

Lecture 5a

APIs



GIT418/598: Multimedia Authoring, Scripting & Production

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Before I talk about application programming interfaces, or APIs, you'll notice that we have two parts to this lecture. This part is APIs and the second part is jQuery and AJAX. There is not a lecture on HTML5 canvas because you have an excellent series of videos to watch from Adobe about canvas. I couldn't do a better job of demonstrating and walking you through canvas than these videos do.

What is an API?

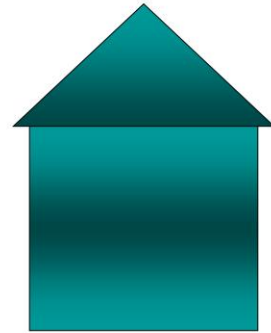
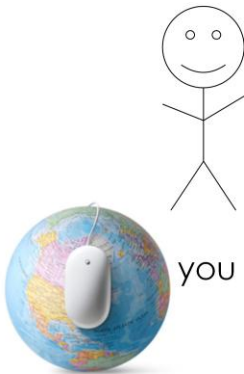
- Set of programming standards for accessing and interfacing with data
- Application-to-application interface, not a user interface
- Allows developers to get data from outside source and create their own applications powered by that data



I've mentioned APIs in an earlier lecture. There are several JavaScript APIs for use with different HTML5 features. Part of your assignment for this module has you using an API, so I want to give a more in-depth explanation into what an API is and how it can make your web development life easier.

API explained with really bad illustrations

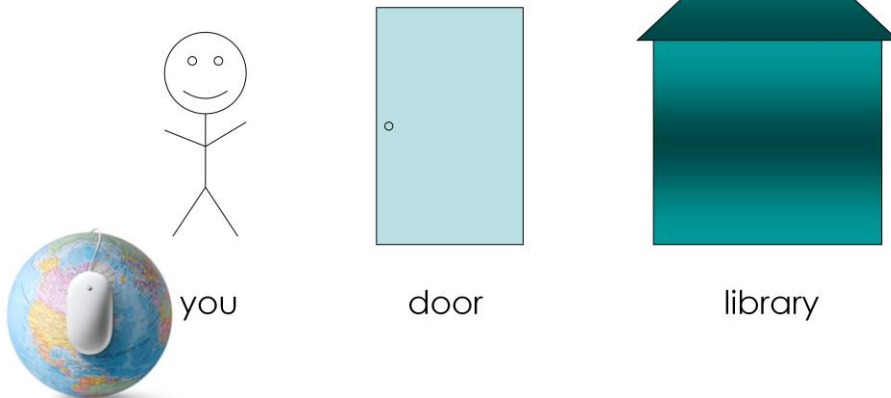
- You need a book from the library



library

API explained with really bad illustrations

- In order to get into the library you need to open the door



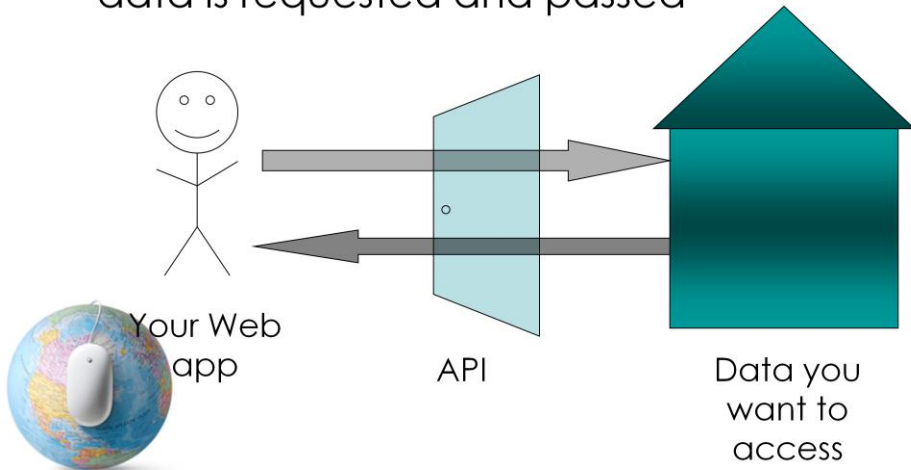
API explained with really bad illustrations

- In the world of the Internet, you can write Web applications that can “call” remote Web servers and “ask” for data
- That data then can be retrieved and placed on your Web site
- APIs are the way you can “call” the server



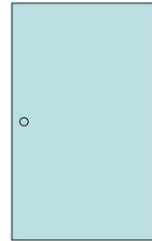
API explained with really bad illustrations

- APIs are your doorways through which data is requested and passed



API explained with really bad illustrations

- Sometimes the door is unlocked
- You can walk in, get the book you want and leave
 - Ex. Flickr



Unlocked
door = Free
to the public

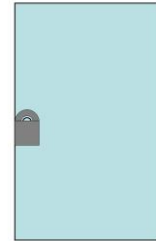
Many have open or public APIs that will allow you to access data.

API explained with really bad illustrations

- Sometimes door is locked and you need a key from library's owner
- Some keys open just one part of the library; some open entire library
- Many APIs require a key



– Ex. Many Google APIs



Locked door
= need API
key

Watch Lecture 5b!

- Reading and assignments are at the end of Lecture 5b



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