

Harnessing the Power of Flare's Stylesheet Editor

PRESENTED BY

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Hyper/Word Services



Who Am I?



- Neil Perlin - Hyper/Word Services.
 - Internationally recognized content consultant.
 - Help clients create effective, efficient, flexible content in anything from hard-copy to mobile.
 - Certified – Flare, Mimic, Viziapps, other tools.
 - Train, consult, and troubleshoot on Flare, CSS, etc. for MadCap.
 - Working in CSS since 1999-ish.

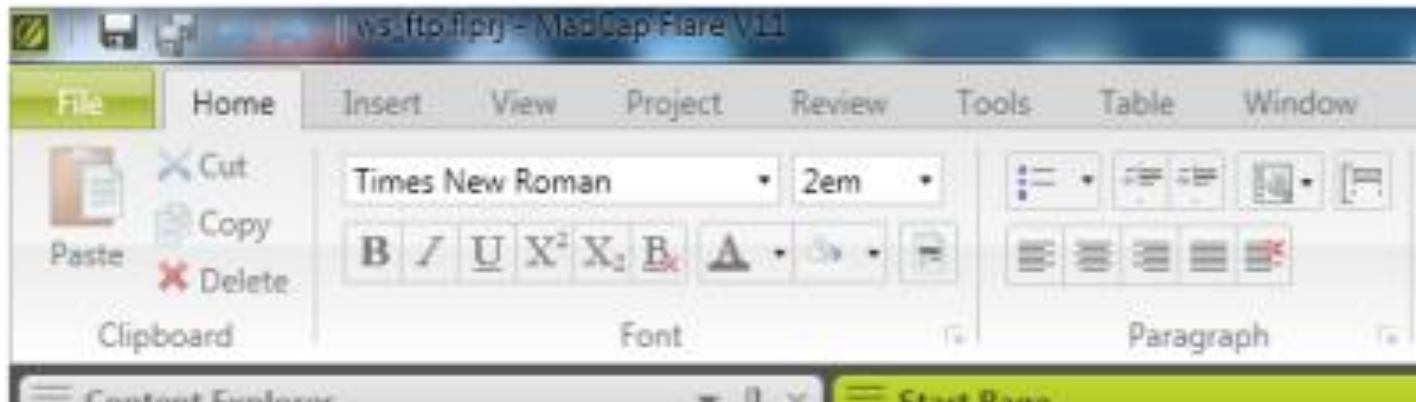
Some Context

- Overview of Styles and Stylesheets



What's Local Formatting?

- Formatting using the Font and Paragraph options on the Home ribbon.



- The root of much evil – use styles instead.

What's a Style?

- A named set of format properties for a type of content.
 - Like H1, defined as 16pt, Navy, Arial, Bold.
- You must apply most styles – but Flare *does* apply h1 and p when you create a topic.
- If you have to change a property, you only have to do so once, for the *style* – the change applies to every use of the style.

What's a Style Sheet?

- A file containing all (ideally) styles and their properties for all topics in a project.
- Called a cascading style sheet, or “CSS”.
 - Like Word’s styles *conceptually* but:
 - An open standard, not MS-proprietary.
 - Separate from the content template.

“Cascading” – Definition 1

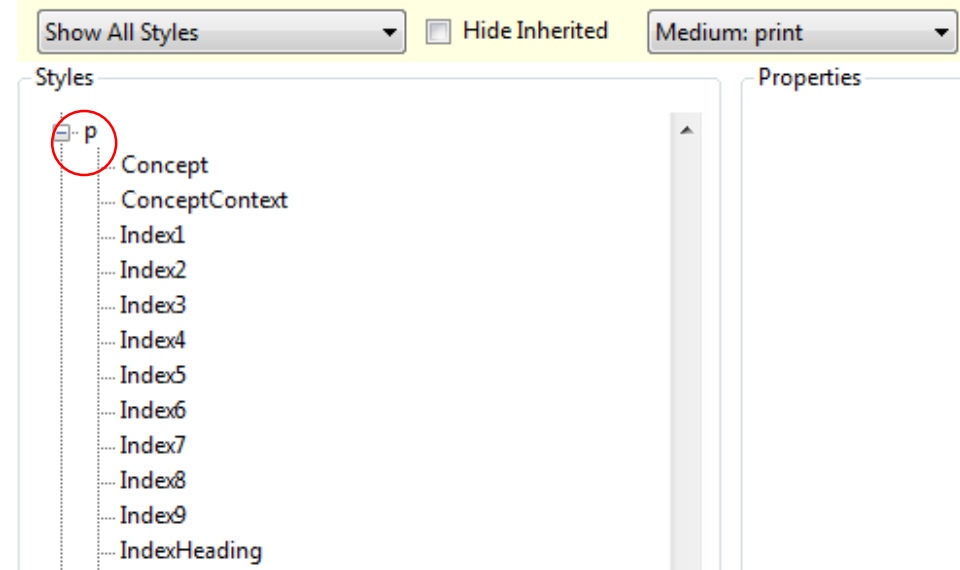
- “Cascade” of three ways to apply styles.
 - External – CSS file to which each topic links.
 - Highest efficiency, lowest priority.
 - Embedded – Stored in topic to which styles apply.
 - Middle efficiency, middle priority.
 - Inline/Local – Formatting via text formatting toolbar.
 - Lowest efficiency, highest priority.

“Cascading” – Definition 2

- “Child” styles (“sub-classes”) inherit settings from their parent styles.
 - For example, if Normal style uses Arial and you add a child style based on Normal, it uses Arial.
 - The more properties you can define in a parent style, the more efficient your CSS.

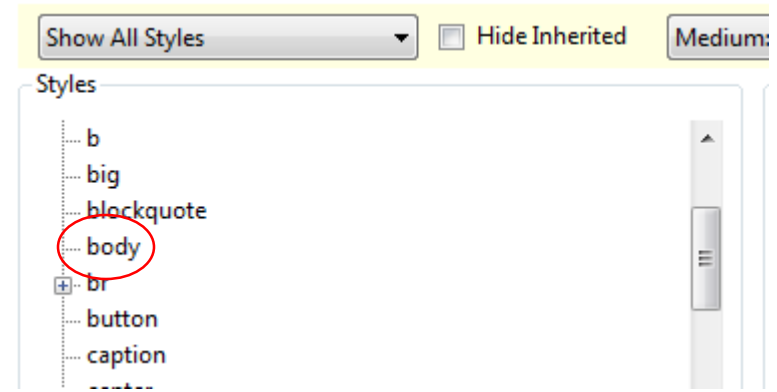
Parent vs. Child Example

- The styles under “p” are child styles (“sub-classes”) of p.
- Changing a property of p changes that property in all the p sub-classes unless you defined them separately.

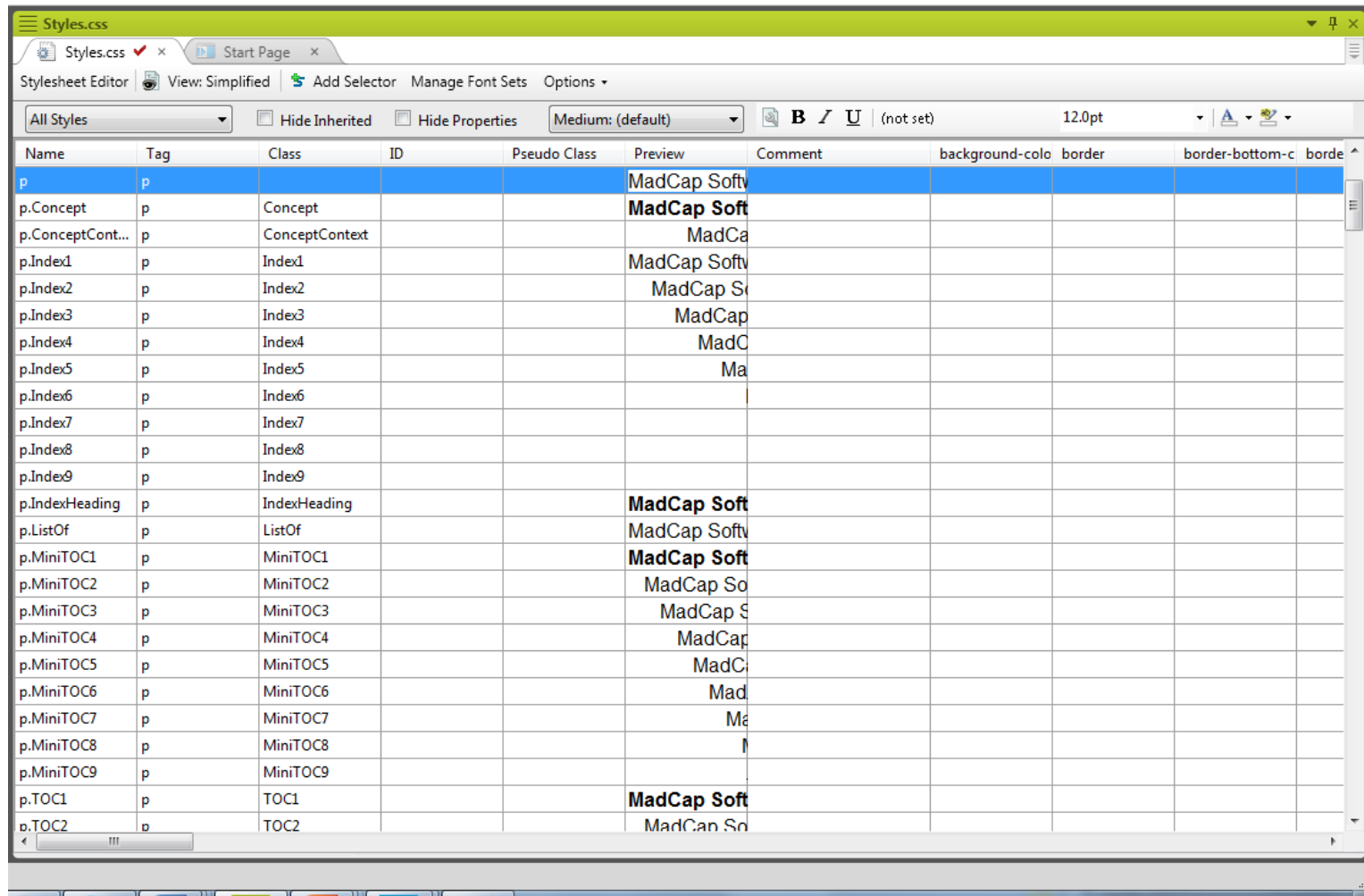


A Terminology Issue – “body”

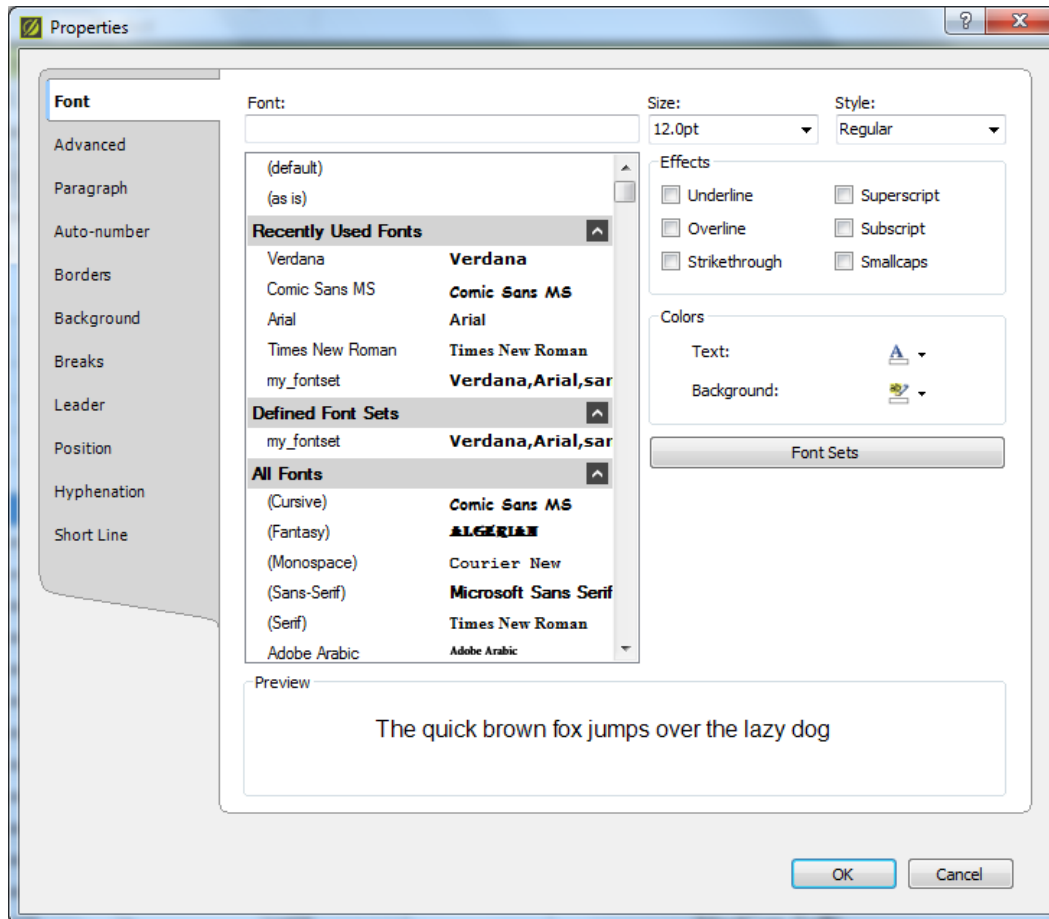
- In HTML, “body” is the top-level parent style.
- Changing a property of “body” changes that property for all other styles in the CSS unless you defined them separately.
- And now, to the Stylesheet Editor.



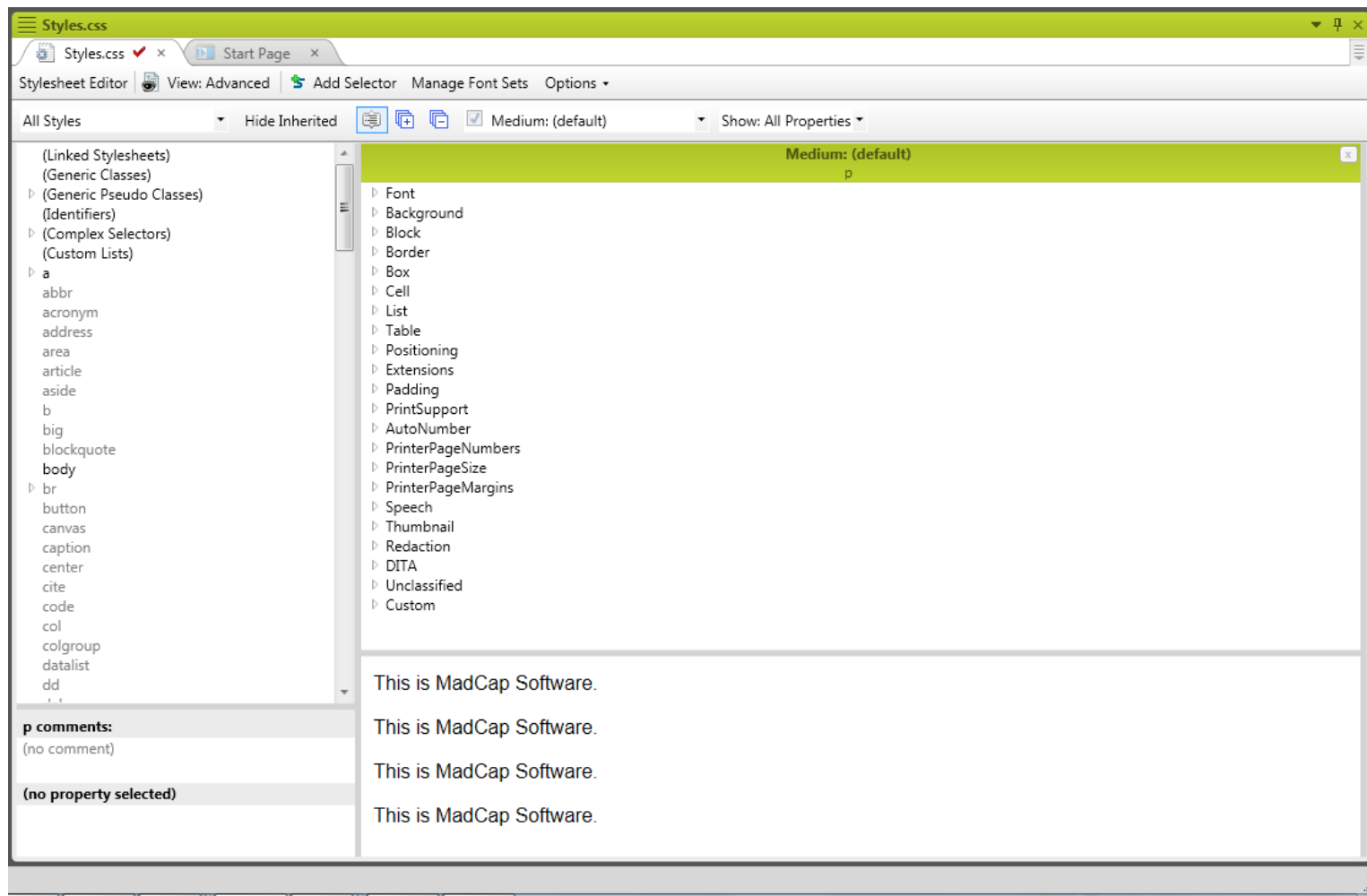
Stylesheet Editor – Simplified View



Stylesheet Editor – Simplified View

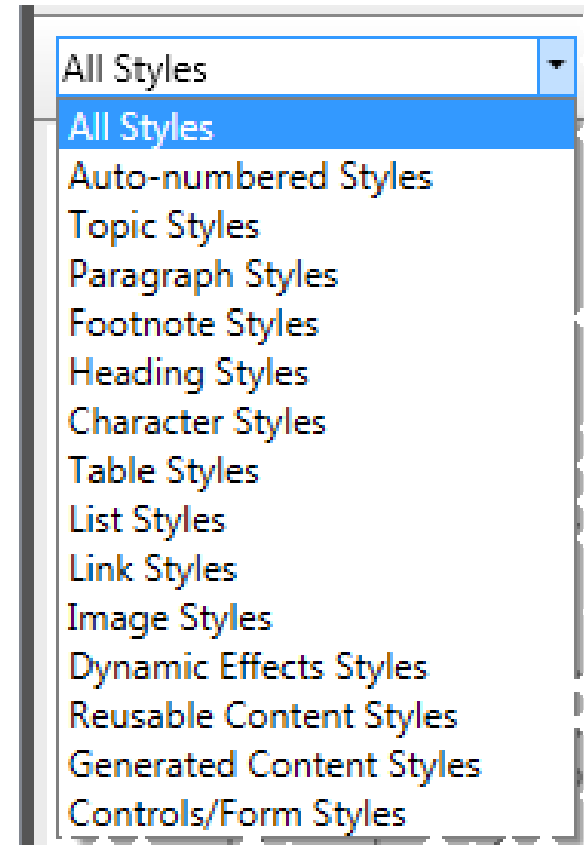


Stylesheet Editor – Advanced View



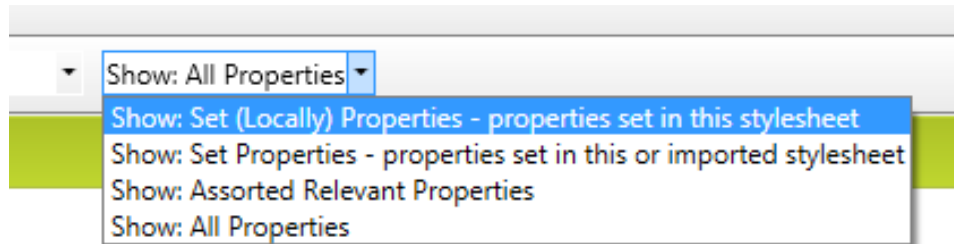
Display Style Categories

- Can display all the styles or list them by category.



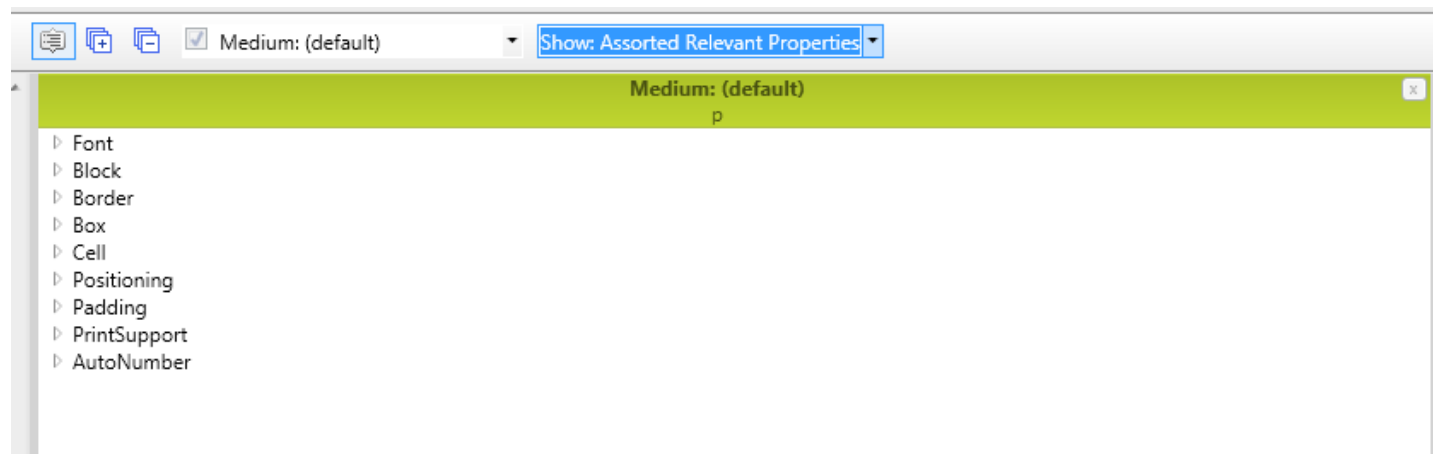
Display Property Categories

- Can display properties in different ways.



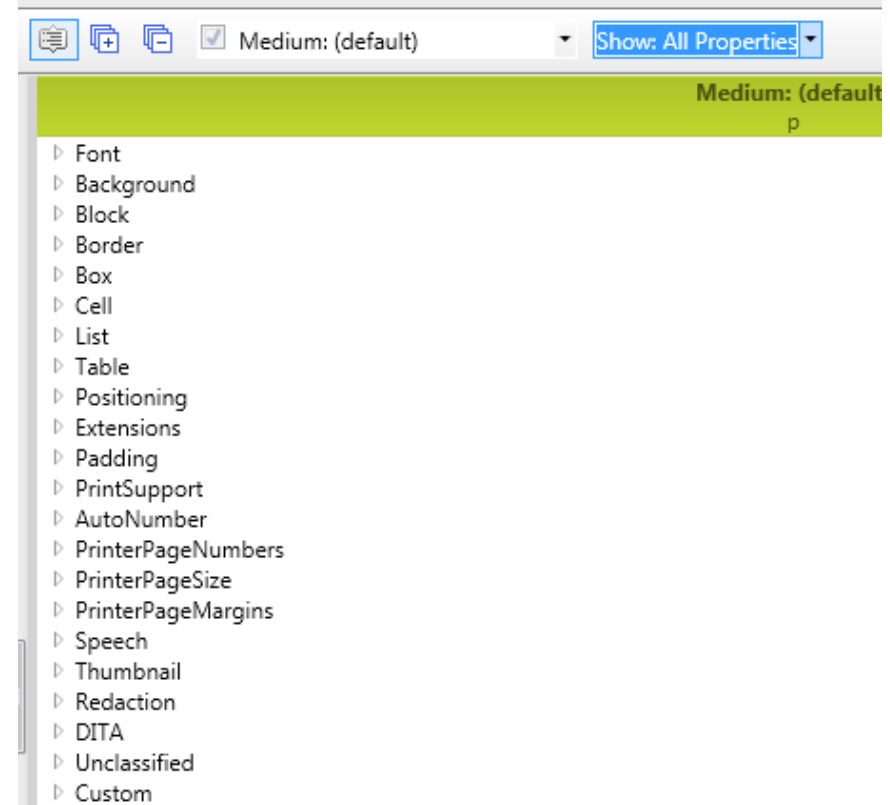
Property Views

- Show Assorted Relevant Properties – Those properties you're most likely to use. Shown in functional groups.



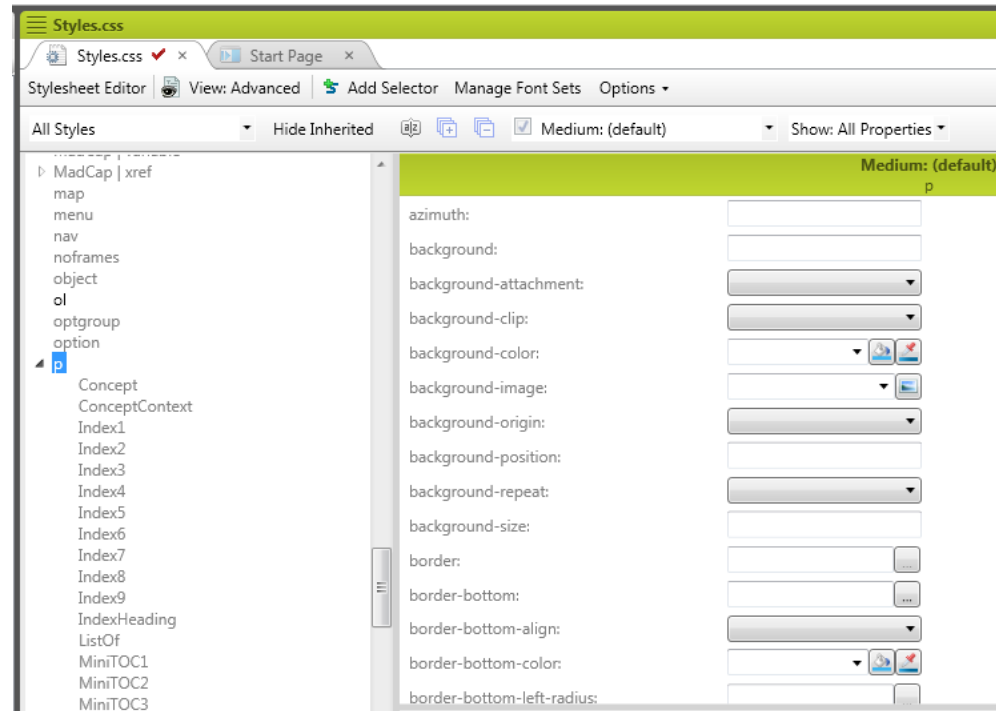
More Property Views

- Show All Properties – All the properties in functional groups.



More Property Views

- Switch to Alphabetical View – All properties in alphabetical order instead of in functional groups.



Repeated(?) Properties

- Some properties, like Padding, appear in multiple places.
- They're the same properties; they just fit into multiple functional groups.

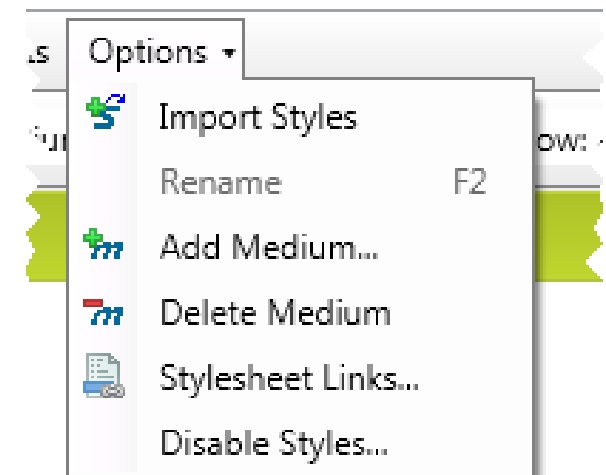
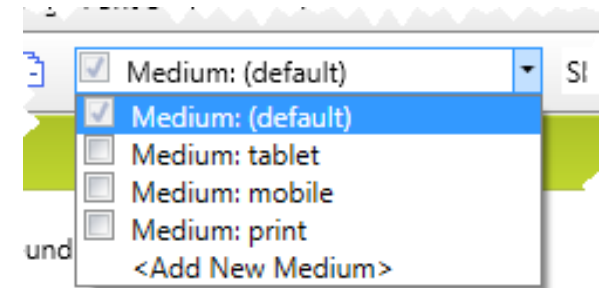
The image shows a design tool's style panel with a green header bar labeled "Medium: (default)" and a small "p" icon. The panel is divided into two sections. The top section contains a list of properties: "padding:", "padding-bottom:", "padding-left:", "padding-right:", "padding-top:", and "width:". Each property has a corresponding input field and a small "..." button. The bottom section is a collapsed list of functional groups: "Cell", "List", "Table", "Positioning", "Extensions", and "Padding". The "Padding" group is expanded, showing the same list of padding properties as the top section, each with its own input field and "..." button.

Mediums

- A medium is a formatting exception for a given target based on a single stylesheet.
 - Assume you set h1 to blue as the color default but want it to use black for print targets.

Mediums

- You can use the predefined mediums.
 - And define the h1 settings for the Default and Print mediums.
- Or create custom mediums via the Options pulldown.



Mediums

- Flare automatically assigns the medium for common targets on the Advanced tab of the Target Editor.
- You can override the automatic setting and use your own medium.
- Mediums are available in pre-12 versions of Flare but with fewer features.

Where Are the Property Values?

- Some properties, like color and font size, are clearly labelled.
- Others are harder to find in the property list.
 - For example, where do you set up underlining?

Where Are the Property Values?

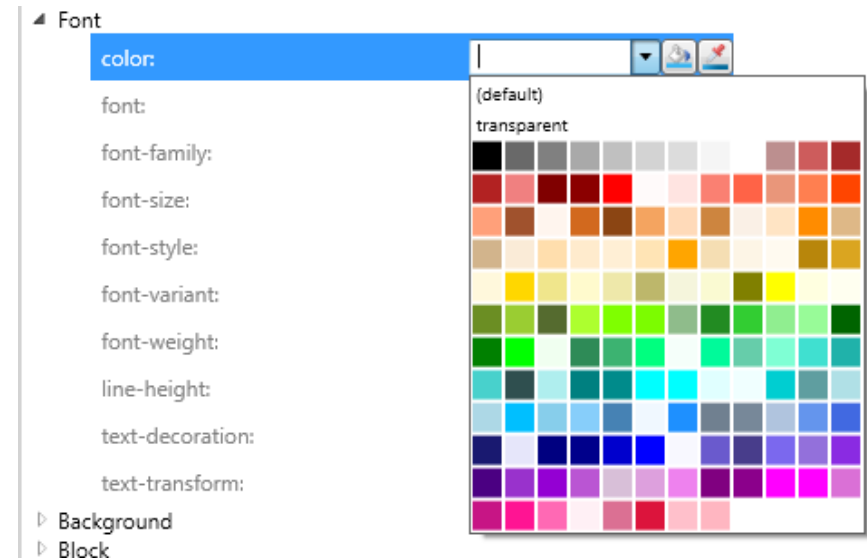
- Under Text Decoration in the Font group...



- obviously... 
- Learning this takes practice, training helps...

What Are the Property Values?

- Many properties are available from drop-downs, like color:
- And text decoration:



What Are the Property Values?

- Others are available from drop-downs but with no guidance, like the orphans setting.



A screenshot of a dialog box with a list of settings on the left and input fields on the right. The settings listed are 'orphans:', 'page-break-after:', 'page-break-before:', and 'page-break-inside:'. The 'orphans:' field is currently selected, and a small dropdown menu is open next to it, showing a downward arrow and a double-headed vertical arrow. The dialog box has 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons at the bottom right.

- You have to know what the defaults are.
 - “2” in this case.

What Are the Property Values?

- Why are most fields blank?



- Why does a field remain blank when I select its (default) option?

What Property Values Are There?

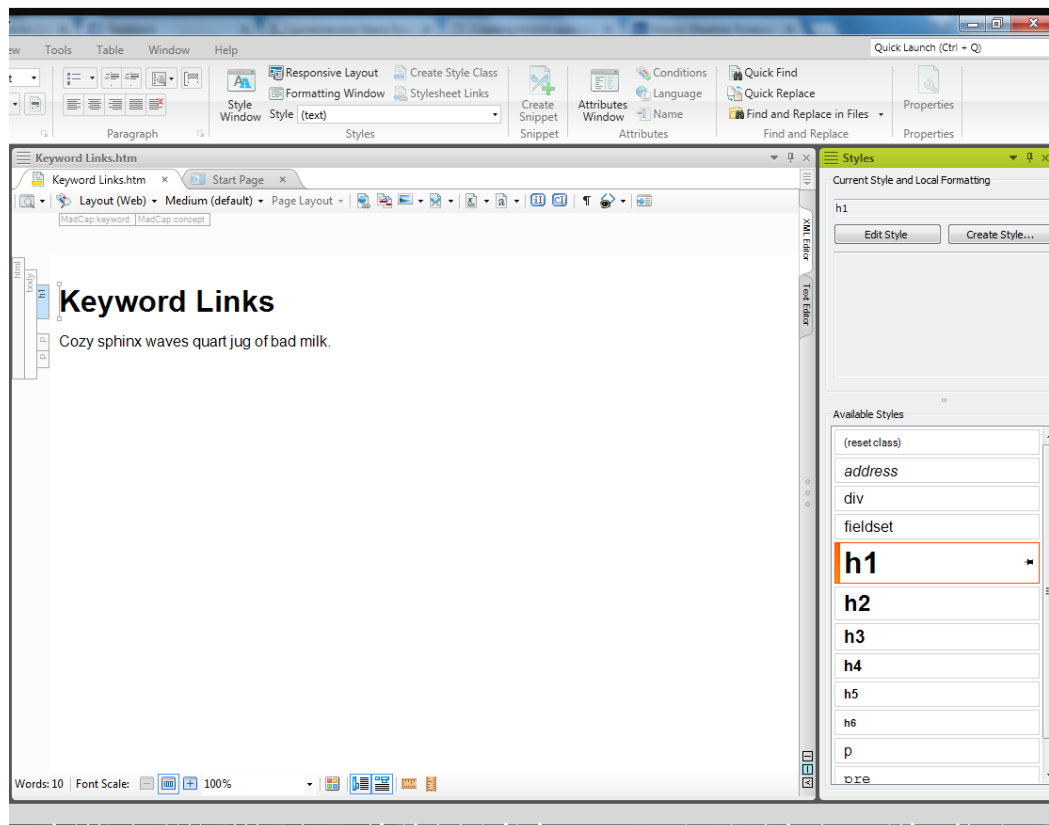
- A blank field means that property uses the users' browser's default for that property.
- You'd use the (default) option for a property if you made another setting for the property and want to zero it out and return to users' browser defaults.

How To Create a New Style

- Select the style to act as the parent, like p.
- Click the Add Selector button on the local toolbar.
- Type the class name.
- Specify the new style's property values.
- Save.
- The style then appears in the Styles pane and the Style list on the Home ribbon.

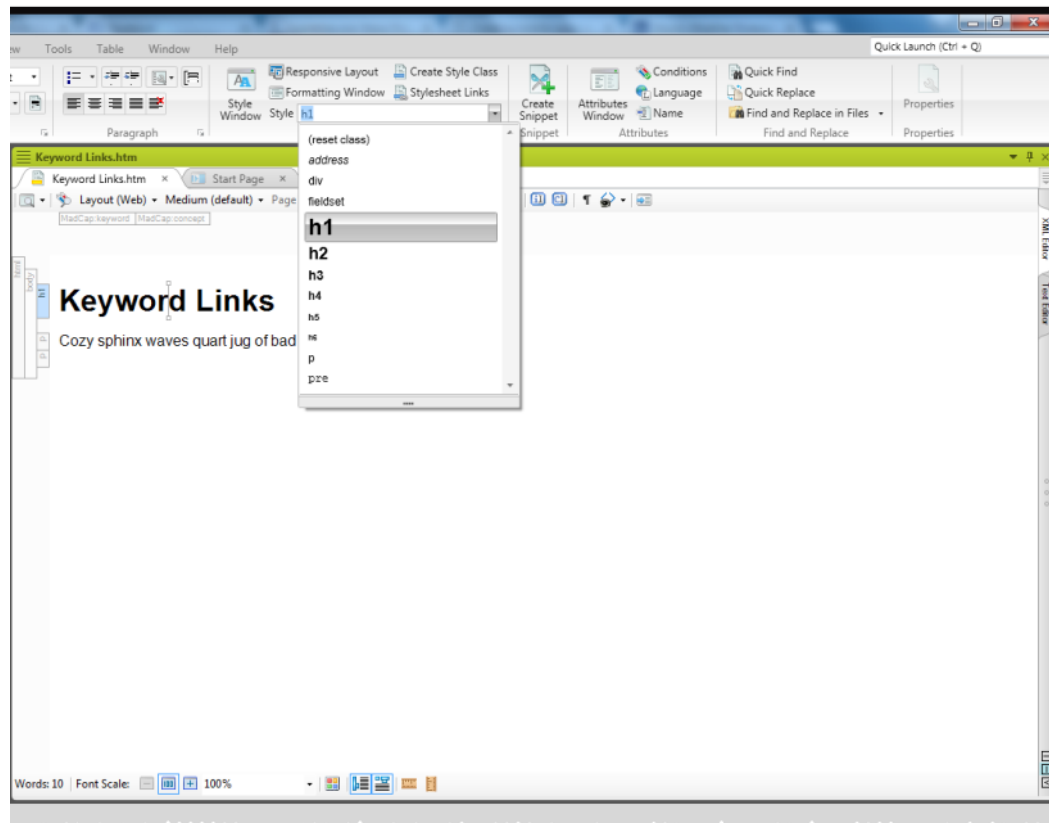
How To View Your Styles

- The Styles pane.



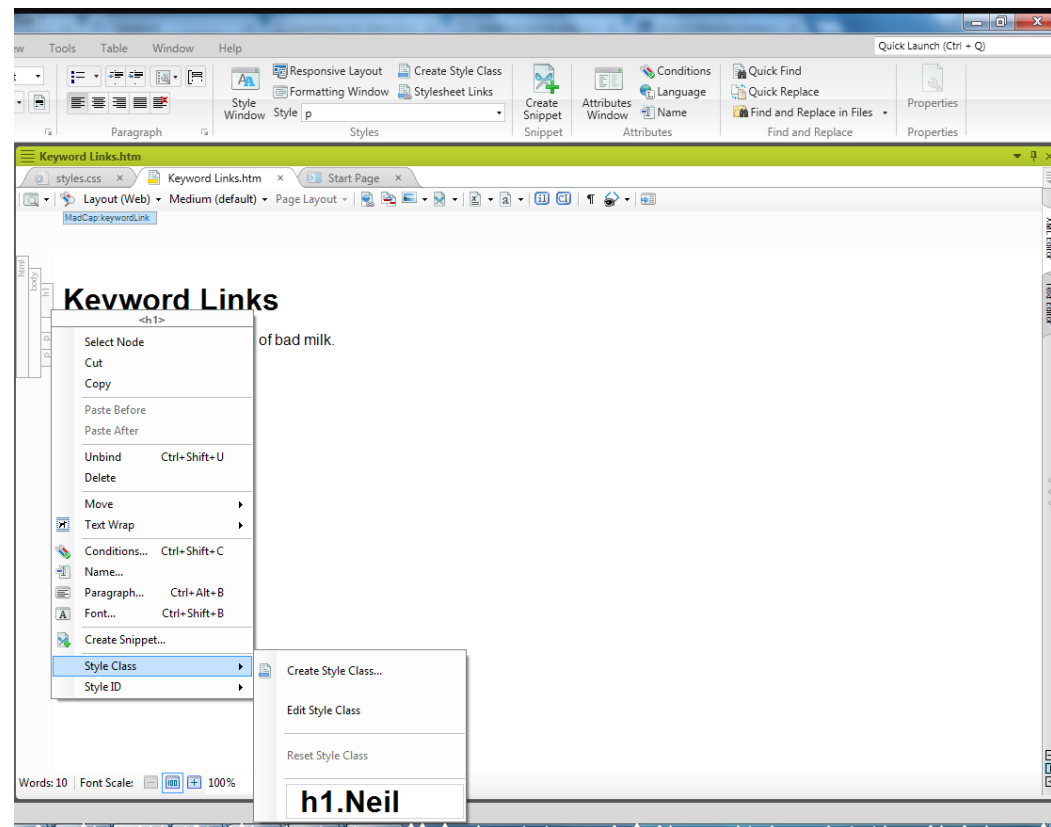
How To View Your Styles

- The Styles dropdown.



How To View Your Styles

- The Styles slide-out, for sub-classes of a style..



Demo

- Create a “caution” sub-class of p with Default and Print medium settings.
- Apply and demo the “caution” sub-class.

Summary

- There's enormous power, including features that I haven't even discussed.
- Plan to do a lot of reading, experimentation, and consider a class to learn more about it.

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