

# Joomla Templating

An introduction

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# Context

- ▶ Been building Joomla sites since it was Mambo
- ▶ Active in the Joomla support forums as a moderator
- ▶ Worked with many clients on all levels of template customisation & development
- ▶ I am *not* an expert on web coding standards

## Important disclaimer:

Some of the techniques I describe could be used to steal other's intellectual property. That is not my intention, nor do I condone such actions.

# First Principles



# Data, structure, presentation

## Data in MySQL database

Contentid = 4

Title = Company Profile

## Structure in HTML

```
<td class=contentheading>  
    $Title  
</td>
```

## Presentation in CSS

```
.contentheading {  
    font: arial; font-size: 18pt; color: #800000;  
}
```

# What affects the layout?

- ▶ Joomla core output - content items
- ▶ Template structure
- ▶ Installed extensions and their parameters
- ▶ Module position parameters
- ▶ Content formatting
- ▶ Browser limitations and rendering

# What pulls it all together?

- ▶ Joomla has a set of common CSS classes which are applied to all content and all extensions

## **a.mainlevel, a.mainlevel:link, a.mainlevel:hover, a.mainlevel:visited**

---

This styling is for the items in the default MAINMENU. Note: it isn't advisable to keep main menu as horizontal or vertical list. Make it a flat

[Example](#)

---

## **#active\_menu**

---

Current page id for highlighting on main menu.

[Example](#)

---

## **ul#mainlevel-nav, ul#mainlevel-nav li, #mainlevel-nav a:link, #mainlevel-nav a:hover, #mainlevel-nav a:visited**

---

Style for the default TOPMENU. Links are an unordered list.

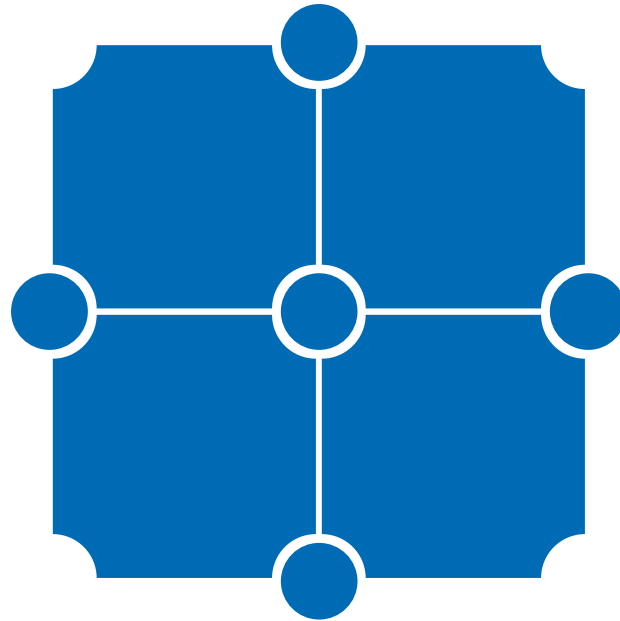
- ◆ [Example](#)
- 

- ▶ See Type-JoomlaStyles

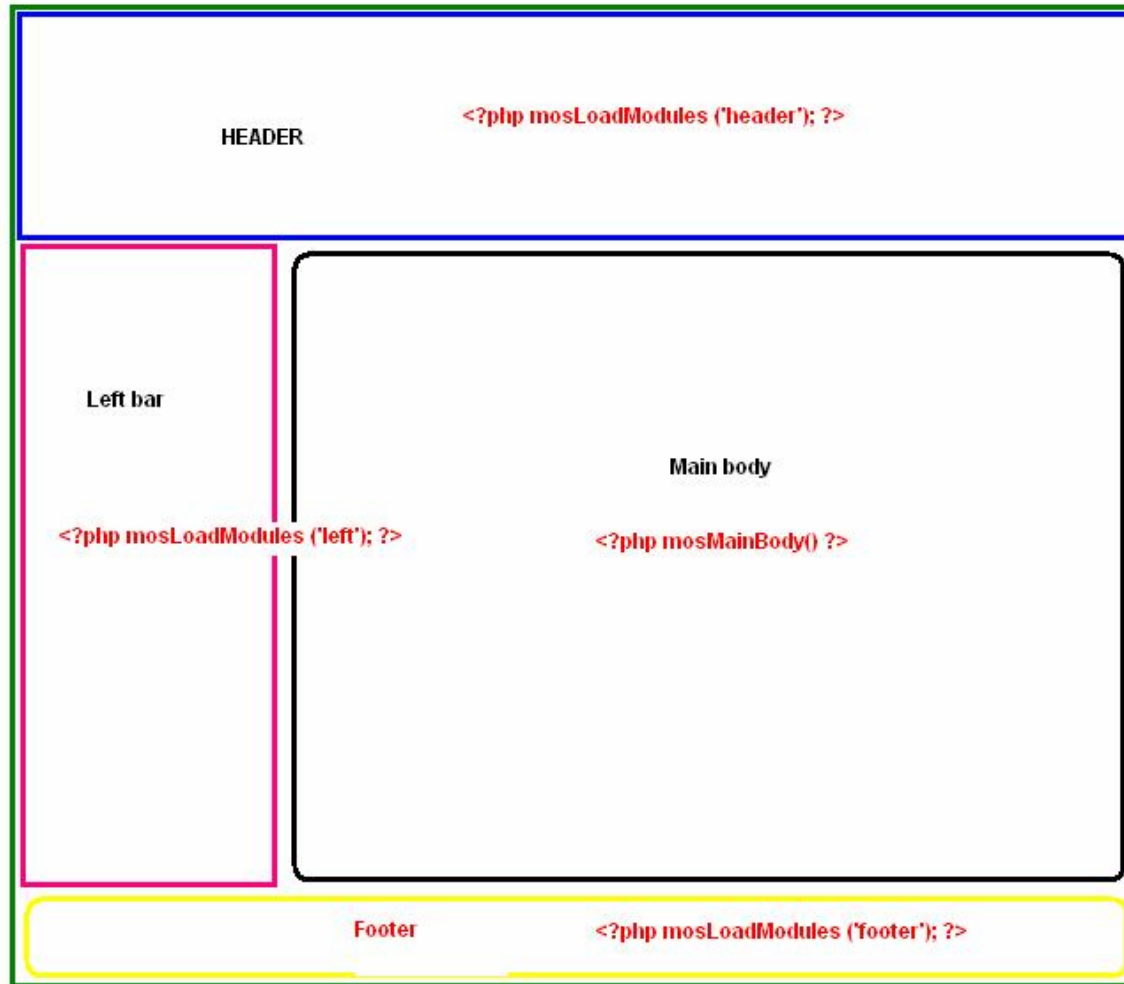
# Standard files

- ▶ `css/template_css.css`
  - ▶ `/images/`
  - ▶ `index.php`
  - ▶ `templateDetails.xml`
  - ▶ `template_thumbnail.png`
- 
- ▶ The structure and function of each file is well documented in the Joomla Template Tutorial

# The Pieces



# A simple template structure



# Headers

- ▶ Some templates come with Photoshop “blanks” to assist you to add your own images



- ▶ Standard snippets such as site title
- ▶ Header modules
  - Flash content
  - Rotating images
  - Date/time

# The standard footer

- ▶ The standard code

```
<?php include_once( $mosConfig_absolute_path  
.'/includes/footer.php' ); ?>
```
- ▶ Others have template copyright notices hard coded in the template
- ▶ Not easily editable, leaves out some useful information

## Footers

# A better footer

- ▶ Delete the standard code

- ▶ Add

```
<?php mosLoadModules ('footer'); ?>
```

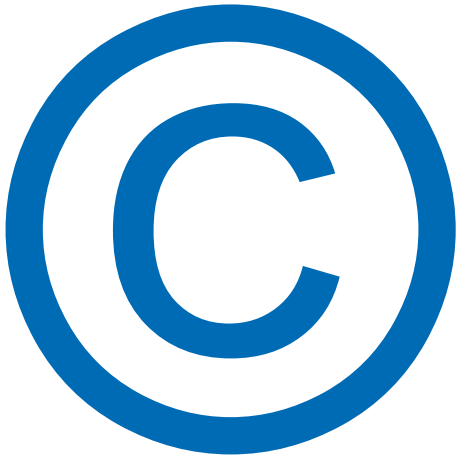
- ▶ Create a new module called footer
- ▶ Place your footer text in the Custom Output content
- ▶ Publish the footer module to the footer position

or

- ▶ If the footer content is going to remain static, put it directly in the index.php file

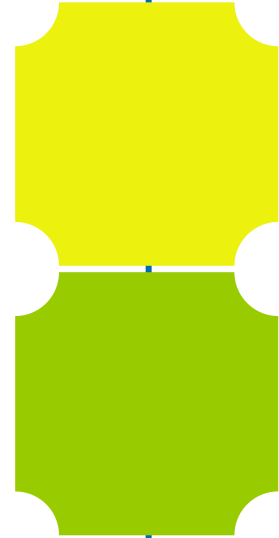
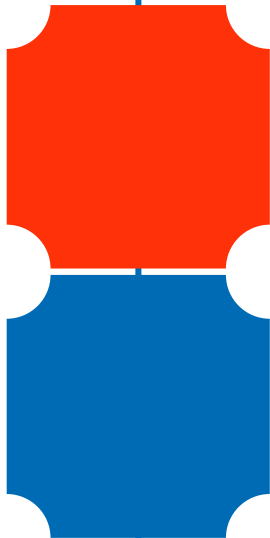
# The Joomla copyright

- ▶ You are allowed to remove the Joomla copyright code that appears in the footer.php include file
- ▶ You should take care to preserve the template designer attribution if their licence requires it



```
<?php  
mosLoadModules('left')  
?>
```

# Modules



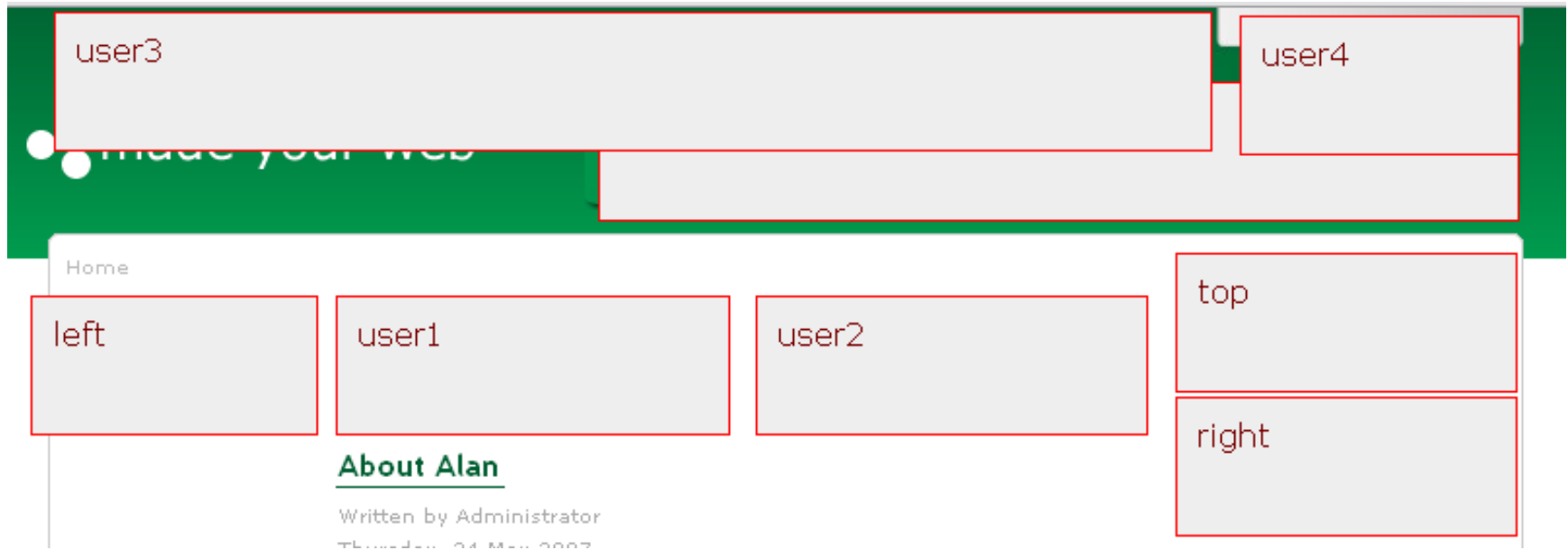
# Module positions

- ▶ Modules are published to positions

```
<?php mosLoadModules ('left'); ?>
```

- ▶ Each template has a set of default positions

```
http://www.site.com/?tp=1
```



# Module position parameters

- ▶ Output configuration parameters affect layout & formatting

```
<?php mosLoadModules ('left'); ?>
```

becomes

```
<?php mosLoadModules ('left', -1); ?>
```

- ▶ The parameters are explained in the Joomla Template Tutorial

# Specific module parameters

- ▶ Some modules (and components) have their own styling additional to that of the template:
  - CSS classes editable on the backend
  - CSS style sheet file for editing
  - Internal templates for selection

```
zOOm gallery & medium view

.blockContainer {
    width: 100%;
    visibility: visible;
    border: none;
}
.blockHeader {
    background-image:
url('../www/images/blocks/header.png');
    background-repeat: repeat-x;
    height: 21px;
```

# Module class suffixes

- ▶ If you want to format a specific module differently, open the module and add a suffix (e.g. -newstyle)
- ▶ Then edit the template css file, adding a new class

```
.module  
{font-size: 14pt;  
color: #c0c0c0  
}
```

```
.module-newstyle  
{font-size: 12pt;  
color: #800000  
}
```

- ▶ This also works for pages (Content Items)

# Collapse empty module positions

- ▶ If a module position is empty, it should gracefully disappear

```
<?php if (mosCountModules('right')) { ?>
    <div id="sidebar">
        <div class="inside">
            <?php mosLoadModules( 'right' );?>
        </div>
    </div>
<?php } ?>
```

- ▶ There are more complex examples
- ▶ You can use the same approach for inline css

# Content & Components

- ▶ Basically, a table structure with a cell for the page title and a cell for the content
- ▶ Headings are `.contentheading` or `.componentheading`
- ▶ There are styles for author, date, read more, navigation, article TOC etc

```
<?php mosMainBody(); ?>
```

# Template development environments



# Local is lekker, mostly

- ▶ You have to load the template in a Joomla site to see what it looks like
- ▶ Editing online is painful
- ▶ Editing off-line and uploading after each change is worse
- ▶ A local Joomla installation is the best - JSAS/Xampp

*However:*

- ▶ Complex sites with lots of modules may be difficult to replicate locally, and you may end up having to build or tweak online

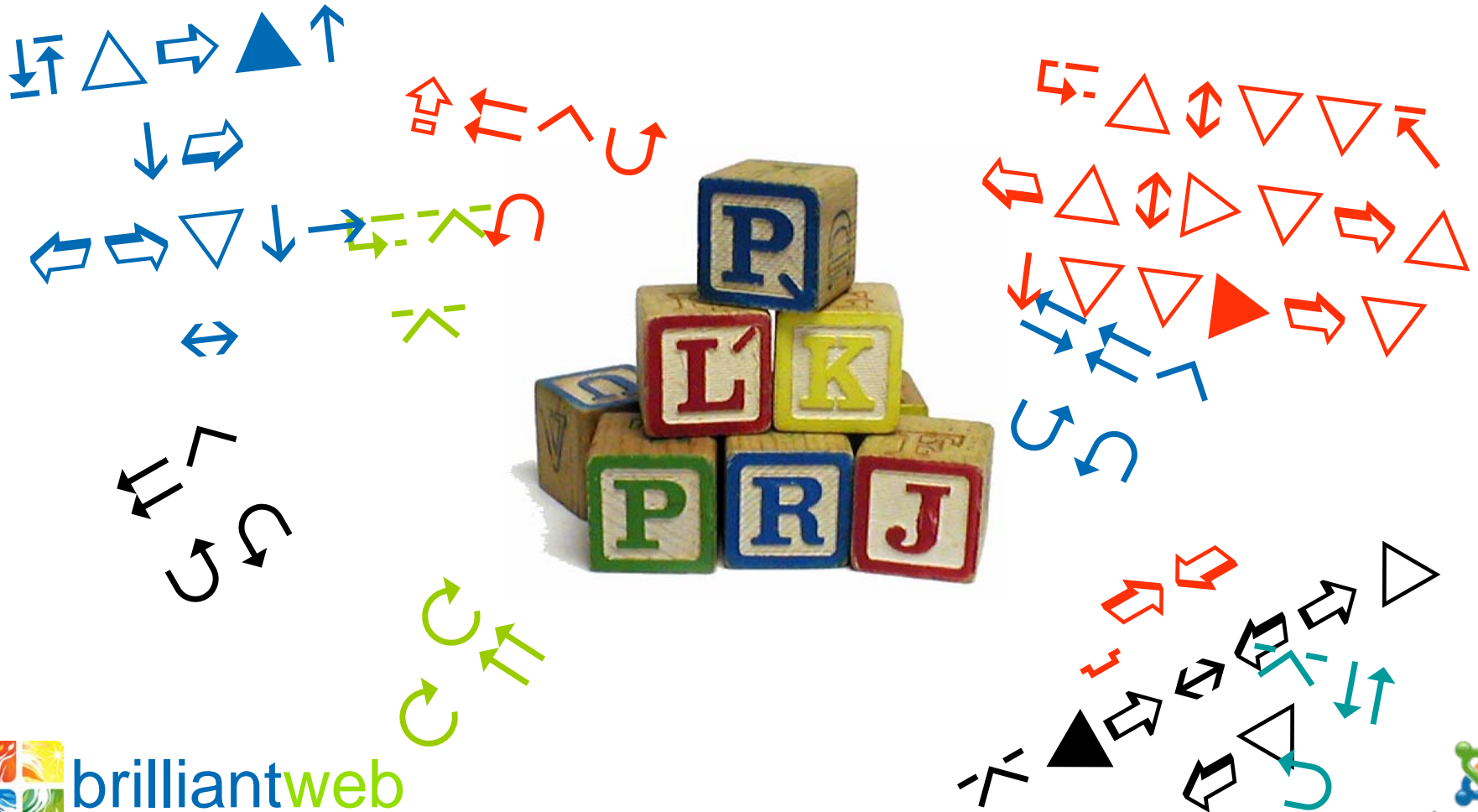


# Software/Resources

- ▶ NVU
- ▶ Dreamweaver
- ▶ Template packager
- ▶ Firefox extensions
  - Web Developer Toolkit
  - MeasureIt
  - Colour picker
  - View formatted source
  - Firebug
- ▶ A collection of templates to review
- ▶ Compass Designs tutorial
- ▶ My notes
- ▶ JoomlaStyles file
- ▶ [kuler.adobe.com](http://kuler.adobe.com)

# Creating templates

A phased approach



# Tweak existing template

- ▶ Find a free template on [www.joomlaos.de](http://www.joomlaos.de)
- ▶ Find the name of a template on a Joomla site
  - View the page source
  - Look for `template_css.css` in the code
  - Look at the folder name before that  
This is usually the name of the template
- ▶ Install it locally and open the files in your editor

# Tweak existing template

- ▶ Change colours
  - Open the `template_css.css` file in an editor
  - Load the web page and use a colour picker to find the HTML colour codes for the colours you want to change
  - Use search and replace to replace the old colours with the new
- ▶ Change images
  - Browse to the template images folder
  - Download and open the existing image in a graphic design program and change it
  - Upload the changed file
- ▶ Change widths
  - Edit the width of module spaces etc in the template `index.php` file or the `template_css.css` file

# Create your own template

- ▶ Cross-browser compatibility issues
- ▶ Style all Joomla standard classes, even if they are not used when developing the template
- ▶ Plan for empty module positions
- ▶ Include lots of module positions to give the user layout flexibility
- ▶ If you want to use the standard installation process, then you will need to construct the installer xml file.

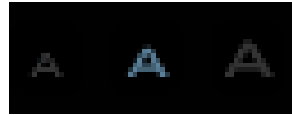
But wait! There's more!



if you call now...

You get the Joomla template

with resizing text



cool corners



the snazzy colour changer

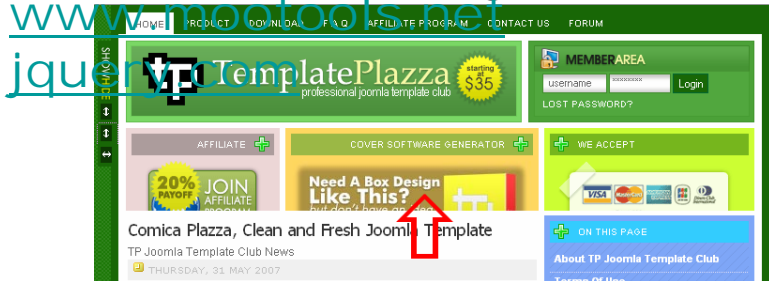


And it costs less than the price  
of a flight on a Russian spaceship

the screen resizer



the collapsing modules



and groovy menu



# References

- ▶ Official Joomla template manual (HTML)  
<http://dev.joomla.org/content/view/1136/79/>
- ▶ Official Joomla template manual (PDF) (several Joomla tutorials available)  
[http://www.compassdesigns.net/tutorials/joomla-tutorials/joomla-template-tutorial\\_12.html](http://www.compassdesigns.net/tutorials/joomla-tutorials/joomla-template-tutorial_12.html)  
(free registration required)
- ▶ The rest of the resources mentioned are linked at [www.brilliantweb.co.za](http://www.brilliantweb.co.za)

# Next steps

- ▶ Visit [www.brilliantweb.co.za](http://www.brilliantweb.co.za) to download:
  - This presentation
  - A set of notes with additional materials
  - The Joomla Template Tutorial and other resources mentioned

# Not covered

- ▶ SEO - H1 tags, getting content “higher in the code”
- ▶ How to do all the fancy stuff
- ▶ Menu styling
- ▶ Liquid vs fixed width
- ▶ Rounded corners
- ▶ Hiding modules from specific users
- ▶ Commercial template libraries
- ▶ Validation
- ▶ Template coding for WYSIWYG editors
- ▶ CSS inheritance