Teaching the Library and Information Community How to Remix Information

Raymond Yee
Technology Architect, Interactive University
Lecturer, School of Information
UC Berkeley
yee@berkeley.edu

“Mixing and Remixing Information”

- I'm currently teaching a class at UC Berkeley's School of Information entitled “Mixing and Remixing Information”

- http://www.sims.berkeley.edu:8000/academics/courses/is290-4/s06/overview.html

Class Framework Adopted

1. learning to use a specific application as an end-user
2. learning how to use the API of that application
3. learning how to create something new by *remixing* the data and API of the application with those of other applications

- learning by doing: project-oriented emphasis

Why Use Flickr?

- A fascinating, deep application in its own right
- features such as RSS, tagging, blogging, social networks that provide good jumping off points
- An API that's http://www.flickr.com/services/api/ and well-maintained and does REST/XML-RPC/SOAP
- Plenty of Flickr mashups
- *Flickr Hacks* book
- example: geotagging Flickr via greasemonkey

What's actually happening?

- project-orientation has become the central focus; I've not lectured that much
- not a lot of transferable materials, mostly hidden in a closed class wiki right now.
- desire to workshop certain topics:
  - mapping APIs
  - Flash
- diverse background of students: technical and non-technical
- challenges of teaching in a wireless classroom w/ constant connectivity

What I'd love to cover (to the most advanced class)

- What I've proposed recently for a 3-hour tutorial:

- Surveys current and developing techniques for reusing or "remixing" personal digital content and services via XML, web services, and the modern web browser.

- To ground our understanding, we will use Flickr, the quintessential "Web 2.0" photo-sharing site, as the central example, and draw upon other systems (such as Yahoo!, Google maps, OpenOffice.org) to provide allied or contrasting examples.

Topics

- how XML and web services as used in the "real world" vs the world of spec-writers
- the role played by RSS/Atom and tagging for remixing with little programming
- commonalities and contrasts various API providers (e.g., how do you compare the Flickr API with that of Yahoo!'s or Amazon's?)
- incorporating geospatial services into the mix of services
- how the XML of OpenOffice.org and Microsoft Office can be exploited to create and manipulate "smart documents"
- the use of the modern web browser, including Firefox extensions and greasemonkey scripts to remix data
- an analysis of emerging "service composition frameworks," that let users more easily remix data and services (e.g., Flock.com , Ning.com, Chandler)
- what it would take to give end-users seamless access to any digital content source, handle any content type, and apply any software service to this content.

Wanted: Library-oriented examples

- Question for discussion: What are the library-oriented examples I can use?
  - e.g., CoinS, unAPI, xISBN
  - getting data and metadata from CDL (Melvyl)
- What others?

- *What would be curriculum* for teaching future librarians how to create services and content that can be easily remixed?