Adding Mouse Over Row Highlighting To Tables

Intro

I have a bit of "me" time today to write some code and I thought I'd treat myself to something light and fun by building something purely for its flashiness and aesthetic. Something that does't have any useful purpose other than it looks good.

I am a big fan of adding effects to html pages by simply adding a reference to a separate javascript file. This keeps the javascript code separated from the HTML, which is a big help in avoiding "spaghetti script".

This is a technique that Jon Galloway writes about in his post on Markup Based Javascript Effect Libraries which highlights several approaches for adding interesting behaviors to a page without using Flash or DHTML behaviors (which only work in IE anyways). By referencing a javascript file and adding certain semantic markup to html elements, an author can add very interesting effects to a page.

The Row Mouse Over Effect

The effect I will introduce is simple. Adding a javascript file and a couple CSS classes will allow you to add row highlighting to any table. It provides a mean to change the look and style of a row when you mouse over it, and then change it back when you mouse out.

All you need to do is to reference the tableEffects.js javascript file and add the "highlightTable" css class to a table. At that point, each row of the table will have its CSS class changed to "highlight" or "highlightAlt" when moused over. Its CSS class will be reset when the mouse leaves.

In order to actually see a change when you mouse over, you'll have to style the rows for highlighting like so:

```
table.highlightTable tr.highlight td
{
    background: #fefeee;
}
table.highlightTable tr.highlightAlt td
{
    background: #fafae9;
}
```

The script assumes you want to use a different color for alternating rows. If not, you can simply style both highlight and highlightAlt the same.

See It In Action

col 1	col 2	col 3	col 4
Apple	Orange	Banana	Kiwi
Pinto	Porsche	Peugot	Acura
LAX	SFO	ANC	NYC
No	Body	Look	Here
Red	Blue	Green	Alpha

Get the file

Download the file from here (Right click and save as).

If you have any improvements (as I am sure there will be some), please let me know and I will keep my version updated. I named the script "tableEffects.js" because I hope to add more interesting effects.

And remember, though I tend to preach table-less design, there are semantic uses for tables. When using this script, it helps to make sure that your tables are semantically marked up. For example, if you don't want your

header row to highlight, use <th> tags instead of <tr>. The script ignores the table header tags.