Flash Fan Menus 2007, 2008

Technical Manual

Background

The Flash fan menu launched January 12th, 2004 for MEDICOL 2007 and 2008, was an attempt to improve on the Fireworks-generated fan menu. Currently, it is made up of the html and swf files sitting in the same folder on WebCT as the older menus and using the same meta tag to refresh from the home page.

Configuration

The new menu is published from Flash with the publish settings set to percent, but the embed tag dimension elements in the resulting html file are changed to width=”700” height=”420”. The result is that the fan stretches to fit the Internet Explorer browser, but stays fixed size in Mozilla.

The meta refresh tag works best so far. Other swf files have worked in the home and organizer pages with just the embed tag in the upper text field of WebCT’s organizer page tool setup, but for some reason in this case it didn’t although it did work in WebCT’s content module tool and single page tool. Mozilla does not generally recognize the percent fit parameter.

Design

How it works:

In flash the fan menu has two layers of timelines. In the bottom layer common to all frames in the timeline are the graphics and buttons of the pies and rectangle buttons. On the second layer timeline, frame 1 is the default state, frame 2 has the orientation submenu showing, frame 3 has the PRIN submenu showing, etc. The transparent background is actually a button that jumps the menu back to default frame 1. When the menu first appears, it is in frame 1, when you roll over a pie or button it jumps to the corresponding frame showing the submenu. The submenus are text fields in the frames of the second layer timeline. These readonly text fields function with HTML saved in them with hyperlinks and break tags.

Editing and Updating

Changing hyperlinks in the submenus

- Open the FLA
- Save a copy under a backup name
- Open Actions panel in Development Panels under Windows, and the Components Inspector.
- It’s a good idea to click on the dot on the first layer under the lock symbol at the left of the timeline so that no changes happen accidently to the first layer
- Click on the corresponding frame in the second layer of the timeline.

- Click on the submenu in the Work Area, then click on parameters, text in the Component Inspector.
- Select the code in the text line of the Component Inspector, and copy it to NotePad.
- Make your changes in NotePad, keeping it without carriage returns, and copy it back into the text line of the Component Inspector
- Click again on the submenu in the Work Area, and you should see the change
- If there is a scroll bar showing, you will need to select the tool on the left below the pencil and then resize the submenu rectangle by dragging on one of the perimeter midpoints. Then reselect the top left arrow tool to reposition the submenu.
- Save the updated FLA under its original name.
- Under File, Publish Settings, select Percent, and select for html and swf.
- Publish
- Exit and copy the updated fla and swf files (not the html) to the corresponding menu folder on MEDICOL S: and WebCT.

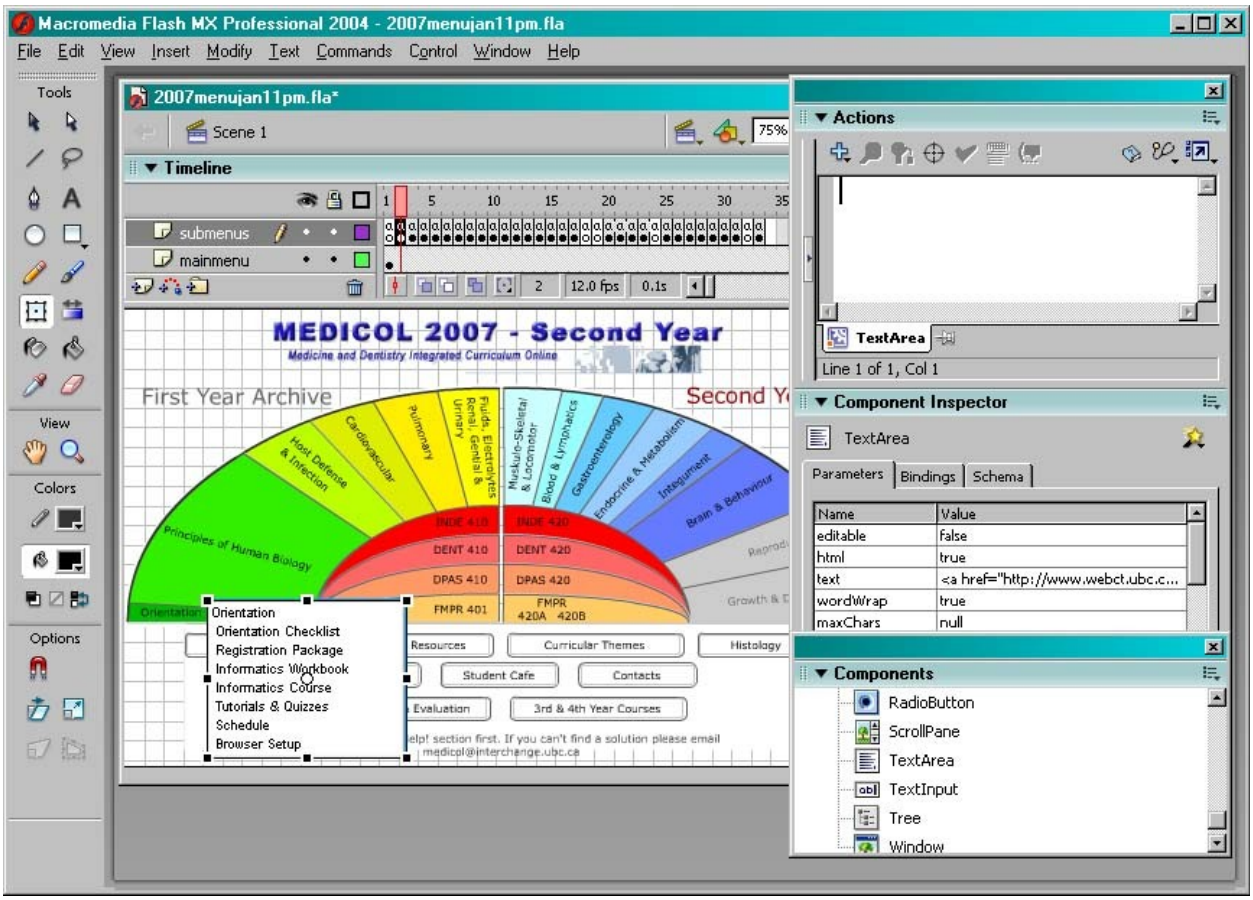

figure 1: editing the PRIN

Activating a new pie

- Open the FLA
- Save a copy under a backup name
- Open Actions panel in Development Panels under Windows, and the Property Inspector.

- It’s a good idea to click on the dot on the second layer under the lock symbol at the left of the timeline so that no changes happen accidently to the second layer. If there is a lock symbol on the first layer, click to remove it.
- Use the arrow tool at the top left so that you don’t accidently resize or distort the pie or button.
- Click on a pie or button, and you will see the actionscript for it in the Actions panel
- If the inactive pie does not have actionscript, copy actionscript from an activated pie, and then change the GotoAndStop number for the corresponding second layer submenu frame. For example, INDE 420 is 20 Brain & Behaviour is 17*.
- Click on the same pie or button and you will see that at the very top, you no longer see just “Scene 1” but also the name of the object and a different timeline representing the up, over, down, hit appearances of the button.
- Click on the fill color of the button and you will see the actual graphic of it all selected.
- To change the fill colour the pie, deselect all by clicking elsewhere on the Work Area and then again on the fill colour.
- Now click on the paint bucket and swatch rectangle at far left and you will see a panel open. Type the colour hex code into the input box, and enter.
- The fill colour of the pie should change.
- At the very top of your screen, click on the button image to go back to the button
- Now click on the caption of the pie in the Work Area, you can change the colour of the text from inactive grey to next to black with the same bucket tool.
- Save the updated FLA under its original name.
- Under File, Publish Settings, select Percent, and select for html and swf.
- Publish
- Exit and copy the updated fla and swf files (not the html) to the corresponding menu folder on MEDICOL S: and WebCT.

Adding a new Submenu text

- Open the Component panel in Development Panels under Windows
- Lock the first layer and unlock the second
- Select the second layer frame where you want the submenu to be according to the rollover actionscript of the pie or button on the first layer
- Open the Component panel and scroll down to TextArea,
- Drag the textArea onto the Work Area
- Add the HTML as you would when “Changing hyperlinks in the submenus” as earlier
- Save the updated FLA under its original name.
- Under File, Publish Settings, select Percent, and select for html and swf.
- Publish
- Exit and copy the updated fla and swf files (not the html) to the corresponding menu folder on MEDICOL S: and WebCT.

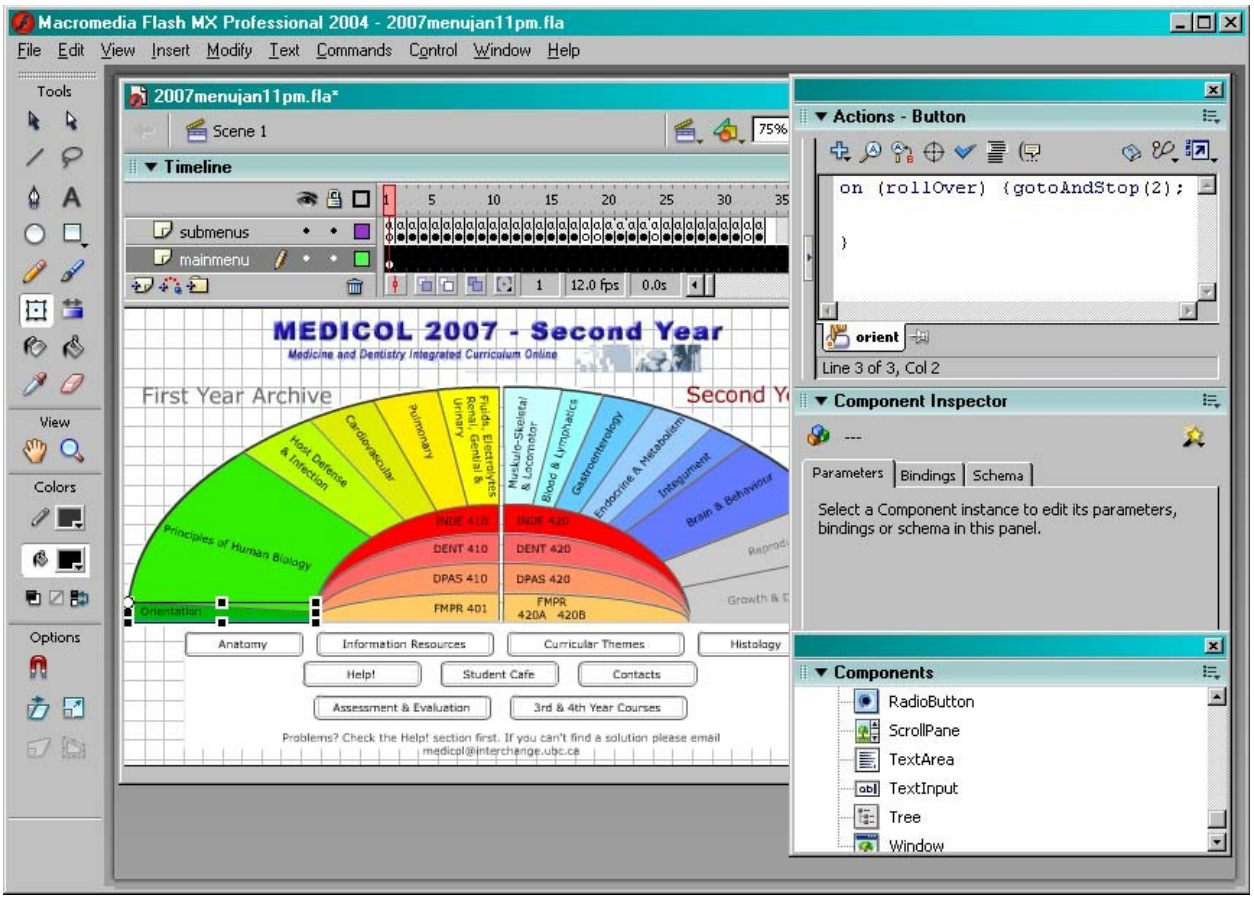

Figure 2: Editing a pie or button