JEE Course
Servlets – Cookies

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Content

- Cookie definition and usages

- How to create Cookies?

- How to retrieve Cookies?

Cookie definition

- Cookies are small sequences of bytes stored on the client side.

- They have first proposed by Netscape to store persistent data

- There are some restrictions on their usage:
    - A Cookie can only be accessed by the domain that has created it
    - In general, browsers allow disabling Cookies (privacy)

- Cookies are sent back (as headers) each time she returns to the server who recorded them.
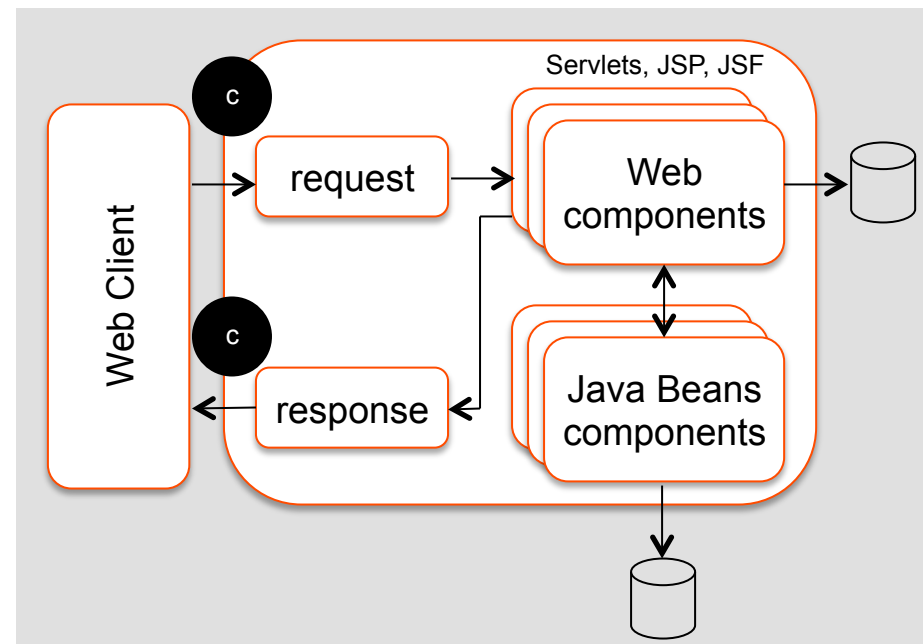
Cookie usages

- The most common uses of cookies are:

  - Storing useful data to reduce the amount of work to fulfill forms

  - Site personalization

  - Session tracking

- Cookies do not represent a safety issue to the user. They main concerning is related to privacy.

Example: /module01/example03.html

Creating Cookies (1 of 2)

- To create a cookie you must:

  - Create a *Cookie* object informing the key and value as Strings

  - Set the cookie expiration time (in seconds) using the *setMaxAge* method. If no time is specified, the cookie is valid until the browser is closed

  - Send the cookie to the client using the *HttpServletResponse.addCookie* method

Creating Cookies (2 of 2)

- Some rules:

  - The cookie name can not contain special characters:
    [] () = "/? @:;

  - The cookie content can not contain semicolons

  - You can also create cookies by entering the
    appropriate headers in the response object.

Example: /module04/example01.html

Retrieving Cookies

- Browsers always send all cookies that belong to the domain during the request

- Cookies are embedded in the request message as headers

- You can retrieve them using *getCookies*

- To retrieve a specific cookie, you should iterate over the returning array, comparing the name using the *cookie.getName* method (brute force!)

Some Cookie methods

- set/getName   Ex.: setName("prefFolder")

- set/getValue   Ex.: setValue("/usr/files")

- set/getMaxAge   Ex.: setMaxAge(60 * 60)

- set/getSecure   Ex.: setSecure(true)

- set/getDomain   Ex: setDomain("fun.acme.com")

- set/getPath   Ex: setPath("/")

Further reading

HttpServletResponse interface

http://tomcat.apache.org/tomcat-8.0-doc/servletapi/javax/servlet/http/Cookie.html