

ZAPTHINK ZAPNOTE™

CURL

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Curl

Curl takes a very much different approach than others for display of dynamic, Web Services-generated content. Emerging from a project at MIT, Curl is a new programming language and environment that provides a runtime environment and IDE tool for creation of applications requiring a rich client-side applications.

Technically, Curl calls the language a “content language” in that it encompasses presentation features of HTML, user behaviors like JavaScript, and programming languages such as C++/Java in one framework. In essence, the application can create a “hello world” in one-line of code that can turn from black to red and be linked to other applications.

The runtime environment is called Surge and is a high-performance JIT compiler. Curl is delivered as source code over the wire directly to the client, which compiles to object-oriented code and executes. There is no intermediate language or virtual machine as in Java. This means applications can create dynamic Curl programs that can be executed in real-time. Their IDE tool is called Surge Lab and looks similar to tools like CodeWarrior.

The system can be used to strong effect as the presentation layer for Web Service applications. They use XML as a description for user presentation as well as functionality. This allows for a very light bandwidth usage and very high level of client side functionality. The system also includes a native XML parser as well as SOAP processor, so developers can get access to key XML functionality without having to add in additional components.

However, Curl in many ways is competitive with Java, DHTML, JavaScript, and other client-side tools, at least from a mind share perspective. Some of the challenges with Curl involve the necessity to have a client-side plug-in and enough developers to support the language. Also, it is not clear what support there will be for Curl on alternate device types, such as PDAs and cell phones. Yet, they don't expect their platform to be ubiquitous – only to support the needs of enterprises looking to deploy rich Web Services interfaces.

Related Research

- *Web Services Technologies and Trends Report (ZT-WEBSRV)*

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ZapThink is an IT market intelligence firm that provides trusted advice and critical insight into XML, Web Services, and Service Orientation. We provide our target audience of IT vendors, service providers and end-users a clear roadmap for standards-based, loosely coupled distributed computing – a vision of IT meeting the needs of the agile business.

ZapThink's role is to help companies understand these IT products and services in the context of SOAs and the vision of Service Orientation. ZapThink provides market intelligence to IT vendors who offer XML and Web Services-based products to help them understand their competitive landscape and how to communicate their value proposition to their customers within the context of Service Orientation, and lay out their product roadmaps for the coming wave of Service Orientation. ZapThink also provides implementation intelligence to IT users who are seeking guidance and clarity into how to assemble the available products and services into a coherent roadmap to Service Orientation. Finally, ZapThink provides demand intelligence to IT vendors and service providers who must understand the needs of IT users as they follow the roadmap to Service Orientation.

ZapThink's senior analysts are widely regarded as the "go to analysts" for XML, Web Services, and SOAs by vendors, end-users, and the press. They are in great demand as speakers, and have presented at conferences and industry events around the world. They are among the most quoted industry analysts in the IT industry.

ZapThink was founded in October 2000 and is headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts. Its customers include Global 1000 firms, public sector organizations around the world, and many emerging businesses. ZapThink Analysts have years of experience in IT as well as research and analysis. Its analysts have previously been with such firms as IDC and ChannelWave, and have sat on the working group committees for standards bodies such as RosettaNet, UDDI, CPExchange, ebXML, EIDX, and CompTIA.

Call, email, or visit the ZapThink Web site to learn more about how ZapThink can help you to better understand how XML and Web Services impact your business or organization.

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