

## Javascript Dynamic Navigation

There's more than one way to skin a cat and even more ways to screw up site navigation. A word of warning for those that are thinking about using Dynamic Javascript navigation: Don't. Seriously, don't do it. There are countless reasons why not and here are just a few:

Site navigation is easy to understand when permanently displayed. Thanks to the myriad of delivery options from search engines and direct linking, site navigation needs to present users with a clear and evident way to know where they are located. Javascript presents this in instances where breadcrumb navigation doesn't exist.

Flash doesn't mesh with JavaScript very well. Embedded elements can cause problems with dynamic navigation. Embedded video and flash animation virtually take over a page, often causing navigation to appear incorrectly or not at all.

Different browsers treat JavaScript in different ways. No matter how hard you work it or how much you tweak it, the only way to ensure that JavaScript Dynamic navigation works is to test, test and test again in different browsers. Even then, some viewers may have trouble.

Your site will be broken if JavaScript is turned off! Web users are much savvier than in days past which often means they take greater security precautions by turning off JavaScript settings in their browsers. According to W3Schools, 10% of visitors will have Javascript disabled making your site disjointed.

JavaScript menus present a usability nightmare. Not everyone is as quick with a mouse as you. Dynamic JavaScript menu navigation is difficult to work through. When is the last time you initiated a drop-down menu only to accidentally move off the menu and have to try again? It happens more than you think and is a usability nightmare for those that are a little less Web savvy.

There are simply better ways to skin a cat, er, create menus. An external XML navigation structure or a range of server-side scripting processes can achieve the same effect and all are capable of outputting standard XHTML without any of the drawbacks.