In this thread I would like to discuss documenting an API. Documenting use cases will be discussed. I will also talk about documenting security as well as documenting goals. And alas, reference documentation will be described. So, what is documenting an API?

“API documentation is a technical content deliverable, containing instructions about how to effectively use and integrate with an API. It’s a concise reference manual containing all the information required to work with the API, with details about the functions, classes, return types, arguments and more, supported by tutorials and examples.” (June 06, n.d.). “A use case is a description of the ways in which a user interacts with a system or product. A use case may establish the success scenarios, the failure scenarios, and any critical variations or exceptions.” (*What Is a Use Case & How to Write One | Wrike*, n.d.). Regarding security, “an API user guide must include advice about how to register as a developer, register a consumer app, and get tokens using the available OAuth flows or whatever other security system/ framework is in use.” (Lauret, 2019). When we are documenting goals of an API, it is important to remember “a goal’s reference documentation describes the goals’ purpose, what is needed to use it, what kind of feedback consumers get in the even of success or failure, and if it is part of a group of goals.” (Lauret, 2019). This leads us to the best known of all API documentation, which is reference documentation. Reference documentation “describes the interface contract of the API. It lists the available goals and describes their inputs and outputs. This is what you have to describe when designing an API, which can be sufficient for very basic API’s if all use cases are fulfilled by the API can be accomplished using a single goal.”

References:

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