What Is An Api?

The definition of an API is ‘Application Programming Interface’, this means that data is transferred between 2 applications. As it is two different applications that are communicating with each other, and a request is sent, and feedback is given from the other app, back to the original. Examples can be messaging and even checking the weather. “API is the acronym for Application Programming Interface, which is a software intermediary that allows two applications to talk to each other. Each time you use an app like Facebook, send an instant message, or check the weather on your phone, you’re using an API.” (MuleSoft, 2021)

The way that this can be discussed is that, as a user, you send a request, this can be seen as raw information. Once the information reaches the second application, the request is put through in its raw information form. The secondary app will then process this raw data into readable information that gives feedback to the user, in a way that they want and can understand. Another way that this can be seen is when you are using a secondary website, a site that is linked to the information that you want, and by using this secondary app, information is not being gathered from what you are using, but rather from a linked source that provides the necessary, processed data that you, as a user would need.

Having a framework dependency, in my opinion, should be highly recommended for any developer that needs to build a massive website. A dependency can help you build a site with some sort of framework, instead of hard coding everything, therefore taking longer and more mistakes can be made, making your site a bit less effective. “APIs can be a service for developers. Every time developers write a new program, they don’t have to start from scratch to build a core application that tries to do everything. Instead, they can contract out certain responsibilities by using already created pieces that do the job better.” (Kaur, 2018).

The external API that I had used was a link to a public GitHub repository, with links to different items. I chose the cat pictures because my character is into cats. The cat posts are changed and randomly generated when the button is clicked. Personally, I feel like this is necessary for my site because my character loves cats, and instead of looking for pictures and individually downloading them to add to the Images file in my folders, or even linking to specific images on the internet, which could get removed, these generate literally any different cat pictures that will always exist. This is pulling from the GitHub repository source, and allows an effective method to have different pictures on your site, without going through the effort of getting each image.

The way that this impacts my site, is more for User Interface than much of a technical component, although it does save time and there is less code in HTML for many different pictures, so it saves space only for necessary code, so no extra CSS and HTML. It also adds more content relating to my character onto the site, and more time will be spent on the site by just watching random cat pictures being generated onto the site.

The other alternative to using this API, is importing many different cat pictures and displaying it on a web page. In an Array, you can store each different cat picture and use a button to generate a random place value, then displaying that cat image that has the generated value, this is more work, that is why APIs are made, to ensure that developers have a framework to get started with, and code the more important aspects and details of the site, while having more content that does not need to be coded and can impact your site.

# References

Kaur, M., 2018. *What is an API and why are they important to developers?.* [Online]   
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