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WEB 420: Discussion 5.1

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Organizing Data

When designing an API it’s important to keep in mind that less is more and there should be a designated place for everything. When organizing data in an API property naming is a big factor. Make sure name are clear, concise, and describe the property in the best way. When data is sorted well it makes the API more readable for humans.

Feedback is important because it tells a user if an error is fixable on their end or not. When displaying errors to users it’s efficient to group together like issues and to order them from least to most important. Another good tip is to display all the errors that may arise at once, therefore, causing less steps to be taken for the user to see results. Its also a good practice to provide users with information rich status codes. Some common ones are 400- bad request, 401- unauthorized, 403- forbidden. all of the 400 error codes mean that there is an issue on the client or user side of the API. The more information that is given and specific the status code the easier it is for the user to fix the problem. 500 means internal server error, 503- service unavailable. All of the 500 status codes are internal or server errors which means that the problem is not fixable on the client side.

When designing an API its important to keep in mind the API goals. Goals are created by always keeping in mind the user. What do they need? how can they do it? What do they need in order to complete the task? What do they get in return? All these questions will help to keep your API goals organized and focused on the client.

Resources:

Au-Yeung, J. (2020, March 2). *Best practices for REST API design*. Stack Overflow Blog. https://stackoverflow.blog/2020/03/02/best-practices-for-rest-api-design/

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