

## Get Content Stack

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### About this stack

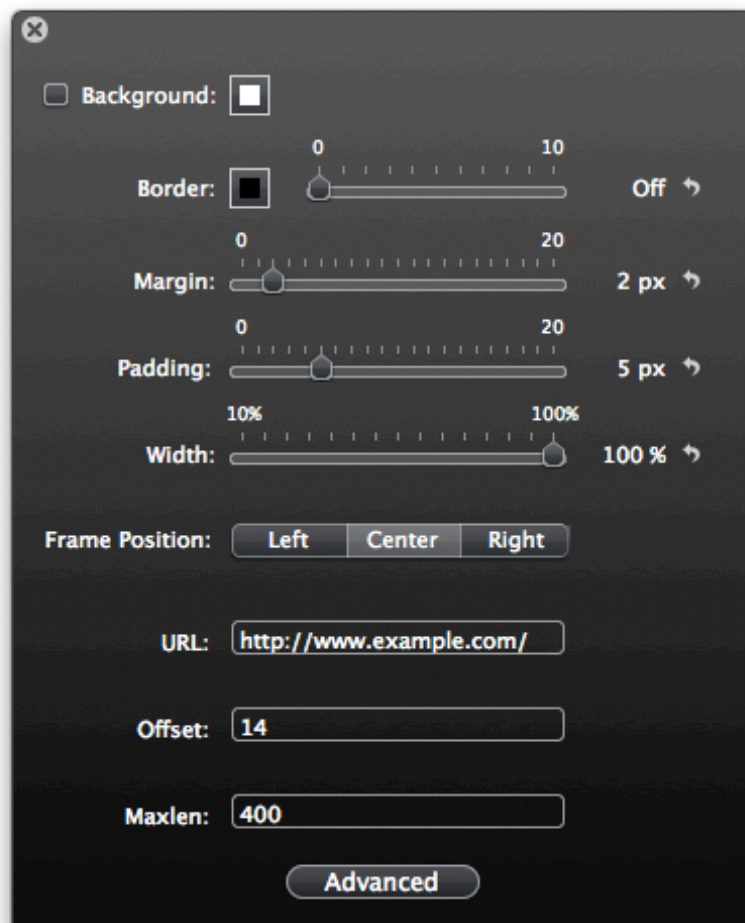
This stack can be used to fetch and display text from another website inside your stacks page. Unlike an iFrame, you can control exactly what text is displayed. You can use it to embed items such as current weather conditions, sport scores, share prices, news headlines, top forum threads or recent blog posts inside your stacks page. This stack is best used to fetch text from plain text files (.txt files) but it can be used to fetch content from basic HTML or PHP sources. Used correctly, it is a very powerful script to add to your Stacks page.

### How do I use this stack?

Start by installing the stack. As you are probably already aware, new stacks should be copied and pasted into `~/Library/Application Support/RapidWeaver/Stacks/` where `~` is the name of your home directory. Restart RapidWeaver for the new stack to become available.

Open the RapidWeaver page inspector and make sure your page has a .php extension.

Drag and drop the get content stack into your stacks page like you normally do. Single-click the get content stack in edit mode and open the stack inspector by clicking the 'i' button to open the Stack inspector, pictured below:



**URL** is the address to the page you want to obtain content from. This can either be a standard HTML page or a plain text (.txt) file stored on a web server. The address must

include 'http://' and point directly to the source file. Normally it is not possible to obtain content from secure sites, session-based sites or password-protected sites.

**Offset** is the point of the website or text file where you want to start importing your content from. Say for example the sentence you wanted to import was 310 characters into the page, this is the figure you enter in the box.

**Maxlen** is the maximum length of the content you wish to import. Say for example the text you want to import was 126 character long, you would enter 126 into the box.

**Notes:**

For best results, link to a basic data source which does not contain too many line breaks or other code such as HTML tags. Raw text (.txt) files work very well, standard HTML pages work OK, but miscellaneous tags can sometimes break the formatting or cause errors. Linking to a data set which is over 1000 characters long can sometimes present problems.

Ideally the data you link to should not be fluctuating in length. Some tolerance is allowed if you have spaces (e.g. &nbsp; tags) after your content. If content before your offset point is changed, this may cause the wrong content to get imported.

More details about the PHP file\_get\_contents function can be found on this page:

[http://uk3.php.net/file\\_get\\_contents](http://uk3.php.net/file_get_contents)

Searching the internet for file\_get\_contents will also turn up numerous additional resources.

This stack requires a web server with PHP 4 or greater installed. Most web hosting companies have standard versions of PHP installed, although some (such as Apple's Mobile Me service) don't. Additionally some web hosts have strange configurations of PHP which might cause issues. Check with you web host if in doubt. Normally if the contact form supplied with RapidWeaver works on your web server, you should be OK using this stack.

Because this stack has the power to fetch content from almost any internet source, it is vitally important you obtain permission from copyright owners before re-using content in your own website. Although in theory you are simply 'windowing' content already available to others, you should still seek permission before using this stack with content that is not yours.

Again, it should be emphasised that you need to change your page extension from .html to a .php file extension under the RapidWeaver page inspector. If it is left as .html, this stack simply won't work.

**Questions, comments or suggestions for improvements?**

Please contact me via the ThemeFlood website: <http://www.themeflood.com>

RapidWeaver forums: <http://www.realmacsoftware.com/forums/index.php/forums/>