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RESTful Web Services Cookbook: Solutions For Improving Scalability And Simplicity



Synopsis

While the REST design philosophy has captured the imagination of web and enterprise developers alike, using this approach to develop real web services is no picnic. This cookbook includes more than 100 recipes to help you take advantage of REST, HTTP, and the infrastructure of the Web. You'll learn ways to design RESTful web services for client and server applications that meet performance, scalability, reliability, and security goals, no matter what programming language and development framework you use. Each recipe includes one or two problem statements, with easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions for solving them, as well as examples using HTTP requests and responses, and XML, JSON, and Atom snippets. You'll also get implementation guidelines, and a discussion of the pros, cons, and trade-offs that come with each solution. Learn how to design resources to meet various application scenarios

Successfully design representations and URIs
Implement the hypertext constraint using links and link headers
Understand when and how to use Atom and AtomPub
Know what and what not to do to support caching
Learn how to implement concurrency control
Deal with advanced use cases involving copying, merging, transactions, batch processing, and partial updates
Secure web services and support OAuth

Book Information

Paperback: 316 pages

Publisher: Yahoo Press; 1 edition (March 14, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0596801688

ISBN-13: 978-0596801687

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.8 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (28 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #115,958 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in [Books > Computers & Technology > Web Development & Design > Web Services](#) #36 in [Books > Computers & Technology > Networking & Cloud Computing > Data in the Enterprise > Client-Server Systems](#) #278 in [Books > Computers & Technology > Networking & Cloud Computing > Internet, Groupware, & Telecommunications](#)

Customer Reviews

As is common with O'Reilly's Cookbooks, the style of this book is very terse and to the point. There is not much handholding. The intended audience seems to be system architects who already know

what they are doing, but who need to know what they should be aiming for when they want to be RESTful. The "recipes" in this Cookbook are more like Best Practices, since figuring out how to implement them is left as an exercise for the reader. Compared to my previous readings on REST, this book strongly emphasizes the use of consistent XML formats. For me, this was the most important lesson in the book. It is not enough to just use PUT and DELETE: in order to really think in terms of "representations," you need to design meaningful XML. Along these lines, Allamaraju's discussion of the Atom protocol is particularly interesting.

I had been following "What is REST" tutorials online for the last few weeks as I was working on an API for an upcoming SaaS product. Unfortunately there were still some nitty-gritty details behind the tenants of RESTful design that weren't clicking in my brain, making it hard for me to really grok if I was following the intended design guidelines correctly or just faking it like so many other services do. Picking this book up after a recommendation from an HN reader, I got 4 chapters in before the smoke cleared in my brain and I had multiple "Ah ha!" moments such that the whole concept cleared up for me in a matter of days. It could be the writing style or presentation, but I just found it really easy to digest and answering all my questions as they popped up in my head. An excellent resource for anyone else working on RESTful API design.

This book provides a clear and concise description of REST and how to make your web services accessible via REST. I got the book because I was struggling with authenticating a Restful web service. The chapter on security is worth the price of the book. I finally understood OAuth's three-legged and two-legged protocols, and was able to build a protected web service API. The book is not tied to a specific programming language, which I think is good as it focuses on core concepts instead. It was easy for me to work on Python and Javascript to get the OAuth operation in place.

I have not made it through the whole book, but my first impressions are really good. One of the interfaces we were designing for work is to time consuming to wait for a http response, in the first chapter of this book it gives you the way to do Asynchronous requests correctly with rest. There is also some good information on presenting resources that are not nouns, nouns are easy right you have a collection of people for example, you want to list all the people and do CRUD operations on a particular person. This to me is classical rest and is strait forward to do, but what about verbs (not in the POST, DELETE http sense) but in the give me driving directions sense. The book covers this

and actually uses driving directions as it's example. There are a couple of issues I'm still trying to find covered in the book, like how to do pagination on a collection of resources correctly. There is at least one recipe on this, but I did not see how to indicate a default page size (ie I requested all user accounts, but only returned first 200 due to size, how does the client know that 200 were returned) The other thing is the proper way to use http get parameters in search and other limiting operations. It would be nice to have some basic recipes there, but to be fair I might just not have seen them yet. All in all it's a nice addition to your technical library.

If you are looking for a book on REST I will highly recommend RESTful Web Services Cookbook by Subbu Allamaraju. As the title says, it's a cookbook for REST and a great starting point for anyone starting with rest or looking for more insight into the best practices on how to implement RESTful web services. The main focus is on the architecture and concepts, not the specific implementation details for any different language. Truly a book outlining the foundations for a lasting technology. If you are looking for a book telling you how to implement REST in Java or C# or Ruby or any other language, this is not the book you are looking for.

Some good information but the structure they use for this is so unnatural. Some forced book structure that turns everything into a Q and A. Really makes it hard to create a flowing narrative about the topic as a whole. This is probably more a comment on O'Reilly's standards than the author or material.

All I can say is, this book ROCKS. A thorough, in-depth approach that takes you not only to the high-level perspectives to understand what REST is and what is required, but also a lower level best practices approach to making solid architectural decisions for your code. It also uses the approach of relating potential/real world problems, followed by solutions that explain how to solve the problem, what the problem was, and why the solution is the best approach through reference to design and standards. Great book. If you have a basic concept as to what REST is and are looking for guidance to that next step for proper architecture/design solutions, then this is the book for you.

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