

ISS PRIMER FOR BUILDING A PERSONAL STUDENT WEB PAGE

General description of the ISS web site

The web site and its maintainability are envisaged as follows:

- iss.bu.edu is maintained by Profs. Karl and Konrad; George Atia has volunteered to help with ISS web page development; any additions and corrections must be sent to them.
- Student pages are maintained by individual students starting from a template (see below); it would help uniform look and feel if that template were changed only in terms of content and not in terms of layout/graphics.
- We do not have right now a common publications database, so there is no Publications page on iss.bu.edu for now. Prof. Karl is looking into this, so for now each student should maintain his/her own list. We are also planning to add pages for seminar listings and internal documents (controlled access).
- There are two ways to serve your page. You can serve it off ISS Web Server, or off people.bu.edu (or some other server). This is easy and explained in detail later. In the first case, however, you will need an ISS Linux cluster account and disk space on the ISS web server (in /home/httpd/html/students).
- In order that your name appear on the ISS "People" page and a link be made to your new page, you need to email George (geokamal@bu.edu) the following:
 - First name:
 - Last name:
 - Degree you are working on:
 - Area (one the four from iss.bu.edu):
 - Advisor:
 - Email address:
 - Office number:
 - Phone number:
 - Year started your degree:
- The web page you are going to produce will be accessible by the outside world as "iss.bu.edu/username" or "iss.bu.edu/students/username", where "username" is your username when you login with your Kerberos password.

Software used

The ISS web site is built with NetObjects Fusion (NOF) 7.0 (currently being moved to 8.0), an inexpensive, easy to use and powerful web design program available from www.netobjects.com. NOF is installed on the Windows PC in PHO446 (the older dual-Xeon, not the new dual-core); educational price is only \$75, and a 30-day trial version is available on the web. Although BU uses Dreamweaver, we believe NOF is more suited to the tasks we are trying to

complete.

How to start student web page

Follow the steps below to start editing your web page from a template that is attached to this email. You need to customize the template by including your photo (should be placed in the "Assets" directory) and editing some text (see below). The template includes 4 sub-pages of the main page: biography, research, publications and personal. Although all are recommended, the only mandatory sub-page is research.

1. USE NOF 8.0 on PC in PHO446 or install your own version on your computer
2. Extract the compressed template from this email; note where you save it.

Do not uncompress this ZIP file with any decompression program !!! You will open this file within NOF. Otherwise, the whole directory is corrupted.

3. Start NOF

3. Open a new site based on the downloaded template as follows:

Open: "File" -> "New Site" -> "From template"
Navigate to the downloaded zipped template; hit OK

In "Save the site as", travel to the directory where you want to place your web page assets on the local computer (it will be published to web server later), and specify a name for the directory that will contain all the stuff.

You should see now in NOF a tree structure of the template web site.

At this moment, in the directory where you saved your site you should see an NOF file (*.nod), and "Assets" directory with images used to produce the site (BU logo, ISS logo). Add your picture to the "Assets" directory; its size should be about 165x210 pixels.

Soon more directories will get created there.

4. Few words about views you will work with in NOF. The main views are:
 - Site View: View with the tree structure of the site. You will add and delete pages in this view, change page names and easily navigate the tree.
 - Page View: When you double-click on any page in the site view, you will switch to the Page View in which you carry out all the editing. Note that through the "View" menu you can open all kinds of little windows telling you about the status of various items (navigation bar, text box, etc.)
 - Style View: Contains styles available. You do not need to do anything here since we recommend the ISS Style for all the pages so that the look-and-feel be uniform throughout the site.

- Assets View: Shows all the assets (files, links, etc) and lets you verify if the links exist (good practice to avoid "URL Not Found" message); check out "Verify All Links" in "Assets" menu.
- Publish View: In this view you will publish your design, either to the local disk (Explorer comes up automatically), or to a remote Web server. More on this soon. Publishing the site is similar to previewing the site ("Preview Site" button), but the generated HTML files end up in different directories. When you ask to preview, NOF automatically generates "Preview" directory (first time you preview) in the directory where the site (*.nod file) is located.

Another directory that is automatically generated is Backup; it is generated the moment you close NOF for the first time.

5. Your primary tasks will be to add text, links, perhaps pictures. The icons in the leftmost column of the NOF window are self-explanatory (Select, Text, Picture, Link, Table, ...)

In particular, you will need to customize the template:

- in "Page View", link the placeholder (white rectangle with red-dot exclamation mark on the "Home" page) to your picture: click on the rectangle and then browse to suitable file in the "Picture Properties" window,
- replace the "First Name Last Name" placeholder in the address text box, and in the text box in the left margin (above the menu) by double-clicking,
- do the same in the banner by clicking on it and replacing the text in the "Banner Properties" window.

Any time you want to see what your changes look like in a browser, you can hit the "Page Preview" button (horizontal button above the page window but below the icons at the top) which will show, within NOF, only the page you are on. Alternatively, you can hit "Preview Site" button which will generate the whole site (slower) and then open it in Explorer. The advantage of the latter one is that you can navigate the whole page and see it in the browser the way visitors to the site will see it (e.g., you can set font size to the one you think visitors will use).

6. To publish your site there are two paths:

If you publish to people.bu.edu or any other ftp-enabled web server, follow these steps:

- Switch to the Publish View (click on "Publish" button in the top menu)
- Select in "Publish" menu, "Publish Settings"

- In "Select Profile", choose "Remote Publish Server" and specify remote "FTP host" as "people.bu.edu" (directory stays empty), your username and Kerberos password. Save the settings.
- Now, you publish your site to people.bu.edu by clicking on "Publish Site" icon or in "Publish" menu choosing "Publish site", choosing the "Remote Publish Server", and selecting "Entire Site".

If you have no ftp access to the web server, like the ISS cluster where ftp is turned off (although you can tunnel ftp through ssh, this seems unreliable), you can use ssh's file transfer window to achieve the same.

- First, I suggest that you create a new directory "Local Publish" in the directory where your *.nod file and "Assets", "Preview" directories reside. If you do not do this, by default your "Local Publish" directory will be deep in the bowels of the NOF install tree.
- Switch to Publish View (click on "Publish" button in the top menu)
- Select in "Publish" menu, "Publish Settings"
- In "Select Profile", choose "My Computer" and travel to the "Local Publish" directory you just created. Save the settings.
- Now, you publish your site locally by clicking on "Publish Site" icon or in "Publish" menu choosing "Publish site", choosing "My Computer", and selecting "Entire Site".
- Fire up your ssh file transfer window. In the local window, travel to inside of the "Local Publish" directory you just created and select all files/directories (CTRL-A). In the remote window, travel to the directory where your web site is located (on the ISS Linux cluster: /home/httpd/html/students/uid, where uid stands for your user id or username). Transfer all the files in "Local Publish" to the remote directory.

7. One comment. We believe that a good web site design policy is to force a new browser window whenever a link takes the viewer out to another web site. Unfortunately, in NOF forcing a new browser window when following a link is not as simple as button activation. When you create a link (by highlighting some text and clicking on the "Link" button on the left vertical menu) a Link window pops up. Click on the "HTML" button, and then on the "Inside Link" button and type in the window below "target=NewWindow" which will insert the string inside the HREF directive. This will open a new window.
8. Another comment. In order that what you published to a server be visible to the outside world, it must be readable by anybody. On Linux, this requires setting of suitable privileges on all the files in your Web directory (e.g., "chmod a+r -R *").

9. One WARNING: The web space assigned to you on the ISS Linux cluster is meant only for studies-related material (i.e., primarily research). If you wish to include some of your personal stuff on your web page, you must create "public_html" directory in your home directory on ISS, place your personal web page there and link to this page from the "iss.bu.edu/~uid" link on the "Personal" page.

This is it. I know it looks intimidating at first, but after a few tries it is really easy to do.

Good Luck,

Janusz Konrad