Introduction

What is Sinatra?

Sinatra is a Domain Specific Language (DSL) for quickly creating web-applications in Ruby.

It keeps a minimal feature set, leaving the developer to use the tools that best suit them and their application.

It doesn't assume much about your application, apart from that:

- it will be written in Ruby programming language
- it will have URLs

In Sinatra, you can write short *ad hoc* applications or mature, larger application with the same easiness.

You can use the power of various Rubygems and other libraries available for Ruby.

Sinatra really shines when used for experiments and application mock-ups or for creating a quick interface for your code.

It isn't a *typical* Model-View-Controller framework, but ties specific URL directly to relevant Ruby code and returns its output in response. It does enable you, however, to write clean, properly organized applications: separating *views* from application code, for instance.

Installation

The simplest way to install Sinatra is through Rubygems:

```
$ gem install sinatra
```

Dependencies

Sinatra depends on the *Rack* gem (http://rack.rubyforge.org).

Sinatra supports many different template engines (it uses the Tilt library internally to support practically every template engine in Ruby) For optimal experience, you should install the template engines you want to work with. The Sinatra dev team suggests using either ERB, which is included with Ruby, or installing HAML as your first template language.

```
$ gem install haml
```

Living on the Edge

The *edge* version of Sinatra lives in its Git repository, available at **http://github.com/sinatra/sinatra/tree/master**.

You can use the *edge* version to try new functionality or to contribute to the framework. You need to have Git

version control software and bundler.

```
$ gem install bundler
```

To use Sinatra *edge* with bundler, you'll have to create a Gemfile listing Sinatra's and any other dependencies you're going to need.

```
source :rubygems
gem 'sinatra', :git => 'git://github.com/sinatra/sinatra.git'
```

Here we use the rubygems source to specify where to get Sinatra's dependencies; alternatively you can use the git version, but that is up to you. So now we can install our bundle:

```
$ bundle install
```

Hello World Application

Sinatra is installed, how about making your first application?

```ruby
require 'rubygems'

# If you're using bundler, you will need to add this
require 'bundler/setup'

require 'sinatra'

get '/' do
  "Hello world, it's #{Time.now} at the server!"
end
```

Run this application by $ ruby hello_world.rb and load http://localhost:4567 in your browser.

As you can see, Sinatra doesn't force you to setup much infrastructure: a request to a URL evaluates some Ruby code and returns some text in response. Whatever the block returns is sent back to the browser.

Real World Applications in Sinatra

Github Services

Git hosting provider Github uses Sinatra for post-receive hooks, calling user specified services/URLs, whenever someone pushes to their repository:

- http://github.com/blog/53-github-services-ipo
- http://github.com/guides/post-receive-hooks
- http://github.com/pjhyett/github-services

Check out a full list of Sinatra apps in the wild.

About this book

This book will assume you have a basic knowledge of the Ruby scripting language and a working Ruby interpreter.

For more information about the Ruby language visit the following links:

- ruby-lang
- ruby-lang / documentation

Need Help?

The Sinatra club is small, but super-friendly. Join us on IRC at irc.freenode.org in #sinatra if you have any questions. It's a bit slow at times, so give us a bit to get back to your questions.