Introducing ASP

Learning About ASP and Server-Side Programming

ASP is a Web server scripting language from Microsoft used for embedding dynamic content into HTML Web pages. ASP stands for "Active Server Pages."
ASP is a server-side scripting language. What distinguishes ASP from something like client-side JavaScript is that the code is executed on the server. This means that the server executes your script and translates the content to HTML before sending it to your Web browser. All of the heavy lifting and computing is done on the server.

When a user looks at the source for the Web page created by your ASP file, they have no way of knowing what's going on behind the scenes—all they see is the end result.

Using ASP

ASP is automatically enabled with all of the Windows hosting accounts we offer. Once you activate your Windows hosting account, you can create and upload PHP pages.

If you're not familiar with ASP and not interested in writing your own programming code, you can still use ASP on Web sites by downloading existing scripts and applications and installing them on your site. There are a multitude of free ASP scripts and applications already written and distributed on the Internet.

Using ASP and an MSSQL or Access database, you can create robust Web sites that generate content and images dynamically.

Below is a list of just some of the features you can add to your Web site using ASP:

- Blogs
- Guestbooks
- Discussion Forums
- Mail Functions
- Password Generation
- Database Communication
- Auctions
- Calendars/Planners
- Games
- File Management
- Voting/Polling Features

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What Asp Looks Like

If you are familiar with HTML, ASP is a straightforward language to learn. Once you learn the basic syntax, you can explore more advanced features of ASP.

Here is a basic example of what ASP looks like in an HTML document:

```
<html>
    <head>
        <title>ASP Example</title>
    </head>
    <body>
        <%
        response.write("Everybody loves an ASP script!")
        %>
    </body>
</html>
```

Unlike Perl or C, there's no need to write a program with a lot of commands to output your HTML. You simply write an HTML script with some embedded code to do something.

Notice how The ASP code is enclosed in special start and end tags. These allow you to jump into and out of “ASP mode.”

Your First ASP Page

There are several good (often free) ASP editors available for writing your ASP code, but technically you can use any text editor program to write an ASP file (e.g., Notepad, TextEdit).

To Create Your First ASP Page

1. Open your text editor.
2. Type the following code into your text editor:

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```
<html>
   <head>
      <title>ASP Test</title>
   </head>
   <body>
      <%
      response.write("Hello World!")
      %>
   </body>
</html>
```

3. Save you file as “hello.asp” and close your text editor. If you are using Windows Notepad, make sure that the the “.asp” replaces the “.txt” extension when you save your file.

4. Upload your new ASP file to the root folder of your Windows hosting account.

5. Use your browser to access the file by typing in your Web address followed by /hello.asp/. For example, www.yourdomainnamehere.com/hello.asp.

If everything is configured correctly, ASP will convert the code in between the <% and %> tags and display the text “Hello World” in your browser.

NOTE: If you tried this example and it did not display correctly or you see the whole file as text, contact customer service. Remember to upload your file to your hosting account. If you try to view this ASP file on your computer, it will not work. You need to upload it onto a Web server that has ASP running.

The point of the example is to show the special PHP tag format. In this example we used < % to indicate the start of a ASP script. Then we wrote the ASP content and left ASP mode by adding the closing tag, %>. You may jump in and out of ASP mode in an HTML file like this anywhere you want.

Your Second ASP Page

There are a number of functions you can call using ASP that display information about your Web browser or Web server.

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To Use ASP to Get Information About Your System

1. Open your text editor.

2. Type the following code into your text editor:

```
<html>
    <head>
        <title>ASP Information</title>
    </head>

<body>
    <p><strong>You are browsing this site with:</strong>
    <%Response.Write(Request.ServerVariables("http_user_agent"))%> </p>

    <p><strong>Your IP address is:</strong>
    <%Response.Write(Request.ServerVariables("remote_addr"))%> </p>

    <p><strong>The DNS lookup of the IP address is:</strong>
    <%Response.Write(Request.ServerVariables("remote_host"))%> </p>

    <p><strong>The method used to call the page:</strong>
    <%Response.Write(Request.ServerVariables
("request_method"))%> </p>

    <p><strong>The server's domain name:</strong>
    <%Response.Write(Request.ServerVariables("server_name"))%> </p>

    <p><strong>The server's port:</strong>
    <%Response.Write(Request.ServerVariables("server_port"))%> </p>

<p><strong>The server's software:</strong>
    <%Response.Write(Request.ServerVariables
("server_software"))%> </p>

</body>
</html>
```

3. Save you file as “info.asp” and close your text editor. If you are using Windows Notepad, make sure that the the “.asp” replaces the “.txt” extension when you save your file.

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4. Upload your new ASP file to the root folder of your hosting account.

5. Use your browser to access the file by typing in your Web address followed by /info.asp/. For example, www.yourdomainnamehere.com/info.asp

If everything is configured correctly, ASP will convert the code in between the <% and %> tags and display information about your browser and server in your HTML page.

Additional Resources

There are a number of places on the Internet where you can learn more about ASP and the different types of ASP Web applications that you can use on your Web site. Here are a few links to get you started:

Microsoft Active Server Pages Site

W3School's ASP Tutorial

ASP Alliance

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