

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to *Designing Effective Websites*! I hope you're as excited about taking this course as I am about teaching it. Before we get started, let me tell you a little about myself.

My name is Rich Blum, and I've been working with websites for more than 10 years, both from a design and a programming perspective. Often when you're knee-deep in programming code it's easy to overlook the design aspect of a website. How often have you seen a website that functionally was perfect, but just looked horrible? My goal in this class is to help you think about the design aspects of your websites as well as the programming and content.

I've also worked for more than two decades as a network and server–support person at a large organization. To help manage the chaos, I often create my own application programs to perform tasks on the servers and workstations.

More than ever, visitors are attracted to sites that fulfill their desire to be informed, entertained, and educated. The key to providing what your site visitors need is understanding the purpose of your website and its target audience.

Unlike other courses, this one is not designed to teach you the mechanics of creating a Web page or how to use a particular software program. But if you intend to create or advise others about a website either now or in the future, you're in the right place.

I designed this course to help you take website creations to the next level by enhancing both design and functionality. Together we'll discover what attracts visitors to a website in the first place. You'll also learn how to use design tools such as typography, Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), and multimedia to captivate visitors and keep them returning for more.

If this intrigues you, welcome to the first of 12 lessons that will help you design effective websites. I'm looking forward to exploring all the ways the Web can help you communicate with the world. So let's get started!