

Making Boost do More

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moodlemoot

Situation...

- I want my Moodle **looking great!**
- **Problem:** Everyone has a different definition of what “great” means
- **Solution:** Themes
- **Three** general theme options:
 1. Design your own custom theme
 2. Use a third-party plugin theme
 3. Use one of the build in themes

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Three Theme Options

1. Design and produce your own theme
 - **Advantages:** You can do anything
 - **Disadvantages:** Learning curve steep, time, cost
2. Use a 3rd-party plugin theme
 - **Advantages:** Many great themes, quick to deploy
 - **Disadvantages:** Shorter learning curve, long-term support is sometimes questionable
3. * Use built in themes (Clean, More, Boost)
 - **Advantages:** Great long-term support, you do nothing
 - **Disadvantages:** They do not look as great as you might want

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Rick's Approach

- Pre Moodle 3.2 (Clean and More themes)
 - I used **More** and **modified** it with **CSS**
- I Presented “Customizing MORE to Improve Your Moodle’s Appearance” at MoodleMoot US 2016
(see www.rjerz.com, links at bottom)
- Moodle 3.2 and beyond
 - We now have **Boost**, the newest core theme
 - New features (e.g., the nav drawer) and new ways to apply CSS
 - Boost seems to be the future direction, **I like it.**

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Problem: Making my Boost look like More

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My Strategy

- **More** (pre-3.2): use theme settings and CSS to tweak Moodle’s look. **No code modification!**
- **Boost** – a little different, 2 tabbed pages
 - **Advanced Settings:** Two CSS (SCSS) dialog boxes
 - **General Settings:** Preset files, very few other settings

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Rick's method for Boost

- Use the **Raw SCSS** dialog box (exactly like More)
- **Optionally:**
 - Make changes to settings in your own **Preset** file
 - Move working (tested) CSS from the **Raw SCSS** dialog box into your **Preset** file
- **Eventually:** All modifications in Preset file, **easily sharable**

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How does one do this?

- Use browser's **inspection tools**
- Probe for the webpage **element of interest** and its associated **CSS code**
- Make changes and view the results
- Copy changed CSS into your Raw SCSS textbox
- When you can't figure it out, post on **moodle.org**
- **Have fun!**

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Example 1: Change Course Font Color to Red

- Find the element in Firefox's Web Developer Inspector tool
- Change some settings
- Copy the code into Raw SCSS dialog box in Boost
- Example of the code

```
a {color: red}
```

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Example 2: Navbar Color

- **Navbar: Change color**

```
/* The top Navbar characteristics */
.navbar-light {
background-color: #d1c8c1;
//background-color: orange;
}
```

- **Note:** When I duplicate my "production" moodle to my "experimental" MAMP moodle, I swap the "//" in front of the lines to distinguish my experimental moodle from my production moodle

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Example 3: Heading Text Sizes and Line Spacing

- A smaller and "tighter" design is desired

```
/* Improve Heading Styles */
h1, h2, h3, h4 {
line-height: 100%;}
h1 { font-size: 150% }
h2 { font-size: 120% }
h3 { font-size: 110% }
h4 { font-size: 110% }
```

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Example 4: Add a background image

- I didn't know how to do this, so I asked on **moodle.org**
- Here is the CSS code

```
/* Add background image */
body {
background-image:
url(https://rjerz.com/images/moodle_background_01.jpg);
background-repeat: repeat;
}
```

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What is a Preset file and what does it look like?

- Begin with the default.scss file, rename it to something that you like (I like rj-preset02.scss)
- Element attributes
 - You can change the attribute values and view the results
- CSS code
 - You can change the CSS code, and add your own

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Using the Preset files?

- Example of changing Heading Text Sizes
- Example of adding Background Image CSS code
- Load file into your Moodle's Boost theme
- Select it from the drop down
- Note: these Preset files can become very **powerful**. I take a **simple** approach.

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My method of using the Preset file

- Work is the Raw SCSS dialog box first
- Edit the preset file in a text editor
- Cut the CSS code from Raw SCSS and paste it into the Preset file
- Reload the preset file into Boost
- See that **it works!**

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Results (current)

My More (moodle 3.1)

My Boost (Moodle 3.3)

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Summary

- **Advantages of my approach:**
 - Uses "core" themes, good long-term support
 - Easy to maintain and make changes
 - Easy when updating moodle, code persists
 - Easy to move the appearance around to other moodles

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Summary

- **Disadvantages:**
 - CSS is a little "technical"
 - There is still a learning curve
 - What is fun to one person can be a pain in the neck to others
 - Not as cool as some of the 3-party plugin themes

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My Issues with Boost

- Unable to collapse right-side blocks
Vote for **MDL-57305**
- What should be in the **nav drawer**?

There seems to be a great opportunity to greatly enhance the nav drawer and make it become a valuable "user customized" feature, far surpassing competitor LMSs!

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Additional Support

- Go to <http://www.rjerz.com>, follow the links at the bottom for last year's and this year's presentations
- Additional support for this presentation, including:
 - Default.scss file
 - My current preset file
 - Raw SCSS CSS code
 - Presentation video
- Email: rick@rjerz.com
- Find me on moodle.org

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The End - Thank you!

- For Pecha Kucha presentations, questions will be asked collectively at the end of the session.

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