



Flash for Programmers

James Smith

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Flash for Programmers is a serious book for serious Flash developers. It is NOT just another marketing driven, "Learn Flash in 24 hours for dummies" offering. It basically shows how to use Flash for practical, real-world applications. To quote the preface:

"I call this book 'Flash for Programmers', but it is really not just for programmers, at least not in the strictest sense. It is for anyone who wants to use Flash for utilitarian purposes, as opposed to frivolous ones. It is aimed at 'programmers' who have not used Flash before but have belatedly realised its usefulness in authoring data-driven websites, as well as existing Flash 'designers' who have, well, belatedly realised its usefulness in authoring data-driven websites..."

The opening section covers the basics of Flash programming, with neophytes and designers with little programming experience specifically in mind. Experienced Flashers can probably skip this. There then follows a detailed section on how to develop a robust and straightforward programming architecture REGARDLESS of the server configuration chosen. This is an important point – Flash movies support any combination of server side language and database, the question of which to use when authoring data-driven Flash movies is no more relevant than asking what server configuration supports your own choice of browser.

The two main programming sections form the bulk of the book and cover the example movie and component projects that comprise the accompanying source distribution. These projects cover a wide variety of Internet related topics. To quote the marketing schpeil on the back cover:

"Learn how to...

- * Seamlessly communicate with ANY server side language including Perl, PHP, ASP and Java.
- * Improve navigation and user input without the need for lengthy JavaScript or complex HTML.
- * Allow for the easy and intuitive retrieval, manipulation and submittal of dynamic data sets.
- * Create compelling graphical representations including stunning 3D graphs.
- * Write object oriented, extensible Flash applications for the real world."

Finally, there's an extensive appendix covering many subjects including Flash class inheritance, profiling, communicating with servers over HTTPS, packaging component extensions – the list goes on and on.

All in all, this book is probably the most comprehensive guide to modern Flash programming yet published.

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