



## Typical Charlie

### Using ColdFusion Studio/HomeSite+? Be More Productive

by Charlie Arehart

OK, so the majority of press these days about CFML editors (including in several issues of the FAQU) has been for CFEclipse (CFE, for short). If you're still using ColdFusion Studio or HomeSite+ (CFS/HS+), you may feel like you've seen this drama before, when Macromedia chose Dreamweaver (DW) as the preferred development environment for CFML. Yet you still stick with your trusted old editor.

And you know what? You're not alone. It's a bit of a dirty secret to admit you're still using it. You're labeled stodgy, recalcitrant, even a Luddite and a heretic! Yet many of us in the community still favor it. Yes, I'll admit it. My name is Charlie Arehart, and I still use HomeSite+! That'll cost me points in the eyes of some, but, hey, I use the other two editors (DW, CFE) as well, as there are some things they do that the other, and CFS/HS+, does not.

But this isn't an article to defend CF/HS+. Rather, I'm just talking to you, my fellow users. I'd wager you're not taking full advantage of it, even after all these years. I want to share a few pointers. Even if some are obvious to you, I know from experience that other folks may be surprised by most of them:

- \* Favorite folders: Do you find yourself jumping among folders or servers (local/remote/ftp) in the Files tab? The top left pane shows directories, and if you select one, the lower left pane shows files in that directory. Right-click in the list of file names (NOT the directory list), and choose Favorite Folders>Add Current Folder to Favorites. Now, go to another directory, and right-click again, or select a newly entered favorite.
- \* Recent Files: If you need to reopen a file you opened recently, don't dig around for it. Use File>Recent Files.
- \* Default blank document: Do you find when opening a new file (such as with Ctrl-N) that you end up highlighting all the default HTML text to delete it? Instead, use Options>Settings>Locations>Default Template and change it to Blank Document.
- \* Go to Line: When a ColdFusion error is indicated to be on "line 23", use Ctrl-G, enter the number, and you'll be placed on that line. (This works in most other editors, also.)
- \* Line Numbers, wrapping: Want to see the line numbers? Want to enable/disable wrapping? Each is controlled by an icon to the left of the text area (called the Editor Toolbar, officially, in the View menu). The first looks like a # sign, the second is two above that.
- \* Enabling opening of other file types: Have you ever tried to open a file from the file system (Windows Explorer or My Computer), telling it to open in CFS/HS+, but it just wouldn't? You just need to tell CFS/HS+ to permit it. See Options>Settings>File Settings>Extension Manager. Click Add, provide a descriptive name and extension (like "logs" and "\*.log"), and choose "editable" and "in filter". Now such files can be opened from the file system.
- \* Tag/function insight: When you're typing tags, attributes, and functions, do you find yourself typing them completely? The editor can do that for you! It's called tag (or function) insight. The problem is that it's set to a one-second delay by default. Some may never notice the feature exists. Use Options>Settings>Tag Insight and slide the "Delay" to 0. Same for Function Insight.
- \* CTRL-F4 (or right-click and "edit tag") on any tag: This will open a tag editor which depicts the available attributes for a given tag, often in a categorized display of tabs with the most

common attributes on the front tab. You'll also notice little help icons in the lower right of that window, which display help for the tag, either in that window or a new one.

- \*F1 on tags/functions: Press F1 on any tag or function to get help for it. (Just beware that if you apply the CF8 updates, the help shown is pretty anemic.)
- \*ColdFusion 6, 7, 8 Updates: "What's that you say? ColdFusion 8 updates? For CFS/HS+? Are you joking?" Nope. There have been updates for each release since CFS's official "demise". These update the tag help, tag/function insight, and related features (worth it even if the tag help is anemic, since you can get that just as easily with services like [cfquickdocs.com](http://cfquickdocs.com)). You can get the ColdFusion 8 updates at <http://www.adobe.com/support/coldfusion/downloads.html#cfdevtools>, and the ColdFusion 7 updates at <http://www.adobe.com/support/coldfusion/downloads.html#cf7downloads>.
- \*Tools>Insert Expression: Sometimes you just need a quick reminder of all the available functions and CFML built-in variables. These are quickly accessed by clicking the Tools>Insert Expression menu command, or Ctrl-Shift-e, which shows them grouped by category: list, array, decision, etc. for functions; CGI, CFQUERY, CFFILE, CFFTP, etc. for variables. For more info, see an article I did: <http://www.systemanage.com/cff/cfadv-sep98.cfm>.
- \*CSF/HS+ Help: try Help>Open Help References Window (or click the corresponding book icon in the toolbar tabs at bottom left), which opens a book-style help interface, which includes help for CF (multiple manuals) as well as for CFS/HS+ itself. Do check out the latter, especially. You'd be amazed at the cool things you could learn.

I'd love to go on, but I'm limited in my space here. Again, check out the help manual I just mentioned. Look especially into the Query Builder, the Browse feature, the RDS features, keyboard shortcuts, and more. I need to do a ColdFusion Meetup ([coldfusionmeetup.com](http://coldfusionmeetup.com)) on this topic.

Finally, I mentioned HS and HS+ at the outset. Do you know why HS+ exists, but that you can't buy it? It could be obtained only on the CD for DW MX, MX 2004, and 8. It's no longer even offered in DW CS3. Unfortunately, even when available it was not listed in the CD's installer (until DW8), so you had to know to find the HS+ installer manually. If you're still using CFS, and you have a license for DW, consider installing it. For the most part, it's an update (and an incremental one in each update to DW.) You can learn more at [http://carehart.org/blog/client/index.cfm/2006/8/1/homesite\\_plus\\_on\\_dwmx\\_cd](http://carehart.org/blog/client/index.cfm/2006/8/1/homesite_plus_on_dwmx_cd), as well as a ColdFusion Developer's Journal article I did a few years ago: <http://coldfusion.sys-con.com/read/41617.htm>.

I realize that some who read this will feel I've given the CFS/HS+ users more reasons to stick with their beloved editor. CFS/HS+ users really do owe it to themselves to seriously consider CFE and/or DW. Clearly, the end of the road is at hand for CFS/HS+. We can love it, but we may even stop getting updaters for new CF tags/functions someday.

Until you move on, though, I hope these tips help. The issue focus was development environments, and many of us still get plenty of real development done in CFS/HS+.

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A veteran ColdFusion developer since 1997, Charlie Arehart is a longtime contributor to the community and a recognized Adobe Community Expert. He's a certified Advanced ColdFusion Developer and Instructor for ColdFusion 4/5/6/7 who served as tech editor of the ColdFusion Developer's Journal until 2003. Now an independent contractor living in Alpharetta GA, Charlie provides high-level troubleshooting/tuning assistance and training/mentoring for ColdFusion teams (<http://carehart.org/consulting>). He runs the Online ColdFusion Meetup (<http://coldfusionmeetup.com>, an online ColdFusion user group), is a contributor to each of the three-volume series ColdFusion 8 WACK books by Ben Forta, and is frequently invited to speak at developer conferences and user groups worldwide.