

CGT 353: Principles of Interactive and Dynamic Media

Flash: Getting Started and Tour

Introduction: Flash Development Tools:

- The program you will become familiar with is the **Flash Authoring Tool**
- This will be referred to as the **F.A.T.**
- **Flash apps can also be written in Flex Builder**
- Flex Builder is an **integrated development environment (IDE)**
- ActionScript can be written in anything, in Notepad if you really want

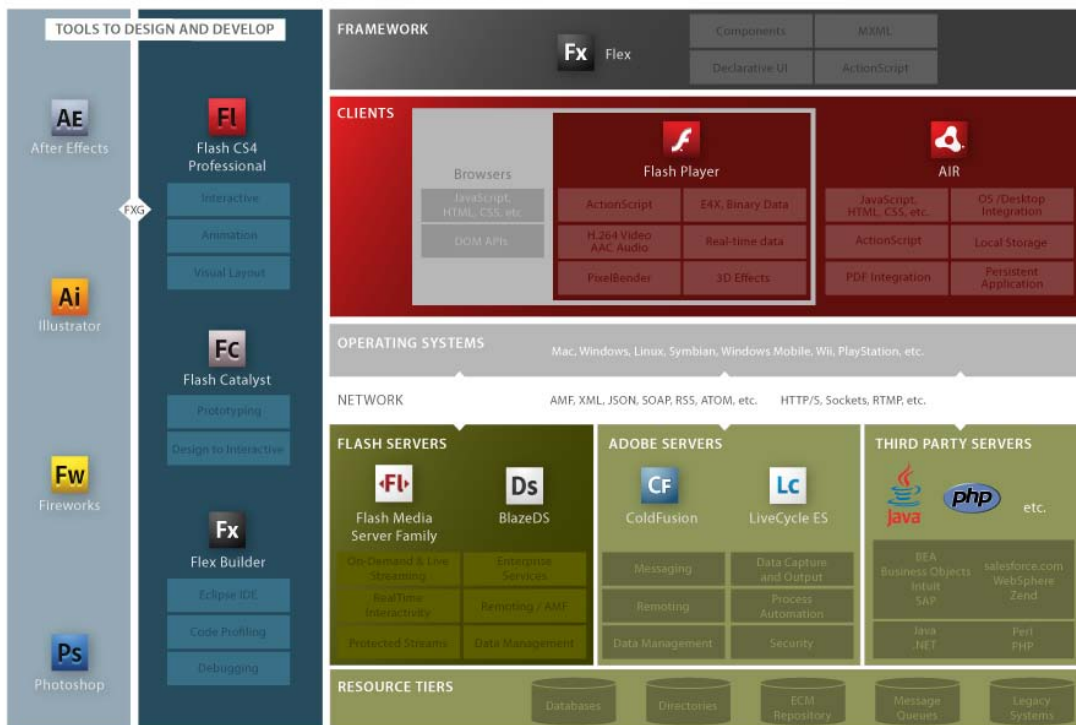
“Programmers will walk around and FLEX, but CGT’ers chew the FAT.”

The Basics of Flash Movies:

- Three types of essential files, **.fla, .swf, and .as**
- Can produce other types of files, including HTML, exe, etc...
- An .swf file is actually a flattened, optimized, single timeline version of the fla file....

The “Flash Platform”:

Adobe Flash Platform and web technologies



Help Features:

- **General Help under Help Menu**
- **Flash Support Center:** <http://www.adobe.com/support/flash>
- **Flash Resources Page:** <http://www.adobe.com/support/documentation/en/flash>
- **Flash Exchange:**
http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange/index.cfm?event=productHome&exc=2&loc=en_us
- **Flash Design Center:**
<http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/designcenter/search.cfm?product=Flash&go=Go>
- **Flash Developer Center:** <http://www.adobe.com/devnet/flash>
- **ActionScript Technology Center:** <http://www.adobe.com/devnet/actionscript>
- **Video Workshop:** http://www.adobe.com/designcenter/video_workshop

Flash Client RunTime Environments:

- **Runtime environments (RTEs or runtimes)** are programs that can run ActionScript.
- Since AS is run by these portable runtimes, AS is itself portable.
 - **Adobe AIR** – standalone on desktops
 - **Flash Player** – current player is 9
 - **Flash Lite** – mobile devices
- Each runtime environment is basically the same, but with a few different custom features that deal with the capabilities and security measures of each environment.

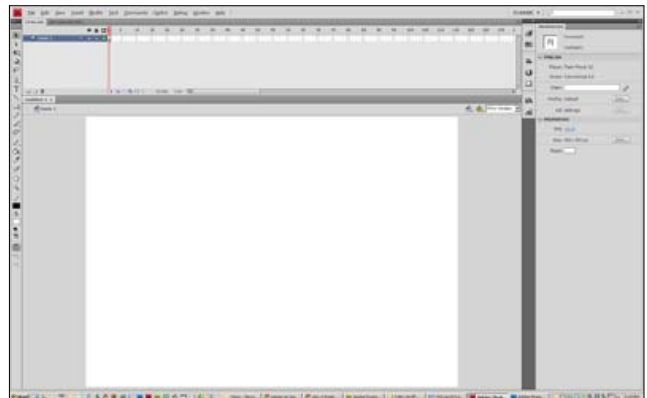


The Main Interface Components:

- **Toolbar** - press Tab to hide
- **Timeline**
- **Stage** - visually shows position and properties of objects
- **Panels**

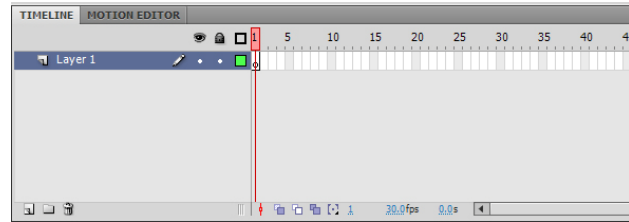
Toolbar: Divided into three sections:

- Tools
- View
- Colors



Timeline:

- Used to lay out elements in the movie.
- Know the difference between **frames** and **keyframes**.
- Know that the more keyframes you have, the more problems you will have with your animations.
- The timeline is what permits you to create animations, using either frame-by-frame or tweened animations.



1. **Layers and controls** - show, lock, outline, motion guide, layer folder

2. **Frames and controls:**

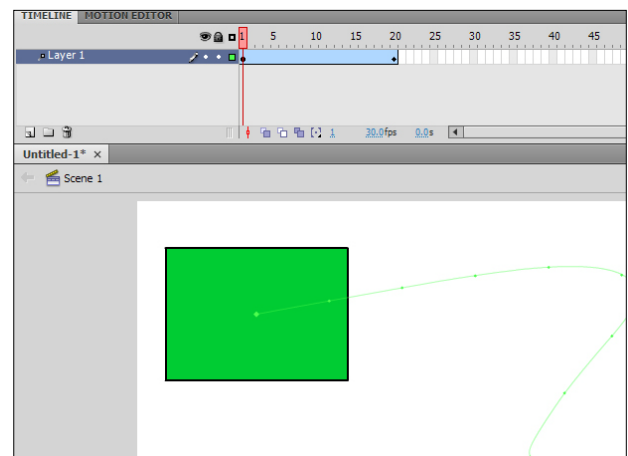
- onion skin, multiple frames, counter, time, labels, comments
- selecting and moving frames
- inserting and removing frames (F5 and Shift F5)
- copying frames (Alt drag)
- inserting keyframes - F6
- inserting blank keyframes F7
- clear keyframe - Shift F6
- difference between cutting and removing frames
- frame view options

tweened animation - motion of an object defined by two keyframes where the object has different fundamental properties

motion tweens - (blue tint) the primary type of tweening that allows for changes in position, size, etc...

Note: There is a difference between traditional motion tweening and classic tweening...

shape tweens - (green tint) only applied to primitive, non-grouped shapes....

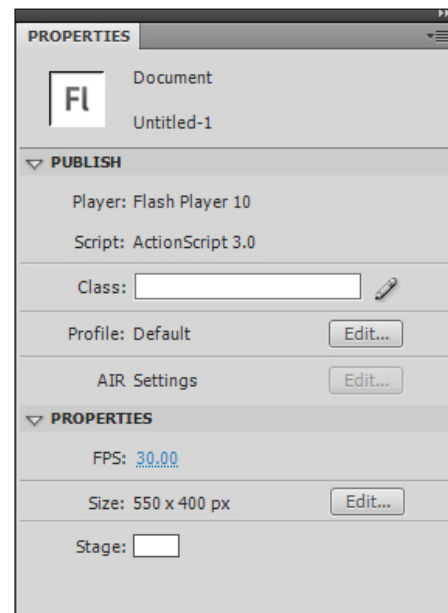


The Stage and the Document Window:

- **Work Area**
- **Stage view control**
- **Hand and Zoom tools**
- **Breadcrumbs**
- **Scene Panel**

Panels:

- Property Inspector
- Align
- Color mixer
- Color swatches
- Info
- Scene
- Transform
- Actions
- Debugger
- Movie Explorer
- Reference
- Output
- Accessibility
- Components
- Component Parameters
- Library



UI Customization:

- Flash allows you to customize the user interface to your liking
- Can save your arrangement by using the **Window/ Save Panel Layout**

Starting With Your Preferences:

Most default preferences are generally acceptable, although you should make yourself familiar with them and tweak them to your liking....

Default movie setting is 550x400 pixels, although you can reset defaults.

- General
- Editing

- Clipboard
- Warnings
- Actionscript Editor

Document Properties:

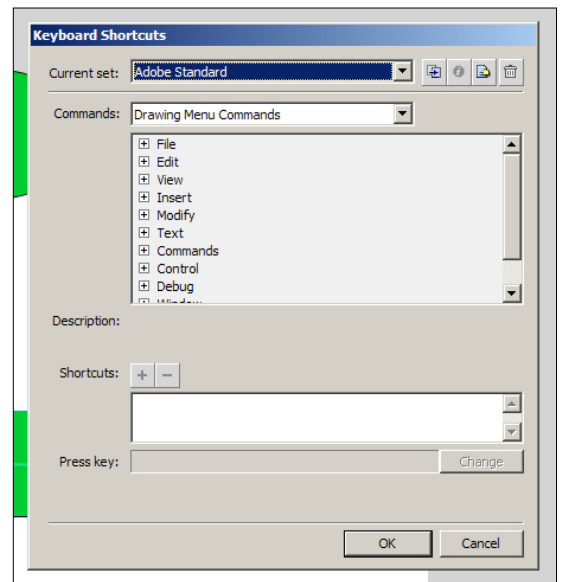
- Dimensions
- Match
- Background Color
- Frame Rate
- Ruler Units

Keyboard Shortcuts:

- Can create your own set or use one based on another application....

Font Mapping:

- Mostly for use in a multi-developer environment
- Basically, allows you to create logical font substitutions when you don't have the appropriate fonts on your computer
- No need to worry about this just yet



Timeline Playback Basics:

Frames - indicate the current moment in time

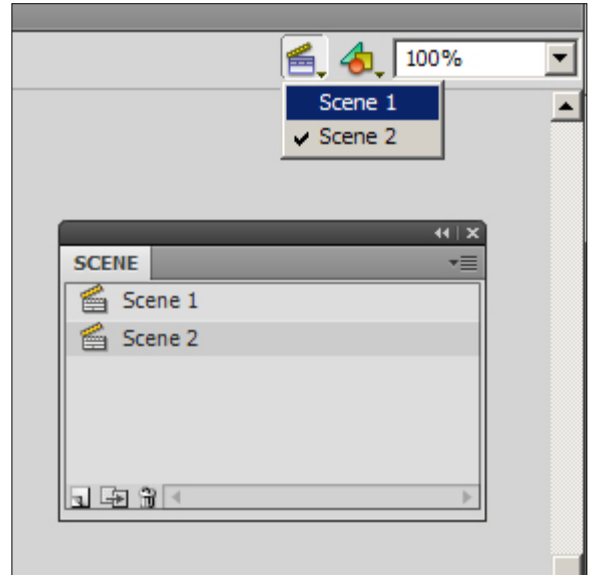
Use either of the following methods to view animation in a timeline:

- Scrub
- Enter
- Control/ Enter
- Controller

Use the escape key to stop....

Scenes:

- Each scene is a multiple main timeline in the movie.
- A lot of argument in the development community whether scenes should be used.
- For this class...**ONLY use them for animations (P1)**
- Insert/ scene to add a scene...
- Use the scene drop-down list to move between scenes.
- ActionScript is usually used to make that jump between scenes....



Note: To use ActionScript to jump between scenes....you need to name the scene in the script:

```
gotoAndPlay("label","SceneName");
```

Publish Settings:

- Important to understand how these settings affect your published Flash apps
- Will explore various aspects of these settings throughout the semester.