

THE MULTIMEDIA FACTORY

Web Development Services A Layman's Glossary

Animation

It is essentially any image that changes over time.

ASP

An abbreviation for Active Server Pages. A technology used for creating dynamic content (see below) of a web page.

Bandwidth

Bandwidth is the maximum amount of data that can travel over a network in a given time, usually expressed in bits per seconds.). A hosting server will allocate your site a fixed amount of bandwidth usage within a given period of time. (transfer / download of files ... each page view adds to the bandwidth used)

Banner

Also referred to as a banner ad, a banner is a typically rectangular advertisement placed on a Web site either above, below or on the sides of the Web site's main content and is linked to the advertiser's own Web site.

Browser

Often called Web browser, it is a software application used to locate and display Web pages. The two most popular browsers are Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. There are many other browsers like AOL Browser, Opera, Firefox, Safari as well as others.

Content

By definition, content is the 'stuff' that makes up a web site. This includes text, pictures, images, sounds, animation, video, etc. In practice however, when we refer to web content, we are essentially referring to content in a textual nature. Content therefore is the 'information' provided within the text of a website.

CSS [Cascading Style Sheets]

A simple mechanism for adding style (e.g. fonts, colors, spacing) to Web documents. Not all browsers (of specific versions) can take advantage of the full specification of CSS integration.

Database

A special way of organizing computer data. It looks like a table organized into columns and rows for fast access to data within the cells in the table. There are many different types of databases but all of them work on the same principle. Databases are very useful for storing and organizing data for later retrieval. Very often used for managing accounts, managing user information, creating guest books and bulletin boards, product information, mailing lists, and much more.

Directory

A database edited manually by Humans, not populated by web crawlers. Websites are submitted and indexed by category making this feature the main difference between it and a Search Engine. Users can navigate through the categories to locate documents or information. Think of it as a giant yellow pages. Most directories offer searching options (which is similar to searching from a Search Engine) within its database.

Discussion Group

A web page that supports interactive discussions by users. Users submit text content using a form, that is saved on the server and that way make it available to other visitors.

DNS

The **Domain Name System** that identifies each computer as a point on the Internet using an Internet protocol (IP) that translates from domain name (www.multimediafactory.com) to IP (a series of numbers that identifies the location of the website) and reverse. . Domain names are alphabetic so they're easier to remember. The Internet however, is based on IP addresses. Every time you use a domain name, a DNS service must translate the name into the corresponding IP address. For example, our domain name `http://www.multimediafactory.com` is really `http:// 71.18.102.170`

Domain Name

A unique name that identifies one or more IP addresses. For example, the domain name `multimediafactory.com` represents one IP address (`71.18.102.170`) Domain names are used in URLs (uniform resource locator) to identify particular Web pages. Every web site that you visit is stored under a domain name.

Domain Name Extension

The part after the dot in the domain name is a domain name extension. In `www.multimediafactory.com`, the domain name extension is `.com`. There are many other domain name extensions such as `.net .org .biz .gov .edu .mil .info .web .us .uk .cc .it .mx .ba` and many others.

Downloading

Downloading is the method by which users access and save or "pull down" files or programs to their computers from a remote computer or server, usually via a modem.

Dynamic content

Information in web pages which changes automatically, based on database or user information. A page that generates content "on-the-fly" as a user requests the page. For example search results are generated by a search engine in response to a query. The page is dynamic because it displays only the information that matches the input request from the user. If the input request changes, the page will not look the same. Non-dynamic (or static) pages remain the same each time the page is called (viewed) For example a privacy policy or terms of use page will always appear the same.

E-Commerce

E-Commerce is conducting business over the Internet. It mostly refers to buying and selling items on-line. An e-commerce site usually includes all elements necessary to conduct the sales transaction in a fully automated setting including the payment method such as credit card processing.

Encryption

A way of coding the information in a file or e-mail message so that if a third party intercepts it as it travels over a network (or the internet) it cannot be read. Only the persons sending and receiving the information have the appropriate "key" to unlock the encryption, making it unreadable to anyone except those persons for which it was intended.

Flash

A graphic animation technology developed by a company called Macromedia (now owned by Adobe). Most browsers support Flash technology and one flash animation looks the same on

all browsers. Flash is in many cases used interchangeably with the term animation however Flash itself is a proprietary technology.

Frames

An HTML technique for combining two or more separate HTML documents within a single web browser screen. This means that the screen is broken down into two or more sections, each displaying it's own document simultaneously. A web site using frames often causes great problems for search engines, and may not be spidered and indexed correctly.

FTP

FTP stands for File Transfer Protocol, which is one of the methods of transferring files over the Internet. This is a very typical method used for uploading files (pages) to a hosting server for viewing over the Internet.

GIF

GIF stands for graphics interchange format. It is a graphics file format. GIF supports color and various resolutions. It is however limited to 256 colors making it more practical for graphical images as opposed to photographs, which are better saved as JPEG files.

Hits

Are the individual requests a server answers in order to render a single Web page completely. The page document itself *and each of the various images on the page* represent a separate hit. This means if there are 12 images on the page, when the page is called (to be viewed), there are 13 hits that occur. (12 images + 1 page document)

Home Page

It is a first page (also called an index page, opening page or start page) of a Web site.

Hosting

Hosting is the storage and accessibility of a website to Internet users. This is made possible through a computer (or series of computers) running server software. The server software allows for the simultaneous viewing of the website. The website files are stored on the computer (server) and are accessed via the Internet. Hosting is usually conducted by commercial hosting companies but a website can be hosted on a computer at home or in your office. Through a commercial hosting company, you are usually allotted a fixed amount of disc space (storage space for your website files) and bandwidth (the total amount of file transfer from the server to internet users in a given time period).

HTML [HyperText Markup Language]

HTML is a basic computer language providing the means for creating simple hypertext (text with links) documents, intended for publishing on the World Wide Web.

Image Map

An image that has several links geographically mapped onto it. The image is broken down into two or more regions, each with it's own set of links. For example, breaking down the image of a map into several geographic regions. Each with its own link to another image or page.

Interactive

A Web page is interactive when it prompts a response from the user or in some way can interact with the user dynamically. For example if a window opens instructing a user that there is missing information from a form input, the page has considered interactive.

Internet

The largest global network connecting millions of computers. It is strictly based on TCP/IP protocol for communication between host (your computer) and server. Each Internet computer, (host), is independent. The Internet is not synonymous with World Wide Web. The Internet and the Web are two related but separate things.

Intranet

A private network belonging to an organization, usually a corporation, accessible only by the organization's members, employees, or others with authorization.

IP [Internet Protocol]

The method (or protocol) by which data is sent from one computer to another on the Internet. Each computer (known as a host) on the Internet has at least one IP address that uniquely identifies it from all other computers on the Internet. An IP address usually looks like 71.18.102.170

Java applet

A short program written in Java (not JavaScript) that is attached to a Web page and executed by your browser. Often used for complicated web applications.

JavaScript

JavaScript is an object-based scripting language. It can add interactivity to a web page dynamically.

JPEG (JPG)

Stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group. JPEG uses a compression technique for color images (compression makes the file size of the image smaller). Some details are lost in the compression process, however JPEG compression provides a relatively good quality image. It is widely used on the Internet and other digital applications.

Link

Also called a hyperlink. An element in an electronic document that links to another place in the same document or to an entirely different document. Typically, you click on the hyperlink to follow the link. Hyperlinks are the most essential ingredient of the World Wide Web.

Meta Tag

A special HTML tag that provides information about a Web page. Unlike normal HTML tags, Meta tags do not affect how the page is displayed. They are used for elements such as page title, description, keywords, site author and many other "hidden" elements viewed only in the code.

Mouseover

Also called a rollover. A JavaScript element that triggers a change on an item (typically a graphic image or text) in a Web page when the mouse pointer passes over it.

MP3

MP3 is the file extension for MPEG, audio layer 3. It is a method for compressing audio files. (making the file size smaller) MP3 files can be embedded into web site providing music while visitors are viewing the site. MP3 files are relatively small comparing to other audio files and therefore are quite suitable for transferring over the Internet.

Perl [Practical Extraction and Report Language]

Perl is a server-side computer language that provides much of the web's interactivity.

Pixel

Refers to how monitors divide the display screen into thousands or millions of individual dots to display an image. A pixel is one dot.

PHP

PHP Hypertext Preprocessor is a server-side scripting (computer) language used to create dynamic Web pages.

Protocol

A formal set of conventions that allow communication between two communicating functional units. Simply stated, it is a language that computers use to talk to each other. There are many such languages. The most popular is TCP/IP, which is the official language of the Internet.

Ranking

The number (order of ranking ... 1 being the highest) that a web site is listed for a specific search term in a specific search engine. Search Engines utilize a ranking algorithm (mathematical formula) to determine a site's ranking for a particular keyword or phrase.

Resolution

The resolution of an image describes how fine the dots are that make up that image. The more dots, the higher the resolution. When displayed on a monitor, the dots are called pixels. A 640 x 480 screen (resolution) is capable of displaying 640 distinct dots on each of its 480 lines, or about 300,000 pixels.

Script

A script is an executable list of commands created by a scripting language. Scripts that are executed on a web server are said to be server-side scripts. Scripts that execute on your own home PC are said to be client-side scripts. Scripts can be embedded within HTML to produce a web page with dynamic actions. Simply stated, if the operation occurs before it gets to your computer, it is server-side, if it happens within your computer, it is client-side.

Scripting Language

A scripting language is a simple programming language used to write an executable list of commands, called a script. JavaScript, Perl, VBscript and others are scripting languages rather than general-purpose programming languages.

Search Engine

A program that performs searching on documents for specified terms or phrases, stores the results in a giant database and returns a list of the documents where those terms can be found. The most popular search engines today are Google, Yahoo, MSN, AOL, Ask, and Altavista. There are several thousands search engines and the number is growing every day. Most however get their information (data) from one of these major engines.

Search Engine Optimization

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is an act of increasing the number of visitors to a particular web site by adding appropriate keyword phrases, creating linking campaigns and other SEO techniques. The result (if done correctly) increases the ranking in the search results. The higher a web site ranks in the results of a search, the greater the chance that your site will be found by a search engine user. For general and competitive web sites it takes a lot of work to create a well optimized and search engine friendly web site.

Server

A computer, program or process, which responds to requests for information from a user. (a server is capable of responding to many simultaneous users). On the Internet, all web pages reside on servers.

Spam

Spam refers to the practice of blindly sending commercial messages or advertisements to email users or posting to newsgroups.

Spider

An automated software robot that continuously crawls websites using the site's hyperlinks and pages and collects data that is returned to its database for indexing. This is how Search Engines function. The process of crawling the web, storing URLs' and indexing keywords, links and text, is the act of *Spidering*.

SSI [Server-Side Includes]

Tells a server to include information (a separate file) in a document before sending it to the Internet user's browser. This is a very effective method of providing the same information over many pages. One file can be altered to produce the changes over the many the pages that include the SSI file.

Sub-Domain (Name)

A sub-domain is a domain that is part of a larger domain name. Such as `www.something.somewhere.com`

Submission Forms

Forms are web page "fields" for a user to fill in with information. They are an excellent way of collecting and processing information from people visiting a website, as well as allowing them to interact with web pages. Forms are written in HTML and processed by CGI (common graphics interface) programs. The output can be sent as an e-mail, stored online, printed, and/or returned to the user as an HTML page.

Tag

An HTML tag is a command written into a document that specifies how the document should be formatted (look). A web browser interprets these tags and outputs the intended action.

Template

HTML templates are skeletal HTML pages with the main content left out. Templates provide an effective solution in creating many pages with an identical look or navigational structure but different content.

Traffic

Traffic is a measurement of the amount of users that visit a Web site.

Thumbnail

A small version of a bigger image on a web page. Usually containing a link to a full-size version of the image.

URL [Uniform Resource Locator]

Each separate page accessible on the Web has a unique address, which can be identified by its URL. The first part of the address (eg; http or ftp etc) indicates what protocol to use, and the second part specifies the IP address or the domain name where the resource is located.

Usability

Refers to the degree of a page's "user friendliness" for the user.

Validation

Validation is a way to make sure that your (HTML) code is compliant with current HTML specifications (i.e. the code is correct and within the standards set for web page creation)

Video Clip

A short video sequence that can be embedded into a web page.

Web Application

Web Applications are web programs or other programs designed to be used on the web site using a browser. Example of web application would be an e-commerce web site, web banking, stock exchange on the web, web games and many others that use programs to operate functions within the site.

Web Based E-mail

Web based e-mail is software on a server that allows you the luxury, if desired, to access your email accounts by simply using a web-browser. It allows users to send and receive emails via any web-browser anywhere in the world.

Web Page

One of the pages on the web site including home page.

Web Site

A site presence on the World Wide Web. Each Web site contains a home page (opening page), which is the first document users see when they enter the site.

World Wide Web

A system of Internet servers that support specially formatted documents. The documents are formatted in a script called HTML (HyperText Markup Language) that supports links to other documents, as well as graphics, audio, and video files. Not all Internet servers are part of the World Wide Web.