Emergent Architecture Design

For MoodCat

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Challenge the future

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by

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An electronic version of this document is available at
https://github.com/MoodCat/MoodCat.me/.

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Contents

1 Introduction **1**
1.1 Design goals . . . 1

2 Software architecture views **2**
2.1 Subsystem decomposition . . . 2
2.1.1 Moodcat Frontend . . . 2
2.1.2 Moodcat Backend . . . 3
2.2 Hardware/software mapping . . . 4
2.3 Persistent data management . . . 5
2.4 Concurrency . . . 5

Glossary **7**

Bibliography **8**

1

Introduction

This document provides a sketch of the system that is going to be built during the context project multimedia services. The architecture of the syste is defined by the system's high level components. These components are split in to sub components and sub-systems.

1.1. Design goals

The following design goals will be preserved throughout the project:

- **Deployability**
  The system will be developed in such a way that we can always deploy the most current version (Continuous Integration [1]). Being able to deploy the system at any time allows us to keep the work required for a release managable. Because the current version should be deployable at anytime, developers are enforced to only alter the system in a non-breaking way. Another advantage is that smaller releases[1] imply a lower possibility of introducing bugs.

- **Portability**
  The frontend should work on *Evergreen* browsers [2]. The backend should run on both Windows and Linux server environments capable running Java software.

- **Simplicity**
  The system will be developed with simplicity in mind. Existing libraries and frameworks will be investigated and used if applicable, so we can focus on developing the system rather than the tools required to build the system. This will keep our codebase relatively small and allows us to focus on the user experience and underlying algorithms rather than reinventing the wheel for the used techniques.

- **Object-oriented programming**
  Object-oriented programming[2] will be used to develop the system. We will separate the system into subsystems and components (packages, classes and interfaces). This should enable code reuse and extensibility, and improve the testability of the sytem, because each component can be tested individually[3].

- **Usability**
  Users should be able to use Moodcat intuitively. All features of MoodCat should work for modern browsers. Moodcat should work properly with accessibility tools like screenreaders.

[1] We define *smaller releases* as a relatively small change to the codebase.

[2] «The term "evergreen browser" refers to browsers that are automatically upgraded to future versions, rather than being updated by distribution of new versions from the manufacturer, as was the case with older browsers.» - http://www.techopedia.com/definition/31094/evergreen-browser

2

Software architecture views

This chapter discusses the architecture of the system. The system is first decomposed into smaller subsystems and the dependencies between the subsystems are explained. In the second paragraph the relation between the hardware and software of the system is elaborated. The third paragraph illustrates the data management of the system.

2.1. Subsystem decomposition

Moodcat is subdivided into two components: the frontend website and the backend processing service. In this chapter we will explain how these components are composed and how they interact with each other.

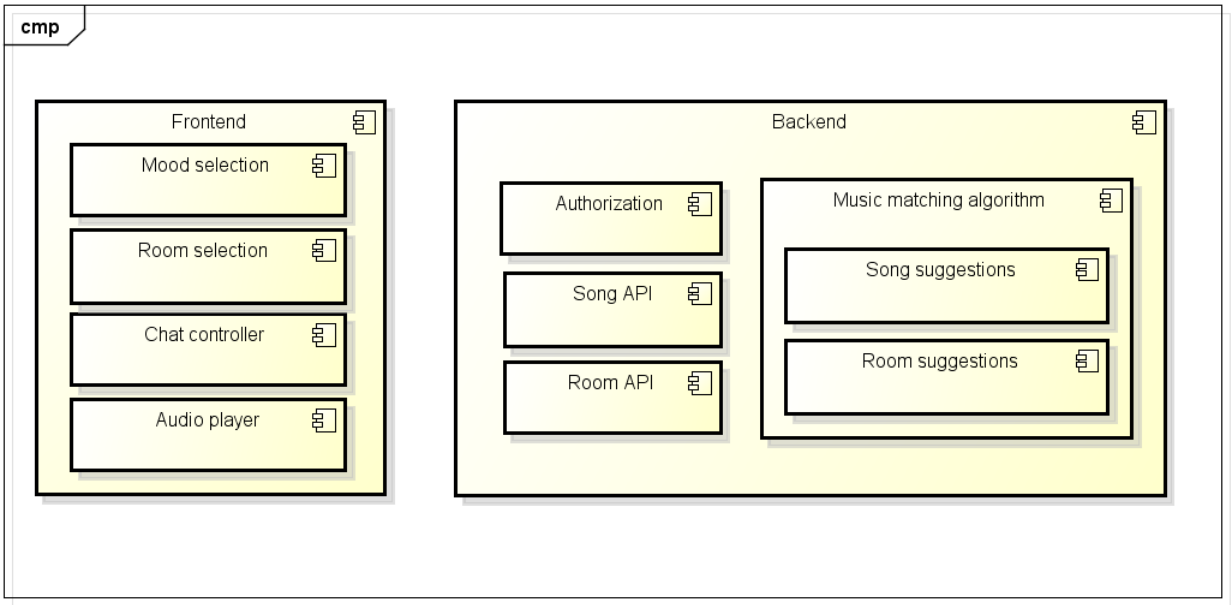

Figure 2.1: Architecture overview for Moodcat

2.1.1. Moodcat Frontend

The frontend will be the visible part for the user. After logging in to our services, the user will be able to select his mood and based on that MoodCat will provide several music listening rooms. In these rooms the user can interact with other users through the chat while listening to the music.

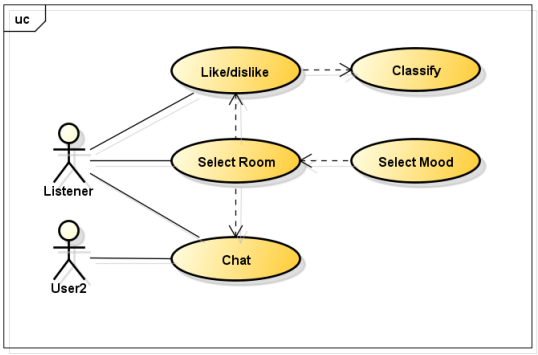

Figure 2.2: Use case diagram for Moodcat

The MoodCat frontend will be web-based. This allows us to support all modern devices which enables a large target audience. We will develop the frontend using modern techniques as HTML[4], Javascript and CSS[5]. Twitter Bootstrap will be used as boilerplate for our own customized CSS theme.

AngularJS[6] will be used as web framework, providing us two-way data binding between the user interface and backend, and a standardized way of composing user interface controlling logic through *controllers*, *services* and *directives*.

The Object-oriented[2] and Dependency Injection[7] driven nature of AngularJS makes it suitable for unit testing[3]. Testing the frontend codebase will be done using the Karma[8] testrunner, the Jasmine[9] testing framework and the PhantomJS[10] headless[1] browser.

2.1.2. Moodcat Backend

The Moodcat backend has several subcomponents, each with their own responsibility:

- the *Static File Server* that serves the frontend website on a webserver;
- the *REST API* which is used for communication about rooms and songs between the backend and frontend;
- the *music matching algorithm* which is used to generate music suggestions for rooms and to find a room for a user.

In the following paragraphs we will explain the last two subcomponents.

REST API

The backend keeps track of which rooms are active and what song is currently played in the room. The API can process user votes and classifications in order to improve the system. Furthermore, the backend is responsible for transmitting the chat messages between the users in the room. An example interaction between the frontend and the backend is given in 2.3.

[1] JavaScript runs in browsers and the written logic needs a DOM to interact with. A headless browser does not actually render the page and is therefore much faster in intergration tests.

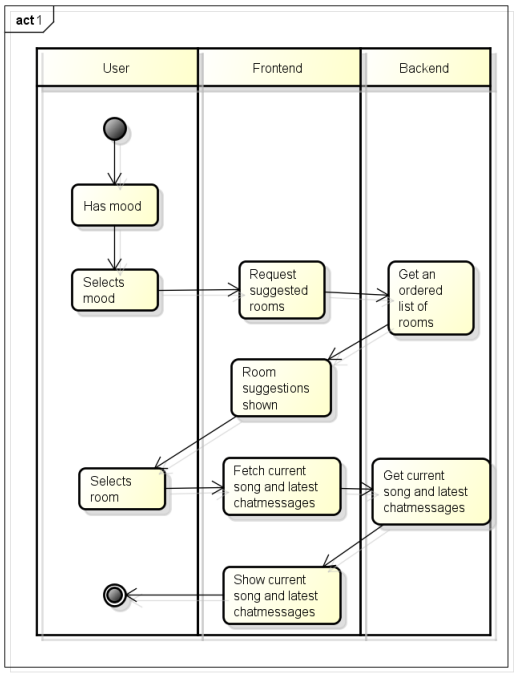

Figure 2.3: Example interaction frontend and backend

The backend and the frontend communicate over HTTP requests in the JSON format. The REST API will be written in Java using JAX-RS and Jackson. Jackson serializes Java objects to a JSON string based on their attributes, and vice versa: it is able to deserialize a Java object from a JSON string. This allows us to use JSON in the frondend, which is ideal in Javascript, but use classes and objects in Java, which greatly improves the testability of the responses. The backend will be tested with unit tests written using JUnit and Mockito.

Music matching algorithm

The music matching algorithm determines and compares moods for songs, rooms and users. The classification of songs will be done by classification from the user, which will be encouraged with gamification. Moodcat will improve over time, because the more people classify the more accurate it gets. All entities are modeled with a valence and arousal vector. Valence and arousal are measured in a range of -1 to 1. By default, a song will be classified with the default vector: valence 0 and arousal 0. This would mean an absolute neutral mood. This classification (mapping) will be updated over time by processing user feedback. Therefore the longer the system is running, the more accurate the classifications become.

When a user votes down, the user will be requested to classify the song. If there are more up-votes than down-votes the classification will not have effect, because the majority of the audience says the song fits the room.

Using a nearest-neighbour algorithm we will determine which song fits a room and which room fits a user. This can ultimately be improved by personalising according to the listening history of the user.

2.2. Hardware/software mapping

For navigating through the user interface and posting messages in the chatroom a keyboard and mouse, or a touch screen with onscreen keyboard is required. We will annotate our elements with proper Aria accessibilty attributes so that assistive technologies, such as screen readers, will work with our service properly.

Moodcat requires an audio interface to play music. To interact with the audio interface from the browser, the Web Audio API[11] and ngAudio[12] are used. The users browser should support these technologies in order to use Moodcat.

2.3. Persistent data management

Moodcat has to handle both song data and chatroom data.

We try do deduplicate artists from the Soundcloud data as much as possible. We identify artists in our database by an unique identifier. Besides this identifier, we store the name for the artist. The name will be used to display in the frontend.

For the song we store the basic properties, like artist, song title and duration. A song has an unique id in our system and also an id from Soundcloud, in order to fetch data from Soundcloud. We also include an url to display the artwork of a song.

Furthermore each song has its own valence and arousal value, this is updated when users classify the song. This classification will be done in the Music Matching Algorithm as described above. In order to prevent incorrect or unwanted classifications, we also have to store the netto value of up-votes compared to the down-votes.

Each room has an unique room identifier, which is used to find the room requested from the API call. We also store basic properties: The name of the room to display on the frontend, the currently playing song and the duration of the song currently playing. Furthermore, the arousal and valence values of the room are stored.

For a chatmessage we store the author, actual message, timestamp and the room in which the message was posted.

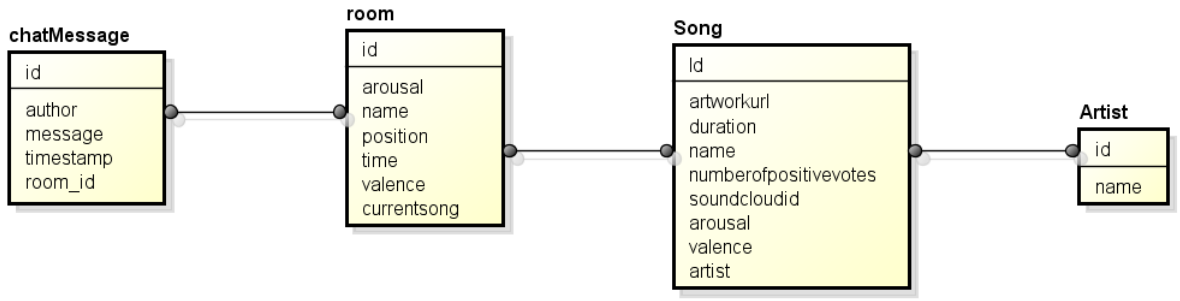

Figure 2.4: ER diagram for Moodcat

Most of the currently used data will be stored in memory, as it would be intensive, for example, to query the database for each chat message that comes in. However, the data will eventually be persisted in a PostgreSQL[13] Relational database. On one hand, it would be impractical to store our entire dataset in memory, on the other hand, then the system can continue where it has left off after a restart.

We will connect our Java backend server to the PostgreSQL database using the Java Persistence API (JPA) and the Postgres JDBC driver. The Hibernate[14] Object-relational mapping (ORM) framework will be used to map Java class instances to tables. QueryDSL[15] JPAQuery will be used to build SQL queries from Java code. We have chosen for these techniques because they provide a nice and clean API to bind Java objects to database objects.

2.4. Concurrency

In order to scale up to thousands of connected clients, we should develop with concurrency in mind from the very first start. Moodcat uses the Soundcloud API in order to stream media to the clients. This means that the audio stream does not have to pass through our servers. We do however have to handle the various API calls to interact with the backend, for example to play the next song or to broadcast a message in a room.

It is important that these requests do not block each other, therefore we have chosen a servlet container, Jetty, that uses asynchronous sockets - which will not block if there is no data to receive yet.

Besides the communication with the clients, Moodcat should also keep its algorithm (described in 2.1.2) running in the background. This algorithm will run in seperate threads to optimize throughput. These seperate threads will get a specific task assigned, which has his local data to compute on. Deadlocks will be prevented because the spawned threads will be joined before acquiring locks in

synchronized statements. This will happen when we persist the algorithm output in the database.

Glossary

Aria Accessible Rich Internet Applications defines ways to make Web content and Web applications (especially those developed with Ajax and JavaScript) more accessible to people with disabilities. 4
arousal How calm or excited you are. 5

class An extensible program-code-template for creating objects, providing initial values for state (member variables) and implementations of behavior (member functions, methods). 1
Continuous Integration The practice of merging all developer working copies with a shared mainline several times a day. 1
CSS Cascading Style Sheets is a style sheet language used for describing the look and formatting of a document written in a markup language. 3

framework An abstraction in which software providing generic functionality can be selectively changed by additional user-written code, thus providing application-specific software. 1

HTML HyperText Markup Language is the standard markup language used to create web pages. 3
HTTP The Hypertext Transfer Protocol is an application protocol for distributed, collaborative, hypermedia information systems. 4

interface A common means for unrelated objects to communicate with each other. These are definitions of methods and values which the objects agree upon in order to cooperate. 1

Javascript A dynamic programming language. It is most commonly used as part of web browsers, whose implementations allow client-side scripts to interact with the user, control the browser, communicate asynchronously, and alter the document content that is displayed. 3, 4
JSON JavaScript Object Notation, is an open standard format that uses human-readable text to transmit data objects consisting of attribute–value pairs. It is used primarily to transmit data between a server and web application, as an alternative to XML. 4

library A collection of non-volatile resources used by computer programs. 1

Object-oriented programming Programming paradigm based on the concept of ”objects”, which are data structures that contain data, in the form of fields, often known as attributes; and code, in the form of procedures, often known as methods. 1
Object-relational mapping A programming technique for converting data between incompatible type systems in object-oriented programming languages. 5

package A Java package is a mechanism for organizing Java classes into namespaces similar to the modules of Modula, providing modular programming in Java. 1

Relational database A relational database is a digital database whose organization is based on the relational model of data, as proposed by E.F. Codd in 1970. This model organizes data into one or more tables (or ”relations”) of rows and columns, with a unique key for each row. 5

Soundcloud An online music streaming service. 5
SQL Structured Query Language is a special-purpose programming language designed for managing data held in a relational database management system (RDBMS), or for stream processing in a relational data stream management system (RDSMS). 5

valence The amount of attraction you have towards a certain event. 5

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