

## Using CSS Menu Writer with DataAssist

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With CSS Menu Writer and DataAssist, you can create a dynamic navigation menu that is populated by data in your database. This type of dynamic navigation menu can be valuable in a number of different situations. For example, if you are creating an Administrative back-end to your online store, you can dynamically update your navigation menu items, without having to open Dreamweaver. Alternatively, for your online store, you may want all your products to be listed in a menu for customers to easily find what they are looking for.

With this feature, you can set up your menu list to automatically update whenever a new products has been added to your store.

### What Do You Need to Start?

- Dreamweaver CS3 or 8
- Menu Writer 1.0 or higher
- DataAssist 2.0 or higher
- Connection to a dynamic site

### Getting Started

Provided in your Order History are the sample start files that you can follow for this Solution Recipe. The `blue_sky_music` page and style sheet used have been created using Eric Meyer's CSS Sculptor. You do not need this WebAssist Dreamweaver extension to follow along, but you may find it useful in the future when designing the CSS for your site, along with your Menu Writer menus.

### Inserting Menu Writer Menu

Before we create a template from our CSS Sculptor page, we want to insert our CSS Menu Writer menu.

1. Open the `blue_sky_music` page that was creating in CSS Sculptor.
2. Highlight the placeholder text **Top Navigation**.
3. Press **Delete**.
4. From the Insert option in the Menu bar, select **WebAssist**.
5. Select **CSS Menu Writer**.

6. Select **New Menu**.
7. From the Style menu list under Menu, select **Horizontal Bevel**.
8. Select **Pacifica** from the Design menu list.
9. In the Menu Items window, select **Item 1**.
10. Rename Item 1 **Home**.
11. Select **Item 2** from the Menu Items window.
12. Rename Item 2 **Products**.
13. Select **Item 3**.
14. Click on the **Right icon** to make Item 3 a submenu of Item 2.
15. Rename Item 3, **Items**.

**Note:** The Items menu item is a placeholder that we will use to create our dynamic menu.

16. Click **Finish**.
17. Press **Ctrl (Cmd)+ S** to save your page.

### Creating a Dreamweaver template

The next step is to create a template from our CSS Sculptor page we just inserted our menu to. This will ensure that when our DataAssist pages are created, this template will be used, and our navigation menu from CSS Menu Writer will be included on each page.

1. From the File option in the Menu bar, select **Save as Template**.
2. Select the site to store the template.
3. Leave blue\_sky\_music in the Save as field.
4. Click **Save**.
5. When asked to Update links, click **Yes**.
6. Highlight the placeholder text **Side Navigation**.
7. Switch from the WebAssist category of the Insert bar to the Common category, and select the **Templates: Editable Region** icon.
8. Enter **SideNavigation** as the name

9. Click **Save**.
10. After creating the editable region, press **Delete** to remove the placeholder text.
11. Highlight the placeholder text **Page Body**.
12. Select the **Templates: Editable Region** icon from the Common category of the Insert bar.
13. Enter **PageBody** as the name.
14. Click **Save**.
15. Press **Delete** to remove the placeholder text.
16. Press **Ctrl (Cmd) + S** to save your template.

You now have a Dreamweaver template containing your CSS Menu Writer menu.

### Creating your DataAssist pages

The next thing to do is run through the DataAssist Wizard to create the Insert, Update, and Details pages for your site.

**Note:** Before running the DataAssist Wizard, make sure you have set up your database connection to the **mw\_blue\_sky\_music** database provided in your Order History. In this example we name this connection connBSM.

1. From the Insert option in the menu bar, select **WebAssist**.
2. Select **DataAssist**.
3. Select **DataAssist Wizard**.
4. From the Connection menu select **connBSM**.
5. Select the **Items** table from the Table menu list.
6. From the Template name field, select the **blue\_sky\_music** template.
7. In the Editable Region menu list select the **PageBody** editable region.

By default, all the DataAssist pages are selected to be created. For this example we do not need all these pages.

8. Uncheck **Search** and **Delete**.

9. Click **Next**.
10. Leave the default layout settings and click **Next**.
11. Leave the default Results page layout settings, click **Next**.

In the Results page Options step, we are going to remove all the database columns we do not want to display in our Results page.

12. Select **ItemID**.
13. Holding down the **Ctrl** key, select **ItemCatID**.
14. Click the Delete button to delete both of those columns.

Next, let's rename the remaining columns.

15. Select **ItemName**.
16. In the Label field enter **Name**.
17. Select **ItemShortDesc**.
18. Enter **Description** in the Label field.
19. Select **ItemPrice**.
20. Enter **Price**.
21. Click **Next**.

In the Detail page layout step, we will use the default settings.

22. Click **Next**.

For the Details page, let's leave the default columns, but rename **ItemID** and **ItemCatID**.

23. Select **ItemID**.
24. In the Label field enter **Item ID**.
25. Select **ItemCatID**.
26. Enter **Category ID**.
27. Click **Next**.

For the Update page we will use the same columns.

28. Click **Next**.

Again, we will use the same columns for the Insert pages.

29. Click **Finish** to create your DataAssist pages.

### Modifying the CSS Menu Writer menu file

When you create a navigation menu using CSS Menu Writer onto a dynamic page, an include file is created that stores the names of each menu item in your menu. We will modify this file to include the dynamic data we need for our menu list.

Although this How To references PHP specifically, the process is almost identical for all document types and server models. Where steps differ, they are clearly noted.

1. In the Files Panel, expand the **CSSMenuWriter** folder.
2. Expand the **cssmw** folder.
3. Open **menu.php**.

Please note that this file extension is based on the document type you are working with. If you are using ASP, you will want to open the **menu.asp** file, and if using Coldfusion you will want to open the **menu.cfm** file.

Next, we need to insert a new recordset to this page.

4. From the Server Behaviors Panel, click on the **Add (+) symbol**.
5. Select **Recordset**.
6. Enter **rsMenu** for the Recordset name.
7. Select **connBSM** from the Connection menu list.
8. In the Table menu list, select **Items**.
9. Select the **Selected** radio button.
10. Select **ItemID**.
11. Holding down the **Ctrl key** select **ItemName**.
12. Click **OK**.
13. In Design View, highlight the **items** menu item
14. Press **Delete** to remove this text.

In place of the text we are going to insert the **ItemName** recordset.

15. From the Bindings panel, expand the **rsMenu** recordset.
16. Select **ItemName**.
17. Click **Insert**.
18. Highlight the inserted recordset.
19. In the Properties Inspector click the **Browse icon** next to Link.
20. Select the **items\_Detail.php** page.

**Note:** Notice that in the URL field the path to this file includes **../..** This is because that is the path to this file from the menu.php file, but for our pages that will contain the menu writer menu, this path will not work.

21. Highlight **../..** from the path in the URL field and press the **Delete** key.
22. Select the **Parameters** button.

Here we are going to set a parameter for this menu item based on the **ItemID**.

23. Enter **ItemID** in the name field
24. Click once in the **Value** field.
25. Click the **lightning bolt**.
26. Select the **ItemID** recordset.
27. Click **OK**.
28. Click **OK**.
29. Click **OK** to close the Select File window.

### Creating a Repeat Region

To have each item dynamically listed in this menu list, we will create a repeat region that lists all records from the database.

1. Highlight the **rsMenu.ItemName** menu item.
2. From the Server Behaviors Panel click the **Add (+)** symbol.
3. Select **Repeat Region**.

4. From the Recordset Menu list, select **rsMenu**.
5. Select the **All records** radio button.
6. Click **OK**.

The last step is to remove the database connection that is added to this page when we create our recordset. This connection is unnecessary, and will cause an error to occur for PHP and ASP users.

**Note:** Those using Coldfusion can skip this step.

7. Enter Code view by selecting the **Code** button.
8. Scroll to the top of the page and locate the database connection.

For PHP users this should look like this:

```
<?php require_once('../..../Connections/connBSM.php'); ?>
```

For ASP users this should look like this:

```
<%@LANGUAGE="JAVASCRIPT"%>  
<!--#include file="../../Connections/connBSM.asp" -->
```

9. Highlight this line of code.
10. Press the **Delete** key.
11. Press **Ctrl or Cmd + S** to save your page.

You've now successfully turned your menu writer menu into a dynamically populated menu.

### Testing your dynamic menu

Now to see how your dynamic menu list works, you may want to preview your DataAssist pages, and insert a new item.

1. From the Files Panel, double-click to open the **items\_Insert.php** file.
2. Press **F12** to preview this page in your browser.
3. Run your mouse over the **Products** menu item.

Notice all the products in the items table are listed.

Insert a new item to the database.

4. Enter some data in the fields of the Insert page.
5. Click Insert to insert this data to your database.
6. Run your mouse over the **Products** menu item.

Notice that the new item has been added to the bottom of the list.