

NinedaysBlog

A blog about my mis-adventures in photography, web design, web development and so much more. The internet is for discovery and that is what I intend to do, discover and learn!

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Direct to Download Images and PDFs

At work one day we were discussing how one of our clients wanted people to be able to download images.

We set up the page where the thumbnails linked to the full size image.

That wasn't good enough.

Even with text that says: "*Right click to save*" or "*'File>Save As' to save*"

Still not good enough.

So I said to myself, Kyle...that's what I call myself.

Moving on. I knew that there was a PHP header that could be sent to force a PDF to download instead of opening so I hunted it down and sent it over to the developer on the project and suggested she try it with images and see how that worked.

Next thing I know she was sending me a Skype that it had worked, and that I was a genius. Far to brilliant to be this pretty. Some of that might be an over-exaggeration if not a blatant lie.

So I dug up the PHP to load a PDF for direct download

```
<?php
header('Content-Type:application/pdf');

header('Content-Disposition:attachment;filename=download_pdf.pdf');

readfile('original.pdf');
?>
```

And then modified it to do it with an image

```
<?php
header('Content-Type:image/jpeg');

header('Content-Disposition:attachment;filename=download_image.jpg');

readfile('original.jpg');
?>
```

Pretty neat. checkout the [demo](#).

This is also a great way to find the actual source of a file. If a user signs up through a form and after the form has processed and saved the data to the database this script target to a new window could call a file and the user would never know where the source came from.

Also great for allowing a logged in user to download files that are only accessible by themselves so they can't send the link inadvertently to another person. (*See below for further clarification*)

Reference

- [List of Mime Types](#)
- [Demo](#)

Update 11/18/2007 @ 6pm

In response to Sean's comment (which he further clarified) as:

How ever i don't think that the mention of a security solution is apt because it's trivial to look at what URL is being downloaded with no external applications.

I meant more of a solution for a web application where a user has to login in order to download documents. As long as the downloader script is checking for that session (or cookie) and redirects to the login screen if the user isn't logged in. That's when the ability to use the script and hide the source PDF (or any other file for that matter) for simple security solution would come into play.

About this entry

You're currently reading "Direct to Download Images and PDFs", an entry on Ninedays Blog

Published:

11.16.07 / 10am

Author:

[Terri Ann](#)

Category:

[Development](#), [Feature](#), [PHP](#), [Work](#)

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2 Responses

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1. [sean 11.17.07 / 3pm](#)

it's trivial to look at the download location from the download manager in firefox...

2. [Terri Ann 11.17.07 / 4pm](#)

@sean

I'm not sure I follow you. This has nothing to do with managing the client side of the download it has to do with how the server-side presents the files.

I wish you'd provided more detail in your response!

EDIT

[Clarification and my response here](#)

Have your say

XHTML: You can use these tags: `` `<abbr title="">` `<acronym title="">` `` `<blockquote cite="">` `<code>` `` `<i>` `<strike>` ``

Logged in as [Terri Ann](#). [Logout »](#)

Oh come on, you have *something* to say.

About

So I'm going to try and blog again. You know, stick with one blog tool and not quit halfway through a year? If I can control my BADD (Blogging Attention-Deficit Disorder) maybe I can keep this ball rolling.

So about me?

Yea about me. I'm 22, living in Central Massachusetts, from a brief stint just outside of Boston. Work as a web developer in Newton, freelance photographer. And by freelance I do me "hobbyist" but I'm working on that 😊

I've had ninedays.org for a number of years now, but it still has never felt like home. I'm really trying to get together what I want it all to be.

- [Blog](#)
- [Code Reference/Tutorials](#)
- [Photography Portfolio](#)
- [Web Development Portfolio](#)

- [Projects](#)

I'm not shooting for too much now am I? I really need to get this all together so I can continue on with my other tow projects. One is in partial development but has some major kinks that need to be worked out, and the other is a big tada list now. One day it will be a super-useful portal. I know it will!

Blogroll

- [CSS Beauty](#) - CSS Design, News, Jobs, Community, Web Standards
- [Fadtastic](#) - the multi author web design journal
- [Headsetoptions.org](#) - WordPress, Web Design, Blog, Etcetera
- [Jezebel](#) - Celebrity, Sex, Fashion for Women. Without Airbrushing
- [LifeClever ;-\)](#) - Tips for Design and Life
- [Nat Attack is the New BloG](#) - My Natalie has a blog. i <3 her!
- [Pearsonified](#) - Best Damn Blog on the Planet
- [Strobist](#) - Off camera lighting - your flash photography will never be the same again.
- [Warpspire](#) - Web, Design and Code Geekery

Recent Links

- [Art for Kupenda](#)
Art for charity, love the concept. A friend of mine is running the event and I will be contributing.
- [Full Moon Graphics](#)
I used this site long long ago when I knew nothing about web design and was always looking for "free graphics" for my website. Now that I know more, I realize she is a talented artist!
- [How To Create A Favicon](#)
Great and easy way to create a fav icon. And I feel so smart when I run programs through the command dialog.
- [85\\$ Tour of DC - Photo of the day](#)
Lining up cash with the buildings...what fun!
- [Orange's Unlimited Website](#)
One of the best flash websites I've ever seen. Truly inspirational to the unlimited possibilities of flash.
- [Urban Graphic Ltd.](#)
Interesting graphic design featured on this site. Very refined and lovely, but whimsical at the same time.
- [blik Race 'Ya](#)
Wall stickers that look like a lot of fun!
- [Dreams of Flying](#)
A fantastic photography experiment that appears to have children flying through the sky on amazing adventures.
- [More Recent Links](#)

Powered by [Hemingway Reloaded \(comfortably modified\)](#) flavored [Wordpress](#).

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