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Web Standards Solutions: The Markup And Style Handbook, Special Edition



Synopsis

Welcome to the expanded second edition of Dan Cederholm's bestselling Web Standards Solutions. Web standards are the standard technology specifications enforced by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to make sure that web designers and browser manufacturers are using the same technology syntax. It is important that these implementations are the same throughout the Web • otherwise, it becomes a messy proprietary place, and lacks consistency. These standards also allow content to be more compatible with multiple different viewing devices, such as screen readers for people with vision impairments, cell phones, PDFs, etc. HTML, XML, and CSS are all such technologies. This book is your essential guide to understanding the advantages you can bring to your web pages by implementing web standards and precisely how to apply them. Web standards such as XHTML and CSS are now fairly well-known technologies, and they will likely be familiar to you, the web designer. Indeed, they are all around you on the Web. However, within web standards still lies a challenge: while the browser's support for web standards is steadily increasing, many web developers and designers have yet to discover the real benefits of web standards and respect the need to adhere to them. The real art is in truly understanding the benefits and implementing the standards efficiently. As a simple example of its power, you can use CSS to lay out your pages instead of nesting tables. This can make file sizes smaller, allowing pages to load faster, ultimately increasing accessibility for all browsers, devices, and web users. Expanded edition containing bonus material. Teaches how to use Web standards effectively to build better web sites. Solutions style promotes learning by work-through examples and assessments.

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Customer Reviews

I've mentioned in the past that books on web standards and markup tend to irritate me due to their "I'm an expert and my opinion is always right" attitude. But never one to give up, I had the chance to review *Web Standards Solutions - The Markup and Style Handbook* by Dan Cederhold (Apress). Much like the book *Designing With Web Standards* by Jeffrey Zeldman, this is a refreshing change and extremely practical. I really like it! The chapter breakdown: Lists; Headings; Tables Are Evil?; Quotations; Forms; , , and Other Phrase Elements; Anchors; More Lists; Minimizing Markup; Applying CSS; Print Styles; CSS Layouts; Styling Text; Image Replacement; Styling ; Next Steps; Index The chapters follow a common format... A topic is introduced, and three or four different methods are shown on how to accomplish the task (like lists). Each method is explored for pros and cons, with the goal of finding a solution that puts emphasis on semantic meaning and clean markup. This is followed by an "extra credit" section that pushes past the basic topic and starts to show some more unique ways to use CSS for appealing page images. For one, the tone is conversational in nature. You're not being lectured to or scolded for not adhering to perfect and exact standards (or opinions). The book is also not a reference manual as such. It's a practical guide on how to use CSS to get the job done and give yourself a solid design that will work for multiple types of browsers. Throw in a little humor along the way, and this book becomes one which you find yourself picking up repeatedly. The sign of a good book for me is one where I'm using the book either before or during my review. Based on a project I'm currently coding, I've already started to memorize certain page numbers I keep going back to. This book will definitely secure a spot on the bookshelf at work, and will be closely guarded to make sure it doesn't disappear.

For just under a year now I have been dipping into the online community of advocates for the many uses of CSS. As someone who is a graphic designer and part time web designer it can sometimes be a pain to find that mix of visual, structural, and functional design needed to take your portfolio and skills to the next level. This book takes a very clear approach to laying out many paths to a single, or similiar, solutions. I think a big problem with all of us "non gurus" who are trying to get into CSS is knowing whether a tag or style is compatible with the "popular browsers" and if we are going to hand off the project to our clients full of holes and subsequently full of complaints. You can trust Dan as a professional who lays down a number of approaches that can be used, none of which are

totally obsolete and are going to leave you with an unhappy client. Another great element of this book is the value it adds to your work. When you put these skills to work on your sites, you not only creating visually great work, but you are also making your work compatible on all levels (hand helds, multiple browsers, screen readers, non CSS compatible browsers) and the book even shows why using specific techniques will optimize your code for search engines (and anyone worth their weight in gold knows how important search engine optimization is for clients). There are a lot of great reasons to fork over your money on this book. As I believe I heard someone mention before, if you have basic CSS knowledge and this book you will be ready to rock. Just don't pick it up expecting to learn CSS from the ground up. For those who have that basic working knowledge, this is the next step in your CSS revolution!

I wish I'd read this one sooner. This book is a great introduction to the fabulous world of web standards. This is not, however, the right book if you are already an experienced coder of standardized (X)HTML. Unlike books such as CSS Mastery (Budd, Moll, Collison), this book contains little of the "oh, right - I had completely forgot about that" tips, that experienced users could use. If you have done little web standards (X)HTML and would like a good place to start, this is absolutely a book I would recommend. If you know your web standards, and like them too, I would recommend looking elsewhere.

First off, this book is definitely not a reference book, if you want to code up in XHTML and CSS, then you need to do the groundwork which is covered in other books. What this book does do, is show you how to practically apply these technologies in everyday situations of web design, and show patterns of commonly accepted, useful tricks and techniques. Invaluable to the freshly converted - yes - but make sure you know your stuff or this book will leave you floating nowhere. There are no explanations, or details on XHTML or CSS, you must have a reasonably good grasp of both. The book assumes we are here to learn the simple applications without being confusing. That's cool, but the book also assumes you have a good working knowledge of CSS, so it's simple, but not so simple. I was disappointed that there was not much depth to the examples shown, and some of the potential pitfalls were not indicated. For example, on the chapter on CSS positioning, we were given a float method, but it's not explained why this is not ideal or where to find more information about the related issues. That stuff would seem relevant to the readers of this book. Anyway, I enjoyed it, it was really useful - all the applications are excellent, but be careful as you will probably get stuck without a grounding in XHTML and CSS.

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