

The New FrontPage—SharePoint Designer

By Dick Evans

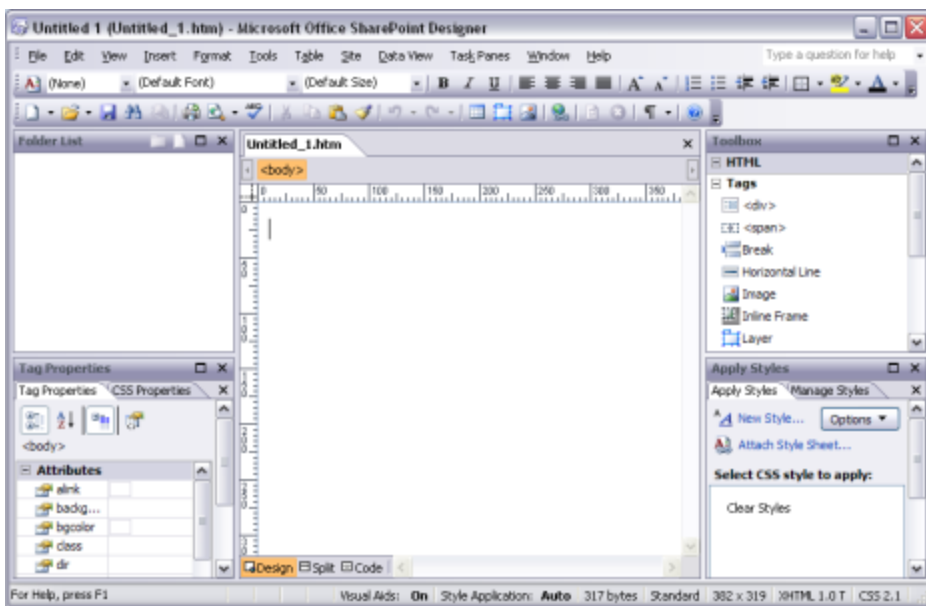
Microsoft has removed FrontPage from its list of Web development application. You can still use it to build and maintain sites, but you cannot purchase the software. Instead, they have released Expression Suite which includes Expression Web as a replacement for FrontPage. In addition, they have released SharePoint Designer as a replacement for FrontPage to design and maintain SharePoint sites.

Although to different applications, SharePoint Designer (SPD) and Expression Web (EW) both replace FrontPage (FP). Any Web site previously created in FrontPage can be maintained using either new application. For the development of a new application, EW does not offer all the features of FP because those features require FrontPage Extensions loaded on the host site and the pages created are not XHTML compliant.

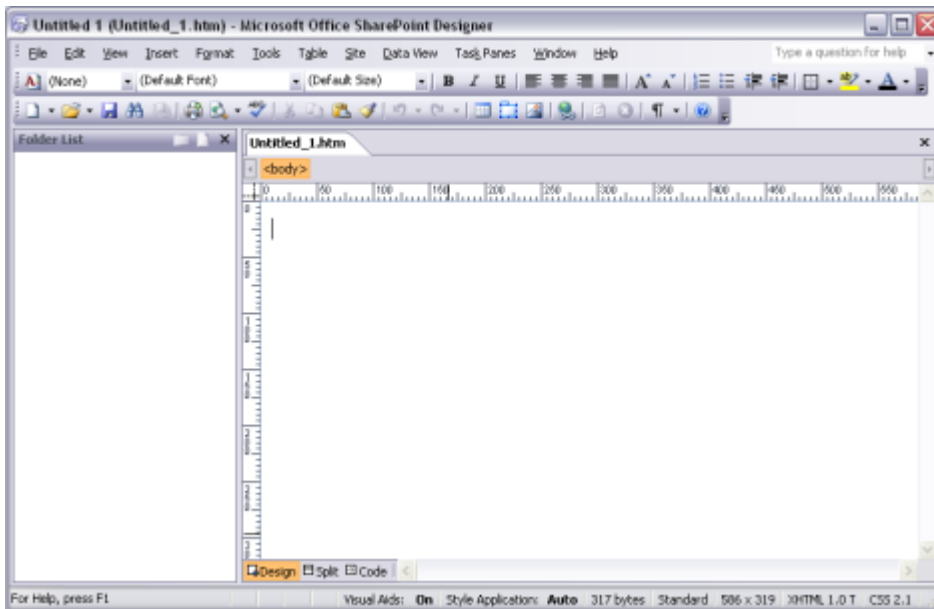
If you are building Web sites, the best solution is EW. This will require new knowledge of XHTML and CSS (Cascading Style Sheets).

SPD is a better direct replacement for FP. It allows you to access a number of the Web Components that were available in FP now unavailable in EW. Let us look at the new UI (user interface) and modify it to look just like FP. Then we will build a simple page and see the difference behind the scenes in HTML code.

1. Open SPD



2. It looks very complicated as compared to FP. There are four task panes as well as a working area in the middle. FP only had the Folder List and the work area. **Close the other three panes.**

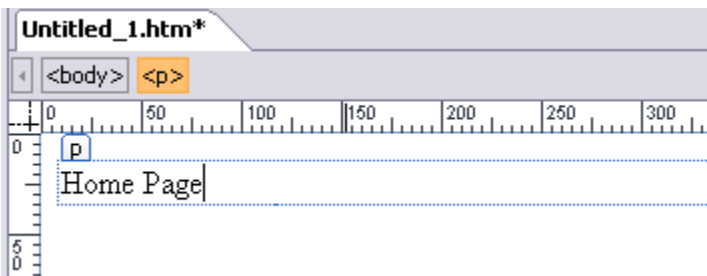


3. That looks a little better.

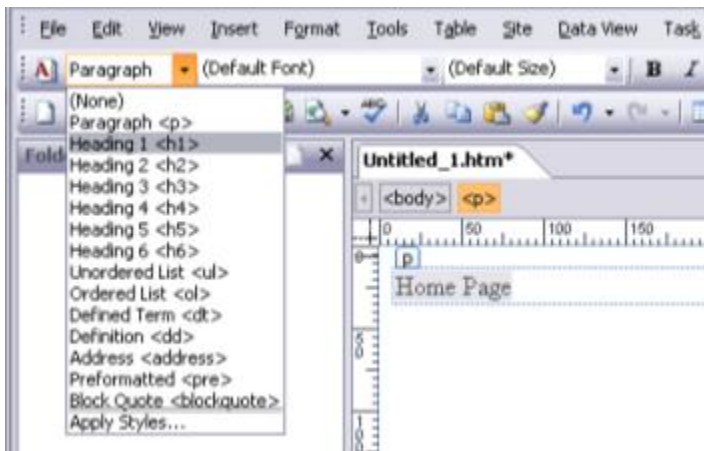
4. Now set the following options:

- Tools > Page Editor Options > General, check the word wrap checkbox, click OK
- Tools > Page Editor Options > AutoThumbnail, uncheck the border checkbox, click OK
- Tools > Application Options > General, uncheck the top checkbox (Open last web site...), click OK
- View > Ruler and Grid > Show Ruler
- View > Toolbars > Style Application, pull down the arrow and change automatic to manual, close the toolbar

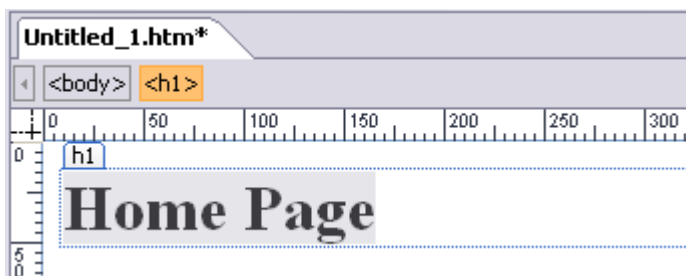
5. Now let us create a simple page. In the work area **type Home Page**



Notice the box around the words and the 'P' tab. The box represents the element and the P tells you what the element is – a paragraph in this case. Clicking the tab selects the element content and the HTML tags that describe it.

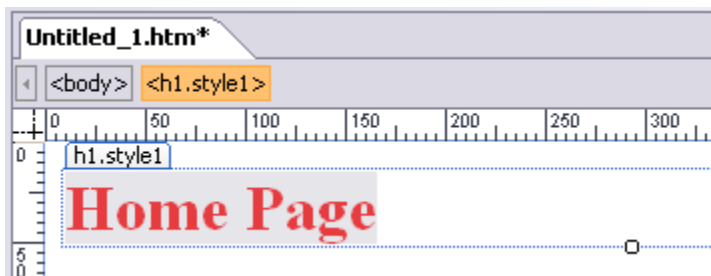


6. Select the words, then on the formatting toolbar, select the **H1** style.



Just like in FP, the text is changed and notice the element is now H1.

It is the code that is different. At the bottom of the work area, locate the three tabs. FP had four, but its Preview tab did not do a great job showing you what the browser view would be, and the links did not work. FP had a Preview in Browser button, as does SPD. Use that instead to Preview the page.



7. Using the Font color button, color the text Red.

Here is the code in FP:

```

<html>
<head>
<meta http-equiv="Content-Language" content="en-us">
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=windows-1252">
<title>New Page 1</title>
</head>
<body>
<h1 style="color: red;">Home Page</h1>
</body>
</html>

```

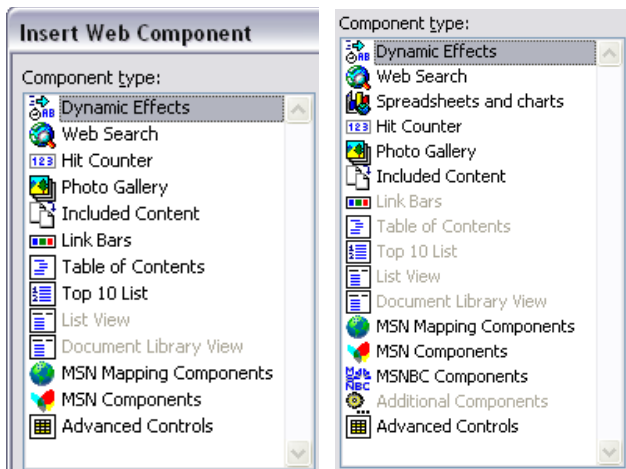
Here is the same code in SPD:

```
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd">
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
<head>
<meta http-equiv="Content-Language" content="en-us" />
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=utf-8" />
<title>Untitled 1</title>
</head>
<body>
<h1 style="color: #FF0000">Home Page</h1>
</body>
</html>
```

I have highlighted the differences. FP creates HTML code with inline HTML code to define the font color. SPD uses inline CSS. This is XHTML/CSS compliant code.

So, behind the scenes, there are some big differences. On the surface, when you remove the extra panes, SPD looks and feels a lot like FP.

8. If you want to return to the original layout in SPD, it is as easy as **Task Panes > Reset Workspace Layout**.



The left image shows the **Insert > Web Components** available in FP; the right SPD.

They are available in SPD only when creating or editing a Web site. Many of the components require FrontPage Extensions installed on the server and are not XHTML compliant. They are included because a SharePoint site is internal to a company and compliancy not as critical. The grayed out items are only available when editing a previously created site that includes them.

The short summary is that you will not find too many differences between FP and SPD. Remove the extra task panes and you may even forget you are using a new application. If you are a power user, there are many subtle differences, but then again, you might want to take a look at EW or even the entire EW Suite.