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Assignment 9.1 Browser Debugging

In this week’s assignment, I wanted to find two tools that were neither the Chrome nor Firefox debugger. I found JSLint.com and Fiddler. JSLint.com is similar in nature to the CSS and html validation tools. Fiddler is a web debugging proxy.

JSLint.com is a code quality tool rather than a debugger. When using the tool, it advises some pretty heavy-handed restrictions to help developers avoid bugs. JSLint was written by Douglas Crockford, the inventor of JSON and author of “JavaScript: The good parts.” The program is so restrictive that it might be best if none of us take its advice until we gain a couple of years’ experience with the language. Still, it’s interesting to check your code against it. Here are some of the standard JavaScript that JSLint proscribes: the *new* operator, the use of *this* keyword, arrow notation (Crockford calls them ‘farts,’ fat arrows, giving a little puff of a hint as to how he feels about them), *for* loops, the use of *var*, switch statements, and more. It’s also worth noting that Crockford is extremely biased. He insults C, C++, Java, and the developers who use those languages regularly (Stop the hate, Doug!). Like the JavaScript language itself, he is important and well respected, but flawed at the core. At least he’s not boring. Check out his ‘code talks’ on YouTube.com. Here’s one: <https://youtu.be/XFTOG895C7c>. (JSLint.com and YouTube.com)

Now on to Fiddler. Fiddler offers several features. They include performance testing, security testing, traffic recording, and web debugging. The performance testing “lets you see the ‘total page weight’…”. For example, you can set rules to flag uncompressed responses that exceed 25kb. Security testing will decrypt and display application requests. Traffic recording logs connections and sessions. While I was testing, I observed Windows 10 doing an update. Had Fiddler not been running, I would have had no idea that Windows was updating. Finally, it has web debugging that allows you to view cookies, headers, and cache directives and ensure they are transferred between the client and server. Like JSLint, this is likely a tool to save for the future, perhaps when we are working with a non-local database. (telerik.com/fiddler)

In summary, JSLint is a tool that offers warnings about code to prevent bugs, and Fiddler is a web debugging tool that offers a view of what’s happening under the hood in terms of http/s connections.

Citations

“Telerik Fiddler”. Telerik.com. Accessed on Feb 6, 2020: <https://www.telerik.com/fiddler>

Crockford, Douglas. “Good Parts.” *JSLint*, Douglas Crockford, 16 May 2018. Accessed on Feb 6, 2020: jslint.com/help.html