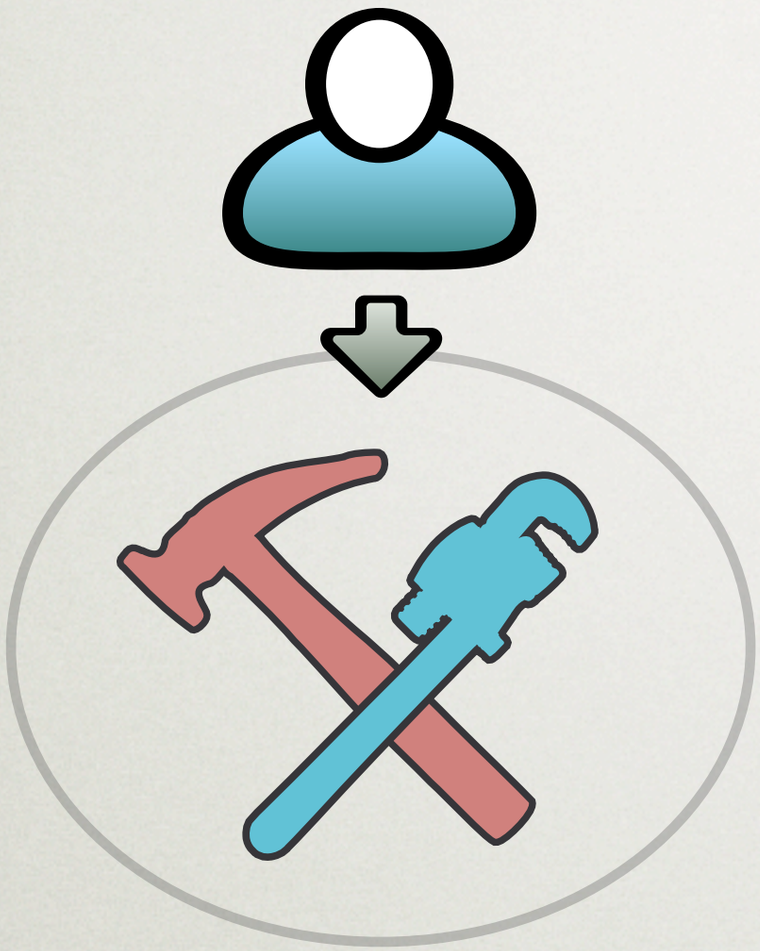
Benefits those who



build the tools

build **WITH** the tools

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ERROR!

This DVD is not compatible with your TV.

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WEGA™ HDTV flat-panel display.

MATT DAMON IS JASON BOURNE

THE BOURNE SUPREMACY

UNIVERSAL

parallel with nature

structure

ecosystem

Early days

19 December 2002

[10 am]

Our new Titanium **PowerBook** arrived yesterday. Enough said.

Not just another XHTML/CSS site launch

Creative Commons hopes to bring sanity to the marketplace of ideas—a marketplace hobbled by intellectual property laws that discourage sharing and collaboration, reward corporations rather than artists, and chiefly exist to insure that no lawyer will ever go hungry in America. Creative Commons offers **licenses** that let you "share with the world while protecting yourself." An **animated short** explains why the group exists and how its licenses can help creative people publish securely. Oh, yeah, and the simple yet attractive site was created in XHTML and CSS, like any smart new site ought to be. :::

18 December 2002

[2 pm | 11 am]

My Glamorous Life **Number 76** has generated heaps of reader mail, probably because it explicitly requested "no mail."

Design this: the W3C Remix

WThRemix challenges designers, coders, and IAs to create a redesign for the **W3C** homepage that is appropriately branded, intuitively navigable, organizes its content with the user in mind, and looks great—in other words, a W3C that will *inspire* people who create websites. We urge you to read about and support this contest

Current Glamor:
Smoke Out

Latest Essential:
When Bad Ideas Go Wrong

Recent ALA:
Flexible Layouts with CSS — fluid grids that work. Plus **Flash Satay**. Have your Flash and standards, too.

Recent launch: **Fox Searchlight Pictures** (with Hillman Curtis)

Recent interview:
SXSW Tech Report

The independent content producer refuses to die.

Hide/Show Relevant Externals.

Relevant Externals:

20 things

Eric A. Meyer

eric@meyerweb.com

The professional bio:

> Eric A. Meyer has been working with the Web since late 1993. He is currently employed as a Standards Evangelist with Netscape Communications while living in Cleveland, Ohio, which is a much nicer city than you've been led to believe. A graduate of and former Webmaster for Case Western Reserve University, Eric coordinated the authoring and creation of the W3C's CSS Test Suite and has recently been pushing the limits of CSS-based design as hard as he can on his site css/edge and acting as List Chaperone of the highly active `css-discuss` mailing list. Author of "Cascading Style Sheets: The Definitive Guide" (O'Reilly & Associates) and "CSS2.0 Programmer's Reference" (Osborne/McGraw-Hill) and the fairly well-known CSS Browser Compatibility Charts, Eric speaks at a variety of conferences on the subject of standards, CSS use, and Web design. He is also the host of "Your Father's Oldsmobile," a weekly Big Band-era radio show heard on WRUW 91.1-FM in Cleveland. When not otherwise busy, Eric is usually bothering his wife Kat in some fashion.

Like it says on my résumé, I've been a member of the information technology departments of a consulting firm, a university, a law publishing firm, and a pharmaceuticals company (that was from most to least recent). I've also been a radio announcer for WRUW-FM 91.1, an amateur actor and theater crewperson, a drummer, and a burger-flipper. I have a deep interest in cinematography, I cook, I read, I listen to a wide range of music, and I have a B.A. in History, as well as minors in astronomy, English, and artificial intelligence. My hair is red, my eyes are blue, and I'm approximately six feet tall.

What keeps me busy? Quite a lot.

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)

Between writing an O'Reilly book on the subject, my articles for *Web Review* and the O'Reilly Network, the CSS browser support charts I maintain, my work with the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), teaching CSS courses for the HTML Writers Guild and others, and general particpation in various CSS forums (including `css-discuss`), I've built up a reputation for knowing a thing or two about CSS.

Speaking

I discovered at some point that I really enjoy travelling to other places, getting up in front of groups of people, and talking about subjects I know well. So far, presentations have happened in the United States, Europe, and Australia. Currently seeking opportunities on the other four continents (maybe the South Pole needs a better Web site!) in addition to your city. Interested? Let's talk.

Writing

This area offers every piece of writing I've ever done and felt comfortable with releasing into the public eye. This includes my many professional articles on the topic of CSS (mostly the series "A Sense of Style"), a smattering of commentary pieces, and bits of what I like to think is humorous writing. Your opinion may differ.

Your Father's Oldsmobile

Every Wednesday morning, I do a two-hour radio show on WRUW-FM 91.1. The show covers music recorded between 1920-1950, roughly speaking, so you can enjoy big band, swing, blues, jazz, and other gems from that period. Thanks to our streaming audio, you can hear the show anywhere in the world-- assuming you're awake between 1200 and 1400 GMT (subtract one hour during American daylight savings time).

navigation

- Eric's page
  - Speaking
  - Writing
  - Books
  - CSS info
  - css/edge
- Kat's page
- Miscellaneous
- site home

presentation

Javascript and cookies necessary

- basic styles
  - grayscale
  - natural
  - lunar sky
  - darkfall
- basic variant
- boxy
- Advanced setup...

Members of the CSS Samurai

John Allsopp

David Baron

Roland Eriksson

Todd Fahrner

Ken Gunderson

Ian Hickson

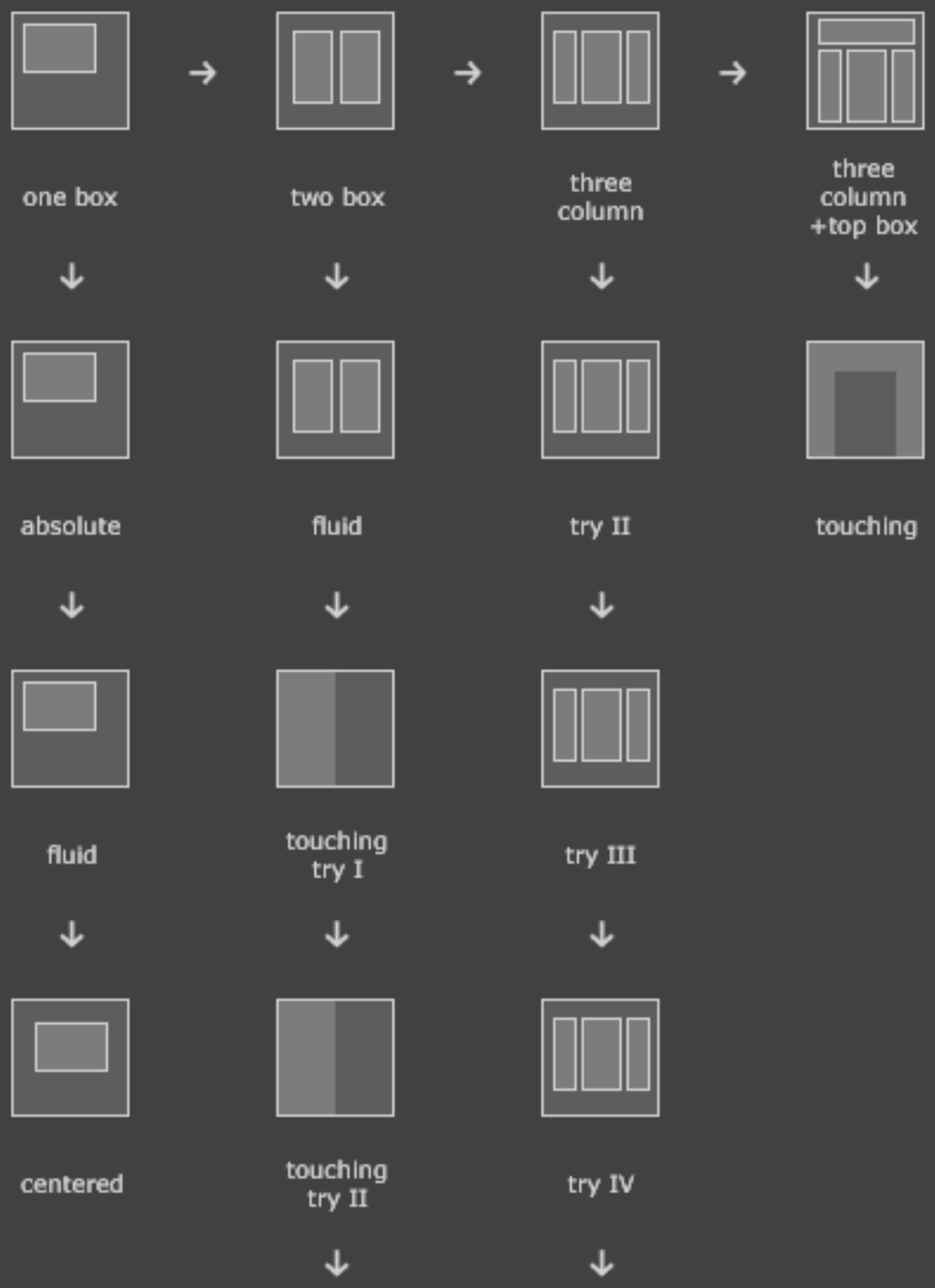
Braden McDaniel

Eric Meyer

Liam Quinn

Sue Sims

You may note that many of us are involved in one way or another with the various companies whose browsers we review. It would be sensible, therefore, to question the impartiality of the Samurai. However, you may rest assured


one box
two box
three column
three column +top box
absolute
fluid
try II
touching
fluid
touching try I
try III
centered
touching try II
try IV

Links

A List Apart
Greasy Skillet
Roy Rosenow
SwankyAl
Fake Link One
Nothing Here
Links Nowhere
Fake Link Four
Fifth Fake Link

Flanking Menus

With the popularity of three column layouts, this layout is bound to be useful to many. You may have seen this technique used at **dynamic ribbon device**. In fact, this "flanking menus" technique was devised by BlueRobot for that site. Surprisingly, the technique has caused quite a bit of talk. The concept is simple: a content box with large margins is flanked by two additional (menu) boxes.

An important benefit of this technique is the order of elements in the HTML source. Here, the order is essentially content, menu one, menu two. For old browsers, text-only browsers, screen-readers, and many alternative devices, this means that the content is displayed before the menus. And, after all, most users visit a page for its content.

Known Issues

This layout fails in IE4.5/Mac. That browser has poor support for CSS absolute positioning, yet it recognizes and executes the CSS @import statement used to hide CSS from broken browsers. Currently, there is no known solution.

< Return to the Layout Reservoir :: **View the CSS**

A Call To Action

Much effort has been made to ensure that the layouts in the BlueRobot Layout Reservoir appear as intended in CSS2 compliant browsers. The content should be viewable, though unstyled, in other web browsers. If you encounter a problem that is not listed as a known issue, I am most likely not aware of it. *Please* **email me** a heads-up. Your help will benefit the other five or six people who visit this site.

LAYOUT TECHNIQUES: 3 columns, the holy grail

leftcontent

```
#leftcontent {
position: absolute;
left:10px;
top:50px;
width:200px;
background:#fff;
border:1px solid #000;
        }
```

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ulliam corper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem veleum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel willum lunombro dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et iusto odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duis dolore te feugait nulla facilisi.

centercontent

```
#centercontent {
background:#fff;
margin-left: 199px;
margin-right:199px;
border:1px solid #000;
voice-family: "\"}\"";
voice-family: inherit;
margin-left: 201px;
margin-right:201px;
        }
html>body #centercontent {
margin-left: 201px;
margin-right:201px;
        }
```

This is the most elegant technique and perhaps the most sought after layout: a 3 column page with a fluid center column. Easy to understand, easy to implement. I first saw this layout at **dynamic ribbon device** and have since learned that the sweet CSS came from Rob Chandanais of **BlueRobot**. Owen also made a very nice **tutorial** using this layout technique.

Read about the IE5x PC workaround in use on this page **here**.

Scroll down for the source.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ulliam corper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem veleum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel willum lunombro dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et iusto odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duis dolore te feugait nulla facilisi.

Li Europan lingues es membres del sam familie. Lor separat existentie es un myth. Por scientie, musica, sport etc., li tot Europa usa li sam vocabularium. Li lingues differe solmen in li grammatica, li pronunciation e li plu commun vocabules. Omnicos directe al desirabilit‡ de un nov lingua franca: on refusa continuar payar custosi traductores. It solmen va esser necessi far uniform grammatica, pronunciation e plu sommun paroles.

rightcontent

```
#rightcontent {
position: absolute;
right:10px;
top:50px;
width:200px;
background:#fff;
border:1px solid #000;
        }
```

This page is part of **CSS Layout Techniques**, a resource for web developers and designers.

Other Layout Techniques:
3 columns, the holy grail
2 columns, ALA style
4 columns, all fluid
3 columns, all fluid
static width and centered
nested float

Does it **validate**?

QUOTE MARKS

"This is a really weird case."
— An analyst opines on a Supreme Court case that pits cable companies against third-party ISPs.

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To the moon, and beyond

Culture MORE>

Cult of Mac
Apple iDolatry

On The Road - Great River Road
Travels in technology.

Joystick
Games, games, games

DAT's Entertainment
Not the same old song and dance

Business MORE>

TOP STORIES

updated 2:00 a.m. Dec. 4, 2004 PT NEWS ARCHIVE>

Change Is in the Air

Weather Data for the Masses

The U.S. government's weather data is now available in a more friendly XML format, so everyone can make use of it. By Daniel Terdiman.

Napster Star Changes His Tune

Napster creator Shawn Fanning is trying to make peace with the music industry. His newest venture will help the record labels and peer-to-peer networks work together to create new digital music businesses. By Katie Dean.

Wired Tools 2004

The coolest geek shopping list ever: 129 of the best screens, cams, phones, games and gadgets of the year, from *Wired* magazine.

Navy Probes New Iraq Photos

An online photo album showing Navy SEALS with Iraqi prisoners prompts an investigation. A military prosecutor says they're simply evidence of juvenile behavior, but they may violate the Geneva Convention, which prohibits souvenir photos of prisoners of war.

How Long Is Your Digital Trail?

Sex Drive » Relationships in the information age work best when you exercise restraint and courtesy. Especially after you break up. Commentary by Regina Lynn.

Final Round in Cable-ISP Fight

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear whether cable operators must give access to their lines to third-party ISPs.

CLICK OR MISS:

Fun for the Kiddies
Cryptographic coloring books, drug-sniffing dog cartoons and spy-satellite sing-alongs are what you'll find on child-oriented government sites.

HOT OFF THE WIRE

Breaking news from AP and Reuters

Israel, Egypt Swap Prisoners in Sign of Warmer Ties

Report: Musharraf Says Bin Laden Trail Has Gone Cold

Insurgents Kill 23 Iraqis Countrywide

Romania Demands U.S. Marine Return to Face Trial

Gunmen Kill 17 Iraqis in Attack on Buses

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Readers on how everyone is digital ... fears of passport chips ... games in the metaverse ... and more.

Corrections
Recent revisions to our articles.

FURTHERMORE

CINNAMON
INTERACTIVE

Onze core business is websites.
Onze focus ligt op communicatie.
Onze kracht zit in *design.*

We bouwen gebruiksvriendelijke, toegankelijke websites die uw boodschap overbrengen.

Cinnamon (kaneel) staat voor een kleine toevoeging die een groot verschil maakt in de smaak. Cinnamon Interactive richt zich op de elementen van webdesign die de grootste verschillen maken op de websites van haar opdrachtgevers.

Website Re:d Design gelanceerd

Re:d Design is een ontwerpbureau dat zich in hoofdzaak richt op architectuur, stedenbouw en interieur. Re:d Design liet enkele jaren geleden al een site ontwerpen en uitvoeren door Cinnamon, en besloot dat het nu tijd was om nog meer met hun site te gaan doen.
Lees meer...

Cinnamon en Advies.overheid geven een presentatie op het symposium 'Openheid in praktijk'

Cinnamon is uitgenodigd om samen met AdviesOverheid.nl te spreken op het symposium 'Openheid in de praktijk', gehouden op 4 november in het World Trade Center in Rotterdam. Het symposium wordt georganiseerd door OSOSS. Lees meer...

Art Direction en het Web, Nederlandse versie

Oorspronkelijk gepubliceerd onder de titel "Art Direction and the Web" op *A List Apart*, een internet-magazine voor webdesigners. Cinnamon's creative director Stephen Hay schrijft in dit artikel over de technieken van de art director in relatie tot websites. Lees meer...

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College FB | GamePlan
Scores | RealTime
NBA | Fantasy
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ProRodeo | WNFR
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ESPNDeportes.com
More Sports
SportsNation

Cheers And Jeers

It's No. 1 USC vs. No. 2 Oklahoma for the BCS Championship.

The BCS gave some teams reason to rejoice, but once again provided fuel for its critics' fire. USC and Oklahoma can cheer their Orange Bowl berths, but can't deny also-perfect Auburn got shafted. Only Utah's Fiesta selection won't ignite debate.

• **Vote:** Who'll win? | Orange | Sugar | Fiesta | Rose | Schedule

OUR VOICES

Rashad McCants' performance against UK on Saturday shows he's matured into a polished star.

ESPN.com didn't include Yolanda Paige on its list of the top point guards. Maybe it should have.

Phil Mickelson's Masterful putt ranked first on the Weekly 18's list of golf's best shots of 2004.

INSIDER

MUST READ

Super-Charged Matchups

It's no shock playoff pushes quickened the Week 13 pulse. But few predicted the Chargers' slim defeat of the Broncos would electrify the AFC West. And the Eagles lit up the Packers in what was expected to be a NFC postseason peek.

- Leaders | Fantasy Dozen | Sunday stud
- Steelers at Jaguars (ESPN LIVE!)

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ESPNEWS Headlines

- Falcons fail to clinch South | **Ravens stunned**
- Colts score another 40-plus | **Pennington a lift**
- Aaron on Bonds: No matter what, 'It's wrong'
- NBA clears way for brawl grievance hearing
- Utah's Sanford hired by UNLV | **Meyer's deal**
- Colonials upend No. 12 Terps | **Arizona wins**
- ND women get their kicks winning NCAA title
- Tillman's final tragic moments marked by chaos
- Rumors: Red Sox, Yankees top Pavano's list
- James: Suns have best 'spurt ability' in NBA

More Headlines | Daily Headlines E-mail | Wire

ESPN.com Top Searches

Infirmary | Final BCS | Buffaloed?

PAGE 2 | PAGE 3 | INSIDER | FANTASY

Simmons: Let's Cash In!
Early playoffs are easy pickin's

Whitlock: Free Jeff George
Take it easy on the guy

Ill-Advised: Southern Cal's Matt Leinart
USC QB chooses between felines and females

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- OU tames Buffalos .. Cal tops Southern Miss
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>Mac users, tell us what you think

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Page reduction	50 KB
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Projected Bandwidth Savings	2 terabytes/day 61 terabytes/month **730 terabytes/year**

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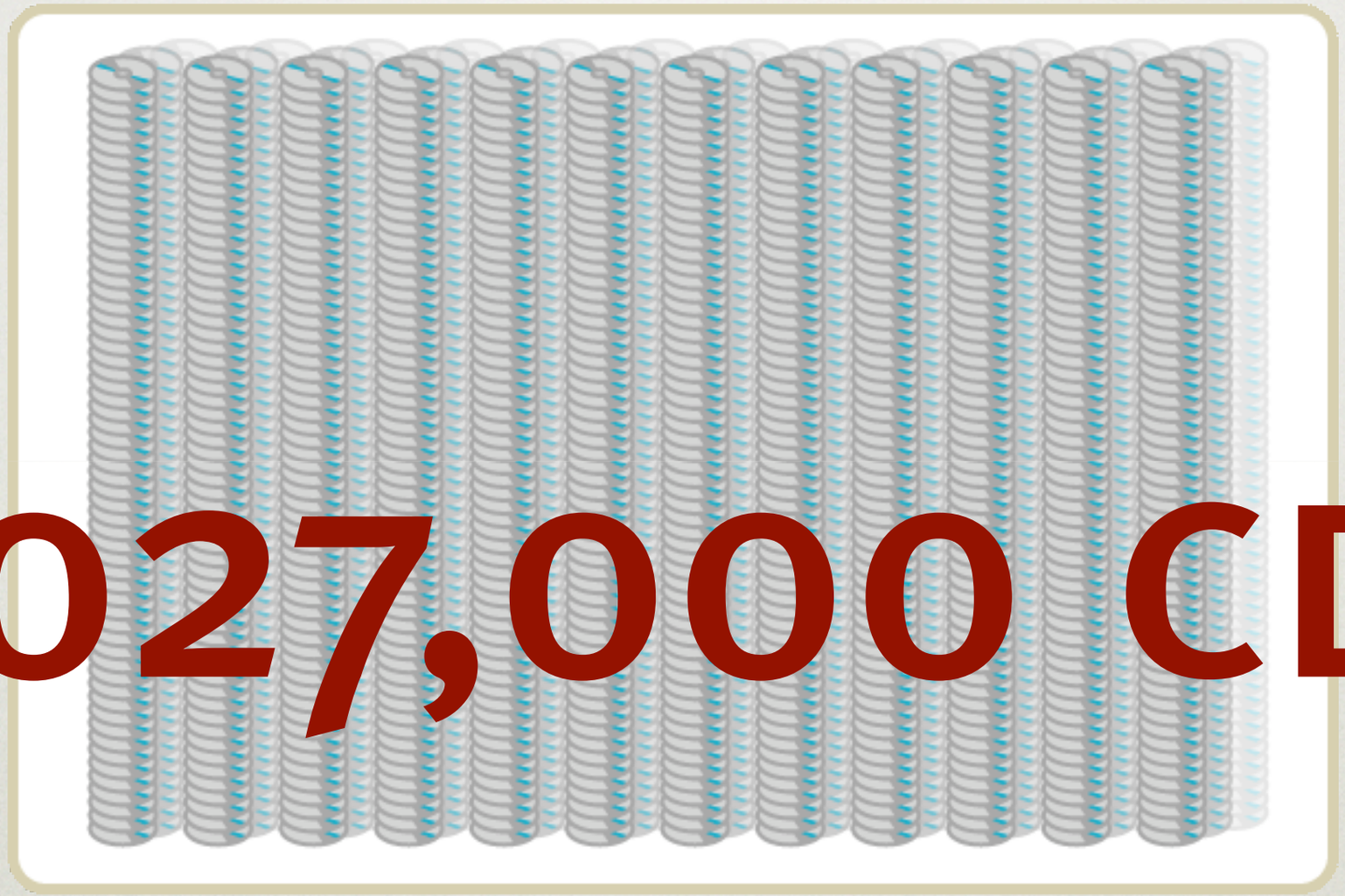
What the heck is 329 terabytes?



1,027,000 CDs

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元完全な技

Zen Garden

The Beauty of CSS Design

A demonstration of what can be accomplished visually through CSS-based design. Select any style sheet from the list to load it into this page.

Download the sample html file and css file

The Road to Enlightenment

Littering a dark and dreary road lay the past relics of browser-specific tags, incompatible DOMs, and broken CSS support.

Today, we must clear the mind of past practices. Web enlightenment has been achieved thanks to the tireless efforts of folk like the W3C, WaSP and the major browser creators.

The css Zen Garden invites you to relax and meditate on the important lessons of the masters. Begin to see with clarity. Learn to use the (yet to be) time-honored techniques in new and invigorating fashion. Become one with the web.

So What is This About?

There is clearly a need for CSS to be taken seriously by graphic artists. The Zen Garden aims to excite, inspire, and encourage participation. To begin, view some of the existing designs in the list. Clicking on any one will load the style sheet into this very page. The code remains the same, the only thing that has changed is the external .css file. Yes, really.

CSS allows complete and total control over the style of a hypertext document. The only way this can be illustrated in a way that gets people excited is by demonstrating what it can truly be, once the reins are placed in the hands of those able to create beauty from structure. To date, most examples of neat tricks and hacks have been demonstrated by structurists and coders. Designers have yet to make their mark. This needs to change.

Participation

Graphic artists only please. You are modifying this page, so strong CSS skills are necessary, but the example files are commented well enough that even CSS novices can use them as starting points. Please see the CSS Resource Guide for advanced tutorials and tips on working with CSS.

You may modify the style sheet in any way you wish, but not the HTML. This may seem daunting at first if you've never worked this way before, but follow the listed links to learn more, and use the sample files as a guide.

Download the sample html file and css file to work on a copy locally. Once you have completed your masterpiece (and please, don't submit half-finished work) upload your .css file to a web server under your control. Send us a link to the file and if we choose to use it,

select a design:

- Chien by Alex Miller
- Like the Sea by Lars Daum
- Angelus by Vladimir Lukic
- Zenfandel by Nicholas Rougeux
- Daruma by Stuart Cruickshank
- Berry Flavour by Maren Becker
- a Simple Sunrise by Rob Soule
- Bugs by Zohar Arad

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- CSS Resources
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A few Zen Garden favorites

Creepy Crawly

This is Cereal

Mediterranean

Bonsai Sky

Miracle Cure

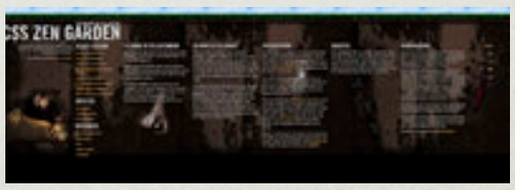
Release One

15 Petals

C-Note

Radio Zen

prêt-à-porter



What Lies Beneath

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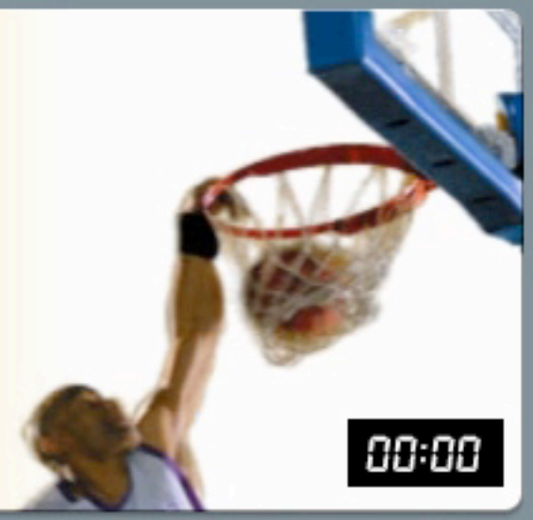

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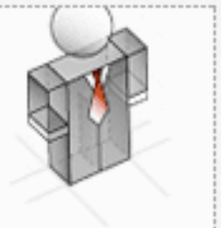

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- MEDIENPREIS HERBERT
- ANFAHRTSPLAN
- KONTAKT

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- INVESTMENT
- KONTAKT

MIKROZEITUNG

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- KONZEPTPYRAMIDE
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- BUSINESSPLAN
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- KONTAKT

JUNGFRAU ZEITUNG

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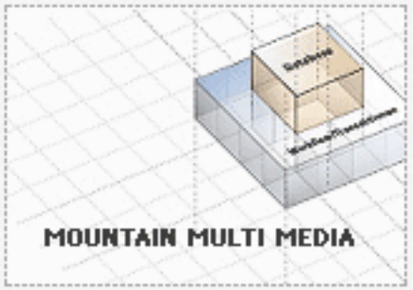

MOUNTAIN MULTI MEDIA

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- MEDIENINTEGRATION
- SYSTEM G-OS
- REFERENZEN
- TEAM
- ANFAHRTSPLAN
- KONTAKT

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Mikrokosmos-Tipp | 01. Dezember 2004

BERGDOHLE MIT KLANGBILDERN

Tächa spielen Freitag und Samstag live im Hotel Harder Minerva, Interlaken

Tächa, die Bergdohle, die über Wengen kreist, gab der Band und ihrem Projekt den Namen. »

WEITERE NEWS:

Presseschau | 30. November 2004
«Messen uns nicht mit St. Moritz» »

Carte Blanche | 25. November 2004
The ugly Americans »

Mikrokosmos-Tipp | 24. November 2004
Weihnachtsduft im Schnitzlerdorf »

Presseschau | 23. November 2004
Luxustempel für Seminare »

MEDIENSPIEGEL:

www.persoenlich.com | 03. Dezember 2004
CH-Zeitungsverleger: Zeichen der Zeit nicht erkannt »

www.journalismus.com | 02. Dezember 2004
Verleger Gossweiler: Zukunft der schweizer Zeitung liegt im Lokalen »

Werbewoche | 23. September 2004
Virtuelle Grabsteine, reale Gewinne »

Werbewoche | 23. September 2004
Bauernverband rechts überholt »

Gossweiler Media AG
Mountain Multi Media
beim Bahnhof/Postfach

Gossweiler Media AG
Long Term Meeting
beim Bahnhof/Postfach

Gossweiler Media AG
Mikrozeitung
beim Bahnhof / Postfach

Gossweiler Media AG
Jungfrau Zeitung
Aarmühlestrasse 1

Finance Music Shopping **YAHOO!** Mail My Yahoo! Messenger

Search for: [ ] [on the Web] [Yahoo! Search] • Advanced • Preferences

Yahoo! Travel - Flights, Hotels, Cars, Vacations, Cruises

Free mail Sign Up **Mail status:** Sign In

Autos	Horoscopes	Movies	Real Estate
Chat	HotJobs	Music	Shopping
Finance	Kids	My Yahoo!	Sports
Games	Mail	News	Travel
GeoCities	Maps	People Search	TV
Groups	Messenger	Personals	Yellow Pages
Health	Mobile	Photos	**All Y! Services...**

Yahoo! Personals — New season, new someone?

I'm a [Woman] seeking a [Man]

City, State, or ZIP: [ ]

Age: [ ] to [ ]

Find my match

Free Personality & Love Style Test

Yahoo! Small Business

Web Hosting — Sell Online
$4.98 Domains — Search Listings

Yahoo! Featured Services

Personal Website — Personals
Live NCAA Audio — HotJobs

Entertainment — » More Entertainment

Weekend Movies

- In Theaters: 'Closer,' 'National Treasure' & more
- Preview this week's new 'Arrested Development'
- LAUNCH Artist of the Month: Snoop Dogg
- Movie Trailers · Daily Horoscopes · Comics

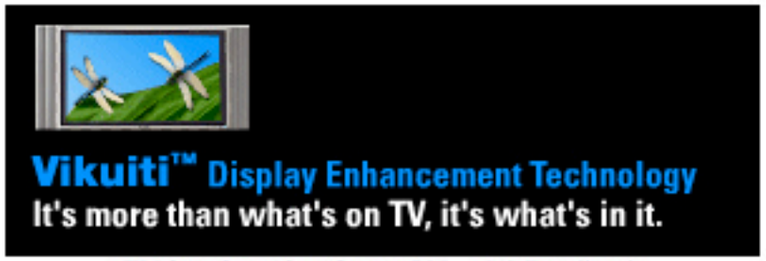
Buzz Log - What the world is searching for — » More Buzz

A new Nintendo for junior? See which goodies kids are searching for this holiday season. **More...**

Top Searches From Kids

1. Half-Life 2
2. Apple iPod
3. Levi's
4. Rocawear

2004 Holiday Gift Center - from Yahoo! Shopping



TV buying tips from 3M - Ad Feedback

In the News — 3:22pm, Sun Dec 5

- 68 Iraqis die in weekend insurgent attacks
- Egypt frees Israeli spy in prisoner swap
- Musharraf: Bin Laden's location is unknown
- Rescuers aid victims of Philippines storms
- Report: Jackson DNA sample collected
- Milk vending machines installed in schools
- Mobile operators seek higher sound quality
- NFL - Scores · Standings | NBA · Tennis

Sports · Stocks · News · Popular

Weather

Enter City or U.S. Zip Code

[ ] Go

Save location on this page

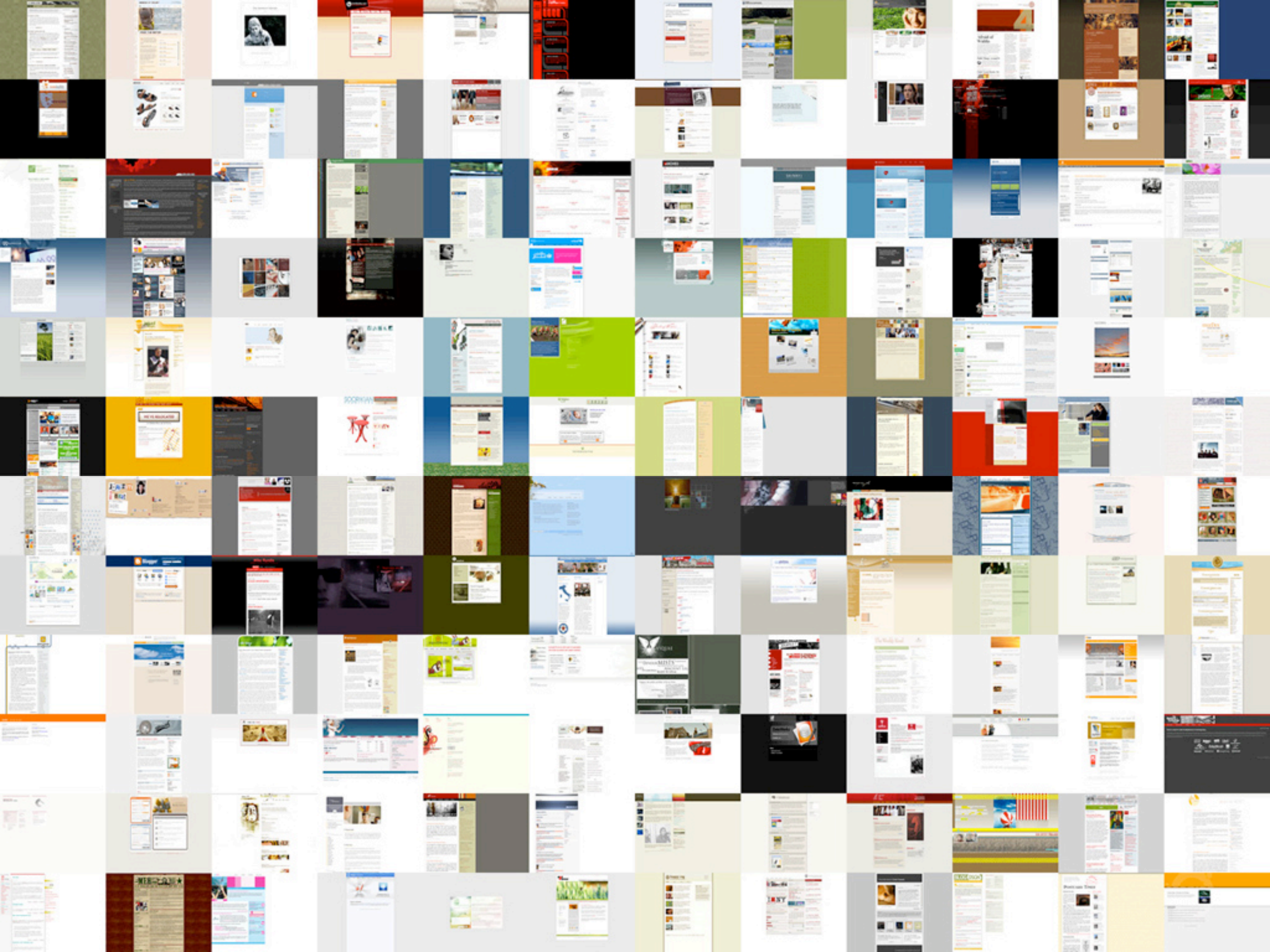
Marketplace

STAPLES that was easy.

A flurry of holiday savings
Staples has everything you need to go digital this holiday season. See the great deals now.

HP Photosmart 8450 Printer - Featuring eight-ink color technology - Shop now.

25% off at AllPosters.com - Today only. Every poster and art print - Act now.



Gallery-based resources

CSS Vault
cssvault.com

Style Gala
stylegala.com

Unmatched Style
unmatchedstyle.com

CSS Beauty
cssbeauty.com

Web Standards Awards
webstandardsawards.com

CSS Import
cssimport.com

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Accomplishments

- Purified data and content
- Proven viable (com, gov, edu)
- Reduced file sizes
- Accessibility on the radar
- Modular thinking
- Higher expectations

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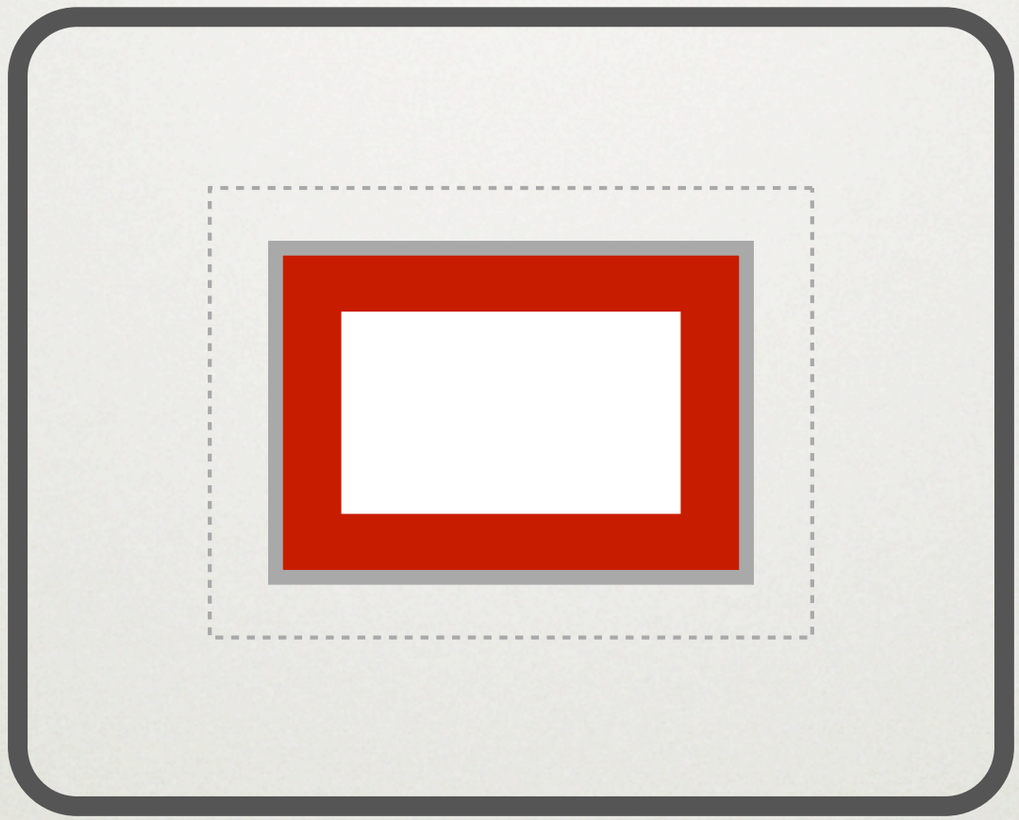
Mistakes

Boxy design



over-reliance on the box model
and making the box **VISIBLE**

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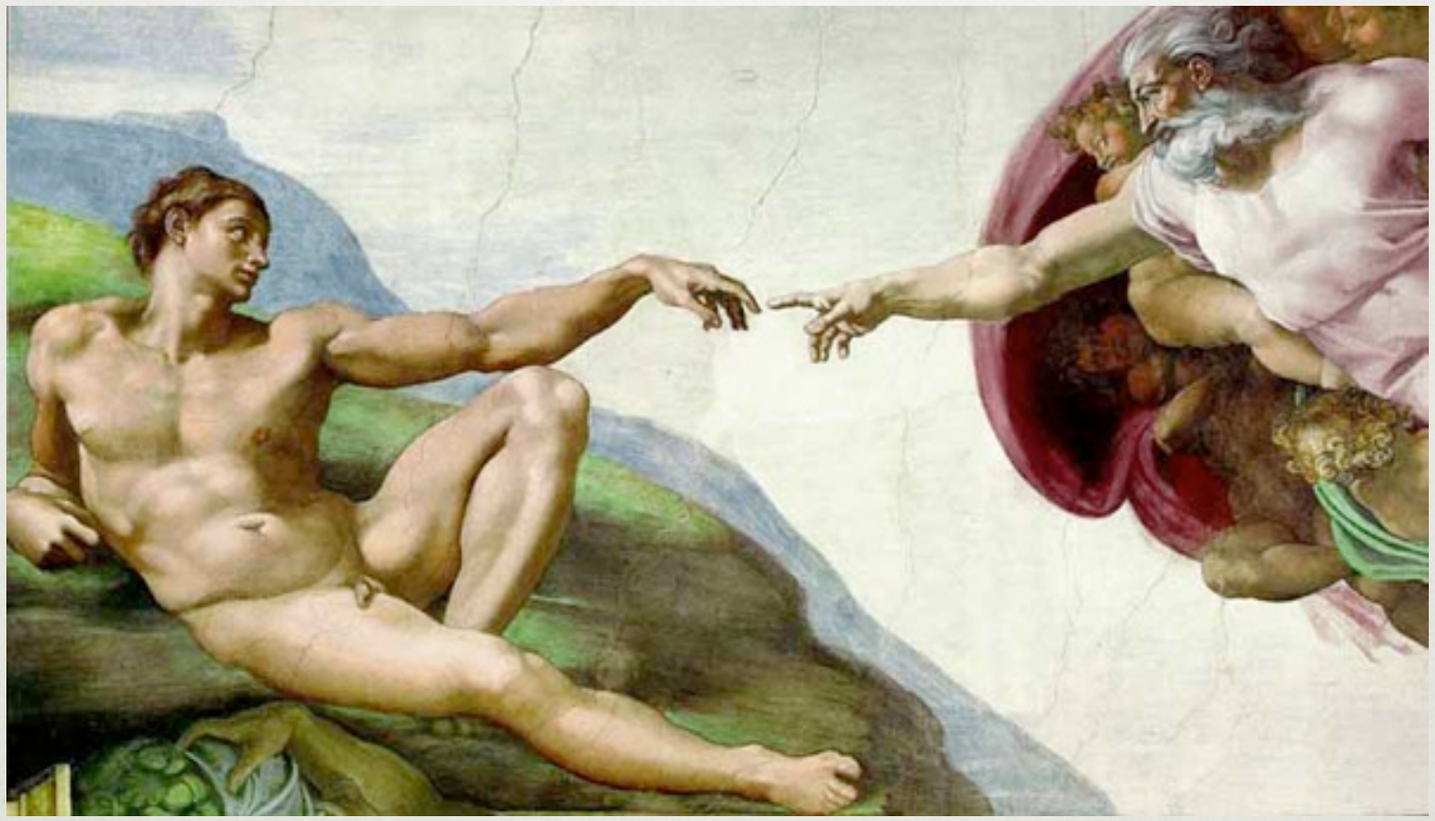
Image replacement



In the beginning...

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Presentational `class` & `id` names

Avoid	Use instead
large	page-title
redtext	subhead
top-line	main
borderedbox	module
rightcol	secondary

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Imitation

– Innovation

= Stagnation

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Looking ahead

Five years?

CSS?

CSS!

?

2001 2003 2005 2007 2009

2000 2002 2004 2006 2008 2010

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CSS3 viability?

- Modularization
- Specification delays
- Software vendor implementation
- User adoption of new technology
- Designer/developer learning curves

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Interesting bits of CSS3

- Target properties for links
- Sophisticated `media` queries
  - `media="screen and (min-device-width:800px)"`
  - `media="not handheld"`
- Border images
- Multiple background images per element
- `content` property (true IR)
- The COLUMN Model

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Imagine if...

people could make use of CSS blindly...
without ever viewing, writing, or editing
one line of CSS.

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Imagine if...

one style sheet could be interoperable with ~~hundreds of pages.~~

thousands of sites.

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Imagine if...

the distribution model for browser software changed dramatically.

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Beauty in design is not only
about that which can be seen,
but also that which can’t be seen.