

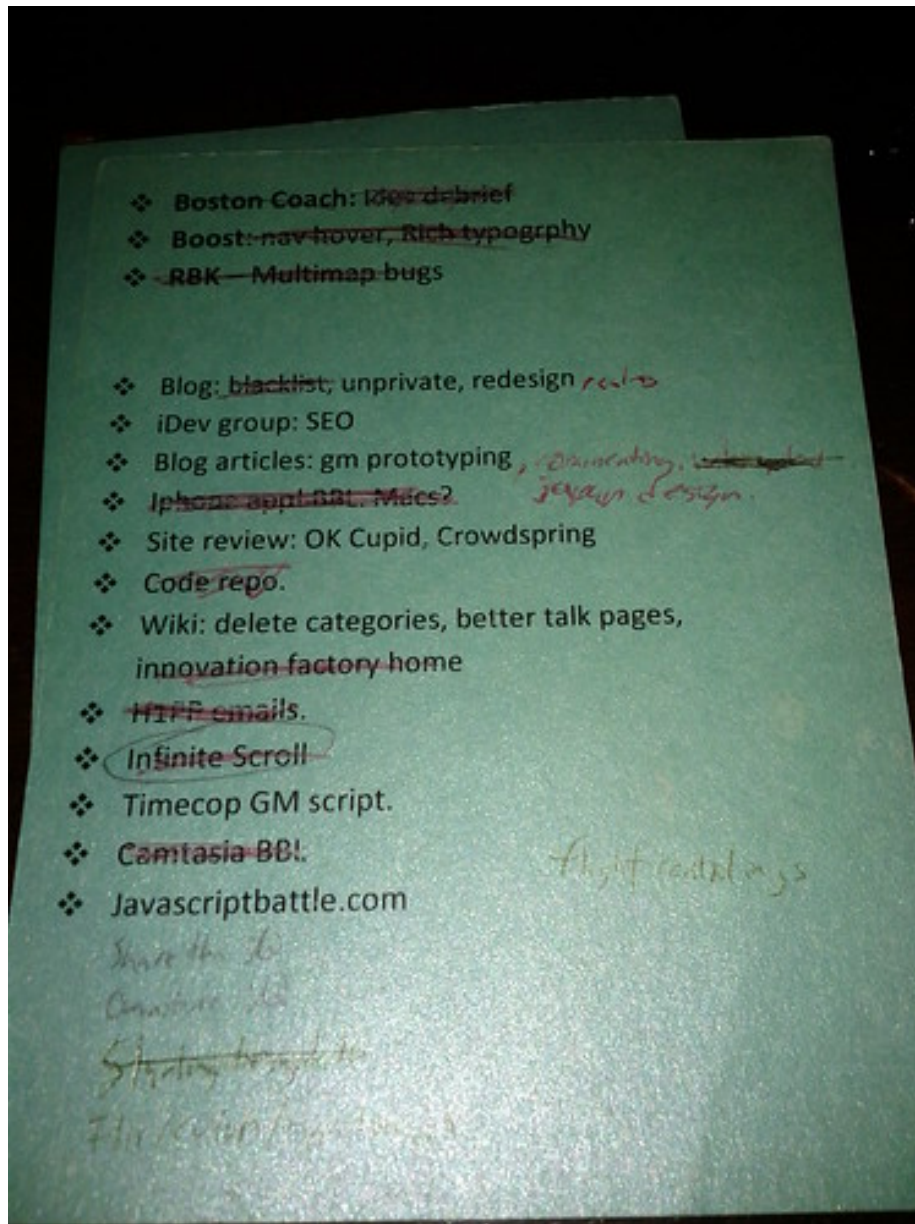
The History of HTML5 Boilerplate

Sometime in 2009...

“Wouldn’t it be great if we created a document that would be the starting point for developers?”

The boilerplate was started with the above quote in mind. While at Isobar / Molecular, Paul Irish began combining frequently copied and pasted chunks of code into a single document. The document would consist of basic, low level snippets to be used on upcoming projects. It began building on top of itself throughout each new project. This document was being created around the same time as the Isobar Best Practices.

But first...



The first written evidence of h5bp. See “starting template” at the bottom.

The Isobar / Molecular Standards Doc started in the summer of 2009. Work continued throughout the year. On **April 30th, 2010**, it went public (original post). Feedback was fantastic and a lot of people started adopting / following the guidelines laid out in this doc.

“Ongoing feedback was great (filling in a little bit since Paul left right after it launched) It was the #1 page on the isobar site forever and would make the rounds once every couple of months with a huge traffic spike as new people discovered it. It was actually very cool to have people come in for interviews and want to work with us because they’d seen the standards doc.” - Rob Larsen

Meanwhile...

The HTML5 Boilerplate was started in **Jan 2010** under the name “frontend-pro-template”. Divya Manian and Paul Irish meet during SXSW at Halcyon (the coffee shop with s’mores). This was the first time they met in person to discuss the project, brainstorming was continued back and forth over IM.

On **Mar 20, 2010**, Divya made the first outside contribution. Up to this point, Adam McIntyre and Rob Larsen had contributed when it was still a Molecular project.

Things are getting hawt in huurrr... so hawt...

April 5, 2010, hawttt pink makes an appearance. Hawttt pink was first seen at Dan Cedarholm’s dribbble.com. The clear choice when choosing something that’s hawttt and sexy and catches your eye, is **#FF5E99**.

“Some sort of whimsy needs to be a part of every project. But, it’s a bit tricky on a project that will be used by everyone, so the text selection color is a perfect spot for this” - Paul

Paul also gave an early tease about the project to Rey Bango in an interview (skip to 3:15 of the Paul video). Intrigue!

It’s never too early...

May 14th, 2010, the team starts to experiment with Sass. Divya was the catalyst behind this because as she claims.. “Paul does not believe in being an early adopter :P”. But the project settled on using CSS to appeal to a wider audience.

Did you know...

Some of the names for the project that didn’t make the cut:

- Pro Frontend Template
- Starting HTML5 Template
- Markup Zygote

Paul came up with the name HTML5 Boilerplate in the car on the way to his parents house. The project isn’t truly a “boilerplate”. A boilerplate is the bare minimum amount of code needed for a project. H5BP isn’t the bare minimum.

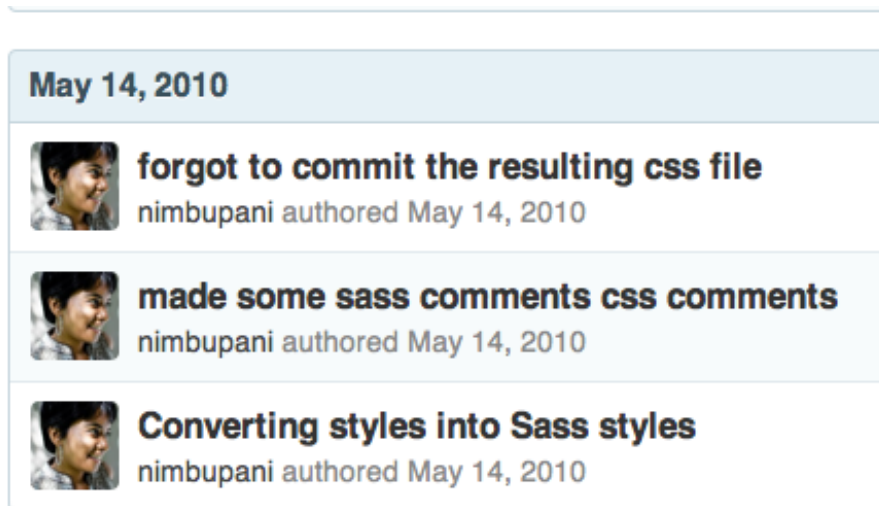


Figure 1: wassup sass

June 2010 Paul leaves Isobar and heads to a little startup called Google.

July 6, 2010 the project name is officially changed to HTML5 Boilerplate

HTML5 Reset-er-um-plate-ish. . .

The day before H5BP launched, HTML5 Reset went live. The projects had similarities. Divya had been pushing to launch earlier, but the desire for a build script was holding it back. The build script was such an important part of the project, performance, etc.. but the work was underestimated. The launch of HTML5 Reset made the team decide to launch the project without the build script. . . for now.

“If we wait a week, we lost and all this work was wasted” - Paul.

HTML5 Boilerplate releases. . .

In **Aug 2010**, the HTML5 Boilerplate ships. Contributors included: Jonathan Neal, Garowetz, Jdbartlett, Rob Larsen, and Mathias. About 120 watchers initially but not many commits, yet.

Aug. 13th, 2010, Rob kicked off the Ant build script. Even though it’s difficult to introduce Ant, Java and XML to front-end developers, the build script was extremely important. The build script was created with the ySlow and PageSpeed guidelines in mind. Ant was the proper solution.

Shi Chuan starts to contribute.

A mobile home...

Dec 16, 2010 Mobile Boilerplate launched

To infinity and beyond...

Since the launch, the growth has been linear.

Unilever was a major early adopter (where's the pink bro?), and Twitter's use in 2010 was huge as well. Because H5BP is a starting point, the project didn't start showing up in the wild for a few months after the initial release. Many sites, which were currently in production, couldn't start over and implement H5BP after it launched. But soon, many sites were using it.

As soon as it shipped people began contributing and reporting bugs here and there. GitHub FTW. Steadily The project climbed to the #4 most watched on GitHub. Since the release of Twitter Bootstrap, HTML5BP has settled at #5.

This doc was primarily written by Tony J Camp based on issue 844. Original notes [here](#).