Newsgroups: comp.infosystems.www.providers
From: kel...@redwing.SLAC.Stanford.EDU (Mike Kelsey)
Subject: Re: Back button
Message-ID: <Cz2HCp.44r@unixhub.SLAC.Stanford.EDU>
Organization: Stanford Linear Accelerator Center
Date: Thu, 10 Nov 1994 19:41:13 GMT

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Check out http://www.whitehouse.gov/, the Web server set up by a bunch of interns at the U.S. White House. They made their top level "home page" a CGI script, and build the pages they present on the fly. When you enter the home page the script assigns some sort of unique identifier to your "session." As you traverse their suite of pages, the <BASE> URL is generated in such a way that the script knows which page you came from. Keep an eye on the URL that is displayed in your "Location:" window (or the equivalent) on your browser.

The on-the-fly generated pages include a [Back] button that is a *REAL* back-to-previous-page action. The URL it connects to is in fact the last page you visited. If your browser shows you the URLs at each hyperlink (say when you run your mouse over them), compare it to the current URL and you'll see what I mean.

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The trick is not to have hard-wired pages, but to generate the pages on the fly using a CGI script. That way you can control, at the time the information is transmitted to the client, what is presented and what the various hyperlinks are.

-- Mike Kelsey