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WEB Q&A

Windowed and Windowless Elements, Cookie Characters, and More

[Edited by Nancy Michell](#)
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Q I have a windowless JavaScript menu that gets overshadowed by a window. How can I prevent this?

A All windowed elements paint themselves on top of all windowless elements in their container. However, windowed elements do follow the z-index attribute with respect to each other, just as windowless elements follow the z-index attribute with respect to each other. See [How the Z-index Attribute Works for HTML Elements](#) for more on how this works.

So, one way to deal with this is to convert the menu to a DHTML scriptlet and wrap it into a floating <DIV>, like so:

```
<div id='ctl100_MasterContentplaceholder_newdate_div'
      style='position: absolute;display:inline;z-index:100;' >
  <OBJECT ID='ctl100_MasterContentplaceholder_newdate_ok'
    DATA='/aspnet_client/esupplyctl/ClientTools2.htm'
    TYPE='text/x-scriptlet' >
  </OBJECT>
</div>
```

An overview of scriptlets is available at [Introduction to Scriptlets](#). Plus, the Dino Esposito (Wrox, 1998) has lots of information on creating DHTML scriptlets and details on how to do this.

Another option is to use window.createPopup for your menu, which is also supported in Internet Explorer. You can use an HTML Component (HTC) and an XML file defining the menu.

Q I have been getting the following cookie-related error from an ASP.NET page: "dangerous Request.Cookies value was detected from the client: (W0073355_ID="...icVWBPvb9OnploMFqAQ==")".

It looks like some combination of characters is raising this exception. How can I change this behavior? There is no need to flag this cookie since there isn't any text after the equals sign.



A As you know, this is a security feature designed to prevent script from being rendered in an HTML form. Although none of the base 64 characters are invalid in a cookie combination that are not acceptable, including:

- <{a-z}
- <!
- expression(
- on{a-z}* =
- &#
- script{space}*.

If the `HttpRequestValidationException` is being raised, then the only way to disable request validation for the pages using those cookies. However, if you do disable validation, it is very important that you perform your own validation of any user. The request validation feature, which was introduced in ASP.NET 1.1, is a line of defense against cross-site scripting attacks. Without such validation, the application is vulnerable to such attacks.

Q When I switch from ASP to ASP.NET does that mean I must move to a three-tier architecture?

A There aren't any changes that would limit the number of tiers in your ASP.NET application. It's really a design decision. So no, switching to ASP.NET does not mean that a three-tier application must be turned into a two-tier version.

Actually, ASP.NET allows more tiers because you can separate the presentation layer completely from the page logic (a .cs or a compiled class in a .dll). At that point you can put your business logic in your .dll in the bin folder, or in another separate database procedures in SQL Server™. You can have as many tiers as you want.

Note that you may want to make sure that you're clear on whether you're talking about logical tiers, however. You can have a three-tier logical architecture while using a two-tier physical architecture (in order to avoid the cost of cross-process calls between business tiers). This is true for both ASP and ASP.NET, but it's an important distinction that is sometimes lost when discussing *n*-tier architecture.

Q I have a query that returns data to a DataGrid depending upon which item is selected in the dropdown lists. The user can then page through the DataGrid to find the information they want.

The problem is that when the user clicks on a row in the DataGrid it brings up a new page. When she clicks to return to the page with the DataGrid, the dropdowns are in their original state and the user must re-query, which I don't want her to have to do.

A The best way to deal with multiple queries to the same data is to cache the data in the ASP.NET cache. You can set the cache expiration policy so that it's appropriate for your data. If your data changes a lot, long or non-expiring if your data changes infrequently. When you need to bind your data to the DataGrid, you can retrieve the data from the cache if it's still there (memory pressure can expire data from cache) or re-query your database. Knowledge Base article 323290 has a good example under the heading "[Cache server memory](#)".

Q I need to package a control I've built into a Microsoft® Installer (MSI) file number of DLLs, and I need to have the installer run on a user's machine website. Is there anything special that I need to do to cause the OCX file to be executed with Microsoft Internet Explorer? Can I use the <OBJECT> tag so that I can click on a link?

A For this to work in Internet Explorer, you just need to register the file like control to be used with an <OBJECT> tag. That means that in the MSI, the control is filled out along with the Typelib table. As an alternative solution, you can use the control itself should support IProvideClassInfo or IProvideClassInfo2 with the <OBJECT> tag. The Knowledge Base article 200839 ("[How To Enable A Handling On A Web Page](#)") provides a further explanation.

It is acceptable to use the <OBJECT> tag if this is outside of the MSI, but you might get prompts due to security constraints. You might consider just having a separate page if the control is not on the machine, using code like that shown in [Figure 1](#).

There is a document on MSDN® that discusses no-touch deployment in the .NET Framework, but that solution also requires end-user configuration. (See [No Touch Deployment in the .NET Framework](#).)

Q I have an ASP.NET application that uses the Internet Explorer Web control. When it navigates to a new page or does a postback to the same page, the HTC file is not cached on the server. I set the Content expiration for the HTC files on the server, but they do not seem to cache them. Is there anything else I should be doing?

A A supported hotfix is now available from Microsoft, but it is only intended for systems that are affected by the problem that is described in the Knowledge Base article 840312 ("[Cached HTC Files Do Not Cache Requests In Internet Explorer 6](#)"). You should only apply it to systems that are affected by this specific problem. Therefore, if you are not severely affected by this problem, you should wait for the next Internet Explorer 6.0 service pack that contains this hotfix.

Q I'm trying to troubleshoot Web connection problems and want to look at a tool to display HTTP headers in Internet Explorer?

A When you are troubleshooting connectivity issues between IIS and Web browser, you can view data that is not displayed in the Web browser, such as the HTTP headers in the Request and Response packets. One way is to use wfetch. It's a free utility that is included in the IIS 6.0 Resource Kit and is also available as a standalone app.

You can also use wfetch to provide detailed information about the traffic to and from the server. See the Knowledge Base article 284285 ("[Use Wfetch.exe To Troubleshoot Web Connections](#)").

While wfetch is a great tool for some kinds of debugging, if you need a tool to view the headers in Internet Explorer so you can surf and look at the headers at the same time, you can use [ieHTTPHeaders](#).

Q I have a page that shows a DataGrid based on user filters. When the user clicks on a link for a particular row in the DataGrid, I use Response.Redirect to redirect the user to another page.

where he updates the data. I now want to take my user to the first page ar based on the same filters he had selected earlier on. What is the best way t requirements are as follows:

- I want to preserve some values in Page1.aspx, go to Transfer.aspx, and to Page1.aspx I want to use those values.
- I need to use query strings to pass values from Page1.aspx to Transfer.
- Finally, I'd like to catch the URL of the calling page. I also have to consi

I know I can store filter selections in session state variables and when the page, the DataGrid can use these session variables. However, session varia so if the user doesn't have cookies enabled, I have a problem.

A One way to solve your problem is to use `Server.Transfer` and `Context.Items` would use in Page1.aspx:

```
Context.Items.Add("pageval", "value to preserve");
Server.Transfer("Transfer.aspx");
```

And in Transfer.aspx you would use:

```
string val = (string)Context.Items["pageval"];
```

`Server.Transfer` performs a transfer on the server side; the page does not between, so this approach would avoid the 302 page sent to the client whic round-trip between the client and server.

The `HttpContext` instance for a request is available while the processing c The moment that the page is sent to the client, that particular `HttpContext` not preserved between round-trips to the client. So, if you go to Transfer.a: `Server.Transfer` to go back to Page1.aspx, the context would still be availat see Transfer.aspx, then it would not be available.

Yes, you can use a query string to pass values as well. You can use this n `Server.Transfer` and `Response.Redirect`, which is a good way to pass values `Server.Transfer`, the client will actually never see the query string, but they `Response.Redirect`. There are also ways to encode your values inside the q information can be encrypted.

There's one more thing you should know about `Server.Transfer`. In ASP.N would be preserved as a POST if that was the initial request. In ASP.NET 1. transferred to itself, it will always be a GET, so you would have to use the c Form collection is not available anymore.

To catch the URL of the calling page you can choose to use either `Request.UrlReferrer` (which gets the referring page path and query string) or `Request.UrlReferrer` gets just the referring page path).

In the page Load event of Page1.aspx, `Request.UrlReferrer` will be null be the first time a user types the URL of this page. Thus, any attempts to acce `AbsoluteUri` will result in an exception. You can avoid this problem by only €

Page1.aspx if Page.IsPostBack is true. You can use something like this:

```
string referrerUri = (Request.UrlReferrer != null) ?  
    Request.UrlReferrer.AbsoluteUri : string.Empty;
```

The only real problem with using UrlReferrer is that it is not guaranteed that the page is actually being referred to because some firewalls and privacy software can block the Referrer header. You can tack a query string parameter like "ReferrerUrl=MyPageName.aspx" onto the Response.Redirect call.

For more information, visit [HttpServerUtility.Transfer Method](#) and [HttpCo](#)

Got a question? Send questions and comments to webqa@microsoft.com

Thanks to the following Microsoft developers for their technical expertise: Gaurav Iyer, Boerner, Todd Carter, Richard Ciapala, G. Andrew Duthie, Rob Franco, Scott Golube, Lasseen, Pat Long, Alexander Louie, David Lovell, Nathan Manis, Oscar Newkerk, F. Ivan S. Shestakov, Martin Sieber, and John Wadie.



From the [December 2004](#) issue of [MSDN Magazine](#).

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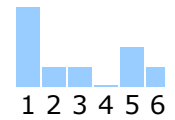
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