

August 2007 Newsletter

If you are receiving this message, it means that I have either done work for you in the past, I am doing work for you now, or you have expressed interest regarding me doing work for you in the future. If you would prefer to not receive further emails, please let me know about it.

Being that it is now August, I will be sending out invoices to any of you for whom I have done work in July, or for those who have not yet paid for previous months. Please remit your payment when you have a chance.

The latest - I want to talk about a few things I have been working on recently because, for one, I think some of them are pretty cool and, for another, I would hope that maybe some of you would be interested in having them as well.

Flash Video - I would think that pretty much everybody has heard of YouTube and probably most of you have gone to their web site to view a video or two. Well, this past month I had the opportunity to work on adding a Flash (.flv) video to a website, similar to what goes on on YouTube. In preparation for this, I spent some time reviewing numerous Flash video players. Some of them have all kinds of bells and whistles (but they are expensive bells and whistles...), so I was fortunate to find a free version that has enough features to make it useful. If anybody is looking to add Flash video to their site, let me know and we can discuss it. I am in the process of setting up a demo page on my website. Stay tuned...

E-commerce - I know there are some of you who are not looking to sell stuff on your sites but, for those of you who are, I have spent some time this past month doing some research on this as well. I already have some clients who use shopping carts that charge a fee and they are fine and have lots of cool features. There are 2 free ones that I recently spent a lot of time "playing" with, however, and you might think about them if you want to have the availability to sell your wares online.

PayPal - This is one of the most popular free e-commerce solutions. I know this for a fact since I have had an account for some time and I repeatedly get fake emails asking me to give the scammers (scummers ...???) my info. Unfortunately nowadays, you know you're popular in the online world when everybody wants to scam off of you. As long as you keep away from the scammers, it is pretty simple to implement and, although there are not a ton of extras, you can set up either shopping cart items or "buy now" buttons, add shipping and/or tax and various other features. You can create a merchant account for high-volume business but you can also set up an account where you do not have to pay a monthly fee and only a small per transaction fee. When I first signed up, you had to have a PayPal account to buy something from a PayPal shopping cart but you can now pay with any credit card, even if you do not have a PayPal account of your own.

Google Checkout - This is very similar to PayPal. The user interface is almost the same but there are more features than with PayPal. Unfortunately, for now at least, you must sign up for a Google Checkout account to pay for something. I would guess it won't be long before you can pay with credit cards alone, though.

Web-based Help - Prior to starting my company, I spent some time as a technical writer and did a lot of work creating and editing HTML Help documentation. I was recently offered the opportunity to work on some Web-based Help. I haven't started it as of yet, but I have been doing some research and I found some pretty cool software that easily transforms HTML Help documentation (which I am still familiar with) into Web-based Help files. I am looking forward to getting involved in this area again. I hope to set up a demo of this as well in the near future.

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Thank you all for your business (and potential business...)

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