

The Value of Mega Menus in SharePoint

SimplePortals Industries & Clients

				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				
				

What are Mega Menu

- ❖ Mega menus are floating menus, most often activated by a mouse hover
 - ❖ Typically a “No click” solution
 - ❖ Sometimes designers will incorporate a “click and lock” style mega menu – depends on design decisions
- ❖ Mega menus improve navigation by making browsing web pages:
 - ❖ Faster
 - ❖ Easier
 - ❖ More user friendly
- ❖ Mega menus can be evil
 - ❖ If implemented without forethought, they can make navigation worse
 - ❖ With mega power, comes mega responsibility

Mega menus navigation differences

User Experience

- ❖ With mega menus you're not limited to what SharePoint OOTB controls provide
- ❖ Mega menus provide you with the capability of adding icons along with text labels, pure icon based links, simple graphics (clickable or not), and a plethora of other techniques
- ❖ You can choose your layout - for instance, you can customize your menu to show up with several columns, staggered boxes, or any combination of other layouts

User Behaviour

- ❖ Once you begin to use mega menu's, you should start to notice an immediate change in your navigation behaviour. You'll stop going to "landing pages", and start actually accomplishing the tasks you set out to accomplish without getting lost, or side tracked
- ❖ You may find after some use that you missed some items in your menu(s). Simply go back and adjust them – there's no shame in iterating a design until you reach the most useful result

What kinds of solutions are out there

- ❖ There are several ways to implement mega menus in SharePoint
 - ❖ Poorly
 - ❖ Passable
 - ❖ Awesomely
- ❖ CodePlex has some suggestions
 - ❖ One is simply known as “SharePoint 2010 Starter Masterpage Feature with Mega DropDown Navigation Menu” (SP2010.CodePlex.com)
- ❖ The web has some suggestions for how to use mega menus with SharePoint, however..
 - ❖ Several of these are based off of HTML5 solutions – you lose all backwards compatibility
 - ❖ Or entirely contained in the masterpage, requiring code changes to update..
 - ❖ Most are farm based – which doesn't help anyone in Gov't or Office 365

How we chose to implement them

- ❖ Can be manually deployed like a Sandboxed solution
 - ❖ Allows it to be a solution any gov't agency could take advantage of, and anyone looking to implement on Office 365, or locally
- ❖ Used basic HTML4 principles
 - ❖ Implemented using HTML, JavaScript (jQuery), and CSS
 - ❖ Allows the solution to fall back to previous browsers (IE8, IE7) quite gracefully
- ❖ Managed with the OOTB navigation controls
 - ❖ Some solutions allow you to pull information for your menus from a SharePoint list – we avoided this as we wanted to go beyond what those solutions offer and come up with something even more slick that uses OOTB navigation controls.

How we designed our mega menus

- ❖ We threw around a few ideas of how to improve (over the OOTB SharePoint menus):
 - ❖ The overall look and feel
 - ❖ How to make them fit best with client's styles (borders, bullets, and menu headers)
 - ❖ How to deal with degradation (lesser versions of a browsing experience)
 - ❖ How to provide the most value, without being bloated
 - ❖ How to maintain the original menu behaviour (so the old guys wouldn't twitch)
- ❖ We put together an initial design proof of concept – a working design
- ❖ We reviewed the proof of concept together
- ❖ We released an initial version to many of our clients
- ❖ We released the app to the public & MS Store
- ❖ We iteratively improved the design

Mega Menu Overdone

L.L.Bean Enter item # or keyword

FREE SHIPPING
No minimum order, no end date, just free.

Shopping Bag

MEN'S **WOMEN'S** **KIDS'** **FOOTWEAR** **OUTDOOR GEAR** **HUNTING & FISHING** **LUGGAGE** **HOME** **SALE**

Hunting Apparel
Hunting Gear
Hunting Footwear
Fishing Apparel
Fishing Gear
Fishing Kayaks & Canoes
Binoculars, Scopes & Range Finders
Dog Supplies
Electronics
Knives & Tools
Lighting
Sunglasses

New Arrivals
Gifts for the Hunter

Find It Fast
▶ Big Game Hunting Apparel
▶ Big Game Hunting Gear
▶ Hunter's Boat & Tote
▶ Hunting Packs
▶ Maine Hunting Shoes
▶ Upland Hunting Apparel
▶ Upland Hunting Gear
▶ Gun Accessories
▶ Waders

Classic Wool
with Advanced Insulation for More Warmth, Less Bulk
▶ [Maine Guide Wool Parka](#)

What the H3L.L. Bean?

Each of the top level tabs opens into a similar mega menu.

Great Gifts, Shipped Free

Color
Black (27)
Blue (23)

In Summary...

Mega Menus Can:

- ❖ Make the user experience much more elegant and visual
- ❖ Present the user with a new array of menu options, which make sense for different scenarios
- ❖ Provide a much simpler navigation experience

You Must Be Careful Of:

- ❖ Proper design tactics – Common sense doesn't go out the door just because you've now got a mega menu at your disposal
- ❖ Overstuffing – No Turducken's!
- ❖ Confusing more than you're simplifying