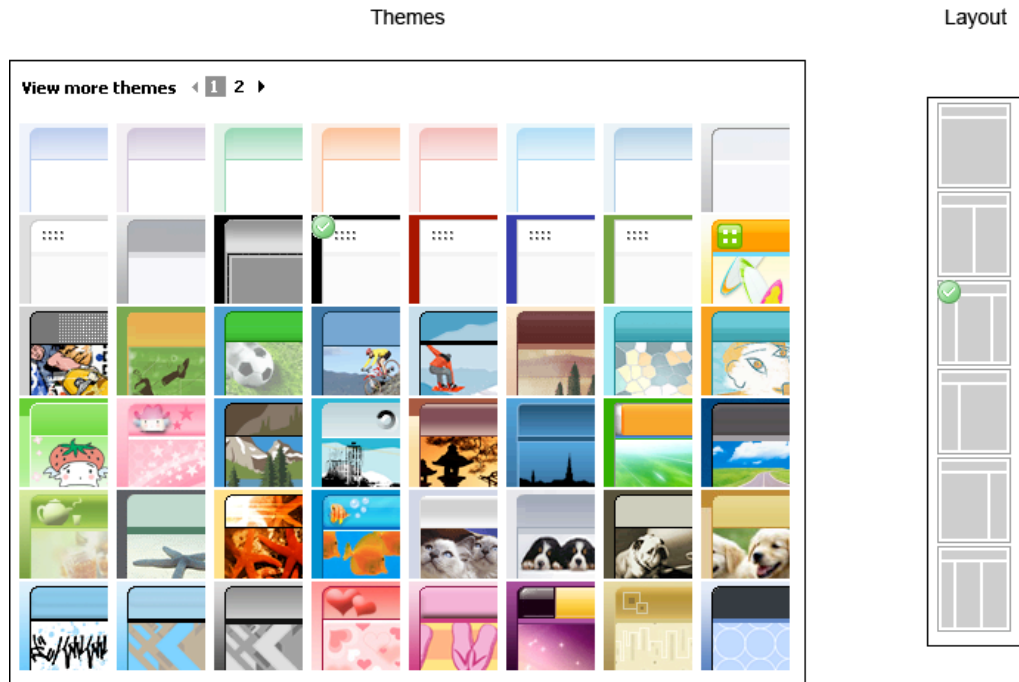# Chapter 7: Posting a Web Site Within an Hour (or So)

Choosing a Theme and a Layout

MSN Spaces allows you to designate a *theme* and a *layout*. A **theme** consists of a collection of colors, fonts, and images used to display your space. Currently, you can choose from over 80 themes. In contrast, a **layout** simply indicates the number and size of columns and rows in your MSN Space. By default, your space uses three columns.

> **lingo** In the context of MSN Spaces, a *theme* controls a space's colors, fonts, and background, whereas a *layout* controls the number of columns and rows in the space's content area.

To choose a theme, click the **Theme** menu, and then click a theme thumbnail image. (Notice that there are two pages of theme options.) When you click a theme option, your space displays the theme's settings. You can change the theme as many times as you want. Your selection doesn't become permanent until you save your changes (but even then, you can change your theme any time you're in edit view).

For the Phat Tiger Says… space, we selected the second color on page two. The black-and-green theme reminded us of night vision imagery we've seen in news stories, and since the MSN Space is for a night watch crew, the association made sense. If possible, you should choose a theme that reflects the purpose or personality you want to convey with your space.

Themes   Layout

The Themes and Layout options for MSN Spaces

To choose a layout for your MSN Space, click the **Layout** button and select your

column preference. For this project, we stuck with the default three-column

approach (the third option on the **Layout** menu). A three-column layout with

the center column representing the largest content area is a standard and

useful layout employed by many bloggers and Web designers.

You can experiment with different layout options, but be prepared—when you

change layout settings, your content modules are automatically resized and

reorganized into the new layout selection. If you revert to the three-column

layout after experimenting, you might need to reposition your content

modules. Of course, repositioning modules isn't a big deal, since you can drag

modules around using your mouse.

After you've settled on theme and layout selections, click **Save**. None of your changes appear online until you save your work. If you don't like the changes you've made, click **Cancel** instead of **Save**, and your MSN Space will revert to the last saved version.

The overall theme and the shape of your MSN Space should now be defined. Your next job is to begin narrowing your focus by adding and removing content modules in your MSN Space.