



Designing

Impromptu Reports

for HTML Delivery

Product Information

This document applies to Impromptu version 7.1 MR1 and may also apply to subsequent releases. To check for newer versions of this document, visit the Cognos support Web site (<http://support.cognos.com>).

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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Example of static HTML from Impromptu.....	5
1.2 Example of viewing HTML output in IWR.....	6
2. DESIGNING REPORTS FOR HTML OUTPUT	8
2.1 Controlling the Display of the Report Navigator	8
2.2 Alignment	8
2.3 Overlapping Objects	9
2.4 Scrollbars	9
2.5 Performance Tips	10
3. TROUBLESHOOTING	11
3.1 Why am I missing some of my report objects?	11
3.2 How do I get rid of all these scrollbars?	11

1. INTRODUCTION

HTML output can be used in two ways:

- Static output when saving as HTML from Impromptu User or Impromptu Administrator
- As an output format in Impromptu Web Reports (IWR)

1.1 Example of static HTML from Impromptu

When the report is saved as HTML from Impromptu, a snapshot of the data is included.

Report Navigator

- Australia
- Belgium
- Canada**
- France
- Germany
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Mexico
- Singapore
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- United States

Canada

Total Order Value And Margin for Products Sold

Total Revenue and Margin: \$196,541.89 \$85,741.89

Product No.	Product	Total Order Price	Total Qty	Total Sale Amount	Total Sale Margin
40100	Star Lite	\$165.00	1	\$133.65	\$3.65
40101	Star Gazer-2	\$2,486.00	22	\$9,040.90	\$1,494.90
40102	Star Gazer-3	\$3,275.00	47	\$22,346.00	\$4,956.00
40103	StarDome	\$1,169.00	13	\$7,221.96	\$1,891.96
40200	MoonBeam	\$348.00	36	\$3,846.24	\$966.24
40201	MoonGlow	\$627.00	47	\$5,250.33	\$1,208.33
40202	MoonLite	\$408.00	57	\$4,111.08	\$919.08
40300	Day Tripper	\$56.00	17	\$192.08	\$39.08
40301	Pack n' Hike	\$262.00	8	\$1,006.08	\$302.08
40302	GO Small Waist Pack	\$37.00	44	\$711.06	\$183.06
40303	GO Large Waist Pack	\$48.00	50	\$1,098.00	\$298.00
40400	Dover-1	\$269.00	162	\$10,298.28	\$3,332.28

1.2 Example of viewing HTML output in IWR

Data is retrieved dynamically when IWR creates HTML output, like PDF output.

Sales by Country (After) [Return](#) [Save](#) [Save As](#) [Help](#)

Report Navigator

- Australia
- Belgium
- Canada**
- France
- Germany
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Mexico
- Singapore
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- United States

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40303	GO Large Waist Pack	\$48.00	50	\$1,098.00	\$298.00
40400	Dover-1	\$269.00	162	\$10,298.28	\$3,332.28

Notes

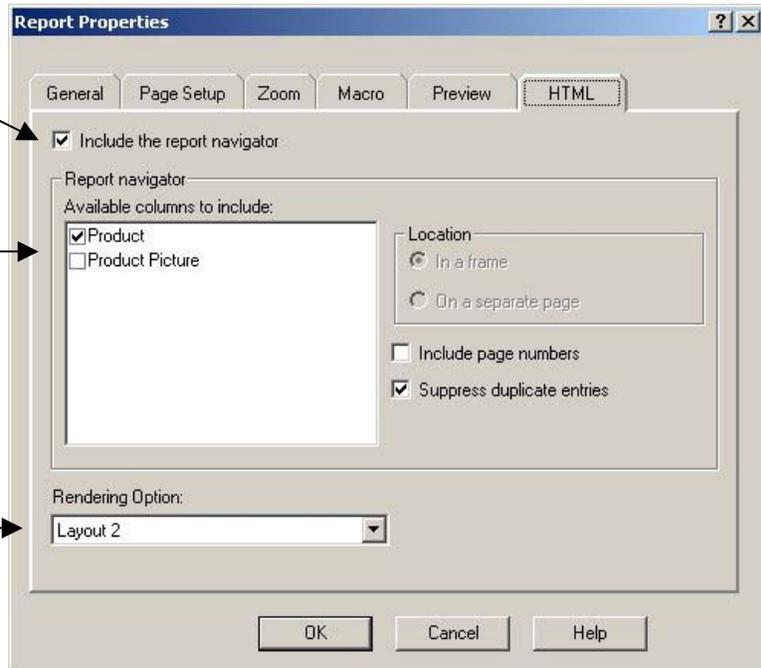
- Drill through from one Impromptu report to another is available only when viewing HTML output using IWR.
- A URL may be specified in a report and this link will be available in static HTML output or when viewing HTML output using IWR.

HTML Report Options

Controls whether the report navigator is shown on the left-hand

Displays the grouped and associated columns available for display in the Report Navigator

Default is "Layout 2"



Notes

- Layout 1 is available to support upgrading from Impromptu 7.0. Layout 1 will not be available in the next feature release of Impromptu.

2. DESIGNING REPORTS FOR HTML OUTPUT

2.1 Controlling the Display of the Report Navigator

The report navigator allows a user to quickly navigate HTML content based on a one or more grouped columns.

DO use the report navigator for multi-page reports

To display the Report Navigator, ensure the **Include the report navigator** checkbox is checked on the HTML properties page.

Tip: If the report fits on one page, deselect the **Include the report navigator** option.

DO specify a grouped column

For items to appear in the report navigator, the selected columns must be visible on the report. Grouped and associated columns will be available for selection.

More than one column may be specified.

Tip: When an item is selected in the Report Navigator, focus is placed on the text element on the HTML report. To ensure that focus is at the top of the HTML page, place one of the grouped columns used by the Report Navigator at the top of the report page.

2.2 Alignment

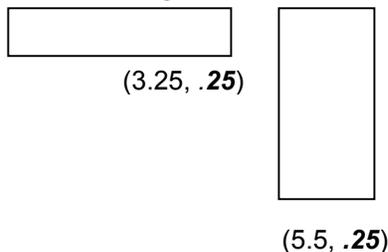
You cannot specify the absolute position of an item in HTML. To maintain the relative position of objects, all objects are placed in cells of one or more HTML tables, laid out relative to the report page.

As a result, the report may look fine in Impromptu but the report elements may appear misaligned in the HTML output.

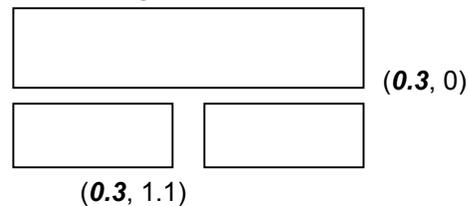
To ensure that objects appear aligned in the HTML output, align objects exactly to the same X or Y coordinate. The coordinates are visible in the status bar when an object is selected.

In the following examples, the bolded values indicate values that need to be identical to ensure horizontal or vertical alignment.

Horizontal Alignment



Vertical Alignment



DO align objects to the same x or y coordinate

To reduce the complexity of the HTML output, ensure that objects that are to appear lined up, either vertically or horizontally, use the same x or y coordinate.

Tip: The easiest means to align objects is to align one side to parent (top, bottom, left, right).

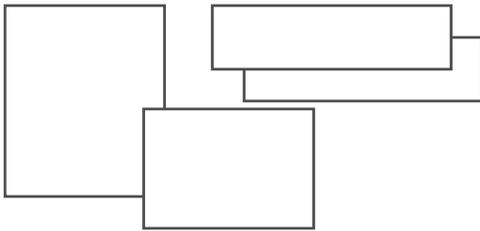
2.3 Overlapping Objects

There is no mechanism to layer objects in HTML. Report objects that are behind other objects will not export to HTML.

If you create HTML reports and discover that some objects are missing, you will need to check whether objects overlap.

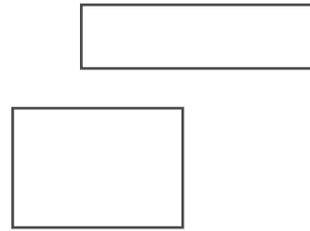
Impromptu Report

If the Impromptu report contained objects arranged as below:



HTML Output

The resulting HTML output shows only two of the four objects:



DO NOT overlap objects or layer objects

Only those objects on top will be exported. Resize or move objects so that none overlap.

Tip: To see the object outline, from the **View** menu, select **Boundary Lines**.

Tip: Check the HTML log file to see if anything was discarded. The log file is generated in the same folder as the HTML output, and is called *MyReport.Log*.

DO create calculated items to reduce text frames

If the text frame for a label overlaps the related data, eliminate the text frame by creating a calculated item that concatenates the label with the data.

Example: `'Customer Name: ' + customer_name`

Tip: Use string conversion functions such as the `Number-to-String ()` function to convert numeric, date or time values before concatenating with the label.

2.4 Scrollbars

Scrollbars can appear in two ways when viewing HTML output.

- On report objects such as list frames that contain more data than can be displayed for the size of the frame
- On the browser when the size of the report is greater than the browser window size

DO use a page size that displays in the browser window

When a report is larger than the browser window, horizontal and vertical scrollbars appear for both the report and the browser.

Tip: Resize the Report Body to fit in browser window.

Tip: Turn on Page Breaks after group breaks.

DO test list frames in the target browser

Horizontal scrollbars may appear in list frames due to vertical scrollbars being added.

Tip: To avoid unnecessary horizontal scroll bars in list frames, leave a little extra space on the right side. The extra space will accommodate the width of the vertical scrollbar when the number of rows exceeds the height of the list frame.

2.5 Performance Tips

HTML output follows the same principles as PDF output: all data is retrieved before creating the output format. As a result, if a report has a complex query, the time required to retrieve the data will be the same regardless of the report output selected.

Depending on your environment, file size may be an important performance consideration. The following tips identify how to manage the size of the resulting HTML files.

DO align objects

The more unaligned objects, the more HTML table entries are created to position the objects. This creates larger HTML files which take longer to load in the browser.

DO minimize the number of objects on the report

The more objects in the report, the larger the HTML files and the longer it takes to load in the browser.

DO simplify use of borders, colours, fonts, etc.

Formatting is a consideration only when file size is critical.

The more complex the formatting, the larger the HTML files and the longer it takes to load in the browser.

3. TROUBLESHOOTING

3.1 Why am I missing some of my report objects?

Check the x,y coordinates of the missing objects to determine if they are behind another object on the report. For more information, see section **2.3 Overlapping Objects**.

3.2 How do I get rid of all these scrollbars?

Scrollbars appear when the report is larger than the browser window or more data appears in a report frame. For more information, see section **2.4 Scrollbars**.