



# Web 2 Market Website Design & Configuration Questionnaire and Guide

At Web 2 Market, our web development philosophy is to create simple, clean sites with obvious navigation, a consistent layout, and, most importantly, the information your customers are looking for. We want to make your customers' visits to your web site as trouble free as possible. That all begins with a good site design.

Answering the questions in this questionnaire will help us to determine how to design your website. We will use the information you provide here as a first step in designing the look and feel of your web site. We will highlight many of the key elements of an e-commerce site, specifically an AbleCommerce e-commerce site, and provide you with several configuration/design options. We will also highlight some common customizations to the AbleCommerce templates that many of our customers find useful.

In addition to the questions, we will attempt to explain some of the more confusing areas of deciding on a site design, like Page Size, Alignment, etc. We cannot cover everything here, but at the end of the questionnaire, we have a list of several useful links if you want to learn more. Also searching the web will provide countless sites with tips and ideas about web site design.

Also included in this questionnaire is a series of questions regarding the configuration of your AbleCommerce web site. If you are requesting a non-AbleCommerce site, please disregard these sections. For AbleCommerce customers, filling out the entire questionnaire will help us to quickly design and configure your site to meet your individual needs.

Please keep in mind, this questionnaire is a guide to help you help us to design and configure your web site. Some questions you may not be able to answer and some you may not understand. If you find yourself struggling with a question, please continue with the next one, or give us a call. When we contact you to discuss the design and finalize your AbleCommerce configuration, we will go over everything in this questionnaire in detail to make sure that everything is correctly configured to meet your business needs.

Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Web 2 Market at (708) 653-3100. When you are finished, please return this to us as soon as possible so we can begin the process of creating and configuring your new web site. Thanks.



# Company Information

Please take a few minutes to fill in the company information below so we can keep all of our records together. Thank you for your cooperation.

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Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Store Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Web Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Store Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Section I

General Site Design

When we design a website, we can design it so that it is fixed at a specific size or so that it expands to fill the entire page. Depending on your content and your target customers, one option may work better for you than the other. How should you determine the size that your site should be designed?

Once upon a time, most monitors had a standard resolution of 640 x 480 pixels and websites that wanted to display the best for the greatest number of visitors were designed to fit in a window of that size. As monitors become bigger and cheaper, more people are able to use higher resolutions. Over the years years, the standard minimum resolution increased to 800 x 600 pixels and as larger monitors become increasingly popular, the trend is toward 1024 x 768 and even larger displays. A quick search of the web shows that in January of 2004 about 40% of users were using screen resolutions of 800 x 600 or less. Current statistics (as of January 2009) show that number has dropped to less than 4% while 1024 x 768 or greater has jumped from about 55% in 2004 to 93% in January 2009 ([http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers\\_display.asp](http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers_display.asp)).

However, just because more and more people are viewing the web at resolutions of 1024 x 768 does not mean that everyone is. Even those customers that have screen resolutions of 1024 x 768 (or even larger) may not have their browser window maximized. Generally, it is a good idea to design a web site so that it will display fine on the lowest resolution site that your visitors will have. Traditionally, this was 800 x 600, but in recent years the trend has swung to designing for 1024 x 768 resolutions. However, if your business is aimed at customers who tend to be less technically advanced, you may still want to consider a site design for 800 x 600 resolutions. Many news and technology sites (see [www.dell.com](http://www.dell.com), [www.espn.com](http://www.espn.com), [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com), and [www.cnet.com](http://www.cnet.com)) are currently designed for 1024x768 resolutions, however most retail sites are still designed for 800x600 resolutions (see [www.walmart.com](http://www.walmart.com)), however more and more retail sites are designed for 1024 x 768 resolutions: [www.target.com](http://www.target.com) (was 800 x 600 in 2006, but is now 1024 x 768), [www.buy.com](http://www.buy.com), [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com), [www.att.com](http://www.att.com), and [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com).

One way to avoid resolution constraints completely is to design your site so that it expands to fill the entire screen regardless of the resolution. The major downside to designing your site like this is formatting. As the page is resized, text and images will rearrange to fill the available space. Unfortunately, this can drastically change the way a site appears depending on the customer's screen resolution. However, having an expanding site design allows you the flexibility to have product images that do not have to conform to a standard size. Some clients find this style of site to be untidy while others appreciate the flexibility. Usually expanding sites work best when you have a lot of content and information to display and aren't quite as concerned with appearance. Several examples of sites that use stretch-to-fit designs are [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org), [www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com).

If you have questions about page dimensions and alignments, see the examples in the appendix or visit some of the links provided. If you still have questions, feel free to contact Web 2 Market.

- Site Dimensions – What size do you want your site designed? *See the appendix for examples.*  
..... 800 x 600 [ ]  
..... 1024 x 768 – recommended [ ]  
..... Stretch-to-Fit [ ]  
..... Other \_\_\_\_\_



**Site Alignment:** If you selected 800 x 600 or 1024 x 768 above, you can now select how you want the page aligned in the browser window. You have several choices depending on the look and feel you want to go with on your site. Horizontally, you can have your page centered (with equal margins on each side) or aligned to the left or right side of the window. Center and Left aligned are the most common choices. Vertically, you can have your page set to fill the screen from top to bottom; start at the top and only expand downward as far as the content requires; or have the page sit in the middle of the window. NOTE: These settings are mainly for pages with content that is not long enough to fill the browser window.

- 2. Site Alignment – Choose an alignment for your site. *See the appendix for examples.*
  - ..... Centered Horizontally / Fill 100% Vertically [ ]
  - ..... Centered Horizontally / Top Align Vertically – recommended [ ]
  - ..... Centered Horizontally / Middle Align Vertically [ ]
  - ..... Left Horizontally / Fill 100% Vertically [ ]
  - ..... Left Horizontally / Top Align Vertically [ ]
  - ..... Left Horizontally / Middle Align Vertically (uncommon) [ ]
  - ..... Right Horizontally / Fill 100% Vertically (uncommon) [ ]
  - ..... Right Horizontally / Top Align Vertically (uncommon) [ ]
  - ..... Right Horizontally / Middle Align Vertically (uncommon) [ ]

**Margins:** When there is enough content on a page to fill a browser window you may want to force a margin around the content, specifically at the top and bottom of the page. This can give the impression that the web page is floating over a background, particularly if you have the page center aligned horizontally.

- 3. Margins – Enter Yes or No if you want any of the margins below, or if you know exactly how big of a margin you want, enter the size below. *See the appendix for examples.*
  - ..... Top Margin \_\_\_\_\_
  - ..... Bottom Margin \_\_\_\_\_
  - ..... Left Margin (uncommon) \_\_\_\_\_
  - ..... Right Margin (uncommon) \_\_\_\_\_

## Navigation and Component Layout

Most of the sites we design are e-commerce sites designed for AbleCommerce; however, most of the information below also applies to non-AbleCommerce sites. The most important part of your web site is providing an understandable site that your customers can easily navigate. With non-AbleCommerce sites we have a lot more flexibility in the design, however many of these layout tips are important to apply to non-AbleCommerce sites. For AbleCommerce sites, the site must work within the AbleCommerce framework and the constraints of HTML (the web's programming language). We have a lot of flexibility within this framework, but there are a few limitations.

AbleCommerce sites must be laid out in a relatively rectangular pattern. Because the site is designed in HTML, it is laid out in a series of invisible tables. The tables have rectangular cells laid out in rows and columns. Graphics can be used to soften these edges and give the appearance of curves. The main table of AbleCommerce has six main cells:

- Row 1:  
Cell 1 - Header Banner
- Row 2:  
Cell 2 - Top Navigation
- Row 3:  
Cell 3 - Left Navigation  
Cell 4 - Main Content  
Cell 5 - Right Navigation
- Row 4:  
Cell 6 - Footer

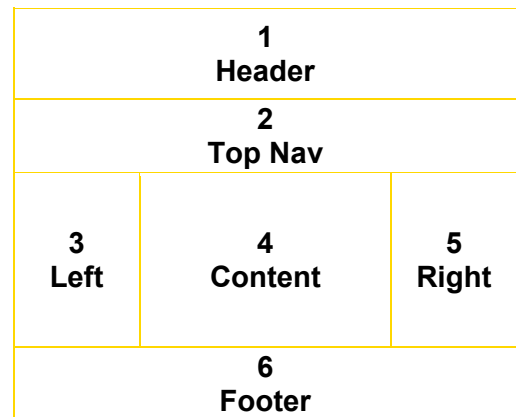


Figure 1

Each of these cells can be customized to look exactly how you want, and they are just the default layout, a good guideline. And you don't have to include all of the cells here. In fact, many of our clients choose not to include the Right Navigation cell and a few chose to hide both the Left and Right Navigation cells. A few examples of sites where you can easily see various layouts using these cells, especially the Right and Left navigation panels, are:

<http://www.sweetservices.com>  
<http://www.williamsbrewing.com>  
<http://www.wavewerks.com>  
<http://www.expressyourselfonline.com>  
<http://www.bigfireworksoutlet.com>

Again, within the constraints of AbleCommerce and HTML we have a lot of flexibility. Here are a few other sites that show how the different designs can be used:

<http://www.celticseasalt.com>  
<http://www.elitepetwholesalers.com>  
<http://www.naturalhealthpractice.com>  
<http://www.scooterworks.com>  
<http://www.earthy.com>  
<http://www.americanscreeningcorp.com>  
<http://www.rossipasta.com>  
<http://www.etrucktoys.com>



With non-AbleCommerce sites there is much more flexibility allowed in the layout. Sites can be designed with much more non-standard or organic layouts. We can design AbleCommerce sites that vary greatly from the default layouts, however non-standard designs may require a lot more work and customization of AbleCommerce.

One other thing that we do not do on a standard site is incorporate Flash. Because AbleCommerce was designed with HTML code, incorporating Flash is a very large customization that is not included in a standard quote. We can however, include Flash components, like animations and simple navigation. See <http://www.bigfireworksoutlet.com> for an example of incorporating a Flash animation on the homepage. Non-AbleCommerce web sites can include more Flash and can incorporate Flash easier, but again, Flash animations are not included in standard design quotes. If you would like more information about incorporating Flash components in your site, please call or e-mail Web 2 Market.

OK. Now that we have that out of the way, here are a few questions to consider when deciding on the look and feel of your site. Please answer these questions as well as you can, they will give us a good idea of the direction we should take your site. If you do not know exactly what you want, let us know other web sites that you like or dislike and why. We will work from those ideas to get something you are happy with. The more detail you can provide here, however, the quicker the design process will be. Feel free to use more space than we have provided. More detail is better.

**Site Designs and Graphics:**

**1. Company Logo and/or Artwork**

Do you have a company logo or artwork that you are using on your current website or in printed material? Do you want to carry the logo, designs, and color scheme through to your new website? We will need you to forward the logos/images to us in either digital format (preferred) or by mail. We also have the ability to create a new logo or custom graphics.

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**2. What color scheme do you want to use?**

Typically, a web site should match the colors in the company logo and/or the colors in any current marketing materials or catalogs. You do not have to match these colors, but doing so will help build company identity. If you have a catalog or any marketing materials that you would like us to work from, please send them to us via mail, e-mail, or point us to a web site where we can view/download them. If you want to mail us information, contact your W2M Designer for the address to get your materials to us the quickest.

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**3. What general feel do you want your site to have?**

This could be a series of descriptive words, like 'clean, corporate, sleek' OR 'soft, inviting, warm'. Different companies want to portray a certain feel when visitors come to their site. It is important that the feel of your site match your company. A gardening site would not necessarily want a clean, sleek look, but an electronics site would not necessarily want a rustic, natural feel.

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4. **Are there other web sites which you like the look and feel?**

A great gauge of how your site should look is other sites on the internet. Browse through a few sites (competitors are a good source of industry designs) and let us know a few that you like. We will try to incorporate ideas and aspects of those sites into your design without looking like it is a copy. You will get your own unique design. In addition, if you have any sites that you definitely do not like, it always helps to see what not to do, too.

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**Navigation and AbleCommerce Specific Features:** AbleCommerce already has many useful navigation features built in. For most of them, it is a matter of positioning and configuring the built in features so they display the information you want. For non-AbleCommerce sites, we can replicate many of the navigation features in AbleCommerce or design completely new navigation structures and tools.

5. **Page Header** – The Page Header (Cell 1 in *Figure 1* above) appears on every page in your site. Most customers will put their logo and company name here. AbleCommerce also includes by default links to the following pages: Login, Account, Wishlist, Basket, and Admin (for logged in admin users) as well as a Search Box. Please let us know any other information you would like to appear in this header.

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6. **Top Navigation** – What links do you want to include in your top navigation bar (Cell 2 in *Figure 1* above). Keep in mind that these links must fit into the width of the page determined in the above section. Adding more links will require smaller sized text. By default AbleCommerce includes links to the following pages: Home, Product Finder, Advanced Search, and Contact Us.

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<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

7. **Page Footer** – The Page Footer (Cell 6 in *Figure 1* above) also appears on every page in your site. Most customers will put their contact information, copyright statement, and links to informational pages, like About Us, Privacy Policy, etc. Please let us know the information you would like to appear in this footer. By default AbleCommerce includes links to Home, Search, and a copyright statement.

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8. What AbleCommerce features do you want to enable, and where do you want them displayed? This mainly refers to the controls available in the right and left sidebars. AbleCommerce 7 has many controls that can be included in the left and right sidebars. Below are some of the more popular ones, but you may want to contact us to find out more about your options. Please select the panels you want to display on each side and the order in which you want them to appear. NOTE: Keep in mind that different pages within AbleCommerce can have different controls, so please provide any details if there are controls you only want to appear for certain pages, e.g. Featured Products may only display on the home page.

**Left Navigation** (Cell 3 in *Figure 1* above):

- .....Basket Shipping Estimate [ ]
- ..... Category Drop Down List [ ]
- ..... Category Search [ ]
- ..... Featured Category Items [ ]
- ..... Featured Products Grid [ ]
- ..... Mini Basket [ ]
- ..... More Category Items [ ]
- ..... Popular Products Dialog [ ]
- ..... Product Accessories Grid [ ]
- ..... Product Assets [ ]
- ..... Product Reviews Panel [ ]
- ..... Product Tell A Friend [ ]
- ..... Recently Viewed [ ]
- ..... Related Products [ ]
- ..... Similar Products [ ]
- ..... Simple Category List [ ]
- ..... Simple Search [ ]
- ..... Subscribe To Email List [ ]
- ..... Wishlist Search [ ]
- ..... Other Panels/Information (May Require Customization)

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**Right Navigation** (Cell 5 in *Figure 1* above):

- .....Basket Shipping Estimate [ ]
- ..... Category Drop Down List [ ]
- ..... Category Search [ ]
- ..... Featured Category Items [ ]
- ..... Featured Products Grid [ ]
- ..... Mini Basket [ ]
- ..... More Category Items [ ]
- ..... Popular Products Dialog [ ]
- ..... Product Accessories Grid [ ]
- ..... Product Assets [ ]
- ..... Product Reviews Panel [ ]
- ..... Product Tell A Friend [ ]
- ..... Recently Viewed [ ]
- ..... Related Products [ ]
- ..... Similar Products [ ]









# APPENDIX

## Information, Examples, and Additional Resources

# Site Dimension Examples



**800 x 600 formatted site in a 1024 x 768 browser window.**



**The same site stretched to fit the 1024 x 768 browser window.**



**800 x 600 formatted site in a 1280 x 1024 browser window.**



**The same site stretched to fit the 1280 x 1024 browser window.**

NOTE: A 1024 x 768 formatted site will look similar to the top left image on screens that are larger than 1024 x 768 and similar to the top right image on 1024 x 768 screens. On 800 x 600 screens, a 1024 x 768 formatted site will require horizontal scrolling. The bottom images illustrate how fixed-width formatting remains consistent on larger monitors while stretch-to-fit formatting changes with the size of the browser window.

# Page Alignment Examples (Centered)



**Centered Horizontally**  
**Fill 100% Vertically**



**Centered Horizontally**  
**Top Align Vertically**



**Centered Horizontally**  
**Middle Align Vertically**

# Page Alignment Examples (Left Aligned)



**Left Horizontally**  
**Fill 100% Vertically**



**Left Horizontally**  
**Top Align Vertically**



**Left Horizontally**  
**Middle Align Vertically**

# Page Alignment Examples (Right Aligned - uncommon)



**Right Horizontally  
Fill 100% Vertically**



**Right Horizontally  
Top Align Vertically**



**Right Horizontally  
Middle Align Vertically**

# Margins



Top No Margin



Bottom No Margin



Top Margin



Bottom Margin



## Example Navigational Links

Several areas throughout AbleCommerce provide sections where you can enter Navigational Links to other AbleCommerce pages. Below is a list of possible locations that you can link to. This list will be helpful when deciding what links to include in your Top Navigation, Left Navigation Links Panel, Right Navigation Links Panel, Header, or Footer.

\* Denotes pages that require a Web 2 Market enhancement or plugin.

- **Standard AbleCommerce Pages** – These pages are standard AbleCommerce pages that you can link to in your navigation.
  - o Address Manager – Manage the customer’s address book.
  - o Change Username/Password – Change the user’s Username and/or password – redirects to Login for anonymous users.
  - o Checkout – Begin the checkout process.
  - o Contact Us – Company contact information.
  - o Find Wishlist – Search for other customer wishlists.
  - o Forgot Password – Page allows customers to request a forgotten password by entering their email address.
  - o Home Page – The store’s home page.
  - o Login – Allows existing customers to log in to their account. Also provides registration and forgot password forms if enabled.
  - o Logout – Logs the customer out of their account.
  - o My Account – Shows the customer their account summary.
  - o My Basket – Shows the customer the items in their current shopping basket.
  - o My Wishlist – Shows the customer’s wishlist management page.
  - o Order History – Shows the customer’s order history.
  - o Quick Order \* - Allows the customer to quickly order multiple items by SKU (with W2M Quick Order Plugin).
  - o Search – Search for products, categories, webpages, and links.
  - o Subscribe to Email List - Lets customers sign up to receive emails.

- **Other AbleCommerce Pages** – These pages depend on your AbleCommerce inventory, categories, webpages, and links.
  - o Categories – You can link to individual Categories.
  - o Links – You can link to any of your custom Links.
  - o Products – You can link to individual Products.
  - o Webpages – You can link to any of your custom Webpages.
  
- **Suggested Webpages** – These are common webpages that companies like to include with their store. You may want to include some of these on your store. You will have to provide the content for any pages that you want.
  - o About Us
  - o Become a Member
  - o Contact Us
  - o Customer Reviews
  - o Customer Service
  - o Disclaimers
  - o FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions
  - o Guarantee
  - o Help Center
  - o Join a Mailing List
  - o Letters of Recommendation
  - o Link to Additional Resources
  - o Link to Associate Company Website(s)
  - o Link to your other Company Website(s) – like Forums, Blogs, etc.
  - o Mission Statement
  - o Partners
  - o Physical Store Information
  - o Portfolio of Clients
  - o Privacy Policy
  - o Return Policy
  - o Shipping Policy
  - o Technical Support
  - o Testimonials
  - o Warranties



## AbleCommerce 7 Features

This guide contains some of the items that you may want to consider when deciding on features to include and the site design.

A more complete list of features is available here:

<http://www.web2market.com/AbleCommerce-7-C41.aspx>

NOTE: This list is not complete. Continuous development and enhancements to AbleCommerce result in new features being added all the time. For the latest information, you can call or e-mail Web 2 Market.

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### ***Custom Fields:***

- You can add custom fields to hold product specific data. For instance, like Material or Voltage.

### ***Themes:***

- Use themes to control the look of your site. You can associate different themes with a store, a category, or a particular product or webpage.

### ***Wishlist:***

- Your customers can keep track of items they want to buy in the future in wishlists. They can have multiple wishlists and can send wishlists to friends.

### ***E-mail to Friend:***

- Your customers can automatically e-mail a link to the current product to friends along with a personal message.

### ***Related Products and Product Accessories:***

- AbleCommerce can automatically display links to related products or suggested accessories.

### ***Vendors:***

- All products in your catalog can have an associated vendor. You can then report on products as sold by vendor. You can also notify vendors when their products are ordered for drop-ship capabilities.

### ***Coupons:***

- Offer special incentives to your customers using the basket coupon feature.

### ***Gift Wrap:***

- Gift wrapping system allows you to define the different styles of wrap available for your products. Wrapping can be associated with a fee on a per-style basis and can be associated with a tax code if desired. The gift-wrap choices, including images, will be displayed for the customer at checkout.



## ***ESD - Electronic Software Delivery:***

- AbleCommerce 5 can now keep track of electronic files sold via download (programs, e-books, music, etc.). The sophisticated capabilities include an email manager, license manager, and file upload manager. It will automate tasks such as product installation readme's, download limits and time-outs, and emailing of software license keys.

## ***Kitting - Selling of multiple products:***

- Kitting allows multiple products to be sold together in a package. Multiple components can be attached to each kit that allows very flexible configurations and customer options. Some examples of product kitting are gift baskets, computer systems, and items with add-ons or accessories.

## ***Payment Methods:***

- AbleCommerce has built-in payment options for: American Express, Carte Blanche, Discover, Fax Order, Mastercard, Call Me, Diners Club, en Route, JCB, Visa, Purchase Orders (New in 5.0), PayPal (New in 5.0)

## ***Customer Groups:***

- Membership groups allow for any number of pricing levels. An example might be Wholesale customers, or Retailers. Groups can have specialized pricing or payment methods.

## ***Warehouses:***

- Configure the Warehouse (ship from) locations for your products. When you add a product into inventory, you can select the ship from location. When shipping is calculated, the ship from addresses are used to determine the available methods and rates. If an order contains products shipped from different warehouses, the order will be broken into multiple shipments grouped by the ship from location. Each shipment will be charged shipping fees separately. In this scenario, it is possible for different shipping methods to be used for each shipment.

## Additional Resources

If you search the web, there are tons of resources about web site design. Below are some links to some excellent resources.

- **AbleCommerce**

- o <http://www.ablecommerce.com> – AbleCommerce Home Page
- o <http://help.ablecommerce.com> – AbleCommerce Help
- o <http://forums.ablecommerce.com> – AbleCommerce Community Forums
- o <http://topsites.ablecommerce.com> – A directory of stores that use AbleCommerce.

- **Web 2 Market**

- o <http://www.web2market.com> – Web 2 Market Home Page
- o <http://www.web2market.com/AbleCommerce-7-Plugins-C37.aspx> - W2M AbleCommerce Plugins and Enhancements

- **Web Design Resources**

- o <http://www.w3schools.com> – W3 Schools Web Developer Community
- o <http://www.webstyleguide.com> – Web Style Guide
- o <http://www.wpdfd.com> – Web Page Design for Designers
- o <http://www.webdesignfromscratch.com> – Web Design From Scratch
- o <http://www.digital-web.com> – Digital Web Magazine
- o <http://webdesign.about.com/od/htmlxhtmltutorials> - About.com HTML/Web Design

- **Browser & Display Statistics**

- o <http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/default.asp> - W3Schools Browsers Home
- o [http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers\\_stats.asp](http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers_stats.asp) - W3 Schools Browser Statistics
- o <http://www.upsdell.com/BrowserNews/stat.htm> - Browser News - Statistics
- o [http://www.digital-web.com/articles/designing\\_for\\_the\\_web](http://www.digital-web.com/articles/designing_for_the_web) - Digital Web - Designing for the Web