

Creating Custom Themes



Creating Custom Themes for Lectora

A *theme* is a set of design elements that together to provide a look to your Lectora title. This guide describes how to create custom themes and install them into Lectora. The process involves creating the individual design elements that make up your theme, importing them into Lectora to create a template, saving the theme components into one compressed file, and finally installing the theme within Lectora.

Theme file organization

A theme file is a compressed file that contains a set of files that have templates and associated information for today's five standard device resolutions. The contents of a theme file are:

MyTheme.athm

|— index.html

|— 320x480.awp

|— 480x800.awp

|— 800x600.awp

|— 1024x768.awp

|— 1280x800.awp

└— thumb.jpg

Creating your own theme

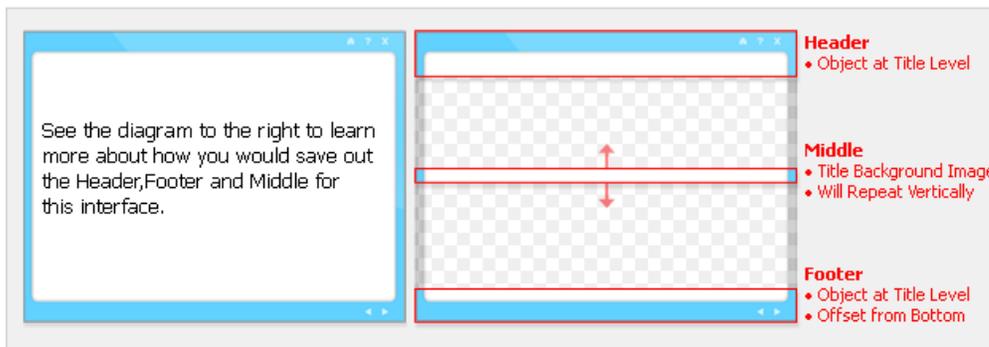
Follow these steps to produce a Lectora theme:

1. Create the main visual elements (header, footer, background, navigation buttons, logo placeholder, and so on) in the graphic editing program of your choice. Save the separate theme elements with *.jpg*, *.png*, or *.gif* file extensions. Follow these rules when creating and saving each visual element:

- The five sizes you will be designing elements for are below. You must design your themes at the **Actual Dimensions** sizes listed below, not the **Theme Size**. The **Actual Dimensions** have taken into account the screen space that is reserved by the Web browser on the device.

Device	Theme Size	Actual Dimensions
High resolution widescreen	1280x800	1265x800
Standard screen	1024x768	1009x662
Low resolution screen	800x600	785x600
Android devices	480x600	480x763
iPhone/iPod	320x480	320x416

- The header and footer images should be separate from the background image. A header is a non-repeating image that sits at the top of a page. The footer is like the header, except it is located at the bottom of the page. A footer is required to ensure that various devices, like the iPad, display the entire page. Some devices will zoom in on a page to show just the content and will crop-out everything else. By having a footer graphic, you ensure that the entire page is displayed. (See diagram below.)
- The middle part of your template will be set as the page's background, and therefore, should be designed to repeat vertically. Make this image exactly as wide as your Lectora page. Images that are equal to or greater than the page's width will automatically repeat vertically. The background can be as short as you want; shorter images will load faster. The background will only repeat vertically when it is shorter than the page in Lectora. Be sure to only include the elements that you want to repeat vertically in the background image.



- The following standard navigation buttons are suggested (in appropriate sizes) for each of the five theme sizes:

- **Home**
- **Help**
- **Exit**
- **Back**
- **Next**

Be sure to name the buttons as above. Additional buttons (such as **Glossary**, **Print**, and so on) can also be created as desired.

2. Start Lectora and select **New Blank Title** from the Getting Started window to create a new title.
3. In the Title Explorer, change the title's name to that of your theme. To do so, either click on the name to highlight it, then click again and provide the new title name or click **Title Options** on the **Design** ribbon and provide the new name in the Title Options window.
4. Assign your middle section theme graphic as the title's background image. To do so, click **Image** from the **Title Background** group on the **Design** ribbon. Navigate and select your middle theme graphic. The graphic will repeat vertically.
5. Import your other interface graphics (header, footer, logo placeholder and so on) into Lectora and place them at the title level. All theme objects must be placed at the title level. The logo placeholder image must be an image object and it must be called "Logo Placeholder" in order for it to be automatically replaced when a user switches themes in Lectora.
6. Add and configure the navigation buttons that need to be included to complete your theme. Be sure to name all of the attached actions in a way that makes them easily identifiable. For example, the action on the **Home** button could be called "Go to Home Page." If this is a mobile template, you do not need an over or down state for the buttons.
7. Arrange all objects on the page to form your desired interface.
8. Name all of your objects something that will help people quickly identify them, such as "Header" or "Next." The object names in a given template need to be unique. For example, if you have five buttons, you should name them each differently. Additionally, these object names need to match across all the templates that you are including in the theme. For example, if you have a Next button in one template and a Next button in another template, the buttons should have the same name in both templates.

Required Name

Logo Placeholder

Course Title

"Course Title Goes Here" or "Course Title" text

Home

Description

Logo placeholder image

Course Title text block

Text within the Course Title text block

Home button

Help	Help button
Exit	Exit button
Back	Back button
Next	Next button
Page Title	Page Title text block
<Page Title Auto Text>	Optional text within the Page Title text block

9. Optionally, assign empty ALT tags to your theme graphics with the exception of the buttons. People making courses that are 508-compliant (handicap accessible) ensure that the visually impaired can easily take their courses. This means using alt tags, which are read aloud by a screen reading program, such as JAWS. However, having alt tags on unnecessary items means users will listen to irrelevant information that could make the experience confusing or frustrating. To assign an empty ALT tag to an object, enable the **Empty ALT Tag** check box from the **Web Options** group on the **Properties** ribbon.
10. Offset the position of your footer graphic from the bottom, along with the objects that are meant to stay at the bottom. To do so, enable the **Offset from Bottom** check box in the **Position** group on the **Position / Size** ribbon for each footer element. This anchors your footer elements to the bottom of the page, regardless if its height changes. Ignore this step if your template is meant of have a fixed height.
11. Lock the position and size of your interface graphics. To do so, create a group of your interface graphics, add your interface graphics to the group, then, enable the **Lock** in the **Position / Size** group on the **Position / Size** ribbon. Be sure the group resides on the title level.
12. Create a text block for the course title. Enter in some placeholder text and format the text block as necessary. Then place this in the appropriate location on the page. In the Title Explorer, place this at the title level after the interface graphics group you created in the previous step. The text block must be named "Course Title" and contain the text "Course Title" or "Course Title Goes Here" in order for it to be automatically replaced when a user switches themes in Lectora.
13. Create a page title. Place it in the appropriate place on the page. In the Title Explorer, place this after the course title at the title level.
14. Save the title as a template. Under the **File** ribbon, select **Save Options** and select **Save Title As Template**. Provide the name and a description.
15. Export the new template and name it based on the screen resolution. Remaining on the **File** ribbon, select **Create New Title**. Then click **My Templates**. Select the template you just created and then click **Export**. Navigate and save the template. Name it using the screen resolution for which it was designed (for example, .1024x768.awp).
16. If you are creating a template for mobile devices, add mobile-specific resources to extend your template. Open the \ThemeSDK folder in Windows Explorer. Locate and drag the *HTML Mobile Extensions.awo* file into the Title Explorer. This will add two HTML Extension objects to your title. If they are not at the title level, move them there now. The following objects are added to your title:
 - Javascript that hides the URL bar.
 - Meta tag to scale your content to fit mobile devices.
 - Meta tag to set the apple touch icon. This icon is seen when someone bookmarks your site to their home screen.

This also adds an Apple Touch icon to your resources. You can customize this icon as long as the name is not changed.

17. Repeat the above steps to create this template in the remaining screen resolution sizes.
18. Create the thumbnail. In your preferred image editing program, create a .jpg version of your 785x600 (Low

resolution) template. Be sure the file is saved at 785x600 and named *thumb.jpg*.

19. Create the *index.xml* file. Open a text editing program, such as Notepad. Copy the following text and paste it into a blank document:

```
<?xml version="1.0"?>
<theme>
<name>My Custom Theme</name>
<thumb>thumb.jpg</thumb>
<t320x480>320x480.awp</t320x480>
<t480x800>480x800.awp</t480x800>
<t800x600>800x600.awp</t800x600>
<t1024x768>1024x768.awp</t1024x768>
<t1280x800>1280x800.awp</t1280x800>
</theme>
```

Replace the text *My Custom Theme* with the name of your theme. Make sure the names used for your *.awp* template files match the names listed in the text file. Save the file as *index.xml*.

20. Create the compressed *.athm* file. Copy the *.awp* template files, *thumb.jpg*, and *index.xml* into the same folder. In Windows Explorer, select the folder, right-click and select **Send to > Compressed (zipped) folder**. Rename the zip to the name of the template and change the *.zip* extension to be *.athm*.

Creating the Installer

This section describes the steps for creating an installer that places your custom theme into the proper location in Lectora. Before starting, you will need to download and install the NSIS environment that is needed for installing custom themes. After you install NSIS, the computer will be ready to build an installer.

Follow these steps for creating a Lectora Theme installer:

1. Download and install the NSIS at <http://nsis.sourceforge.net/Download>. View the *Release Notes* for additional information about downloading and installing NSIS.
2. If you have not done so already, unzip the folder that these instructions are contained within. Some files within it cannot be properly edited otherwise.
3. The *zip* file contains a sample theme file *MyTheme.athm*. Replace the file with your theme file in the extracted directory.
4. Edit the file *Themeinstall.nsi* in a text editor, like Notepad, and change the *MyTheme.athm* reference in the Installer Sections of the *Themeinstall.nsi* file with the name of your Theme files. You must have one line for each theme you will be installing. For example, if your theme files are named *Theme1.athm* and *Theme2.athm*, you would change the lines as follows:

From:

```
File ".\MyTheme.athm" ;You should change this to be your new Theme!!
```

To:

```
File ".\Theme1.athm" ;You should change this to be your new Theme!!
```

```
File ".\Theme2.athm" ;You should change this to be your new Theme!!
```

5. Compile the NSIS file and create a *setup.exe* install file. To do so, right-click the *ClipFlashPluginInstall.nsi* file in Windows Explorer and select **Compile NSIS Script** from the right-click menu.
6. Double-click the newly created *setup.exe* file in Windows Explorer and follow the instructions on the screen.