**What are Themes?**

* Not the same as ASP.net themes
* Simple styling and branding for both WSS and MOSS sites
* Apply to all areas of one particular SharePoint site including Application pages (\_layouts)
* Can be used with master pages for even more customization

**Applying a Theme to a SharePoint site**

* Site Actions > Site Settings > Modify All Site Settings | Look and Feel > Site Theme
  + WSS: Site Settings > Site Theme
* What happens
  + Theme is moved to \_themes and theme.css is renamed to (Vint1011-65001.css)
* How are Themes referenced from master pages
  + <SharePoint:Theme>
  + <meta name="Microsoft Theme" content="Breeze2 1011, default">
  + Not including Themes - <http://blog.drisgill.com/2008/08/disabling-themes-on-custom-master-pages.html>

**Themes under the cover**

* Themes Folder = C:\Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\web server extensions\12\TEMPLATE\THEMES
  + <YourThemeName>.INF

[info]

title=YourThemeName

codepage=65001

version=3.00

format=3.00

readonly=true

refcount=0

[titles]

1031=YourThemeName

* + theme.css
  + mossExtension.css
    - Extra CSS applied to the end of the Theme CSS for MOSS sites
  + images and CSS
* SPTHEMES.XML = C\Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\web server extensions\12\TEMPLATE\LAYOUTS\1033\SPTHEMES.XML

<Templates>

<TemplateID>YourThemeName</TemplateID>

<DisplayName>Your Display Name</DisplayName>

<Description>Your Description</Description>

<Thumbnail>images/th\_yourtheme.jpg</Thumbnail>

<Preview>images/th\_yourtheme.jpg</Preview>

</Templates>

* Thumbnail and preview images = C:\Program Files\Common Files\Microsoft Shared\web server extensions\12\TEMPLATE\IMAGES
  + OOTB thumbnails = th\*.gif

**Creating your own Theme**

* Copy an OOTB Theme that is close to your design
* Name the folder and .INF file the same as your Theme name
  + Alpha-Numeric only, no special characters or spaces
* Edit .INT file and replace all instances the OOTB Theme name with your Theme name
* Edit SPTHEMES.XML, add an entry for your new Theme
* Add a placeholder preview thumbnail to the Images directory
  + Replace later with an actual screenshot
* Run iisreset /noforce
  + Obviously your will want to not do this on production until you are ready
* Browse to your SharePoint site and select and apply the new Theme
  + Site Actions > Site Settings > Modify All Site Settings | Look and Feel > Site Theme

**Modifying your Theme**

* Open the site in SPD
* Navigate to \_themes > YourThemeName
* Open Your1011-65001.css and make some changes
* Add or update images
* Browse to your site and refresh to see the changes
* Move your CSS and image changes back in the 12 Folder in order to make them permanent
  + Do not run IISRESET or switch the Theme beforehand!
* Run iisreset /noforce
* Reselect your Theme

**Theme Tips and Tricks**

* Strange errors
* Importing Theme CSS
  + Allows for easier maintenance
  + Slightly more complicated structure and references
* SharePoint Skinner - <http://www.codeplex.com/SP2007Skinner>
* Theme Generator - <http://hermansberghem.googlepages.com/themegenerator.htm>
* IE Developers Toolbar – <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=E59C3964-672D-4511-BB3E-2D5E1DB91038&displaylang=en>
* Firebug - <http://getfirebug.com>
* Deployment
  + Automatic Deployment - <http://solutionizing.net/2008/07/09/updating-spthemesxml-through-a-feature/>
  + Feature Stapling - <http://www.grahamzero.com/thoughtfactory/2007/06/automatically_a.html>