



COMP 4021

Internet Computing

Use of Hidden Fields

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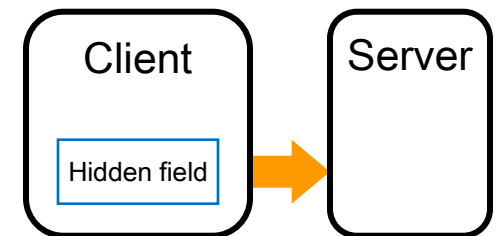
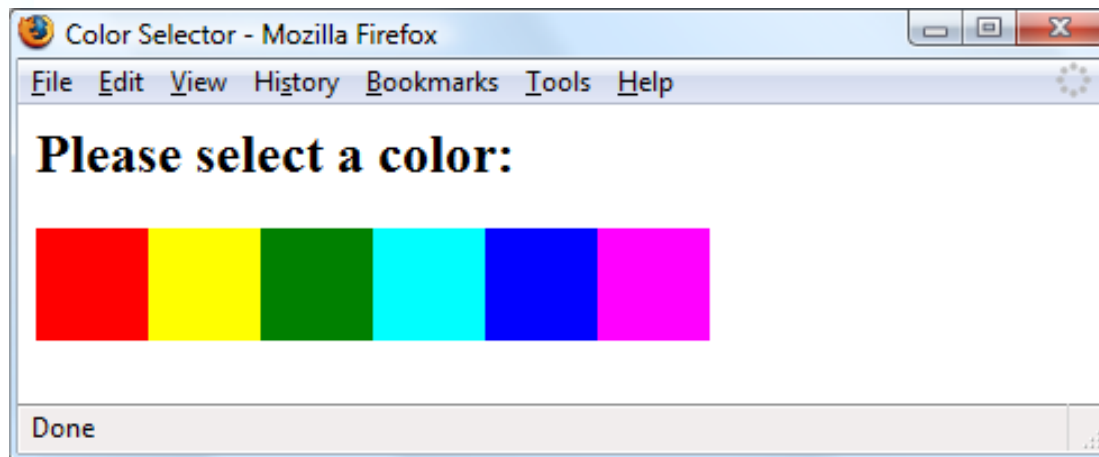
Slides created by Dr. David ROSSITER

Hidden Fields

- Hidden fields are useful for implementing 'system' variables shared between the server and the client
- A hidden field is also useful for the client to send information to the server (without using the standard input fields such as text fields and selection boxes)

Example – Color Selector

- An HTML form does not provide a simple input field which handles color selection
- We can build a color selector using several DIVs and then send the color using a hidden field



Example 1

```
<html>
  <head>
    <title>Color Selector</title>
    <style>
      div {
        position: absolute;
        width: 50px;
        height: 50px; }
    </style>
    <script>
      function select(color) {
        document.getElementById("color").value=color;
        document.getElementById("color").form.submit(); }
    </script>
  </head>
```

Set hidden
field value
and
submit the
form using
JavaScript



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in next slide*

Example 1

The DIVs for
a simple
color
selector

```
<body> <h2>Please select a color:</h2>
  <div style="position:relative">
    <div style="background-color:red;left:0px"
      onclick="select('red')"></div>
    <div style="background-color:yellow;left:50px"
      onclick="select('yellow')"></div>
    <div style="background-color:green;left:100px"
      onclick="select('green')"></div>
    <div style="background-color:cyan;left:150px"
      onclick="select('cyan')"></div>
    <div style="background-color:blue;left:200px"
      onclick="select('blue')"></div>
    <div style="background-color:magenta;left:250px"
      onclick="select('magenta')"></div> </div>
  <form action="..." method="GET">
    <input type="hidden" name="color" id="color" value="" /></form>
</body> </html>
```

Setting Hidden Field in the Server

- A hidden field can be changed by server side code
- For example, the hidden field can be changed to a different color by some code on the server

...

```
<input type="hidden" name="color" id="color"  
      value="<?php print $my_color; ?>" />
```

...

Example 2

```
<?php
    $my_color = ... // set the color of the hidden field
?>
```

```
<html> <head>
    <title>Color Selector</title>
```

```
    <style>...</style>
```

```
    <script>
```

```
function select(color) {
```

```
    var fld = document.getElementById("color");
```

```
    if (color != fld.value) {
```

```
        if (!confirm("Do you want to use the new color?"))
```

```
            return;
```

```
        fld.value=color;
```

```
        fld.form.submit();
```

```
    } }
```

```
</script> </head>
```

On the client submit the form using JavaScript only if the value is changed to a new value



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in next slide*

Example 2

```
<body> <h2>Please select a color:</h2>
<div style="position:relative">
  <div style="background-color:red;left:0px"
    onclick="select('red')"></div>
  <div style="background-color:yellow;left:50px"
    onclick="select('yellow')"></div>
  <div style="background-color:green;left:100px"
    onclick="select('green')"></div>
  <div style="background-color:cyan;left:150px"
    onclick="select('cyan')"></div>
  <div style="background-color:blue;left:200px"
    onclick="select('blue')"></div>
  <div style="background-color:magenta;left:250px"
    onclick="select('magenta')"></div> </div>
<form action="..." method="GET">
  <input type="hidden" name="color" id="color"
    value="<?php print $my_color; ?>" /> </form></body></html>
```

The color hidden field with a value set by the server