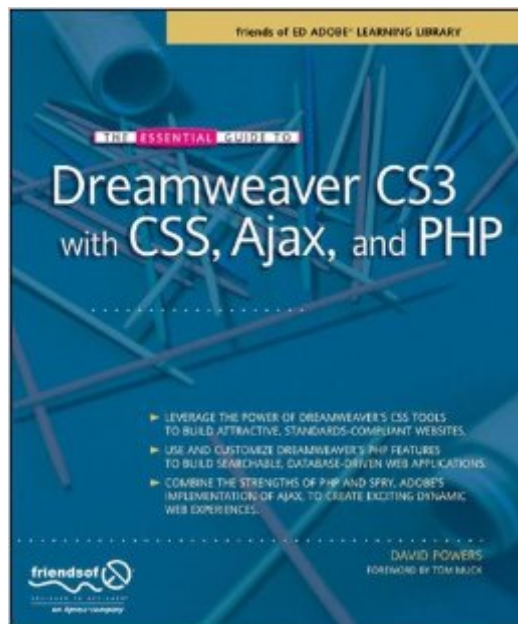


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The Essential Guide To Dreamweaver CS3 With CSS, Ajax, And PHP (Friends Of Ed Adobe Learning Library)



Synopsis

Dreamweaver is a huge selling product with over 3 million users worldwide, and the new version, Dreamweaver CS3, promises to be just as popular, with new features such as Ajax support. The book is written by best selling Dreamweaver author David Powers. He presents a strictly practical, real world series of tutorials to teach aspiring and existing Dreamweaver users how to do everything they could possibly want to do in terms of CSS, PHP (bar far the most popular server-side language Dreamweaver supports, and the only one that is really used a great deal,) and Ajax web sites, from beginner to advanced topics.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a developer who is modestly adept with PHP, this book is a welcome addition to my library. With the recent release of CS3, it covers the nuts and bolts of the application(s) including the newly introduced Spry Widgets. Being a visual learner, I especially appreciated the chapter entitled "Creating a CSS Site Straight Out of the Box." The instructions were clear and concise and provided a great foundation for building future CSS based sites. Every chapter, at least for me, was full of "Ah Ha" moments. I think I've learned more from this book than any other I've read in the past year (and there's been plenty). I even figured out how to get PHP My Admin running, thanks to this book! I recommend it highly.

If you are VERY comfortable with PHP and MySQL, this may not be the best book for you. (I say that with some reservations, though, because of the vast wealth of knowledge in this book between page 1 and page 729.) Also, if you don't know how to code in PHP, the "Introduction to the Basics of PHP" in Chapter Ten may not be enough instruction for you to comfortably appreciate this book. BUT, if you have some knowledge of PHP (for example, you are a self-taught PHP coder like myself), need the power of PHP and MySQL, and are curious about any benefits there might be from this new technology SPRY (Adobe's implementation of AJAX), this will be an excellent book for you. The writing is clear, concise (in spite of its detailed explanations), and logical. The strength of Powers' book is providing you with the vast majority of tools you will need to create, test, and implement a dynamic Web site using the power of PHP, MySQL, SPRY, and more. For instance, Chapter Four has detailed instructions on setting up a PHP server on your hard drive to enable you to test your server-side programs. Those instructions begin with downloading the PHP installation files and end with trouble-shooting possible configuration problems, including all necessary steps in between. The book continues with how to set up a PHP site using Dreamweaver, learning the rules, tips, and benefits of cascading style sheets (CSS), the advantages and creation of a SPRY navigation menu bar, and an in-depth examination of on-line forms and data validation. Since the next logical step is doing something with the form data, the MySQL database product is tackled beginning, again, with its installation, continuing with the use of the phpMyAdmin feature, and ending with the storage of database records (including access control and security issues). As if this was not enough information to digest, the book ends with a guide to and uses for XML and XSLT in your Web site. One more big plus from this book is that it offers the code (tested and commented) for a number of commonly used functions on Web sites today. If you are looking for a login function, form validation function, mail function, (and the list goes on) you'll find the code in this book. Again, there is a wealth of knowledge in this book from front cover to back cover - well organized and easy to grasp.

As the author says, "this book isn't 'Dreamweaver CS3 for the Clueless', or 'Dreamweaver CS3 for Complete Beginners'". There are plenty of books flooding the market at the moment for those users, and if that's you, I recommend you look elsewhere. This book is intended for those who are familiar with the basics of web development with an interest in PHP, CSS, Ajax and Spry (Adobes version of Ajax). It assumes that you know your way around Dreamweaver, but that you haven't developed database driven web applications before. As a tutorial, it is undoubtedly excellent. The author has a light and friendly writing style which works really well with this book, and he rapidly takes you from

'newbie' status to becoming an experienced developer. As a reference book, it doesn't quite work - but I don't think that was the intention anyway. There is no 200-page index at the back listing all possible PHP and MySQL commands, but the book is all the better for it. If you need reference material, it's free on the web anyway, and personally I don't like books which use such an underhand method of giving me 'quantity' over 'quality'. This Essential Guide is exactly, and just, that. Just one word about support. Not a word you normally associate with books, but David Powers is very active on the Adobe Dreamweaver forums, and always happy to assist readers (and others!) with any PHP-related questions. Just knowing that makes me confident about buying future books written by him.

A fabulous book so easy to follow and informative. This brings Dreamweaver to today and has dropped completely the outdated use of tables that others (such as H.O.T.) seem to be stuck with when the industry trend is only to insert tables into a page when using excel spreadsheets and such and never to use them for page building. The extensive introduction of Widgets is a delight and has completely replaced those Javascript drop menu's avoiding all the pitfalls they entailed. The author leads you into dreamweaver in the usual way, most of these titles use, then easily run through tutorials that demonstrate how to build a site from simple CSS templates and from scratch. Step by step the author leads one from simple site to the introduction of widgets (new to DW CS3) through to PHP pages and on to databases and includes. Very easy to follow and brings one up to date on the new CS3 architecture.

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