



Thursday, August 18, 2011

Greetings.

I wanted to inform you of some important news where your website is concerned, your web hosting, and that of your business associates and friends.

As of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011, many web servers will no longer be providing an option to host Microsoft FrontPage extensions. Let me explain.

## **WHAT ARE MICROSOFT FRONTPAGE EXTENSIONS**

Microsoft FrontPage was originally built with a specific set of rules and ways of operating that allow things like animated pictures to “animate”, contact form pages to actually send a message to the site owner, and so forth. These rules and code are uniquely specific to FrontPage, unlike any professional software program available today. Consequently, in order to allow these extensions to actually work, the web server needs to devote resources and specific code that enable FrontPage-designed websites to do what they were intended to do.

## **WHY WEB SERVERS ARE DISCONTINUING FRONTPAGE EXTENSIONS (ALMOST TWO DECADES LATER).**

FrontPage was one of the original WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) ways to build a website. This was before most hackers were even born. Originally developed by Vermeer Technologies in 1993, Microsoft bought Vermeer in 1996 because FrontPage was developed specifically for Microsoft’s branded browser, Internet Explorer. *(I won’t go into the history of Internet Explorer, other than to say that it has been the subject of numerous lawsuits that Microsoft lost and is regarded as the most poorly designed and worst browser available in the world today. It is also the most popular. Go figure. Marketing works, provided you throw enough money at it.)* Today, you can still find evidence of Vermeer Technologies in filenames and directories prefixed `_vti_` in web sites created using FrontPage.

Of course, a number of other companies developed their own technology for website building, chief among them being Dreamweaver, the industry professional standard, and the software we use to build the national award-winning websites that have become a hallmark of Henry Lester & Associates.



Unfortunately, Microsoft never did anything with FrontPage as a software program other than to add a bell here and a whistle there. In the meantime, technology moved forward, leaving FrontPage behind. Hackers became more technically advanced, and found easy prey among companies that had their websites designed with FrontPage.

FrontPage provided gaping security holes that allowed them to take over e-mail addresses, hack into the sites and changed entire pages, steal databases, and more. And it continues today.

Still, Microsoft kept selling FrontPage, despite diminishing market share thanks to Dreamweaver and the Adobe Creative Web Suite (another industry standard, which we also use), until finally, in 2003, Microsoft “pulled the plug” and stopped selling and supporting this software.

But “**Weekend Web Site Designers**” kept using the product to design sites for businesses who didn’t know any better (and neither did the “W.W.S.D.” people), and web servers had to keep those FrontPage extensions alive to allow this one, single piece of defunct software to continue to work.

Microsoft truly proved with FrontPage that they are a marketing juggernaut, to the detriment of the businesses that believed in or bought the product.

## **THE END OF MICROSOFT FRONTPAGE**

The bottom-line; “Enough is Enough”. Eight years after Microsoft threw this software out the Windows (*sorry for the pun here, but I’m on a roll*), a first for Microsoft, web servers are now discontinuing their efforts at providing expensive and significant resources so that this software can continue to work as a live website.

Such is the case with our servers, and many others, effective September 19th, 2011.

## **WHAT HAPPENS – OR DOESN’T HAPPEN**

With only one exception, which we have gone to great pains to circumvent through php hand-coding, custom code writing, and so on, there is no client we serve that will have an issue with this change, as every site we’ve designed for years is created in the latest professional industry standard software that is recognized as the world gold standard for web design; The Adobe Web Creative Suite, and Adobe Dreamweaver.

HOWEVER – for business associates of yours who “Did It Themselves”, have a site still operating that was designed prior to 2003, or had a “Weekend Web Site Designer” design their site for them in FrontPage, this will be the end of any possibility for a contact form page to work, FrontPage animation to play, and more.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

Simply, spread the word. Send this message as an attachment. Refer these business owners of FrontPage-designed websites to us. We are ready to help your business associates and business friends move beyond this moment with national award-winning website design and personalized web hosting that they will later thank you for, and potentially, reward you with referrals of their own. Let them know what you already know about us. Help them, refer them to us, and help yourself.

## HOW TO TELL IF A WEBSITE IS DESIGNED IN FRONTPAGE

- First and foremost, it just looks old. It isn't "smooth" like other sites, and it looks a little like a brochure, rather than a professionally designed, up-to-date website.
- Second, if this is a business acquaintance of yours, ask them when their website was designed. If it was designed in 2007 or earlier, it could very well be a FrontPage design.
- All that being said, this would be the easy way:  
**Ask the business owner to contact us.** We have the resources to virtually search the code on their website, and determine if their website was designed using FrontPage.

## WHAT DO WE CHARGE

We charge absolutely nothing for determining if a website is designed in Microsoft FrontPage, and we charge nothing for providing a no-obligation estimate for redesign.



## RESOURCES

**For information on our company, visit:**

<http://www.henrylester.com>

**For information on our website design capabilities, visit:**

<http://www.henrylester.com/webdesign.html>

**For information on our web hosting services, visit:**

<http://www.henrylester.com/webhost.html>

**To contact us:**

<http://www.henrylester.com/contact.php>

**Questions? Please call.**

(608) 787-0900 (Local Office)

877-787-0900 (Toll Free)

Thanks!

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*“Leverage The Web”*