



ARE YOU A BOOTSTRAPPER?

Migrate to the New Age Web Technology

INTRODUCTION

In the past, when one heard the word ‘Bootstrap’, especially in relation to business ventures, it had a sole definition: To help oneself, through improvised means. So when someone said, “Unable to raise capital for my start-up from banks, I decided to partner with friends and bootstrap my company,” it meant the person had explored and adopted a do-it-yourself option. But in recent years, Bootstrap has come to mean something entirely different in the world of technology; and though the connotation has changed as a result, the fundamental essence of the word remains the same.

Bootstrap is a free and open-source collection of tools for creating websites and web applications and is one of the more revolutionary technology offerings that have been developed of late. Its overwhelming popularity is such that everyone, regardless of their position on the tech learning curve, wants to try their hand at using this excellent front-end framework (an interface for the user) which basically makes putting together a website from scratch a breeze! It is also doubles as a web application framework that is a software framework designed to support the development of dynamic websites and web applications.

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It is interesting to note that Bootstrap, originally called ‘Twitter Blueprint’, was the brainchild of the ingenious duo Mark Otto and Jacob Thornton at Twitter. They developed the framework to advance consistency across internal tools. For the uninitiated, Bootstrap is akin to a highly impressive website and/or web application starter guide. The rules for enjoying its rich benefits are extremely simple: all one has to do is download the files and add them to their website or web app. As mentioned, Bootstrap is not the elusive Holy Grail, or its use privy to a select few. This accessibility and potential for ease-of-use has opened a plethora of opportunities because the framework makes no distinction between beginners, advanced web developers and designers.

The good news is that Bootstrap is responsive which quite simply means it has the ability to perform on virtually every device, regardless of size; be it big desktop screens and the smaller cell phone screens. Currently, Bootstrap is in its third avatar and is dubbed Bootstrap 3. Much to the delight of website developers, Bootstrap has made the hitherto Herculean task of creating a flexible CSS framework that follows current standards and one that is competently tested—an exercise which consumed several days—very easy.

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In many ways, the USP of Bootstrap lies in the fact that it was developed mainly to work seamlessly on mobiles. This makes absolute sense if we consider the growing and vast numbers of people who browse the Internet on their handheld devices, such as cell phones and tablets. Against this backdrop, it has now become imperative to enhance the overall user experience by optimizing websites for a flawless browsing experience on both desktops and mobile phones—and this is where Bootstrap emerges a clear winner with its cutting-edge technology.

What's doubly enticing is that Bootstrap is compatible with the latest versions of almost all the top browsers including Google Chrome, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Opera, and Safari. However, a few of these browsers are not supported on all platforms.

Reduced Development Time

It would not be farfetched to say that Bootstrap is no less than a magic wand for web developers in a rush! The greatest advantage of using Bootstrap is the simplicity of creating and completing the entire process of development. Whether it is a brand new website or a regular application, Bootstrap makes life easier, a whole lot easier.

No longer do you need to spend endless hours in coding from the start, because by using off-the-rack blocks of code, courtesy Bootstrap, you can work wonders in a jiffy. Add to this the much-appreciated cross-browser compatibility and CSS-Less functions and the picture is complete. However, if you wish to gain even greater mileage in lesser time, consider buying the ready-to-use Bootstrap themes; which of course give you the liberty to modify them according to your requirements. It's as uncomplicated as downloading files from Bootstrap on GitHub, unzipping them and including those files in the head of the HTML document.

Increased Responsiveness

A recent study by Cisco Systems, the American multinational technology company, revealed that mobile data traffic all across the globe would skyrocket as much as 11-fold by 2018. Given these astonishing statistics, it becomes very crucial to develop responsive websites to keep pace with the changing times.

With its fluid grid layout which adapts to the proper screen resolution dynamically, Bootstrap is a boon in this context as it enables the creation of mobile-ready websites comfortably. Achieving responsiveness is no longer an uphill climb.

Bootstrap's classes enable the user to determine the number of spots each column should occupy in the grid system. Once done, the user can define when the columns are to be stacked horizontally, instead of vertically, to aid in their proper display on mobile devices.

Consistency is the Cornerstone

Acutely aware that Bootstrap's importance extended far beyond being a mere internal toolkit Mark Otto the co-founder released the first open-source version in August 2011. Consistency was the effectual cornerstone and core belief behind Bootstrap; which had for its aim the desire to blend the activities of designers and developers.

So it does not matter who is in charge of the project because Bootstrap facilitates consistency and promotes uniform results across platforms. Translated, this refers to ordered output be it on Chrome, Firefox or Internet Explorer.

Easy Customization

Bootstrap enables users to custom-build in accordance to their project specifications and needs. The Bootstrap customize page allows developers to dictate what characteristics must be utilized by simply checking off unwanted features.

There is a wealth of Components to choose from apart from the set of built-in-classes and extraordinary grid-system, the Bootstrap framework also offers its users a range of attractive and exciting ready-to-use components that include Breadcrumbs, Badges, Navigation Bars, Jumbotron, Buttons, Panels, Pagination and Glyphicons.

JavaScript Properties

Rise above the elementary structural and styling mandate with Bootstrap JavaScript libraries. Developers can effortlessly control tooltips, Typehead, Scrollspy, modal windows alerts, Popover, Button and so on. Here's the big surprise: Bootstrap gives you the power to skip writing the script altogether.

Enormous Support Base

Bootstrap users need never feel alone. Thanks to its eye-popping features, one can approach the large support community which ensures that assistance is just a mouse click away, should any issues arise. Further, Bootstrap is in a continuous state of updation that is made available instantly. Heartening news arrived for the legion of Bootstrap fans when in May 2015 it became the most-starred project on GitHub where it is hosted, developed and maintained with 81,000 stars and over 32,000 forks.

CONCLUSION

With heaps of elements on offer, Bootstrap is already being hailed as the future of design. Take for example HTML5 and CSS3 that are poised to be the next big thing in the years ahead. Designers and web developers are therefore increasingly open to accepting the fact that with its rapid, responsive development which is both consistent and well-supported by the development and design community, Bootstrap has got what it takes to become the universal benchmark in due course.

Even if you are satisfied with your current custom CSS library, it wouldn't do any harm to use Bootstrap for at least one project. Rest assured that once you do this, its features will mesmerize you; and you will undoubtedly come to truly appreciate this incredible framework for all that it offers.

ABOUT ORCHESTRATE

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