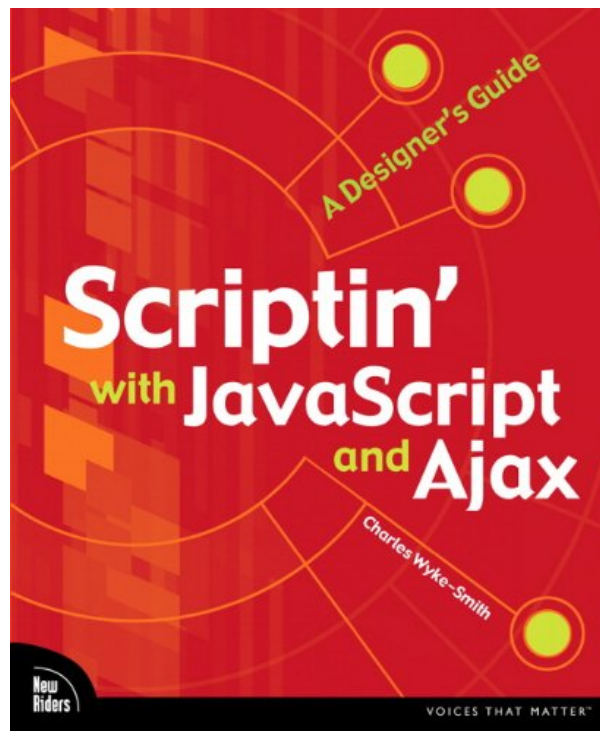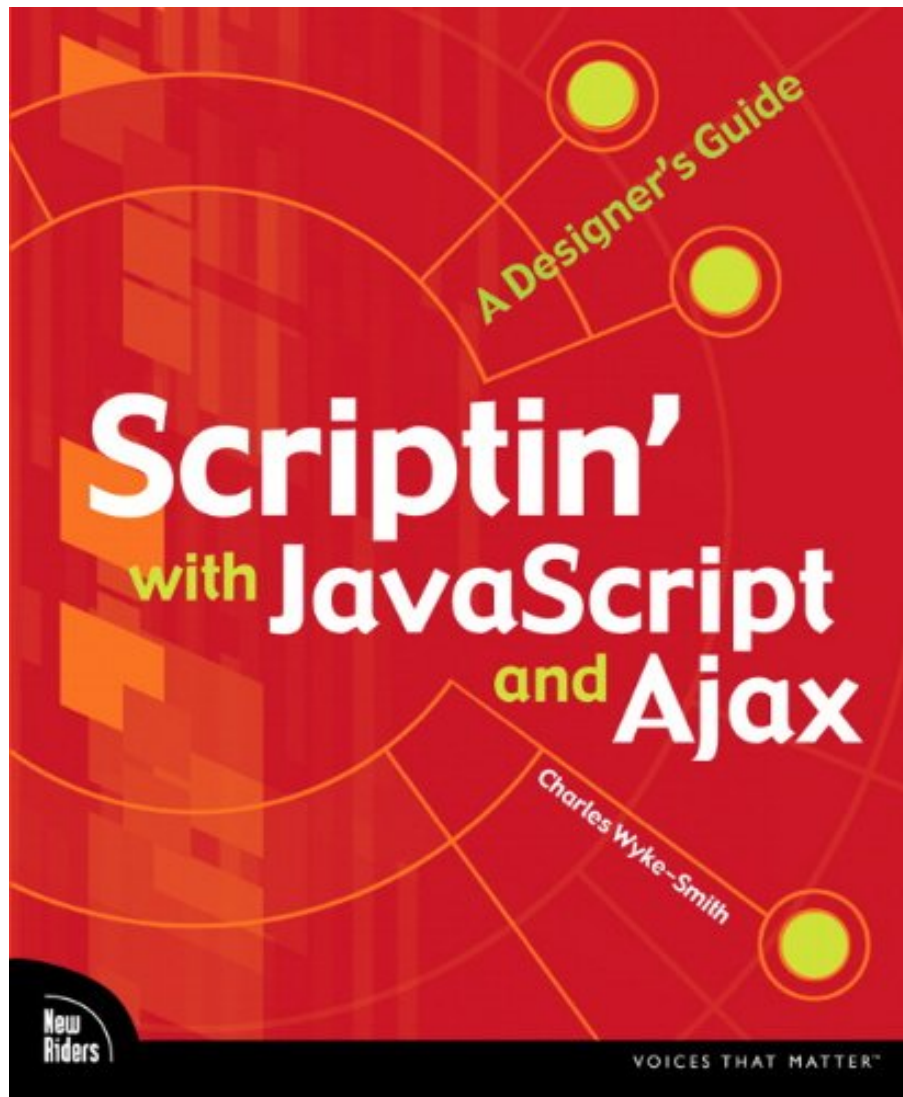# SCRIPTIN' WITH JAVASCRIPT AND AJAX: A DESIGNER'S GUIDE (VOICES THAT MATTER) BY CHARLES WYKE-SMITH

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From the Back Cover

JavaScript is the brains of your Web page-it enables you to modify a document's structure, styling, and content in response to user actions without requesting new pages from the server. Scriptin' with JavaScript and Ajax teaches you how to master this powerful and elegant language so you can develop intuitive user interactions that take the user experience to new levels of sophistication and responsiveness.

Today's application-like Web experiences (such as Salesforce.com and Google Maps) and Web 2.0 sites (such as Flickr.com and Twitter) are powered by JavaScript and Ajax. Using the techniques shown in this book, you will be able to start creating similar experiences in the sites you design.

Scriptin' with JavaScript and Ajax will teach you how to:

Start developing with JavaScript fast!Write lightweight but powerful object-oriented code Modify the Document Object Model "Progressively enhance" your pages with JavaScript to provide the highest levels of accessibility to all usersLearn sophisticated techniques for making your pages respond to user actionsUse the downloadable Scriptin' library of helper functions to speed development and ensure cross-browser compatibilityUse Ajax scripting techniques to update specific areas of the page with data from the serverCreate powerful interface interactions, such as sliding panels and tree menusEvaluate frameworks such as jQuery and Prototype to find the best one for your needsBuild an online application that looks and responds like a regular desktop applicationEasily adapt the Scriptin' code examples for use in your own projects-download them at www.scriptinwithajax.com

About the Author

Charles Wyke-Smith has been creating web sites since 1994 and currently serves as Director of User Experience for Charleston-based BenefitFocus. In recent years, Charles was VP of Web Development for eStar.com, a celebrity information site, and has provided web design and consulting services to companies including Wells Fargo, ESPN Videogames, and The University of San Francisco. His work today focuses on site development, with an emphasis on user experience, information architecture, and interface design. Charles has taught classes in multimedia and interface design and speaks at many industry conferences.

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Discover the trick to enhance the quality of life by reading this **Scriptin' With JavaScript And Ajax: A Designer's Guide (Voices That Matter) By Charles Wyke-Smith** This is a kind of book that you need now. Besides, it can be your favored book to check out after having this publication Scriptin' With JavaScript And Ajax: A Designer's Guide (Voices That Matter) By Charles Wyke-Smith Do you ask why? Well, Scriptin' With JavaScript And Ajax: A Designer's Guide (Voices That Matter) By Charles Wyke-Smith is a publication that has different particular with others. You may not have to know that the author is, just how prominent the work is. As wise word, never judge the words from that speaks, but make the words as your inexpensive to your life.

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Scriptin' with JavaScript and Ajax will teach you how to:

- Start developing with JavaScript fast!

- Write lightweight but powerful object-oriented code

- Modify the Document Object Model

- "Progressively enhance" your pages with JavaScript to provide the highest levels of accessibility to all users

- Learn sophisticated techniques for making your pages respond to user actions

- Use the downloadable Scriptin' library of helper functions to speed development and ensure cross-browser compatibility

- Use Ajax scripting techniques to update specific areas of the page with data from the server

- Create powerful interface interactions, such as sliding panels and tree menus

- Evaluate frameworks such as jQuery and Prototype to find the best one for your needs

- Build an online application that looks and responds like a regular desktop application

- Easily adapt the Scriptin' code examples for use in your own projects—download them at www.scriptinwithajax.com

- Sales Rank: #1484758 in eBooks
- Published on: 2010-04-07
- Released on: 2010-04-07
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Most helpful customer reviews

31 of 32 people found the following review helpful.
Some good content, brought down by loads of errors.
By JonG
I'm an experienced programmer, but fairly new to JavaScript.

I liked how the book didn't get stuck on the basics and jumped quickly into real examples of applying JavaScript to enhance a website.

However, as more code appeared on the pages, so did a lot more mistakes. A number of these seemed to be the result of going through several revisions and not updating all references to the code being discussed, but many were pretty inexcusable such as:

- Glaring syntax errors
- Inconsistent names / referencing functions or objects that don't exist
- Incomplete / non-functional code in places

I was able to get something out of this book and didn't get stumped by many of these mistakes (although there were certainly some WTF moments), but I kept imagining a poor novice programmer getting totally confused by parts of the text. There were also some bad practices demonstrated in places. The number of errors is severe enough that I wouldn't recommend this book to friends or colleagues.

Great Book for New and Seasoned Web Designers Alike
By Paul Adam
Scriptin' with JavaScript and Ajax is written by Charles Wyke-Smith who is also the author of Stylin' with CSS which is one of the best CSS books I've read. This is a great book for new and seasoned web designers alike. He does a great job of explaining the basic programming fundamentals of JavaScript so that even a newbie can grasp the concepts of JavaScript and similar programming languages.

There are only seven well thought out chapters that present the concepts of JavaScript in easily digestible chunks with a logical flow. You will learn about the rise of JavaScript, the basics, objects and the DOM, events, Ajax, and the major JavaScript frameworks that make the language fun and easy to learn. Before you are through, Charles presents instructions for creating two simple JS powered web applications.

Charles discusses JavaScript's rise to popularity on the web and the fact that it's the only programming language that runs in the browser. He covers accessibility and progressive enhancement, discussing building websites in three layers. The first layer, the plain HTML with the server technology such as PHP. The second layer, making it look good with CSS styles in an external stylesheet. Finally the third layer, enhancing the experience with JavaScript and using Ajax to make sites that can retrieve data from the server without refreshing the page.

The basics of JavaScript programming are explained in a concise introduction discussing variables, strings, evaluations, booleans, and arrays. Arrays are further dissected with techniques to add, read, and sort elements in an array. He also discusses associative arrays. I have read many programming books and taken classes and his explanations of programming basics were a great refresher and helped cement the concepts. Charles talks about using code to work with data. He explains operators, concatenation, and decision statements like switches and loops. There is a great explanation of how functions work and variable's scope. Passing anonymous functions as variables and calling functions from links is also show. The book does a really great job of explaining common programming characteristics in a clear, understandable way.

Objects, named collections of variables and functions, are explained. He discusses accessing an object's properties and methods with the dot sequence: objectName.aPropertyOfTheObject; objectName.aMethodOfTheObject();. Everything in JavaScript is an object and there are two types: predefined and user-defined. Charles talks about object literals, comma separated lists of properties and methods. He discusses how objects are great to organize code into tasks the application performs. This chapter has a good diagram to explain how objects work. The DOM is explained and how to use it with JavaScript to modify any part of the document's HTML and styles.

The chapter focused on events shows how to use JavaScript to add feedback and interactivity when the user operates the mouse and keyboard to interact with the web site. It shows a technique to create striped tables with rollover effects and how to change text on a page based on the amount of characters keyed in.

There is a chapter devoted to Ajax where Charles walks through building an Ajax powered guitar catalog and even makes it accessible. Another cool part of the chapter is where he shows how to store the data for the guitar catalog in JSON and then in XML format. This is great to see the differences between the two.

In the chapter on frameworks, Charles discusses the advantages and disadvantages of using frameworks, the major four being YUI, Prototype, jQuery, and Adobe Spry. He explains namespacing and why it's important that frameworks use it to prevent variables of the same name from colliding with each other when multiple frameworks are used. The great thing about this chapter is that he shows how to accomplish the same task in

four different frameworks. This shows the differences in size of code and will help you make a decision about what framework to learn. Rich Internet Application components are shown created in the different frameworks so you can see how they each accomplish the same function in their own way.

In the last chapter you build two applications that combine everything learned from the previous chapters into real work examples. The first application is a horizontal scrolling image carousel with an overlay view of the images when clicked. The second is a location finder with AutoComplete built into the search box. The AutoComplete application uses maps with the Yahoo! API. He also shows how to use a jQuery plugin to set rounded corners on the carousel application.

Scriptin' with JavaScript and Ajax is a great addition to the collection of web design books written by Charles Wyke-Smith and will fit nicely into any web designers library. It's a medium-sized, easy read that is not dry, long, or boring. It makes great use of color and diagrams when displaying the code examples. The code samples are available on the book's site and will be useful in your next web projects. I highly recommend the book!

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.
How could I be so grossly wrong
By Abhi
After reading thru chapter 5, I wonder how I made such a poor choice. I saw the 4+ rating but failed to notice it comes from a statistically insignificant 8 reviews.

Here are my gripes about this book

-Even though the title or the introduction doesn't say it, the book uses PHP backend. So, if your backend is Google Apps/CGI/ASP.NET, you will just have to run thru the PHP code uncomfortably and just get over it. Though it is not a real impediment, since this is a frontend programming book, author could have been neatly abstracted a technology specific backend.

-After reading thru couple of chapters, I had this feeling that author is fairly knowledgeable about the topic but is too impatient to put his thoughts down. Most of us had a teacher like this at school, didn't we? A good researcher, but a bad teacher. At times, he doesn't spend enough time where it counts.

-This impatience and lack of detail reaches new heights with JS objects & DOM, the topics I was most interested in and also the basis for Ajax. He doesn't describe the DS, (i.e., Just show us what are the nodes in tree and at each node, what are the different lists etc.,) He just gives couple of examples and leaves it to the reader to imagine the data structure.

It has been a terrible choice. I just used the topic headers and read most of the other stuff on online tutorials. Save yourself time and money. Buy something else.

See all 9 customer reviews...

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