

Templates

One important feature of a good site is consistency. A well-designed site will have a consistent look and feel throughout. This includes placing certain elements in the same spot, using the same color scheme, etc.

Dreamweaver Templates may be used to assist in creating a consistent look.

If a website needs to be redesigned, it does not mean that all of the information about the company has changed – in many cases only the way the information will be presented is changing. Consider a company that sells 100 products. When the site is redesigned, those 100 products may be exactly the same as before the redesign. Perhaps the color and layout of the site is all that is different.

Dreamweaver Templates can make this type of redesign very simple. Some information is stored in “fields” called “Editable Regions” that will change from page to page, while other information will remain the same from page to page. When you create a template, you will decide what will be editable.

You may be familiar with the concept of templates from other software programs. However, in one important way, Dreamweaver Templates are different from some other programs. *Pages created with a template may remain tied to that template.*

Because of this, when a change is made to the template, you will have the option to update all pages created with the template. Dreamweaver will open all of the pages and make the needed changes. After these pages are uploaded to the server, the site is updated.

Note: This is one of the features that may only be used after a Dreamweaver “Site” has been created. This is because Dreamweaver will keep track of all pages created with a template. Then when a change is made to the template, the other pages may be updated.

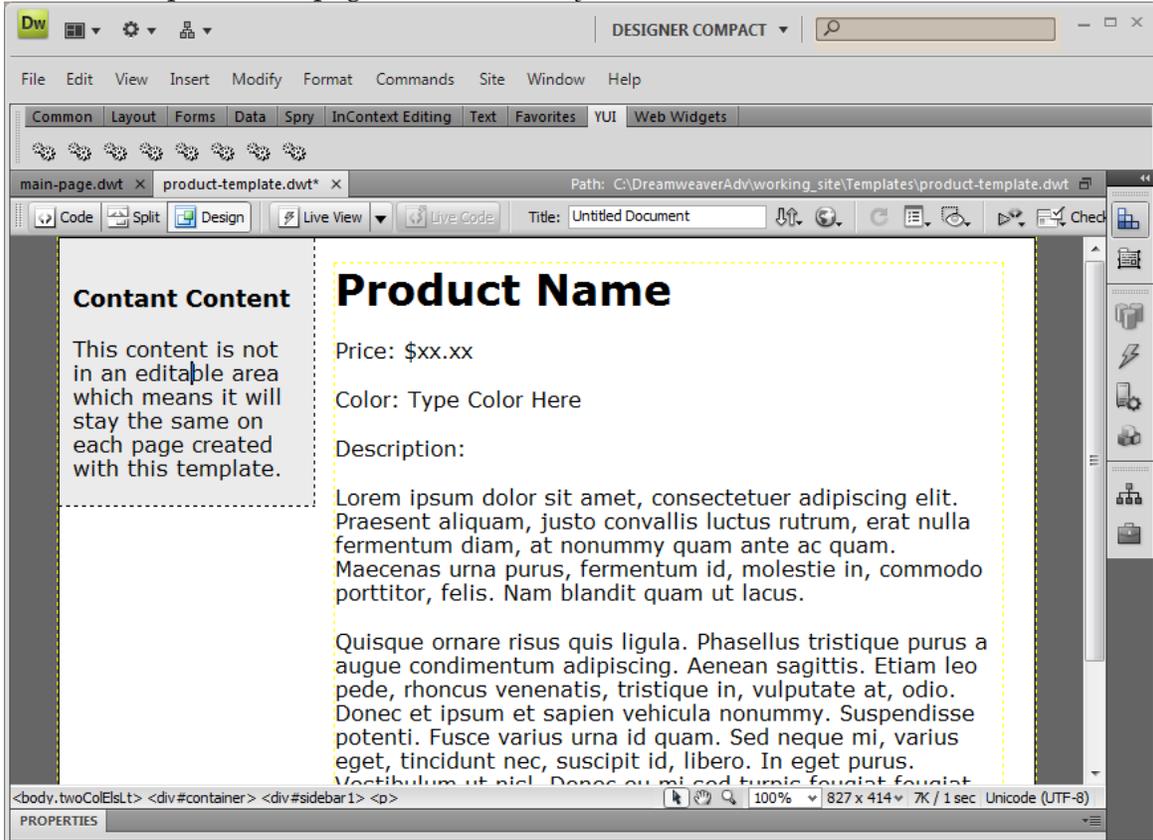
Steps in Creating a Template

1. Create an HTML Page Design

The first step in creating a template is to create an HTML page. Using tables, images and any other HTML elements that you plan to use on the site, design a page. As you are designing the page think about which elements will be the same on each page and which elements will change from page to page. You may decide to place “dummy” text in the location of text that will change on each page. (See Appendix C for help in creating dummy text.)

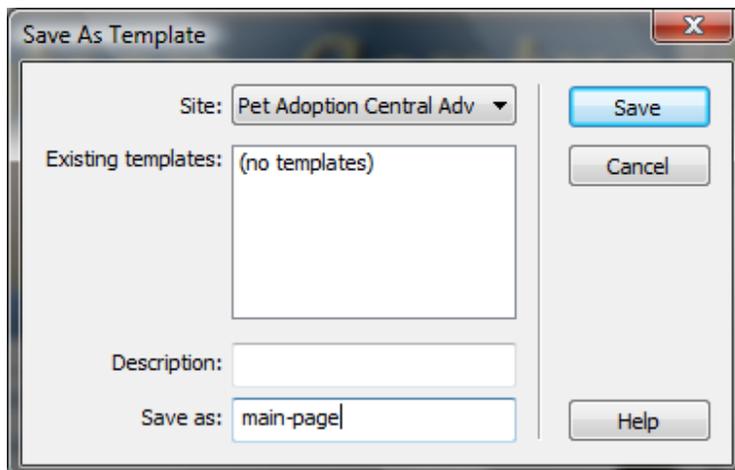
The page below shows the basic format of a page that is about to become a template. The layout of the page is set. Any desired color is added and dummy text is placed in table cells. This

template is being designed to show product information. There are places for a name, price color and description. The page creator will *only* be able to edit those sections.



2. Save as a Dreamweaver Template

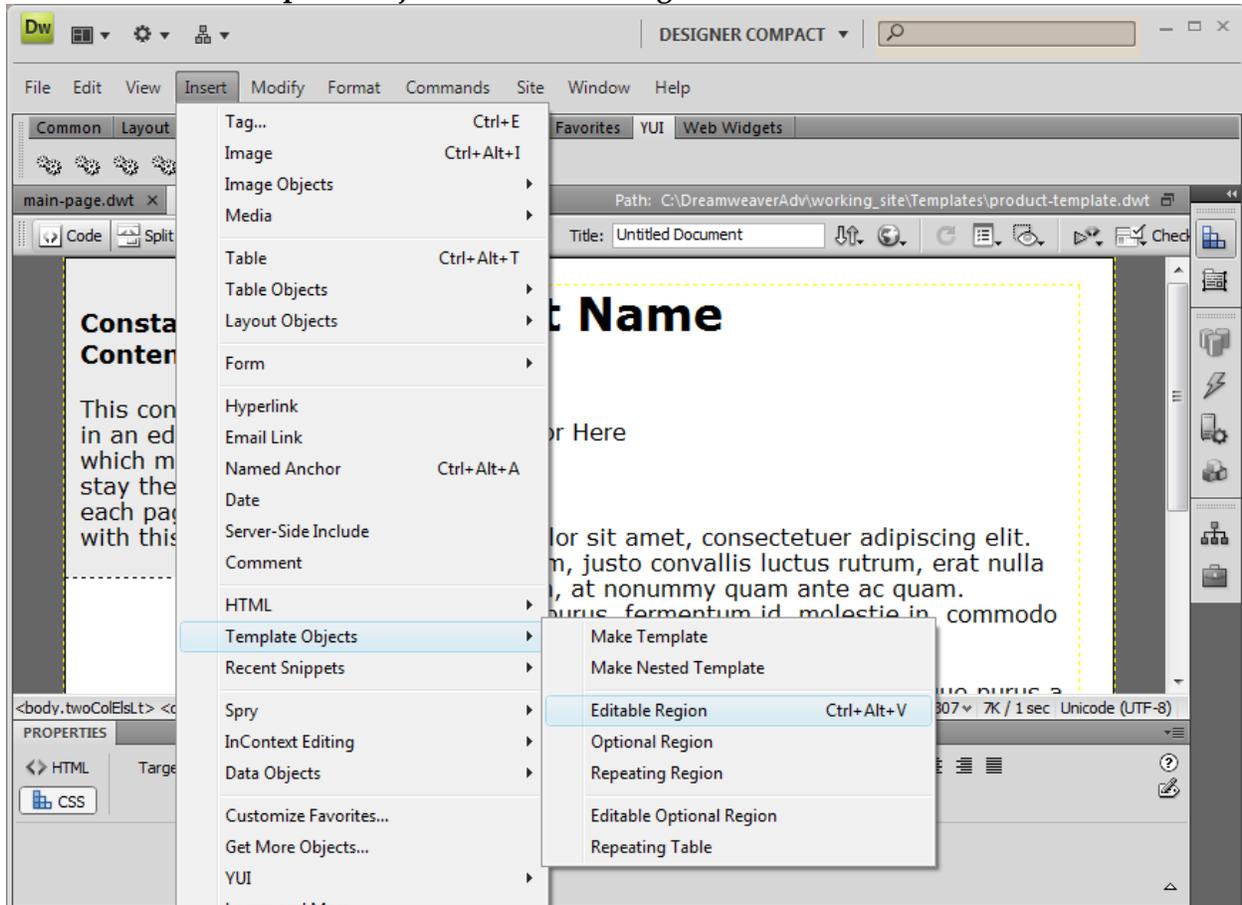
After creating the basic layout of the page, it must be saved as a Dreamweaver Template. Choose **File** → **Save as Template** from the drop-down menu and the following dialog box will appear. Give your page a name. Dreamweaver will automatically create a folder named Templates (if you do not have one already) and will save the document with a .dwt extension.



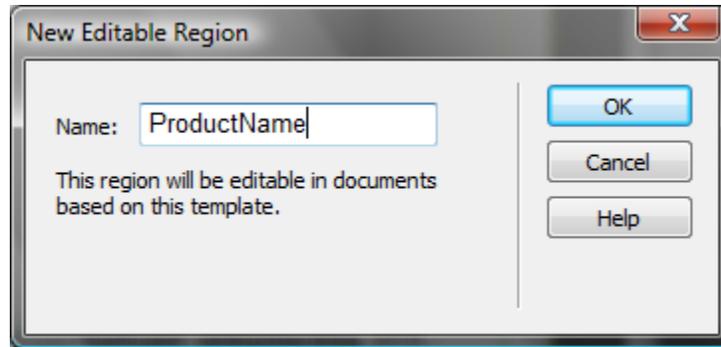
3. Define Editable Regions

Now that the page is saved as a Template, certain areas on a template may be assigned as “Editable Regions.” This means that they can change from page to page. Certainly the main content will change (otherwise why would you have multiple pages?), but any other element may change as well: navigation links, images, etc.

There are two ways to define a section as editable. First select the section you would like to become editable. Then, you may right-click and choose **Templates** → **New Editable Region** or choose **Insert** → **Template Objects** → **Editable Region** from the main menus.



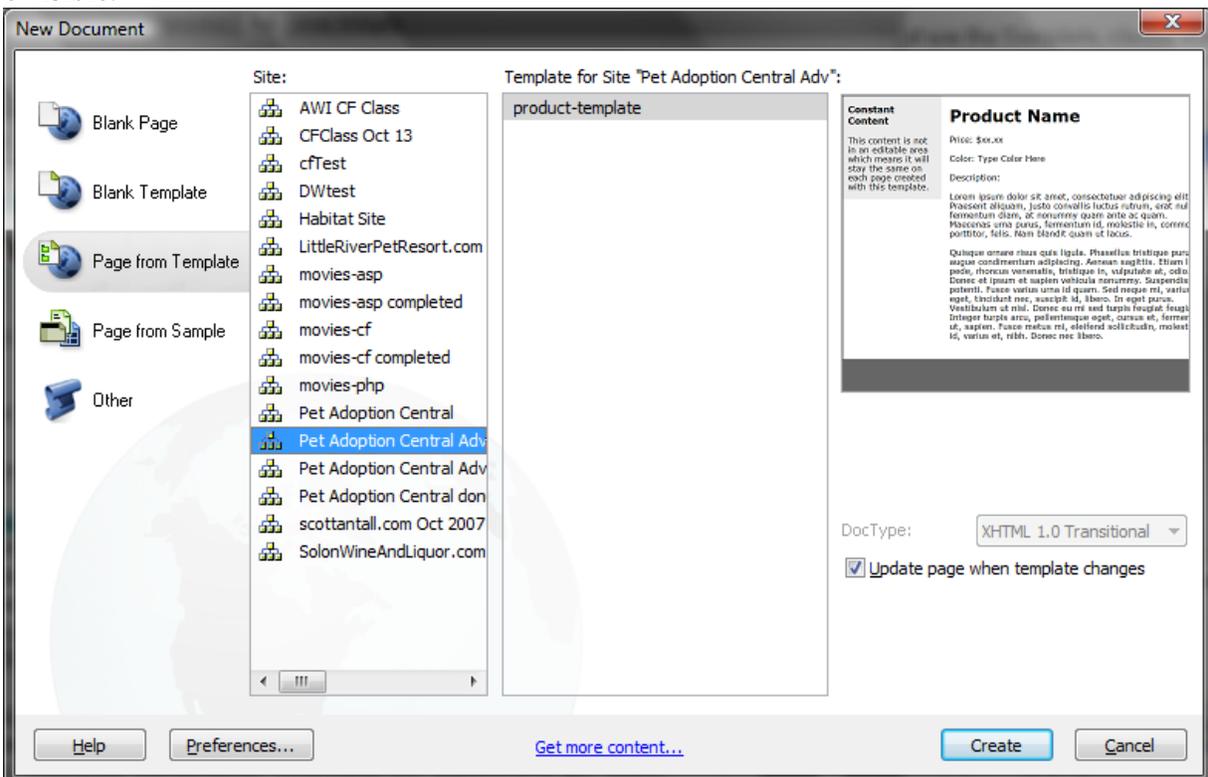
Now, give this editable region a name. Although Dreamweaver will allow it, it is not a good idea to use spaces in the names.



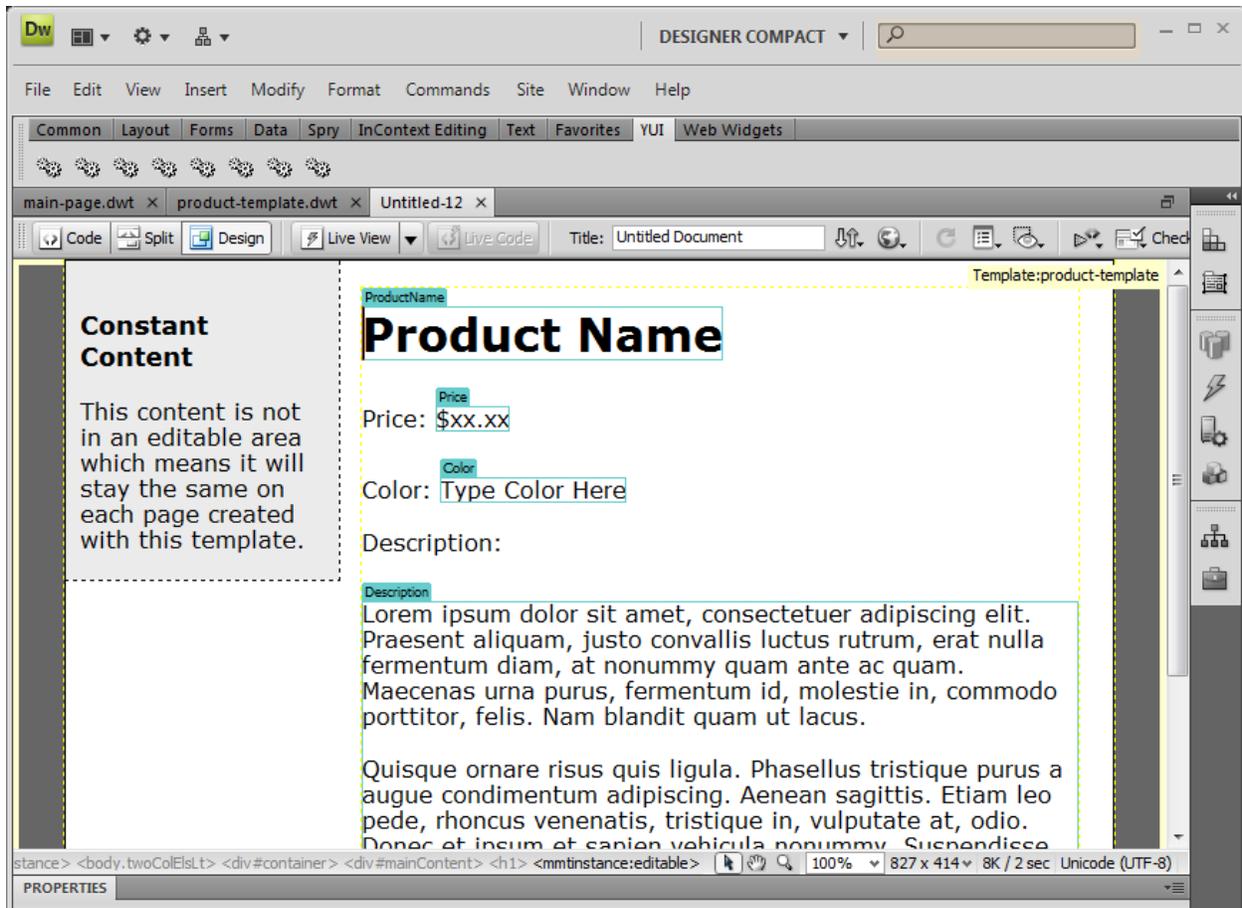
Once all of your desired editable regions have been set, save the template and close the document.

4. Create additional pages

Now that the template has been created, to create pages that use the Template, choose **File** → **New** from the drop down menus. Under the “Page from Templates” tab, you will see a list of your “Sites.” When one of the sites is selected, a list of that site’s templates with a preview will be visible.



Any editable regions will show up with a blue outline as seen below. Only these areas may be edited. Type text into the individual sections and save the document as a regular HTML document.



Updating a Template

In order to make changes to the template that will be carried through to all of the pages that were created with that template, open the template directly. (Note: Dreamweaver created a "Templates" folder and will save all of your templates there.)

After you have made your changes in the template document, choose "Save." As soon as you do, Dreamweaver will ask whether you would like all of the pages created with that template to be updated. If you choose yes, it will automatically open those pages and will make the needed changes.

Exercise 2: Create Multiple Pages Using a Template

10 to 15 minutes

This is the first of two exercises using Templates. This Template will only have one large editable area. But, in the next exercise we will use that one large section to create nested templates.



Part 1: Create a Template

1. Open **index-intro.html**. This is the index page that we created in the *Introduction to Dreamweaver* course. Make any changes to the design that you would like. We will use this page to create all subsequent pages for the site. *Remember, if you decide to make changes to the design later it is no problem! We can update all of the pages.*
2. Save the page as a Template by choosing **File → Save as Template**. Name the page **main-page.dwt**.
3. Add one editable region to this page. Highlight the entire content section on the right side. (The title bar, menu and footer will remain constant on each page created with the template. Therefore, they should NOT be a part of your selection.) Once highlighted, **add an Editable Region**. Name the region *MainContent*.

4. Once the editable region has been created, you may save and close the Template.

Part 2: Create pages from a Template

1. You will create two new pages from this Template:
 - a. locations.html
 - b. contactus.html
2. Copy the content from locations-intro.html and contactus-intro.html. Again, feel free to update or change the content any way you would like.
3. Save your new documents and close them.

Part 3: Update the Template

1. Make a change to the Menu Bar of the Template! For example, you could add a new top level link for "Programs and Services" with the following sub links:
 - a. Programs and Services:
 - i. Behavioral Training
 - ii. Lost and Found
 - iii. Library
 - iv. Shop
2. When you save, it will automatically update the two documents you just created.

Challenge

- Make additional pages from the template
- Read ahead to the next section about optional