

An Introduction.

What This Guide Is About

The following sections provide you with a general overview of what this guide is about. You probably don't want to read the guide from beginning to end, so this will help you find the specific topics that are of interest to you.

There are two different versions of Xara Web Designer, so we will also provide a point-by-point overview of the differences between these.

Web Design

Things were different, but rarely better, when it came to computer technology in the past. It used to be necessary to distinguish between "design", i.e. a website's appearance, and "technical" aspects, i.e. producing clean HTML code. Both imagination and technical know-how were required to reach a satisfactory level of ability in both areas.

Today, Xara Web Designer offers a significantly easier approach to creating websites. You no longer need to figure out how to realize design ideas in streamlined HTML code — Xara Web Designer automatically generates the code for you. Today, all you need are ideas. And even these aren't entirely necessary thanks to the templates included with the program, which offer a variety of design suggestions which can be implemented right away.

About This Book

The purpose of this guide is to show you how best to use Xara Web Designer to create your very own website. Whether for beginners who are looking for a quick introduction or advanced users who are looking for answers to very specific questions, this guide has something for everyone. No prior knowledge is required, so you can get started right away.

In the first chapter, we will provide you with an overview of the program installation process and the basic working method (see page 11). In the second chapter we will deal with the various working techniques (see page 19). These first two chapters are intended to familiarize you with Xara Web Designer.

These are followed by a chapter about developing concepts for websites (see page 65). After all, a good concept is half the work when creating a website. At the end of this chapter, we explain the quickest way to implement (see page 91) this concept. We will do this by taking one of the included templates and working with it to create a unique, customized website.

Then we'll get a bit more ambitious and create (see page 185) a website from scratch. To do this, we will make good use of the information presented in the preceding chapters. We recommend reading the "easier" chapters first before trying specialized designs such as pop-ups.

Speaking of pop-ups, both these and mouse-over effects are among the most important objectives for web designers, which is why we've devoted (see page 235) an entire chapter to them. The same goes for photos. A website without pictures come across as sterile and unattractive, much like a room without windows. So we've given them their own chapter (see page 253) as well.

No one is alone on the Internet, which is why we've included a section explaining how to link (see page 279) your website to the rest of the online world. We will show you, for example, how to embed YouTube videos and other sites into your website. To do this we'll use the included "widgets".

We will then cover Flash animations (see page 297), which can be added by using placeholders, much like widgets. This concerns (almost) everything that moves on a website.

And of course, for anyone interested in designing commercial websites, a chapter about online shops is a must (see page 327). Once the website is finished and online, i.e. can be found on the Internet, the next goal is to get as many visitors as possible. To provide assistance with this, we've created a separate chapter on search engine optimization (see page 361).

The final chapter deals with some important legal issues that you should be aware of to avoid receiving any nasty letters from lawyers (see page 377). A glossary is also provided to help find the most important technical terms (see page 381).

A note about the illustrations in the book: They show, for the most part, the program version Xara Web Designer Premium and were created using Xara Designer Pro, the "big brother" of all Web Designer programs.

Special Features in the Premium Version

With the normal version of Xara Web Designer you can perform most of the editing techniques described in this book. However, some features are only available in the Premium version. We will let you know if a certain procedure is not possible in the standard version of Xara Web Designer.

To give you an overview of both versions, we have provided a summarized list of all the features that are exclusively available in Xara Web Designer Premium:

- **Website variants** (see page 229) for optimal display on large monitors, medium-sized tablets and small smartphones
- **Animated objects** (see page 251), e.g. buttons that jump or fly in
- **Fixed and automatically-expanding objects** (see page 170), e.g. floating navigation bars
- **Flash or GIF animations** (see page 297)
- **Presentations**
- **Freehand and Brush Tool** (see page 30) for free drawing
- **Extrude** (see page 56), **bevel** (see page 54) **and mould tools** (see page 55) for creating three-dimensional effects
- **Red Eye Tool** (see page 267) **and Panorama Tool** for editing photos

- **Live Effects Tool** (see page 46) for more complex image editing
- **Edge feathering feature**
- **Print feature**
- **Screenshot feature**
- **Search & Replace** in Text Tool (see page 41)
- **Combine Shapes** feature (ARRANGE menu)
- **Advanced Insert Options** (EDIT menu)
- **Line and Frame Gallery** (see page 299)
- A range of **FTP options** including the option of adding several profiles
- **Direct import of graphics online**
- **More fills** and more options for using fill types
- **More transparency** (see page 51) and more options for using transparency types
- **More color models** and the option to create named colors
- Support for **header code** and **sitemaps** (see page 367)
- **Playback of H.264 videos** using an HTML5 player
- **HTML5 vector graphic export**

Note: MAGIX regularly offers special deals to update Xara Web Designer to the Premium version. In order to receive automatic notifications about these special offers, you must register (see page 14) your product with MAGIX.

The illustrations in this book mostly depict the Premium version.