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David Crowder

Coauthor of Creating Web Pages Bible



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About the Author

David A. Crowder has authored or coauthored more than 20 books on subjects ranging from computers to historical mysteries, including popular best-sellers such as *Building a Web Site For Dummies* and *CliffsNotes Getting on the Internet*. He was selling hypertext systems back in the days when you had to explain to people what the word meant. He has been involved in the online community since its inception and is the recipient of several awards for his work, including *NetGuide Magazine's* Gold Site Award.

He is the son of a teacher and a college president, and his dedication to spreading knowledge, especially about the computer revolution, goes beyond his writing. He also founded three Internet mailing lists (discussion groups), JavaScript Talk, Java Talk, and Delphi Talk, all of which were sold to Ziff-Davis. One of his most treasured memories is the message he received from an old-timer on one of those lists who said that he had never seen such a free and open exchange of information since the days when computers were built by hobbyists in home workshops.

When he is not writing, he spends his time with his wife Angela, wandering through villages in the Andes or frolicking in the Caribbean surf.

Dedication

For Angela. Eres mi sol, nena, eres mi luna.

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Introduction

Maybe you already have your own Web site and you're not quite satisfied with it. Or perhaps you're still in the planning stages and want to know what you can do to make your site as good as it can be. You've been to Web sites that have all the bells and whistles, and you wouldn't be human if you weren't just a wee bit envious. Well, now you can have it all, too. In this book, I show you some of the best stuff around, and I tell you just how to go about putting it on your site.

About This Book

This isn't just another Web-design book. It's special. Really. I set out to write the one book I'd want by my side if I were looking to set up a really fancy Web site and not break the bank doing it. I tracked down and tested zillions of Web site enhancements and selected the top of the line to share with you. And I'm honestly proud of the results. I've authored or coauthored more than 20 books on computers and the Internet, and this one is my hands-down favorite.

It's full of things you're sure to love. It's packed with fun stuff, but it's got plenty of serious stuff, too, like how to get past the hype and really make money. You'll wonder how in the world you ever got along without having these features on your Web site.

How to Use This Book

Keep this book next to your computer and never lend it to anybody. It's far too precious for that. Make your friends buy their own copies. If you need to make space on your bookshelf, throw away anything else you own to make room for it. When you travel, take it with you. Hold it in your arms at night and tell it how much you love it.

Each chapter is a stand-alone entity. (Don't you just love that word?) You don't have to read the whole thing, and it's a rare person who will read it from cover to cover right off the bat. Go ahead — hit the table of contents or the index and jump to the parts you're most interested in. But don't forget to explore the rest of the book after you're done with the parts that excite you most. You won't regret spending the time — you'll find wonders in every chapter.

Foolish Assumptions

I figure that you have some kind of experience with creating Web pages. You don't need to be a wizard at it, just good enough to put together something that opens in a Web browser and to upload it to your Web site.

I assume that you have a favorite Web-page creation program — whether it's Dreamweaver, plain old Notepad, or the UNIX-based text editor, *vi* — and you know how to use it. So when I say to copy and paste text or save your file, you know what you need to do. Just in case you don't have a good Web-authoring program, you've got that covered, too. The CD-ROM that accompanies this book has a passel of HTML editors on it.

Conventions Used in This Book

It's all organized, I promise. Even though it's rather plebeian compared with finding free content for your site, lots of people worked very hard to make sure that this book follows some straightforward rules, like typographical conventions.

Code listings, of which there are plenty, look like this:

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<SCRIPT>
...
</SCRIPT>
<TITLE>
...
</TITLE>
</HEAD>
...
```

HTML elements in this book are in uppercase and their attributes are in lowercase, as in this example:

```
<INPUT type="hidden" name="answer" value="yes">
```

If the value of an attribute is in normal type, you enter it exactly as shown. If it's in italics, it's only a placeholder value, and you need to replace it with a real value. In the following example, you replace *myownimage* with the name of the image file you intend to use:

```
<IMG src="myownimage">
```

Whenever you see the URL for one of the top sites I've tracked down, it appears in a special typeface within the paragraph, like this: *www.dummies.com*. Or it may appear on a separate line, like this:

www.dummies.com

How This Book Is Organized

This book is divided into seven parts. I organized it that way, with a little help from the folks you see in the Acknowledgements. You did read the Acknowledgements, didn't you? Don't tell me that you're the kind of person who reads the Introduction but doesn't read the Acknowledgements. Please tell me that you didn't miss the Dedication, too?

Each part has between three and five chapters in it. And each chapter has headings and subheadings. All the sections under these headings and subheadings have text that enlightens the heart and soul. Here, take a look.

Part I: Moving from Web Page to Web Site

Part I shows you how to transform a bunch of Web pages into a coherent Web site, including navigation secrets. It spills the secrets of how to plan a successful site from the ground up and tosses in a quick refresher course in basic HTML.

Part II: Adding Sparkle to Your Site

Part II gives you a ton of ways to make your site work, look, and sound great. It covers the different ways that you add new features to your Web site. Then it covers different ways to add search features to your site, where to get great graphics and multimedia, and how to keep your site in tip-top shape.

Part III: Good Content Makes Contented Visitors

Part III is about getting your visitors involved in your site so that they keep coming back for more. It shows how to get feedback from your site visitors with message boards and chat rooms. If that's not enough, you'll find fun and games and a guide to getting fresh content for your site, as well as a guide to the wonderful world of blogging.

Part IV: Raking In the Bucks

Part IV takes a look at making money from your site. It explodes the myths about Internet income and shows you how to really make a profit, how to get a credit card merchant account, and how to work both ends of the affiliates game.

Part V: Publishing and Publicizing Your Site

Part V shows you all you need to know about getting your site online and helping people find it. It covers Web-hosting options, getting listed in search engines, and establishing reciprocal links with other sites. It also shows how to keep in touch with your visitors without falling into the spam trap.

Part VI: The Part of Tens

Part VI is The Part of Tens. Well, it just wouldn't be a *For Dummies* book without The Part of Tens at the end, right? This part comprises 3 chapters, so you've got 30 extra bits here that tell you all sorts of wonderful things, like where to go for Web site design advice and ways to add value to your site.

Part VII: Appendixes

Appendix A is a glossary of all the tech terms that might leave you baffled, and Appendix B is a guide to what's on the CD-ROM that's tucked into the back of this book.

About the CD-ROM

I've put together plenty of nice stuff for you on the CD-ROM that accompanies this book. You'll find all sorts of things that make jazzing up your Web site easy — programs for Windows and programs for Macs. And wherever possible, I included the Web site add-ins discussed in the book.

Icons Used in This Book

The icons in the margins of this book point out items of special interest. Keep an eye out for them — they're important.



Psst! Listen, pal, I wouldn't tell just anybody about this, but here's a way to make things a bit easier or get a little bit more out of it.



Time to tiptoe on eggshells. Make one false step, and things can get pretty messy.



You don't really need to know this stuff, but I just like to show off sometimes. Humor me.



Well, of course, it's all memorable material. But these bits are ones you'll especially want to keep in mind.



You don't need to bother downloading this feature because it's already been done for you.

Where to Go from Here

Well, keep turning pages, of course. And use the material to make your own Web site the hottest thing there ever was.

One of the hardest parts about getting this book together was categorizing the material in it. Many times, a Web site add-in could have been slotted into a different chapter than the one it ended up in because it had multiple features or attributes. So when you're visiting any of the sites that I mention in this book, be sure to take a good look around. A site that has a great chat room might also have a fine affiliates program. One that offers a good series of Java applets could have some solid tutorials on Web design. A site that has good information on dedicated servers may have the best e-commerce solution for you. I encourage you to browse up a storm.

Chapter 4

Designing for Site Navigation

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding usability
 - ▶ Adding a search engine to your site
 - ▶ Improving your site with navigational tools
-

You can expect two kinds of visitors to your site: those who want to get what they want fast and those who want to take the time to explore.

For visitors who want to get somewhere on your site fast, you need to provide a way for them to quickly find what's interesting. A *search engine* is the answer for these people. And I don't mean the kind of search engine that gives them links to the entire World Wide Web, but one that searches only your site (although you can have both).

For visitors who want to leisurely browse your site, you need to provide an easy way to explore it. You can just slap a bunch of plain old links everywhere, but there are a lot of neater and cooler ways to do it.

In this chapter, I show you how to add some glitz and function to your site to make the surfing experience a whole lot easier for your visitors.

Planning Usable Navigation

Usability is an important word for Web designers. It means just what it says — making a site usable. Without usability, nothing else you do matters. What good is it to have wonderful content if nobody can find it? What good is it to have beautiful graphics on a page that is inaccessible except by dumb luck?

Fortunately, designing a usable Web site isn't difficult, and a few simple rules set you on your way. As with any set of rules, you may want to break these from time to time, but you do so at your own peril:

- ✓ **Keep your navigation system consistent on all the pages in your Web site.** If you have a link to your home page at the top of half your pages and put that link at the bottom of the rest, you'll confuse your visitors.
- ✓ **Put links to your home page and your search function on both the top and bottom of every page.** Too many Web designers put them on only the top or the bottom, forcing users to scroll to find them. Don't make your visitors do extra work.
- ✓ **Never use blue, underlined text for anything but a link.** In fact, try to avoid underlining at all. Use bold or italics for emphasis instead; otherwise, you'll fool a lot of people into clicking that text to no effect.
- ✓ **Don't use too many links in a navigation bar.** Half a dozen is about the most you should add. Remember that a navigation bar is not a site map but a guide to the major sections within your site.
- ✓ **Use words!** Using graphical icons may make your pages prettier, but you should design your navigation bar (or whatever alternative you use) to instantly communicate what it means to someone who has never been to your site before. In this case, a picture is *not* worth a thousand words.
- ✓ **If your site is composed of hierarchical pages (and most of them are), consider using breadcrumb navigation.** The term comes from the idea of leaving a trail of breadcrumbs as you walk so that you can easily retrace your steps. When applied to a Web site, the metaphor refers to a listing at the top of the page showing the current page's relationship to the hierarchy. The History page on Yahoo!, for example, shows a breadcrumb trail of Directory>Arts>Humanities>History, corresponding exactly to the URL of the page: `dir.yahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/History/`.

Adding a Search Function

Unless your site consists of just a single Web page, you need a search engine for it. Sites that don't offer search functions are at a real disadvantage compared with those that do have them. Put yourself in a visitor's shoes and ask, "Do I want to spend hours browsing this site in the hope that I may stumble across the information I want? Or do I want to spend a few seconds running a search to get the information I need right away?"

All the search options described in the following sections have their own strengths and weaknesses. Similar programs and services offer varying features. The importance of each feature is a matter for you to decide. I recommend checking out all of them. Because none of them requires much effort to install and use, you may as well road-test every one to see which you like best.

Getting a free search engine with FreeFind

After you take a look at the capabilities of FreeFind's search engine (www.freefind.com), you may not bother to look at anything else (except that I describe another one that's worth a peek, too). It's a beautifully designed, full-featured, honey of a search feature that you can add to your site in just a few minutes. It's customizable, creates a site map for you, keeps an up-to-date What's New list that shows visitors what you've added lately, gives you extensive reports on what people are looking for, and does pretty near everything else you can want, except fry your eggs for breakfast. The cost? Nothing.

After you finish drooling over the search engine, you may ask, "What's the catch?" Advertising supports it, which means that an ad banner appears at the top of the search page on your site. If your site also has its own advertisers, you can't show any of your ads in competition with FreeFind's ads on that page.

On most sites, an advertising banner is a pretty small point to consider. Even if you have your own sponsors, you can still place their ads on every page on your site that doesn't have FreeFind, and FreeFind helps your visitors get to all those other pages more easily. FreeFind imposes a site limit of about 2,000 Web pages (32MB), but a polite e-mail message to the FreeFind folks generally gets them to raise the limit.



You do face one other restriction with FreeFind: FreeFind doesn't allow anyone to use its search engine on adult-only sites, because its advertisers don't want to appear on such sites.

Still with me? Okay, FreeFind's search engine runs on its servers, not on yours, so tons of people can use it simultaneously without tying up all your server resources.

You can set up FreeFind to search just your site, just the World Wide Web outside your site, or both your site and the Web in the same search. You can modify the search form, and FreeFind makes the job extremely easy for you by providing online wizards that help you make custom choices, such as designating link colors (either by name or hexadecimal value).

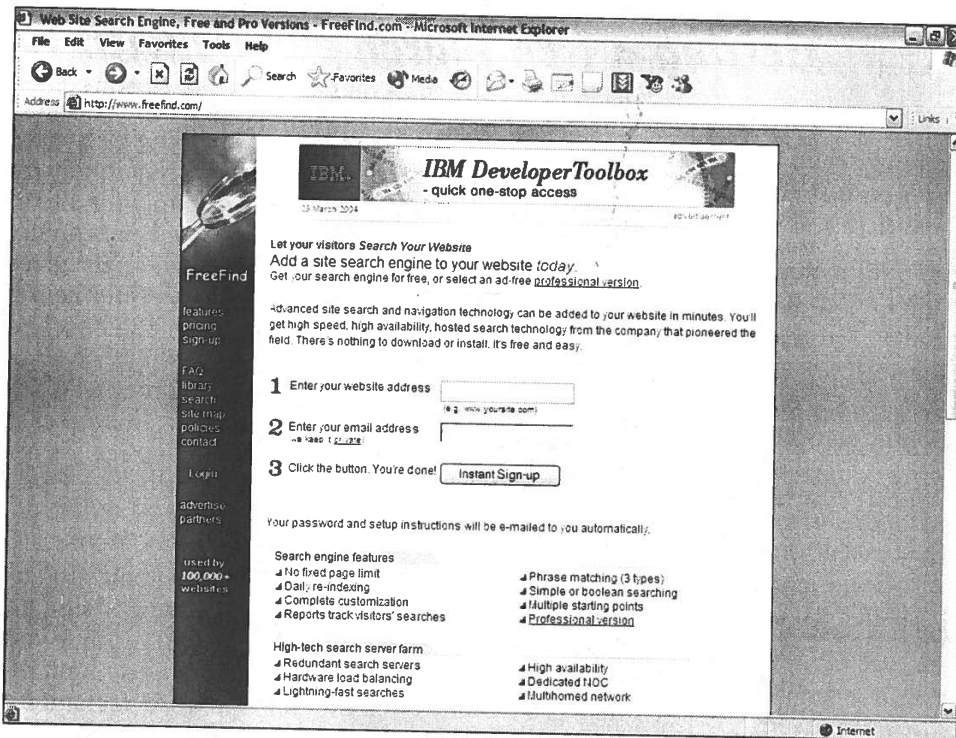
Joining FreeFind

To sign up for FreeFind, all you need to do is to fill out a simple form, as the following steps describe:

1. **Go to FreeFind's home page (www.freefind.com) and enter your Web site address and your e-mail address in the appropriate text boxes (see Figure 4-1).**

FreeFind keeps your e-mail address confidential, so your address won't be sold to anyone.

Figure 4-1:
Signing
up for
FreeFind's
free search
engine on
FreeFind's
home page.



2. Click the Instant Sign-up button.

FreeFind sends you an e-mail confirmation message right away. The message contains your password, site ID, and all the links you need to use its service.

3. Click the link in the e-mail confirmation message to go to the FreeFind Control Center (www.freefind.com/control.html).

4. In the form on that page, you need to enter your Web site address, e-mail address, and the password from the e-mail confirmation message; then click the Login button.

The Select Account Type page appears.

5. Click the select link next to Free Account.

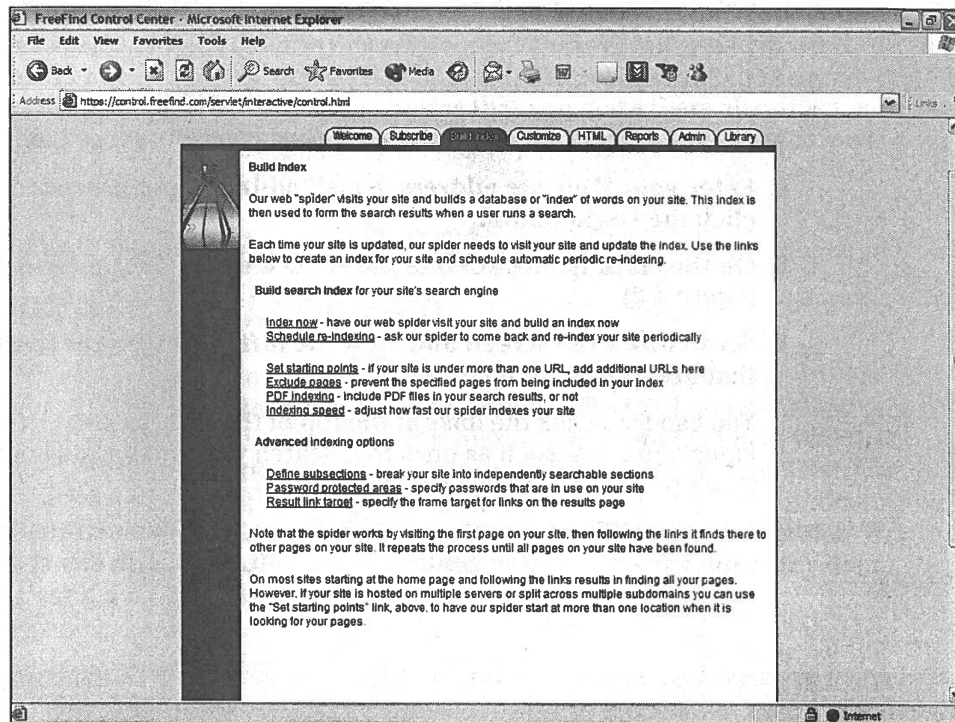
Of course, if you're the adventurous type who wants to skip the "try before you buy" approach, you can always click one of the paid service links instead.

You only have to complete this step the first time you sign in to FreeFind.

6. On the main Control Center page, click the Build Index tab (shown in Figure 4-2).



Figure 4-2:
The Index
tab of
FreeFind's
Control
Center,
where you
tell the
search
engine to
start
indexing
your site.



7. Click the **Index Now** link.

8. In the dialog box that appears, click the **Finish** button to have FreeFind index your site.

FreeFind starts indexing your site and e-mails you when it's finished. At the same time it does the indexing, FreeFind also creates a site map and a What's New page for your Web site.

Adding the search engine

FreeFind gives you the HTML code for a basic search panel you can add to your pages. All you need to do is to cut and paste the version that you want (either from the e-mail message or the attachment) onto the Web page on which you want to use it and then upload the page to your site, and your search engine is fully functional.

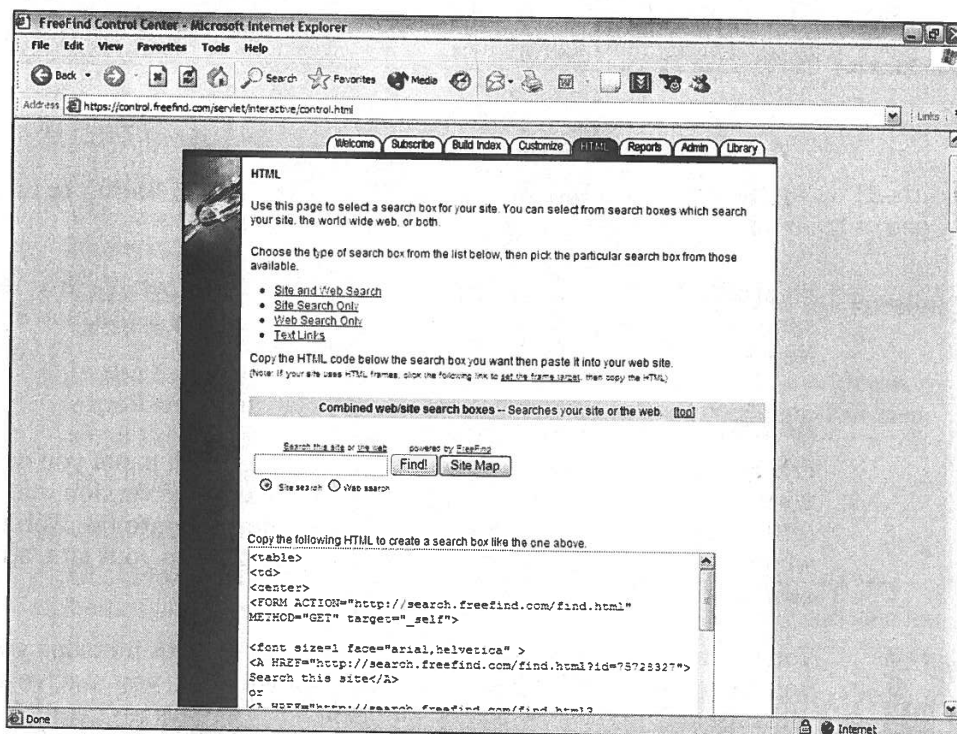


You can't use the search engine until FreeFind finishes indexing your site. If you try to use it before FreeFind is finished indexing, you receive an e-mail message saying that the spider's indexing of your site isn't complete, and you get a Web page reminding you to wait.

Here's how to go to the goodies page and get your free code (if you're already in the FreeFind Control Center from the previous steps, you can skip straight to Step 3 here):

1. Go to the FreeFind Control Center (www.freefind.com/control.html).
2. Enter your Web site address, e-mail address, and password, and then click the Login button.
3. On the main Control Center page, click the HTML tab (shown in Figure 4-3).
4. Scroll down the screen and view the different types of search panels that are available.
You can also click the links at the top of the page to jump to particular kinds of panels, such as ones that search your site only as opposed to those that search the Web and your site.
5. When you find a search panel you want, click inside the text area underneath it, which contains the HTML code, and select the code. Next, copy the code and paste it into your own Web page's code.

Figure 4-3:
You find the code for different search panels you can use in adding FreeFind's search engine to your site on the HTML tab.



If you want to customize and pretty up the search page, go to the Control Center page and click the Customize tab. You can specify background colors and images, the type of logo that appears, the positioning of the search results, and many other options. The choices that you make there also affect your site map so that both the search page and the site map share the same look.

Dropping in Perl CGI scripts with Simple Search

If you're a go-it-alone type who doesn't want to rely on outside servers to process your site searches, you can drop in a Perl CGI script instead (see Chapter 6 for more on scripts). It requires a bit more technical skill than some tasks, or a little bit of help from your ISP or network administrator, but it's definitely doable, even if you don't know anything about CGI. One of the best and easiest CGI scripts to use is Simple Search. Written by Matt Wright, one of CGI's greats, Simple Search has been a venerable mainstay of many Web sites. Figure 4-4 shows Simple Search on a Web page.

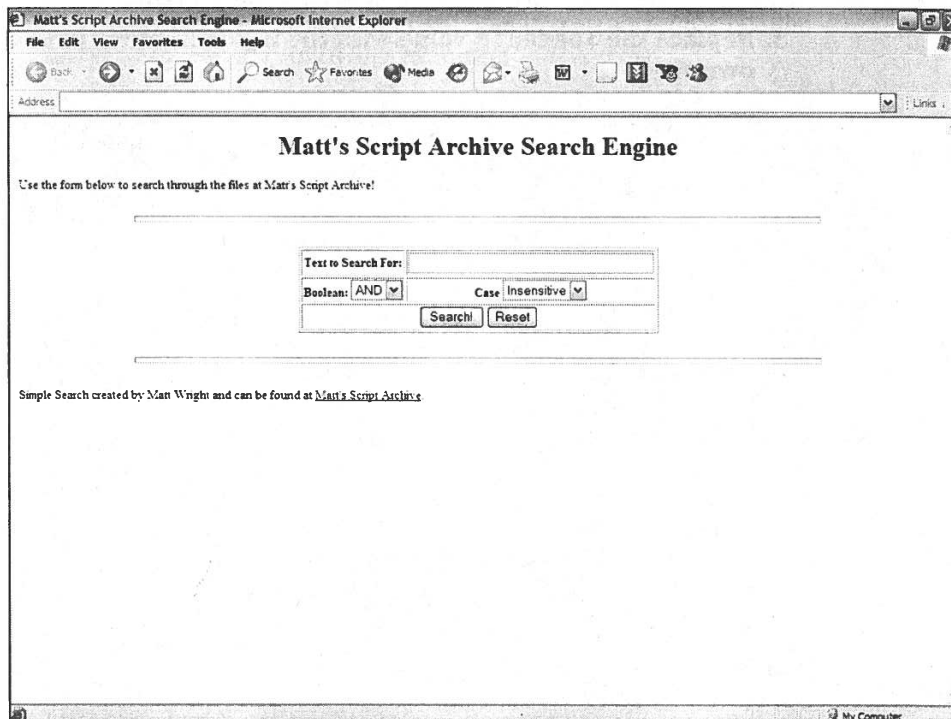


Figure 4-4:
Simple
Search
adds
keyword-
searching
capabilities
to your site.

You can download Simple Search from Matt's Script Archive (worldwidemart.com/scripts/search.shtml). To add Simple Search to your site, you first need to uncompress (unzip) the main file for the program (`simple.zip`, `simple.tar`, or whatever) and then make a few alterations in the enclosed sample files.



You need to change a few settings in the script to make it work on your site. Make sure that you follow the exact format of what appears in these settings as you replace the sample values in the script with the information for your site, or the script won't work. This mostly means that you must leave all quotation marks and semicolons in place just as they appear in the following examples. Don't replace single quotes with double quotes or vice versa. Keeping a hard copy of the file handy while working on it may help you to remember what to do — and what not to do.

To prepare the Simple Search's Perl script for use, follow these steps:

1. **Go to worldwidemart.com/scripts/search.shtml and open the file `search.pl` in a text editor.**
2. **Scroll down until you reach the section with the heading `# Define Variables`.**
3. **Replace the `$basedir` value with the base directory path of your own site.**

For example, in the following script line, the sample value for this variable is `/mnt/web/guide/worldwidemart/scripts/`. Remember to replace only the value itself, not the variable (`$basedir`) or any punctuation marks.

```
$basedir = '/mnt/web/guide/worldwidemart/scripts/';
```

The *base directory path* is the path on your Web server, not your Web site's URL, which you add in the following step. If you don't know this value, ask your ISP or network administrator. Make sure that you include the trailing slash at the end (`/`).

4. **Replace the `$baseurl` value with the base URL of your site.**

The value you need to supply for the `$baseurl` variable is the URL of the directory where your site's main page resides. The base URL for [Dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com), for example, is `http://www.dummies.com/`. And using both `http://` and the trailing slash is important here, too, even if you're not accustomed to using both in Web addresses. In the following line from the script, the value you need to replace is `http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/`:

```
$baseurl = 'http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/';
```

5. Replace the sample values for the `@files` variable with the paths and files that you want Simple Search to process as part of its search.

In the following line from the script, the values you need to replace are `*.shtml`, `demos/links/*.html`, and `demos/guest/*.html`:

```
@files = ('*.shtml','demos/links/*.html','demos/guest/
*.html');
```



This is one of the easiest places to create a typographical error that keeps the script from working because the `@files` variable can have more than one value. Each value is surrounded by single quotation marks, as usual, but it's also separated from the other values by a comma. If you use more than one value here, pay careful attention to the sample code's syntax.

If you want to search only HTML files in the main directory, for example, you enter the value that the following example shows:

```
@files = ('*.html');
```

To search both HTML and SHTML files in the main directory, you use the following example instead:

```
@files = ('*.html','*.shtml');
```

To search for HTML and SHTML files in a subdirectory called `fauna` as well, you use the following example:

```
@files = ('*.html','*.shtml','*/fauna.*html','/fauna/
*.shtml');
```

6. Replace the value of the `$title` variable with the name of your site. In the following line from the script, the sample value you need to replace is Matt's Script Archive.

```
$title = "Matt's Script Archive";
```

This value appears along with the search results, and the next step makes the text into a text link.

7. Replace the value of the `$titleurl` variable with the Web address of your main page. In the following line from the script, the value you need to replace is `http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/`.

```
$title_url = 'http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/';
```

This value is usually the same as the `$baseurl` value (see Step 4), although you may want to add the page's filename as well. For example, if your `$baseurl` value is `http://www.mysite.com/` and your main page is `index.html`, you can use either `http://www.mysite.com/` or `http://www.mysite.com/index.html` as the value for `$titleurl`.

8. Replace the `$searchurl` value with the Web address of your search page. In the following line from the script, the part you need to replace is `http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/demos/search/search.html`.

```
$search_url =  
    'http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/demos/search/  
    search.html';
```

9. Save the file.

To prepare the HTML search page for use, follow these steps:

1. Open the file `search.html` in a text editor.
2. Change the action attribute of the FORM element to the URL where you're locating the Perl script on your Web server.

In the following line from the `search.html` file, the value you need to replace is `http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/cgi-bin/demos/search.cgi`.

```
<form method=POST  
    action="http://worldwidemart.com/scripts/cgi-  
    bin/demos/search.cgi">
```

3. Save the file.

Now upload both files to your server. Make sure that you send `search.pl` in ASCII form and that you put it in your `cgi-bin` directory. Send `search.html` in ASCII form and put it in your Web page directory.



You have two options when uploading files. Your FTP program will send a file as either ASCII or binary. ASCII means to treat the file as text, and binary is used for graphics and so forth.

Okay, remember I told you this one took a bit more tech savvy than most? This is where that comes into play. You need to set permissions for the files so they'll work on your Web server. If you don't know what that means, don't worry about it. Just ask your ISP or network administrator to do it for you. Tell them that you need to `chmod search.pl` to 755 and to `chmod search.html` to 744. They'll know what you mean, and they can take care of it in about ten seconds.

Showing the Way with Navigational Tools

The more complex your Web site is, the more important it is to use good navigational tools. Although a search engine provides quick answers to specific questions, there's nothing like browsing your way through a site to really get

to know what treasures are tucked away. You can help your visitors find their way around your site with some of these handy navigational helpers.

Shelving your links with Bookshelf

Bookshelf (also known as Webshef) is an applet created by Nick Sakva, and it's one of those joys that you run across from time to time. It's not only functional, but also attractive and clever to boot. It's a Java applet that sets up a list of links that looks like a 3-D bookshelf — similar to the one shown in Figure 4-5. Each link gets its own volume on the shelf, and the books' titles show the link names. You can set individual details, such as the size and color of each book, and you can even add graphical icons to the bindings. The coolest part comes when someone clicks a link — just before the link activates, the book slides out a bit to show that it's selected.

Bookshelf is a Java applet that you find at java.searchrealm.com/javaandcgi/javascripts5/bookshelf.zip or www.sakva.org.ru/BOOKSHELF.HTM. The class files for it are compressed within the file `shelf.jar`, so when you put it on your Web page, your HTML code for the start tag needs to read as follows:

```
<APPLET name="shelf" archive=shelf.jar
        code="ru.sakva.bsh.Webshef.class" width=400
        height=300>
```

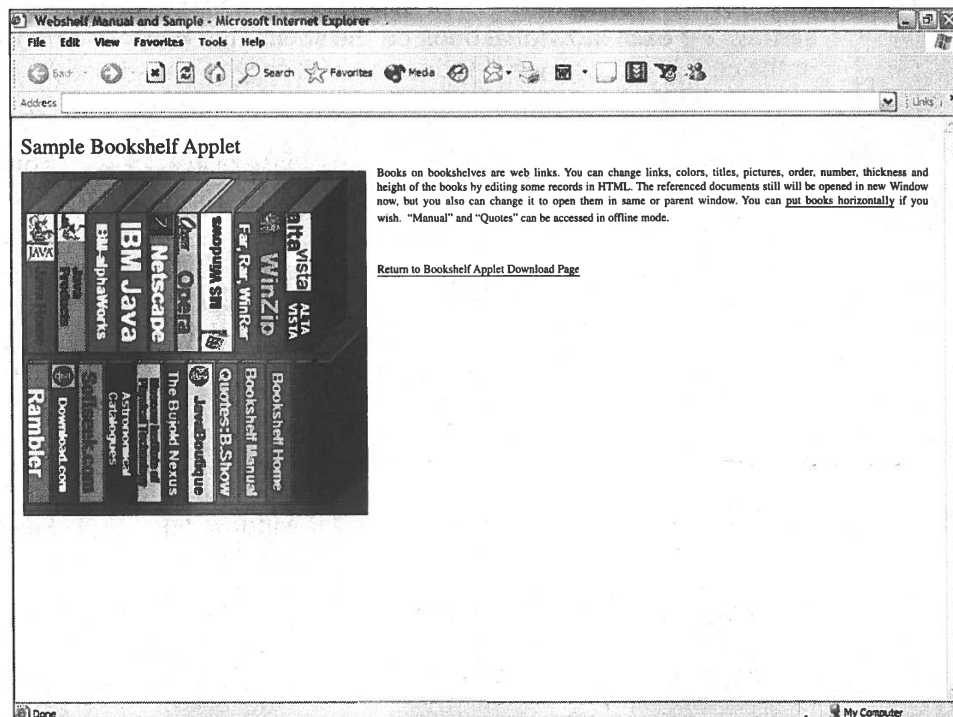


Figure 4-5: Bookshelf makes your links look like books on a shelf.



When several files are needed to make a Java applet work, they often come packed together within a jar (or Java Archive) file, which is simply a zip file with a different extension. You don't need to unzip the jar file for the class files to work.

You can change the width and height values for this applet, by the way. As a matter of fact, you probably want to monkey around with these values to get the right look for your shelves of books. Depending on how many links you want on a page, the number of books varies, and any time that you have more than can fit on one shelf, the applet generates a new shelf. Two shelves take up twice as much height, of course. Likewise, setting the applet for thicker books means that fewer titles can fit on a given width of shelving; taller books also need more height per shelf . . . and so on. Doing a bit of experimenting with the width and height values, changing them and reloading the page to see the results, is often well worth your time and effort.



If you end up with an extra shelf displaying only one or even a few books on it, you can just increase the width value of the shelf a little bit. Doing so usually creates enough room to move the book(s) on the second shelf back up onto the shelf above it and eliminates the need for the extra shelf.

Now for all the stuff that comes before you reach the `</APPLET>` end tag. This applet uses lots of parameters. If you look at the sample Web pages (SHELF_E1.HTM and SHELF_E2.HTM) that come with the applet, you see that the first several parameters are for setting the overall look and default values. After you get beyond these settings, you find several different groups of parameters, each group separated from the others by a blank line. These are the settings for each individual book on the shelf. That blank line isn't required in the code, by the way, but it does make it easy to see where the settings are for each book.



You don't need to use all the parameters that are available for this applet. Any parameter for which you fail to specify a value simply reverts to its default value.

Opening a new window when a link is clicked

First off, you want to choose what happens after a visitor clicks a link. You do so by using the frame parameter. If you want the linked page to open over the current one, you use the following code:

```
<PARAM name=frame value=_self>
```

To open the linked page in a new browser window, you instead use the following code:

```
<PARAM name=frame value=_blank>
```

Other options for the value include the standard `_parent`, `_top`, or `_bottom`, or the name of any frame you have created.

Setting the wall and shelf colors

Next, you want to set the color of the wall on which the shelf hangs and the color of the shelf as well. You set all colors in this applet by using hexadecimal values. You probably want to set the wall color to match your own page's background color. The following code example shows how to set the color of the wall and shelf:

```
<PARAM name=wall.color value=FFFFFF>  
<PARAM name=shelf.color value=602010>
```

Arranging the books

To set the arrangement of the books on the shelf, you specify the `putBooks` parameter. Here's how to tell Bookshelf to set the books upright:

```
<PARAM name=putBooks value=vertical>
```

A value of `horizontal`, on the other hand, means that the books are stacked sideways on the shelf. The default value is `horizontal`, so you really only need to specify this parameter if you want them upright. If you go for vertical books, you can also specify whether they're right side up or upside down. You do so by using the `book.turned` parameter, and the only possible values are `yes` or `no`. The following code makes the books sit right side up:

```
<PARAM name=book.turned value=no>
```

The previous code sets the default value for the entire shelf, but you can override it for each book. You can also set any individual book to stand right side up or upside down as well, regardless of the default setting. (For details, see the section "Specifying the details for each book," later in the chapter.)

The `title.direction` parameter is closely related to a book's direction. If the books stand in a normal, upright position, using the value `downward` for this parameter means that the books' titles run from top to bottom, and using `upward` for it sends the titles from the bottom to the top. The default value is `upward`, so you really only need to specify this parameter if you want downward titles. This is the way to do it:

```
<PARAM name=title.direction value=downward>
```



If the book is upside down, the title runs in the opposite direction. An upward title on a book that's upside down looks the same as a downward title.

Changing the font

To specify the font used for the titles, the — you guessed it — `font` parameter comes into play. The following code sets a serif font, for example:

```
<PARAM name=font value=serif>
```

You can choose `serif`, `sansserif`, `monospaced`, `dialog`, or `dialoginput` as the value.

Setting the colors of the covers and titles

You set the colors of the book covers and titles with the `cover.color` and `title.color` parameters, using hexadecimal color values, like this:

```
<PARAM name=cover.color value=00008B>
<PARAM name=title.color value=000000>
```



If you set the code for a horizontal viewing and set the book covers to the same color and volume size, you get a desk look with dozens of drawers that open.

Changing book dimensions

Several parameters deal with the dimensions of the books, all of which require pixel values. The height of the books is set via the `book.size` parameter, so if you want books that are 100 pixels high, you use this code:

```
<PARAM name=book.size value=100>
```

You set the default, minimum, and maximum thickness by using three different parameters, as the following example shows:

```
<PARAM name=book.thickness value=20>
<PARAM name=book.min value=10>
<PARAM name=book.max value=100>
```

A fourth parameter, `book.volume`, works in concert with these and each individual book's thickness settings to calculate their size. You're best off leaving this value set at about 10, as in the following example, although it can be interesting to experiment with different values:

```
<PARAM name=book.volume value=10>
```

Setting the number of books

You use the `books.number` parameter to set the total number of books showing. If you have 20 books on the shelf, this is what you type:

```
<PARAM name=books.number value=20>
```

You need to make sure that the number of books is accurate. If you set this parameter's value to less than the number of books you have, only that number shows. For example, if you have 12 books and set this value to 10, 2 books don't show up — and that means two links can't be used.

If you set the parameter to more books than you have, Bookshelf generates enough extra books, using the default settings, to match the number. The extra books have blank spines, of course, and no links are associated with them.

Specifying the details for each book

You need to detail each individual book. In many cases, the parameters work exactly the same as the default ones that I describe in the preceding paragraphs. The only difference for some is a prefix that tells which book the parameter applies to.

The two most important things that you need to have on each book are its link and title. A link that leads to another site has to use the full URL (like <http://www.dummies.com/>), but local links can use a relative URL, like this:

```
<PARAM name=$1.ref value="index.html">
<PARAM name=$1.title value="Home Page">
```

The \$1. part of the parameters' names means that this particular book is the first book on the shelf. If it's the second book you're detailing, you use \$2. instead (and so on).



You don't need to list the books in order. The book number that's a part of the parameter names is all that Bookshelf needs to sort them out.

If you want a two-line title on the book's spine, you need to separate the lines with a semicolon, as in the following example:

```
<PARAM name=$1.title value="JavaScript;Resources">
```



You can't have more than two lines in a book's title. If you try to create three lines, for example, the attempted third line and the semicolon stay on line two.

You can override the default cover and title colors for each book by specifying the book's own colors:

```
<PARAM name=$1.cover.color value=00008D>
<PARAM name=$1.cover.title value=000FD0>
```

You can also set the direction in which the book and title face for each individual book:

```
<PARAM name=$1.turned value=no>
<PARAM name=$1.title.direction value=downward>
```



The settings for an individual book take precedence over the default settings for all the books as a unit. If you decide, for example, to set a certain book so that it doesn't turn over, it stays standing upright even if you set all the others to flip upside down.

You set the width of a particular book like this:

```
<PARAM name=$1.volume value=20>
```

You can add an image to the book's spine, too, by telling the book's icon parameter what file to use:

```
<PARAM name=$1.icon value="spine.jpg">
```

This file must be either a GIF or a JPG image, and you don't want it to be very large — try to make it roughly the size you want in the finished product, although Bookshelf can shrink it quite a bit to make it fit.

Using boxes on the shelves

You can place boxes, as well as books, on the shelves. This effect looks like a shrink-wrapped software package instead of a book. To specify that the link is in a box, all you need to do is to set up its parameter value, as shown here:

```
<PARAM name=$1.box value="yes">
```

If you want to set *all* the books to be boxes by default, use the book.box parameter instead:

```
<PARAM name=book.box value="yes">
```

Putting it all together

The following example combines all the previous code, showing it as it needs to appear in the code on your Web page:

```
<APPLET name="shelf" archive=shelf.jar
        code="ru.sakva.bsh.Webshelf.class" width=400
        height=300>
<PARAM name=frame value=_self>
<PARAM name=wall.color value=FFFFFF>
<PARAM name=shelf.color value=602010>
<PARAM name=putBooks value=vertical>
<PARAM name=book.turned value=no>
<PARAM name=title.direction value=downward>
<PARAM name=font value=sansserif>
<PARAM name=cover.color value=00008B>
<PARAM name=title.color value=000000>
<PARAM name=book.size value=100>
<PARAM name=book.thickness value=20>
<PARAM name=book.min value=10>
<PARAM name=book.max value=100>
```

```

<PARAM name=book.volume value=10>
<PARAM name=books.number value=20>
<PARAM name=$1.ref value="http://www.dummies.com/">
<PARAM name=$1.title value="Dummies Press">
<PARAM name=$1.cover.color value=00008D>
<PARAM name=$1.title.color value=000FD0>
<PARAM name=$1.turned value=no>
<PARAM name=$1.title.direction value=downward>
<PARAM name=$1.volume value=20>
<PARAM name=$1.icon value="spine.jpg">
<PARAM name=$1.box value="no">
<PARAM name=$2.ref value="http://www.wiley.com/">
<PARAM name=$2.title value="Wiley">
<! Remaining Books Go Here >
</APPLET>

```



The part that says *<! Remaining Books Go Here >* is just a placeholder. You don't need it in your code. That's where you put the parameters for the other 18 books in this example.

Creating menus with VMaxNav

VMaxNav, a Java applet from Virtual Max, creates an Explorer-style menu that makes site navigation a breeze. As you can see in Figure 4-6, it's attractive, space saving, and useful. It's also easy for Webmasters to work with. You can control the colors and fonts that it uses and even throw in a background image if you want. You can download VMaxNav from www.geocities.com/siliconvalley/lakes/8620/vmaxnav.zip.

The basic code for adding the VMaxNav applet is as follows:

```
<APPLET code="vmaxnav.class" width="200" height="294">
```



You can alter the width and height attributes, but if you're using a background image, make sure that you use one that either fits the new dimensions or looks good as it tiles. Otherwise, your nice, new navigational tool won't look too good.

The two parameters shown in the following example are required by this applet:

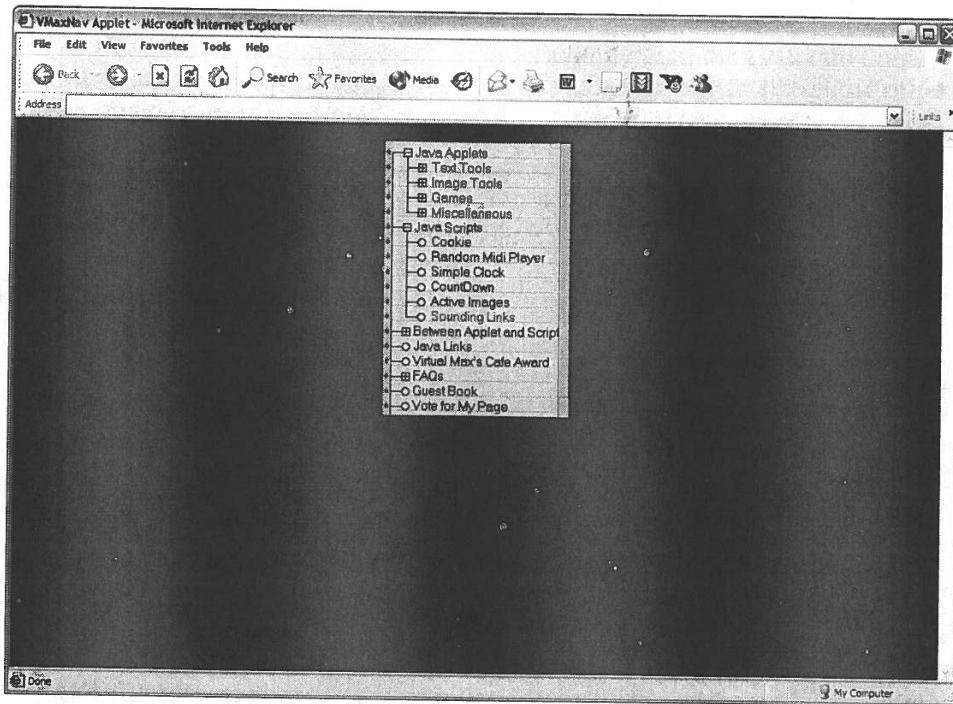
```

<PARAM name="AUTHOR" value="Virtual_Max
    (http://cme.to/vmax)">
<PARAM name="KEY" value="Free Version">

```

The AUTHOR parameter is self-explanatory. The KEY parameter value changes only if you register the applet. (The only difference between registered and unregistered versions is that the unregistered one adds a link to Virtual Max's Web site at the end of your links.)

Figure 4-6:
VMaxNav
creates an
attractive
site map
menu.



VMaxNav requires one file other than the `class` file — a text file that lists the links that you want to add. If you want the background image, that's another external file, but the applet doesn't require it. The following examples show you how to specify these files in your code:

```
<PARAM name="URL" value="vmaxnav.txt">
<PARAM name="BGIMAGE" value="vmaxnavbg.gif">
```

I cover the structure of the text file after I finish discussing the parameters. If you use the name `vmaxnav.txt` for this file, you don't need to list the `URL` parameter because that name is hard-wired into the applet, meaning that the applet automatically looks for a file with that name, unless you specify otherwise. If you use another name, you do need to specify the `URL`.

Setting the colors for the navigation tree

You can set the colors for the navigation tree through the `TEXTCOLOR`, `ACTIVECOLOR`, and `BGCOLOR` parameters. You need to enter these values in hexadecimal format. The following code example shows the default color values:

```
<PARAM name="TEXTCOLOR" value="C0C000">
<PARAM name="ACTIVECOLOR" value="80FF00">
<PARAM name="BGCOLOR" value="000080">
```

If these colors suit your design scheme, you don't need to specify them.

Setting the font face, style, and size

You can choose the font face, style, and size by setting the values of the FONT parameter. The font-face options are TimesRoman, Helvetica, Courier, Dialog, or DialogInput.



You must use the exact same capitalization because of the applet's case sensitivity for these font names. Font style values are 0 for normal, 1 for bold, 2 for italics, and 3 for bold italics. Font size values are in pixels.

You put the three values together, separating each by a space. To set Helvetica bold, 20 pixels high, for example, use the following example:

```
<PARAM name="FONT" value="Helvetica 1 20">
```

Specifying how the linked file opens

To specify how the linked file opens, you use the TARGET parameter. The values are the standard _top, _self, _blank, and _parent, or any window name that you have created:

```
<PARAM name="TARGET" value="_blank">
```

Putting it all together

Here's the whole shooting match in one place:

```
<APPLET code="vmaxnav.class" width="200" height="294">
<PARAM name="AUTHOR" value="Virtual_Max
      (http://come.to/vmax)">
<PARAM name="KEY" value="Free Version">
<PARAM name="URL" value="vmaxnav.txt">
<PARAM name="BGIMAGE" value="vmaxnavbg.gif">
<PARAM name="TEXTCOLOR" value="COC000">
<PARAM name="ACTIVECOLOR" value="80FF00">
<PARAM name="BGCOLOR" value="000080">
<PARAM name="FONT" value="Helvetica 1 20">
<PARAM name="TARGET" value="_blank">
</APPLET>
```

Setting up the external text file

To set up the external text file that VMaxNav draws its information from, you need to follow a strict but simple format. One line in the text file creates one equivalent line in the applet display's tree. You specify the level of the line in the tree by the number of blank spaces at the beginning of the line. As the following example shows, a top-level line has no spaces before the text. If it's a second-level line, you add one space before the text; if it's a third-level line, you add two spaces; and so on.

```
Top Level
  Second Level
```

```
Third Level
Another Second Level
Third Level
Another Third Level
Another Top Level
```

Make sure that you save the applet as an unformatted, plain-text ASCII file.

The text on each line has to follow the format *text|URL*, like this:

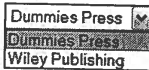
```
Main Page|index.html
```

When you finish, upload the `html` file, the `class` file, the `txt` file, and the background image file (if you use one). Don't forget that you need to upload the `html` file and the `txt` file in ASCII format and the other two as binary files.

Making drop-down lists

Well, I've got just about everything else in this chapter, so it's probably time to throw in a bit of JavaScript, too. The drop-down list shown in Figure 4-7 is easy to add to your site. It's a form that contains a selection menu. When a visitor makes a selection from the list, the form calls the JavaScript code and loads the selected page.

Figure 4-7:
A Java-
Script drop-
down list.



To add this JavaScript to your Web page, you first need to put the script into your `HEAD` element so your code looks like this:

```
<HEAD>
<SCRIPT language="JavaScript">
<!--
// Hide from old browsers
function golinks(where){
self.location = where;

}

// stop hiding -->
</SCRIPT>
</HEAD>
```

Of course, you'll probably have some other stuff in the HEAD element, too, like your title, but I'm focusing on the basics.

Next, put the form into your BODY element:

```
<BODY>
<FORM>
<SELECT
    onchange="golinks(this.options[this.selectedIndex]
    .value)">
<OPTION value="http://www.dummies.com/">Dummies
    Press</OPTION>
<OPTION value="http://www.wiley.com/">Wiley
    Publishing</OPTION>
</SELECT>
</FORM>
</BODY>
```

Change the values of the OPTION elements to the URLs you want to link to. Of course, you'll want to change the descriptive content, too. To add more links to the list, just add more OPTION elements.

Online Sources for Improving Site Navigation

Table 4-1 lists some places on the World Wide Web where you can find more resources like those that are covered in this chapter.

Table 4-1 Online Resources on Site Navigation	
Web Site Name	Web Address
FusionBot	www.fusionbot.com
Google Free	www.google.com/searchcode.html
LinkBar	www.consultcom.com/Java/Applets/LinkBar.html
Mondosoft	www.mondosoft.com
siteLevel	intra.whatuseek.com

