

Invitation to Web Browsing Study

We are seeking participants for a study on how software developers use the web. The purpose of the project is to measure how often software developers return to code-related web pages they have previously visited, and determine the methods they use to find these pages (e.g. web search, bookmarks, or typing the address). The study will help us assess whether a tool to support web page revisitation could be useful to software developers.

We are looking for participants who have worked on at least one substantial programming project in the last six months, using either Java, Javascript, or C#. Participants must also do most of their web browsing using Firefox on Windows. (If you would like to participate, but cannot because you use a different language, browser, or OS, please let us know – the list may be extended.)

This study is being conducted by Nick Sawadsky (nicks@cs.ubc.ca), under the supervision of Dr. Gail Murphy (murphy@cs.ubc.ca), and is funded by a gift from Microsoft Corporation.

Participating in the study will take at most 30 minutes of your time. For the study, you will be asked to download and run a tool on your computer. The tool will extract a list of web pages visited from your web browser's history database. The tool will attempt to download each page in this list and classify it as development-related or non-development-related.

The tool will then generate a report. In this report, no details which might allow a specific web page to be identified (such as the page address or title) will be included. You will be given the opportunity to view the report before choosing whether to submit it.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Nick Sawadsky (nicks@cs.ubc.ca) by email.