

HTML Markup for Accessibility You Never Knew About

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HTML Revisions

- ✓ HTML 2.0 – November 1995
 - Base version everyone learned
- ✓ HTML 3.2 – January 1997
 - Tried to reconcile browser-war tags
 - Officially added tables and frames
- ✓ HTML 4.01 – December 1999
 - Deprecated layout tags
 - Added more table and form tags
- ✓ XHTML 1.0 – January 2000
 - Made HTML 4.01 well-formed XML



Structural Markup Helps Accessibility

- Structure in your document means something
 - ✓ Helps disabled users figure out what is important
 - ✓ Search engines rate higher
 - Google is the biggest blind user on the Internet



<h1>...<h6> are not Evil!

- Possibly the best tags to provide document structure
- Utilizing CSS, they aren't ugly
- Most screen readers have a mode to read just the headings on a page



Tags You Don't Use or Misuse

- Tags you've probably used
 - `` (2.0) - Indicates emphasis
 - `` (2.0) - Indicates stronger emphasis
- Tags for quotations
 - `<blockquote>` (2.0) – indicates large quotation
 - `<q>` (4.0) – used for single line quotations
 - `<cite>` (2.0) - Contains a citation or a reference to other sources



Forgotten Structure Tags

- Screen & Code
 - `<code>` (2.0) - Designates a fragment of computer code
 - `<var>` (2.0) - Indicates an instance of a variable or program argument
 - `<samp>` (2.0) - Designates sample output from programs, scripts, etc
 - `<kbd>` (2.0) - Indicates text to be entered by the user



Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initialisms..

- So what are the differences
 - Abbreviation - letter or letters, standing for a word or phrase of which they are a part (e.g. U.S.A.)
 - Acronym - word formed from the initial letters or by combining initial letters or parts of a series of words (e.g. radar)
 - Initialism - an abbreviation consisting of the first letter or letters of words in a phrase (e.g. FBI)
- HTML 4.0 introduced `<abbr>` and `<acronym>`

✓ Lars Holst - Abbreviations and acronyms



SNAFU

- Internet Explorer doesn't support <abbr>
- Using Dean Edward's IE 7 fixes
- Work around using and CSS

✓ Acrobat - Abbreviation & Acronym
Generator

<http://accessify.com/tools-and-wizards/acrobot/default.asp>



List Tags

- Everyone knows about
 - `` - Ordered Lists
 - `` - Unordered Lists
- The 3rd type of list, Definition Lists
 - `<dl>` - Definition List
 - `<dt>` - Definition term
 - `<dd>` - Definition

✓ Max Design - Definition Lists

<http://www.maxdesign.com.au/presentation/definition/>



Form Tags

- HTML 4.0 added 5 new tags for forms
 - `<button>` - provides a better control than `<input type="button" ...>`
 - `<optgroup>` - groups `<option>`
 - `<label>` - defines relationship between a form control text labels
 - `<fieldset>` - groups related form controls
 - `<legend>` - labels a fieldset
- See Sandra Clark's presentation on **Creating Accessible Web Forms**



<noscript> & <noframes>

- Both were added in HTML 4.0
- Easiest way to generate content for user agents that do not support given functionality



Tables

- HTML 3.2 officially added table support with the following tags
 - `<table>`
 - `<caption>`
 - `<tr>`
 - `<th>`
 - `<td>`



Table Header and Footers

- W3C added to the functionality of tables in HTML 4.0
 - `<thead>`
 - `<tfoot>`
 - `<tbody>`
- Provide a method of grouping rows
- Order of the tags matter



Scope Attribute

- Used for simple data tables to provide data cell with header information
 - Values for scope
 - row – header information from the row
 - col – header information from the column
 - rowgroup – header information from row group
 - colgroup – header information from column group



Header Attribute

- Used for complex data tables
- Using id attribute on `<th>` to give unique names for headers
- The ids defined are then used in the headers attribute
- Can have multiple ids, it is a space delimited list



<colgroup> & <col>

- <colgroup>
 - ✓ defines a group of columns in the table and allows you to set properties of those columns
 - ✓ Used directly after <table> and before any other tags
- <col>
 - ✓ Used within <colgroup> to set properties for a specific column
 - ✓ Cols may be defined within colgroups or outside



Other Table Attributes

- `<table>`
 - `summary` – provides a summary of the table
 - `rules` – specifies which rules will appear between cells within a table
 - `frame` – specifies which sides of the frame surrounding a table will be visible
- `<th>` & `<td>`
 - `abbr` – abbreviation to use instead
 - `axis` – used to create a list of category names that form the basis of a query which is executed against the cells forming the table



Tools

- W3C MarkUp Validator
<http://validator.w3.org/>
- Web Developer Extention for Mozilla/Firefox
<http://www.chrispederick.com/work/firefox/webdeveloper/>
- DevEdge Netscape Sidebar Tabs
<http://devedge.netscape.com/toolbox/sidebars/>
- Web Accessibility Toolbar for IE
<http://www.nils.org.au/ais/web/resources/toolbar/>
- IBM Home Page Reader 3.0
http://www.ibm.com/able/solution_offerings/hpr.html



Resources & References

- W3C HTML 4.01 Spec
<http://www.w3.org/TR/html401/>
- WebAIM Techniques
<http://www.webaim.org/techniques/>
- UMD - Web Design Accessibility
<http://www.d.umn.edu/itss/support/Training/Online/webdesign/accessibility.html>
- Accessify.com
<http://accessify.com/>



Books

- Designing with Web Standards
by Jeffrey Zeldman
- Building Accessible Web Sites
by Joe Clark
- More Eric Meyer on CSS
by Eric Meyer



Thank You

- Please fill out the evaluation
- Be sure to see Sandra Clark's
Creating Accessible Web Forms

