Unlinkable pages: You may have noticed that in most of the figures we’ve shown you, the address bar doesn’t change even when the page does. When you use the XMLHttpRequest object to communicate with the server, you never need to modify the URL displayed in the address bar. While this may actually be a plus in some Web applications, it also means your users cannot bookmark your page or send a URL to their friends (think about maps or driving directions). This isn’t insurmountable; in fact, Google Maps now includes a Link to This Page link (see Figure 8-4). If links are key to your application or site, be aware that Ajax makes this a bit a challenge.

Asynchronous changes: Talking to the server asynchronously is one of the real steps forward with Ajax; however, it isn’t without its issues. We’ve talked about this a few times, but it’s worth discussing again: users have been trained to expect the entire page to be repainted anytime things change, so they may not notice when you update just parts of the page. Just because you can reload parts of the page doesn’t mean this is the right approach for your entire application—use this approach judiciously.