

# 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

# Three Theme Options

- 1. Design and produce your own theme**
  - **Advantages:** You can do anything
  - **Disadvantages:** Learning curve steep, time, cost
- 2. Use a 3<sup>rd</sup>-party plugin themes**
  - **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

# 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](http://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.**

# Problem: Making my Boost look like More

## My More

The screenshot shows the 'My More' course interface for 'Operations Management - MSCI3000-Su16'. The layout is a multi-column dashboard. On the left is a navigation sidebar with sections for 'ONLINE USERS', 'PEOPLE', 'SEARCH FORUMS', and 'ADMINISTRATION'. The main content area is divided into three columns: 'Administrative Items' (listing Syllabus, Course Calendar, etc.), a 'CALENDAR' for May 2016, and 'UPCOMING EVENTS'. A 'MY CHECKLIST' and 'LECTURE VIDEOS' section are also visible. The interface has a textured, light-colored background.

## Default Boost

The screenshot shows the 'Default Boost' course interface for 'Information Systems - MSCI3005-S17'. The layout is a clean, modern dashboard. On the left is a vertical sidebar with a 'Courses' menu and a list of course options including 'Participants', 'Badges', 'Competencies', 'Grades', 'Dashboard', 'Site home', 'Calendar', 'Private files', 'My courses', and 'Site administration'. The main content area features a header for the course, followed by 'Administrative Items' (Syllabus, Course Calendar, etc.) and 'ONLINE USERS'. A 'PEOPLE' section with 'Participants' is also present. The interface is clean and uses a light gray color scheme.

# 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

# 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**

# 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](http://moodle.org)
- **Have fun!**



# 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}
```

# 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**

# 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% }
```

# Example 4:

## Add a background image

- I didn't know how to do this, so I asked on [moodle.org](https://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;  
}
```

# 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**

# 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.

# 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!**

# Results (current)

## My More (moodle 3.1)

The screenshot shows the Moodle 3.1 course interface. The course title is "Operations Management - MSCI3000-Su16". The page is divided into several sections: "ONLINE USERS" (Rick Jerz, last 5 minutes), "PEOPLE" (Participants), "SEARCH FORUMS", and "ADMINISTRATION". The "ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS" section is expanded, showing a list of course items: "Course Introductory Items", "Chapter 1: Operations and Productivity", "Chapter 2: Operations Strategy in a Global Environment", "Chapter 3: Project Management", "Chapter 4: Forecasting", "Chapter 5: Design of Goods and Services", and "Chapter 6: Managing Quality". A "CALENDAR" section shows the month of May 2016 with a grid of dates and a list of "UPCOMING EVENTS" (none shown). A "MY CHECKLIST" section shows tasks for "Kathy Smith" and "Rick #rick". A "LECTURE VIDEOS" section lists videos like "Ultras Virtual Desktop" and "Downloading DreamSpark Software". A "CASE VIDEOS" section lists "What is Operations Management?". An "ADMIN VIDEOS" section is also visible.

## My Boost (Moodle 3.3)

The screenshot shows the Moodle 3.3 course interface. The course title is "Operations Management - MSCI3000-Su17". The page is divided into several sections: "MSCI3000-Su17", "Participants", "Grades", "Home", "Dashboard", "Calendar", "Private files", and "My courses". The "My courses" section lists several courses: "MBA8150-Su17-OL", "MSCI3005-Su17", "MSCI3000-Su17", "MSCI3005-S17", "MBA8150-S17", "MBA8150-S17-OL", "MSCI9230-S17", and "Test". The "ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS" section is expanded, showing a list of course items: "Course Introductory Items", "Chapter 1: Operations and Productivity", "Chapter 2: Operations Strategy in a Global Environment", and "Chapter 3: Project Management". A "CALENDAR" section shows the month of May 2016 with a grid of dates and a list of "UPCOMING EVENTS" (none shown). A "MY CHECKLIST" section shows tasks for "Kathy Smith" and "Rick #rick". A "LECTURE VIDEOS" section lists videos like "Ultras Virtual Desktop" and "Downloading DreamSpark Software". A "CASE VIDEOS" section lists "What is Operations Management?". An "ADMIN VIDEOS" section is also visible.



# 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

# 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

# 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!

# 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](mailto:rick@rjerz.com)
- Find me on [moodle.org](http://moodle.org)

# The End - Thank you!

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

