

CASCADING STYLE SHEETS – STYLING THE WEB.

Karuna Hazrati¹, Priyanka Mittal², Komal Chauhan³

Abstract; Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) is a Style Sheet Language. It is used for describing the formatting and look of a document written in a markup language like HTML, XML etc. CSS language can be applied to any kind of XML document, including SVG, XUL, plain XML. CSS is used almost by all web pages to describe their presentation. CSS is designed primarily to enable the separation of document content from document presentation, including elements such as the layout, colors and fonts whereas HTML is used for document content. This improves content accessibility and provides more flexibility.

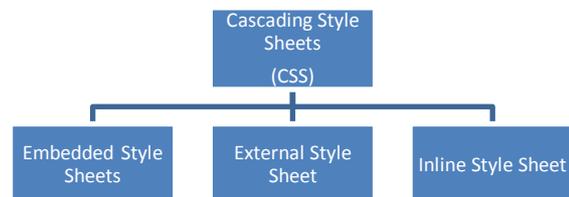
I. INTRODUCTION

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) defined the standard Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) that offers designers more flexibility and accuracy when defining the appearance of text and formats than standard HTML. To manipulate the appearance of the Web page without affecting its HTML structure, we use CSS. For instance, if we want to change all the text in the document to green, and all the headlines to blue, it's possible to redefine the body elements in the entire document to turn green with just one instruction, and then perform another step to change the headlines to blue in CSS. But with standard HTML one have to manually change the elements on the page one by one.

A. Significance of Cascading Style Sheets

CSS is quite beneficial to web designers if used appropriately. Spacing between lines can be defined using cascading style sheets. It defines the size of the type in pixels instead of points, and defines specific fonts within pages. It's very cumbersome for the designer to formatting each individual page, especially if their site contains hundreds of pages. One only needs to specify such inclinations once with style sheets, and the style can be applied to an entire site. And if the designer decides to change the width of the page, then he or she only needs to change this preference in one place, rather than having to search through all of the pages to change the HTML. CSS offer flexibility in terms of the presentation effects that they provide. Properties like color, background, margin, border, and many more can be applied to all elements. A specific style can be applied to all level-two headings, or paragraphs, or all emphasized text using Style sheets. It gives the flexibility of applying a style altogether. There is a down side to using CSS. Only Netscape 4.0+, 6.0+ and Explorer 4 and 5 support CSS. Some of these browsers don't offer full support for the entire CSS1 specification. For instance, if someone were to look at style-based pages in an older browser, they would not see any formatting beyond default colours, sizes, fonts and positions. Few programs like Dreamweaver can only accomplish to convert styles to HTML tags automatically.

B. Types of Style Sheets



Embedded Style Sheets refer to when you embed style sheet information into an HTML document using the <style> element. You do this by embedding the style sheet information within <style></style> tags in the head of your document. Embedded style sheets are an internal part of the HTML document. Inside the <head> tag of the document, all of the code is written and affects only one page.

External style sheets are the most powerful as a single file can be used to format a large number of pages. Then, a single variation can affect all the other pages instantly. The contents of an external style sheet file look alike to the embedded code, except that they are not part of the HTML page. Instead, they are located in a separate file, with a .css extension as disparate to .html.

Inline style sheets are valuable when you have multiple pages that share the same styles. Alike embedded style sheets, inline styles are part of the HTML document. However, they are written in the <body> of the page, contrasting to the <head>.

Inline style sheets are not as authoritative as embedded or external style sheets, primarily due to the fact that if one needed to make changes, one would have to do it every place the inline style appeared in the document. However, the benefit of using inline style sheets would be to override styles from external style sheets. Unfortunately, Dreamweaver does not automatically create code for inline styles. Therefore, it would need to be written manually.