

Introduction

The new wave of buzz-word technologies has shaken the web community once again "splashing" old-timers and newbies alike with their share of hype and confusion.

There is no surprise in the fact that some of the cool "new" ideas will turn up as nothing but marketing fluff. History repeats itself: once again the "mummies" are being "re-painted", re-labeled, and resold as something brand-new and out of this World.

At the same time some of the "re-invented" technologies, which have been previously used just occasionally have now been re-evaluated and put to work by many developers.

It is mainly due to the improved browser support as well as affordable prices on high speed Internet and higher end machines that we can now dig out those "dusty old tricks" waiting on their shelves for the better times.

One of those "new technologies" is the **designMode** DHTML feature or **MSHTML** editor as it is called in IE. It has been implemented in Internet Explorer since version 5. Using this feature you can in no time build your own Rich Text editor creating an illusion of a desktop application being embedded into your web page.

Although the feature has been around for a few years it hasn't been used as often as it could be for a very apparent reason: the lack of support by browsers other than Internet Explorer (PC only).

A year ago, or so, guys at Mozilla have decided that the feature was too sexy not to include in the new foxy Firefox, the version 1.0.2 has come out with the **designMode** built-in.

Things got even better when Opera 9 beta hit the market with the support for the feature. Although still buggy and in the beta, the chances are the new Opera will have the full **designMode** support. This makes it "three"! There are still Safari (IMHO not a browser :-)) and Internet Explorer for Macintosh, but with the long-awaited departure of the latter in January 2006 and the great new Firefox for Mac, Safari is no longer a threat.

With the three major browsers now supporting the feature we can now safely put it into our toolbox.

In this series of articles we will use the **designMode** feature to build an online Rich Text editor. We will heavily rely on CSS to mimic desktop application interface and at the end we will use AJAX to build the functionality for sending the created "document" as an email attachment, saving it to the server and to the hard drive.

This is a basic HTML editor, if you want an advanced out of the box editor please take a look at [Advanced HTML Editor](#) from DMXzone.

Creating Interface

Our interface will consist of two main sections: the toolbar containing all the buttons at the top of the page and a blank iframe right below it. Clicking a button will execute some code modifying the document in the iframe.

1. In Dreamweaver create and save a new document.
2. Click Page Properties button on the Properties Inspector and set all margin values to 0:
- 3.

Thanks for your interest in the "Building Rich Text Editor. Part I " article by Alex July. To purchase the full article [click here](#)