

# Introduction

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**M**acromedia has always been known as a leading-edge design company. Since it introduced Director more than a decade ago, Macromedia has shrewdly developed products (like Fireworks and Dreamweaver) and acquired products (such as Flash and FreeHand) geared toward turning artists into developers. With its acquisition of Allaire, Macromedia added a powerful technology platform to its suite of design-oriented products. Macromedia Studio MX 2004 represents the natural evolution and integration of the Macromedia products into a single set of Web development tools. The result? We've worked in Web development since its inception, and we can honestly say that there's never been a product that is as user friendly, powerful, and complete as Macromedia Studio MX 2004.

## About This Book

*Macromedia Studio MX 2004 All-in-One Desk Reference For Dummies* (we know, it's a mouthful) is designed to be a hands-on, easy-to-understand guide to the features in all the Macromedia Studio products. The no-nonsense approach is designed to help you begin to build Web sites by covering the basics in a clear and concise fashion. The way we see it, you've got things to do, and reading a book, even a clever one, takes up valuable time. The faster we can help you do something or answer a question, the better.

## How to Use This Book

You can use this book in a few different ways:

- ◆ **As a reference:** If you already have a Web site and use Macromedia Studio, this book can be a handy refresher for that thing you couldn't quite remember how to do. Whether it's exporting graphics to Macromedia Flash from FreeHand, or the right syntax for a query in ColdFusion, use this book to fill in those gaps that we all have . . . especially as we get older.
- ◆ **To guide you through building a Web site:** Several authors contributed to the creation of this book. All of us have a wealth of experience in the process of building Web sites. In this book, we've tried to impart as much of our collective knowledge about the processes and pitfalls of building Web sites using these tools as we can.

- ◆ **To learn about the tools:** In this All-in-One Desk Reference, each mini-book has at most 150 pages to cover a product or topic, which means that we get right to the point and make the topics covered easy to understand. We believe that this approach makes figuring out these products easier.

## *Three Presumptuous Assumptions*

Before you dive in to the book, we thought we should give you some advance warning of our expectations. We know, you're the audience, so we shouldn't be presuming anything! But, just so you know where we're coming from, here are our three basic assumptions about you, the reader:

- ◆ **You're in a hurry.** Frankly, if you wanted a more in-depth book, you'd have picked up a regular *For Dummies* book on one or all of these products. Hence the no-nonsense, get it done, and keep on moving approach you're gonna see inside this book.
- ◆ **You know something about Web development.** This isn't a book where we're going to spend a lot of time talking about HTML and how it works. So you won't find a chapter anywhere in this book titled, "What the Internet Is and How It Works."
- ◆ **You'll experiment on your own.** The approach here is to give you quick, useful examples of how things work across all these products. In some cases, the examples can be fairly sophisticated. In most cases, though, it's the basics. Our hope is that you'll take those basic examples and build your own, more complex ones on top of that, according to the complexity of your site.

## *Macintosh versus Windows*

Macromedia Studio is both a Windows and a Macintosh product. In this book, you see us use the Windows commands, and the figures are all showing Windows XP. The reason we chose to use the Windows version is because the ColdFusion MX 6.1 Developer Edition is included on the Windows version, but not the Macintosh version of the product. If you are using Macromedia Studio on the Mac, you can still do everything in Book VI if you're using ColdFusion at your place of business or if your Internet Service Provider (ISP) supports ColdFusion.

In general, you can convert between Windows (PC) and Macintosh key commands by using the following equivalencies:

- ◆ The Ctrl key on a PC is equivalent to the Cmd (⌘) key on a Mac.
- ◆ The Alt key on a PC is equivalent to the Option key on a Mac.
- ◆ The Enter key on a PC is equivalent to the Return key on a Mac.

## *How This Book Is Organized*

Like all the All-in-One Desk References, this book's chapters are organized into minibooks. Most of the minibooks revolve around products, but one is geared toward the Web development process. The following sections describe each minibook in more detail.

### *Book I: An Introduction to Building Web Sites*

Before we jump into the products in the Macromedia Studio suite, we want to frame the conversation around how Web sites get built: things to consider, organizing yourself, and so on. This minibook walks you through how to figure out what it is you're really building, and how you should go about preparing to build it.

### *Book II: Dreamweaver MX 2004*

Dreamweaver MX 2004 is the crux of any Web development effort with Macromedia Studio, so naturally, this is a good place to start. In this minibook, you get a hands-on look at how you can use Dreamweaver to create and manage your Web sites, whether they're more design-oriented (with Macromedia Flash) or technology-driven (with ColdFusion).

### *Book III: Fireworks MX 2004*

Whereas Dreamweaver is the tool that helps you manage your Web site, Fireworks MX 2004 is designed to spur your creative vision. This minibook shows you how to use the variety of tools in this impressive program to bring the look and feel of your site to life. It also shows you how to use Fireworks in conjunction with the other Macromedia Studio products (such as Macromedia Flash) effectively.

### *Book IV: FreeHand MX*

This is the minibook for the true illustrators. Whether the final product is a Flash-based or a traditional HTML-based site, FreeHand MX gives designers the tools they need to create compelling imagery. In this minibook, you find out how to turn your ideas into working graphical art to be used in a variety of Web applications.

### ***Book V: Macromedia Flash MX 2004***

Macromedia Flash MX 2004 is probably the most exciting of the Macromedia products. Macromedia Flash delivers animation, sound, and interactivity to the Web like no other product ever has. If you've ever wanted to find out how to use this tool to add some new zeal to your Web site, then this is the minibook for you!

### ***Book VI: ColdFusion MX 6.1 Developer Edition***

ColdFusion, once left for dead by many in the industry, now appears well poised to lead mainstream Web development into the dynamic content arena. In this minibook, you too can find out just how easy it is to use ColdFusion to create dynamic Web sites.

### ***Book VII: Contribute 2***

In this minibook, we introduce you to the newest member of the Macromedia family, Contribute 2. Designed as a collaborative tool that turns your hard development work into an easy interface for non-techies to update and publish content to the Web, Contribute puts the power of building Web sites in the hands of the people you work with. In this minibook, you find everything you need to know to get you and your collaborators up and running with Contribute in no time flat.

## ***Icons Used in This Book***

Along the way, when there's something of interest to point out, we toss in one of the icons you see in the left margins. When you see one, slow down for a moment to check it out to see what's up!



If there's a way to make something easier, or a more commonly accepted way of doing something, we tell you about it. This is the icon to look for!



When we really want to reinforce something, we throw in a Remember icon.



Pitfall ahead! That's what this icon is all about. If something could cause trouble, we let you know.



Because we love technology, you have to forgive us for geeking out every now and then. When we do, though, we let you know with this icon.



This icon highlights new features in the Macromedia Studio MX 2004 suite of products.

## *Where to Go from Here*

If you've read this far, then you may actually be a candidate for reading this book cover to cover! From here, we suggest you dive right in to whatever section you're most interested in. Remember, all these minibooks are self-contained and don't require you to read the others. So have at it. It's buffet time, and your plate needs fillin' up!