

Contents

Acknowledgments	xi
Introduction	xix
Part I: Understanding the Facebook Platform	1
Chapter 1: Facebook as a Platform	3
<hr/>	
Evolution of Facebook	3
Facebook Services	4
The Technology behind Facebook	5
Introduction to the Core Technologies	5
Role of the Application	6
Anatomy of an Application	7
Application Canvas	7
Application Profile Box	8
Application About Page	9
News Feed and Mini-Feed	10
Application Directory	12
Notifications and Requests	13
Facebook Pages	14
Message Attachments	14
Application Request Process	16
Validating the Request Signature	18
Client Libraries	18
The Developer Center and Developer Application	18
Application Traits	19
Top Friends	19
iLike	19
Extended Info	20
Art	20
Fortune Cookie	21
Honesty Box	21
Causes	21
del.icio.us	22
Pirates vs. Ninjas	22

Contents

Election '08	23
Scrabulous	23
Application Trait Overview	23
Advertising and Marketing	24
Perfecting a Single Idea	24
Adding New Functionality and Extending Functionality	25
Cosmetic Enhancements	25
Business Relationships	25
Facebook Beacons	25
Summary	25
Chapter 2: Building Your First Application	27
What You Need	27
Outlining the Functionality and Features	27
Creating the Application	28
Introducing the Facebook Developer Application	28
Creating the 'Hello World' Application	28
Writing the Application	33
Preparing the Application Environment	33
Application Layout and Structure	34
Class Overview	34
Canvas Pages	37
Evaluating the Status	45
Summary	46
Chapter 3: Facebook Markup Language (FBML)	47
Understanding FBML	47
Entities	48
HTML	48
Operators	49
Navigation	51
Informational	54
User and Group	56
Information Control	58
Profile	62
Profile Visibility	64
Media and External Content	66
Notifications and Requests	70
Facebook Widgets	73
Editor and Forms	75

System	80
Miscellaneous	81
Dynamic FBML Attributes	84
Visibility	84
Mock-Ajax	85
Forms	86
Images	86
Forms	87
CSS and the DOM	87
Summary	87
Chapter 4: Advanced FBML	89
<hr/>	
FBML and FBJS	89
The Basics	89
Element and ID Renaming	93
FBML Canvas Rules and Caveats	95
FBJS DOM Objects	95
CSS and Styling	98
Event Handling	99
Ajax	100
Dialogs	104
Summary	108
Chapter 5: Using the Facebook API	109
<hr/>	
The Method Request	109
Common Request Parameters	110
Responses	111
Error Handling	111
XML	113
JSON	113
Method Definitions	113
Authentication	113
News Feed and Mini-Feed	114
FQL	121
Friends	122
Notifications	125
Profile	128
User	130
Events	139
Groups	143

Contents

Photos	146
FBML	153
Marketplace	155
Summary	162
Chapter 6: Data Mining with FQL	163
FQL Requests	163
FQL Responses	164
XML	164
JSON	164
FQL Syntax	166
Available Fields and Tables	167
Additional Query Components	172
Fields with Complex Data Structures	173
Using This in Your Applications	174
Method Replacement	174
Storing Data	174
Summary	175
Chapter 7: Authentication	177
Authentication Components	177
Identifying an Application	178
Sessions	179
Signatures	179
Application Authentication	180
Validating Requests	180
Forcing Views	183
External Application Authentication	184
Creating Sessions from Desktop Applications	192
Summary	195
Part II: Building Facebook Applications	197
Chapter 8: Resources for Developers	199
The Developers Application	199
My Applications	200
Discussion Board	206
Updates and Service Announcements	207
Application Stats	208

The Developers Web Site	209
Documentation	209
Resources	209
Tools	210
Wiki	211
Bug-Tracking	211
Test Accounts	211
Summary	212
<hr/> Chapter 9: Doing More with Hello World	<hr/> 213
Looking Back	213
Going Forward	214
Preparation	214
Creating Better Profiles	215
Event Tracking with Application Events	220
Sending and Tracking Invitations	222
Statistics and Metrics	227
Summary	228
<hr/> Chapter 10: External Application Development	<hr/> 229
Defining the External Application	229
Creating an External Application	230
Preparation	230
Installing MediaWiki	231
Disabling Anonymous Edits	233
Disabling Account Creation	233
Removing the Login Link	233
Creating the External Application	233
Developing the AuthFacebook Component	234
Developing the Facebook Component	245
Exercises	248
Summary	248
<hr/> Chapter 11: Best Practices	<hr/> 249
Common Goals	249
Creating Automated Jobs	249
Application Settings and Configuration	257
Respecting User Privacy in a Social World	262

Contents

Caveats	263
Callback URLs Are Not to Redirect	263
The 12-Second Rule	263
Callback URLs Cannot Be Made Using SSL	263
Design Patterns	264
Common Elements	264
Styles and Colors	264
Canvas Navigation	265
Displaying Ads	266
Using Dialogs Efficiently	267
Summary	270
Appendix A: PHP File Reference	271
Index	315