

Why use Glassfish instead of Apache? What's its strengths and weaknesses?

Asked 16 years, 2 months ago Modified 11 years ago Viewed 62k times



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Sorry for my ignorance here, but when I hear the word webserver, I immediately imagine Apache, although I know people use Microsoft's IIS too. However since I've been hanging out here at Stackoverflow I've noticed lots of people use Glassfish.



Which made me wonder, why would I want to use Glassfish (in the sense that I'm interested, but I don't really understand why it might make my life easier). From what I read it's Sun's open-source derivative of Apache's Tomcat, thus I imagine it's a good (or great) quality product. But since I don't know its strengths and weaknesses, I don't know when it would be wise to choose Glassfish over another server. Could anyone elaborate ?

glassfish

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demongolem

9,698 ● 36 ● 95 ● 105

asked Oct 6, 2008 at 7:50



Robert Gould

69.7k ● 61 ● 191 ● 275

1 Do you need a Web Server or a Servlet Container?

– [Shimi Bandiel](#) Oct 6, 2008 at 7:52

I'm thinking about WebServer primarily. – [Robert Gould](#) Oct 6, 2008 at 7:56

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GlassFish is an Application Server which can also be used as a Web Server (Http Server).

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A web Server means: Handling HTTP requests (usually from browsers).



A Servlet Container (e.g. Tomcat) means: It can handle servlets & JSP.



An Application Server (e.g. GlassFish) means: It can manage Java EE applications (usually both servlet/JSP and EJBs).



You should use GlassFish for Java EE enterprise applications.

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Arjan Tijms

38.2k ● 12 ● 111 ● 143

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 7:53



Shimi Bandiel

5,757 ● 3 ● 42 ● 49

1 That would mean Glassfish is what one could call a lean-mean Java Server, less general purpose than Apache, but more focused and optimized for Java Servlets?

– [Robert Gould](#) Oct 6, 2008 at 7:57

Yep, although Glassfish also has a very good HTTP handling framework. – [Shimi Bandiel](#) Oct 6, 2008 at 7:59

14 "lean-mean" is not exactly what describes a full Java EE server. – [Thorbjørn Ravn Andersen](#) Dec 19, 2011 at 13:03

@ShimiBandiel: Excellent description and breakdown. Thank you. :) – [Chiramisu](#) May 23, 2012 at 3:22

I an newbie here. Cant we use apache for Java applications ? – [bubble](#) Sep 3, 2013 at 13:54



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The need for a sepearte Web server is mostly needed in a production environment. You would normally find a Application server to be suffice most of your development needs. A web server is capable of holding larger number of active sessions and connections, thus providing the necessary balance without performance costs.

Stick to a simple web server if you are only working with servlets/jsps. It is also to be noted that in a netbeans environment, glassfish has better support than other App

servers. In the context of eclipse though, WSAD and JBoss seem to be the preferred options.

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Nifle

11.9k ● 10 ● 78 ● 102

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 8:54



questzen

3,287 ● 20 ● 21



3



Glassfish will soon release the modular kernel.

This means that the containers you need start up and shutdown as you need them. I.e no EAR deployed, EJB container won;t start up. This seems to have made it very good for development as it can start and stop *very* quickly. This takes it a lot closer to development environments like Rails (where redeployment is a massive part of your development)

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edited Jan 19, 2012 at 15:21

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Nifle

11.9k ● 10 ● 78 ● 102

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 9:16



Andrew Harmel-Law

7,879 ● 12 ● 45 ● 56



I have used GlassFish server for developing Web Services. It provides a very interactive Admin Console

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where admin can test the Web Services. I really find it helpful while developing Web Services



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answered Nov 22, 2013 at 15:06



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Varun

583 ● 1 ● 5 ● 12

