



*A
Woman's
Guide
to*



*Building
Her Own Web
Site Vol. I*

The following are excerpts from “A Woman’s Guide to Building Her Own Web Site, Volume 1”.

Part 1. Introduction

Goal of this book

Do you want to create your own web site, either for your personal use or for a small business? The goal of this ebook is to introduce you to the information you need to know and to guide you through the activities you need to perform to make your web site a reality.

Who should read this ebook

If you want to create an interactive web site – by interactive, I mean a web site that lets you run banner advertisements (more on banners later), have fun things for your users to do, display random images or text (more on that later, too!), or provide many of the activities that you find on web sites, and have the freedom to choose the applications you want to put on your site – you should read this ebook. Even if you don’t plan to do all the work yourself, reading this book will give you information you can use when you hire someone who will build the web site for you. You’ll know a lot about what kinds of scripts are out there, what you can get for free and for low cost, and what kinds of features you can put on your web site.

This ebook is divided into two parts. Part 1 introduces you to a number of topics related to web sites. Part 2 steps you through using a number of scripts to show you how to work with scripts and add these features to your site.

In addition, this ebook is volume 1 of a 2-volume set. Volume 2 covers more advanced topics and examines more complex scripts. Volume 1 will get you started working on your web site; Volume 2 will give you information to help you add sophisticated features.

What you need to know before you start

1. Create and edit text files

Whether you use a word processor like Microsoft’s Word or Corel’s WordPerfect, or a simple text editor like Notepad, you need to know how to create a **text** file, save it to your local disk, and edit it later. (The PC program Notepad will create text files. Also, you can save files in Text only format (with line breaks) from the word processing programs.) This book will not discuss how to create files, nor how to use the various web page tools like Composer, FrontPage or HotDog Pro. Please visit your local bookstore or go online to find a manual on how to use these tools.

2. Directories

You must understand what a directory is and the fact that a directory can contain files and additional subdirectories.

3. Download and unzip files

You need to know how to download a file – normally this is just clicking on a link that says “download”. Once the file is downloaded, if it is a ZIP file (it has a .zip extension), you need to know how to unzip the file. If you don’t have WinZip, go to <http://www.winzip.com> and download and install their WinZip shareware program. (Please also pay them for it.)

4. HTML

You need to know at least the basics of HTML to understand the scripts in Part 2 and to make the necessary modifications to use these scripts. If you have no HTML experience or need a refresher, visit http://www.herttechnology.com/ebooks/html/intro_html_1.zip and download the HTML Introduction.

If you want to become more proficient with HTML, you may want to visit the web sites listed here:

<http://html.about.com/compute/html/mbody.htm>
<http://www.netmag.co.uk/webbuilder/htmlhelp/>
<http://www.webreference.com/html/>

Or visit these sites:

<http://www.webdeveloper.com>
<http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/>

Or even buy a book:

1. Create Your First Web Page in a Weekend
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0761513884/crazyforlife>.
2. HTML 4 for the World Wide Web, Fourth Edition: Visual Quickstart Guide
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0201354934/crazyforlife>.
3. Dummies 101 ® HTML 4
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0764502050/crazyforlife>

Words of encouragement

Whatever you do, don’t get frustrated and give up. Like anything else, building a web site requires new knowledge and skills that take time to develop. Think about all the things you’ve learned to do in your life that seem easy now, but weren’t so easy when

you first tried. When I first learned to drive a stick shift, I couldn't make a left turn in busy traffic for months. But over time, I got adept at pulling out and shifting without stalling and now I don't even have to think about it. The topics I'll be discussing are like that. Give it time, and with practice, it will be second nature to you.

So, if you have your patience in hand, a little excitement perhaps, and some enthusiasm, let's get started. You may want to skim things through first, then return for a closer look. You should click on the URLs as you go, too. If you have trouble bringing them up in the reader, copy the URL to your browser's Location: bar (Netscape Navigator) or the Address bar (Internet Explorer). And, of course, all the trade-marked names in this ebook are owned by their respective companies (like Windows 98 is owned by Microsoft). OK, let's go!



Web hosting

Now that you've registered a domain name, it is as if the great world post office has handed you a piece of paper with an address on it, "123 Main St. Anytown, MD, 22222, USA", but *without that address being associated with a physical location*. This situation is different than what happens in real life. In real life, you buy a house with an address or you buy a piece of land and the post office assigns it an address. In both cases, the physical location determines the address. But on the Internet, you can take your domain name and put it physically anywhere you want. The way you give your Internet "home" a physical existence is by "hosting" it. When you host a web site, that means finding a company to keep your web pages and to provide a web server that can give your pages to someone's browser.

As mentioned earlier, in order for people to browse to your web site, you need to have a web server that can feed your web pages to browsers, and that is what the web hosting company will provide for you.

The web hosting company will do some other things that are necessary for your web site to be available.

1. The company will give you an IP address. The IP address is what computers on the Internet will recognize as your domain's physical location. You normally don't need to worry about IP addresses, but the computers on the Internet do.
2. The company will provide one or two domain name servers (DNS's) that translate your domain name into the particular computer where your web site is located.
3. The web hosting company will contact the company that keeps the master list of all the domain names and give them your IP address and the DNS information.

Your web hosting company will take care of telling the company you registered your domain name with (for example, 000domains.com) that you have an IP address now (#3 above). But this can take several days. If you get impatient, you may be able to call the company you registered with and give them the IP information and the DNS host names, and they can take care of assigning your IP to your address. They may also say something like, "Your domain name will be up in about 24 hours after the DNS changes get propagated." This confusing statement simply means that your domain name and its physical location will be passed around the world, so that anyone, anywhere on the Internet, will be able to browse to your domain and see all the great stuff you're providing. Amazing, isn't it?

Now for some specifics. All web hosting companies will give you disk space and will transfer your files to browsers. But not all companies will give you the same amount of these resources for the same price. In addition, there are other options that you may want depending upon what your web site is going to do.

1. Amount of disk space

2. Amount of data transfer per day
3. Ability to run scripts
4. SSI – very strongly recommended
5. SSL
6. Customer support
7. Utilities for managing your web site

If you are going to have a big site with a lot of graphics, or if you will have thousands of users that will store information on your site (like registrations), you may need a lot of disk space. If you aren't, you probably won't need more than 20 MB.

Data transfer amount simply means the number of bytes of information that the web server hands out to all the browsers coming to your site. Again, if you are have a highly popular site with a lot of graphics (especially photographs) that will be downloaded, you will need a higher data transfer limit. My web host, Virtualis, has a great limit – 1 GB per day for most of its hosting options. I haven't hit that limit yet. It's nice to not have to worry about it, too.

The ability to run scripts (in particular, Perl scripts in a cgi-bin) is necessary if you want to do a lot of interactive stuff on your site. I'll talk about what a script is, what Perl is, and what a cgi-bin is later. Most of the freebie web hosting sites don't allow you to run Perl scripts, but some do. (Those that do may require you to run their ads on your site.) Normally when you sign up with a regular web hosting company, it is a given that you'll be able to run scripts, but just make sure.

SSI means "server-side includes" and they can simplify the maintenance of your web site. More on that later. It's a good thing if your web server allows SSI. Some of the scripts that are discussed in Part 2 work best with SSI.

SSL means "secure socket layer." This is necessary if you are going to be handling credit card processing on your site (as opposed to using a third party). Also, if you are going to accept personal information from your users (like SSNs) you need to have a secure way to transfer the information. And a secure place to store it. Security and credit card processing are advanced topics that will be covered in Volume 2.

Customer support is critical. If you are having a problem with your web site, your users will be having a problem, too. Users are not tolerant of problems and delays; it is too easy to just click off to another site. Therefore, you need a responsive web hosting company that will solve your problems quickly (like Virtualis). I can't stress how important customer support is.

You should check out what utilities are available for managing your web site. You will need to be able to upload files, edit files on your site, delete files, create new directories, check your site's statistics, etc. Hopefully, your web host will provide you with an easy

browser interface that allows you to perform these tasks. See Appendix A for an example using my web hosting company, Virtualis.

You may want to print out this page and the next or you may want to copy the upcoming questions into a file. Then make a note of the answers. When you go through the scripts in Part 2, you will need to know the answers to these questions. If you have a copy of the answers handy, it will be easier to follow along with the script examples when you try them out.

Questions to ask:

1. What is the directory path to Perl? (Stay tuned for a discussion of Perl.)
2. SSI capable? If so, what are the file extensions for
 - a. the HTML page and
 - b. for included text file? (More on SSI in a moment.)
3. If I overflow my disk or transfer limits, how will I be charged?
4. What is my cgi-bin directory path? (More on cgi-bin later.)
5. What is the URL path to my cgi-bin?
6. What is my web documents root directory? (See below.)
7. What is the URL path to my documents root directory?
8. What should the filename of my home page be? (Often index.html.)
9. In what directory or directories are my log files (particularly the server error log file) kept?
10. What is my username and password for my account on the web host computer?
11. What utility is provided for transferring/uploading/publishing files and setting file permissions?
12. What is my mail server program? (For example: /usr/lib/sendmail -t)
13. What is my FTP address? (You will need this if you do not use your web host's file transfer utility in question #11.)
14. When referring to my site, can I enter just sitename.com (or sitename.org, or sitename.net) or do I have to preface it with www?
15. What is my IP address? (You may need this for configuring some of the scripts.)

When you sign up for web hosting services, you may be given an account on the machine that hosts your domain (question #10). If so, make a note of the account information.

When you select a web hosting company, make sure they either send you the answers to the above questions in an introductory email, or send the support department an email asking those questions. You will need the answers to most of these questions in Part 2.

Programs

What the heck is a computer program anyway? It is a series of instructions that tell the computer to do something. Programs are written in computer languages like Perl, JavaScript, and Java. The computer languages have special terms and conventions that they use. What you need to know about these special terms and conventions will be presented. (Fortunately, you don't really need to know that much.)

Computer languages are actually there for people to use. The computer doesn't understand the computer language as it appears to a person! The reason is because a computer only understands numbers – technically only 0 and 1. Everything on a computer ultimately gets translated down to a sequence of 0's and 1's. But humans don't like looking at long strings of numbers consisting of 0's and 1's. Therefore, computer languages were developed so that people can write programs in these languages rather than in 0's and 1's. Along with the computer languages are programs that do the translation from the text the human works with down to the sequence of 0's and 1's.

There are two basic kinds of computer programs – scripts and programs (proper). The difference has to do how the translation down to 0's and 1's occurs. Basically, with a script, each time the script is run the translation happens. With programs (proper), the translation is done once in advance through a process called compilation. Compiling a program creates a separate file that is not human-readable, but that is the file that will get used when the program is executed by the computer. There are reasons for having scripts and programs, but that doesn't concern us here. All you need to know is that Perl and JavaScript programs are scripts, and you will hear them referred to as scripts rather than as programs (in most situations).

Variables

Computer languages use things called variables. You need to know about variables because you'll be working with them when you set up scripts to run on your web site. Variables are containers that can hold information, like a jar can contain something. Variables also have names, rather like a label on the jar. You use a variable's name to refer to it. An example variable in Perl would be

`$site_title`

The name of the variable is `$site_title`. (In Perl the `$` is part of the variable's name.) You can put something in the variable with an equals sign like so:

`$site_title = "Crazy for Pets";`

The information, or value, I stuck in the variable is the sequence of words Crazy for Pets.

Affiliate Programs

An affiliate program is a contractual arrangement between you and another organization in which you agree to sell or promote the other organization's products and/or services on your site in exchange for some benefit, usually a commission on the sales. There are numerous affiliate programs out there. The best thing for you to do is visit some of the sites that provide overviews of affiliate programs. I'll get to those in a moment.

Why become an affiliate?

1. Add additional features to your site by offering products for sale without having to worry about handling the orders and shipping yourself.
2. Make commissions from sales.

General recommendations for incorporating an affiliate program into your site.

1. Feature specific products.
2. Rotate featured items frequently. You will see how to set up a script so that you can feature a different product each time the page is loaded (RandomPicker).
3. Join programs that relate to the content and/or purpose of your site.
4. Don't try to join dozens of affiliate programs in the hopes of making money through the more-is-better approach. Pick a few good programs that provide products or services appropriate for your site.
5. Work the product (or service) into the content of site, for example, a product review or an article. Keep a link to the product near the content.
6. Build traffic to your site. You will need to have good traffic levels (500 or more visitors a day) to make any money at all. You may get 1% of your visitors clicking on your affiliate links, and only some of them will actually buy something. So be sure to promote your site.
7. Choose higher commission percentages on higher priced goods if those goods relate to the content and purpose of your site. Higher commissions on expensive products will obviously make you more money than lower commissions or lower priced goods.

The primary downside to most affiliate programs is that visitors leave your site when they click on the affiliate link. There are some exceptions to this rule that you'll see in Volume 2. You can also use frames to prevent your visitors from completely losing touch with your site when they click on a link. I'll talk about frames in Volume 2.

The affiliate programs will identify what types of affiliates can join the program. There might be a traffic minimum requirement, for example, that your site must meet before joining. Or, the affiliate might not accept a site that features adult content.

One thing you want to do is make sure you join a reputable program – one that delivers a quality product or service on time to its customers, that keeps accurate records, and pays you your commission on the agreed times. (The contract will specify how often checks will be sent and what minimum amount you need to earn in commissions before you get paid.)

You may also want to consider if the affiliate program is managed by a third-party like Reporting.net. These third-parties handle signing you up as an affiliate and tracking your sales. You can sign up with multiple affiliates, and the third-party will combine your sales. They ultimately send you the check, too. Again, choose reputable third-parties (Reporting.net or Clickbank, for example).

One of the best sites that lists affiliate programs is <http://www.refer-it.com>. In addition to identifying programs that are available and what the requirements are for joining, the site also rates the affiliate programs. Please spend some time reviewing what is on Refer-It.com before you sign-up with an affiliate program.

When you go to a site like Refer-It.com, you will see categories listed, like books, coffee, cosmetics, health, etc. Clicking on a topic will take you to a list of the programs available for that area. Then you can click on the link for a given program and read about it. If you like it, you can join the program.

Joining a program

When you join a program you

1. Read and accept the contractual agreement.
2. Create an account with the affiliate or with the third-party (remember to record the URL, your username, and possibly your password).
3. Read the affiliate's pages devoted to frequently-asked questions, helpful information about affiliate programs and being successful, and how to manage your affiliate account.
4. Create your links.
5. Add links to your HTML.

The affiliate (or the third-party) will have a way to generate or determine what links to put in your HTML code. You'll need to add those links to your pages so your visitors can click on them, go to the affiliate's site, and hopefully buy something so you'll make a commission. Sometimes you can only get a link to the affiliate site (like to Pets.com) as a whole. Sometimes you can get a link to an individual product as with books on Amazon.com.

Clickbank's links are short and make a good quick example. Clickbank is a third-party who provides many affiliates from which you may choose.

```
<a href="http://hop.clickbank.net/hop.cgi?XYZ/ABC">Great Place</a>
```

This example shows the format for Clickbank links. The real link has my affiliate ID where XYZ is and the affiliate ID for the particular company where ABC is. Ideally, the link should be put into context in a way that makes people want to buy the product. For example, you could write an article about why your puppy stopped chewing your shoes as soon as you gave him “chew-me bones”, then have a link off the product (or its picture) to the affiliate site where the product is sold.

Banner Exchanges

A banner exchange is a group of web sites that agree to show each other's banners on their web sites. The exchanges are handled by a third-party that arranges for the sharing of the banners. If you want to participate in the banner exchange you need to follow a few steps.

1. Go to the third-party banner exchange site. (See ebook for a list of some sites.)
2. You create an account for your web site by entering a login and password. With some exchanges, you will need a different account for each different banner that you want to have in the exchange at one time. Some banner exchange programs let you have more than one banner going at one time for a given account. With LinkExchange you can have different banners for separate web sites under the same account.
3. Read and agree to the contract.
4. Submit banner graphic.
5. Copy the HTML code for the banner exchange into the web page where you want the other site's banners to appear. You can also use a banner rotator program to serve the banners. I'll discuss that cryptic sentence in detail in Part 2.
6. Depending upon the exchange, you may be able to target certain types of web sites for your banner to appear on, and you may be able to select the type of web sites that can show banners on your site.
7. Periodically check your account status to see how many banner impressions you have earned for your banner and how many times it has been shown on the other sites. Check your click-through rate (CTR). CTR means the percentage of people who actually click on your banner versus the number of impressions the banner has had.

A banner impression (or exposure) means putting your banner up on a web site one time. In banner exchanges you earn impressions by showing the other members' banners on your site. With some exchanges you can earn extra impressions by showing other members' banner on your site **and** having a user **click** on that banner.

Unfortunately, there aren't any exchanges where you get an impression for every time you show a banner on your site. Normally, you get one exposure for every two impressions of your site. Some programs give you two impressions for every three impressions. In the exchanges, you can normally purchase additional impressions. There may also be ways of earning additional exposures, like by joining an affiliate of the banner exchange site. Each banner exchange site will describe its promotional and advertising opportunities.

As with everything else on the web, you need to head for the reputable sites. Here is a list of banner exchange sites that do what they say they will. But you should still check your account and make sure that your banner is getting all the impressions it is supposed to.

Part 2. The Scripts

The scripts in the following pages were selected for two main reasons: 1) they provide some useful or fun features that you can add to your web site easily, and 2) installing and using these scripts will give you the foundation you need to work with more advanced scripts and scripts that I don't discuss here.

In each category below, there are other scripts that are equally good that I did not choose. After you install and work with these scripts, please revisit the CGI-Resource Index, the JavaScript Source, and the Java Boutique to review other, similar scripts that may be more to your liking. (And check out the numerous scripts that I did not have time or space to discuss.)

📌 Suggestion: in Part 1 I recommended that you keep a record of the affiliate and other programs that you join and the scripts that you set up. Make a note of the name of each script, the URL where you got it, the directories where you put the files, the date installed, and any username and password needed for administration. A month or two later you will be glad you did.

📌 Tip: you should bookmark your script URLs for easy reference.

📌 Another suggestion: your web host will back up your files on a regular basis, but you should also make your own backups. In the beginning, you may only need to copy your configured and customized files to a floppy disk (later, you may need to get a tape backup system). Label each disk clearly and keep them safe. If the worst happens and you lose your disk drive or your web host gets hacked, you will have your scripts in a safe place, ready to re-install. You should also do this with data files, graphical images, and your "diaries".

📌 Note: in the upcoming sections I include quite a bit of code. The code is there for your reference only – you do not have to read it (reading code is usually an eye-glazing experience at best!) and understand it. Use it to compare with the script files that you will be editing and look for the bolded sections where you need to make changes or add something.

📌 Get your answers to the questions for your web host from Part 1. You will need many of the answers when you set up the scripts.

📌 If, when you go to download a file the browser tries to open the file, click on the link with your right mouse button and select "Save Target As" or "Save Link As".

Cliff's Banner Rotator Version 2.51

A banner rotator program allows you to show different banners in the same location on your web page. Each time the page is loaded, the script randomly chooses a banner from a list that you set up and displays the chosen banner in the spot on your page that you select. This program is by Shaven Ferret.

Go to <http://www.crazyforlife.com> and click reload or refresh several times and see what banners show up in the upper left corner. The banner selection is done using Cliff's Banner Rotator. You may get the same banner a few times in a row, but that's OK. The script is just choosing one banner randomly, so you sometimes get the one you just saw.

A banner rotator script is a very useful script to install on your site if you are going to be showing more than one banner. It allows you to devote just one section of your page to a banner, but still have different banners appear. Depending upon how you configure the script, you can give all banners an equal chance or allow some banners to get shown more often.

This script is also a gentle introduction to installing and configuring Perl scripts because there are only two files to deal with and only a couple of edits to make. But I will go through some steps that are common to setting up more complex scripts, so this exercise is also good preparation for using more complicated scripts.

 Note: this script requires SSI capability.

 Note: with scripts, you may find it easier to edit them on your PC or Mac and upload (or publish) the configured files. Or you may prefer to upload the files first, and then edit them on your web host machine. Many people like to make their edits on their PC or Mac, so in the steps I will configure the scripts first and then upload and install them.

Download

1. Go to the CGI-Resource Index (see Section "Perl Scripts" under "Online Resources" in Part 1) at <http://www.cgi-resources.com>.
2. Click on Programs and Scripts, then Perl, then Advertisements.
3. Scroll down and click on Cliff's Banner Rotator. (The name says version 1.0 here, but 2.5.1 when you download it as of April 2000.)
4. On the script's page you will find a download link; click on it to bring the ZIP file to your hard drive.
5. Create a separate directory and unzip the files to that directory.

You will have two scripts, ads.cgi and ad-admin.cgi. ads.cgi is the script that runs when your web page is loaded. The other script, ad-admin.cgi, is the one you use to administer your banners – adding new banners to the rotation, editing banners, and deleting banners from the rotation.

 Note: in this example, each script has just one file associated with it. But sometimes, a single script is split up across several files. There are several reasons for using multiple files for one script; one reason is to keep the individual files relatively small and easy to edit.

Configure

Edit ads.cgi in a text editor and do the following.

1. Check the Perl path at the top of the file. It may look like this:

```
#!/usr/bin/perl
```

or something similar. If your web host is running the NT operating system, you can skip this step. But if your host is running UNIX, then insert your system's Perl path after the #! (The path is the answer to question #1 in Part 1.) If your path is /usr/sbin/perl, the line will look like:

```
#!/usr/sbin/perl
```

Don't delete the #! And don't put any punctuation after perl.

2. Now set the \$datadir variable for your system. Look for this line:

```
$datadir = "ads";
```

and replace it with the directory where you want the data files kept.

In the upcoming Install step, I recommend that you create a separate subdirectory for each script's **data** files under your web documents root directory. (Your web document roots directory is the answer to question #6.) In this example, let's say the web documents root directory is /usr/myacct/html/sitename. Therefore, the ads directory will be /usr/myacct/html/sitename/ads.

Some people prefer to leave each script's data files with the scripts in the cgi-bin area. If you would rather do that, you can, but for this example, just follow along with what I'm doing.

Replace \$datadir so it looks like

```
$datadir = "/usr/myacct/html/sitename/ads";
```

substituting your web documents root directory for /usr/myacct/html/sitename.

🚩 Important: don't remove the double quotes or the semicolon. Do not put a slash after ads.

Save ads.cgi. Now edit ad-admin.cgi in a text editor.

1. Check the Perl path in this file and make the same modifications you made to ads.cgi.
2. Replace \$datadir with what you used in ads.cgi
3. Scroll down and replace

```
$password = "shavenferret.com";
```

with the word that you want to make your password. For this example, I'll use element3.

```
$password = "element3";
```

🚩 Again, don't remove the double quotes or the semicolon.

Save ad-admin.cgi and remember your password. (Now is the time to get out the script diary.)

Install

Now go to your web host machine and move to the cgi-bin directory. I recommend that you create a separate subdirectory for each of your scripts rather than putting them all in one directory. In the scripts that I look at in this ebook, I'll create the subdirectories under the cgi-bin directory.

1. In your cgi-bin directory, create a subdirectory called banner_rotator.
2. Upload/transfer/publish ads.cgi and ad-admin.cgi to the banner_rotator sub-directory. (I discussed uploading files in Section "Uploading files" in Part 1). I suggest that you use whatever mechanism your web host has set up for handling files.
3. `chmod 755 ads.cgi` and `ad-admin.cgi`. Remember the discussion of `chmod` in Part 1? This word means set permission. Both these script files need to be set so that all users can execute the scripts. You need to set the permissions this way because the web server is the one that will be accessing the script on your behalf. If you got the answer to question #11 in Part 1, you will know how to do this with your web host. 755 means you can read, write and execute the script; all other users can read and execute it.
4. Now go to your web documents root directory, and create the subdirectory ads that I mentioned a moment ago. In my example, the directory would be `/usr/myacct/html/sitename/ads`.
5. `chmod 777 ads`. This statement means give read, write, and execute privileges to all users for this directory.

There is no customization for these scripts, because there is no need to modify how the ad-admin.cgi script works, and ads.cgi will place the banner where you tell it to in your HTML page with an SSI call. Refer to the answer to question #2 in Part 1 to see what the format is for the SSI call to execute a script on your web host.

1. Open the HTML file that you want the banners to appear in. Make sure your HTML file has the proper extension to enable SSI calls. (That extension is .html on my web host; question #2a.)
2. Find the part of the page where you want the banner, and enter the SSI call. Use the URL path to the ads.cgi script.

Here is the HTML snippet from the file for Crazy for Life's home page.

```
<BODY>  
<!--#exec cgi="/cgi-bin/banner_rotator/ads.cgi" -->
```

SSI Call for Executing a Perl Script

When the page is loaded, this statement causes the ads.cgi script to execute and a banner ad placed where the statement appears in the web page. In this example, the banner will be at the top of the page because it is the first element after the <BODY> tag.

Administering the Banner Rotator

Now it's time to talk about how to add banners. Point your browser at the ad-admin.cgi script. For example, enter a URL that looks something like this:

http://www.mysite.com/cgi-bin/banner_rotator/ad-admin.cgi

You will see a page that has the following login box.

Password?



A login box consisting of a rectangular text input field with a thin border, and a small rectangular button labeled "Enter" positioned directly below the input field.

Login Page for the Banner Rotator

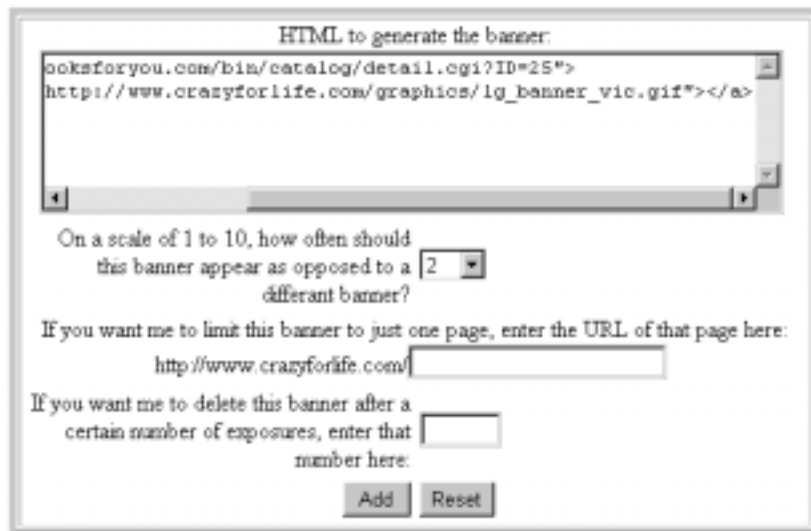
Enter the password that you put in ad-admin.cgi. In our example it is element3.

Now you will get a screen that allows you to enter the banner information. You need to first build a banner URL or link. If you join a banner rotator program or an affiliate

program, they will give you a way to build links. When you build a link, it will be produced for you on a page in your browser. Use the mouse to highlight the text, then copy it. You can then paste the link right into the Banner Rotator. Be sure not to modify any of your banner exchange or affiliate links or they may not work properly.

I created and copied such a link at eBooksforYou and pasted it into my banner rotator. Here is what the screen looks like.

Add a banner



The screenshot shows a web form titled "HTML to generate the banner:". The form contains a text area with the following HTML code: `ooksforyou.com/bin/catalog/detail.cgi?ID=25">
https://www.crazyforlife.com/graphics/lg_banner_vic.gif">`. Below the text area, there is a question: "On a scale of 1 to 10, how often should this banner appear as opposed to a different banner?" with a dropdown menu showing the number "2". Below this, there is a question: "If you want me to limit this banner to just one page, enter the URL of that page here:" followed by a text input field containing "http://www.crazyforlife.com/". Below that, there is a question: "If you want me to delete this banner after a certain number of exposures, enter that number here:" followed by an empty text input field. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: "Add" and "Reset".

The Banner Rotator's Add Section

As you can see, you paste your link text into the text box. Your link will contain a sometimes-lengthy A HREF tag and an image. The image for the above banner is lg_banner_vic.gif. You can use either GIF or JPG files.

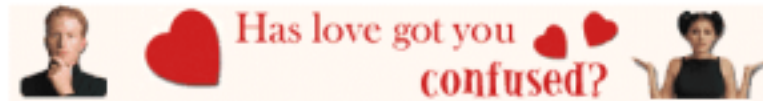
If you want the banner to appear more often than other banners, you can set a different number. This example shows the number 2. If you only want to show this banner on one page on your site, enter the rest of the URL for that page. This feature allows you to keep a collection of banners, use this one script on all your pages, but not show all of the banners on all of your pages.

If you want to delete the banner after a certain number of uses (that is, exposures or impressions), enter that number in the last box.

When you are ready click Add. You will be taken to a screen that shows the banner you entered, or the broken link symbol if you have the URL for the image wrong.

Added

The banner has been added. It will look like this:



Click to go back.

Banner Added!

Click this button to go back. You will see your banner listed **after** the Delete/Edit section. The first banner you add will be at the top of the list, and the others will follow after; each one will have its own box where you can edit the banner.

```
<a href="http://www.crazyforCOWS.com">  
<img src="http://www.crazyforCOWS.com/crazyforCOWS/graphics
```

Exposures:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how often should this banner appear as opposed to other banners?

If you want me to limit this banner to just one page, enter that page's URL here:

If you want me to delete this banner after a certain number of exposures, enter that number here:

What should I do?

A Banner's Edit/Delete Box

Notice the box of information that appears under the banner image. You can see how many exposures the banner has had (meaning the number of times it has been shown). You also have a pull-down menu that allows you to either edit the banner or delete it. There is a Do it button that will either perform the edit or the deletion, depending upon

what you've asked it to do. You can edit or delete one banner at a time. When you click a Do it button, the action will be performed for that banner only.

You can see live examples of using the Banner Rotator at other sites besides Crazy for Life. <http://www.crazyforkitties.com>, <http://www.crazyfordogs.com>, <http://www.crazyforcows.com>, and <http://www.hertechnology.com> all have banners served with this script.



PS. The graphics used at the end of some of the chapters are from <http://www.artbycheryl.com>.