

Website Development

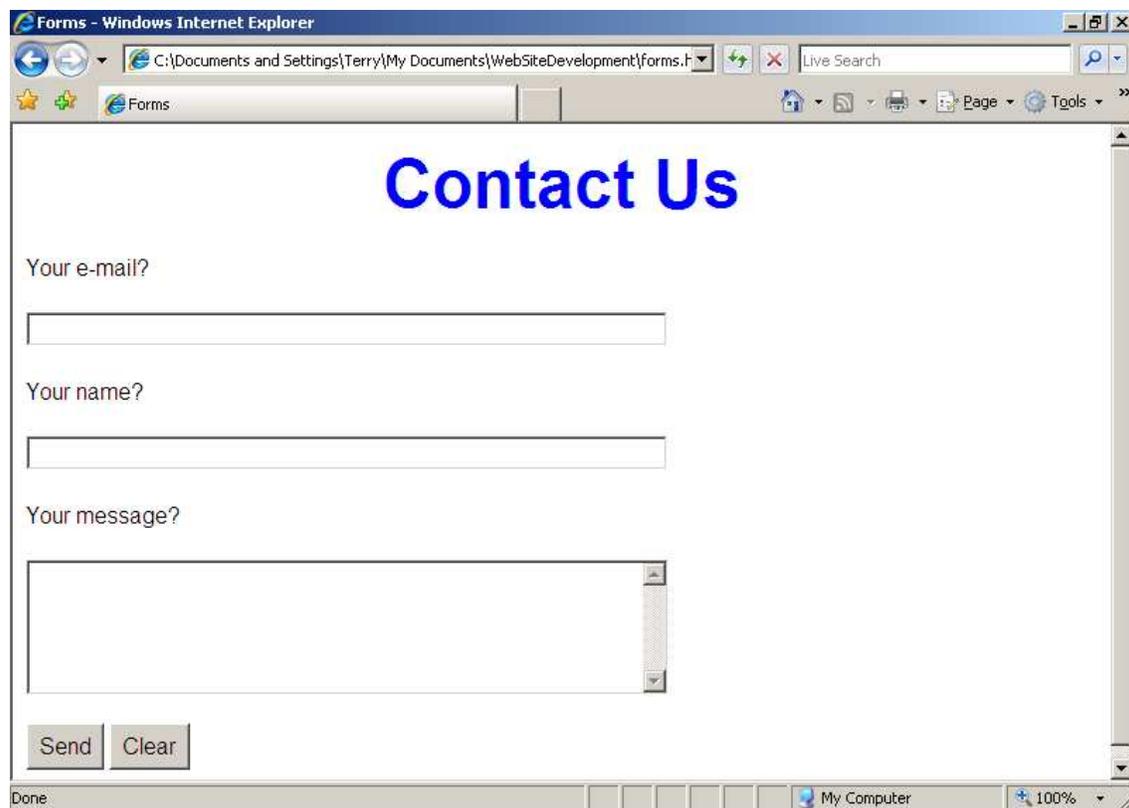
Terry Marris September 2007

8 Forms

A form is an excellent way of getting feedback from users. And you do not have to expose your e-mail address to spiders and robots that crawl through the web looking for addresses to add to spammer's lists.

8.1 Contact Form

The user is invited to provide their e-mail address, name and a comment. They then click either the send button to submit the form, or the clear button to clear the form.



The image shows a screenshot of a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The title bar reads "Forms - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the file path "C:\Documents and Settings\Terry\My Documents\WebSiteDevelopment\forms.F". The search bar contains "Live Search". The main content area features a large blue heading "Contact Us". Below the heading are three input fields: "Your e-mail?" (a single-line text box), "Your name?" (a single-line text box), and "Your message?" (a multi-line text area). At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Send" and "Clear". The status bar at the bottom shows "Done", "My Computer", and "100%".

8.2 Style Sheet

The style sheet is named formstyle.css. Notice that the font and size of input, textarea and button are all specified.

```
/* formstyle.css - style sheet for forms.html */  
  
p, h1, h2, input, textarea, button {  
    font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;  
}  
  
p, input, textarea, button {  
    font-size: 1em;  
    line-height: 1.5em;  
}  
  
h1 {  
    font-size: 3em;  
    color: blue;  
    background: transparent;  
    text-align: center;  
}  
  
h2 {  
    font-size: 2em;  
    font-weight: bold;  
    font-style: italic;  
}
```

8.3 The HTML

The html is named forms.html.

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD
HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN">
<html>
<head>
<title>Forms</title>
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type"
content="text/html; charset=utf-8">

<style type="text/css">
@import url(formstyle.css);
</style>

</head>
<body>
<h1>Contact Us</h1>
<form name="contact" action="" method="post">

<p>Your e-mail?</p>
<input type="text" name="emailaddress" size="59">

<p>Your name?</p>
<input type="text" name="name" size="59">

<p>Your message?</p>
<textarea name="comment" cols="62" rows="5"></textarea>

<p></p>

<input type="submit" name="Submit" value="Send">
<input type="submit" name="Submit" value="Clear">
</form>

</body>
</html>
```

We now look at each point in turn.

```
<form name="contact" action="" method="post">
```

The form is named contact, the method is post (to send the information) but the action is left blank. Normally this would be the name of a file or program or *script* that processes the data, validates it and sends it to a private e-mail address. Commonly used scripts include Perl, PHP, Java and VB. Usually, the script is held on the host - the public computer system that holds your website. At the moment the College does not provide scripting facilities on the Computing server.

```
<input type="text" name="emailaddress" size="59">
```

provides a text box. A text box is used for just one line of text.

```
<textarea name="comment" cols="62" rows="5"></textarea>
```

provides a text area where any number of lines of text may be entered.

```
<input type="submit" name="Submit" value="Send">  
<input type="submit" name="Submit" value="Clear">
```

provide two buttons, one for sending the form, one for clearing it. Of course they both need programming or scripting code to function.

8.4 Exercise

1. Create a contact form for your web site.