

## SOFTWARE REVIEW

Package: Dreamweaver CS4

Publisher: Adobe

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A little less than a year ago, I tackled learning Dreamweaver CS3. I was a frustrated GoLive 9 and welcomed the change. I was concerned about being left behind when CS4 was introduced. With upgrades come the latest and greatest features. Given the part of the total Dreamweaver journey that I have completed thus far, my decision to upgrade to Dreamweaver CS4 makes sense to me.

There is always an issue when deciding to move to the next version of a software product, will the new features be worth the move? With Dreamweaver CS4 I can say they are. I am a relative novice in the website building but I want to keep on learning and digging deeper in to the application as I meet new challenges in making my site look the way I want it to look. Dreamweaver CS4 gives me a lot of room to learn and grow.

Recently I was asked by a young friend to look at the website he was building. He was using Wix one of bunch of browser-based tools that are really designed for combining Flash widgets for use on your Google Page, MySpace or the Wix server. A certain amount of immediate gratification in seeing something containing your name, videos or pictures but that is about it. Cotton candy without any real substance or ongoing nourishment. Dreamweaver CS4, like its predecessors, is a sophisticated and substantial web building tool with features that put it ahead of the crowd:

### *Live View*

I am always interested in seeing what my pages will look as I design them. I really like seeing the way my page will look online using dynamic view without leaving Dreamweaver to open a browser.

### *Flexible Workspace Layouts*

While I was in the early stages of learning Dreamweaver I stuck to the Designer Compact layout because it was easy to work with and closely mirrored the screen shots in the books I was reading. As a part of learning CS4, I decided to take a next step.

The new improved user options are one of the greatest pluses that I found in the SC4. I began by taking advantage of the Dual Layout option and making a customized layout that fit my needs. I also customized the Insert menu to reflect those things I used most often. The ability to combine the Insert, Assets and CSS Styles panels and move them around gives me a custom layout that really works for me.

I also find the Related Files view window to be very handy. In my custom layout I can now easily view remote and local files in a side-by-side comparison. It allows me to quickly compare individual files without going through a full synchronization process.

### *Cleaning Up My CSS Files*

When using CS3, my inexperience caused me to create some very confusing “styles.” Over the last month using CS4 I have cleaned up my CSS files. With the help of the improved Property Inspector I have been doing a better job of keeping my HTML and CSS files straight.

### *Updating Photoshop SmartObjects*

CS4 offers me a choice of modifying my images in Photoshop Elements or working on the PSD files in the Assets panel. I have chosen the latter and can now update all the pages wherever a given image is used in my site without changing the image sizes I have chosen.

Thanks Adobe, for helping me along the path to doing better and better websites.