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### HTML5 vs. Flash

The question of whether HTML5 or Flash is better to use on websites has been an argument raging in the web design and development community for some time now. The answer is that HTML5 is the better tool for building websites. HTML5 is a relatively new, semantic, well-supported standard developed by the founders of the web, the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium.) The W3C is an organization that, as of October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, includes 386 member organizations that gain numerous advantages. Namely, they get to participate in W3C Working Groups. These groups are the democratic entities within the W3C that create the standards we all use, whether we know it or not. Flash is a browser plugin developed by Adobe —a billion dollar company that has created many for-profit software products that were sensational hits since its emergence in 1982—that allows the developer to create websites with admirable functionality and aesthetics.

HTML5 is an open standard that anyone can choose to implement or utilize in some form; it adds to the foundation that search engines and SEO (Search Engine Optimization) are built on, and, importantly, HTML5 is defined by the W3C. Flash and its offshoot-software, on the other hand, are proprietary and in many cases have a negative impact on a site's SEO. Further, they don't comply with W3C-defined standards—the very foundations on which the web is built.

One of the reasons that make many developers think that HTML5 is better for development in the web of today is because HTML is an open standard. The W3C has published the HTML5 specification

for anyone to implement into a piece of software—and there is no cost required to develop in HTML5. In contrast, Flash allows far less control for the user due to constraints involved with its for-profit status. In addition, the average developer has to pay \$699 to use the latest version of Flash Professional, the tool that is used to make Flash projects. It is easy to see why many developers are proponents of HTML5—it is available to all, it is free to learn, and it is free to write.

HTML5 is preferred by many developers over Flash because of another dynamic as well: the way they handle SEO. SEO is based on the standard of HTML4.01, so HTML5 is the next iteration in the evolution of the HTML lineage. As such, HTML5 lends a huge advantage to SEO for a website: search engines can use the new, semantic elements to further improve the accuracy of their search programs. Flash, on the other hand, requires use of special tools to make websites search engine-friendly. By default it does not provide any information for search engines to use, because there is no code that is understandable to search engines.

A further argument as to why HTML5 is preferable when compared with Flash is that HTML5 is developed by the W3C, whereas Flash is developed by a third party, Adobe. Because of this, Flash is prone to corporate ideas and influences that could be harmful to developers' best interests. HTML5, however, is developed by the W3C, which has created and developed HTML and CSS, the language that allows websites to be visually styled. It has also led the development of JavaScript, which allows developers to control communication and interaction in the browser, as well as various other protocols and standards.

The reasons that developers should choose HTML5 over Flash are clear. HTML5 is free for all, whereas Flash is proprietary. HTML5 is the base of the next generation of SEO, while Flash is lacking in the field. HTML5 is developed by an open organization that is democratic, but Flash was created and is developed by a business that has its own interests at heart. After taking into consideration these differences between HTML5 and Flash, it is clear that HTML5 is the choice technology to use.