**Discussion 9.1 – Documenting an API**

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## Documenting use cases

Documenting is required even for the simplest API designs. The documentation of any product helps the user understand how they work and the builders how to build them. The documentation helps the user to know the components of the user interface and their roles. The documentation can come in many forms. Even the user’s manual cover of it is in some form documentation, showing information about changes from previous models, as the book explains, giving the example of an alarm clock. As API designer we must provide the information necessary to explicitly determine the goals of the API.

## Documenting security

Security documentation is required, for any API, is recommended to use the OpenAPI standards for the creation of the documentation and all the specification, information, methods, and procedures should be documented to make sure nothing is out of the goal scopes previously mentioned. Documentation from implementation was the scope of Swagger framework, but the author recommends adding more information to the documentation, because it is not considered completed.

## Documenting goals

The Goals depend on the functionality of the API and they must be communicated effectively, and the way to provide the correct achievement of the goals is thru the use of the responses of the API when performs an action in human-readable descriptions, instead of simple phrases. The descriptions should be user friendly.

## Reference documentation

A user’s guide should be implemented to make the documentation as professional as we can, because as mentioned previously reference documentation could not be enough to cover the whole scope of an API. The goals of the API must be explicit and well explained with constraints and recommendations. Leveraging an API description language such as OpenAPI Specification can be of great help when creating documentation.

Sources:

“The Design of Web APIs” Arnaud Lauret Chapter 12