Flash Domain 2: Identifying Rich Media Design Elements

Adobe Creative Suite 5
ACA Certification Preparation:
Featuring Dreamweaver, Flash, and Photoshop

Objectives

- Identify general and Flash-specific best practices for designing rich media content for a website.

- Demonstrate knowledge of design elements and principles.

- Identify general and Flash-specific techniques to create rich media elements that are accessible and readable.

Objectives

- Use a storyboard to produce rich media elements.
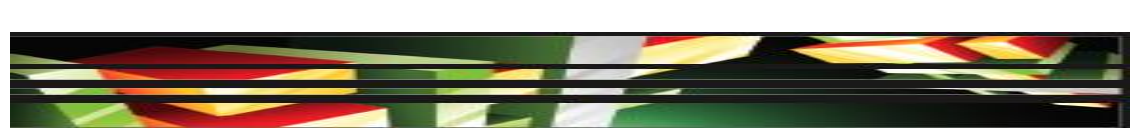
- Organize a Flash document.

Vocabulary

- merge drawing mode
- metadata
- motion preset
- object drawing mode
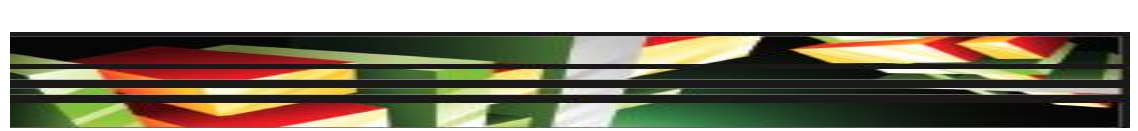- primitive drawing mode
- storyboard
- symbol

Domain 2.0 Identifying Rich Media Design Elements

- The second domain focuses on design elements and maintaining consistency within a rich media project or between rich media projects that are displayed on the same website.

Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website

- **Identify the Benefits of Consistency**

- A consistent design between pages of a website improves the usability and accessibility for the user.

- Consistent navigation will also improve visitors' experience and encourage them to explore your website.

- Consistency in pages within a website will also make maintaining the site easier.

Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **Techniques in Flash Used to Produce Consistency**

- To help guarantee font consistency from one computer to another, Flash Professional CS5 embeds the entire font and font characters, making the font available if it is not installed on a visitor's computer.

Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **Techniques in Flash Used to Produce Consistency (continued)**
- You create objects using drawing tools on the Tools panel.
  - When drawing with the **merge drawing mode**, shapes are merged where they overlap.
  - The **object drawing mode** keeps each shape separate.
  - The **primitive drawing mode** draws separate objects and allows you to adjust the shapes' corner radius and angles.

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Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

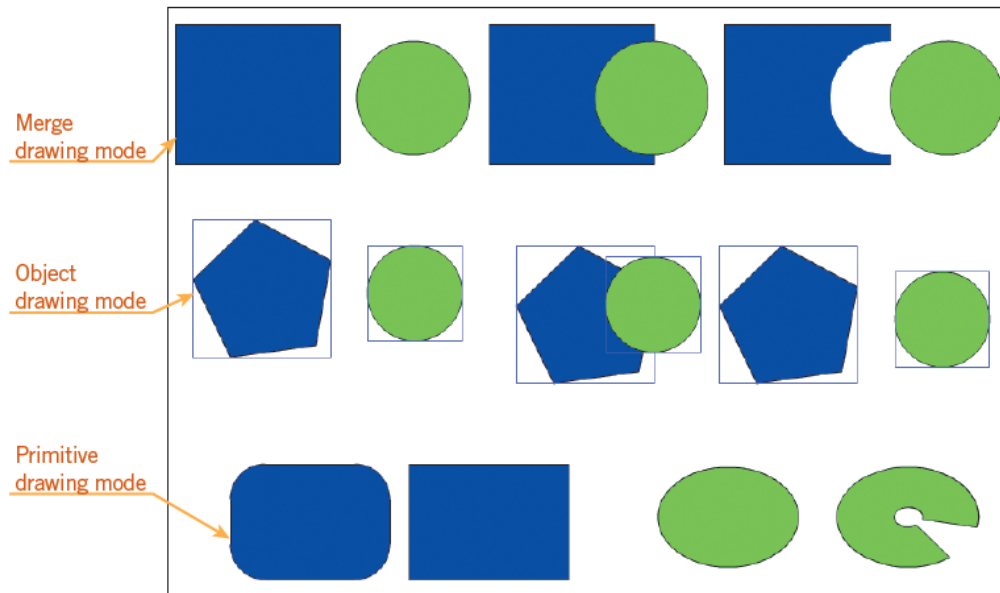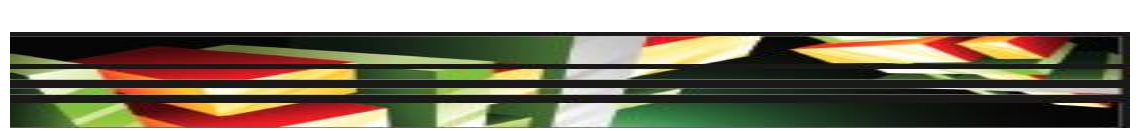- **Techniques in Flash Used to Produce Consistency (continued)**

Merge drawing mode

Object drawing mode

Primitive drawing mode

FIGURE 2–2 Examples of drawing modes

Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

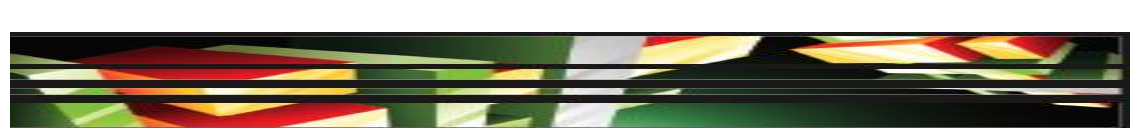- **Techniques in Flash Used to Produce Consistency (continued)**

- You can convert objects on the Stage to symbols.

- A **symbol** is a graphic, button, or movie clip that is created once and then store in the Library panel.

- Symbols can be reused in the current document or shared between other Flash documents.

- You can use templates to maintain consistency or to begin a project.

Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **Techniques in Flash Used to Produce Consistency (continued)**

- Flash offers a library of motion presets to add animation to your project.

- A motion preset is a predefined motion tween that you can share between projects.

- You can apply the same motion preset to different objects, making it easy to be consistent with animations.
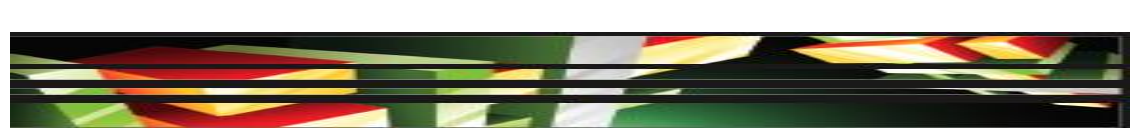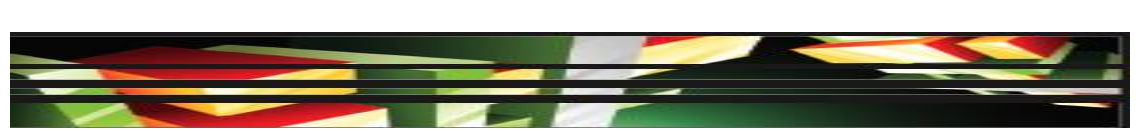
Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **Identify Features Used to Maintain Page Structure**
- Features in a website that you can use to maintain page structure may include the following items:
  - Headings
  - Use of font styles and sizes
  - Color schemes
  - Size and placement of photos
  - Use of design elements such as bullets
  - Use of indentation to organize content

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Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **Identify Features Used to Maintain Page Structure (continued)**

- Because not everyone uses the same browser or version of a browser, it is important during website design to test your web page using a variety of browsers.

- It is also important to use browser-safe colors, a palette of 216 colors that are displayed the same on all monitors.
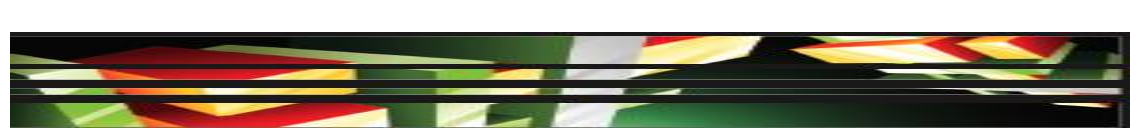
Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **When to Use Rich Media**

- Web search engines work with Flash content in different ways and may not be able to index the text content properly or at all.

- It is recommended that content and navigation be performed in HTML because the site will be accessible to a larger audience.

- You should use rich media, also known as dynamic content, only where it is needed and when it will enhance the visitors' experience or illustrate your message more clearly.

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Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **Benefits for Publishing to the Adobe AIR Format**

- You can publish Flash to the Adobe AIR format.

- Adobe AIR supports HTML, JavaScript, Flash, and ActionScript that runs as a stand-alone application.

- This stand-along application will play in its own window and is not dependent on a Web browser.

- Adobe AIR runs on multiple platforms and devices.

Objective 2.1 Identify General and Flash-Specific Best Practices for Designing Rich Media Content for a Website (continued)

- **Publishing Your Flash Project with Metadata**

- Publishing your Flash project with metadata makes the information available to web search engines.

- **Metadata** is information about your file that you choose to publish, including a document title, author, description, or keywords.

- Additional metadata options can be used to control content on a mobile device.

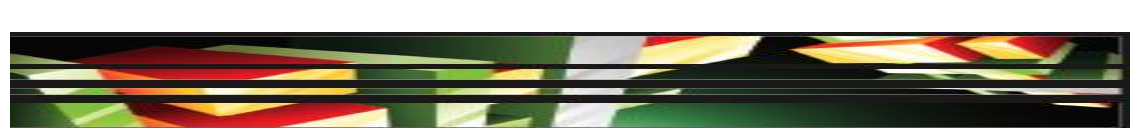# Objective 2.2 Demonstrate Knowledge of Design Elements and Principles

- Graphic design elements and principles

DESIGN ELEMENTS	DESIGN PRINCIPLES		
Lines	**Emphasis**	**Symmetry**	**Contrast**
■ The basic component of a shape	■ Making a specific element stand out	■ When the composition of the text and graphics is evenly distributed around a center point	■ Similar to emphasis, it separates elements by comparing or creating differences
■ Every line has length, thickness, and direction	■ Achieved by using color, size, location, or shapes	■ Symmetry can be vertical, horizontal, or radial	■ Can be achieved through the use of color, size, shapes, and location
■ Lines can be curved, horizontal, vertical, diagonal, wavy, dashed, or dotted			
Shapes	**Movement**	**Color Theory**	**Rule of Thirds**
■ A line that defines or implies a boundary	■ Directing the eye in a certain direction	■ The idea that colors can affect human thought and emotions	■ The theory that the most interesting components of a composition, like a web page, are found off center
■ Shapes can be geometric, such as a square or a circle	■ Achieved through the use of dots, arrows, or lines	■ Colors may be visually pleasing or may make someone feel uncomfortable	
■ Shapes may also be organic			

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Objective 2.2 Demonstrate Knowledge of Design Elements and Principles (continued)

DESIGN ELEMENTS	DESIGN PRINCIPLES		
Texture	**Balance**	**White Space**	**Proximity**
■ A fill used in shapes to imply what an object may feel like	■ The page is laid out in a planned and coherent visual pattern	■ Areas of the page that do not have text or graphics	■ The closeness or distance from text and graphics
■ The texture may, for example, look rough or wavy	■ Visual elements are not out of proportion or heavy in one area	■ Includes margins, padding, and line spacing	■ Close proximity indicates a connection, such as placing a caption on a graphic
	Unity	**Alignment**	**Repetition**
	■ Creating a feeling of wholeness	■ The spacing of text and graphics in relation to one another or the margins on a page	■ Repeating an element to create visual consistency
	■ Achieved by using the same color or different tints of that color	■ Common alignments: center, left, right, and justify	■ May be achieved on the same page in a website or among all pages in a website through the use of headings, colors, font styles, and by repeating the basic layout between pages

Objective 2.2 Demonstrate Knowledge of Design Elements and Principles (continued)

- You can achieve balance by applying symmetry or asymmetry.

- Symmetrical balance is created with the weight of a composition is evenly arranged around a center point.

- Asymmetrical balance is achieved by arranging objects of different sizes around a center point and using smaller shapes together to balance out a larger shape.

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Objective 2.3 Identify General and Flash-Specific Techniques to Create Rich Media Elements that Are Accessible and Readable

- Readability can improve the visitor's experience, as well as improve their comprehension and retention of the information.

- You can focus the grade level of the written text.

- Formatting options that need to be considered include font, line spacing, color, paragraph indents, and placement of text on the screen.
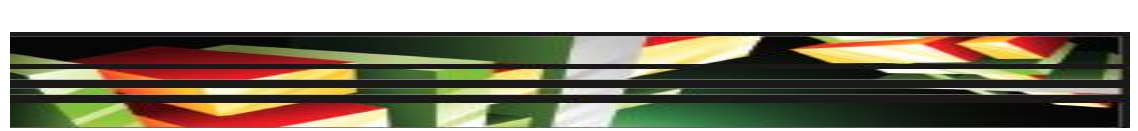
Objective 2.3 Identify General and Flash-Specific Techniques to Create Rich Media Elements that Are Accessible and Readable (continued)

- When creating accessible content, consider allowing the user to perform the following:
  - Adjust the size of text or images.
  - Manipulate the content with the keyboard rather than the mouse.
  - Read text captions for audio components.
  - Use a screen reader to access the content.
  - Hear an audio track, thus removing the need for a screen reader.

Objective 2.3 Identify General and Flash-Specific Techniques to Create Rich Media Elements that Are Accessible and Readable (continued)

- Practically all of the accessibility issues that affect HTML and content provided via Dreamweaver can also apply to rich media content created in Flash.

- Provide synchronized captions for any audio for individuals with hearing disabilities.

- Allow content to be paused and restarted from where it was paused by providing video playback controls.
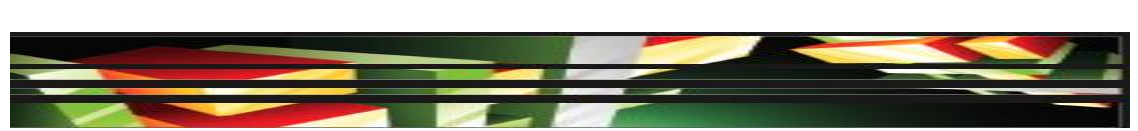
Objective 2.3 Identify General and Flash-Specific Techniques to Create Rich Media Elements that Are Accessible and Readable (continued)

- Limit flashing or blinking elements.

- Provide contrast between elements, and allow content to be scaled.

- Offer keyboard options to control or manipulate the content.

- Make sure screen reader software can access content.

- Allow music and audio to be turned off so that they do not interfere with a screen reader.

Objective 2.3 Identify General and Flash-Specific Techniques to Create Rich Media Elements that Are Accessible and Readable (continued)

- Flash CS5 includes a set of accessible components to implement many accessibility practices, including:
  - SimpleButton
  - Checkbox
  - RadioButton
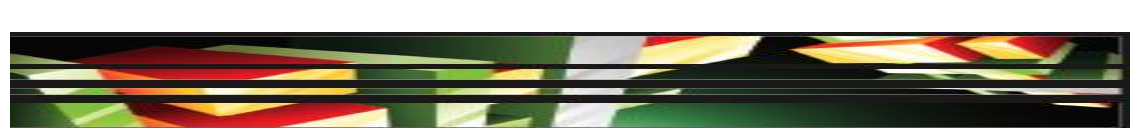 - Label
  - TextInput
  - TextArea
  - Alert

Objective 2.3 Identify General and Flash-Specific Techniques to Create Rich Media Elements that Are Accessible and Readable (continued)

- Window
- DataGrid
- ListBox
- ComboBox

● You can use the FLVPlaybackCaptioning component to add closed captioning options to your Flash videos.

Objective 2.4 Use a Storyboard to Produce Rich Media Elements

- Just as flowcharts and wireframes aid in planning a website, a storyboard is essential to managing rich media content.

- A **storyboard** is a graphic organizer used to map out the various scenes or actions that will take place.

- Storyboards often resemble a comic strip and have space to include a sketch and comments.

- When using storyboards, you will want to consider including information about animations, transitions, timing, images, text, and audio.

Objective 2.5 Organize a Flash Document

- When working with Flash, your document can easily include hundreds of different elements.

- Organizing your content will make developing your Flash document much easier.

- You can create folders to organize symbols and objects in the Library panel and layers in the Timeline.

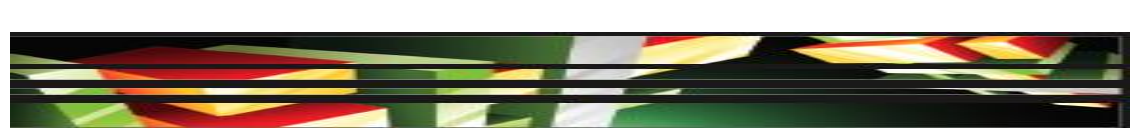# Objective 2.5 Organize a Flash Document (continued)

- An organized Flash document
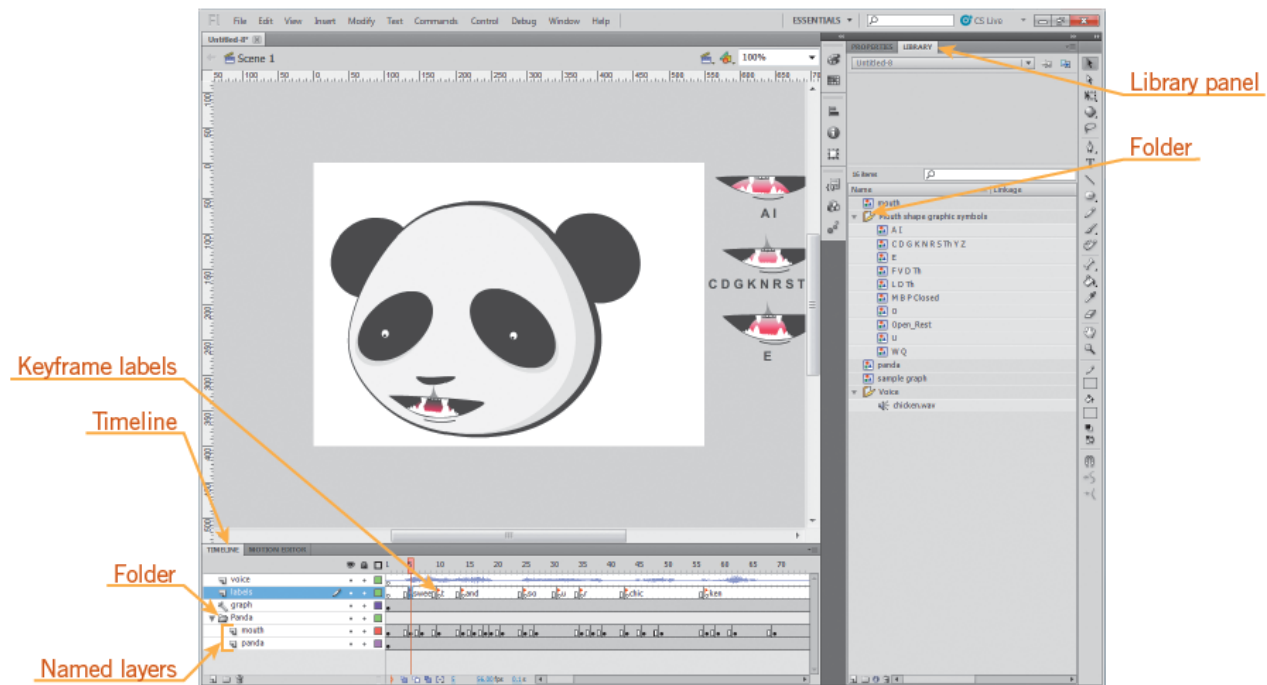
Summary

- Objective 2.1 Identify general and Flash-specific best practices for designing rich media content for a website

- Objective 2.2 Demonstrate knowledge of design elements and principles

- Objective 2.3 Identify general and Flash-specific techniques to create rich media elements that are accessible and readable

- Objective 2.4 Use a storyboard to produce rich media elements

Summary (continued)

- Objective 2.5 Organize a Flash document

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