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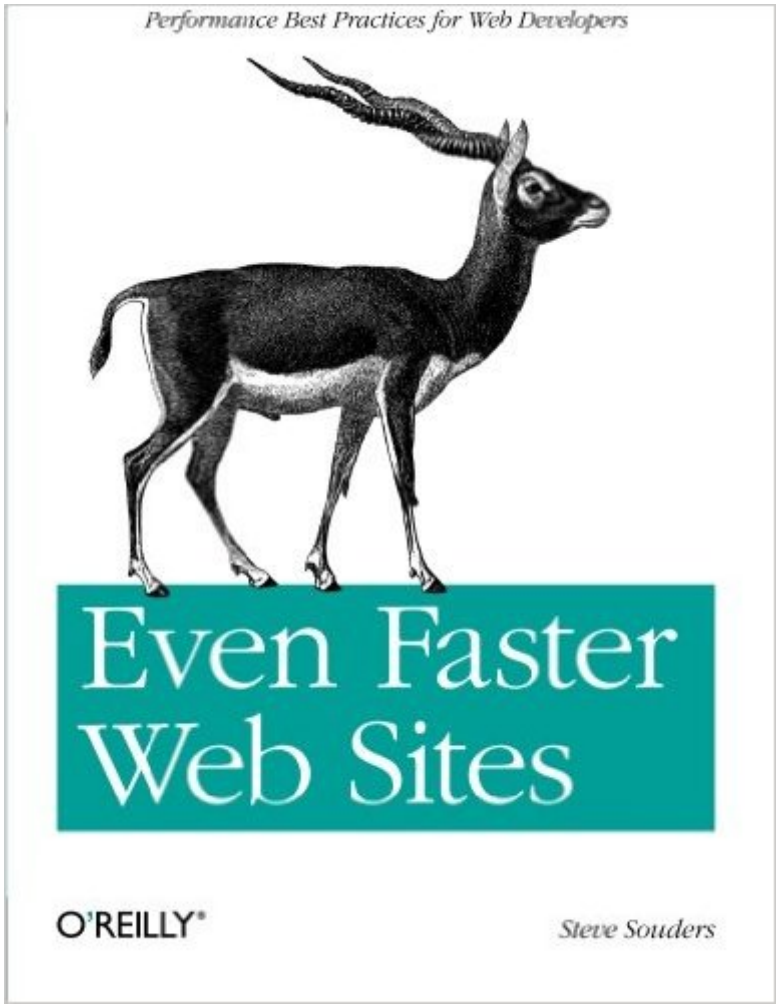
Even Faster Web Sites: Performance Best Practices For Web Developers



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Synopsis

Performance is critical to the success of any web site, and yet today's web applications push browsers to their limits with increasing amounts of rich content and heavy use of Ajax. In this book, Steve Souders, web performance evangelist at Google and former Chief Performance Yahoo!, provides valuable techniques to help you optimize your site's performance. Souders' previous book, the bestselling High Performance Web Sites, shocked the web development world by revealing that 80% of the time it takes for a web page to load is on the client side. In Even Faster Web Sites, Souders and eight expert contributors provide best practices and pragmatic advice for improving your site's performance in three critical categories: JavaScript--Get advice for understanding Ajax performance, writing efficient JavaScript, creating responsive applications, loading scripts without blocking other components, and more. Network--Learn to share resources across multiple domains, reduce image size without loss of quality, and use chunked encoding to render pages faster. Browser--Discover alternatives to iframes, how to simplify CSS selectors, and other techniques. Speed is essential for today's rich media web sites and Web 2.0 applications. With this book, you'll learn how to shave precious seconds off your sites' load times and make them respond even faster. This book contains six guest chapters contributed by Dion Almaer, Doug Crockford, Ben Galbraith, Tony Gentilcore, Dylan Schiemann, Stoyan Stefanov, Nicole Sullivan, and Nicholas C. Zakas.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is a follow-on to Steve Souder's first book entitled "High Performance Web Sites".

Whereas the first book was authored entirely by Steve Souder, this newer book contains chapters authored by other experts in Javascript, Ajax, and/or Network Performance. Comparatively speaking, I tend to think of the performance tuning techniques discussed in the first book as all relatively straightforward to implement, while those in this newer book as ranging from some that are relatively straightforward to implement (e.g., how to write efficient Javascript and CSS Selector code, how to optimize image sizes, and how to flush documents early to trigger initial web page rendering as soon as possible), to others that tend to be trickier to implement, involving either the use of:* lesser known http features (e.g., chunked encoding for incremental page rendering or low-latency data transfers from server to browser in support of near-realtime applications such as chat, stock quotes, etc), or* still evolving technologies (e.g., Google GEAR or Web Worker API for overcoming Javascript's single-threadedness to get more concurrent work done), or* not yet publicly released technologies (e.g., Microsoft Research's Doloto system that facilitates the "splitting and packaging" of a Javascript-intensive Web Application into a quick-loading initial component or cluster that enables early page rendering, and supporting payloads that are loaded more lazily or on-demand).

Today's Web developer knows that the speed of one's site is an important measure to its overall success, and Steve Souders' previous book, /High Performance Web Sites/ (O'Reilly), laid out what seemed to be every way to achieve good performance gains without the sacrifice of functionality or aesthetics. When I began reading Souders' /Even Faster Web Sites/, I therefore wondered how he could possibly demonstrate fresh ways to achieve performance gains without regurgitating the content of his previous book. What I discovered as I read /Even Faster Web Sites/ was it presented all new best practices for making your web sites "leaner and meaner" without repeating the content of his last book./Even Faster Web Sites/ takes the latest techniques available to developers and organizes them into three performance areas: JavaScript, network, and browser. Though I believe Souder knows what he is talking about regarding web site performance, I found it refreshing this time around that he had the contributions of other experts in the field to give their ideas on performance gains in these areas.I thought the chapters on JavaScript, especially those discussing Ajax and asynchronous techniques, were well written and gave good, new best practices to trim time off the loading of content on a site. I also appreciated the chapter dealing with Comet, as these technologies are surely a driving force for future web applications, and having best practices early in their development will only help their progress. Of the two chapters on browser performance, I found the honesty of the discussion on the downsides of using iframes most helpful, especially when their

use was discussed as a viable technique for improving performance early in the book.

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