Chapter VI

Web Page Design

Introduction

This chapter focuses on digital design for the Web using Adobe Photoshop and Macromedia Fireworks. It’s time to review the storyboards that you created in Chapter IV. Your goal at this point is to use the storyboard designs that you sketched to create Web page screens. You want to utilize the content you gathered and developed while working in the last chapter. After successfully completing this chapter, you will have Web page screen designs that will be output into table- or layer-based HTML files. The files you will generate are going to be HTML files, but will not be functional Web pages. They will not have working links, pop-up windows or multimedia. The pages that are generated in this stage come from Macromedia fireworks or Adobe Photoshop. In this
chapter, you will learn how to develop screen designs that will be turned into Web pages. When we open these pages in Macromedia Dreamweaver, we will be able to an extensive Web functionality and integrate flash-based multimedia. The main thrust of this chapter is to provide you with enough basic skills to get your portfolio pages designed and exported using professional level tools. Once you have completed the process, you’ll be empowered to continue to develop Web pages throughout your career. As a learning tool, the Web portfolio makes you get involved with digital tools.

So far, we spent a lot of time working on paper. This is a good thing, because otherwise there is a good chance that we might be highly confused when we begin to use digital tools. Web portfolio design and Web design in general cannot begin simply by using digital tools. As we have stressed in this text, there must be conceptualization and content development. We need to have the ideas and materials available, before we manipulate those using digital tools.

Digital Tools

Computers give us choices in applications and in workflow methods. We see this in the sheer number of different companies that produce the same software. You can use Microsoft Word or WordPerfect for word processing. Each yields a text document, but the difference lies in the preference of you, the user. You might think Word is easier or more intuitive. Or maybe you are used to WordPerfect from a previous job, so you make it your tool of choice. The point here is that there are many software packages available for Web design and development. There are also many ways to approach designing Web pages on a computer. The processes I will be demonstrating and using for the Web portfolio design presented in this book are used in professional design shops. Most importantly, they are tools and techniques that I have used and taught successfully. I am a designer, so I take a designer’s approach more than that of a programmers approach. That is not to say that we won’t be doing Web programming. We will be using JavaScript, ActionScript, and some basic HTML to enhance functionality of our Web pages. On the design side, we will use image editing software and Web optimization software for front end design. I know this sounds very daunting, but it is a simple compact method for creating impressive Web portfolio pages. As your learning grows, so will your confidence.