

Sunday, May 27, 2007

May's phplarchitect Magazine - worthy weekend reading

I usually don't extol the virtues of magazines in blog posts. However, I've been sitting down with a printout of May's phplarchitect Magazine and figured it was well worth some attention. A lot of PHP developers whether newcomers or even old hands just looking to expand their knowledge would love this issue.

The two that stick in my mind are Jim Delahunt's "Unicode and PHP: A Gentle Introduction" and Jeff Moore's "Test Pattern: Model View Controller". Both are something those seeking illumination on these topics should certainly read. Jeff's article presents an overview of the MVC Pattern and injects a lot of clarity into a confusing subject for many PHP developers. This is one of the few times reading about MVC in PHP that there's more than a vague reference to a really important point - that Views may (even should) be empowered to read data from the Model. As Jeff notes the continuing popular trend of forcing an application to shuffle between Controllers just to inject Model data in part of a View is completely unnecessary. In my own humble opinion, over-dependency on Controllers to inject Model data into Views is wasteful of resources by pushing folk into adding more and more Controller classes for every teeny View->Model interaction (more work and files to maintain). I'd be hard pressed to believe it doesn't impose a performance cost too.

Jim Delahunt's article is another noteworthy one. I have a pet peeve about developers and popular online websites which store usernames with Unicode characters, render HTML which declares itself UTF-8, and which results in garbage characters like question marks everywhere. For a long time, my own name with a common European character (a-acute) failed to render on most sites claiming to output UTF-8 - assuming of course the site even allowed me to submit my real name... These days there's a marked improvement. This excellent article digs into Unicode in an easy to access way. If you are still not familiar with Unicode, UTF-8, the other Unicode standards, and why they are essential knowledge when building internationalised web apps then this is the article for you.

What else is in the mag this month? There's a cool overview of the Symfony Framework, Iliia Alshanetsky on Dictionary Attacks, and a few other articles I really enjoyed but won't mention here directly. As PHP magazines go, this is an action packed issue worth being enthusiastic about. You can review and buy the PDF version of May's issue for a handful of Canadian Dollars over at [phplarchitect](http://phplarchitect.com).

Posted by Pádraic Brady in Irishisms, PHP General, PHP Security at 03:48

Indeed Jeff's article is a good read and gives an insight in the original MVC implementation. One of the most challenging concepts behind MVC is captured in the world famous requirement:

"show overdrawn balances in red"

I would place it in the view (display logic), but as described in the article it's actually domain logic and must be placed in the model. It boggles my mind how to implement this!!

CSS and or HTML (which have the capabilities to display a value in red) are part of the view (I presume), the data (negative value) is part of the model.....how can you integrate this? Anonymous on May 27 2007, 17:48

I'd put it in the View. Whether the balance is negative/positive is a domain decision (maybe the balance is flagged negative separately from being signed), but the red highlighting of negatives is down to the View.

This is the simple case. For bank balances not all negatives are necessarily overdrawn in which case the "what is overdrawn" status must be determined by the Model - not the View which is safe with negatives, but not with the business interpretation of them.

Definitely a though provoking article



Anonymous on May 27 2007, 20:21

PÃ¡driac, I fully agree with you! The guys at PHP Architect released yet another great issue of the php|architect magazine. Every month I enjoy reading it, and I would highly recommend it to any PHP developer out there. Anonymous on May 30 2007, 01:03