

Developing Socially

The Facebook Application Platform

Why Facebook?

- 250 million+ users
 - Almost half (120 million) log in daily
 - <http://tinyurl.com/refresh-friendface>
- Tons of flexibility
 - Pretty much any language you want
 - Many different “flavors”
- Trusted (user-inferred security)
- Secure (real security)
- Accessible
- Fun!

Accessibility

Set Up New Application

Sample Code
Get started quickly with some example code!



Examples



Facebook Platform Components

- Core API
 - FQL
- (X)FBML
- FBJS
- Connect

Core API

- Gateway to the Facebook database
- What you can do
 - Get user/page information
 - Interact with core Facebook apps (events, notes, etc.)
 - Perform administration functions
- Limits
 - User's privacy settings
 - Active sessions
 - Extended permissions

FQL

- SQL-like query language to access Facebook data
- Most SQL syntax works
 - Allows for more complex queries
- Fine-tuned control over data you receive
- Limits
 - Indexable fields
 - Active sessions
- Most API functions are wrappers for FQL queries

FBJS

- JavaScript-like implementation suitable for use on Facebook canvas
- Sandboxed
- Limits
 - Poorly documented
 - Far inferior to jQuery

FBML

- Markup language that eases repeatable functions
- Carries many of the same tags as HTML, with some additional ones
- What you can do
 - Write just one line of code for many easy tasks
 - Let Facebook figure out what to show based on privacy settings
- Limits
 - Some tags not available in certain parts of the Facebook Canvas (page tabs vs. regular pages)
 - Not as easily available on external sites

Where does your app live?

External

- Use Facebook Connect to hit Facebook functions
- App lives on your server, user never goes to Facebook
- Use jQuery (or whatever) to live things up
- XFBML
- Examples: Startlike, Mashable Comments

Internal

- Use standard Facebook API to hit Facebook functions
- App is stored on your server, but is rendered on Facebook
- Use FBJS to live things up
- FBML
- Examples: Mafia Wars, FarmVille

Case Study



Case Study

- Entry point is a tab of a Page
- Objectives
 - Get Fans
 - Give away 1,000,000 burgers
 - PROFIT
- Failures
 - No publishes
 - Costs a lot of money

The art of duplication

- We want an app that:
 - Lives on a fan page
 - Gets fans
 - Drives fans and non-fans to the page for very little money
 - Is quick and easy to use

Demonstration

Gotchas

- Documentation
 - Permissions
 - Available API functions
 - Consistency
- Reliability
 - FB Connect
 - Out-of-box PHP library
- Fragmented community
- User errors/misconceptions

Where to go for help

- Developers app (create apps, API keys)
 - <http://www.facebook.com/developers>
- Central developers resource center (the rest)
 - <http://developers.facebook.com/>
 - Wiki: <http://wiki.developers.facebook.com>
- IRC: #facebook
- When all else fails:
 - <http://www.google.com>

About me

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- Code available at
 - <http://svn.jimmysawczuk.com/refresh-demo>

Questions?
