

GoDaddy and Flash Forms

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Once upon a time, GoDaddy had an issue displaying Coldfusion-generated Flash Forms in Internet Explorer. I spent a few hours on the issue and found that it was related to a file that was unavailable, for whatever reason, to ColdFusion at runtime. I spent a lengthy amount of time working with GoDaddy's tech support personnel, who have since resolved the issue (good work!). However, I know that other companies that provide hosting may have similar problems, so the following is a workaround.

The Problem:

My Flash Forms work fine on my local machine/my dev box/my other production server, but when I upload an identical file to my new hosting server, my form does not appear and I get a JavaScript error.

The Solution:

First and foremost, you'll have to copy the CFIDE/scripts folder from your dev or local machine. The key is this: if it sits on the root of your site, you have to rename it something else. I renamed mine `_CFIDE`.

Then, you'll have to add some code above and below your form. Here is my sample code:

```
<!-- Code snippet starts -->

<cfsavecontent variable="_theForm">

<cform name="theForm" format="Flash" width="300" height="200" accessible="yes">
<cfinput type="button" name="btn1" value="CLICK HERE" onClick="alert('The CFIDE hack works!')">
</cform>

</cfsavecontent>

<cfoutput>#Replace(_theForm, "/CFIDE", "_CFIDE", "ALL")#</cfoutput>

<!-- Code snippet ends -->
```

Okay, so what does this all mean? It appears that the issue with some hosting facilities and FlashForms lies somewhere in the way that they handle the CFIDE directory. Among other things, CFIDE contains all of the JavaScript and such that is needed to successfully get a Flash Form up and running. A few times in development I have had problems because I forgot to create a virtual directory to point to CFIDE. So it makes sense that if I'm having problems with Flash Forms, it must mean that CFIDE is missing. So I can just upload my own CFIDE/scripts and I'll be on my way, right?

Wrong. CFIDE already exists within your hosting account, but it doesn't work for forms in IE. Why? It's missing a file called `CF_RunActiveContent.js`. Furthermore, simply uploading your own CFIDE/scripts will not work, because the servers will not recognize it. Basically their version of CFIDE takes precedence over yours. Bummer.

So what to do? Well you've likely already read the solution above, which involves copying CFIDE/scripts and then renaming it. In reality, all you need is `CF_RunActiveContent.js`, and by association, `cformhistory.cfm` and `cformhistory.js`. With a little tweaking, you could whittle it down to just `CF_RunActiveContent.js`, but it adds a few characters to the solution code. I digress.

So once you've put the files where the server can see them, all that is left to do is tweak the code that ColdFusion spits out. This is the reason for the `cfsavecontent` and the `cfreplace`. It basically allows you to tell ColdFusion that you want to change the output after it's processed. In the resulting HTML, anything that refers to `CFIDE/scripts` gets changed to your version, `_CFIDE/scripts`, including the reference to `CF_RunActiveContent.js`. Now able to see that file, IE puts on a big smile and renders your code, no questions asked. Voila.

So why all this trouble? What exactly is contained in this `CF_RunActiveContent.js` file that is so vital? (This is the part that will piss you off.) Here are the entire contents of `CF_RunActiveContent.js`:

```
//v1.0 Copyright 2006 Adobe Systems, Inc. All rights reserved.
function CF_RunContent(src){document.write(src);}
```

All of this for a crappy little one-line function that does basically nothing?! That's why I've been struggling with Flash Forms all this time?!

Those of you at the head of the class are wondering at this point, why can't we just replace the function `CF_RunContent` with `document.write` inside the `Replace` tag? Wouldn't that save us the trouble of having to create our own version of the CFIDE directory? The short answer is, yes you can, but you won't want to.

Why not?

Because Microsoft lost a lawsuit and wants to punish the world for it. Google EOLA vs Microsoft for more on that.

Basically, if you take a shortcut and replace `CF_RunContent` with `document.write`, your form will display just fine, BUT... It will have that irritating little border around it that says you have to click or hit the spacebar to start using the flash object. I'm sure you've seen it, and it sucks. Fortunately, the folks at Macromedia kick @\$ and were able to circumvent it when using Flash Forms. The price? A tiny little one-line file, entitled... `CF_RunActiveContent.js`.

So that's the long (okay, very long) and the short of it. For now, you can get around the Flash Form bug with a fairly simple, albeit ugly, hack.