Janis Gonzalez

WEB 420 RESTful APIs

Discussion 9.1 Documenting an API

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Bellevue University

Use cases act as proof of the API product and are used for an introduction to more specific implementation scenario documentation types. A use case describes steps or actions, defining interactions between the user and the system in order to achieve a specific result. These use cases help convey the message to users on how to obtain that certain end result and they can also address a more technical user on how to evaluate and understand that specific problem or solution (Lauret & Lane, 2019). Use cases help market an API by being easily accessible since they are written in basic English and include infographics as well as providing a structure that is easily understood and legible. An API user guide should include information on how to be able to “register as a developer, register a consumer app, and get tokens using the available OAuth flows” or any other security framework being used for the API (Lauret & Lane, 2019). The documentation for an API should include the goals. The documentation should describe what the goal’s purpose is and what is needed to use it as well as what kind of feedback consumers may get if the event was a success or failure (Lauret & Lane, 2019). It’s always best to be able to provide an easy to read type of description since it makes it very user-friendly. The goal should be described with a brief summary and should include all the possible responses with their respective data models (Lauret & Lane, 2019). A good way to set this up would be to make it as easily readable as possible with an many relevant examples as possible. There should also be a description of all the possible errors.

Reference:

Lauret, A., & Lane, K. (2019). Chapter 12: Documenting an API. In *The Design of Web APIs*. essay, Manning.