Looking for a way that allows your Web site visitors to communicate with you? This lesson shows you how to build forms that gather information from users and teaches you about the various ways to process the information.

Publishing
Your Web Pages

Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- understand on how to published a web site ;
- understand the necessary things before publishing a site to the Net;
- discuss on how to transfer necessary files from you local drive to a web server.
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Understanding Web Page Publishing

The final phase of creating a Web site is publishing your pages. In the world of HTML, the term publishing refers to all the necessary steps you must take to make your HTML documents available to others. This includes finding a Web host.

Web Hosts

To make your pages available on the Web, you need a Web server — an Internet-connected computer specifically set up to store and manage Web pages. Commonly called hosts, Web servers allow you to transfer and store files, including HTML documents, images, and multimedia files. Unless you have your own Web server, you need to find a server to host your pages.

Determine Your Needs

Before you start looking for a Web host, determine first what features and services you need. For example, how much storage space do you anticipate for using your Web site? Will you be serving multimedia content that uses a lot of space? Does your site require e-commerce features, such as an online shopping cart, or a secure server for handling confidential information? Do you need to keep track of Web statistics, such as who visits your site and how often? Knowing your needs beforehand can help you find the right host.

Web Hosting Scenarios

Numerous companies around the world provide Web site hosting. Some do so for free, in exchange for placing advertising on your site, while others charge a monthly fee. Many Internet service providers (ISPs) and commercial online services offer their members a certain amount of storage space free. If you expect your site to generate a lot of traffic, you can use a dedicated Web presence provider — a company that specializes in helping others establish and maintain a presence on the Web. Web presence providers generally offer more features and support than ISPs.

Search for a Web Host

The best place to start looking for a host is your own ISP or commercial service. If it does not offer hosting services, you can look for Web hosting services on the Internet. For example, the Web Hosting Ratings site (www.webhostingratings.com) can help you start your search. Also, consider asking friends and family for recommendations.

Features to Consider

When considering a Web host, take some time to compare features and services as well as fees. Find out how much disk space the host allows. Although HTML documents are generally small, images and multimedia files included with Web pages can consume large amounts of space. Also find out the host's Internet connection speed and what advanced features and software it supports, such as CGI scripts, PHP, and database access. Ask whether it offers technical support, registers domain names, or provides Web hit statistics to track visitors to your site. After you find a host for your Web site and establish a domain name, if needed, the next step in publishing your Web page is to transfer the HTML documents from your computer to the Web server.

Ordinarily, when you publish your pages to a Web host, your Web address is the name of the host's domain followed by the path to your files. If you want a more unique address, you may want to obtain your own domain name. A domain name is a high-level address for a Web site, such as wiley.com (owned by the publisher of this book). To acquire a domain name, you must register and pay for it.

Acquire Your Own Domain Name

You can register for a domain name through VeriSign (www.netsol.com), which manages the infrastructure for the .com and .net domain names. Dozens of other domain name registrars can help you register these and other types of domain names. Your Web hosting service may also offer a registration service for domain names, for a reduced fee. After you acquire a domain name, you can ask your Web host to create a virtual domain for your site on the host's server. This allows you to use your unique domain name rather than the provider's server name in your URL.

Transfer Files

After you set up an account with a Web host, you can transfer your HTML files to the server and set up your Web site. Transferring files from your computer to a Web server is called uploading. Depending on your server, you can transfer files using FTP (File Transfer Protocol) or a Web interface provided by your hosting service. More often than not, you use FTP to upload your files.

FTP Programs

FTP is the standard for file transfer on the Internet. To transfer files with FTP, you need an FTP program, also called a client. You can find free and shareware FTP clients on the Internet. Popular FTP programs include WS_FTP for Windows (www.ipswitch.com/ Products/WS_FTP/) and CuteFTP (www.globalscape .com/products/cuteFTP). Also, check your Web host to see what FTP clients or file upload tools it offers. See the section "Transfer Files to a Web Server with WS_FTP" for more information.

Maintain Your Site

After you upload your pages, you can view and test your site. One of your chores as a Web developer is to maintain your Web site. It is up to you to keep your information and links current. It is good practice to regularly test your site for broken links. Although some sites need more updating than others do, it is also good practice to update your content on a regular basis or give it a fresh look from time to time. Stale data can keep visitors from returning to your site.

Publicize Your Site

After you publish your Web site, you can look for ways to attract visitors. You can add descriptions and keywords in <META> tags and useful page titles to gain the attention of search engines. You can also advertise your pages on other sites, through e-mails, and offline.

Transferring Files to a Web Server with WS_FTP

You can transfer your Web page files to a Web server using FTP software. FTP stands for *File Transfer Protocol*, which is a method for moving files on the Internet. In this section, you learn how to transfer files using Ipswitch WS_FTP, a popular program for transferring Web files. If you use another FTP program, your steps may differ.
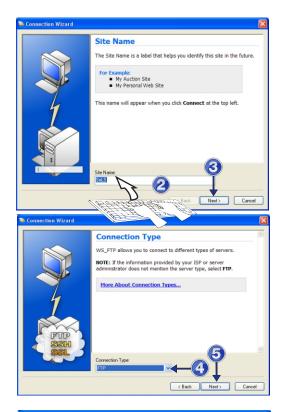
Set Up Your Connection

① Open the WS_FTP program window.
The first time you use the program, the Connection Wizard appears to help you set up your server connection.

② Type a name for your connection.
This can be the name of your Web site.

③ Click Next.

④ Select a connection type.
The default and most common type for transferring files is FTP.

⑤ Click Next.

⑥ Type your server address.
If you do not know the server address, contact your service provider for more information.
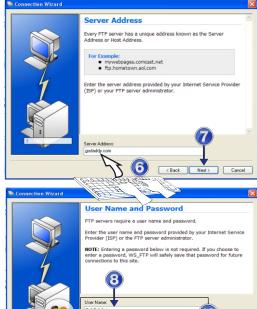
Typically, you receive this information when you sign up for an account.

⑦ Click Next.

⑧ Type your user name.

⑨ Type your password.
If you do not know your user name or password, contact your service provider.

Again, you typically receive this information when you sign up for an account.

⑩ Click **Next**.

11 Click **Finish**.

Your connection information is saved, and the program window remains open and ready for any file transfer activities you want to perform.

After you establish your server connection, you can start transferring files. The WS_FTP program window shows two panes, one displaying the files on your computer and the other displaying files on your server. You can move files between the two by clicking the Upload and Download buttons.

You can upload a single file or multiple files. Anytime you need to update your site, you must transfer more files to the server.

TRANSFER FILES

1 If you have not connected to your server, click **Connect.**

Note: You must connect to the Internet before transferring files.
The Site Manager dialog box appears.

2 Select your connection name from the list.

3 Click **Connect.**

WS_FTP connects your computer to the server.

4 Navigate to the folder on your computer that contains your HTML and other site files.

You may need to navigate to a special folder on the server where Web site files are stored. Check with your service provider for details.

5 Click the files you want to transfer.

To select multiple files, press and hold **Shift** key while clicking file names.

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6 Click the **Upload** button (➡).

WS_FTP shows status messages as it transfers the files.

Depending on the file size, the transfer may take several minutes.

The transferred files appear in the list of server files.

7 Click the **Close** button (❎) to exit the program when you finish transferring files.

You can now use your browser to view the pages.