

Customizing WebLink: Quick Guide

Quickstart Guide

November 2005



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WebLink Architecture

Weblink is a Web-based thin client for the Laserfiche server. Weblink publishes Laserfiche documents on the Web, where users can access them from anywhere using an ordinary Web browser. Weblink is built using ASP.NET, making it easy to customize to suit individual needs.

How Weblink Works

As you install and troubleshoot Weblink, you will find it useful to have a basic understanding of how Weblink works. Weblink acts as a "bridge" between the Laserfiche server and IIS, so the three main components of a Weblink installation are:

- The Laserfiche server, which stores the documents and data that Weblink users will access.
- The Internet Information Services (IIS) web server, which hosts the ASP.NET pages that make up Weblink's interface.
- The Weblink files, including the ASP.NET pages and the program files.

When you install Weblink, it creates a virtual folder in IIS. This virtual folder links to the Weblink folder in Program Files/Laserfiche, which contains the Weblink program files and ASP.NET files. Users access the virtual folder by typing in the URL. This tells IIS to send the default ASP.NET page, Login.aspx, to the user's browser.



The Web pages that make up Weblink's interface consist of several interacting layers: a cascading style sheet (CSS) file that controls the look and layout of the Weblink page, an aspx file that specifies the details of the interface, and a Visual Basic "codebehind" file that contains the data processing layer and interfaces with the Laserfiche server. There are extensive online resources for those who wish to learn more about CSS and ASP.NET.

Customizing Weblink

Among the Weblink thin client's great strengths are the extensive customization options it offers. Using the files included with your Weblink installation, you can customize the appearance, behavior and even the basic functionality of Weblink.

The default installation of Weblink includes a Visual Studio.NET project containing all the files you will need for your customizations. You can customize the Weblink project using one or more of several interacting layers, from simple surface modifications to functional changes. At the top level is the cascading style sheet. Editing this allows you a great deal of control over the color scheme, font, and layout of Weblink pages.

Within the ASPX file, both HTML code and ASP-style tags can alter the content and layout of a page. Visual Studio supplies a graphical editor for these files, simplifying modification of these ASP pages and allowing you to add Weblink controls through a simple drag-and-drop interface. You can modify the properties of the Weblink controls through this graphical interface, by editing the ASPX code directly, or by altering the Visual Basic .NET codebehind file. Each method can provide a different level of control.

Simple Customizations

To get you started customizing Weblink, we have included a few examples. The following examples demonstrate common, simple customizations that Weblink users often perform. The step-by-step instructions for these examples assume that you are using Visual Studio .NET, but you can also make the same modifications just by making changes to the appropriate file in a text editor.

Before you begin, back up your Weblink files so that you can replace them if your customization causes problems. Set up a separate Weblink website or a separate server for editing and testing Weblink customizations. Any changes you make to a Weblink file **will take effect** as soon as you save the file, so you should always test the changes first before applying them to your main Weblink site.

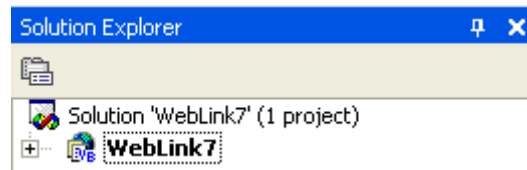
Using CSS: Changing Weblink's Background

Cascading style sheets can change the appearance of a website by telling the web browser how to display certain elements or sections of the page. Using the same style sheet for several pages, as Weblink does, allows you to make changes that apply to all of the pages at once and ensure a consistent look. In this example, we alter the style sheet to customize the background of Weblink pages, either to a new color or to a background image.

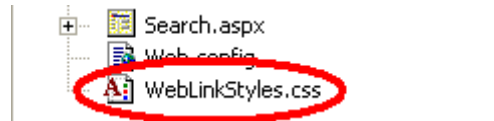
Changing the Background Color

Open the Weblink Visual Studio solution. This file is named WebLink7.sln; it should be located in a folder called "Web Files" in the install directory of Weblink.

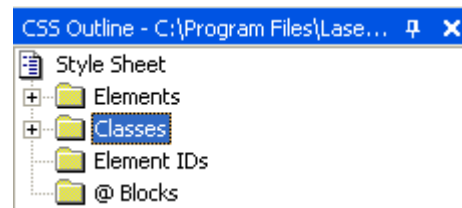
Look for the Solution Explorer in the right-hand pane. (If you don't see it, press Ctrl+Alt+L to open it.)



Expand the Weblink7 project and look for a file called WebLinkStyles.css. Open this file.



The text of the CSS file will appear in the center pane. A CSS outline pane should open up on the left. Expand the Classes folder in the outline pane.



Scroll down and find the .PageBackground class, and click it to jump to it in the CSS file. If you have difficulty finding it in the list of classes, you can press Ctrl+F to open a Find window, then search for ".PageBackground" in the CSS file.

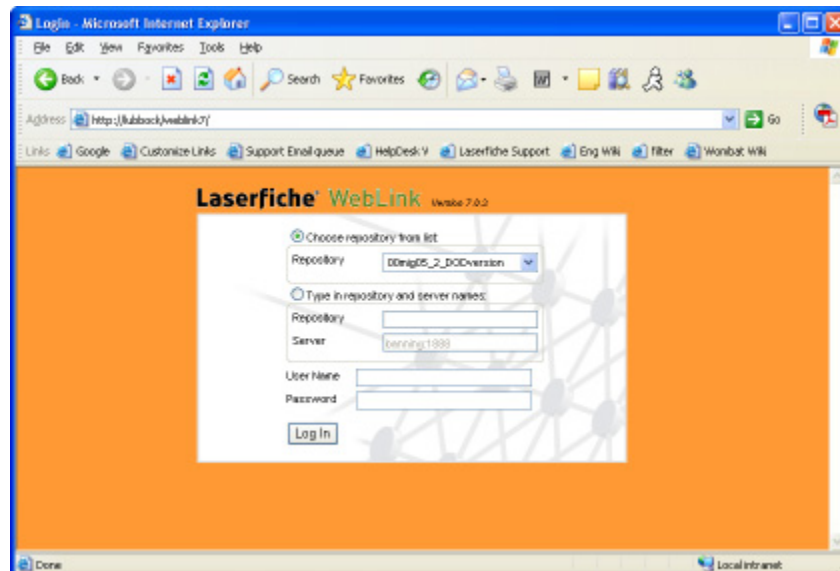
You should see something like the following:

```
677 .PageBackground
678 {
679     background-color:#F7F7F7;
680     PADDING:0px;
681     MARGIN:0px;
682 }
```

The background color is represented by a hexadecimal code. The first two numbers represent the amount of red, the second two the amount of green, and the third two the amount of blue in the color. Many web programming references include guides that match colors to codes—try doing a web search on HTML color codes.

To change the background color, replace the background-color value with your desired color code. In this example we'll use #FF9933, which is a bright shade of orange.

Save your changes, and load the test Weblink website. You should see something like the image below. The other pages of your Weblink installation will have the same background color. Congratulations, you've customized your Weblink installation!



Adding a Background Image

Determine what image you want to use for your background. Make a copy of that image and put it in the Web Files directory with the Weblink Visual Studio solution.

Follow steps 1-6 of Changing the Background Color.

In the .PageBackground class, add a new line. Type in the following:

```
background-image:url(mybackground.gif);
```

replacing mybackground.gif with the name and extension of your background image. The result should look something like this:

```
.PageBackground
{
    background-color: #FF9933;
    background-image: url(mybackground.gif);
    PADDING:0px;
    MARGIN:0px;
}
```

Save your images and load your test website. You should see your background image behind the login box. By default, the image will be "tiled". Check a CSS guide for other background display options.

Customizing ASP Controls

Most of the elements of the Weblink webpages are "controls", pre-coded elements that you can add to your Weblink page. Buttons, drop-down lists, and text boxes are all examples of simple ASP.NET controls. Weblink uses more complicated controls, such as a login box, document browser, and folder tree. You can edit the properties of these controls to alter the way they display and function.

Changing Login Options

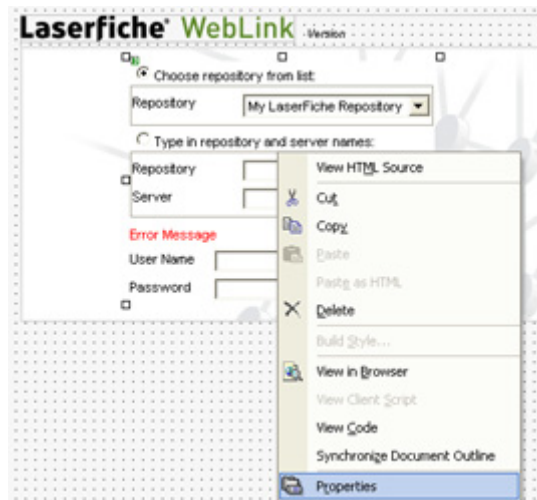
The first ASP.NET control Weblink users see is the login interface. By default, this control looks like this:



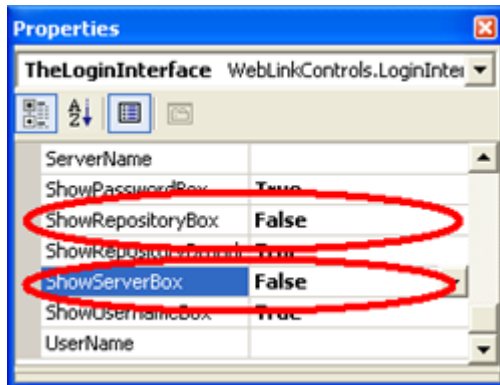
Using the properties of the LoginInterface control, we can determine what options Weblink should display to the user and automatically fill in login information. We'll do this in Visual Studio, but you can do the same things by editing the .aspx files directly.

Hiding Text Boxes from the User

1. Open up the Weblink Visual Studio solution. In the right-hand pane, double-click Login.aspx.
2. Right-click in the center of the login box and choose "Properties" from the drop-down menu.



- The properties box should appear. Our first modification will be to tell WebLink not to display the server and repository text boxes. These are controlled by the ShowServerBox and ShowRepositoryBox properties. Set these properties to False. You can choose to do this in the properties box or in the code, whichever you find easier; there is no difference in the result.



```
<weblink:logininterface  
id="TheLoginInterface"  
style="Z-INDEX: 105" runat="server"  
ShowRepositoryDisabled="True"  
ShowRepositoryBox="False"  
ShowServerBox="False"  
ShowUserNameBox="True"  
RepositoryBoxDisabled="False"  
ServerBoxDisabled="False">  
</weblink:logininterface>
```

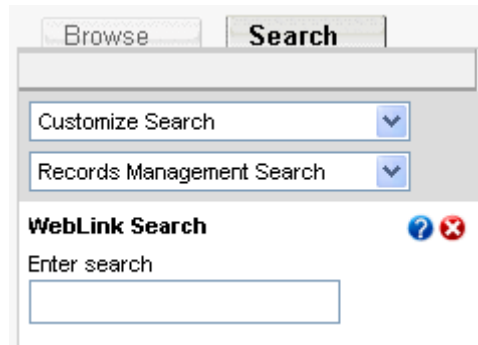
- The login box will now hide the server and repository boxes from the user.



If you choose to leave these boxes visible to the user, you can speed up the login process by filling in the names of the most commonly used server or server/repository pair. You can do this by specifying the server in the ServerName property and the repository in the DatabaseName property.

Changing Search Options

Another common customization in WebLink is to change the search options that are displayed on the search page. By default, the search pane displays a basic WebLink search option and a drop-down list of additional searches that the user can perform.



By changing the properties of the SearchForm control, you can change which search options appear by default and choose whether to let users customize their searches. The following steps describe how to keep users from customizing searches, select which search options will be displayed, and (if you are using the correct version of WebLink) set a default template for the template field search.

1. To determine whether users can customize their searches, set the AllowCustomization property to "True" or "False". In this example we will set it to "False". Change the value for the AllowCustomization property in the code or the Properties box as you did for the Login example above.
2. The SearchForm permits a wide variety of search options. In this case we will remove the option to search with the generic Weblink search and add text search, search by name, and search by template field. To do this, set ShowField, ShowName, and ShowText to True, and set ShowWeblink to False. This will make the search form look like this:

Browse Search

Text ?

Basic Text Search [Advanced Text Search](#)

Phrase:

Phrase And Or Not Within

Fuzzy search

Object Name ?

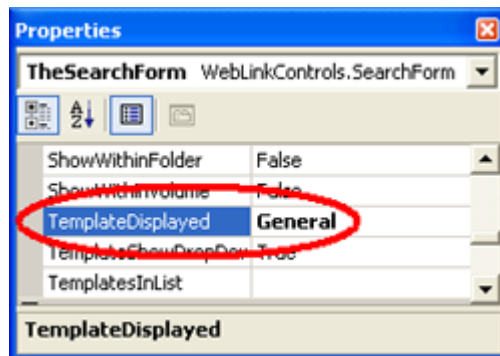
Enter object name:

Document Folder

Field ?

Template: No template assigned ▼

- If you are using WebLink 7.0.4 or above, you can set which template you want to be displayed by default. To do this, find the TemplateDisplayed property and type in the name of the template you wish to display by default. (For more information on template options, see KB article [1011043](#).) In this example we will set the General template as default.



```
<weblink:searchform id="TheSearchForm"
runat="server" Height="100%"
Width="229px" AllowCustomization="False"
ShowWebLink="False" ShowText="True"
ShowField="True" ShowName="True"
TemplateDisplayed="General">
</weblink:searchform>
```



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