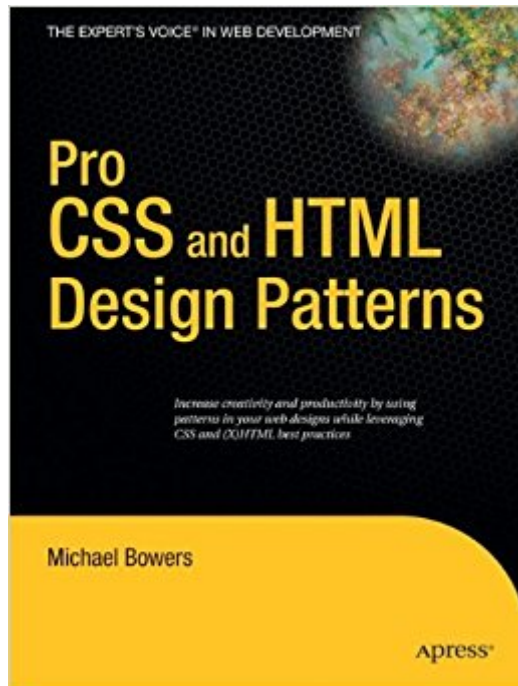




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Pro CSS And HTML Design Patterns



Synopsis

Applying design patterns to HTML and CSS allows web developers and designers to improve their work, in terms of efficiency/productivity and end results, so this is an essential book for anyone involved in the industry. As well as information on CSS and HTML best practices, this book provides the reader with all the CSS and HTML design patterns they need, to adapt for their own projects quickly and easily, along with details of exactly how each one works, and how to use them most effectively. The book is up-to-date for modern browser support, and CSS and HTML specs.

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Customer Reviews

An analogy for comparing this book to other CSS books: if other books are 2-day seminars then this book is a full fledged college course. This book takes a rigorous, organized approach to teaching you how CSS works whereas most CSS books take a "here's what you need to know" approach. It is not difficult, but it does take time to read the entire book and you cannot skip parts of the book or it won't make sense. First, if you only read pages 70-71, then you will have gotten the value of the price of the book. Michael is the first and at this point the only person that I've seen figure out an approach very similar to O-O inheritance (not CSS hierarchical inheritance). His example uses a button class and 3 sub-classes, whose rules are written button.square, button.rounded and button.go. This is an invaluable technique. Other sites have always said that "you can't do O-O inheritance in CSS", but he has come up with a simple way to do it. The difference between this book and others is that he organizes CSS into a methodology that no one else has. He organizes it

into box model type, box model extent and box model placement. These are the authors categories and not explicit CSS categories (though they can be said to be implied by the CSS standard). He then goes about showing you every combination of how these work together, why each is useful and their limitations, including browser limitations. It's very dry reading, but you get a grasp of CSS that you wouldn't get otherwise. For example, I always had difficulty with centering items in CSS, because it would work sometimes and not other times. In other books and on the web, I would find centering "hacks" that usually involved text-align: center, but never really understood why CSS didn't have a way to center items.

Pro CSS and HTML Design Patterns by Michael Bowers is an incredible resource and toolbox for any level web developer. Whether you are just beginning with CSS or are of a professional status, this book has something to offer. With over 300 different design patterns, this book is the perfect resource to solve just about every problem you face. There are patterns for every aspect of your site, and their modular nature give you the potential to combine several of them to create some very unique websites. All of this comes with the added bonus that each of these design patterns have been thoroughly tested in all major browsers. There is great attention to the details throughout each of these patterns.

Contents

This book is not broken down like your typical web development book. The first 3 chapters of this book focus solely on the foundation. The first chapter discusses CSS. This includes addressing many of the common properties and values, different types of selectors, units of measure, and addressing the cascade. Chapter 2 moved on to talk about different HTML design patterns. This section outlines the basic building blocks of any HTML document such as html, doctype, head, body, and many possible elements in between. Chapter 3 moves on to the tricky subject of CSS selectors and inheritance. This becomes important throughout the rest of the book as proper inheritance will play a big role in developing our patterns and keeping our code lean and semantic. None of these three chapters are exhaustive in nature, but they give you a solid base to work with as you read throughout the rest of the book. So, while this book can be used as a resource, if you are just beginning CSS I would recommend not skipping the first three chapters.

If ever you found yourself wishing that every single possible combination of CSS properties was documented in one comprehensive volume, the solution has just arrived. Pro CSS and HTML Design Patterns is just that, a huge guide to each and every HTML and CSS combination you could possibly think of. Floats, clearing, 6 types of box models, absolute and relative positioning - it's all there. Just as with programming, using coding conventions and understanding recurring

combinations can help speed up the entire production work-flow. I am always drawn to the page which describes a book author. Somehow, knowing a bit of background info helps me peer into their thought process as I read the book. In this case, the author Michael Bowers is an accomplished pianist and has a PhD in music theory. It is interesting, because just as notes and pauses can create song, so design elements and whitespace create page layouts. Michael has brought that same sense of composure to this book, describing the intricacies of code interaction and inheritance. He has done a great job of encapsulating many possible page layouts, through having conducted thousands of test cases, paring them down to the most stable, cross-browser compatible solutions. This has resulted in over 350 readily usable design patterns. These can be combined to create limitless possibilities for your own work. Most experienced front-end architects will find themselves agreeing with a lot of the principles that are covered in this book, and for those just starting out, it will bring you up to speed on what you need to know. There are several examples which incorporate JavaScript, but most of the book focuses on practical, real-world application of HTML and CSS, the bread and butter of all professional web developers.

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