GT2003HackathonForms

Sylvain's mini-talk at the GT2003 Hackathon.

Raw notes taken collaboratively during the talk.

Sylvain taking the stage

History of form handling

- FormValidatorAction
- Precept & XMLForm
    - Precept kinda died
    - XMLForm ended up being hyped
        - Could handle repetition (of widgets / fields)
        - XPath limitation for serious datatyping (like Dates)
        - quite a lot of code for serious forms (Get/Set)

Woody approach

- Schema for datamodel definition
- Validation rules are built-in per datatype
- Repeaters ease the creation of multiline, multifield forms
- Binding definitions ease bidirectional data exchange between the model and the forms
- Form model resides server-side (no dynamic XPath expression stuff going on, avoids security problems)
- WoodyTransformer uses form definition + form template to generate a synthetic "form view" which can be processed independently of Woody to create the required (HTML, WML, PDF, you name it) presentation.
- WoodyTransformer and/or JXTemplateTransformer: which one should you choose?
- Styling stylesheets: use the provided ones or brew your own.

Open issues

- Multi-page forms are currently missing. Sylvain thinks this will be implemented with Flowscript "wizards" which will register steps, instead of being Woody's concern.
- Some worries expressed by a lot of people: the necessity of convergence - having only one 'endorsed' form handling framework
- Name discussion: we are considering to throw away the name and rename it into "Cocoon Forms"

(antonio) that is a good idea. But woody is cool too. Think in the woody woodpecker

- Lack of dynamic forms or binding
- Event dispatchers / event queue
- Best practices
- High-level widgets (like existing calendar)
- Client-side validation?
- Possible integration of Linotype editor component as a Woody widget

Interesting sidetrack

- Idea (Upa): moving Woody into the core - a discussion ensues about "What is the Core?"
    - idea: everything which leaves a 'footprint' in the sitemap
    - distinction: 'core' and 'basic' - Woody might be a candidate to be moved into basic

Sylvain is very enthusiastic about Woody, we're looking forward to his presentation of tomorrow (he promised to show us a "Hello Woody World" for people who haven't been able to catch up with this yet 😉 (ooh - but we got production code running already 😉