



SEARCH ENGINE FRIENDLY DESIGN

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THE FOCUS OF THIS TALK: WORK AROUNDS TO ROAD BLOCKS



FLASH, AJEX, FLEX

- Often avoided for SEO reasons
- Effective work arounds exist

RIA'S DEFINED

- Client-side processing (Flash, AJAX, Flex)
- Data can be “invisible” to search engines



BUT FIRST: THE BACKSTORY

THE TWO AUDIENCES ON YOUR WEBSITE



Search engines



Humans

THEIR LANGUAGES



01000001 01100100 01101111
01100010 01100101 00100000
01001101 01000001 01011000



Words, smiles...



IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES?

- “Don’t use Flash!” says the SEO.
- “But it looks slick, and what would YOU know about cool?” replies the designer.



The designer.

The SEO.

RIA'S: LOTS TO BE EXCITED ABOUT



Benefits:

- Richer: drag and drop, using a slider to change data, etc.
- More responsive
- Look and feel approaching that of a desktop environment

RIA's are only going to proliferate. Be prepared to deal with them.

IT'S HAPPENING FAST

- On RIA's: "We'll look back at this as one of the great periods of invention." – Bill Gates
- RIA's are proliferating fast.
- The education of webmasters on the impact of search needs to keep pace.
- **SEO's can't keep saying, "don't use Flash" or "don't use emerging RIA's".**



Steve Jobs and Bill Gates at the D5 conference, 5/30/07


INTRODUCING: MY CSS SILVER BULLET WORK AROUND

NOTICE THE “TABS”

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“CSS tabs”
we’re going to
discuss

EACH TAB LOADS A NEW “PAGE”

- EACH PAGE LOADS AT THE SAME URL
- UNLESS THE USER CLICKS, THIS CONTENT WILL NOT BE LOADED
- SEARCH ENGINES SEE THE CONTENT REGARDLESS OF CLICK (THE CLICK IS JAVASCRIPT, WHICH SEARCH ENGINES ARE NOT TRIGGERING)

Creative Suite 3 overview **Compare editions** Product selector Upgrade tool

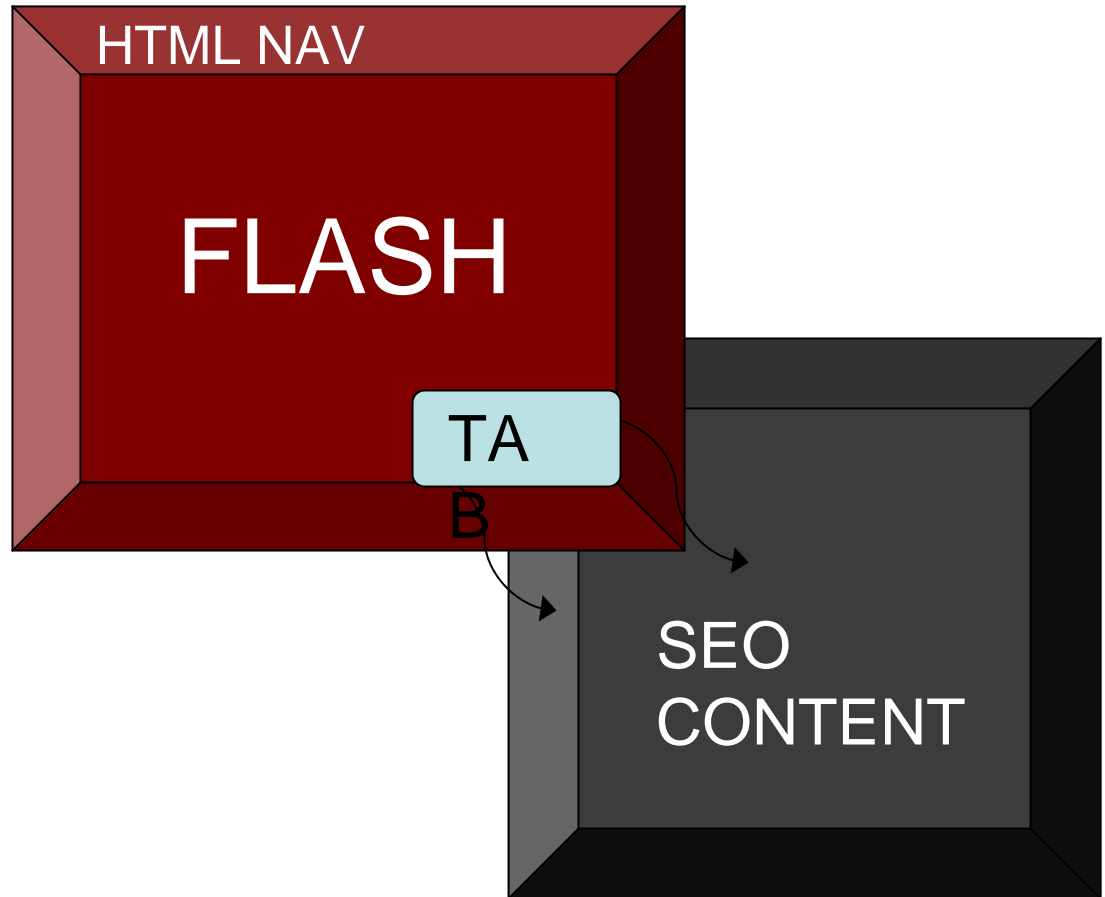
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	DESIGN		WEB		PRODUCTION PREMIUM	MASTER COLLECT
	PREMIUM	STANDARD	PREMIUM	STANDARD		
Adobe InDesign®	•	•				•

SILVER BULLET ANATOMY

- Search engines see the SEO content (always).
- Users will only see the SEO content IF they click on your tab.
- The tab can have a degree of visibility that does not compete with Flash.



HOW IT WORKS

- **JavaScript used to toggle search engine friendly content.**
- **Content is typically (but not always) kept in CSS (as opposed to tables).**
- **Unless the user hovers or clicks (you decide), the user does not see content.**
- **It looks like this:**
``

SO HOW IS THIS CSS TAB THING USEFUL?

- Your designer wants to build a site that is heavy in Flash.
- You are sick of fighting.
- The intervention was embarrassing.
- You need a compromise!



HERE'S HOW IT WORKS



more

1. All you ask from the designer is one HTML object: the “tab”.
2. Place all your SEO content in here.

OBJECTIVES

- **THE DESIGNER OR RIA DEVELOPER GETS THEIR WAY**
 - ⇒ They can bury everything in Flash or another RIA.
 - ⇒ Flash must be embedded.
- **YOU (THE SEO) ASK FOR A “TAB”**
 - ⇒ You place all your SEO content (H1, body copy, internal links) in the “tabbed” area.
 - ⇒ For each unique URL, two versions of the site exist.
 - Flash (or RIA)
 - SEO (text, HTML)

CONSIDERATIONS

- **DO NOT ABUSE THIS TECHNIQUE**

- ⇒ Abuse = keyword stuffing, or placing content you wouldn't want users to see.
- ⇒ Never make the trigger invisible.
- ⇒ Have integrity about the content you place in your "tabbed" area.

THE CURRENT SITUATION IS FRUSTRATING

- Developers are way ahead of search engines' abilities to index
- Developers are doing a lot of extra work to comply
- When will search engines catch up?



MY PREDICTIONS

- **Search engines will require developers to maintain text versions for another 5 years.**
- **Google will rely increasingly on its “Google Webmaster Tools” program to handle widgets and RIA.**
- **The engines will eventually rely on a hybrid model of personalization, click metrics (the Google toolbar is listening to you!), RIA indexing, and text based indexing.**



HAPPY ENDING TO THE STORY

- **“You no longer embarrass me!”**
(email from creative director to Craig, 10/17/07)
- **“If you were hit by a truck, I would consider using my expensive daytime minutes to call 911.”** (Flash designer to Craig, 11/22/07)

