

# WhatIsFlow

You might be wondering what this Flow thing is about - this page contains basic information about it.

## History

The Cocoon flow layer was originally created by Ovidiu Predescu based on work done by Christopher Oliver, who implemented [RhinoWithContinuations](#) in the Rhino script engine.

Although Ovidiu is currently taking a break from Cocoon, several people have been continuing his work on code, samples and documentation.

Christopher and others have been working on the *petstore* example recently, a complete web application that demonstrates the Flow concepts (available with the Cocoon source code, see [WhereToGet21Dev](#)).

## Basics

The flow layer of Cocoon acts as a very powerful yet simple to use *controller* in Model-View-Controller applications.

Here's a (slightly updated) example of a *flowscript* taken from Ovidiu's 2002 GetTogether Flow presentation (see link below)

```
var cart;
function checkout()
{
  sendPageAndWait("login.xml");
  var user = UserRegistry.getUser(cocoon.request.get("name"));
  sendPageAndWait("shippingAddress.xml");
  var address = cocoon.request.get("address");
  sendPageAndWait("creditCard.xml");
  var creditCard = cocoon.request.get("creditCard");
  sendPageAndWait("placeOrder.xml");
  EnterpriseSystem.placeOrder(cart);
  sendPage("orderPlaced.xml");
}
```

If you've been writing web applications with any other system you should see the huge advantage of Flow: the magic of *continuations* allows you to write the *controller* in linear fashion, with the Flow layer's *sendPage* method taking care of:

- Sending the specified page to the web browser client
- Saving the state of the Flow script
- Getting input when the client response comes in (might be a few minutes later)
- Transparently restarting the Flow script as if the user had instantly submitted the page

At this point we expect you to say something like *WOW* and go play with your first Flow application at [GettingStartedWithFlow!](#)

## See also

- Ovidiu Predescu's [Flow presentation](#) at the Ghent GetTogether 2002.
- [Model-View-Controller in Cocoon using continuations-based control flow](#)
- [RhinoWithContinuations](#)
- [Cocoon website doc](#) - pretty solid docco there now.

## TODO

Feel free to add any relevant information here! – [BertrandDelacretaz](#)