

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 1

About This Book.....	1
Foolish Assumptions	1
Conventions Used in This Book	2
What You Don't Have to Read	2
How This Book Is Organized.....	3
Part I: Building the Perfect Beast	3
Part II: Fleshing Out Your Design.....	3
Part III: Adding Bells and Whistles	3
Part IV: Sharing Your Site with the World.....	4
Part V: The Part of Tens.....	4
The appendix	4
The color insert	4
The companion Web site.....	5
Icons Used in This Book.....	5
Where to Go from Here.....	6

Part I: Building the Perfect Beast..... 7

Chapter 1: Creating the Perfect Flash Site 9

Flash versus HTML . . . The Winner Is?	9
Setting Goals for the Design.....	11
Planning Your Site	11
Gathering Assets for Your Site.....	12
Building the Interface	12
Simplifying your workflow with symbols	13
A tall tale of buttons and navigation menus	14
Adding text and other delights	14
Adding the WOW Factor.....	15
Making your site interactive with ActionScript.....	16
Get a move on with animation.....	17
Soundtracks and other operatic delights.....	18
Optimizing and Publishing Your Site	18
Testing your design.....	19
Getting the bugs out.....	19
Optimizing the beast.....	20
Publishing and uploading your brainchild.....	20

Chapter 2: Before You Build Your Site 21

Knowing Your Mission	21
Working with clients	22
Making it crystal clear with a client questionnaire.....	23
Defining your target audience.....	24
What's the Bandwidth, Kenneth?	24
A tale of two bandwidths.....	24
Do you need Freddy the Preloader?.....	25
Put Your Ideas Down on Paper.....	26
Mind mapping your brainstorm	26
Creating a storyboard.....	27
Gathering Your Assets (Or, Wool Gathering).....	30
Creating and optimizing your images	30
Rounding up sound bites for your site.....	33
Adding vexing video.....	34

Part II: Fleshing Out Your Design 39**Chapter 3: Creating the Interface 41**

Creating a Bandwidth-Friendly Flash Site	41
Creating Symbols	45
Flash symbols 101	45
Creating new symbols.....	46
Converting objects to symbols.....	47
Creating instances of symbols.....	48
Editing symbols	49
Working with Color	49
Mixing solid colors	49
Using the Ink Bottle and Paint Bucket tools	50
Creating colorful gradients	51
Using the Color Mixer	51
Using the Gradient Transform tool	53
Fleshing Out the Interface.....	54
Creating Symbols for Content.....	55
Creating a template for content.....	59
Working with layers	59

Chapter 4: Getting the Word Out 65

Using the Text Tool	65
Creating static text	66
Making text pretty	67
Formatting paragraph text.....	69
Checking your spelling, Aaron.....	70
Adding text hyperlinks	73
Creating an e-mail link	74

Active Text for Fun and Profit.....75
 Breaking text apart.....75
 Creating input text boxes77
 Creating dynamic text.....78
 Stuffing 50 Pounds of Text in a 30-Pound Bag79

Chapter 5: Adding Site Navigation83

Button, Button, Build Me a Button.....83
 Building a basic button.....83
 A button with many states85
 Saying Goodbye to Boring Buttons.....88
 Creating animated buttons.....88
 Building a noisy button89
 Creating an invisible button.....90
 Hanging Out at the Navigation Bar92
 Bellying up to the nav bar92
 Duplicating buttons.....93
 Building a navigation bar94
 Assigning actions to buttons96
 Assigning the proper event to a button action.....98
 Creating a drop-down menu.....99

Chapter 6: Get a Move On and Animate the Site105

Animation 101: A Tale of Frames and Keyframes
 and Blank Keyframes105
 Working with frames106
 Working with keyframes107
 Animating Symbols with Motion Tweening108
 Removing a motion tween.....111
 In search of the perfect motion tween.....111
 Creating custom easing112
 Taking an object for a spin114
 Editing your animation114
 Animating along a Motion Path115
 Creating a guide layer115
 Creating a motion path116
 Getting objects to follow a motion path.....116
 Orienting a symbol instance to its motion path.....117
 Linking additional motion tween animations to a layer guide118
 Animating Objects with Shape Tweening.....119
 Removing a shape tween.....121
 Modifying a shape tween animation121
 Creating a shape tween animation for complex objects123
 Animating Image Sequences125

Part III: Adding Bells and Whistles 129**Chapter 7: Making Your Site Interactive131**

Adding Sizzle to the Steak with ActionScript	131
Introducing ActionScript classes, objects, and methods.....	132
Using the Actions panel.....	134
Loading External Movies into Your Flash Site.....	141
Understanding levels	141
Loading movies into targets.....	141
Unloading movies.....	143
Giving Flash a Brain (Variables 101).....	144
Understanding variable data types.....	144
Vive la différence between string data and numeric data.....	145
Creating mathematical expressions.....	147
Understanding operator precedence.....	148
Christening a variable.....	149
Declaring a variable	150
Passing the variable baton to other objects.....	152
Resetting a variable.....	153

Chapter 8: Creating ActionScript Objects 155

Telling Time with a Digital Clock.....	155
Using the Date object.....	156
Making the clock tick tock	156
Displaying the current time	158
Adding Background Music	161
Controlling the volume with a sound controller	162
Creating a soundtrack movie.....	167
Creating a Preloader	168
Using the Bandwith profiler	168
Scripting a one-act preloader.....	169
Hiding Objects with an ActionScript Mask.....	172
Creating Drag-and-Drop Elements.....	175
Creating an element that can be dragged	176
Using the startDrag action	177
Using the stopDrag action.....	179

Chapter 9: Going Visual 181

Adding Tool Tips to Your Web Site	181
Creating the tool tips	182
Creating the tool tip functions.....	185
Programming the buttons	187
Creating a Moving Navigation Menu.....	188
Creating an endless menu	189
Putting the menu in motion	191

Creating a Flash Photo Gallery	193
Preparing images for the gallery	193
Laying out the gallery	194
Creating the XML document	196
Scripting the gallery	197
Dissecting the code	199
Importing Full-Motion Video — A Moving Tale	202
Encoding the video in Flash	202
Linking encoded video to a Flash document	207
Modifying video playback control parameters	210
Adding Pop-ups	210
Chapter 10: Going Commercial217
Creating Flashy Forms	217
Creating form elements	218
Scripting the form.....	218
Creating ActionScript for the Reset button	219
Creating ActionScript for the Submit button.....	220
Creating a Printable Page	222
Designing a Flash Catalog	224
Creating an E-Commerce Shopping Cart	227
Chapter 11: Creating Flash Eye Candy233
Creating a Mouse Chaser	233
Creating a Custom Cursor.....	235
Building a Moving Backdrop.....	237
Creating a Ticker Tape Marquee	241
Creating Flying Text	246
<i>Part IV: Sharing Your Site with the World</i>	<i>.251</i>
Chapter 12: Optimizing Your Site253
Optimizing Your Site	253
Test Each Web Site Movie	256
Debugging the Site	257
Adding Breakpoints	259
Chapter 13: Publishing the Site263
Setting Publish Settings.....	263
Specifying Flash settings	264
Specifying HTML settings.....	268
Publishing Your Site.....	271

Part V: The Part of Tens273**Chapter 14: Ten Tips for Creating Flash Sites That Work275**

Optimize Images Before Building the Flash Site.....	275
Don't Put All Your Eggs in One Basket	276
Get the Bugs Out of Your Scripts	277
Label Your Frames and Scenes.....	278
Use Named Anchors	278
Create Linkage	279
Make Your Site Skinny with Symbols.....	279
Create a Separate Layer for Your ActionScript	280
Use Comments.....	280
Think Modular	281

Chapter 15: Ten Tips for Working with Clients283

Create a Client Survey	283
Create a Static Mock-up.....	284
Get the Client to Sign Off on the Design.....	285
Dot the Eyes and Cross the Tees.....	285
Cover the Bases.....	286
Get It in Writing	287
Get an Initial Payment	287
Get Frequent Feedback.....	287
Get Feedback in Writing.....	288
Bill for Extras	288

Chapter 16: Ten Tips for Promoting the Site289

Choose a Meaningful Domain Name	289
Optimize the HTML Page in Which Your Flash Site Is Embedded	290
Add Meta Tags	290
Research High-Ranking Web Sites	291
Add Alt Text	291
Add Text to the HTML Page in Which Your Flash Site Is Embedded.....	292
Tell the World	293
Get Web Sites to Link to You.....	293
Promote the Site in Blogs and Forums	293
Submit Your Site.....	294

Appendix: Flash Internet Resources295

Flash Training and Tutorial Resources	295
www.computerarts.co.uk	295
www.ultrashock.com	295
www.EchoEcho.com	296

www.ellenfinkelstein.com/flashtips.html296
 www.swift3d.com.....296
 www.actionscripts.org.....296
 www.flash-creations.com.....296
 www.communitymx.com296
 www.flashstreamworks.com297
 www.were-here.com297
 www.flashkit.com297
 www.lynda.com.....297
 www.flzone.net.....297
 www.moock.org297
 www.macromedia.com298
 Flash Animation.....298
 www.coolhomepages.com.....298
 www.bestflashanimationsite.com298
 www.melondezign.com298
 www.webmonkey.com298
 www.djojostudios.com/flash.....299
 Sound299
 www.soundshopper.com299
 www.flashkit.com299
 www.sonymediasoftware.com299
 www.groovemaker.com.....299

Index.....301