

Commenting on *The Honolulu Advertiser's* Blogs

By Jason Nagaoka · jnagaoka@hawaii.rr.com

Before We Begin

This tutorial guide will always be a work in progress; I am always eager to hear suggestions for improvement. If you have anything to let me know about, please e-mail me at the address above. Thanks to **SteveM** for his contributions with editing the first version of this tutorial guide. Thanks to **homey** for pointing out what XHTML tags are allowed with the new *Honolulu Advertiser* blogs. And thanks to **chawan_cut** for noting the limit on the number of links you can make in a post.

The Basics

If you are reading this, then you probably found the link to this file by reading one of *The Honolulu Advertiser's* blogs, probably Stephen Tsai's *The Warrior Beat*. Blogs allow readers to communicate with the blog authors, as well as other readers. If you are interested in learning how to send comments and do simple formatting, then this tutorial is for you.

At the bottom of each blog entry, under the heading "Leave a Reply," is a box where you can type in text and submit comments. You may also copy and paste in text, although any formatting and font size/style features will be lost. **Caution:** Do not post unless you are sure that you want your statement made public for any and all to read. Once submitted, you cannot edit or delete your comment.

The following are the open fields for the comment box:

Name: Enter a name that you wish to be known by. There are few rules in selecting a name. You can use your full name, your first or last name (with or without an initial), a nickname—any name you wish, as long as it is appropriate for a family web site, and it is not the same as another user.

Mail: This e-mail address will not be posted publicly, but it is available to the *Advertiser's* online team, in case the host needs to contact you for some reason.

Website: This is an optional field—you may leave this blank if you wish. If you do post a URL (in the format **http://www.someplace.com**), this will be posted publicly, as your name will link to the URL you enter. Most people will choose to include the URL of a favorite (or personal) web site, or a link to a web page that is related to the comment being made.

Comment text: The text that you would like to post should be typed in the text box, and can be submitted via the **Submit Comment** button. Advanced tips are on the pages to come.

Note that if you type in apostrophes or quotation marks, the WordPress software will automatically turn it into "smart" apostrophes and quotation marks—that is, open and

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closed marks (like those around *smart*)—not "straight" marks (like those around *straight*).

XHTML Tags

Note: The following information is derived from tutorials published at www.w3schools.com.

The *Advertiser* blogs have a short list of "Allowed XHTML tags." The Extensible HyperText Markup Language, or XHTML, is a markup language. Markup languages use special labels called "markup tags" to give instructions for text size and style (like **bold** or *italic* text). These tags also tell the web browser (i.e., Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari) how to display the web page.

All XHTML tags are surrounded by the characters `<` and `>`, which are known as *angle brackets*. These tags typically come in pairs, the first tag being the *start tag*, and the second tag being the *end tag*. Examine this example for **bold** text:

Source:

```
<b>This text is bold</b>
```

Output:

This text is bold

`` is the start tag. Note that the `b` is bracketed by angle brackets. `This text is bold` is the element content. This is the text that will be affected by the tags. `` is the end tag. The `b` is not only bracketed by angle brackets, but it is also preceded by a slash, `/`. This slash is important, for it signifies that this tag is specifically an end tag; without the slash, it would just be another start tag. The `b` is the recognized short-hand code for bold text.

You can also choose to "nest" tags, or use more than one on any selected element content. For example, you may want **bold** and *italic* text:

Source:

```
<b><i>This text is bold and italic</i></b>
```

Output:

This text is bold and italic

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You can utilize any number of start tags that you wish, but each must be closed in the proper order. In the above example, closing the `b` tag before the `i` tag would lead to confusion for the web browser.

If you accidentally do not close a tag properly, the effects of that tag will continue until it is closed, or until the end of the comment or web page. Please be sure that you always include an end tag—particularly, do not forget that slash.

HTML Entities

The computer keyboard has only so many keys; many characters are left off of it. In programs such as Microsoft Word, special characters can be inserted from a table that shows them all; with posting text online, the use of these special characters is different. These special characters are called *entities*, each with an *entity name* and an *entity number*.

Words like **café** use special characters, such as that E with an acute accent over it. This is a character that is not readily available on the keyboard, but can be shown online. Instead of typing the E in café, one should type `é` or `é`; instead. `eacute` is the entity name for the character **é**, while `233` is the entity number. Text in the `&___;` or `&#___;` format is automatically recognized as special code used to signify a special character, much like angle brackets are used to signify XHTML tags.

When entity names are being used, the name is always preceded by an ampersand (`&`) and followed by a semi-colon. When entity numbers are used, the number is always preceded by an ampersand and pound sign (`&#`), and followed by a semi-colon. It is for this reason that the ampersand is a special character in itself, much like the angle brackets used for XHTML tags. If you type the character `<`, the browser will automatically treat the text that follows as an XHTML tag, even if it is not; this may lead to confusion by the browser. The same is true for the character `&`, the browser will be looking for an entity name or a pound sign followed by an entity number.

If you would like to use angle brackets or ampersands in the text of your message, you need to utilize entity names and/or numbers. Entity names and numbers also exist for other characters, marks, and symbols. The Reference Sheet (last page of this file) shows the entity names and numbers for the ampersand, angle brackets, and characters for use with Hawaiian text. More info can be found on other entity names and numbers by searching online.

Edit: The WordPress software which the *Advertiser* now uses for its blogs has no trouble with ampersands, so you should be able to type those without trouble. Similarly, the software has little trouble with the angle brackets *unless* they come in what I call a “code pair”—that is, an opening angle bracket followed by a closing angle bracket. Even if there is non-code text in between the two, the browser will have trouble whenever an opening angle bracket is followed down the line by a closing angle bracket. Please take this into account when typing your angle brackets; one in either direction will be fine, or

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even a closing angle bracket followed by an opening angle bracket is okay, but a opening-closing pair will not properly appear.

Smileys

The new *Honolulu Advertiser* blogs allow for users to type in *smilies*, also known as *emoticons*. These are little images that can show an emotion that the author is trying to express.

The code for the smileys are simple, and are shown on the Reference Sheet (last page of this file). "Text" smilies are written like the emotion they are trying to convey; for example, a happy face is conveyed by :) or :-). There are also "Full Text" smilies, where a code word is placed between two colons (:). These code words are typically short descriptions of the emotion that the image will portray. In some cases, one image may have several "Text" or "Full Text" codes; any of them will work.

A Final Word

The following pages contain explanations and examples of the XHTML tags that are allowed for *Comment text* box. While there are many, many more XHTML tags, these are the only ones allowed for *The Honolulu Advertiser's* blogs. If you would like information on other XHTML tags, please visit www.w3schools.com.

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<a> tag

Definition: “The <a> tag defines an anchor.”

Source:

```
<a href="http://warriorbeat.honadvblogs.com"
title="TWB">The Warrior Beat</a>
```

Output:

[The Warrior Beat](http://warriorbeat.honadvblogs.com)

Notes: An anchor is usually used to “create a link to another document.” This is done using the `href` attribute—you type the URL of the site you wish to link to between the quotation marks. The `title` attribute is optional, and most people omit it; when included, the text will appear to the user when they places their mouse cursor over the link.

On *The Honolulu Advertiser's* blogs, links using the <a> tag automatically appear in brown. Some users have (creatively) decided to omit both the `href` and `title` attributes completely; what results is a blue text that turns brown when the mouse cursor is placed over it.

Edit: I have been wondering for a while why my posts get flagged for moderation when I post a lot of links. **chawan_cut** notes that if you post more than three links, then your post will be flagged. This includes when you just post a URL (rather than a manual link).

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<abbr> tag

Definition: “The <abbr> tag indicates an abbreviated form, like “Inc.,” “etc.” By marking up abbreviations, you can give useful information to browsers, spell checkers, translation systems and search-engine indexers.”

Source:

```
<abbr title="et cetera">etc.</abbr>
```

Output:

etc.

Notes: The <abbr> tag not only adds a dotted underline to the abbreviation, but if you hold your mouse cursor over the abbreviation, the full text that the abbreviation represents appears.

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<acronym> tag

Definition: “The <acronym> tag defines the start of an acronym, like “NATO.” By marking up acronyms, you can give useful information to browsers, spell checkers, translation systems and search-engine indexers.”

Source:

```
<acronym title="No Clue At All">NCAA</acronym>
```

Output:

No Clue At All

Notes: Like with the <abbr> tag, the <acronym> tag not only adds a dotted underline to the abbreviation, but if you hold your mouse cursor over the acronym, the full text that the acronym represents appears.

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<blockquote> tag

Definition: “The <blockquote> tag defines the start of a long quotation.”

Source:

```
<blockquote cite="The Honolulu Advertiser">Stephen  
Tsai knows University of Hawai'i sports, down to the  
last decimal of a 40-yard dash. He's lived UH sports  
since 1987. Few reporters get the inside information  
like he does. What Tsai writes is a daily must  
read.</blockquote>
```

Output:

Stephen Tsai knows University of Hawai'i sports, down to the last decimal of a 40-yard dash. He's lived UH sports since 1987. Few reporters get the inside information like he does. What Tsai writes is a daily must read.

Notes: Blockquoted text is indented and boxed, with the box shaded gray. The `cite` attribute is entirely optional; its only purpose is to show from what source you copied the quotation from. Most people omit this, although it may be necessary for more scholarly Web sites.

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, , and <code> tags

Definitions: “The following elements are all phrase elements. The tag renders as emphasized text. The tag renders as strong emphasized text. The <code> tag defines computer code text.”

Source:

```
<em>This is emphasized text.</em>
<strong>This is strong emphasized text.</strong>
<code>This is computer code text.</code>
```

Output:

This is emphasized text.
This is strong emphasized text.
This is computer code text.

Notes: These “phrase elements” are used more for notation than for formatting; for example, the formatting with the tag is similar to that with the <i> tag, but the <i> tag is more for italicized words, while the tag is more for longer phrases and passages. The same applies with vs. .

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<i> and tags

Definition: “The following elements are all font style elements. The <i> tag renders as italic text. The tag renders as bold text.”

Source:

```
This is <i>italic text</i>.  
This is <b>bold text</b>.
```

Output:

This is *italic text*.
This is **bold text**.

Notes: These “font style elements” are used more for formatting than notation. The <i> tag compares to the tag, and the tag compares to the tag; the font style elements are used more for singular words or shorter phrases, rather than longer sentences or passages.

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<strike> tag

Definition: “The <strike> tag defines strikethrough text.”

Source:

```
<strike>Herman Frazier</strike> Jim Donovan
```

Output:

~~Herman Frazier~~ Jim Donovan

Notes: Technically, the <strike> tag was deprecated (made obsolete) in HTML 4.01, and is not supported in XHTML 1.0 Strict DTD. Instead, users are supposed to use the tag. But since *The Honolulu Advertiser* blogs do not support the tag, users must use <strike> instead.























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This **Reference Sheet** may be printed and displayed for your private use.

Character	Entity Name	Entity Number
&	&	&
<	<	<
>	>	>

Character	Entity Number	Character	Entity Number
Ā	Ā	ā	ā
Ē	Ē	ē	ē
Ī	Ī	ī	ī
Ō	Ō	ō	ō
Ū	Ū	ū	ū
‘	ʻ	’	‘

	:)	: -)	:smile:		:lol:
	:D	: -D	:grin:		:oops:
	:(: - (:sad:		:cry:
	:o	: -o	:eek:		:evil:
	8O	8 -O	:shock:		:twisted:
	:?	: -?	:???:		:roll:
	8)	8 -)	:cool:		:!:
	:x	: -x	:mad:		:?:
	:P	: -P	:razz:		:idea:
	:	: -	:neutral:		:arrow:
	;)	; -)	:wink:		:mrgreen:

Link Text
<abbr title="Title">Abbreviation</abbr>
<acronym title="Title">Acronym</acronym>
<blockquote cite="Source">Quoted Text</blockquote>
Emphasized Text
Strong Emphasized Text
<code>Computer Code Text</code>
<i>Italic Text</i>
Bold Text
<strike>Strikethrough Text</strike>