

CH-CH-CHANGES

BY LEIF WELLS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A lot has happened since our last issue. The Flex 4 SDK has been released. Flash Builder 4 has been released. Flash Catalyst has been released. Adobe Creative Suite 5 has been released. Steve Jobs lost his mind. HTML5 has been released, um...well, not yet. But a lot has happened.

And all this change has created a great deal of chaos. And with chaos comes indigestion, at least for me. But what I've learned from past experience is that with the chaos of change comes opportunity—plenty of opportunity. In this case we're talking about the opportunity to make your desktop and Web applications more maintainable, to make your workflow easier and better, to widen your toolset to assist you in designing and building better applications, and perhaps to find better platforms to develop for and not just the ones Steve says are “magical.”

All magical humor aside, times of change usually make a good time for all of us to take stock in our careers. Are we where we hoped we would be? Where are we on our five-year plan? Do we have the right skills for the short-term future? What is it going to take to be successful in 2015?

While you mull all the pros and cons of chaos and order imbalance, might I suggest that you take a look at this issue's articles. I think you'll be glad you did.

Want to improve your current Flex skills? Take a look at Peter Bells “Effective Flex Development” column featuring the topic of Continuous Integration. Or you could (or rather, should) read the always popular “Flick & Flack” column on the often problematic topic of embedded fonts. (Personal Note: I've lost hair fighting with fonts in Flex. Save your own hair by reading this article.)

Looking to gain some new skills? How about Pixel Bender? Ryan Taylor tells us all about “Using Pixel Bender to Create Custom Filters”. Or what about learning about the Dreamsocket ActionScript Media Framework from its creator, Kenny Bunch? Kenny sets the bar when it comes to delivering all types of media to the world. Have you heard about the new text engine in Flash Player 10? Then you need to read Mihai Corlan's “Eight Things You Should Know About the Text Layout Framework” so you can leverage that new engine.

Or might you be more interested in gaining some new server-side skills? Well, take a look at Andrew Powell and Dan Orlando's “Integrating Flex with Java Using Spring and BlazeDS” and you'll be getting that jumpstart you need. Oh, we're also showing some ColdFusion love, too; Robi Sen shows us the “Flash Builder 4 Data-Centric Features for ColdFusion Developers”.

Feeling more like reading a human interest story? How about “Ten Questions with Adobe's Matt Chotin”? He's human and interesting. And he has some great insights into the Flex SDK's development and history.

Finally, some knot-head named Leif blathers on about how much he loves Flex 4 in the aptly named article “Flex 4 is here and I love it.”

Enjoy the issue.

Leif Wells

Flex Authority, Editor-in-Chief

LEIF WELLS has over fifteen years of practical experience in Adobe Director, Flash and Flex applications, and extensive experience with ActionScript, ColdFusion, XHTML and CSS. Leif is a regular guest lecturer for user groups in Atlanta and has co-authored several Flash and Director technology publications. In his spare time, he manages the Adobe User Group of Atlanta and the Adobe Flash Platform User Group of Atlanta. Leif is a regular panelist on the O’Reilly’s Inside-RIA Summer of Flash podcast.

