

# **What is Progressive Enhancement?**

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# What is Progressive Enhancement?

Progressive enhancement (or “PE” for short) is a web development strategy used to build sites with *baseline devices* in mind while layering in a richer experience for users with more modern browsers.

# But isn't that the same as Graceful Degradation?

Not quite. Graceful Degradation, also known as "fault tolerance", allows a website to degrade in such a way that it continues to operate, *but* provides a reduced level of service rather than failing completely. (*Examples of this are those pesky "You must have JavaScript or Flash support for this to work" messages.*)

Progressive enhancement takes a different approach to development in that it seeks to create websites that are universally accessible to all by placing heavy emphasis on content and structure first and then building upon that in layers so that if one of those layers, like JavaScript, should fail, the site will still be accessible.

# So how do we “progressively enhance” a website?

Separation of HTML, CSS and JavaScript are key to building sites that work for everybody:

1. Begin with clear and well structured content.  
HTML is the foundation on which all else will be built.
2. Maintain rigid separation of layout and presentation with CSS.
3. *Unobtrusively* layer in advance behavior while *carefully considering accessibility*.

Let's see an example...

# The Advanced Page

Here we have a page for P&G (<http://experiencepg.com/social-networks.aspx>) which contains advance JavaScript functionality that allows the end user to “slide” through different social widgets. This page should work well on all modern browsers.

The screenshot displays the P&G Social Networks page. At the top, the P&G logo is on the left, and the tagline "A NEW CHALLENGE EVERY DAY.™" is on the right. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: Home, About, Media & Culture, Our People, P&G Social Networks (active), Brands, Countries/Regions, and Search Jobs.

The main content area is titled "GETTING INTERCONNECTED". It features several social media widgets:

- Facebook:** A widget titled "Experience P&G on Facebook" showing 5,150 likes and a post about a young Northern Gannet found near Fort Jackson, LA.
- LinkedIn:** A widget titled "Linked in." showing 0 people on LinkedIn work at Procter & Gamble, with links to "Register or sign in" and "About LinkedIn".
- Twitter:** A small widget with the Twitter logo.
- YouTube:** A widget titled "The SWIFFER YouTube Channel" with a "See site" link.
- Tide:** A circular widget titled "Helping disaster victims" with a "See site" link.
- Famous Talking Stain:** A circular widget titled "Famous Talking Stain" with a "See TV ad" link.

At the bottom, there is a blue navigation bar with links: Administrative/Non-Management, Consumer & Market Knowledge (CMK), Customer Business Development (CBD)/Sales, Design, Engineering, and External. Below this is a white navigation bar with links: Home, About, Media & Culture, Our People, P&G Social Networks (active), Brands, Countries/Regions, Search Jobs, and Sitemap.

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# No JavaScript? No Problem!

This is the same exact page with JavaScript turned off. While not as advanced as the previous version, the message of this page is still left intact!



# No CSS? No Problem!

We can even take it a step further and view the page without CSS. Because we've taken the time to **lay a foundation down first** with semantically and structurally sound HTML and then build **from the ground up** the page still retains its message! Screen readers, mobile users and search engines will also benefit. *With Progressive Enhancement – everybody wins!\*\**



## Getting Interconnected



### Facebook

Videos, stories, chat and more....Join our FB fan page! [Go](#)



### LinkedIn

See P&G peers you are connected to. 'Link' up with them today. [Go](#)



### YouTube

So many stories - so many videos. Check them out on our YouTube page. [Go](#)



### Twitter

Each tweet can touch a million lives. Start yours on our P&G Twitter page. [Go](#)

- [Watch the talking stain](#)
- [Tide Loads of Hope](#)
- [The Swiffer Break up Channel](#)

*\*\* Everybody, that is, who still doesn't insist upon having the same exact pixel perfect cross-browser experience!*

# Conclusion

We are no longer tied to our desktops. The ways in which people now access the web have changed drastically. Building with progressive enhancement at the forefront of our thoughts will allow us to create web sites that are compatible with different devices, easier to maintain and which can be accessed by *everybody* regardless of the browser they are using.