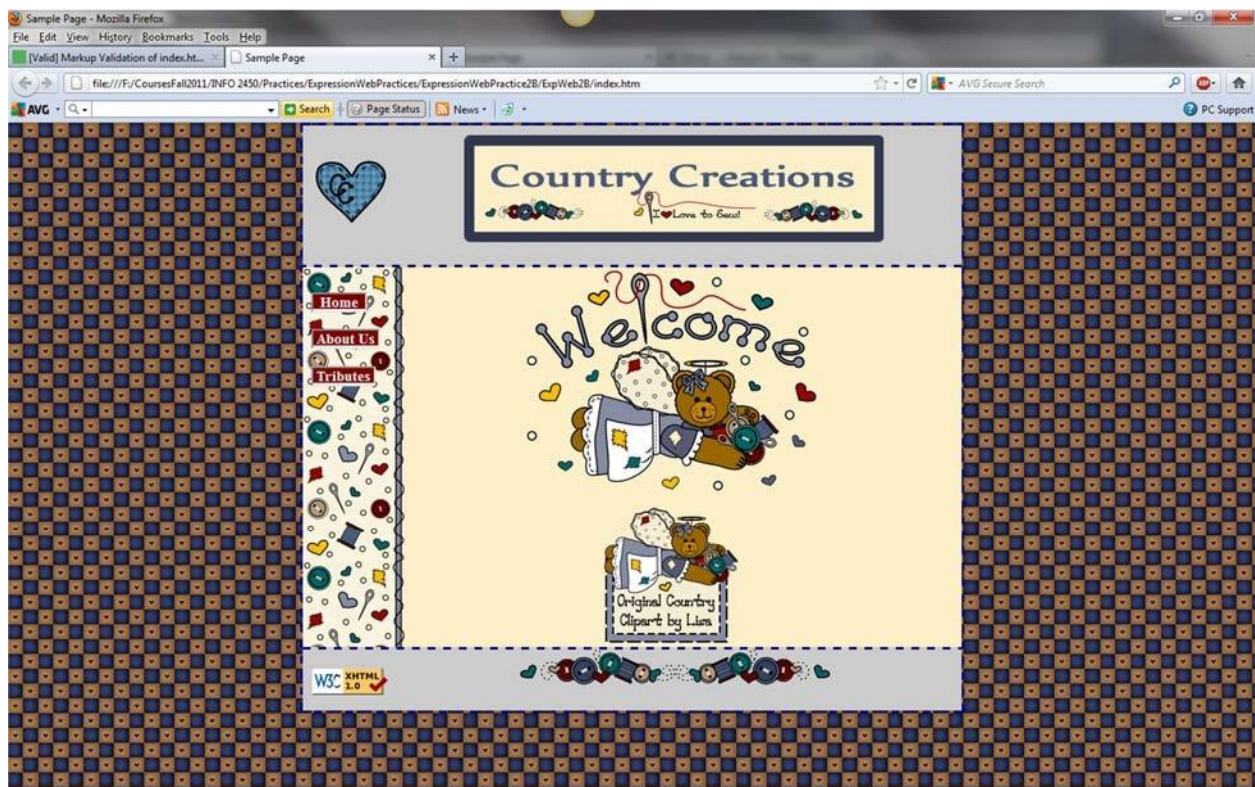# Expression Web Practice 2B
Dynamic Web Templates

Introduction: Once you have designed the basic layout for a Web site, usually with a sample page, you should look at the parts of your pages will remain the same and what parts will change with each new page. Creating a dynamic web template with editable area(s) will help create a consistent look and feel across an entire Web site. Non-editable regions on pages made from the template will remain locked while the editable regions will hold the page-specific content. Refer to the Layout in Expression Web slideshow for help with this practice.

This is the index.htm Web page we created in Expression Web Practice 2A:
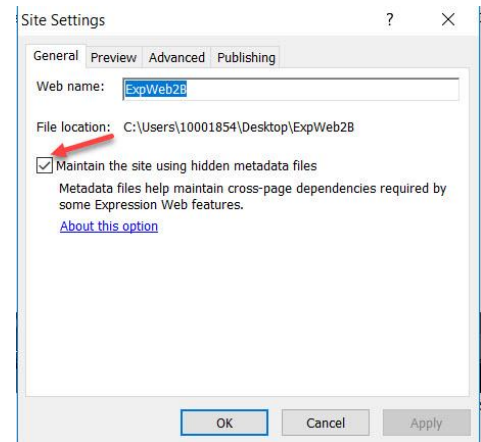

Step 1.   Getting Started

Download the ExpWeb2B.zip file to your desktop. Extract the ExpWeb2B folder and store it on your desktop. In Expression Web, use **Site=>Open Site** and choose the ExpWeb2B folder. The Folder List contains the index.htm page we created in the Expression Web Practice2A practice and also the completed mystyles.css style sheet. There is also an Images folder.

Step 2. **What is a Dynamic Web Template?**
Templates allow the creation of many pages from a single blueprint or template. In Expression Web, the template mechanism is known as a **Dynamic Web Template**. The dynamic web template will have two different types of regions in it, those that are editable and those that are not. By using templates to create pages, designers of the site can manage a consistent look and feel across the entire Web site. If the dynamic web template is changed within the Expression Web environment, all the pages created from it can also change. This use of templates can greatly increase productivity and correctness when managing a large Web site.

Step 3. **Site Settings for a Dynamic Web Template**
First, make sure your site properties are set to allow hidden meta information in your web site needed to maintain templates. Go to the **Site=>Site Settings** menu option and the General tab. Make sure the "Maintain the site using hidden metadata files" is checked.   This type of dynamic web template is proprietary to Expression Web and templates must be modified within the Expression Web environment for the updating of pages to work properly. When making a new project from a previous project, be sure to copy the entire folder contents, even these hidden files so your dynamic web templates continue to work.

Step 4. **Creating a Dynamic Web Template (*.dwt)**
It is best to begin making a template by creating a sample page as we have done with the index.htm page. We have also linked an external CSS style sheet to this sample page that could also be modified in the future. This allows for a flexible look and feel even after a template has been made.

To create an Dynamic Web Template, we will save our index.htm page as a Dynamic Web Template. Using the **File=>SaveAs** option choose Dynamic Web Template .dwt as the Save as Type. Name your template **CountryCreations.dwt.**

Step 5. **Defining Editable Regions in the Dynamic Web Template (*.dwt)**
For this Expression Web Practice 2B site, we want all of the pages to be the same except for page-specific content in the rightcolumn box. The changeable area of a template is known as the **Editable Region**. The part outside any editable area will be locked or non-editable. So the rightcolumn <article> will need to be made into an Editable Region.

We need to make a decision, do we want the rightcolumn to be editable or just stuff inside the rightcolumn? If we want to include the rightcolumn in the editable area, click your cursor in the rightcolumn box. In the Quick Tag list select the <article> tag. This should highlight the entire rightcolumn box in blue.

Use the **Format=>Dynamic Web Template=>Manage Editable Regions** menu option to open up the Editable Regions dialog. You will already have one editable region called **doctitle** in the <head> of your page surrounding the <title> tag. This will allow you to give new pages a meaningful title and to also add JavaScript or other information in the <head>.

Add a new Region Name of **Content** and hit the **Add** button. This will create an Editable Region around your <div id="rightcolumn> </div> which you can see in Code View. When you make new pages from the template, this rightcolumn box will be editable, but the rest of the page will be locked down.

Step 6.   **Making New Pages from a Dynamic Web Template**
To create a new page from a Dynamic Web Template, use the **File=>Page** menu option and **choose "Create from a Dynamic Web Template".** Click on the **CountryCreations.dwt** file and the File Name will be set to attach this template. Then click **Open**. A new untitled page will be created.

Save this new page as **index.htm**. This will overwrite our original index page with an editable area that contains the content we wanted in our index page. The rest of the index.htm page is now locked down and is non-editable. Because the <title> tag is in an editable region, we can change the title of this page to be: Country Creations - Home Page.

To create a new **AboutUs.htm** page from the template, use File=>Page and choose "Create from a Dynamic Web Template". Select the CountryCreations.dwt file and Open. Save this page as: **AboutUs.htm** as this is the page linked in the navigation bar. We want to delete the images in the editable region. Add an <h2> About Us – Country Creations. Add a paragraph that explains the content for the About Us page will be coming soon… Add the sewbearlisalogo.gif to the page and add the hyperlink to: http://www.countryclipart.com. Notice the content of this editable area is centered because of the text-alignment of the rightcolumn. If you want to change this you can always add a specific class for this <div> to change the text alignment.

To create a new **Tributes.htm** page from the template, use File=>Page and choose "Create from a Dynamic Web Template". Select the CountryCreations.dwt file and Open. Save the page as: **Tributes.htm** as this is the page linked in the navigation bar. Change the <title> to be Tributes – Country Creations. We want to delete the images in the editable region. Add an <h2> Tributes – Country Creations. Add a paragraph that explains the content for the Tributes page will be coming soon… Add the sewbearlisalogo.gif to the page and add the hyperlink to: http://www.countryclipart.com.

Your navigation bar links should now allow you to navigate to the index.htm, AboutUs.htm, and Tributes.htm pages.

Step 7. Getting Ready for Project 8

> This is the same process you will use to create a dynamic web template needed in Project8 Web site from your Home.htm page made for Project7. You will save the Home.htm page as a Dynamic Web Template .dwt file. Add the needed editable region and then save the template file. New Web site pages will then be created from your dynamic web template.

Conclusion: A versatile and dynamic Web site can be created using a combination of <div> tags, IDs, an external CSS style sheet, and a Dynamic Web Template. As changes are made to the style sheet or the template file in Expression Web, all attached pages will be changed. This allows a Web Site to be modified overtime in a more efficient and controlled manner.