

COMP 690 E-commerce Fall 2006 Quiz 1—Solutions

The first two problems together are equal in value to the third problem.

Total points possible: 20

1 (5 pts.). What is information asymmetry? What was its role in the vision of E-commerce I, and how does it hold up in the reality of E-commerce II?

Answer

Information asymmetry exists when some market participants have information not available to other market participants. The usual case is where merchants and manufacturers know their true costs, profits, and price discrimination strategies while consumers have only vague ideas of figures and strategies. E-commerce I was supposed to reduce information asymmetry since it was supposed to make information available in ways and volumes not previously possible.

In E-commerce II, there is considerable persistent price dispersion, brands remain very important, and the ideal of very efficient markets has not come to pass. All these factors have allowed merchants and manufacturers to introduce information asymmetries if only because factors not readily available via the Internet now contribute so much to costs and profits.

2 (5 pts.). What is the traditional relation between the richness and the reach of a marketing message? How have e-commerce technologies changed this?

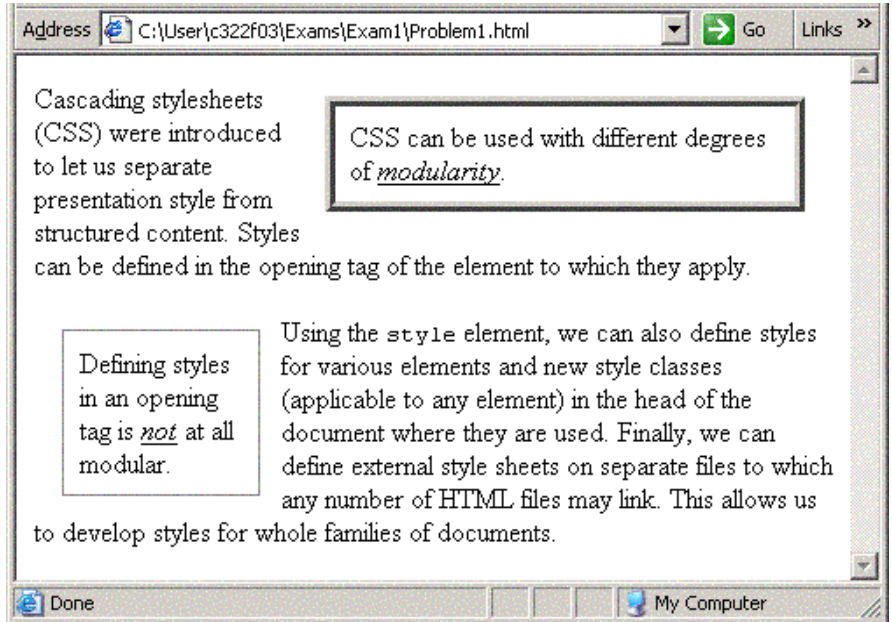
Answer

Before the Web, there was a tradeoff between the richness and the reach of a message: richer messages had less reach, and messages with more reach had to sacrifice richness. The Web, however, has abolished this tradeoff (at least once we go beyond relatively narrow reach) since marketing messages with complex content (such as text, video, and audio) can reach audiences of millions.

3 (10 pts.) The following HTML document is listed with gaps (which you will fill in). Its rendering is shown at right. The body of the document consists first of a `div` element occupying 60% of the width of the screen that floats right and has style class `thickbox`. This is followed by a paragraph element that flows up and around it. Next, there is another `div` element, which occupies 25% of the width of the screen, floats left, and has the style class `thinbox`. This is also

followed by a paragraph that flows up and around it. The HTML document links to a stylesheet called `specific.css`, which defines classes `thickbox` (thick border with ridge style) and `thinbox` (thin border with groove style). This stylesheet imports the stylesheet `general.css`, with two rules; one specifies that `div` elements have both padding and margins the size of half a character, and the other specifies that `em` elements that are descendants of `div` elements are underlined.

The gaps in the listing are labeled with Greek letters, which are repeated after the listing with descriptions of the corresponding missing code. You there supply the missing code. After that, you are asked to supply the two stylesheets.



```

<html>
<head>
<title>Problem 1</title>
  α
  _____
</head>
<body>
<div β
  _____>
  CSS can be used with different degrees of
  <em>modularity</em>.
</div>
<p>
  Cascading stylesheets (CSS) were introduced to let us
  separate presentation style from structured content.
  Styles can be defined in the opening tag of the element
  to which they apply.
</p>
<div γ
  _____>
  Defining styles in an opening tag is <em>not</em>
  at all modular.
</div>
<p>
  Using the <tt>style</tt> element, we can also define
  styles for various elements and new style classes
  (applicable to any element) in the head of the document
  where they are used. Finally, we can define external
  style sheets on separate files to which any number of
  HTML files may link. This allows us to develop styles
  for whole families of documents.
</p>
</body>
</html>

```

α: Link to the stylesheet specific.css

Answer (2 points)

```

<link rel = "stylesheet" type = "text/css"
      href = "specific.css">

```

β: Specify that this element floats right and occupies 60% of the width of the screen. Also specify that the style class is thickbox.

Answer (1.5 points)

```

style = "float: right; width: 60%" class = "thickbox"

```

γ: Specify that this element floats left and occupies 25% of the width of the screen. Also specify that the style class is thinbox.

Answer (1.5 points)

```

style = "float: left; width: 25%" class = "thinbox"

```

Write the stylesheet `specific.css`, which defines classes `thickbox` (thick border with ridge style) and `thinbox` (thin border with groove style) and imports the stylesheet `general.css`,

Answer (3.5 points)

```
.thickbox { border-width: thick; border-style: ridge }
.thinbox  { border-width: thin;  border-style: groove }
@import url(general.css);
```

Write the stylesheet `general.css`, which has two rules; one specifies that `div` elements have both padding and margins the size of half a character, and the other specifies that `em` elements that are descendants of `div` elements are underlined.

Answer (3.5 points)

```
div      { margin: 0.5em; padding: 0.5em }
div em  { text-decoration: underline }
```