Introducing Site Management

As the dull-sounding name *site management* implies, organizing and tracking your Web site's files is one of the least glamorous, most time-consuming and error-prone aspects of being a Web designer. On the Web, your site may look beautiful, run smoothly, and appear to be a gloriously unified whole, but behind the scenes it's nothing more than a collection of varied files—HTML, images, Cascading Style Sheets, Flash movies, and so on—that must all work together. The more files you have to keep track of, the more apt you are to misplace one. A single broken link or missing graphic can interfere with the operation of your entire site, causing personal—even professional—embarrassment.

Fortunately, computers excel at tedious organizational tasks. Dreamweaver's site management features take care of the complexities of dealing with a Web site's many files, freeing you to concentrate on the creative aspects of design. In fact, even if you're a hand-coding HTML junkie and you turn your nose up at all visual Web page editors, you may find Dreamweaver worth its weight in gold just for the features described in this chapter and the next two.

Where the first three parts of this book describe how to create, lay out, and embellish a Web site, this part offers a bird's-eye view of the Web production process as you see your site through to completion and, ultimately, upload it to the Internet.

To get the most out of Dreamweaver's site management features, you need to be familiar with some basic principles for organizing Web files, as discussed in the next section.

Structuring a Web Site

When you build a Web site, you probably spend hours providing your visitors with carefully planned links, helpful labels, and clear, informative navigation tools. You want your *site architecture* to make it easy for them to understand where they are, where they can go, and how to return to where they came from (see Figure 14-1). Behind the scenes, it's equally important to organize your site's files with just as much clarity and care, so that you can find *your* way around when updating or modifying the site later. And, as on your home computer, a Web site's main organizational tool is the humble folder.
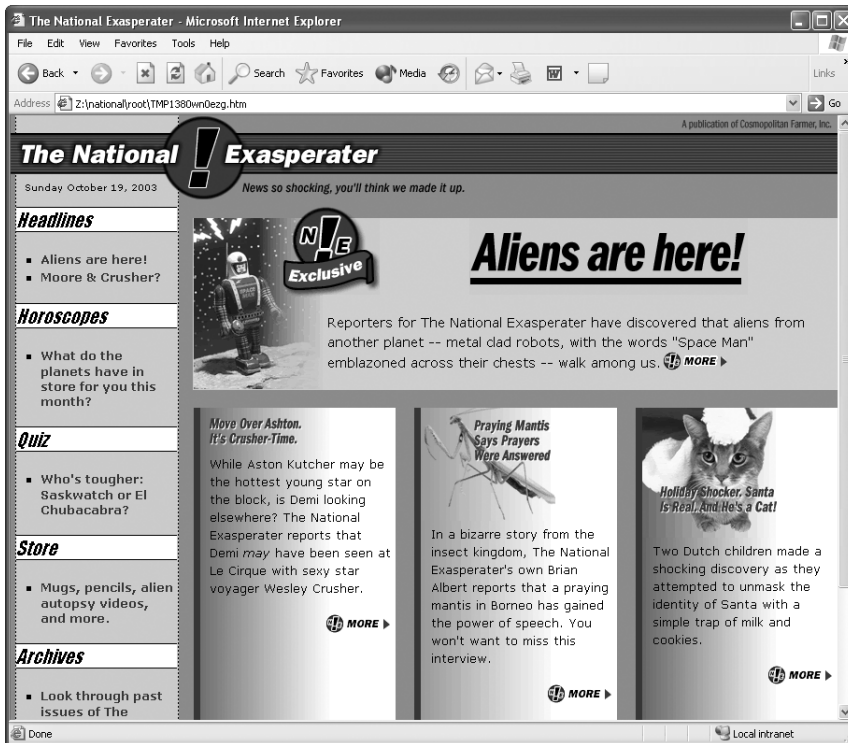
Figure 14-1:
A good site has an easy-to-understand structure. Content is divided into logical sections, and a prominent navigation bar—the column of white buttons on the left in this image—gives visitors quick access to information. When building a site, this "information architecture" provides a useful model for naming and creating the folders that will hold the site's files.

You organize files on your computer every day, creating, say, a folder called Personal, within which are folders called Financial Planning and Vacation Pictures. Inside the Vacation Pictures folder, you have separate folders for your memories of Maui, Yosemite, and the Mall of America.

The same principle applies to the folders that make up a Web site: All Web sites have one primary folder—the *root folder*—that holds all of the site's Web pages, graphics, and other files used in the site. The root folder usually contains additional folders for further subdividing and organizing the site's files.

A good structure (see Figure 14-2) speeds up the production and maintenance of your site by providing quick access to whatever graphic, style sheet, or Flash movie you're looking for. But don't fall into the trap of becoming so obsessed that you put every graphic or Web page you create in its own separate folder; creating a structure for the files in a site should make your job easier, not harder.

Tip: If you already have a Web site that suffers from lack of organization, it's not too late. Dreamweaver can help you reorganize your files quickly and accurately. Take the following rules to heart and then turn to "Organizing Site Files" on page 465, to learn how Dreamweaver can knock your current site into shape.

Here, then, are some guidelines for effective site organization:

Figure 14-2:
Here's a sample structure for a Web site. The root (main) folder, cosmo, *holds all of the pages in the site. The home page,* index.html, *is in the root folder, while other pages are in subfolders—one folder for each section.*

The home page uses lots of graphics that don't appear anywhere else on the site; a folder named images_home *helps keep those in order. In addition, since many pages share the same navigation elements, logos, and other graphics, there's a folder called* images_global. *Also notice that the Classifieds folder (like the folder for each section of the site) has its own default page, here called* index.html, *and can contain additional subfolders (see the box on page 457).*
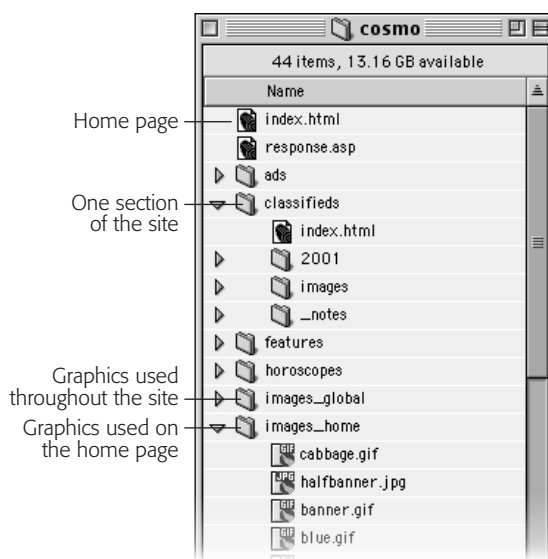
- **Plan for future growth.** Like ever-spreading grapevines, Web sites grow. Today you may only have enough words and pictures for ten Web pages, but tomorrow you'll put the finishing touches on your new 1,000-page online catalog. It may seem like overkill to create a lot of folders for a small site, but better to start with a solid structure today than find yourself knee-deep in files tomorrow.

  For instance, it's useful to create additional folders for graphics files that appear within each section of the site. If a section of your site is dedicated to promoting your company's products, create a folder called Products for storing product Web pages. Create an additional folder called Images to store the pictures of those products. Then, when you add more products or images, you know right where to put them.

Note: While you can start with no organization plan and later use Dreamweaver to bring it all into shape (page 465), you may run into unforeseen problems that way if your site is already on the Internet. If your site's been up and running for a while, search engines may have indexed your site, and other Web sites may have linked to your pages. If you suddenly rearrange the pages of your site, those cherished links from the outside world may no longer work, and people who try to access your site from a search engine may be foiled.

- **Follow the site's architecture.** Take advantage of the work you've already done in organizing the content on your site. For instance, the *National Exasperater's* site content is divided into five main sections: Headlines, Horoscopes, Quiz, Store, and Archives, as shown in Figure 14-1. Following this architecture, it makes sense to create folders—headlines, horoscopes, and so on—in the site's root folder for each section's respective Web pages. If one section is particularly large, add additional subfolders.

- **Organize files by type.** After you create folders for each section of your site, you'll probably need to add folders for storing other types of files like graphics, Cascading Style Sheets, external JavaScript files, and PDF files. Most sites, for instance, make extensive use of graphics, with several graphics on each page. If that's the case for you, then you need to file those images neatly and efficiently.

One way to organize your graphics is to create a folder for images that appear on your home page and another for images that appear elsewhere in the site. Often, the home page is visually distinct from other pages on the site and contains graphics that are unique to it. You can create a folder—*images_home,* for example—in the root folder for images that only appear on the home page. Create another folder—*images_global,* for example—to store graphics that all or most of the pages use, such as the company logo, navigation buttons, and other frequently used icons. When you add images to other pages of your site, you'll know to look for them in this folder.

UP TO SPEED

Naming Your Files

The rules for naming files in Windows and Macintosh are fairly flexible. You can use letters, numbers, spaces, and even symbols like $, #, and ! when naming folders and files on these operating systems.

Web servers, on the other hand, are far less accommodating. Because many symbols—such as &, @, and ?—have special significance on the Web, using them in file names can confuse Web servers and cause errors.

The precise list of no-no's varies from Web server to Web server, but you'll be safe if you stick to letters, numbers, the

hyphen (-), and the underscore (_) character when naming files and folders. Stay away from spaces. File names like *company logo.gif* or *This company's president.html* probably won't work on most Web servers. Replace spaces with underscores or inner caps–*company_logo.gif* or *companyLogo. gif*–and remove all punctuation marks.

Sure, some operating systems and Web servers permit strange naming conventions, but why take the chance? Someday you may need to move your site to another, less forgiving Web server. Play it safe: keep your file names simple.

- **Use understandable names.** While file names like *1a.gif, zDS.html,* and *f.css* are compact, they aren't very explanatory. Make sure file names mean something. Clear, descriptive names like *site_logo.gif* or *directions.html* will make it a lot easier for you to locate files and update pages.

This principle is especially important if you work as part of a team. If you're constantly explaining to your coworkers that *345g.gif* is the banner for the home page, changing the file name to *home_banner.gif* could save you some aggravation. There's a tradeoff here, however, as long file names can waste precious bytes. For instance, a name like *this_is_the_image_that_goes_in_the_upper_right_corner_of_the_home_page.gif* is probably not a good idea.

It's also helpful to add a prefix to related files. For example, use *nav_* at the beginning of a graphic name to indicate that it's a navigation button. In this way, you can quickly identify *nav_projects.gif, nav_quiz.gif,* and *nav_horoscopes.gif* as graphics used in a page's navigation bar. As a bonus, when you view the files on your computer or in Dreamweaver's Files panel (see Figure 14-5), they'll appear neatly sorted by name; in other words, all the nav_ files will cluster together in the file list. Likewise, if you have rollover versions of your navigation graphics (page 132), give them names like *nav_projects_over.gif,* or *nav_horoscopes_high.gif,* to indicate that they are the highlighted (or over) state of the navigation button. (If you use Fireworks, its button creation tools automatically use names like *nav_projects_f1.gif* and *nav_projects_f2.gif* to indicate two different versions of the same button.)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

All Those Index Pages

Why are so many Web pages named index.html (or index. htm)?

If you type a URL like *www.missingmanuals.com* into a Web browser, the Missing Manuals home page opens on your screen. But how did the Web server know which page from the site to send to your browser? After all, you didn't ask for a particular Web page, like *www.missingmanuals. com/about.html.*

When a Web server gets a request that doesn't specify a particular Web page, it looks for a default Web page—often named *index.html* or *index.htm.* It does the same thing even when the URL you've typed specifies (with a slash) a folder inside the site root, like this: *www.missingmanuals. com/cds/.* In this case, the Web server looks for a file called *index.html* inside the cds folder, and—if it finds the file—sends it to your Web browser.

If the Web server doesn't find an *index.html* file, two things can happen, both undesirable: The Web browser may display either an ugly error message or a listing of all the files inside the folder. Neither result is user-friendly.

While your site will still function without this step, it's good form to give the main Web page inside each folder in your site the proper default page name. Web servers use different names for these default pages—*index.html* or *default.html,* for example—so check with your Web server's administrator or help desk. In fact, any page name can be used as a default page, as long as you set up your Web server to look for the correct default name. So if you're creating a dynamic site like those discussed in Part 6, you can set up a server to look for a dynamic page like *index.asp,* or *index.php* as the default page. On many Web servers, multiple default page names are specified, so if it doesn't find a file named index.html, it might then look for a file called *index.php.*

Tip: If you use a Mac, you might not be familiar with the three or four letters that follow Web file names. These letters, or *file name extensions,* tell Windows computers what program should open the file. They're used universally as part of all Web files' names.

The trick is that Windows and Macintosh computers use slightly different extensions. For example, in Windows, Web page names are often followed by *.htm,* whereas the Mac uses *.html.* In most cases, the Windows and Macintosh extension versions are interchangeable. The one exception is JPEG files: Some Windows computers don't understand the Mac extension *.jpeg,* so it's best to stick to the Windows extension, *.jpg.*

When you save a page, Dreamweaver proposes adding .htm, but you can manually change the extension to .html. If you want Dreamweaver to use .html automatically instead, see the box below.

- **Be consistent.** Once you've come up with a system that works for you, follow it. Always. If you name one folder *images,* for instance, don't name another *graphics* and a third *pretty_pictures.* And certainly don't put Web pages in a folder named *images,* or Flash movies in a folder named *style_sheets.*

  In fact, if you work on more than one Web site, you may want to use a single naming convention and folder structure for all of your sites, so that switching among them will go more smoothly. If you name all your graphics folders *images,* then no matter what site you're working on, you already know where to look for GIFs and JPEGs.

POWER USERS' CLINIC

Getting a New Extension

When you create a new Web page in Dreamweaver and then save it, Dreamweaver automatically adds the file extension .htm (if you don't specify one yourself). For example, if you create a new page, choose File→Save and type *about* in the file name box of the Save As dialog box, Dreamweaver saves the file as *about.htm.* If you prefer .html, because you've always done it that way or you don't like the Windows-centric three-letter extension names, you can bend Dreamweaver to your will. It just takes a little extra work.

Your best bet is to launch a text editor other than Dreamweaver, such as BBEdit, Homesite, Notepad, or Text Edit. Then use that program to open a file called Dreamweaver MX 2004→Configuration→Document Types→MMDocumentTypes.xml. (On Windows, you'll probably find your Dreamweaver MX 2004 in the Program Files→Macromedia folder; on a Mac, try Applications→Macromedia→Dreamweaver MX 2004.)

Before you go any further, close Dreamweaver and, in your text editor, make a backup of the MMDocumentTypes.xml file to be on the safe side. On the third line of the document—it begins with <documenttype id="HTML" internaltype="HTML"—look for the word winfileextension or macfileextension (depending on your operating system). You'll see something like this: winfileextension="htm,html ,shtml,shtm,stm,tpl,lasso,xhtml". This code indicates which extensions Dreamweaver recognizes as HTML pages. Reverse htm and html in the list like this: html,htm,shtml… and so on. Save and close the file. Launch Dreamweaver and create a new HTML document. Save the file without adding an extension to it. Voila. Dreamweaver adds .html to the end.

Tip: Put only files that will go on your Web site in the root folder and its subfolders. Keep your source files–the original Photoshop, Fireworks, Flash, or Word documents where you created your content–stored elsewhere on your computer. This way, you're much less likely to accidentally transfer a 14.5-megabyte Photoshop file to your Web server (a move that would *not* gain you friends in the IT department). But if you insist on keeping all those files together with your Web site files, check out Dreamweaver's *cloaking* feature. Using it, you can prevent certain file types from being transferred to your Web server when using Dreamweaver's FTP feature.

Defining a Site

Organizing and maintaining a Web site—creating new folders and Web pages; moving, renaming and deleting files and folders; and transferring pages to a Web server—can require going back and forth between a couple of different programs. With Dreamweaver's site management features, however, you can do it all from within one program. But in order to take advantage of these features, you must first *define* the site; in other words, give Dreamweaver some basic information about it.

Defining the site involves showing Dreamweaver which folder contains your Web site files (the *root folder*) and setting up a few other options. You've already learned how to do this site-building using Dreamweaver's Site Definition Wizard (page 26). But for fine-tuning your settings, it's time to get to know the advanced Site Definition window.

Start by choosing Site→Manage Sites to open the Manage Sites window (Figure 14-3). This window lets you create, edit, duplicate, delete, export, and import your Dreamweaver sites. (It was called the Edit Sites window in earlier incarnations of Dreamweaver.)

When you click the New button to create a new site, a small menu appears (also new in Dreamweaver MX 2004). It lets you choose either Site or FTP & RDS Server (see Figure 14-3). The Site option, which is the choice you'll use most often, lets you define

Figure 14-3:
The Manage Sites window (known as the Edit Sites window in earlier version of Dreamweaver) includes two new options for creating a new site. In addition to the traditional setup where the site files you're working on reside on your computer, you can also set up FTP or RDS server sites. This feature lets you work directly on live files via FTP or Cold Fusion's RDS (Remote Development Services).

a traditional Dreamweaver site—a site where working files reside on your computer. The FTP & RDS Server option lets you create a connection to a live Web server either using FTP or Cold Fusion's RDS (Remote Development Services). Neither of these methods, though, lets you take advantage of Dreamweaver's excellent site management tools (discussed in this and the following chapters). In addition, since you're working on live files on the server, you run the risk of making a serious and all-too-visible mistake on a live Web page visited by thousands of people a day.

Note: If you do want to use FTP or RDS to work directly on live site files, choose the FTP & RDS Server op- tion when creating a new site. You then enter the same information you would when creating a connection to a remote FTP or RDS server, as discussed on page 514.

For setting up a regular Dreamweaver site, choose Site from the New menu. The Site Definition window appears (see Figure 14-4). Click the Advanced tab to access Dreamweaver's advanced settings. There are eight categories of information for your site, but to get up and running, you need to provide information only for the first cat- egory: Local Info. (The remaining categories are discussed in Chapters 15 and 16.)
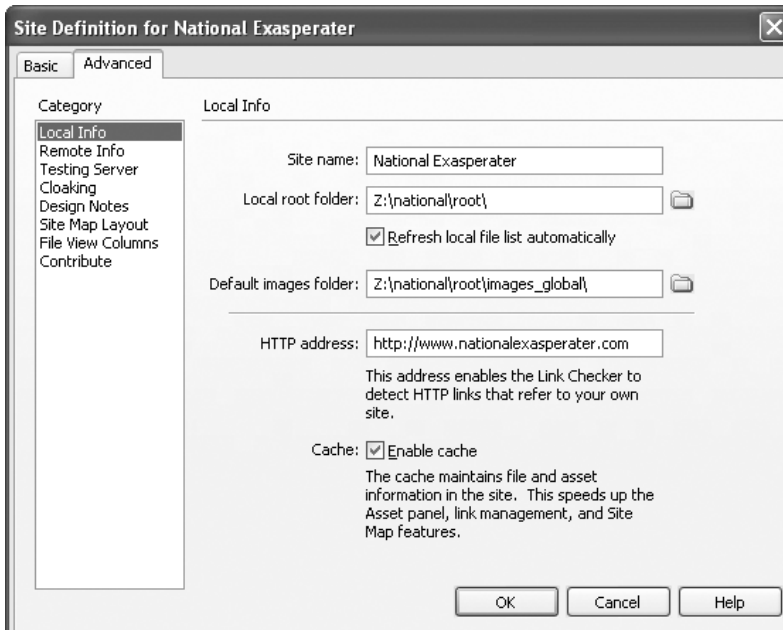
Figure 14-4:
The Basic tab of the Site Definition window provides a simple method for new users to set up a Web site. But experienced users can take advantage of the greater options available under the Advanced tab shown here. The eight catego- ries listed on the left side of the window are discussed in this and the next two chapters.

Here are the options on the Local Info tab:

Site name
Into the Site Name field, type a name that briefly identifies the site for you—and Dreamweaver. This is the name that appears, among other places, on the Site pop-

up menu on the Files panel (Figures 14-6 and 14-7), so that you can tell what site you're working on.

Local root folder

Identify your site's local root folder—the folder that contains all files belonging to your site—by clicking the folder icon to the right of the "Local root folder" field. The procedure is described on page 28. (Also see the box on page 462 for more information on local root folders.)

All of Dreamweaver's tools for managing your sites' files rely on the local root folder. Once you've defined a site, you see all of its files listed in the Files panel. Make sure to turn on the "Refresh local file list automatically" checkbox so that new files—graphics, Web pages, and so on—automatically appear in the Files panel as you add them. Alternatively, click the Refresh button (Figure 16-7) each time you want to see your recent changes in the site files list.

Default images folder

For a graphic image to work properly on the Web, you can't just add it to a Web page (Chapter 5); you also have to store a copy of the graphics file in the local root folder or one of its subfolders. In other words, if you link to a graphic that's sitting on your computer's hard drive *outside* of the root folder, the Web browser will never find it.

Dreamweaver offers a feature that puts images in the right place even if you forget. When you add a stray graphics file to a page in your site, the program automatically copies the file into your default images folder. In fact, even if you drag a graphic from your desktop onto a Web page in progress, Dreamweaver copies the file to the default images folder without missing a beat.

The process of choosing the default images folder is the same as selecting a local root folder. Click the folder icon and select the proper folder, which can be an existing folder in your local root or a new one you create on the spot. (If you're following the process described on page 454, select the *images_global* folder here.)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

Bringing Your Own Web Site

I already have a Web site. Will Dreamweaver work with it?

Yes. In fact, Dreamweaver's site management features are an invaluable aid in organizing the files of an existing site. As you can read in "Organizing Site Files" on page 465, you can use Dreamweaver to rearrange, rename, and reorganize files–tasks that are extremely difficult and time-consuming to do by hand. Furthermore, Dreamweaver lets you clean up and reorganize a site without breaking links. So Dreamweaver can be just as useful for working with a completed site as it is for creating one from scratch.

To work on an existing site, first save a copy of all site files on your computer, all in one folder. When defining the site (see page 459), choose this folder for the local root folder.

HTTP address

If you use absolute URLs to link to pages within your site (page 101), you must fill out the "HTTP address" field in order for Dreamweaver's link management features to work properly. Type your site's full URL beginning with *http://*. Dreamweaver uses this address to check for broken links within your site and to correctly rewrite links if you move pages around.

Note: This step is necessary *only* if you use absolute URLs to link to pages, graphics, or other supplemental files *within* your site. For example, maybe your Web master directs you to link a form to *http://www.yourdomain.com/cgi/formscript.php* instead of using a document relative link. In this case, you'd type *http://www.yourdomain.com/* in the HTTP Address box. In most cases, if you're doing all the development with Dreamweaver, you won't run into this situation, and you can leave the HTTP address field empty.

Cache

The cache is a small database of information about the files in your site. It helps Dreamweaver's site management features work more efficiently; leave this checkbox turned on.

Once you've provided the local information for your site, click OK to close the Site Definition window and begin working.

Editing or Removing Defined Sites

Sometimes you need to edit the information associated with a site. Perhaps you want to rename the site, or you've reorganized your hard drive and moved the local root folder to a different location, and you need to let Dreamweaver know what you've done.

UP TO SPEED

Local vs. Remote Root Folders

A root folder is the main hold-everything folder for your site. It contains every piece of the site: all Web page documents, graphic images, CSS style sheets, flash movies, and so on.

The word "root" implies that this is the master, outer, main folder, in which there may be plenty of subfolders. Remember that, in most cases, your Web site exists in two locations: on your computer as you work on it, and on the Internet where people can enjoy the fruits of your labor. In fact, most Web sites in the universe live in two places at once—one copy on the Internet, the original copy on some Web designer's hard drive.

The copy on your own computer is called the local site or the development site. Think of the local site as a sort of staging ground, where you build your site, test it, and modify it.

Because the local site isn't on a Web server, and the public can't see it, you can freely edit and add to a local site without affecting the pages your visitors are viewing, meanwhile, on the remote site. The root folder for the version of the site on your computer, therefore, is called the local root folder.

When you've added or updated a file, you move it from the local site to the remote site. The remote, or live, site mirrors the local site. Because you create it by uploading your local site, it has the same organizational folder structure as the local site and contains the same polished, fully functional Web pages. However, you leave the half-finished, typo-ridden drafts on your local site until you've perfected them. Chapter 16 explains how to use Dreamweaver's FTP features to define and work with a remote site.

To edit a site, open the Manage Sites dialog box (choose Site→Manage Sites or, in the Files panel, choose Manage Sites from the Site pop-up menu) and double-click the name of the site you want to edit. The Site Definition window opens (Figure 14-4). Now you can type a new name in the Site Name box, choose a new local root folder, or make any other changes. Click OK to close the dialog box when you're done.

Tip: If you want to edit the current site's information, there's a shortcut. In the Files panel (Figure 14-6), just double-click the name of the site in the Site menu. (Mac users need to click once to select the name in the menu, *then* double-click to open the Site Definition window.)

Once you've finished a site and are no longer working on it, you may wish to remove it from Dreamweaver's list of sites. To delete a site from the list, open the Manage Sites dialog box as described above, click to select the site you wish to delete, and click Remove.

A warning appears telling you that this action can't be undone. Don't worry; deleting the site here doesn't actually *delete* the site's images, Web pages, and other files from your computer. It merely removes the site from Dreamweaver's list of defined sites. (You can always go back and define the site again, if you need to, by following the steps on page 459.) Click Done to close the Manage Sites window.

Tip: If you do, in fact, want to delete the actual Web pages, graphics, and other site components, you can either switch to the desktop (the Finder or Windows Explorer, for example) and delete them manually, or delete them from within Dreamweaver's Files panel, described in this chapter.

Exporting and Importing Sites

When you define a site, Dreamweaver stores that site's information in its own private files. If you want to work on your site using a different computer, therefore, you must define the site again for *that* copy of Dreamweaver. In a design firm where several people might be working together on many different sites, that's a lot of extra setup. In fact, even if there's just one of you working on two computers, duplicating your efforts is a pain.

So that you can put your time to better use, Dreamweaver MX lets you import and export site definitions. For example, you can back up your site definition files—in case you have to reinstall Dreamweaver—or export a site definition for others to use.

Note: Unfortunately, you can only import or export one site at a time. So if you have a lot of sites and want to back up their information, grab some coffee and get clicking. (Windows users have another option; see the Note on page 464.)

To export a site definition:

 1. **Choose Site→Manage Sites.**

    The Manage Sites window appears listing all the sites you've defined.

2. **Select a site from the list, and then click Export.**

   If the site definition includes remote site information (page 514), you'll see a panel called Export Site (Figure 14-5). If you're simply making a backup of your site definition because you need to reinstall Dreamweaver, select the "Back up my settings" radio button. (The other option, "Share settings," is useful when, for example, your local root folder is on the C: drive, but it's on the E: drive on someone else's computer, so your setup information doesn't apply to them. It's also handy when you don't want to give someone else your user name and password to the Web server.)
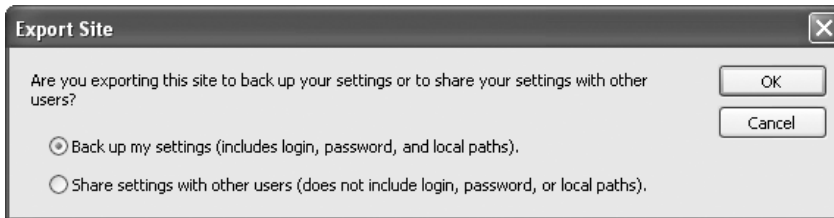
Figure 14-5:
This dialog box lets you back up your settings, or share them (minus your login information) with other people.

3. **Click OK.**

   The Export Site panel appears.

4. **In the Export Site panel, specify where you want to save the file and give it a name.**

   If you're merely making a backup, saving the file to that site's local root folder is a good choice.

Note: If you use Windows, a helpful utility called DW-Exporter can let you export all of your site definitions at once—a great timesaver when backing up your site. In fact, this utility can back up lots of important data, including serial numbers and Dreamweaver's configuration folder. As of this writing, a version for MX 2004 isn't available, but the developer promises one soon. For more information, visit *http://mm-exporter.joexx. de/index_en.php*.

Once you have a site definition file, you can import it into any version of Dreamweaver MX as follows:

1. **Choose Site→Manage Sites.**

   The Manage Sites panel appears.

2. **Click Import.**

   The Import Site panel appears. Navigate to a site definition file—look for a file ending in .ste. Select it, and then click OK.

If you're importing the site definition to a computer other than the one you used to export the site, you may need to perform a few more steps. If Dreamweaver can't locate the local root folder in the site definition file, it will ask you to select a local root folder on the new computer, as well as a new default images folder.

Organizing Site Files

Once you've defined your local site, Dreamweaver helps you organize your files, create folders, and add new Web pages to your site using the Files panel as your command center. To open the Files panel, choose Window→Files, or just press F8.

In its most basic incarnation, the Files panel displays the files in the current site's local root folder. This list looks and acts just like Windows Explorer or the Macintosh Finder; you see names, file sizes, and folders. You can view the files inside a folder by clicking the + (▶) symbol next to the folder (or simply by double-clicking the folder). Double-click a Web page to open it in Dreamweaver.

Tip: You can open certain types of files in an outside program of your choice by defining an external editor for that file type. For example, you can tell Dreamweaver to open GIF files in Fireworks, Photoshop, or another image editor. (See "Setting Up an External Editor" on page 126 for more on this feature.)

You can view your site's files in four different ways using the View pop-up menu (shown in Figure 14-6):

- **Local View** shows the files in your local root folder.

- **Map View** shows a map of your site (see page 471).

- **Remote View** shows files on the Web server in the remote root folder (page 462). Of course, before you've posted your site on the Web, this list is empty. Information appears here only after you've set up a connection to a remote root folder (page 514) and connected to a Web server.

- **Testing Server** view is useful when you're creating the dynamic database-driven sites discussed in Part 6 of this book. No files appear in this view until you've set up a testing server (page 656) and connected to it.
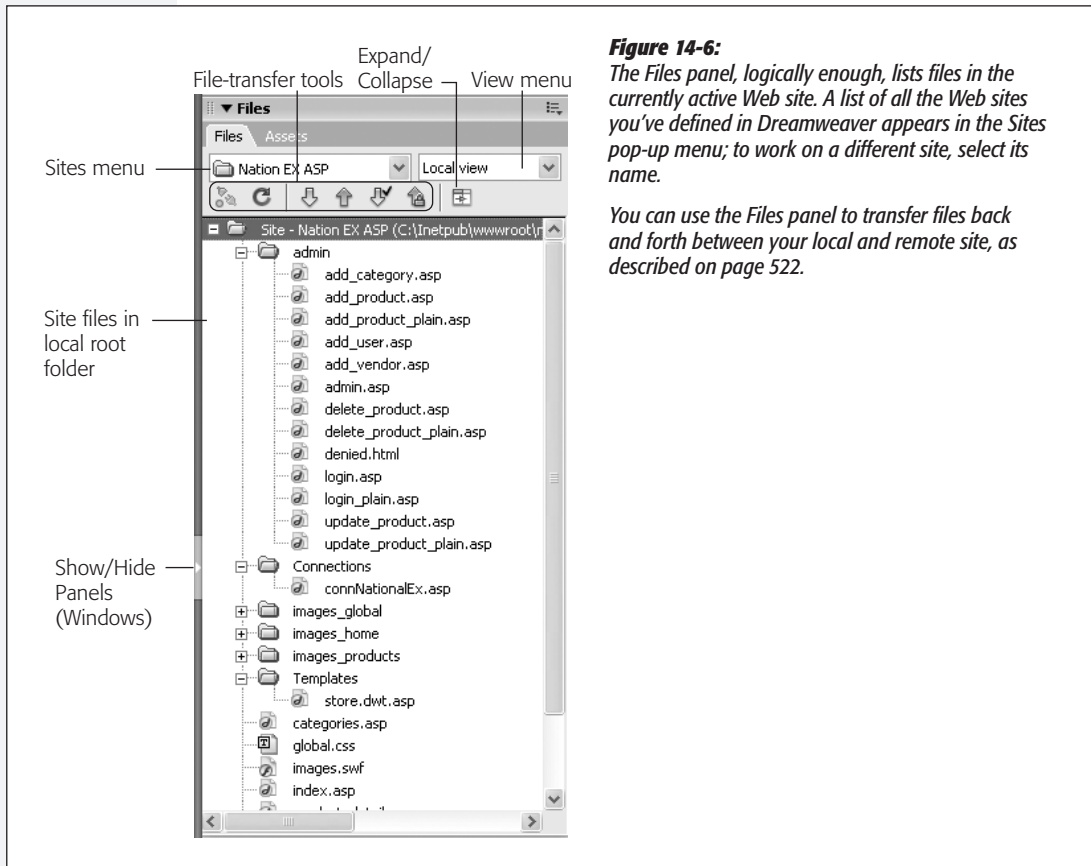

FOR WINDOWS PCS

The Windows Files Panel

If you choose to expand the Files panel, so you can see a side-by-side view of both the remote site files and local site files, click the Expand/Collapse button (see Figure 14-7). The Files panel fills the screen. The obvious drawback is that you can't work on a Web page while the Site window is maximized, because you can't even see it. Click the Expand/Collapse button again to minimize the Files panel and gain access to your document window.

To get around this limitation, you can undock the Files panel: Grab the Files panel group by its grip–the column of dots to the left of the word Files–and drag it toward the middle of the screen. (Stay away from the edges of the screen. This may simply redock the panel group.) The panel group then becomes a floating panel. You're now free to resize the Files panel even after expanding it.

Sites menu

File-transfer tools

Expand/
Collapse

View menu

Site files in
local root
folder

Show/Hide
Panels
(Windows)

Figure 14-6:
The Files panel, logically enough, lists files in the currently active Web site. A list of all the Web sites you've defined in Dreamweaver appears in the Sites pop-up menu; to work on a different site, select its name.

You can use the Files panel to transfer files back and forth between your local and remote site, as described on page 522.

Adding New Folders and Files

The Files panel provides a fast way of adding blank Web pages to your site. With one click, you can create a new page in any folder you like, saving several steps you'd otherwise have to perform using the File menu.

Adding files

To create a new, blank Web page, open the Files panel using one of the methods described on page 465, then right-click (Control-click) a file or folder in the Files panel.

In the contextual menu that appears, choose New File. Dreamweaver creates a new, empty Web page. (Actually, the page doesn't have to be empty; you can edit the file Dreamweaver uses as its default new page, as described in the box below.)

Note: The type of file Dreamweaver creates depends on the type of site you're creating. For a plain HTML site, Dreamweaver creates a blank HTML page. However, if you're building a dynamic database-driven site like those described in Part 6, Dreamweaver creates a blank page based on the type of server model you've selected. For example, if you're building a site using PHP and MySQL, the page will be a blank PHP page (named *untitled.php*).

The new file appears in the Files panel with a highlighted naming rectangle next to it; type a name for the page here. Don't forget to add the appropriate extension (.htm or .html) to the end of its name.

Figure 14-7:
*The Expand/Collapse button
maximizes the Files panel to fill the
monitor* and *lets you display two views
simultaneously. This way, you can look
at both a map of the site and the files
in the local root folder, say, or view
both the remote and local sites at the
same time.*

*Local Files always appear on the
right. Which view appears on the left
side—Remote, Testing, or Site Map—de-
pends on which view you selected* before *clicking the Expand button.*

Testing server   Local site
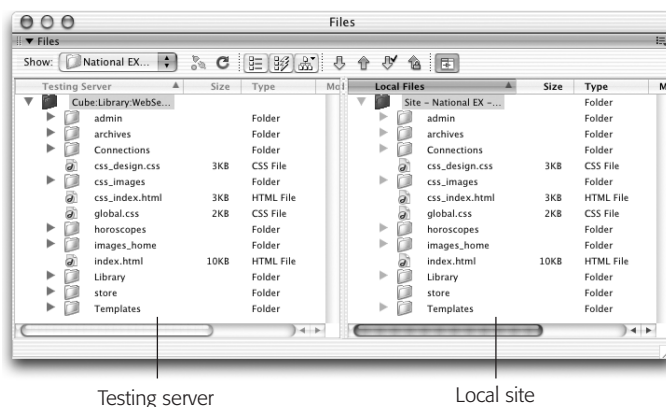
Changing the Default New Page

Whenever you make a new Web page—for example, by choosing File→New or by right-clicking (Control-clicking) an existing file in the Files panel—Dreamweaver gives you a blank, white document window. But what if you always want your pages to have gray backgrounds, or you always want to include a link to the same external style sheet?

Every new Web page you create is actually an untitled copy of a default template document called Default.html. (You'll find it in the Macromedia Dreamweaver MX 2004→Configura-tion→DocumentTypes→NewDocuments folder.) You can open this file within Dreamweaver and edit it however you like: change its background color, margins or text color, or

whatever, so that all subsequent new pages you create inherit its settings. Consider making a backup of this file before edit-ing it, however, so that you can return to the factory settings if you accidentally make a mess of it.

You'll also notice lots of other files in this folder. Since Dream-weaver MX can create lots of different file types—Cascading Style Sheets, Active Server pages, and so on—you'll find a default blank file for each. You can edit any of these—but don't, unless you're sure of what you're doing. You can eas-ily damage some of the more complex file types, especially those that involve dynamic Web sites.

Adding folders

You can add folders to your site directly in Dreamweaver using the Files panel. Just right-click (Control-click) a file or folder in the local files list. If you click a file, Dreamweaver creates the new folder in the same folder as that file; if you click a folder, you get a new folder inside it.

From the contextual menu, choose New Folder.

If you crave variety, you can add a folder another way. Select a file or folder in the Files panel and then click the contextual menu button (see Figure 14-6) and select File→New Folder.

Finally, in the naming rectangle that appears in the Files panel, type a name for the new folder.

Moving files and folders

Because the Dreamweaver Files panel looks and acts so much like the Windows Explorer and Macintosh Finder, you may think it does nothing more than let you move and rename files and folders on your computer. You may even be tempted to work with your site files directly on the Mac or Windows desktop, thinking that you're saving time. However, when it comes to moving the files and folders in your site, Dreamweaver does more than your computer's desktop ever could.

In your Web travels, you've probably encountered the dreaded "404: File Not Found" error. This "broken link" message doesn't necessarily mean that the page doesn't exist, just that your Web browser didn't find the page at the location (URL) specified by the link you just clicked. In short, someone working on that Web site probably moved or renamed a file without updating the link. Because Web site files are interrelated in such complex ways—pages link to other pages, which include paths to graphics, which in turn appear on other pages—an action as simple as moving one file can wreak havoc on an entire Web site. That's why you shouldn't drag Web site files around on your desktop or rename them in Windows Explorer or the Macintosh Finder.

In fact, moving and reorganizing Web site files is so headache-ridden and error-prone that some Web designers avoid it altogether, leaving their sites straining under the weight of thousands of poorly organized files. But you don't have to be one of them: Dreamweaver makes reorganizing a site easy and error-free. When you use the Files panel to move files, Dreamweaver looks for actions that might break your site's links and automatically rewrites paths of links, images, and other media.

Note to programmers: If your custom JavaScript programs include paths to images, Web pages, or other files in your site, Dreamweaver can't help you. When you reorganize your site with the Files panel, the program updates *links* it created, but not *paths* you've included in your JavaScript programs.

Just be sure to do your moving from within Dreamweaver, like this: In the Files panel, drag the folder or file into its new folder (see Figure 14-8). To move multiple files, Ctrl-click (⌘-click) each of the ones you want to move, then drag them as a group; to

deselect a selected file, Ctrl-click or ⌘-click it again. You can also select one folder or file and Shift-click another to select all files and folders in the list between the two.

Note: Close *all* of your Web documents *before* reorganizing your files in this way. Dreamweaver doesn't always correctly update links in open files. But if you do end up with malfunctioning links, you can always use Dreamweaver's Find Broken Links tool (page 494) to ferret out and fix any broken links.


When you release the mouse button, the Update Files dialog box appears (Figure 14-8); just click Update. Dreamweaver updates all the links for you.

Tip: If you accidentally dragged the file or folder to the wrong location, click Don't Update. Then drag the file back to its original location and, if Dreamweaver asks, click Don't Update once again.

Figure 14-8:
Top left: You can move files and folders within the Files panel just as you would in Windows Explorer or the Macintosh Finder. Simply drag the file into (or out of) a folder. But unlike your computer's file system, Dreamweaver constantly monitors the links between Web pages, graphics, and other files.

Bottom right: If you move a file using Windows Explorer or the Finder, you'll most likely end up breaking links to that file, or, if it's a Web page, links in that file. By contrast, Dreamweaver is smart enough to know when moving files will cause problems. The Update Files dialog box lets you update links to and from the file you're moving, so that your site keeps working.
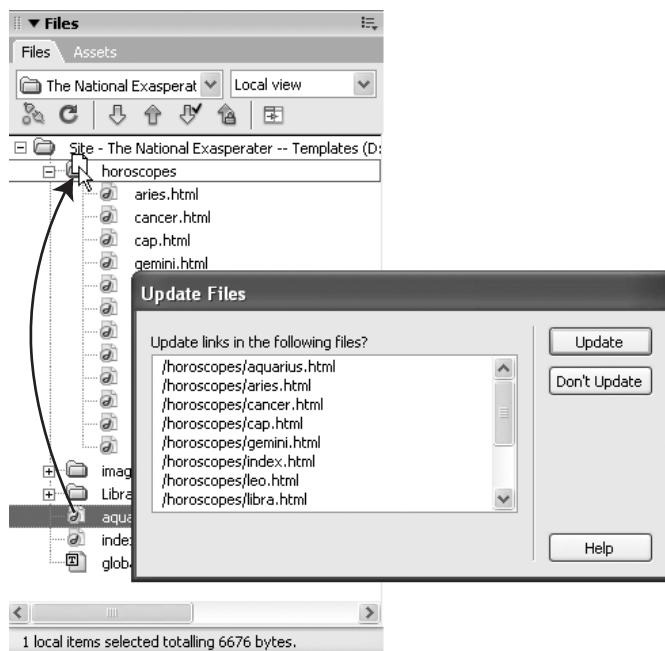
Renaming files and folders

Renaming files and folders poses the same problems as moving them. Because links include file and folder names, altering a file or folder name can break a link just as easily as moving or deleting the file or folder.

For example, say you've created a new site with a home page named *home.html*. You cheerfully continued building the other pages of your site, linking them to *home.html* as you went along. But after reading this chapter and checking to find out what default file name your Web server requires (see page 457), you found that you need

to rename your home page file *index.html*. If you were to rename the file *index.html* using Windows Explorer or the Macintosh Finder, every link to *home.html* would result in a "File not found" error.

Dreamweaver, on the other hand, handles this potential disaster effortlessly, as long as you rename the file in the Files panel instead. To do so, just click the file or folder in the Files panel. Pause a moment, and click the *name* of the file or folder. (The pause ensures that Dreamweaver won't think you just double-clicked the file for editing.)

A renaming rectangle appears; type the new name. Be sure to include the proper extension for the type of file you're renaming. For example, GIFs end with .gif, Cascading Style Sheets end with .css. Although Dreamweaver lets you name files without using an extension, the extensionless files won't work when you move them to a Web server.

Finally, in the Update Files dialog box (Figure 14-8), click Update. Dreamweaver updates all the links to this file or folder to reflect the new name.

Caution: It bears repeating: never rename or move files and folders *outside* of Dreamweaver. If you use Windows Explorer or the Macintosh Finder to reorganize the files in your site, links will break, images will disappear from your pages, and the earth will open underneath your feet. (Well, actually, that last thing won't happen, but it might *feel* that way when your boss comes in and says, "What's happened to our Web site? Nothing works!")

If you've edited files outside of Dreamweaver by accident, see page 494 to learn how to find and fix broken links.

Deleting files and folders

It's a good idea to clean up your site from time to time by deleting old and unused files. Just as with moving and renaming files, you delete files from the Files panel.

To delete a file or folder, just click to select it in the Files panel and press Backspace or Delete. (To select multiple files or folders, Ctrl-click [⌘-click] them as described on page 468.) If the doomed file or folder isn't referenced by any other page on the site, a simple "Are you sure you want to delete this file?" warning appears; click Yes.

Figure 14-9:
When you delete files in the Files panel, Dreamweaver warns you if other pages reference (link to) the file. If you click Yes, you'll need to go back and repair the links. Dreamweaver gives you a convenient way to do it—the Change Links Sitewide command (see page 500)—and reminds you of it in this dialog box.

However, if other files link to the file—or to files within the folder—that you're de-leting, then a warning dialog box (Figure 14-9) appears informing you that you're about to break links on one or more pages in your site. The message even lists the first few pages that use the file. If you've made a mistake, click No to leave your site untouched.

If you're sure you wish to delete the file, click Yes. And yes, this move does *break links* in all the pages listed. Repairing those links, which usually means linking them to a new page, requires a separate step: using the Site→Change Links Sitewide command, as described on page 500.

Viewing a Site Map

While the Files panel's list of files and folders is a great aid in managing those files, it doesn't give you a picture of how your site's Web pages are linked together. You can see that the *index.html* file in the root folder is the site's home page, for instance, but you can't see how it relates to the other pages in the site. In other words, you can't tell which pages link to or from it. To see those relationships, you need Dreamweaver's Site→Site Map view.

The Site Map is a visual guide to the links in a site (see Figure 14-10). An icon repre-senting the home page appears at the top of the map, and arrows connect the home page to icons representing each of the links it contains. As shown in Figure 14-10, special icons clearly mark external, broken, and email links. The best way to view them is by expanding the Files panel (page 465), which spreads the links out into easy-to-read columns. In regular collapsed view, all the links in the map are put into a single column, so you need to scroll down to see the each one. Furthermore, the

Figure 14-10:
The Site Map displays icons for each link in a Web site. Symbols provide added information about the pages: The globe icon ( ) indicates an external link such as http://www.yahoo.com. *The broken link icon ( ) indi-cates that the file either doesn't exist or has been misfiled, so that the link won't work. Dream-weaver also highlights the name of the missing file in red. For more on finding and fixing broken links, see page 494.*

External link   Broken link
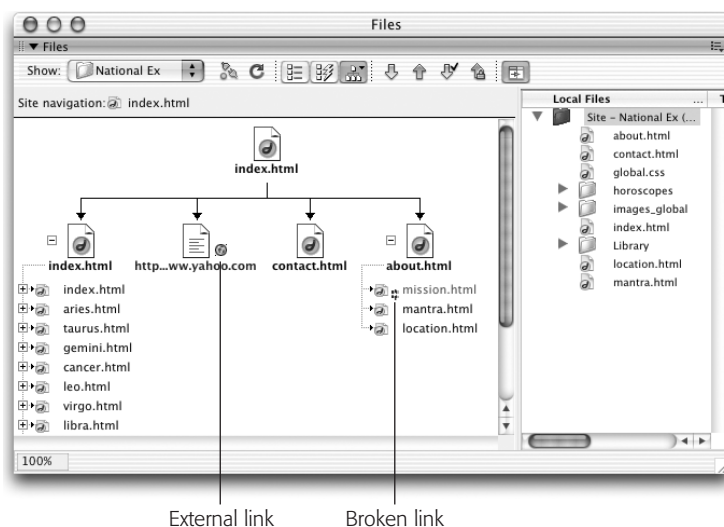
Site Map does more than just provide a visual overview; it also gives you an easy way to rename files and even retitle Web pages.

Setting Up Site Map View

To view a Site Map, you'll first need to do a little preparation:

1. **Choose Site→Manage Sites (or choose Manage Sites from the Site menu in the Files panel).**

    The Manage Sites window appears, listing all of your sites.

2. **Click a site name and click Edit (or just double-click the site name).**

    The Site Definition window opens.

    If you're defining this site for the first time, you can also follow steps 3–9 on page 459 now.

3. **In the Category list, choose Site Map Layout.**

    You see the dialog box shown in Figure 14-11.

4. **Click the folder icon next to the Home Page field. Navigate to the home page file in the site's root folder.**

    Click Select (Windows) or Open (Mac) to set this page as the home page.
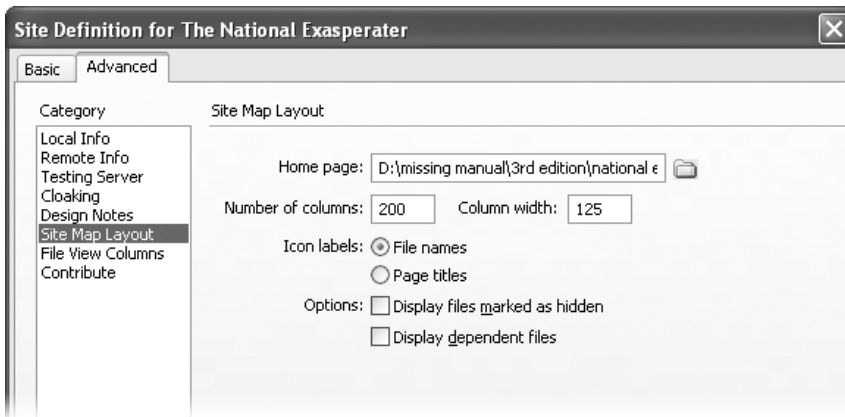
Figure 14-11:
Here, you define the site's home page and set preferences for Dreamweaver's Site Map view. If your home page file is named anything other than index.html *or* index.htm, *you must specify it in the Home Page field.*

Remember that your home page must be in the root folder. Technically, you *can* choose a file that's buried several folders deep in your site folder, but don't do it—unless, of course, you really want to tell people to visit your company's home page at *www.mycompany.com/about_us/about_me/my_dog/ralphie.html*. By specifying a home page in the outer level of your root folder, you can assure that the home page will be at *www.mycompany.com*.

5. **Set any other Site Map preferences you wish.**

The **Number of Columns** field determines how many links can be displayed in a single row of the Site Map. For instance, if you set the number of columns to five, but the home page has ten links on it, the Site Map only has enough columns for the first five links; the remaining five icons get bumped down to a second row directly below the first. Displaying more than one row of links from the home page can be confusing, so it's best to use a number of columns that's at least equal to the number of links on the home page. Dreamweaver's default value of 200 is just fine.

The **Column Width** represents the width, in pixels, of each column. As you can see in the box on page 474, file names and page titles may not fully appear if the column width is too small. Again, stick with Dreamweaver's default value of 125.

Note: The column width and number settings have no effect except when the Files panel is in expanded view (Figure 14-7).

Using the **Icon Labels** buttons, choose whether you want the Site Map to display the file name (*index.html*) or page title ("Welcome to Cosmopolitan Farmer") next to each page's icon. Shift+Ctrl+T (Shift-⌘-T) toggles between the two views when viewing the Site Map.

Once you've got your Site Map on display, you can hide certain files for the sake of clutter reduction by marking them as hidden. To make sure they stay hidden, leave **Display files marked as hidden** turned off. You can always make the hidden files reappear using the steps described on page 475.

The **Display dependent files** option will make GIF, JPEG, CSS, Flash, and all other non-HTML files show up in the Site Map. Since this can make the site map a confusing jumble of files, it's best to leave this option turned off.

6. **Click OK.**

   You return to the Files panel.

Viewing and Customizing Site Map View

Once you've set up Site Map view as described above, you can see it by choosing Map View from the Files panel's unlabeled View menu (identified in Figure 14-6). Because the Files panel is narrow, click the Expand/Collapse View button (also shown in Figure 14-6) to maximize the map area.

When you first view the Site Map, only the first two levels—the home page and all of the pages linked from it—appear. A + symbol next to a page indicates that there are additional links on that page; clicking the + expands the list of links on that page. If those pages in turn have links, additional + symbols appear. You can continue to follow the links by expanding each page, but viewing too many levels at once can bring a confusing complication; see the box on page 474 for advice.

As in the Site file list, you can open a page by double-clicking its icon in the Site Map. In fact, if the Files panel is expanded (so that both the Site Map and Local Site file

listings appear), selecting a page in the Site Map highlights the corresponding page in the File list, and vice versa.

Identifying pages in the Site Map

The Site Map view starts out displaying the file name of each Web page, which can be less than informative. If you've structured your site (as recommended on page 454) so that the main page for each section of the site is stored in a different folder and is named *index.html,* the Site Map will be an unhelpful sea of *index.html* labels (see Figure 14-10).

A better approach: use each page's *title* as the icon label. You can do this either when you first set up the site, as described on page 459, or choose View→Show Page Titles from the Files panel's contextual menu (see Figure 14-13). Repeat the same command to see the file names again. The keyboard shortcut is a fast way to toggle between the two views: Shift+ Ctrl+T (Shift-⌘-T).

Note: In Windows, if the Files panel is expanded, you'll see a menu across the top of the panel, as pictured in Figure 14-12. This menu offers the same options as the contextual menu visible in the collapsed panel, shown in Figure 14-10.

Viewing just part of a Web site

When viewing large Web sites, you might find the Site Map awkward. Perhaps you're working on just a single section, and don't want to be bothered with the extraneous details of the rest of the site. No problem: you can isolate a particular page when view-

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GEM IN THE ROUGH

Don't Get Lost in the Site Map

The Site Map clearly displays links between pages, but if you're not careful, you may end up chasing your tail. Very often, Web pages link back and forth to each other. For example, the home page may link to a page in the site that, in turn, links back to the home page.

In this example illustrated here, the horoscopes main page ("Horoscopes") has a link to the home page ("The National Exasperater"), which links to the horoscopes page, which links back to the home page, which links to the horoscopes page…and so on. All four of the pages indicated by arrows are, in fact,

the same page!
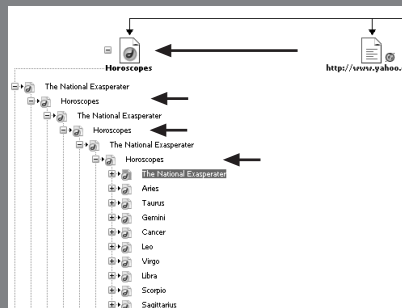
As shown here, the Site Map shows the horoscope page as a link from the home page. When you then click the + to expand the advertising page, you see a duplicate icon for the home page (whose original icon appears at the top of the Site Map). When you click the + sign next to the home page icon under the horoscopes page, you don't get a new level of site links, even though the Site Map displays it that way. What you've done is "re-expand" the home page to display more duplicate icons.

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ing the Site Map. Click a page in the Site Map and choose View→View as Root from the Files panel's contextual menu (Figure 14-13). Alternatively, you can right-click (Control-Click) the page and select View as Root from the menu that appears. The page you selected appears as the top-level page in the Site Map (see Figure 14-12).

Figure 14-12:
This Site Map is zoomed in on a single page (Leo), which appears at the top level of the Site Map where the home page normally would be. The path from the home page to this file appears above the map in the Site Navigation bar. The home page is titled "The National Exasperater." A link from the home page leads to a page titled "Horoscopes," which in turn links to the "Leo" horoscope page. To once again view the home page as the top level of the Site Map, click its name in the Site Navigation bar.
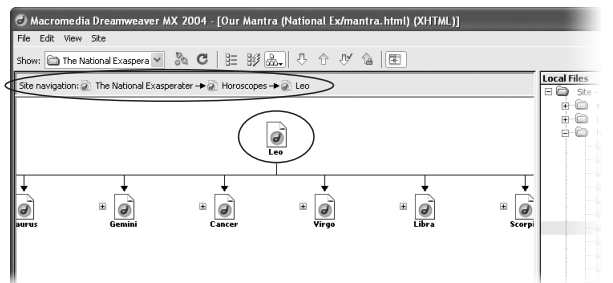
Hiding extraneous links

Like some people you may know, the Site Map loves detail; it includes *all* links from your pages, including external links and email links. At times, this may be a bit more information than you need. Suppose you provide 200 email addresses on a single page; you probably don't need to see all of those listed in the Site Map.

Fortunately, Dreamweaver lets you hide any links you wish. All you have to do is select the files you want to hide (Shift-click them, or drag across a group of them) and then choose View→Show/Hide Link from the Files panel's contextual menu, or right-click (Control-click) the selected files and choose Show/Hide link from the menu that appears; Dreamweaver makes them disappear.

To show hidden files again, choose View→Show Files Marked as Hidden from the Files panel's contextual menu. Dreamweaver makes all hidden files appear with their names italicized, indicating that you've marked them as hidden. You can turn off a

WORKAROUND WORKSHOP

Printing Your Site Map

After perfecting your Site Map, you may want to make a hard copy of it. While Dreamweaver won't print the Site Map (why, Macromedia, why?), you can save it as a graphic and then print it.

Here's the ritual: In Site Map view, choose File→Save Site Map from the Files panel's contextual menu (for Windows, if the panel is expanded, you can select Save Site Map from the File menu at the top of the window). Name the graphic and save it onto your computer. (Windows users can also choose a file format for the graphic—PNG or BMP. On the Mac, Dreamweaver saves the map as a PICT file.)

To print the resulting graphics file, double-click it to open it in, say, Image Viewer (Windows) or Preview (Macintosh). You can print it from there.

file's "hidden" status by selecting it and choosing View→Show/Hide Link, or right-clicking (Control-clicking) the file and choosing Show/Hide link.

Renaming Pages in the Site Map

You can rename files in Site Map view, which works similarly to renaming them in the File List view. However, only the Site Map lets you easily change the *titles* of your site's Web pages. In fact, this is one of the best features of the Site Map. While displaying the page titles, you can quickly scan your site for missing or incorrect page titles and fix them in just a few steps.

You rename a file in the Site Map just as you do in the Files panel; the steps appear on page 469. In this case, just be sure you're looking at the right kind of data—either page titles or file names—before you begin. Press Shift+ Ctrl+T (Shift-⌘-T) to switch back and forth when viewing the Site Map.

When you're finished, Dreamweaver rewrites the title in the HTML of the page. The new title also appears next to the page icon. Or, if you've changed the name of the file, Dreamweaver's Update Files dialog box appears, letting you fix any links that point to the newly named file.
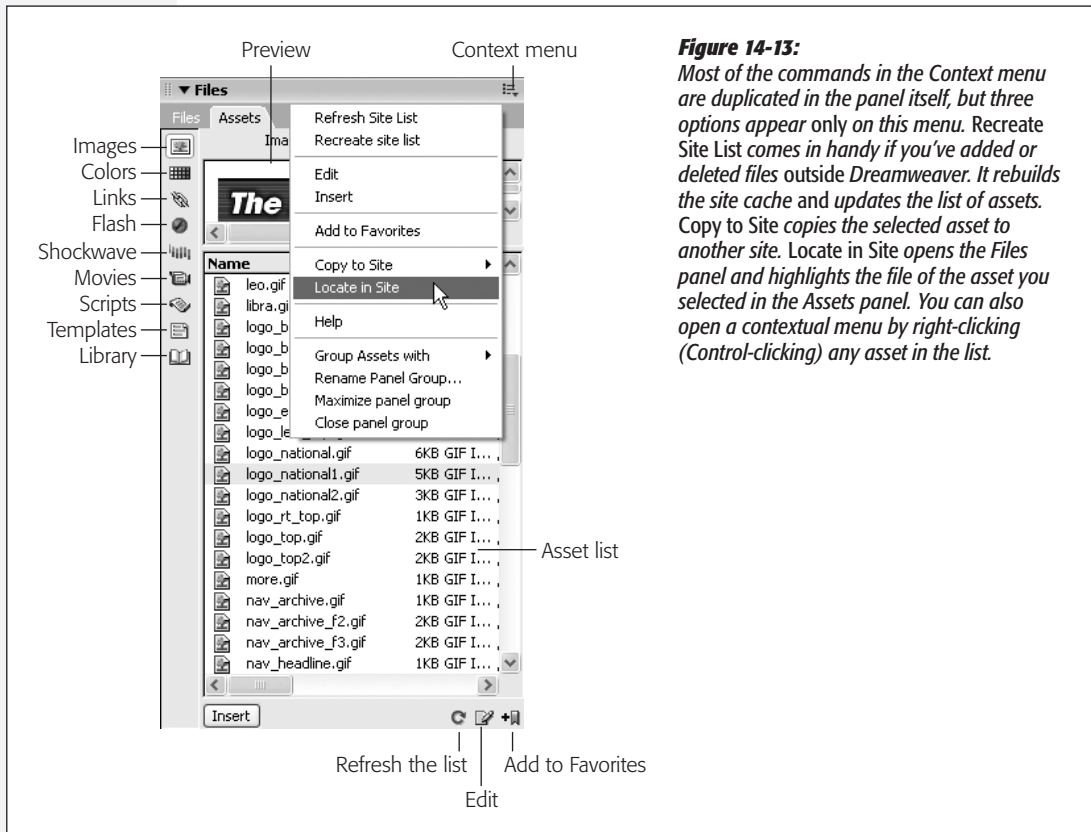
Figure 14-13:
Most of the commands in the Context menu are duplicated in the panel itself, but three options appear only on this menu. Recreate Site List *comes in handy if you've added or deleted files* outside *Dreamweaver. It rebuilds the site cache and updates the list of assets.* Copy to Site *copies the selected asset to another site.* Locate in Site *opens the Files panel and highlights the file of the asset you selected in the Assets panel. You can also open a contextual menu by right-clicking (Control-clicking) any asset in the list.*

Site Assets

Web pages integrate lots of different elements: GIFs, JPEGs, links, colors, and Flash and Shockwave movies, to name just a few. In a large site with lots of files, it can be a challenge to locate a particular image or remember an exact color.

To simplify the process, Dreamweaver provides the Assets panel. For want of a better generic term, Macromedia defines the term *asset* to mean any element you use on a Web page, such as a GIF file, a link, or even an individual color.

Viewing the Assets Panel

Dreamweaver lists your site's assets on the nine category "pages" of the Assets panel (Figure 14-13). To open the panel, choose Window→Assets, or press F11.

You select an asset in the list by clicking its name; a miniature preview appears above the Assets list. To preview a movie, click the green arrow that appears in the preview window.

The assets panel highlights nine different categories of site elements. To view the assets in a particular category, click its icon at the left of the Assets panel.

- The **Images** category lists all of the GIF, JPEG, and PNG files in your site.

- The **Colors** category shows all of the colors specified in the Web pages and embedded style sheets of your site. These include link colors, background colors, and text colors. Unfortunately, it doesn't include colors you've specified in linked style sheets. (For more detail on linked style sheets, see page 149.)

- The **URLs** category lists all external links—not just standard *http://* links, but also email links, FTP addresses, and JavaScript links. (For an example of a JavaScript link, see the box on page 379.)

- The **multimedia** categories—Flash, Shockwave, and Movies—are roughly equivalent. They each display movie files with their corresponding extensions: .swf (Flash), .dcr (Shockwave), and .mov or .mpg (QuickTime and MPEG).

- The **Scripts** category lists JavaScript or VBScript files. This category only includes external script files that Web pages link to. Scripts that are embedded into a Web page—like those created using Dreamweaver Behaviors—are not listed.

- The last two categories—**Templates** and **Library**—are advanced assets that streamline Web site production. They're discussed in Chapters 17 and 18.

You can switch between two different views for each asset category—Site and Favorites—by clicking the radio buttons near the top of the Assets panel. The Site option lists all the assets that appear in the Site for the chosen category. Favorites lets you create a select list of your most important and frequently used assets (see page 480).

Note: Dreamweaver's cloaking feature lets you hide files from many sitewide tasks, including the Assets panel. So, if you have a folder with thousands of image files that you'd rather not display on the Assets panel, you can hide that folder and its files. See page 528 for more on this feature.

If, as you are working on a site, you add additional assets—for example, you create a new GIF image in Fireworks and import it to the site—you'll need to update the Assets panel. Click the Refresh List button ( ) to update the list of assets.

Inserting Assets

The Assets panel's prime mission is to make using assets easier. From the Assets list, you can add graphics, colors, and links to your pages with a click of the mouse. Most of the categories on the panel refer to external files that you can include on a Web page: images, Flash, Shockwave, movies, and scripts.

The easiest way to insert an asset file is to drag it from the Assets panel into the document window. You can drag the asset anywhere on the page you'd normally insert an object—in a table cell, at the beginning or end of a page, or within a paragraph. Script assets can go in the head of a Web page (see Figure 14-14).

(If you're billing by the hour, you may prefer the long way: Click in the document window to plant the insertion point, click the asset's name, and then click Insert at the bottom of the Assets panel.)

Adding color and link assets

Color and link assets work a bit differently than other asset files. Instead of standing on their own, they *add* color or a link to images or text you've selected in the document window. (You can add colors to any text selection, or add links to images and text.) In this way, you can quickly add a frequently used link—the URL to download the Flash player or Adobe Acrobat reader, for example.

POWER USERS' CLINIC

The Return of Root-Relative Paths

Chapter 4 explains the different types of link paths—absolute, document-relative, and root-relative—that Dreamweaver understands (see page 93). While it's best to use document-relative paths for linking to pages within your own site, or for adding images and other media to a page, you may notice that Dreamweaver frequently displays root-relative paths in its site management tools.

For instance, the list in the Assets panel includes the full root-relative path of each asset—*/images_home/banner.gif,* for example. The initial "/" indicates the root folder of the site,

and the information that follows indicates the rest of the path to that asset. In this example, the graphic asset *banner.gif* is in a folder called *images_home,* which is itself in the site's root folder. Dreamweaver needs to look no further than the root folder to find the asset in question.

Root-relative paths indicate a precise location within a site and let Dreamweaver know where to find a file. This doesn't mean, however, that you should use root-relative paths in your Web sites. Use document-relative paths—and let Dreamweaver do its own thing.

To do so, start by highlighting the text (to change its color or turn it into a link) or image (to turn it into a link). In the Assets panel, click the appropriate category button—Colors or Links. Click the color or link you want, and then click Apply. Alternatively, you can drag the color or link asset from the panel to the selection.

Note: Applying color to text using the Assets panel either creates a new CSS style or wraps the selected text in a <font> tag. The actual result depends on the Preferences setting described on page 80.

Figure 14-14:
While you'll insert most assets into the body of a Web page, you can (and usually should) place script files in the head of the page. To do this, first choose View→Show Head Content. Then drag the script from the Assets panel into the head pane, as shown here. (Adding a script asset does not copy the JavaScript or VBScript code into the Web page. Instead, just as with external style sheets, Dreamweaver links to the script file so that when a Web browser loads the page, it looks for and then loads the file from the Web site.)
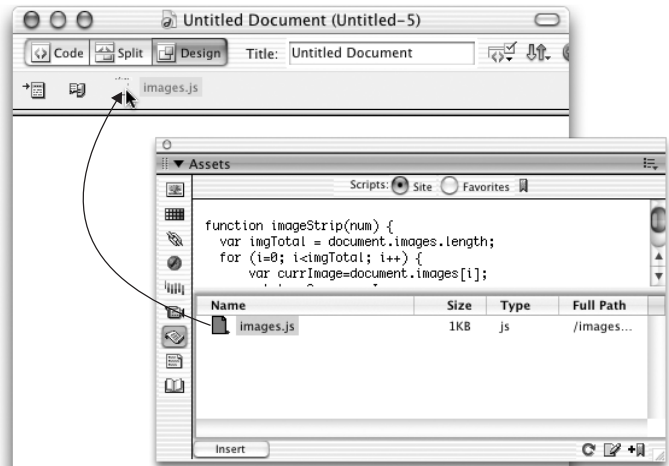
GEM IN THE ROUGH

Better Use of Color Assets

Although color assets are only meant for coloring text, you can use them any time Dreamweaver's eyedropper tool appears, such as when you're about to apply color to tables, table cells, links, pages, and other elements. In other words, anytime you need a frequently used color, you can hop right to the Assets panel rather than pecking around on the color palette or trying to find another occurrence of the color on your screen.

Whenever you click a color box—in the Page Properties window, Prop-

erty inspector, or Style Definition window, for example—a color palette appears and the cursor changes to an eyedropper. You could, of course, use this eyedropper to pick a color from the palette or to sample a color from the screen. But if you've already used the color in your site—or saved it in the Favorites list (see page 480)—just grab it from the Assets panel. To do so, move the eyedropper to the colored swatch in the Assets list and click.
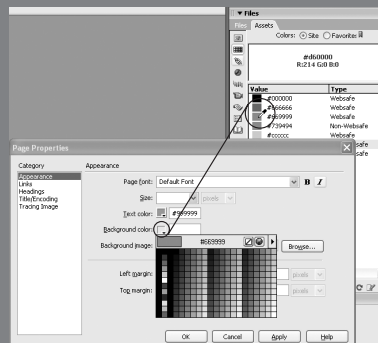
Favorite Assets

On a large site, you may have thousands of image files, movie files, colors, and external links. Because scrolling through long lists of assets can be a chore, Dreamweaver lets you create a compact list of your favorite, frequently used assets.

For example, you might come up with five main colors that define your site's color scheme, which you'll use much more often than the other miscellaneous colors on the Assets list. Add them to your list of *favorite* colors. Likewise, adding graphics files you use over and over—logos, for example—to a list of favorites makes it easy to locate and insert those files into your pages. (Don't forget that you can also use Dreamweaver's Library and Template features for this function. They're similar, but more powerful tools for keeping frequently used items at the ready. Turn to Chapter 17 for the details.)

Identifying your Favorites

If the color, graphic, or other element to be added to your Favorites list already appears on your Assets panel, highlight it in the list and then click the Add to Favorites button (⬛).

Even quicker, you can also add Favorites as you go, snagging them right from your Web page in progress. If you're working on your site's home page and you insert a company logo, for example, that's a perfect time to make the logo a favorite asset.

Simply right-click (Control-click) the image. From the contextual menu, choose Add to Favorites; Dreamweaver instantly adds the graphic to your list of favorites. You can do the same with Flash, Shockwave, and QuickTime files, as well with links. (Unfortunately, this shortcut doesn't work for colors and script files.)

When it comes to colors and links, there's another way to turn them into Favorites. In the Assets panel, select the Color or URLs category, click the Favorites radio button, and then click the New Asset button (⬛). Then:

- If you're adding a favorite color, the Dreamweaver color box appears. Select a color using the eyedropper (see page 35).

- If you're adding a favorite link, the Add URL window opens. Type an absolute URL in the first field, either a Web address starting with *http://* or an *email* link—*mailto: subscriptions@nationalexasperater.com.* Next, type a name for the link in the Nickname field—Acrobat Download or Subscription Email, for instance—and then click OK.

Your new color or link appears in the Favorites list.

Using your Favorites

You insert assets from the Favorites list into your Web pages just as you would any assets; see page 478.

Removing Favorites

Removing assets from the Favorites list is just as straightforward as adding them: just select one in the Favorites list of your Assets panel and then press Delete. The Remove from Favorites button (▬) on the Assets panel does the same thing. Yet another approach is to use the contextual menu (see Figure 14-13).

Don't worry; removing an asset from the Favorites list *doesn't* delete that asset from the Assets panel—only from the Favorites list. You can still find it listed if you click the Site radio button.

Organizing Favorite assets

On a large site with lots of important assets, even a Favorites list can get unwieldy. That's why you can set up folders within the Assets panel to organize your assets. For example, if you use lots of ads on a site, create a folder in the Image assets Favorites called Ads or, for even greater precision, create multiple folders for different types of ads: Banner Ads, Half Banner Ads, and so on.

You can then drag assets into the appropriate folders, and you can expand or contract the folder to show or hide the assets inside (see Figure 14-15). These folders simply help you organize your Assets panel; they don't actually appear anywhere within the structure of your site. Moving a Favorite asset into a folder in the Assets panel doesn't change the location of files within your site.

Figure 14-15:
In addition to using folders to organize your favorites, you can also give a Favorite asset an easily identifiable nickname. Instead of listing a favorite image using its file name—148593.gif—use an easily understood name like New Product. Naming favorite colors can be particularly helpful—a nickname like Page Background is more descriptive than #FF6633. To name a Favorite asset, click to select it, pause a moment, and click again to edit its name. (These nicknames only apply in the Assets panel; they don't rename or retitle your files.)
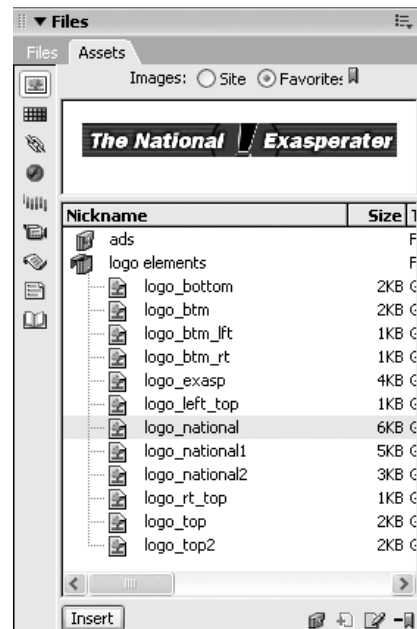
To create a Favorites folder, click the appropriate category button at the left edge of the Assets panel (any except the bottom two, since you can't create folders for Templates and Library items). Click Favorites at the top of the Assets panel (you can't create folders in Site view). Finally, click the folder button () at the bottom of the Assets panel. When the new folder appears with its naming rectangle highlighted, type a new name for the folder and then press Enter. (Don't use the same name for more than one folder.)

To put an asset into a folder, just drag it there from the list. And if you're really obsessive, you can even create subfolders by dragging one folder onto another.