Open APIs & Web Services for Your Website
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A Look Ahead

Terms
Incorporating APIs into your web site
Editing APIs
Finding Additional APIs
Terms: API

What is an API?
An Application Programming Interface (or API) is a way for you to access parts of a remote web site and integrate it into your own site.

Think Mash-up...
Terms: Web Service

What is a Web Service?

- Broader term
- Public interface (API)
- Provides access to data and/or procedures
- On a remote/external system (usually)
- Use structured data for data exchange (often XML)
Terms: Structured Data

Structured data = XML and JSON
- Extensible Mark-up Language and Javascript Object Notation
- Flexible mark-up languages
- Lightweight and easy to parse
- Allow communication between disparate systems
You Already Use Sites with APIs

Sites you know
- Facebook applications
- Twitter
- iGoogle
- Flickr
- YouTube
- Delicious
Resource Management Tool

MSU Libraries Resource Management Tool API

http://www.lib.montana.edu/resources/read.php?form=json&limit=25

Librarians' Resource Management Tool:

https://www.lib.montana.edu/resources/manage/index.php

Public View:

https://www.lib.montana.edu/resources/index.php
Why use APIs & Web Services?

- Access to content/data stores you could not otherwise provide (zip codes, news, pictures, reviews, etc.)
- Enhance site with a service that is not feasible for you to provide (maps, search, products, etc.)
- Combine these services into a seamless service you provide (mashups)
Using APIs on Your Web Page

Demos
- Slideshows for Topics of Interest (Flickr)
- Google Maps for Local Communities
- Local News Ticker and Community Events
- Book Previews for Community Topics of Interest

Resources page with links
http://www.lib.montana.edu/~jason/talks/offline/
Finding Additional APIs & Tools

- Google Code Playground
  - http://code.google.com/apis/ajax/playground/
- ProgrammableWeb
  - http://www.programmableweb.com/
- Delicious tag watching
  - http://delicious.com/tag/api+mashup+widget
- Check your favorite sites for a "tools" or "developers" section
Questions?

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