Just some days prior to writing this review a customer of mine asked me to spice up her website by replacing a static image with "can I have a slideshow please ? I don´t care how you do it." But as such a matter does matter to me, I started searching the web for a jQuery based slideshow plugin which not only comes with a multitude of settings to play with, but also – amongst other criteria – needs to be a popular, well supported and hence future-proof solution.

Guess what I happened to stumble across and instantly began to like for many reasons ? Yep, the Nivo Slider plugin.

While it´s easy to create a rudimentary slideshow by hand, I soon noticed that subsequent production steps can be quite challenging and overly time-consuming for a Nivo Slider newbie like me, and when you need to get your job done ASAP and don´t feel like experimenting for days, what do you need ? An ingenious utility which can conduct the whole procedure from A-Z, makes you forget about the complexity of what you´re dealing with by providing a well-organized and self-explanatory user interface, and nevertheless allows you to gain access to the extensive range of settings which the Nivo Slider plugin itself comes with.

Very fortunately the DMXZone Nivo Slider extension for Adobe Dreamweaver© happened to step in just in time, and in my opinion this one is an amazing tool which not just meets the requirements mentioned above, but comes with one particular feature which will give the buyer a well-deserved lead over the traditional "Dreamweaver is crap, Adobe is an Evil Empire, and all I need is Notepad" ignoramus :: a variety of precast CSS-based "skins" to make your slideshow look "pro" right out of the box.

What´s great about having several slideshow layouts at hand and make this extension toggle them in an instant ? Well, while demonstrating a Nivo Slider – driven slideshow to her, my customer was more than pleased to observe that her choice was based upon "show me something cool right now" rather than having to watch me code for a long while, because this feature makes it possible to use an existing array of (her !) images and apply various color combinations, navigation symbols etc. to them in seconds.

All in all it took me less than 5 minutes…

a) to figure out how the DMXZone Nivo Slider extension works and what I´m able to do with it, and…

b) to insert a great looking slideshow into the HTML page.

The following video will demonstrate how the DMXZone Nivo Slider extension can help you completing such a procedure, which could otherwise take you a very long time, in minutes:

Customizing the default appearance of a slideshow

Once a slideshow has been inserted, you certainly may want to customize its default look.

Remember the "skins" I mentioned earlier ? Each one of them is driven by two CSS files which have different "responsibilities", and to help you understand which one of them needs to be worked on to accomplish a specific task, I´d first like to explain how this extension will spread its "skins" across the file system of your local site.

1. when inserting the very first slideshow into a document, the DMXZone Nivo Slider extension will create a "Styles" folder which sits in the root directory of your local Dreamweaver site. This folder will contain the CSS file "nivo-slider.css" and another subdirectory named "nivoSlider", which in turn contains a subdirectory that´s named after the skin you picked out for your slideshow:

2. what happens when applying a different skin to your current slideshow ? If this skin has not yet been applied to another slideshow, a corresponding subdirectory will be created inside the "nivoSlider" folder as well – and as you´ll assumingly be trying out various skins in the course of time, this is what the "nivoSlider" folder might contain:
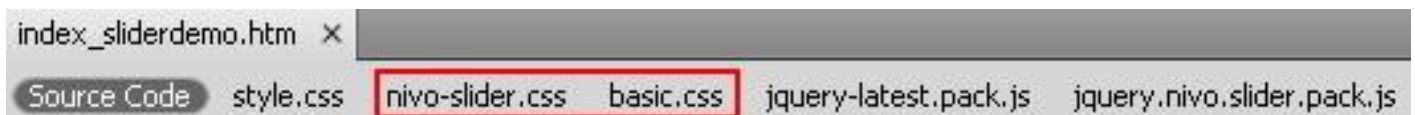

3. what´s to be found inside each "skin" folder ? Let´s have a look at what "cold" supplies:

Are you willing to subscribe to my statement that each "skin" folder will contain the same components "skinname.css" and a variety of image files which are meant to be used as navigation controls or even more ? I´m glad you are, because I´m right ! ;-)

And now it´s time to provide a rough idea about the purpose of "nivo-slider.css" and, say, "basic.css", which are both accessible from with Dreamweaver:
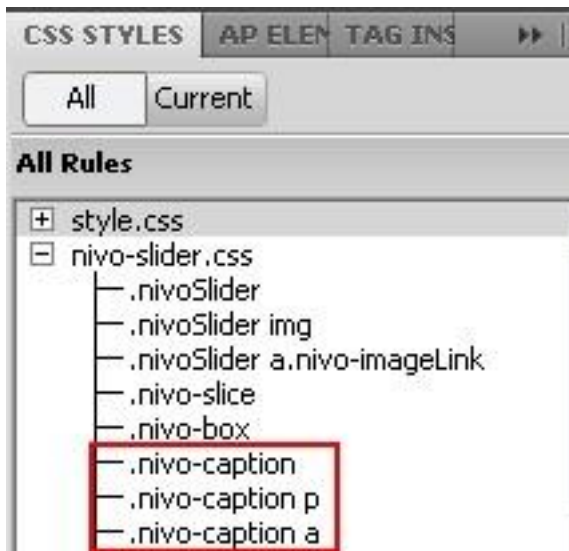

As mentioned earlier, both files will define how your slideshow looks like, however it´s important to be aware of the following distinction:

nivo-slider.css : is by default meant to let you specify some "global" settings which will be affecting all slideshows of your current Dreamweaver Site and which will basically affect those slideshow components *(slices and boxes in the slider, caption styles, control navigation styles etc.)* which "add something" to the displayed images.

basic.css :: without going into the details here, let´s just say that each skin-specific CSS file is meant to affect the way how the images themselves are displayed. Effects such as adding CSS-based rounded corners, using a certain image to create a background shadow or having some backward/forward navigation controls appear as image overlay are meant to be added/modified in this kind of file.

Example : modifying the Caption styles

If you´re like me, one of the very first details you want to adapt to your page design is the default appearance of the slideshow captions. When implementing the slideshow into the page I had no idea about where to start, but thanks to Dreamweavers awesome "Live Code" and "Live View" features I happened to identify three CSS classes starting with – please don´t laugh - "nivo-caption":

Well, although I could have come to this conclusion just by staring at these class names, I admit that I didn´t, because at this early stage I was pretty unoriented, Why am I saying this ? When starting to rework the Nivo Slider CSS files for the very first time, many of you will be in the same boat and may well be confused too. My advice: it´s an unconversant "system", which might take you a while to get into, and in case of hardship Dreamweavers "Live Code" and "Live View" features are indeed incredibly helpful.

That´s it, and I hope you enjoyed this review !