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vide. Then, as you work more with PHP, use it to build on and expand the solutions.

Barbara Scott Zeller

BARBARA SCOTT ZELLER has over 20 years of experience in technical communication. She has written, edited, and designed a variety of publications for corporations and nonprofit organizations. She is a senior member of STC and is currently a senior technical writer for a financial institution in Minneapolis, MN.

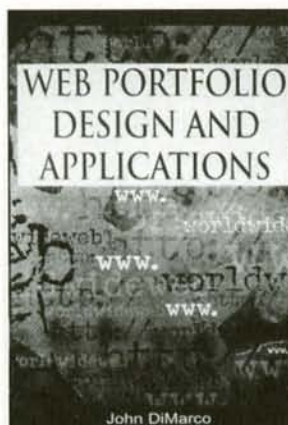
Web Portfolio Design and Applications

John DiMarco. 2006. Hershey, PA: Idea Group Publishing. [ISBN 978-1-59140-855-0. 304 pages, including references and index. \$74.95 USD (softcover).]

In the first chapter of his book, John DiMarco asks Who needs a Web portfolio? In 2007, the majority of technical writers already have at least a basic Web site. My own site may be typical. It was originally designed with a WSIWIG HTML editor as a place to share information such as the course materials for a class taught at a local college. In 2003 it was updated to add marketing materials for a published book. Because I've recently become a contract writer, the site again needs to be updated and moved into a dedicated Web development tool such as Dreamweaver. *Web portfolio design and applications* seemed the ideal book to assist with a revamp.

Web portfolios are the preferred type of e-portfolios, which are "new media products . . . delivered using a variety of electronic media" (13). A Web portfolio uses the Internet as its delivery platform. While such portfolios can be used for business purposes, the book focuses on personal use, in particular in the academic environment.

Having defined his primary audience as college undergraduates and



teachers and using his research to determine what to cover, DiMarco writes a soup-to-nuts overview of the Web portfolio process. First, 50 pages cover defining the audience, choosing content, information design, usability, and visual design, including navigation, color, and images. Well written, the overview is just enough to get a newbie with some technical savvy up to speed.

The 100 pages on using software tools for Web design, authoring, and media creation are punched up with some clever tips. DiMarco recommends Macromedia Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Flash, Freehand, Adobe Photoshop, and Audition. He suggests using Dreamweaver's timing feature to run a slide show for displaying art without having to use Flash, and provides step-by-step instructions on how to use Fireworks to splice large backgrounds for quick loading. I also bookmarked a chart of Web sample rates to choose depending on content when creating Flash files.

One chapter covers the author's own research. The first case tells of a Web portfolio program at Penn State University's Dutton E-Education Institute. All undergraduates were provided 500 MB of space. As of December 2004, one in three students had activated their personal site. Reasons given for not activating were

fear of copyright infringement (a valid concern for any writer), technical worries, and lack of knowledge of the process. By intent, this book does much to allay the last two concerns.

As for the pending revamp of my own site, I will keep this book handy for reference. If you visit, expect to see a Dreamweaver slide show tucked somewhere on-site.

Donna Ford

DONNA FORD recently self-published *Scanning for kids of all ages*, a book based on the course she taught on scanning and OCR. She is a senior member of the Connecticut chapter and serves on the chapter's board.

The Design of Sites: Patterns for Creating Winning Web Sites

Douglas K. van Duyne, James A. Landay, and Jason I. Hong. 2007. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. [ISBN 978-0-13-134555-3. 1,024 pages, including index. \$59.99 USD (softcover).]

The design of sites offers a wealth of information with over a thousand pages chock-full of tips and ideas for the Web designer. As a Web designer myself, I found every topic I could think of relating to information design/architecture, from site accessibility and internationalization, to speeding up your site and writing and managing content, to even designing for the mobile Web.

What I noticed right away as a unique feature of this book is how well it functions non-linearly. Each section could stand alone and includes references to other sections for more information. The chapters begin with a general introduction that explains how the information in this section is relevant and end with a "Take-away ideas" section. The chapters on the individual Pattern Groups and Patterns begin with