

This presentation is an overview of IBM WebSphere Application Server Feature Pack for Web 2.0



The agenda for this presentation entails a recap to what Ajax is and its benefits. It will then be followed by the overview of IBM WebSphere Application Server Feature Pack for Web 2.0 features, Dojo Toolkit and the benefits of the feature pack.



This section describes Ajax and its benefits.



Ajax means for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML. It is a Web development technique for creating interactive Web applications that make Web pages more responsive. Exchanging small amounts of data with the server means that the entire Web page does not have to be reloaded each time you make a change. This increases the Web page's interactivity, speed, and usability. In short, Ajax enables a dynamic, asynchronous Web experience without the need for page refreshes.

In Ajax programming, HTML - or XHTML - and CSS are used for marking up and styling information. Dynamic display and interaction use JavaScript and the Document Object Model, or DOM.

Data interchange and manipulation are accomplished using JSON or XML or both file formats. The XMLHttpRequest object can be used to exchange data asynchronously with the Web server.



The basic technologies in Ajax include XHTML and CSS which provide a standards-based presentation. JavaScript is also one of the technologies and it binds everything together. The DOM provides dynamic display and interaction. XML, XSLT and JSON provide data interchange and manipulation.



Also included in the Ajax technologies is Dynamic HTML, or DHTML, which updates forms dynamically. XML can be used as the format for transferring data between the server and client; although several formats work, including preformatted HTML, plain text, and JavaScript Object Notation, or JSON.



The core of Ajax technology is a JavaScript object XMLHttpRequest . With an XMLHttpRequest object, you can use JavaScript to make a request to the server and process the response. Examples of applications that use this technology include Google's Gmail service, Google's Suggest dynamic lookup interface, and the MapQuest dynamic map interface. It is the JavaScript technology through the XMLHttpRequest object that talks to the server which is not the normal application flow and it is where Ajax gets much of its magic.



This example shows how a request is sent asynchronously with Ajax. In a normal Web application, when you fill out a form and submit it, the entire form is sent to the server. The server then passes on processing to a script (typically PHP or Java or maybe a CGI process or something similar), and when the script is done, it sends back a completely new page.

Ajax puts JavaScript technology and the XMLHttpRequest object between the Web form and the server so when you fill out a form, that data is sent to some JavaScript code and not directly to the server.

The server then sends data back to the JavaScript code (still standing in for the Web form) which decides what to do with that data. It can update form fields on the fly, giving that immediate feeling to your application.

You are getting new data without the form being submitted or refreshed. The JavaScript code can get the data, perform some calculations, and send another request, all without user intervention! This is the power of XMLHttpRequest. It can talk back and forth with a server all it wants, without you ever knowing about what's really going on. The result is a dynamic, responsive, highly-interactive experience like a desktop application, but with all the power of the Internet behind it.



Ajax bridges the gap between the desktop applications and the Web applications. Web pages are more responsive by seamlessly exchanging small amounts of data with the server. The entire Web page does not have to be reloaded each time a change is made thus increasing Web page interactivity, speed, and usability. Ajax applications leverage standard browser features and do not require you to install browser plug-ins.



Another benefit of Ajax is that it builds Web clients in a Service Oriented Architecture that can connect to any kind of server: PHP, ASP. Net, Ruby on Rails, and so on. It also enables major improvements in responsiveness and performance of Web applications.



This section covers the features of the IBM WebSphere Application Server Feature Pack for Web 2.0



This picture shows the feature pack highlights and how the pieces of the feature pack fit together.

There is the **Web 2.0 to SOA connectivity** for enabling connectivity from Ajax clients to SOA services and other J2EE assets. It extends enterprise data to customers and partners through Web feeds.

Then there is the **Ajax messaging** for connecting Ajax clients to real-time updated data like stock quotes or instant messaging.

The **Ajax development toolkit** for WebSphere Application Server is based on Dojo, and is an open source JavaScript runtime.



Features in the feature pack include Web 2.0 SOA Ajax connectivity, JSON4J and Ajax messaging Java libraries, and the Ajax developer's guide.



The Ajax development toolkit consists of the Dojo Toolkit, and IBM extensions to the Dojo Toolkit, like the Atom Library, Gauge Widgets, OpenSearch Library, and the Soap Library. Sample applications are listed here.



The Web 2.0 to SOA connectivity lets you connect from Ajax clients to external Web services, internal SOA services, and other J2EE assets. It also extends enterprise data to customers and partners through Web feeds.



Web remoting is one of the features for Web 2.0 to SOA connectivity. Web remoting provides a lightweight Web endpoint which can expose methods of Java EE assets. Web remoting can also be easily invoked from Ajax applications using JSON or XML formats and supports HTTP GET/POST mapping for methods. It is enabled through simple configuration options so you do not need to rewrite the original Java objects, EJB or Web services.



The Ajax proxy is a lightweight proxy to enable browser based access to cross-site services. The proxy can run embedded within a J2EE application or stand-alone and it uses JEE application level security for proxy access control. The Ajax proxy also has support for white-listing policies for filtering on criteria of incoming requests such as: Cookies, MIME types, HTTP Headers, HTTP verbs.



Web feeds are also part of the Web 2.0 to SOA connectivity. Atom and RSS libraries allow you to expose JEE resources as Web 2.0 style "data feeds." This lets clients subscribe to updates and get notified when the data changes, as long as the update frequency is not near-real-time. Apache Abdera is an open-source project providing feeds support. Abdera addresses both the Atom syndication format and the Atom publishing protocol. In addition, Abdera currently supports reading RSS content.



Another feature for Web 2.0 to SOA connectivity is the JSON4J library. It is an implementation of a set of JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) handling classes for use within Java environments. JSON has gained much popularity within Ajax applications as a lightweight data interchange format.



Ajax messaging is for connecting Ajax clients to near-real-time updated data like stock quotes or instant messaging.

It also connects the browser to service integration bus topics for pushing server-side events to the browser. It uses the Bayeux protocol for long-polling and forever frame Comet transport types.



The Web messaging service bridges browser clients to the service integration bus allowing a Web service or any other item connected to the bus to publish events to Web-based clients.

You can use the Web messaging Service in a new or existing application by placing a utility file library - a .jar file - in an application Web module, setting up a simple configuration file, and configuring servlet mappings. In addition, the service integration bus can be connected to WebSphere MQ through MQ link. Through the service integration bus you should be able to bridge MQ to Web clients.



Web messaging implements the "Comet" server model. It has simulated long running connections and a topic-based publish/subscribe mechanism. J2EE Applications use standard JMS APIs to access messages routed to or from Ajax clients, rather than an augmented servlet API. Ajax messaging uses the Bayeux protocol for client-server communication. Bayeux is a JSON-based protocol for clients to subscribe to events and for servers to deliver them more timely than possible with Ajax-based polling. The goals of messaging are to make event delivery fast and simple. Ajax messaging also allows for the protocol to be extended.



For Web messaging, client side support for Bayeux protocol is provided by the Dojo Toolkit. Security restricts cross-site access to non-authorized domains.



The Ajax Developer's Guide includes information on the importance of the proxy for Ajax, using MVC patterns with the Dojo toolkit, publishing and subscribing to server events from Ajax clients, Ajax and traditional J2EE Web applications, and debugging Ajax.



The Ajax development toolkit for WebSphere Application Server is based on the open source Dojo toolkit. IBM is a committed member of the Dojo Foundation and the OpenAjax Alliance.



The Ajax development toolkit is a supported IBM distribution of the Dojo Toolkit plus additional IBM client-side JavaScript libraries (IBM extensions) to simplify working with different protocols, data formats and connectivity options



The IBM Dojo Toolkit extensions include Atom, SOAP connectivity, Gauge widgets, and the OpenSearch Library. SOAP connectivity makes it easier to invoke public SOAP-based Web services from Ajax applications. The Atom library, data store, and widgets are included in the Dojo toolkit extensions. The Atom publishing protocol (APP) data access makes it easy to invoke any Atom APP 1.0-compliant service, and uses Atom feeds as data sources which are bound to widgets, within your Ajax application. Atom feed widgets are sample feed widgets which use the Atom APP data access feature.



Analog and Bar Gauge widgets are useful for displaying monitored values and they support real-time updates. The OpenSearch Library makes it easy to invoke any OpenSearch-compliant service and bind search results to widgets within your Ajax application. Small demonstrations and tests are included with each library.



Dojo is an open source DHTML toolkit written in the JavaScript language. Dojo allows you to build dynamic capabilities into Web pages. You can use the components that Dojo provides to make your Web sites more usable, responsive, and functional. Dojo builds on several contributing code bases. Dojo toolkit works well across most modern browsers and provides a lot of power and attempts to make it digestible in three major layers: Dojo Core, Dijit, and DojoX.



The features included in the Dojo Toolkit version 1.0 include Dojo Core and Dojo widgets. There are also many community-provided extension modules.



The Feature Pack for Web 2.0 features two main Ajax applications.

The QuoteStreamer sample application uses the Web messaging service to simulate stock quotes to a Dojo-enabled client application.

The Ajax-enabled PlantsByWebSphere application is intended to be representative of a Web application that contains model, presentation, and control layers.



The Feature Pack for Web 2.0 contains code snippets and small test samples and four larger sample applications.

There are two samples that are specific to feeds: The CourierApp Sample Web application demonstrates auto population of address details on selecting a postal code. The address lookup service is invoked using the RPC adapter to get the detailed address. The response can be either JSON or XML format. The feed samples demonstrate the Atom and RSS support in Abdera and the Atom Publishing Protocol support.



This section addresses the benefits of the feature pack for Web 2.0.



The feature pack lets you build and deliver rich Web 2.0 internet applications with IBM SOA, reduce development costs and time to market, and reduce technology choices by providing a standard Ajax library for the enterprise.



This section is the summary.



Web 2.0 to SOA connectivity enables connectivity from Ajax clients and mash-ups to external Web services, internal SOA services, and JEE assets. Ajax messaging connects Ajax clients to real-time updated data like stock quotes or instant messaging. The Ajax development toolkit for WebSphere Application Server is based on Dojo with IBM extensions, and the samples include Ajax-based versions of PlantsByWebSphere and QuoteStreamer.



The supported platforms and development environments are listed here for your reference.



These references are provided for more information on each of these topics.



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