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JavaScript and jQuery
for Designers
Lesson 2: Setting Up Plugins

Michael Slater, CEO
Christopher Haupt, CTO
course-support@webvanta.com
888.670.6793

www.webvanta.com

Welcome!

- Four sessions
  - 1: JavaScript & jQuery Basics
  - **2: Setting Up Plugins**
  - 3: Making Forms Work Well
  - 4: Getting Fancy
- Course Portal has all the links you need
  - www.online-web-courses.com
  - You need your personal login

Questions

- Ask questions via chat during the live course

- Join the discussion group

  – Link at the course portal

- Email us

  – course-support@webvanta.com

  – *Please use the discussion group* for non-private questions

Michael Slater
Cofounder & CEO

Christopher Haupt
Cofounder & CTO

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Goals for This Lesson

- Show how to find, download, and install jQuery plugins
- Provide basic cookbook you can use to create most of the common effects
  - Tabs
  - Slideshow
  - Slider
  - Accordion
  - Dialog
  - Lightbox

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Building Tabs (Homework Solution)

- There are plugins available to create tabs, which you may want to use

- Simple tabs aren't hard to write from scratch

- Many approaches to the problem

- See sample file tabs.html for one simple approach

What is a jQuery Plugin?

- A chunk of software written in JavaScript and jQuery and packaged up in a conventional way

- Follows one of jQuery's usage patterns and calling conventions

- May be accompanied with sample CSS files and images to create a visual design

- Vast majority are open-source

Choosing Plugins

- Search directories
  - http://archive.plugins.jquery.com/
- Google "jquery plugin for xxxxx"
- Look for recommendations
- Look for active development and sizable community
- Quality control is entirely up the developer's whims, and there is often little or no support
- Bar for publishing a plug is very low, so there's lots of junk

Installing Plugins

- There is no real "installation", and plugins don't really "plug in" to anything
  - Just a chunk of JavaScript code you load after jQuery is loaded
- Once the code is there, it provides you new capabilities, typically a new set of actions you can invoke on elements
- May also require CSS and image files
- Your HTML must follow the expected structure

Example: Slideshow

- All this is much simpler in concrete than in the abstract!

- "Cycle" is a very widely used, basic plugin
  - http://www.malsup.com/jquery/cycle/

- Basic setup is simplicity itself
  - Use options to change from default behavior

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Fancy Slideshows: Sliders

- Common technique to get maximum use from top-of-page area

- Content can be just images, or any HTML

- Position indicator/image selector optional

- Forward-back controls optional

- Example: NivoSlider

  – http://nivo.dev7studios.com/

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jQuery UI

- Rich library of UI components, built on top of jQuery

  – http://jqueryui.com/

- Theming system to create consistent, customizable visual appearance for all components

  – http://jqueryui.com/themeroller/

- Custom JavaScript builder so you can select just the features you need

  – http://jqueryui.com/download

Tabs Revisited

- jQuery UI tabs component provides a simple, robust, styled solution

  – Much more code than our simple example, but more capable, extensible, and configurable

  – jQuery UI provides all the code, so although there's much more of it, you don't have to create it

- http://jqueryui.com/demos/tabs/

Accordion

- A very useful device for presenting lots of information in a small space, when the info is organized into categories

- Simple to set up, once you get the HTML markup right

- http://jqueryui.com/demos/accordion/

Dialog

- Simulates a dialog box, though that is just an illusion

  - A floating window that contains a title bar and a content area

  - It is just a region of the page, sitting on top of the other content, and masking out the rest of the page

- http://jqueryui.com/demos/dialog/

Colorbox

- A "lightbox" is just a fancy dialog

- Lightbox plugins provide a variety of capabilities to display content in the dialog

- "Colorbox" is a versatile and widely used plugin
  - Automatically create slideshows from a set of photos that share a classname
  - Load content from a hidden region of the page
  - Load content from another page
  - http://jacklmoore.com/colorbox/

More Great Plugins

- Carousel (jCarousel)

    – http://sorgalla.com/jcarousel/

- Event Calendar (FullCalendar)

    – http://arshaw.com/fullcalendar/

- Photo Gallery (Galleriffic)

    – http://www.twospy.com/galleriffic/

- Google Maps (jquery-ui-map)

    – http://code.google.com/p/jquery-ui-map/

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Troubleshooting

- Your code isn't always going to work the first time!
  - Troubleshooting is as important as coding
- Checklist
  - Any errors in the JavaScript console?
  - Are the required JavaScript files being loaded?
  - Is the HTML structured how the plugin expects?
  - Is any required CSS being loaded?
  - Are any required images being loaded?
  - Is the plugin being invoked on the correct element?

Homework

For any of the following features, choose a plugin and build an example:

1. Frequently-asked questions

2. Photo gallery

3. Product detail page with specs, reviews, and photos

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