

Actinic Web Design & Ecommerce Report 2007

Published June 2007

Table of contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Summary	4
2.1.	Clients and charges	4
2.2.	Web site design and tools	4
2.3.	Ecommerce	4
3.	Web designers and their clients	5
3.1.	Clients and charges	5
3.2.	Site building	5
4.	Web site design and tools	6
4.1.	Web design tools	6
4.2.	Ecommerce tools	6
4.3.	Server preferences	6
5.	Ecommerce	7
5.1.	Demand	7
5.2.	Integration	7
5.3.	Latest Developments	7

1. Introduction

This document comprises a summary and data from the Web Design & Ecommerce Survey commissioned by Actinic, to monitor web site-building and ecommerce trends among web designers.

The research was based on interviews conducted in early 2007 with a random sample of 75 web design companies selected from an independent database. All the companies interviewed had built at least one ecommerce site for a client, but the sample was not selected on that basis.

The research was conducted by pfa Research, www.pfa-research.com

2. Summary

2.1. Clients and charges

- **Web designers are building more sites, and earning less for each.**
 - o The average number of sites built by each web design company grew from 22 in 2006, to 30 in 2007 – with no significant increase in the number of designers employed.
 - o The average amount charged per ecommerce site fell from £4,600 to £3,300.
- **The number of SMEs using the services of a web designer continues to grow.** 90% of web designers' clients are now companies with fewer than 50 employees, compared with 80% in 2006, and 75% three years ago.

2.2. Web site design and tools

- **Dreamweaver is still losing popularity**, in spite of Macromedia's takeover by Adobe. Only half of web designers now name it as their favourite tool for web site design.
- **Web designers appear to be diversifying in the tools they use**, making more use of open source tools and scripts, and doing more hand coding.
- **Web designers are largely satisfied with the ecommerce tools they currently use.**
- **Web designers' love affair with Linux continues.** Almost two-thirds said they preferred building online stores on Linux or UNIX servers.
- **Adoption of PHP rose to 63% of web designers.** Adoption of ASP/.Net fell to 25%.

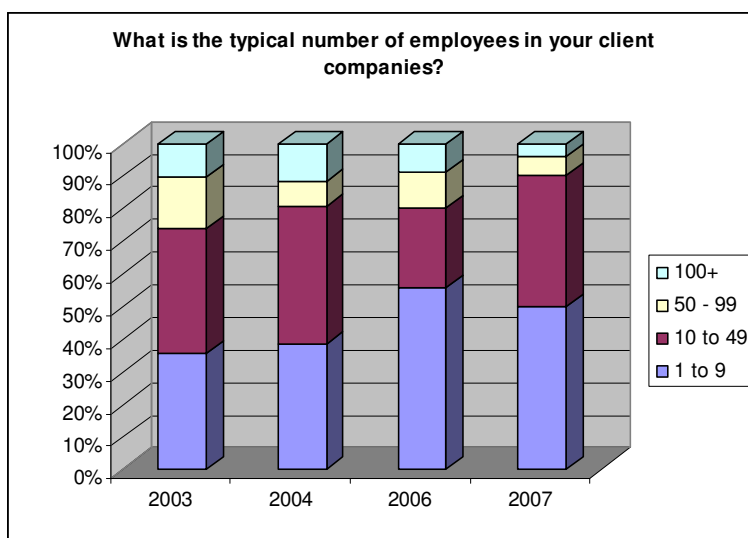
2.3. Ecommerce

- **Demand for ecommerce implementation has risen in line with the growing demand for web builds generally.**
- **The most commonly requested ecommerce site integration was with a payment gateway.** Other integrations sometimes requested were between the web site and a blog, accounts package, EPOS, affiliate schemes and databases.
- **New developments of most interest to web designers in 2007** were in the areas payment processing (18%) and coding (15%).

3. Web designers and their clients

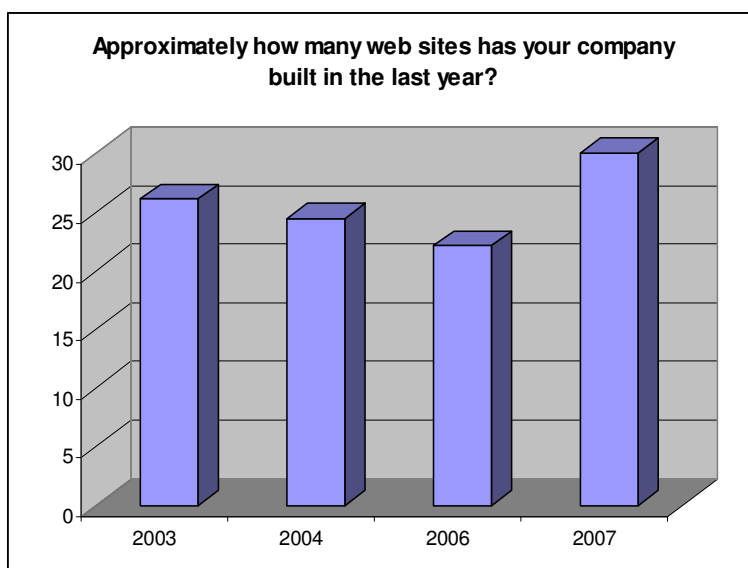
3.1. Clients and charges

- The number of SMEs using web designers continues to rise. Companies with less than 100 employees now represent 96% of web designers' client companies, and 90% of clients have less than 50 employees.
- The average price charged by web designers for deploying an ecommerce site was around £3,300.



3.2. Site building

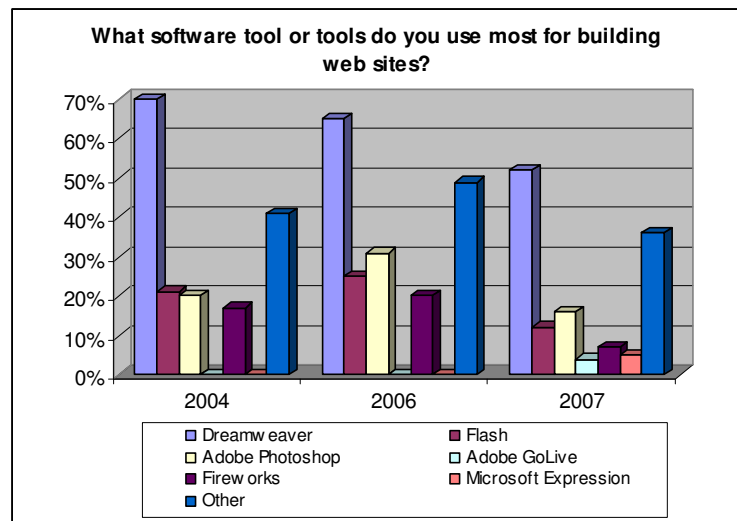
- The number of sites built by web designers rose from an average of 22 in 2006 to 30 in 2007.



4. Web site design and tools

4.1. Web design tools

- Dreamweaver continues to lose market share among professional web designers, but Microsoft Expression has also failed to make much impact.
- All the best-known tools seem to be losing ground. Likely reasons include:
 - Diversification into a wider range of tools.
 - Wider use of free / open source tools.
 - More use of hand coding.



4.2. Ecommerce tools

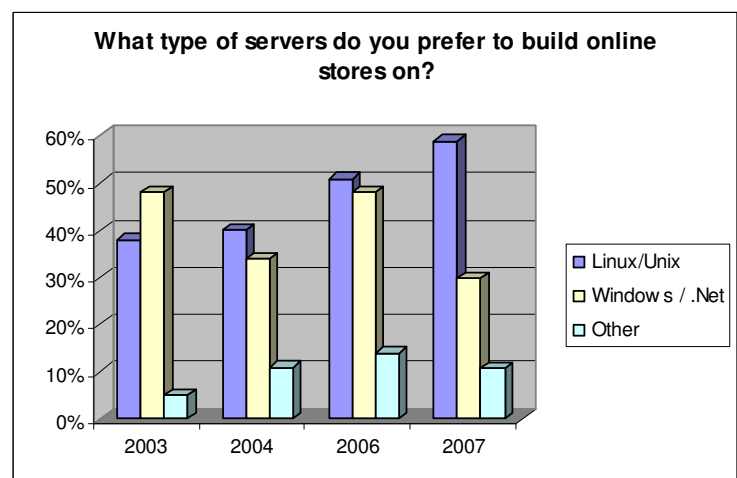
- Less than a third of ecommerce sites are built with a packaged solution.
- Only four out of ten web designers use an ecommerce package 'often', while six out of ten most often turn to hand coding and bespoke development.
- On average, designers rated their preferred ecommerce tool four out of five or higher on all points.

On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your preferred eCommerce tool for the following?

Cost	4.3
Flexibility	4.1
Functionality	4.3
Comprehensive support options	4.0
Security	4.5

4.3. Servers and scripts

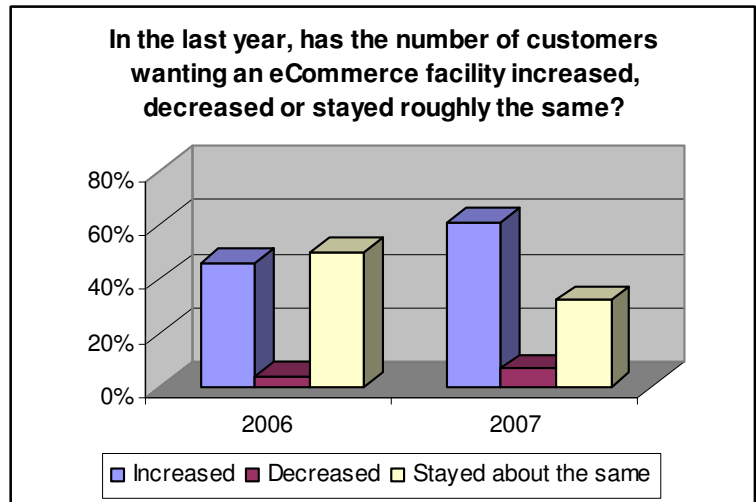
- More web designers expressed a preference for Linux / UNIX servers than in previous years, and their preference was stronger.
- Fewer designers expressed an equal preference for more than one platform.
- Adoption of PHP continues to grow, with 63% of designers using it.
- The proportion of designers programming in ASP/.Net fell to 25%.



5. Ecommerce

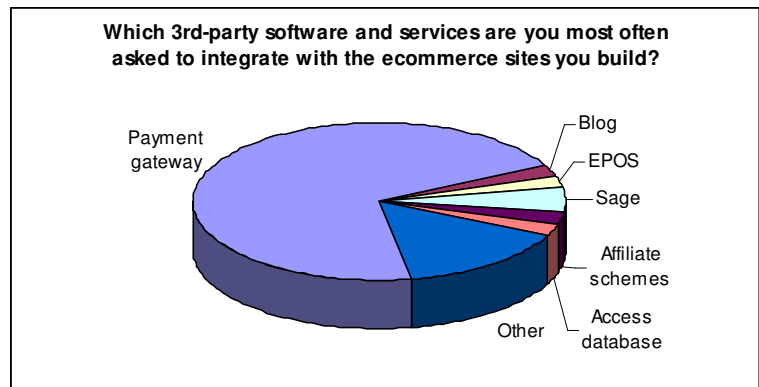
5.1. Demand

- The demand for ecommerce among web designers has risen by about the same proportion as the number of sites they build.
- The percentage of new sites enabled for ecommerce showed no significant change, at 27%.



5.2. Integration

- 62% of web designers said that the most frequently-requested integration was with a payment gateway.
- Other integrations cited were with accounting software, blogging software, EPOS, affiliate schemes and Access databases.



5.3. Latest Developments

- Almost one in five web designers thought the most interesting developments in 2007 were in the area of payment processing.
- Developments in coding, particularly AJAX, were the second most interesting.

