

Collab editor - Notes

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Abstract: This document compiles a series of notes about implementing a rich text editor with collaborative editing.

1 Reverse engineering

This section compiles notes from reverse engineering of existent collab solutions.

1.1 Dropbox paper

The relatively new Dropbox editor (Paper) implements collaborative editing. From some initial tests, the implementation seems to be so solid, and changes made from another user appear in the document with low latency (<1sec). It is not clear which techs Dropbox is using to develop Paper. A quick analysis of the page source of Paper shows a lot of CSS classes prefixed with the word “ace” and also the word “hp”. The former may indicate the use of the Ace editor. The latter is probably related to Hackpad, a web-based real-time wiki, based on the open-source EtherPad collaborative document editor. This Quora question points us exactly in the same direction.