

TEAM REXX “WHAT WE DID” WRITE UP

Team REXX:

Maegan Sobel, Behnam Litkouhi, Eric Rinkus, John Thomas

What We Did:

We used REXX to glue together diverse applications with a focus on textual data. We intended to use REXX to integrate our Scheme-based “Text Adventure” from Program 3 with social media programs like Google+, Facebook, and Twitter with intent to update friends on the users status in the game. Most major social media APIs are REST based using HTTP calls and data packaged in JSON format. By utilizing tools such as REXX/cURL we are able to make standard HTTP requests (such as GET and POST) that are necessary to accomplish our goals. Additionally, all authentication also happens using HTTP so no extra functionality is required of REXX. However, other languages such as Python are much more suited to performing these tasks quickly and efficiently. By using a Scheme program and accessing the API in other languages we are able to relieve REXX of the extra work and leave it to its intended purpose, gluing together the game and posting scripts as a parent program. We established three clear parts to our project: design the game in Scheme, write the script that posts to social media, and write a REXX script that is able to launch the game and serve its data to the social media script. Specifically, our REXX script scans output from the game and finds out whether or not the user has won the Text Adventure game. If the user has won, the script extracts the necessary data once this state has been reached, formats the output to text that humans can read and is conducive to social media posts (e.g. 140 characters for Twitter) and then launching the posting script with that text as input. Through our program, we have displayed two powers of REXX, its ability to glue and its power as a scripting language.

Why It Is Significant:

Our program is significant because we showed how REXX is flexible. It interprets many languages that can communicate on different platforms- this we displayed through being able to post to two different social media sites (Google+ and Twitter) with unique scripts.

Changes From Write-Up:

The only change we made was not writing to Facebook. We finished communicating with Twitter and Google+ and decided that we had demonstrated enough how REXX can be used to glue together multiple scripts. Facebook also had special requests for communicating (requiring mobile app IDs or a website authentication IDs) which we decided was above and beyond our original idea for the program. We chose to keep the Text Adventure an offline application.