

IF140303-Web Application Development

Session-13:

Creating a Live Comments Section Using Websockets

PRU/SPMI/FR-BM-18/0222



Introduction to Live Comments Section



- In this session, we will implement a live comments section for topics.
- Users will be able to add comments that instantly appear on all other users' screens.
- This will function similarly to a live chat.
- We will utilize WebSockets to achieve this functionality.

What is a WebSocket?



- WebSockets provide a persistent connection between the client and server.
- This allows for real-time, two-way communication.
- Unlike HTTP, WebSockets maintain an open connection, allowing data to be sent and received without repeatedly establishing connections.
- Ideal for applications requiring real-time updates, such as live chats or live notifications.

Flow of the Comments Section



- **User fills out comment form.**
- **Clicks submit button.**
- **WebSocket emits event to the server.**
- **Server catches the event.**
- **Server creates a new comment in the database.**
- **Server emits an event with the updated list of comments.**
- **All connected clients receive the update and display the new comment.**

Updating the TopicController



- We need to update the 'TopicController' to include a 'show' action.
- The 'show' action retrieves a specific topic by its ID.
- It then renders the 'show.html' template, passing the retrieved topic to the view.
- No need to update the router since we are using 'resources "/" which already includes a route for 'show'.

Code for the Updated TopicController



```
defmodule Discuss.TopicController do
use Discuss.Web, :controller

alias Discuss.Topic

plug Discuss.Plugs.RequireAuth when action in
[:new, :create, :edit, :update, :delete]
```

Code for the Updated TopicController



```
plug :check_topic_owner when action in
[:update, :edit, :delete]

def show(conn, %{"id" => topic_id}) do
topic = Repo.get!(Topic, topic_id)
render conn, "show.html", topic: topic
end
```

show.html.eex Template



```
<%= topic.title %>
```

- This simple template will display the title of the topic.
- It will serve as the foundation for our live comments section.

Making Topics Clickable in index.html.eex



Making Topics Clickable in index.html.eex



■ This makes each topic in the list clickable, linking to its 'show' page.

Add Comments Migration



```
defmodule Discuss.Repo.Migrations.AddComments do
         use Ecto.Migration
         def change do
         create table(:comments) do
         add :content, :string
         add :user_id, references(:users)
         add :topic_id, references(:topics)
8
         timestamps()
         end
11
```

- Creates a 'comments' table with fields for 'content', 'user_id', and 'topic_id'.
- Establishes relationships between comments, users, and topics.

Creating the Comment Model in comment.ex



```
defmodule Discuss.Comment do
use Discuss.Web, :model

schema "comments" do
field :content, :string
belongs_to :user, Discuss.User
belongs_to :topic, Discuss.Topic
timestamps()
end
```

Creating the Comment Model in comment.ex



```
def changeset(struct, params \\ %{}) do
struct
|> cast(params, [:content])
|> validate_required([:content])
end
end
```

- This model represents the 'comments' table.
- Includes fields for content, user, and topic relationships.
- The 'changeset' function ensures that the content is present when creating or updating a comment.

```
2
```

```
# Add this to both topic.ex and user.ex models has many :comments, Discuss.Comment
```

- Establishes a one-to-many relationship between topics and comments.
- Similarly, it connects users to their respective comments.

Working with WebSocket: Server and Client Side



- We will work on both server-side and client-side to implement WebSockets.
- WebSockets in Phoenix are handled using channels.
- Channels are an abstraction on top of WebSockets, making it easier to work with real-time features.
- They allow for joining, leaving, and broadcasting messages to groups of users.

How WebSocket Works in Phoenix PRADITA University



- **Server-side:** Defines channels that handle different types of messages.
- **Client-side:** JavaScript code connects to the server via WebSockets, joins channels, and sends/receives messages.
- This setup ensures real-time communication between all connected clients and the server.

Creating a Comment Channel



- We'll create a new channel to handle comments.
- This will manage events like adding new comments and broadcasting them to all connected clients.
- The channel will be defined in 'comment_channel.ex'.

comment_channel.ex



```
defmodule Discuss CommentChannel do
         use Discuss. Web, : channel
         alias Discuss. {Repo, Comment}
         def join("comments:" <> topic_id, _params, socket) do
         topic_id = String.to_integer(topic_id)
         comments = Repo.all(
         from c in Comment.
8
         where: c.topic id == ^topic id,
         order by: [desc: c.inserted at],
10
         limit: 100.
11
         preload: [:user]
12
13
```

comment_channel.ex



```
{:ok, %{comments: comments}, assign(socket, :topic id,
           topic id)}
        end
3
        def handle in("new comment", %{"content" => content}, socket
            ) do
        topic_id = socket.assigns.topic_id
5
        user_id = socket.assigns.user_id
6
        changeset = Comment.changeset(%Comment{topic_id: topic_id,
            user_id: user_id}, %{"content" => content})
```

comment_channel.ex

```
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```

```
case Repo.insert(changeset) do
{:ok, comment} ->
broadcast!(socket, "new_comment", %{comment: comment})
{:reply, :ok, socket}
{:error, _reason} ->
{:reply, :error, socket}
end
end
end
end
```

- Defines a 'join/3' function for users to connect to a specific topic's comments channel.
- The 'handle_in/3' function handles the '"new_comment" event, adding the comment to the database and broadcasting it to all clients.

Updating the Socket to Include the Channel



```
defmodule Discuss.UserSocket do
use Phoenix.Socket
channel "comments:*", Discuss.CommentChannel
transport :websocket, Phoenix.Transports.WebSocket

def connect(_params, socket) do
{:ok, socket}
end
```

Updating the Socket to Include the Channel



```
def id(_socket), do: nil
end
```

- Adds the 'comments:*' channel to the socket.
- This ensures that any user connecting to the socket can join the comments channel.

Client-side: Connecting to the WebSocket



```
import {Socket} from "phoenix"
let socket = new Socket("/socket", {params: {userToken: window
   .userToken}})
socket.connect()
let channel = socket.channel("comments:" + topicId, {})
channel.join()
.receive("ok", resp => { console.log("Joined successfully",
   resp) })
```

Client-side: Connecting to the WebSocket



- Establishes a connection to the WebSocket and joins the comments channel.
- Listens for the "new_comment" event and updates the DOM with the new comment.

Adding a Comment Form in show.html.eex



```
<div id="comments">

<%= for comment <- @comments do %>

<%= comment.content %>
</div>

<
```

Adding a Comment Form in show.html.eex



```
1
```

```
<button type="submit">Submit</button>
</form>
```

- Renders existing comments and a form for submitting new ones.
- The form submits comments to the WebSocket channel.

Handling Form Submission in the Client



```
let form = document.querySelector("#comment-form")
let commentInput = document.querySelector("#comment-input")

form.addEventListener("submit", (e) => {
    e.preventDefault()

let payload = {content: commentInput.value}
    channel.push("new_comment", payload)
    .receive("ok", (resp) => { commentInput.value = "" })
```

Handling Form Submission in the Client



- Handles the form submission event.
- Sends the comment content to the WebSocket channel.
- Clears the input field on success or logs an error on failure.

Socket.js: Managing WebSocket Connections

```
import {Socket} from "phoenix"
        let socket = new Socket("/socket", {params: {token: window.
            userToken}})
3
        socket.connect()
        let channel = socket.channel("comments:1", {})
6
        channel.join()
        .receive("ok", resp => {console.log("Joined successfully",
8
            resp)})
```

Socket.js: Managing WebSocket Connections

- Socket.js sets up the WebSocket connection using Phoenix's JavaScript library.
- The Socket instance is created with the user's token for authentication.
- The channel.join() method attempts to join a channel (e.g., "comments:1").
- Success or error messages are logged to the console, helping with debugging.

UserSocket: Handling Channel Connections

```
defmodule Discuss.UserSocket do
use Phoenix.Socket

channel "comments:*", Discuss.CommentsChannel

transport :websocket, Phoenix.Transport.WebSocket

def connect(_params, socket) do
{:ok, socket}
end
```

```
1
```

```
def id(_socket), do: nil
end
```

- The UserSocket module defines how the server handles incoming WebSocket connections.
- Channels matching the pattern "comments:*" are routed to Discuss.CommentsChannel.
- The connect/2 function authenticates and establishes the socket connection.
- id/1 returns nil, meaning this socket won't be identifiable for targeted broadcasts.

CommentsChannel: Basic Setup



```
defmodule Discuss.CommentsChannel do
use Discuss.Web, :channel

def join(name, _params, socket) do
{:ok, %{hey: "there"}, socket}
end
```

CommentsChannel: Basic Setup



```
def handle_in() do
end
end
```

- CommentsChannel handles messages and events for the comments section.
- The join/3 function confirms the connection and can send initial data to the client.
- The handle_in/3 function will process incoming events from the client.

Updating app.js



```
2
```

```
import "phoenix_html"
import "./socket"
```

■ The app.js file imports necessary dependencies for the front-end, including Phoenix HTML helpers and the custom WebSocket logic from socket.js.

WebSocket Join Flow in Phoenix



- Browser initiates connection to the "comments: 1" channel.
- Server routes the connection through UserSocket to CommentsChannel.
- CommentsChannel's join function is called, returning a response.
- Browser receives the response, triggering success or failure handlers.

Handling Incoming Events



```
defmodule Discuss.CommentsChannel do
use Discuss.Web, :channel

def join(name, _params, socket) do
{:ok, %{hey: "there"}, socket}
end
```

Handling Incoming Events



```
def handle_in(name, message, socket) do
{:reply, :ok, socket}
end
end
```

- handle_in/3 handles incoming events, such as a user submitting a comment.
- It processes the event and sends a reply back to the client, indicating success or failure.

Integrating WebSocket in Views



- This script in show.html.eex triggers the WebSocket connection when the page loads.
- The createSocket function is called with the topic ID, establishing the channel connection.

Refining socket.js



```
import {Socket} from "phoenix"
         let socket = new Socket("/socket", {params: {token: window.
            userToken}})
3
         socket.connect()
         const createSocket = (topicId) => {
           let channel = socket.channel(`comments:${topicId}`, {})
           channel.join()
8
           .receive("ok", resp => {console.log("Joined successfully",
9
               resp)})
           .receive("error", resp => {console.log("Unable to join".
10
              resp)})
11
```

Refining socket.js



```
window.createSocket = createSocket:
```

- The createSocket function is updated to accept a topicId, dynamically connecting to the correct channel.
- This makes the WebSocket connection context-aware, depending on the topic being viewed.

Updating CommentsChannel with Topic Handling



```
defmodule Discuss.CommentsChannel do
         use Discuss. Web, :channel
         alias Discuss.Topic
         def join("comments:" <> topic_id, _params, socket) do
         topic_id = String.to_integer(topic_id)
         topic = Repo.get(Topic, topic id)
8
         {:ok, %{}, socket}
         end
10
```

Updating CommentsChannel with Topic Handling



```
def handle_in(name, %{"content" => content}, socket) do
{:reply, :ok, socket}
end
end
```

- The join/3 function now retrieves the topic from the database based on the ID.
- This allows for topic-specific operations within the channel.
- handle_in/3 processes incoming messages, such as adding a new comment.

Enhancing show.html.eex



```
<h5> <%= @topic.title %> </h5>
         <div class="input-field">
         <textarea class="materialize-textarea"></textarea>
         <button class="btn">Add Comment</button>
         <script>
         document.addEventListener("DOMContentLoaded", function() {
           window.createSocket(<%= @topic.id %>)
8
        }):
         </script>
10
```

Enhancing show.html.eex



- The updated HTML structure in show.html.eex includes a form for adding comments.
- The createSocket function is triggered when the page loads, setting up the WebSocket connection.

Updating socket.js **for Comment Submission**



```
import {Socket} from "phoenix"
let socket = new Socket("/socket", {params: {token: window.
   userToken}})
socket.connect()
const createSocket = () => {
  let channel = socket.channel(`comments:${topicId}`, {})
  channel.join()
  .receive("ok", resp => {console.log("Joined successfully",
      resp);})
```

3

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Updating socket.js **for Comment Submission**



```
.receive("error", resp => {console.log("Unable to join",
     resp);});
 document.querySelector('button').addEventListener('click',
      () => {
   const content = document.querySelector('textarea').value
   channel.push('comment:add', {content: content});
 }):
window.createSocket = createSocket:
```

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Updating socket.js **for Comment Submission**



- The createSocket function is enhanced to handle user interaction.
- When the button is clicked, the content of the textarea is pushed to the channel.
- This push event triggers a message to be sent to the server, where it will be processed.

Updating CommentsChannel to Handle Comment Submission



```
defmodule Discuss.CommentsChannel do
use Discuss. Web, :channel
alias Discuss. {Topic, Comment}
def join("comments:" <> topic_id, _params, socket) do
topic_id = String.to_integer(topic_id)
topic = Repo.get(Topic, topic)
{:ok, %{}, assign(socket, :topic, topic)}
end
```

8

10

Updating CommentsChannel to Handle Comment Submission



```
def handle_in(name, %{"content" => content}, socket) do
topic = socket.assigns.topic
changeset = topic
|> build_assoc(:comments)
|> Comment.changeset(%{content: content})

case Repo.insert(changeset) do
{:ok, comment} ->
{:reply, :ok, socket}
```

Updating CommentsChannel to Handle Comment Submission



```
{:error, _reason} ->
{:reply, {:error, %{errors: changeset}}, socket}
end
end
end
end
```

- The join/3 function assigns the topic to the socket for future use.
- handle_in/3 processes the comment: add event, creating a new comment in the database.
- The changeset validates the comment before it is inserted. If successful, a confirmation is sent back to the client.

Example Flow: Submitting a Comment



- **Browser**: The client app starts with topic_id = 1 and joins the channel
 "comments:1".
- **Server**: The socket is forwarded to CommentsChannel, which sends back the current list of comments.
- **Browser**: The JavaScript app renders the list of comments, displaying them to the user.

Updating CommentsChannel with Preloading



```
defmodule Discuss.CommentsChannel do
use Discuss.Web, :channel
alias Discuss.{Topic, Comment}

def join("comments:" <> topic_id, _params, socket) do
topic_id = String.to_integer(topic_id)
topic = Topic
|> Repo.get(topic_id)
|> Repo.preload(:comments)
```

Updating CommentsChannel with Preloading



Updating CommentsChannel with Preloading



```
case Repo.insert(changeset) do
{:ok, comment} ->
{:reply, :ok, socket}
{:error, _reason} ->
{:reply, {:error, %{errors: changeset}}, socket}
end
end
end
end
```

- The join/3 function now preloads the comments associated with the topic.
- This allows the server to send all existing comments to the client when the channel is joined.

Updating Comment Model: JSON Serialization



```
defmodule Discuss Comment do
         use Discuss. Web, : model
         @derive {Poison.Encoder, only: [:content]}
5
         schema "comments" do
         field :content, :string
         belongs_to :user, Discuss.User
         belongs to :topic, Discuss.Topic
         timestamps()
10
         end
11
```

Updating Comment Model: ISON Serialization



```
def changeset(struct, params \\ %{}) do
struct
|> cast(params, [:content])
|> validate_required([:content])
end
end
```

- The Comment model is updated to automatically encode its data to JSON using Poison.
- Only the content field will be included in the JSON output.
- This is useful for sending comment data back to the client in a format that can be easily consumed.

```
import {Socket} from "phoenix"
         let socket = new Socket("/socket", {params: {token: window.
            userToken}})
         socket.connect()
         const createSocket = () => {
           let channel = socket.channel(`comments:${topicId}`, {})
           channel.join()
           .receive("ok", resp => {
             renderComments(resp.comments);
10
           })
11
```

```
.receive("error", resp => {console.log("Unable to join",
             resp);});
2
          document.guervSelector('button').addEventListener('click',
               () => {
            const content = document.guervSelector('textarea').value
            channel.push('comment:add', {content: content});
5
          }):
```

```
function renderComments(comments){
 const renderedComments = comments.map(comment => {
   return `
   ${comment.content}
   }):
 document.querySelector('.collection').innerHTML =
    renderedComments.join('');
```

```
window.createSocket = createSocket;
```

- The renderComments function dynamically generates HTML for each comment and inserts it into the DOM.
- This allows the client to display comments immediately after joining the channel.

Updating show.html.eex for Comment Display



```
<h5> <%= @topic.title %> </h5>
        <div class="input-field">
        <textarea class="materialize-textarea"></textarea>
        <button class="btn">Add Comment</button>
5
        <script>
8
        document.addEventListener("DOMContentLoaded", function() {
          window.createSocket(<%= @topic.id %>)
10
        });
11
        </script>
12
```

Updating show.html.eex for Comment Display



- The HTML template includes a list element to display the comments.
- When the page loads, the createSocket function is called, which fetches and renders the comments.

Broadcasting New Comments



in CommentsChannel

```
defmodule Discuss.CommentsChannel do
         use Discuss. Web, :channel
         alias Discuss. {Topic, Comment}
         def join("comments:" <> topic_id, _params, socket) do
         topic_id = String.to_integer(topic id)
         topic = Topic
         |> Repo.get(topic id)
         |> Repo.preload(:comments)
10
         {:ok, %{comments: topic.comments}, assign(socket, :topic,
11
            topic)}
         end
12
```

Broadcasting New Comments in CommentsChannel



Broadcasting New Comments in CommentsChannel



```
{:reply, :ok, socket}
{:error, _reason} ->
{:reply, {:error, %{errors: changeset}}, socket}

end
end
end
end
```

- The broadcast!/3 function sends the new comment to all clients subscribed to the topic.
- This ensures real-time updates of comments across all clients.



- We update 'socket.js' to include an event listener for new comments.
- After joining the channel, we listen for "comments:\$topicId:new" events.
- The new comment is rendered on the client side.

```
import {Socket} from "phoenix"
let socket = new Socket("/socket", {params: {token: windows.
    userTokern}})
socket.connect()
```



```
const createSocket = () => {
           let channel = socket.channel(`comments:${topicId}`, {})
           channel.join()
           .receive("ok", resp => {
             renderComments (resp. comments):
           })
           .receive("error", resp => {console.log("Unable to join",
              resp);
           }):
8
           channel.on(`comments:${topicId}:new`, renderComment);
10
```



```
document.querySelector('button').addEventListener('click',()
             => {\
           const content = document.guerySelector('textarea').value;
           channel.push('comment:add', {content: content});
        });
      };
       function renderComments(comments){
         const renderedComments = comments.map(comment => {
8
           return commentTemplate(comment)
        });
10
```



```
document.querySelector('.collection').innerHTML =
     renderedComments.join('');
function renderComment(event){
  const renderedComment = commentTemplate(event.comment)
  document.querySelector('.collection').innerHTML +=
     renderedComment:
window.createSocket = createSocket:
```

Authentication with Sockets



- Overview of the authentication flow:
- **Server**: Generate a unique token and add it to the layout.
- **Browser**: Receives the HTML file and boots up the socket, sending the user token.
- **Server**: Verifies the token and assigns the user to the socket.

Update app.html.eex - Adding Unique Token



- We add a script to include the user token if the user is logged in.
- The token is generated using 'Phoenix.Token.sign'.

```
<head>
<title>Hello Discuss!</title>
...
<link rel="stylesheet" href="https://fonts.googleapis.com/
icon?family=Material+Icons">
```

Update app.html.eex - Adding Unique Token



```
<script>

<pr
```

Update user_socket.exUsing Token for Authentication



- The 'connect' function verifies the token and assigns the user ID to the socket.
- This allows us to authenticate users and maintain user-specific data in the channel.

```
defmodule Discuss.UserSocket do
use Phoenix.Socket

channel "comments:*", Discuss.CommentsChannel

transport :websocket, Phoenix.Transport.WebSocket
```

Update user_socket.exUsing Token for Authentication



```
def connect(%{"token" => token}, socket) do
         case Phoenix. Token. verify (socket, "key", token) do
         {:ok, user id} ->
         {:ok, assign(socket, :user_id, user_id)}
         {:error, error} ->
5
         :error
         end
         end
8
9
         def id( socket), do: nil
10
         end
11
```

Explanation of build_assoc



- 'build_assoc' is used to create associations between records.
- Limitation: It can only build one relationship at a time and cannot be called twice.
- Example: Assigning a topic to a user by updating 'comments_channel.ex'.

```
defmodule Discuss.CommentsChannel do
use Discuss.Web, :channel
alias Discuss.{Topic, Comment}

def join("comments:" <> topic_id, _params, socket) do
topic_id = String.to_integer(topic_id)
topic = Topic
|> Repo.get(topic_id)
|> Repo.preload(:comments)
```

Explanation of build_assoc



```
{:ok, %{comments: topic.comments}, assign(socket, :topic,
            topic)}
         end
        def handle in(name, %{"content" => content}, socket) do
        topic = socket.assigns.topic
        user id = socket.assigns.user id
         changeset = topic
8
         |> build assoc(:comments, user id: user id)
         |> Comment.changeset(%{content: content})
10
```

Explanation of build_assoc



```
case Repo.insert(changeset) do
        {:ok, comment} ->
        broadcast!(socket, "comments:#{socket.assigns.topic.id}:new
           ". %{comment: comment})
        {:replv, :ok, socket}
        {:error, _reason} ->
        {:reply, {:error, %{errors: changeset}}, socket}
        end
        end
8
        end
```