



WELCOME to the winter issue of the Que/Sams Java User Group Newsletter. Our goal is to use this venue to keep you updated on Que and Sams' activities within the Java community. You'll learn of our travels with regard to tradeshow and other events. You'll also get the opportunity to learn a little more about our authors in an author profile section. We'll keep you up-to-date with what books are forthcoming and those that are worth a second look. Likewise we want to know what is going on in your group. Keep us posted on your events and activities. Let us know how we can make our books better and which ones just cannot be topped. If there is anything that you would like to see appear in these newsletters, drop us a line.

Be sure to visit www.sampublishing.com/java for the latest on Java technologies from Que and Sams.

Happy holidays from the Que/Sams team! We wish you a wonderful holiday season and all the best in the New Year.

ROGERS CADENHEAD ON RADIO USERLAND



Rogers Cadenhead is a prolific author with dozens of computer books to his credit. His latest effort, *Radio UserLand Kick Start*, explores the ins and outs of this popular (and surprisingly powerful) weblog and content management system. Below are some of his insights and a few tips on how to get the most of Radio Userland. For more, be sure to check out the Kick Start (Sams; ISBN: 0672325632; \$39.99)

THE BENEFITS OF RADIO USERLAND

Radio UserLand has benefits on two levels. For casual users, it's an excellent way to publish a weblog and read RSS newsfeeds. You can get started with the software in minutes. My wife Mary Moewe recently began using Radio to publish Wordzilla (<http://www.wordzilla.com>), a weblog about scriptwriting, and has started following a few of her favorite sites through the RSS aggregator. This is her introduction to weblogging and RSS, and Radio seems like the best choice for that purpose. For advanced users with some experience publishing Web sites or programming, Radio is a powerful Internet development

platform, object database, and content management system that can do all kinds of interesting things -- publish dynamic Web content as HTML, RSS, and XML; produce and consume Web services with XML-RPC and SOAP; mirror content; and gather information from Web servers and Internet services.

Radio has quickly become essential to my daily work routine - it's running all the time. I use it to publish Workbench (<http://www.cadenhead.org/workbench/>), a programming and publishing weblog that has grown to 1,700 pages and 900 entries, and to mirror Web pages and other files automatically from my desktop to several Web sites. One of the biggest time-savers is how Radio replaces the need to use an FTP client -- I offer banner ads on a Web site, and when I finish designing an ad, I save it in a folder on my computer and Radio uploads it to the right server automatically. Radio's great at this kind of information routing. I'm using it to collect and present information from a custom XML feed offered by NASA, publish my Advogato programming diary using XML-RPC, and move data around using HTTP, XML, RSS, POP3, XML-RPC, and SOAP.

One of Radio's best-kept secrets is that it's a \$39 product that has most of the functionality of the \$899 Frontier. Because the software does not include formal documentation, I'm hoping the book opens some eyes about how much Radio can do.

HOT TIPS

1) Use the Nightly Backups preference to enable Radio to save your weblog data on the server hosting your weblog. When you publish with Radio, your most important data is on your computer, not the Web host. Saving it to the server -- which is off by default -- makes it easy to recover from a hard drive crash and other disasters.

2) If your weblog outgrows the free hosting offered by UserLand, consider switching to the Python Community Server (<http://www.pycs.net>), an open-source clone created by Phillip Pearson and Georg Bauer. It's faster because there aren't as many users and offers additional features such as the ability to edit comments.

3) A lot of great add-on tools have been created for Radio. I use Kit by Mark Paschal to enhance the RSS news aggregator, Footbridge (also by Paschal) to publish a weblog category to an Advogato diary, and MyRadio by Mikel Maron to collect other data sources.

4) When you write scripts, there are times when the compiled script you are running will be different than the one you see in the editing window. This is a feature, not a bug, and the reason is explained in Chapter 12 of the book.

- Interview Courtesy of Stephen Ibaraki,
<http://www.stephenibaraki.com/pearson.htm>



A BIT ABOUT XQUERY AND XPATH FROM KURT CAGLE, CO-AUTHOR OF XQUERY KICK START



The following is an excerpt from Stephen Ibaraki's interview with Kurt, for the full interview please visit <http://www.stephenibaraki.com/pearson.htm>

XQuery is actually built upon the XPath 2 specification -- in a way you can think of XQuery as adding certain control structures and control syntax to the XPath language. XPath2 however has undergone a significant amount of revamping as well. The most significant change there includes the introduction of sequences as an alternative to the node-set that was intrinsic to XPath 1.0. Sequences are more general purpose structures, containing not just XML nodes but text, numbers, dates, and just about anything that can be represented in XML, as well as mixed content. This makes it easier to create nodes on the fly, and it also gives you many of the same list manipulation advantages that you get in languages such as Lisp, Scheme, and so on.

If recordsets can be thought of as the data model for SQL, then sequences are the analogous data model for XQuery. In a similar fashion, the query mechanism for SQL - SELECT statements primarily - have an analog in the XQuery FLWOR statements - where FLWOR (pronounced 'flower') is an acronym for For/Let/Where/Order by/Return, the principal keywords of XQuery. Thus, a SQL statement such as

```
SELECT firstName,lastName FROM users u
WHERE u.state = 'CA'
```

would have an analogous XQuery statement:

```
FOR $user in $users WHERE $user/state = 'CA'
RETURN $user/firstName,$user/lastName
```

The difference between SQL and XQuery lies in the way you think about the dataset -- the SQL statement has the terse CASE like pseudo-English that was so common about twenty years ago (upon what I think was the fallacious assumption that you could make programming easier by using English-like statements) while the XQuery statement follows a more traditional programming model (kind of a Visual Basic metaphor that is far more familiar to the current generation of programming).

XPath 2.0 also brings with it a wealth of functions,

considerably more than existed with XPath 1.0 and (for the most part) adding just what's needed to make the language sufficiently robust for work. This includes such things as a regular expression engine that will allow you the ability to perform matches and to do regex replacements, something that significantly expands the ability of the language. This also includes both a tokenizer and a sequence concatenation function which, in conjunction with regular expressions, lets you parse even complex text files cleanly and efficiently. Indeed, I think that it's not an unreasonable statement that XPath2 (possibly in conjunction with XSLT2) may even end up becoming the first pass parser for other language compilers, such as C# or Java, especially given the advantages of moving at least portions of source code into XML.

One of the other major additions to the XPath/XQuery model is the introduction of data-types, about which I have considerably more ambivalence. Data-types first emerged as a necessity, a way of specifying to the computer what size of word to use in retaining principally numeric information. Thus guaranteed, for instance, that if you wrote a loop with an incrementing variable, that the computer would use an integer rather than a floating point number and not inadvertently view 9.995 as 9 rather than 10. However, even a halfway decent interpreter or compiler should be able to ferret this information out by context, without having the user specify it -- indeed, a good optimizing compiler is generally much better at ascertaining the exact type of primitive data-type that's appropriate to a given operation. The second problem that emerges here is that XML does not hold information in a given type, but instead maintains this information as abstract meta-data; this means that type definitions are essentially imposed from outside rather than being intrinsic to the XML representations, which actually adds to the overhead of working with the XML.

My experience working with data-types in XQuery has been that they are a royal nuisance; introducing a typed expression in XQuery is as likely to force you to add type everywhere else, even when it is not explicitly needed for functioning. If you are serializing a result sequence to a binary representation, this may be useful, but this to me defeats the whole purpose of using XML in the first place.



UPCOMING TITLES FROM QUE AND SAMS

BEA WEBLOGIC SERVER 8.1 UNLEASHED

Steve Steffen, et al
0672324873 Nov. 2003

RED HAT LINUX FEDORA UNLEASHED

Bill Ball / Hoyt Duff
0672326299; Jan. 2004

XPATH KICK START: NAVIGATING XML WITH XPATH 1.0 AND 2.0

Steven Holzner
0672324113; Dec. 2003

SAMS TEACH YOURSELF XML IN 21 DAYS, 3RD EDITION

Steven Holzner
0672325764; Oct. 2003

UPGRADING AND REPAIRING LAPTOPS

Scott Mueller
0789728001; Dec. 2003

THE OBJECT-ORIENTED THOUGHT PROCESS, 2ND EDITION

Matt Weisfeld
0672326116; Dec. 2003

SAMS TEACH YOURSELF JAVASERVER PAGES 2.0 WITH APACHE TOMCAT IN 24 HOURS

Mark Wutka, et al
0672325977; Dec. 2003





FEATURED TITLE: *COLDFUSION MX DEVELOPER'S COOKBOOK*

By Brad Leupen and Peter Freitag (ISBN: 0672324628; 2003)

ColdFusion is a rapid application development tool used to create Web sites throughout the Internet. The product's ease of use and capabilities allow even inexperienced developers to rapidly produce basic Web sites.

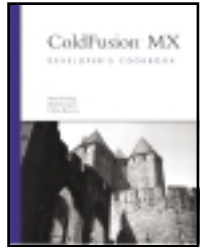
The ColdFusion MX Developer's Cookbook focuses upon teaching the use of ColdFusion's advanced features in the development of more complex Web sites -- Web sites that interact with other sites on the Internet, that are data-driven rather than static, and that are not necessarily confined to one server.

Though the basics of ColdFusion are easily picked up by even novice programmers, many encounter difficulties when they attempt to master more advanced features because they lack formal training. The ColdFusion MX Developer's Cookbook provides recipes and insights into ColdFusion, and along the way teaches some of the fundamentals of the development process.

The recipes serve as templates for database access, custom tags, scripting, generating charts and graphs, and linking into other resources on the Web using SOAP and .NET.

PRAISE FOR *COLDFUSION DEVELOPER'S COOKBOOK*

Are you tired of all the Flash talk and ready to dive into improving your ColdFusion skills? This is the book for you then!



The authors waste no time diving into techniques for improving you skills. In the first couple of pages on string manipulation, I learned tips I could use today. They move quickly into arrays and structures (a challenge for most beginners!) If you're building an application for the first time, the techniques and advice offered throughout will give you working code to build and expand upon.

- Lisa Wilson, Sacramento ColdFusion Users Group

I would recommend this book to anyone doing anything that involves ColdFusion. - Amazon Review

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Contact me with any feedback at:
amy.sorokas@pearsoned.com

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WORD SEARCH: JAVA

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XPATH	H U X M N A R S E S C A E R B O
XML	P S A X L R C D O N V D A K E D
RADIO	U A O Q W R B A A S O T C O D P
USERLAND	O V R U I E P N S E S D I E N E
COLDFUSION	R A A E A C B B A K N D G D A C
SOAP	G J E R A E H S C R A E O X L O
WEBSERVICES	R T K Y M T N I E R U T L P R E
JAVA	E P S C A D K O P R L A B D E D
KICKSTART	S R L P C A G L E A V A E R S S
CAGLE	U D X O E I H S A M S I W E U R
CADENHEAD	C O L D F U S I O N C P C E I L
PERRONE	E A P R I N E K N E X M L E N H
USERGROUP	O W A T I C A D E N H E A D S E
WEBLOGIC	A C C S E O P E R R O N E D A A
SAMS	O R A A N S W I C G Y S N H E L

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