David Jones 01/15/08 Css and Microformatting Client Side

The Internet, the World-Wide-Web such a complex and vital part of our modern day lives; however like other things it has not always been there. In fact it was not so long ago our economy was not dependent on the internet in any way, yet today it is the backbone of the modern day economy. While the internet has indeed come a long ways from its birth it has more to offer us in the way of advancement; after all children grow up, do they not. As a child grows it gets smarter and learns easier way to accomplish goals.

One of the things that a child learns to do as it grows up is to learn short cuts to accomplish their goals; after all we are all a little lazy. An example of a short cut that this child has learned is CSS; but what makes CSS such an accomplishment is not that it is just a short cut, but that it is a short cut beneficial for all involved. CSS allows the developer to write the styling code for a website in just one file and not have to change it in multiple files during editing. Another example of the ease of CSS is that it loads quicker, because once it is loaded once it does not have to be loaded again; this saves time while surfing the same website, so long as the pages are using the same CSS.

One way in which a child matures is that it slowly develops a conscience and learns; and why not it is the backbone of the world today, and set upon every back bone is a head (is there not one(unless it has been chopped off). One such thing the internet is developing is known as the Semantic Web. The Semantic Web is a goal which people dream of, and dread. The goal of this “Semantic Web” is to make it where the computer can “understand” what it is reading, to “know” about the topic in ways, up until now, was reserved specifically for man; therefore replacing the man which the machine worked for. One such interface currently being developed is Microformatting; which is best described as a translator whose purpose is to take that which was only readable by man and translate it into a language the computer can understand.

The question is should this be done. If we do this will we be giving machines a conscience like unto ours, if so then we would be turning them from tools to slaves. We cannot so easily give freedom to something and then chain it back down so that we can be lazy. You cannot stop a bird from singing once its flown in the air, no more than you can take a free man and enslave him. We cannot simply create something that comprehends and understands for the simple purpose of taking way our purpose. After all what is a man without a purpose, but a broken husk; a shard of a broken chandelier once beautiful and adored, now cracked and splintered it is thrown out. While making machines more capable of performing their task is a noble and ingenious thing, it is the opposite for replacing oneself with your creation. As well it would be wise to remember that at some point all children rebel against authority(i.e. teenagers), so be wary over giving over the keys of the kingdom to this Goliath, even if it seems perfectly fine today, tomorrow could prove to be our defeat at the hands of our own children(just like when Britain lost the Americas to its own colonies). Remember therefore the internet is a tool that gets sharper by the day; an amazing piece of equipment which has revolutionized our lives and given us freedom unimaginable; but remember even if Skynet doesn’t go online, we can still replace ourselves to the point at which we lose that which we were striving so hard for the whole time.